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ART. I.—*Lectures on the Evidences of Christianity, before the Lowell Institute, January, 1844.* By Mark Hopkins, D. D., President of Williams College. Boston: Published by T. R. Marvin. 1846. Svo., pp. 383.

WE fully agree with the learned author, that the evidences of our religion are exhaustless. Though truth is one, as the centre of a circle is one, it may be viewed from as many points as are to be found in the circumference. Every comparison of revealed truth, with all other truth, tends to show the harmony of the whole. According to the cast and temper and discipline of individuals, different minds will view the subject differently; and hence the body of evidence may be expected to accumulate as long as the world lasts. There are kinds of proof which are fitted to certain states of society and human opinion, and which, after serving their purpose, cease to be regarded. Thus, for example, the reasonings of the early Fathers, in their apologetical treatises, which seem to have been sufficiently cogent in their day, exhibit arguments on which we should scarcely rely in ours. Every student of theology has been struck with the very different points of view assumed on this subject, by the Germans and the English, respectively. And, with the progress of science, the increase of exegetical research, and the mutual reflections of prophecy and history, we may expect a series of devel-

opments in Christian evidences, which cannot now be so much as imagined. Because these methods of illustrating the harmony of the great central truth with the frame of nature and the constitution of man, are diverse, it does not follow that they are self-contradictory, or that any of them are untrue. To repudiate all but our own methods of proving a great moral system is a token of idle conceit or egregious ignorance. Yet this tendency has been strongly manifested in the very department which we are now considering; and the friends of Christianity have been almost ready to quarrel about the methods of defending it. The time was when great stress was laid on a class of arguments which have now been laid on the shelf, as savouring of the Peripatetic school. Then came the middle era of apologetical theology, in which the whole weight of the argument was made to rest on the historical testimony. Even Chalmers, in his earlier publications, was disposed to slight the internal evidences. At the present time, unless we mistake the signs, there is a tendency to the other extreme, in compliance with the breeze of ill-comprehended German metaphysics which has come over a certain description of minds in our colleges. This likewise manifests itself in a willingness to undervalue all arguments for the Being of God, from final causes, or the teleological mode in general, and to rely on ideas of the Reason. In regard to the Evidences of Christianity, the same persons would draw away our observation from miracles, and all historical proof, and confine us to arguments purely internal.

The fragments of Coleridge have not been without their influence, in furthering the disparagement of the methods of English theology. To all the school, with whom the very mention of the phrase 'common-sense' is as a fatal Shibboleth, and who ever seek the 'high priori road,' the shadow of this great man has been a singular defence. For he held that "all the (so-called) Demonstrations of a God" are failures; and that books like those of Derham, Paley, Nieuwentyt and Lyonet, only prove what we have already pre-supposed. In like manner, the place occupied by miracles, in the Evidences of Christianity, is much lower and less indispensable, if we may believe Coleridge, than we have usually been taught. We name him, because he has been the chief authority, or at least the earliest favourite, with those in our country who have most derogated from the credit

of the common books on this subject. Yet we have never joined in the outcry of those who would make this gifted but erroneous man an infidel; and we shall do him the justice to cite his own language on this very point, namely the true evidences of Christianity, which he makes to be these. "1. Its consistency with right Reason, I consider as the outer Court of the Temple, the common area, within which it stands. 2. The Miracles, with and through which the Religion was first revealed and attested, I regard as the steps, the vestibule, and the portal of the temple. 3. The sense, the inward feeling, in the soul of each Believer of its exceeding *desirableness*, the experience that he *needs* something, joined with the strong foretoking that the Redemption and the Graces propounded to us in Christ, are *what* he needs; this I hold to be the true FOUNDATION of the Spiritual Edifice." To this statement, in its obvious sense, we yield our full assent, and yet there are other expressions of the author which look very much like a sitting in judgment upon all that is revealed, inspired, and attested, at the tribunal of mere human reason. And this has been seized upon, by sundry in our day, who unite with it many contemptuous words in regard to all that may be denominated historical testimony. We rejoice at the absence of such one-sided predilections in Dr. Hopkins, and can therefore find no fault with the prominence which he has given to the Internal Evidence.

These Discourses, we suppose, were delivered before many who are Socinians. So we understand the author, when he says, in the Preface, that he was embarrassed in presenting the argument, since to do so fully he should have dwelt on the Atonement and the Divinity of Christ. "I should be unwilling," he says, "to have it supposed that I presented anything which I regarded as a complete system of the Evidences of Christianity, from which that argument," namely the adaptation of Christianity as providing an atonement, "was excluded." We have no doubts as to the author's opinions; we even discern them in his work; but we are sorry that he should have taken a position of defence which is so immeasurably below the true vantage ground. Especially as he has laid out his chief strength on the internal evidence, is it to be regretted, that the very portion should be excluded in which that evidence is most convincing. Yet we know such a method was not his own choice and it is

possible that the argument may prove the more useful to those in the latitude of its origin, by reason of its reticency on these very points.

At a very early stage of the discussion, the author finds himself engaged with those who object that the belief of a man is not within his own power. The reply of Dr. Hopkins is worthy of insertion, and we shall give it entire :

“ In this case, as in most others of a similar kind, the objection involves a partial truth, from which its plausibility is derived. It *is* true, within certain limitations, and under certain conditions, and with respect to certain kinds of truth, that we are not voluntary in our belief; but then these conditions and limitations are such as entirely to sever from this truth any consequence that we are not perfectly ready to admit.

“ We admit that belief is in no case directly dependent on the will; that in some cases it is entirely independent of it; but he must be exceedingly bigoted, or unobservant of what passes around him, who should affirm that the will has *no* influence. The influence of the will here is analogous to its influence in many other cases. It is as great as it is over the objects which we see. It does not depend upon the will of any man, if he turns his eyes in a particular direction, whether he shall see a tree there. If the tree be there, he must see it, and is compelled to believe in its existence; but it was entirely within his power not to turn his eyes in that direction, and thus to remain unconvinced, on the highest of all evidence, of the existence of the tree, and unimpressed by its beauty and proportion. It is not by his will directly that man has any control over his thoughts. It is not by willing a thought into the mind that he can call it there; and yet we all know that through attention and habits of association the subjects of our thoughts, are to a great extent, directed by the will.

“ It is precisely so in respect to belief; and he who denies this, denies the value of candour, and the influence of party spirit, and prejudice, and interest, on the mind. So great is this influence, however, that a keen observer of human nature, and one who will not be suspected of leaning unduly to the doctrine I now advocate, has supposed it to extend even to our belief of mathematical truth. ‘Men,’ says Hobbes, ‘appeal from custom to reason, and from reason to custom, as it serves their turn, receding from custom when their interest requires it, and setting themselves against reason as oft as reason is against them; which is the cause that the doctrine of right and wrong is perpetually disputed both by the pen and the sword; whereas the doctrine of lines and figures is not so, because men care not, in that subject, what is truth, as it is a thing that crosses no man’s ambition, or profit, or lust. For, I doubt not, if it had been a thing contrary to any man’s right of dominion, or to the interest of men that have dominion, that the three angles of a triangle should be equal to two angles of a square, that doctrine should have been, if not disputed yet by the burning of all books of geometry, suppressed, as far as he whom it concerned was able.’ ‘This,’ says Hallam, ‘from whose work I make the quotation, ‘does not exaggerate the pertinacity of mankind in resisting the evidence of truth when it thwarts the interests or passions of any particular sect or community.’* Let a man who hears the forty-seventh proposition of Euclid an-

* Literature of Europe, vol. iii.

nounced for the first time, trace the steps of the demonstration, and he *must* believe it to be true; but let him know that, as soon as he does perceive the evidence of that proposition so as to believe it on that ground, he shall lose his right eye, and he will never trace the evidence, or come to that belief which results from the force of the only proper evidence. You may tell him it is true, but he will reply that he does not know, he does not see it to be so.

“So far, then, from finding in this law of belief, the law by which it is necessitated on condition of a certain amount of evidence perceived by the mind, an excuse for any who do not receive the evidence of the Christian religion, it is in this very law that I find the ground of their condemnation. Certainly, if God has provided evidence as convincing as that for the forty-seventh of Euclid, so that all men have to do is to examine it with candour, then they must be without excuse if they do not believe. This, I suppose, God has done. He asks no one to believe except on the ground of evidence, and such evidence as ought to command assent. Let a man examine this evidence with entire candour, laying aside all regard for consequences or results, simply according to the laws of evidence, and then, if he is not convinced, I believe God will, so far forth, acquit him in the great day of account. But if God has given men such evidence that a fair, and full, and perfectly candid examination is all that is needed to necessitate belief, then, if men do not believe, it will be in this very law that we shall find the ground of their condemnation. The difficulty will not lie in their mental constitution as related to evidence, nor in the want of evidence, but in that moral condition, that state of the heart, or the will, which prevented a proper examination. ‘There seems,’ says Butler, ‘no possible reason to be given why we may not be in a state of moral probation with regard to the exercise of our understanding upon the subject of religion, as we are with regard to our behaviour in common affairs. The former is a thing as much within our power and choice as the latter.’

“And here, I remark, incidentally, we see what it is for truth to have a fair chance. There are many who think it has this when it is left free to combat error without the intervention of external force; and they seem to suppose it will, of necessity prevail. But the fact is, that the truth almost never has a fair chance with such a being as man, when the reception of it involves self-denial, or the recognition of duties to which he is indisposed. Let ‘the mists that steam up before the intellect from a corrupt heart be dispersed,’ and truths, before obscure, shine out as the noonday. Before the mind of one with the intellect of a man, but with the purity and unselfishness of an angel, the evidence of such a system as the gospel would have a fair chance.”

The author next proceeds to inquire what *kind* of evidence that is, by which Christianity is supported; and he defines it to be moral, as opposed to mathematical, and probable, as opposed to demonstrative. In these expressions, and in the exposition which follows, we find that refreshment of soul which arises from regaining one's own country and hearing one's own dialect; for we have become somewhat weary of new metaphysics. Of this we perceive, from the beginning to the end of this work, not the faintest trace, if we may except an occasional use of the term Reason, to which we make no objection. Most cordially do

we assent to the elucidation which is given, and which is full of graceful simplicity and unassuming strength.

The *grounds* of our certainty in regard to revelation next engage the author's notice, and, according to his enumeration, they are six. The first is what he calls the Reason, or what has been more familiarly known as Intuition. The second is Consciousness. The third is the Senses. The fourth is Memory. The fifth is Testimony. The sixth is Reasoning. We give these, chiefly that the reader may be impressed, as we have been impressed, with the clear, safe, tried, *British* mode of thought which he may expect in our author; an expectation moreover, in which he will not be disappointed.

As a very necessary appendage to this statement, Dr. Hopkins proceeds to inquire how far one of these sources of evidence may come into conflict with another. This leads him to state and answer Hume's famous argument; as he aptly and wittily says, "because it is still the custom of those who defend Christianity to do so, just as it was the custom of British ships to fire a gun on passing the port of Copenhagen, long after its power had been prostrated, and its influence had ceased to be felt."

The idea suggested by Dr. Hopkins, in opposition to Hume's definition of a miracle, as being a violation of the laws of nature, that for aught we know, miracles may be as truly natural events as any other, is not a new thought. It was brought forward by Bonet, the philosopher of Geneva, in his excellent work on the Evidences of Christianity. As far as we recollect, for we have not looked into the work for some years, Bonet maintains, that in the comprehensive plan of Providence, provision was made for miracles; so that they are produced by natural causes, as truly as other events. And he seems to teach, that the proof derived from a miracle in favour of the inspiration of any person arises from his previous knowledge that such an event will take place at a certain time. An opinion of the same kind seems to have been entertained by Mr. Babbage in his ninth Bridgewater Essay. But we confess, that we are by no means satisfied with this view of the subject. If it be correct, then there never has been a miracle since the beginning of the world. It is not that an event rarely happens, or that it is of a wonderful nature which renders it miraculous, it may possess both these characteristics, and yet be entirely natural.

Nor is it necessary to suppose, that in the production of a miracle a greater power is exerted, than in the production of common events. Sometimes, a miracle is effected by the mere cessation of a power which acts uniformly, unless interrupted. Common events take place according to established laws, but a miracle is produced by the operation of a new cause which does not commonly act. It is the immediate interposition of the Deity, to produce an effect, which would not be produced, unless this extraordinary power were exerted. For a man to be born and to be sustained by food, is natural, but for a man to be raised from the dead is miraculous. The author justly observes, "That if man rose from the dead as statedly, after a year, as they now do from sleep in the morning, one would be as natural as the other." But this is only to say, that the established laws of nature might have been different from what they are. Taking these laws as they exist, the rising from the dead is miraculous, not natural.

There seems to us to be danger in this concession. One of the most plausible objections to the argument from miracles is, that we are not sufficiently acquainted with the laws of nature, to be certain that any event which seems miraculous is not produced by some natural cause not before observed, or only developed in some peculiar circumstances. "That miracles were provided for, in the vast cycles of God's moral government," as our author expresses it, is a matter not disputable. As they are important events, no doubt provision was made for them, but that does not make them natural events. They were decreed to come to pass as *miracles*, and not by pre-established laws, but by the exertion of the power of God at the time, distinct from his operations in nature. It does not appear to us, upon this theory, how what is called a miracle, can furnish any conclusive proof of a divine revelation. If the event be *natural*, that is in accordance with the laws of nature, how can it furnish evidence that the man who declares that it will occur at a certain time is commissioned of God. When Christopher Columbus predicted an eclipse of the sun to the savages of America, they were induced to believe that he acted by supernatural authority; yet there was no miracle. And now, if some person should predict that a comet which had never been observed before, would appear on a certain day, this would be no more a miracle

than an eclipse of the sun. The best method of bringing this opinion to the test, is to consider it in application to some of the miracles recorded in the Bible. When Moses, by divine command, struck the rock in Horeb, the water gushed out in such abundance as to form a river. If no water existed in the rock before, here was a striking miracle, requiring the immediate exertion of omnipotence. How could this be considered a natural event? It was contrary to nature, and therefore miraculous. Again, when our Lord called Lazarus from the tomb, there was an exertion of omnipotence, and an event was the consequence which was contrary to the common laws of nature. In what sense then could this event be considered as a *natural* event?

The argument from miracles, in proof of a divine revelation, is perfectly simple. Some person declares that he has received a certain communication from God, and as a proof of it works a manifest miracle; and this evidence all impartial persons consider conclusive, because God is a God of truth, and will never exert his power to confirm the pretensions of an impostor. By enabling the individual to counteract the established laws of nature, in a case where these laws are well understood, he sets to his seal the declarations which are made by the person endowed with this miraculous power. Strictly speaking, however, the power of working miracles never resides in any creature, but is truly the power of God exerted in connexion with the word or command of a prophet or apostle. Thus the matter has always been understood by the soundest theologians; and nothing can be gained by any new hypothesis on this subject.

Hume's great mistake is, that he takes no account of God's moral government, which is in a movement always onward towards a grand consummation, in which the principles are ever the same, but the developments always new, and therefore not to be measured by experience.

When Dr. Hopkins says that *most* of those who have opposed Hume have erred, by permitting him to assume a sort of divine sacredness in the permanency of nature, we feel as if a just discrimination were needed, among his opponents. Such is not our conviction in regard to that class of arguments to which we have yielded our respect; these have uniformly regarded the question as one of pure evidence. It is not so much whether a miracle could be, as whether it could be verified. We therefore assent

to our author's views, when he proceeds to say, that all the testimony, which Hume would fondly employ against miracles, is merely negative; and when he asserts that an alleged intervention of new causes, disturbing the apparent uniformity of nature, is open to proof from testimony, like any other fact.

In common with the soundest writers on this subject, Dr. Hopkins maintains triumphantly, that Hume's principle would make it unreasonable to believe a miracle on the testimony of the senses; secondly, that he uses the term *experience* in two senses, for personal and for universal experience; thirdly, that it would exclude the belief of any new fact in scientific discovery; and fourthly, that Hume yields the ground, by admitting himself that there may be miracles of such a kind as to allow of proof from human testimony. These are the suggestions of our author, in which, as we think, the true strength of his reply to Hume resides.

Before leaving this point, we beg leave to state in a few words the ground which we have long since been taught to take, and which is therefore by no means new. The grand defensive position is this: whatever could be verified by the senses, can be verified by testimony. So far as Hume's argument is concerned, notwithstanding his pretended distinction between the marvellous and the miraculous, no strange phenomenon in physics could ever be verified; a marvel is as much against his vaunted *experience* as a miracle. Testimony avails to produce the belief of the events called miraculous. And this faith in testimony is as natural as faith in the senses. That the alleged fact is *unusual*—and Hume's argument, when stripped of its appendages, imports no more—creates no such improbability as may not be removed by observation of the senses; and that which the senses observe, may be verified by testimony.

The second lecture is on the antecedent probability of a revelation, on the probability of miracles as the attesting means, and on the connexion between the miracle and the doctrine. It is an able and ingenious chapter of the argument, but does not admit of abridgment. We especially admire the dense and beautiful conclusion, in which the author shows that the question is plainly between the Christian religion and none at all.

In the third lecture, the field of positive argument is more clearly laid out, and the question raised, whether God has in fact

made a revelation. The author most justly separates himself from those who regard it as presumptuous to study the internal evidences at all, as well as from those who think it preposterous to study them first. At the same time, he has not gone the length of Jenyns, in undervaluing the external evidences. With these, however, he does not begin. Leaving for a time the historical witnesses, he proposes to come directly to Christianity itself. The method confers a novelty on his discourses, and is exceedingly well fitted to impress the minds of such an auditory as enjoyed them. Indeed, we are disposed to believe, that this is the order of inquiry, which has existed in most instances of conversion from Deism. If we can induce an unbeliever to make himself familiar with the Bible, we have gained half the battle. Thus beginning, our author proceeds to place the alleged revelation in the centre, and to compare it, in respect to its adaptation, successively with Natural Religion—with Conscience, first as a perceiving power, and then as a power capable of improvement—with the Intellect, the Affections, the Imagination, and the Will. He next considers Christianity as a restraining power. Then follow the Experimental Evidences of Christianity, its tendency to become universal, and the impossibility of its originating with man. The Internal Evidence is then closed with a lecture on the Condition, Claims, and Character of Christ. We have here indicated the contents of eight lectures, or more than half of the work.

So much of the excellency of this treatise lies in the closeness and logical elegance of its statements, that we deliberately abstain from any attempt to epitomize. There are portions which we would gladly give entire, if it were proper so to do. For example of what we admire, we would refer to the third lecture, where the analogy is pointed out between Christianity and the works and government of God. In speaking of revelation as a 'mediatorial system,' the author feels the restraints of his position, and as we think foregoes the opportunity of bringing out the strongest internal evidence which the case admits.

In treating of natural religion, we are highly gratified to observe that Dr. Hopkins pursues a happy line between the extremes of those on the one hand who almost deify reason, and those on the other hand who deny that any thing is discoverable

in morals and religion without the Bible. So, in respect to ethics, we equally rejoice in his clear assertion, that "the utility of an action is one thing, and its rightness another," and in his teaching that "the affections are not under the immediate control of the will." Indeed, we cannot recall an instance, in which this profound thinker and accomplished scholar has vented a paradox, or given forth a single oracle which can be relished by the recent boastful improvers of our philosophy. In such a station as that which he adorns, a severe reserve of this nature is of good augury for the coming race of scholars. The remarks on experimental Evidence are excellent and striking, but we can give only the concluding part, and we ask attention to the peculiarity of the manner: it is a lesson to the ever-straining ambition of false taste.

"But the unbeliever may say, this may be all very well for the Christian himself, but it can be no evidence to me. Let us see, then, whether it would be no evidence to a candid man; whether an attempt is not made in this, as in so many other cases, to judge of religion in a way and by a standard different from those adopted in other things. To me it seems that the simple question is, whether this kind of evidence is good for the Christian himself; for if it is, then the candid inquirer is as much bound to take his testimony as he is to take that of a man who has been sick, respecting a remedy that has cured him. If a large number of persons, whose testimony would be received on any other subject, should say that they had been cured of a fever by a particular remedy, there is no man who would say that their testimony was of no account in making up his mind respecting that remedy, though he had not himself had the experience upon which the testimony was founded. If it is said that the evidence to the Christian himself is not well founded, and is fanatical, very well. Let that point be fairly settled. But if it be a good argument for him, then we ask that his *testimony* should be received on this subject as it would be on any other. The testimony is that of many witnesses; and I am persuaded that a fair examination of facts, and a careful induction, after the manner of Bacon, would settle forever the validity of this argument, and the proper force of this testimony. Every circumstance conspires to give it force. It is only from its truth that we can account for its surprising uniformity, I may say identity, in every age, in every country, and when given by persons of every variety of talent and of mental culture. Compare the statements given, respecting the power of the gospel, by Jonathan Edwards, by a converted Greenlander, a Sandwich Islander, and a Hottentot, and you will find in them all a substantial identity. They have all repented and believed, and loved and obeyed, and rejoiced; they all speak of similar conflicts, and of similar supports. And their statements respecting these things have the more force, because they are not given as testimony, but seem rather like notes, varying, indeed, in fulness and power, which may yet be recognized as coming from a similar instrument touched by a single hand. If I might allude here to the comparison, by Christ, of the Spirit to the wind, I should say that in every climate, and under all circumstances, that divine Agent calls forth the same sweet notes whenever he touches the Æolian harp of a soul renewed. And this uniform testimony does not come as a naked expression of mere feeling;

it is accompanied with a change of life, and with fruits meet for repentance, showing a permanent change of principle. This testimony, too, is given under circumstances best fitted to secure truth; given in affliction, in poverty, on the bed of death. How many, how very many, have testified in their final hour to the sustaining power of the gospel! And was there ever one, did anybody ever hear of one, who repented, at that hour of having been a Christian? Why not, then, receive this testimony? Will you make your own experience the standard of what you will believe? Then we invite you to become a Christian, and gain this experience. Will you be like the man who did not believe in the existence of Jupiter's moons, and yet refused to look through the telescope of Galileo for fear he should see them? Put the eye of faith to the gospel, and if you do not see new moral heavens, I have nothing more to say. Will you refuse to believe that there is an echo at a particular spot, to believe that the lowest sound can be conveyed around the circuit of a whispering gallery, and yet refuse to put your ear at the proper point to test these facts? Put your ear to the gospel, and if you do not hear voices gathered from three worlds, I have nothing more to say. Will you refuse to believe that the colors of the rainbow are to be seen in a drop of water, and yet not put your eye at the angle at which alone they can be seen? Or, if you think there is nothing analogous to this in moral matters, as there undoubtedly is, will you hear men speaking of the high enjoyment they derive from viewing works of art, and think them deluded and fanatical till your taste is so cultivated that you may have the same enjoyment. Surely nothing can be more unreasonable than for men to make their own experience, in such cases, a standard of belief, and yet refuse the only conditions on which that experience can be had.

"I have thus endeavored to show, first, that there is in Christianity a self-evidencing power, and that the experimental knowledge of a Christian is to him a valid ground of belief; and, secondly, that a fair-minded man will receive his testimony respecting that knowledge as he would respecting the colors in a drop, or the echo at a particular point, or the pleasures of taste, or any other experience which he had not himself been in a position to gain."

There is not in this work, according to our estimate, a more masterly portion than the lecture on the Character of Christ. We have met with a large part of the propositions before, but the connexion, the light and shade, and the *callida junctura*, make them exquisite and new. The colours on the canvass are the same with those on the palette; but what wonders are wrought when these familiar hues proceed from the pencil of a master. A nobler subject cannot occupy the pen of man; and President Hopkins has treated it with the care and delicacy of an affectionate sculptor, whose well-chiseled contour is as chaste as it is graceful. It is, after all, but a sketch; it is one, however, which makes us willing to see something more extended from the same hand, and something in which he shall give unrestrained utterance to the fulness of his belief respecting the adorable person of Christ.

In the historical department of the Evidences, Dr. Hopkins contends, we have simply to determine facts. Was there such a person as Jesus? Was he crucified? Did he rise from the dead? And he declares, most justly, that no man has a right first to examine the facts, and determine beforehand whether they are improbable. It is a striking peculiarity of the Christian religion, that its truth and power are inseparably connected with certain facts which might originally be judged of by the senses, and which are confirmed to us by testimony. And our author says with a warmth which we approve, as against the Strauss and Parker school, "I believe in no religion that is not supported by historical proof; unless Jesus Christ lived, and wrought miracles, and was crucified, and rose from the dead, Christianity is an imposture—beautiful, indeed, and utterly unaccountable, but still an imposture." In considering the external evidence, he begins with the fact, *Christianity exists*. We cannot follow him in his very beautiful amplification. To account for it, without assuming the truth of the system, is shown to be impossible. The strength of the arguments of Leslie and of Whately is here given in a succinct and convincing manner. Dr. Hopkins truly says, that, over and above testimony, the facts of Christianity are sustained by every species of evidence by which it is possible that any past event should be substantiated.

Upon the authenticity and credibility of the New Testament books, the author does not appear to have bestowed that concentration of original thought, which is manifest in the earlier lectures. This part of the discourse, though judicious and useful, bears marks of compilation, rather than resort to the sources; and this he very frankly and fully avows. He expresses likewise his embarrassment in attempting to present in a single lecture the evidence from Prophecy. Though the statement is brief of course, and by no means novel, it is interspersed with observations which betray the master's hand. He shows that this species of evidence is peculiar, conclusive, grand, and growing. The following remarks are a characteristic specimen of the author's striking way of presenting bold thoughts in modest language.

"Some are more struck with one species of evidence, and some with another; and it seems to have been the intention of God that his revelation should not be without any kind of proof that could be reasonably demanded, nor without proof

adapted to every mind. To my mind, the argument from the internal evidence is conclusive; so is that from testimony; and here is another, perhaps not less so even now, and which is destined to become overwhelming. These are independent of each other. They are like separate nets, which God has commanded those who would be 'fishers of men' to stretch across the stream, that stream which leads to the Dead Sea of infidelity, so that if any evade the first, they may be taken by the second; or, if they can possibly pass the second, that they may not escape the third.

"This evidence, so striking and peculiar, it has generally been supposed it was the object of prophecy to give. That this was one object I cannot doubt. It may even have been the sole object of some particular prophecies, as when Christ said to his disciples, respecting the treachery of Judas, 'Now I have told you before it come to pass, that when it is come to pass, ye might believe.' But, important as this object is, it seems to me to be only incidental. Prophecy seems, like the sinlessness of Christ, to enter necessarily into the system, to be a part, not only of the evidence of the system, but of the system itself. I speak not now of this or that particular prophecy; but I say that the prophetic element causes the whole system to have a different relation to the human mind, and makes it quite another thing as a means of moral culture and discipline. It is one thing for the soldier to march without any knowledge of the places through which he is to pass, or of that to which he is going, or of the object of the campaign; and it is quite another for him to have, not a map, perhaps, but a sketch of the intended route, with the principal cities through which he is to pass dotted down, and to know what is intended to be the termination and the final object of the campaign. It is evident that in the one case a vastly wider range of sympathies will be called into action than in the other. In the latter case, the soldiers can co-operate far more intelligently with their commander-in-chief; they will feel very differently as they arrive at designated points, and far higher will be their enthusiasm as they approach the end of their march, and the hour of the final conflict draws on. And this is the relation in which God has placed us, by the prophetic element in revelation, to his great plans and purposes. He has provided that there shall be put into the hands of every soldier a sketch of the route which the church militant is to pursue in following the Captain of her salvation; and this sketch is continued all the way, till we see the bannered host passing through those triumphal arches where the everlasting doors have been lifted up for their entrance into the Jerusalem above. This is not merely to gratify curiosity; it is not merely to give an evidence which becomes completed only when it is no longer needed; but it is to furnish objects to faith and affection, and motives to effort, and to put the mind of man in that relation to the great plan of God which properly belongs to those whom he calls his children and his friends."

The closing lecture presents the evidence derived from the propagation of Christianity and its effects and tendencies. But this is preceded by a series of observations, which, however brief, are in our judgment, second in value to none in the volume. He is speaking of honest inquirers, who are vexed with doubts, and his counsels to such are most wise. "If," says he, "I may be permitted to drop a word in a more familiar way in the ear of

the candid and practical inquirer, referring to my own experience, I would say, that I have found great benefit in being willing—a lesson which we are all slow to learn—to wait.” His enlargement on this is very noble, but we leave it for the enjoyment of the reader. He proceeds to administer these cautions. First, we are not to have our confidence in the Christian religion shaken, from the mere fact that objections can be made against it. Secondly, we must distinguish between objections which lie against Christianity as such, and objections which lie equally against any scheme of belief whatever. Thirdly, we must distinguish between objections against Christianity and objections against its evidence. Fourthly, we are to observe that Christianity is not the only scheme against which objections can be made. “I have seen those to whom it never seemed to have occurred that we were thrown into this world together with great and common difficulties, and that other people could ask questions as well as they.” We owe it to the author to subjoin his own lucid summary.

“We have seen that there was nothing in the nature of the evidence, or in any conflict of the evidence of testimony and of experience, to prevent our attaining certainty on this subject. We have seen that there was no previous improbability that a Father should speak to his own child, benighted and lost; or that he should give him the evidence of miracles that he did thus speak. We have heard the voice of Nature recognizing, by her analogies, the affinities of the Christian religion with her mysterious and complex arrangements and mighty movements. We have seen the perfect coincidence of the teachings of natural religion with those of Christianity; and, when Christianity has transcended the limits of natural religion, we have seen that its teachings were still in keeping with hers, as the revelations of the telescope are with those of the naked eye. We have seen that this religion is adapted to the conscience, not only as it meets all its wants as a perceiving power, by establishing a perfect standard, but also as it quickens and improves the conscience itself, and gives it both life and peace. We have seen that, though morality was not the great object of the gospel, yet that there must spring up, in connection with a full reception of its doctrines, a morality that is perfect. We have seen that it is adapted to the intellect, to the affections, to the imagination, and to the will; that, as a restraining power, it places its checks precisely where it ought, and in the wisest way; so that, as a system of excitement, of guidance, and of restraint, it is all that is needed to carry human nature to its highest point of perfection. We have seen that it gives to him who practises it a witness within himself; and that it is fitted, and tends, to become universal, while it may be traced back to the beginning of time. Such a religion as this, whether we consider its scheme, or the circumstances of its origin, or its records in their simplicity and harmony, we have seen could no more have been originated by man than could the ocean. We have seen the lowly circumstances, the unprecedented claims, and

the wonderful character, of our Saviour. Around this religion, thus substantiated, we have seen every possible form of external evidence array itself. We have seen the authenticity of its books substantiated by every species of proof, both external and internal. We have seen that its facts and miracles were such that men could not be mistaken respecting them, and that the reality of those facts was not only attested, on the part of the original witnesses, by martyrdom, but that it is implied in institutions and observances now existing, and is the only rational account that can be given of the great fact of Christendom. We have seen, also, that the accounts given by our books are confirmed by the testimony of numerous Jewish and heathen writers. And not only have we seen that miracles were wrought, and that the great facts of Christianity are fully attested by direct evidence, but we have heard the voice of prophecy heralding the approach of him who came travelling in the greatness of his strength, and saying, 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord.' We have seen this religion, cast like leaven into society, go on working by its mysterious but irresistible agency, transforming the corrupt mass. We have seen it taking the lead among those influences by which the destiny of the world is controlled; so that the stone which was cut out without hands has become a great mountain; and, finally, we have seen its blessed effects, and its tendency to fill the earth with righteousness and peace.

"These things we have seen separately; and now, when we look at them as they stand up together and give in their united testimony, do they not produce, ought they not to produce, a full, a perfect, and abiding conviction of the truth of this religion? If such evidence as this can mislead us, have we not reason to believe that the universe itself is constituted on the principle of deception?"

This has been to us a delightful book. There is a simplicity and a freshness about it which, in our overwrought age, produce a sort of surprise; as if a Grecian girl should come among a modern bevy of curled and painted madams. It is inartificial and modest: *nudaque simplicitas, purpureusque pudor*. This is however not the naïveté of unaccomplished wondering rusticity, but the quiet ease of high culture. Every page bespeaks the thinker and the scholar. Dr. Hopkins is altogether full of the thought, which is let alone; and the result is a translucent style, such as one admires in Southey's histories. If we were desired to characterize the work in a single word, that word should be *clearness*. We have never hesitated for an instant as to the meaning of a single sentence. In saying this, we say enough to condemn the book with a certain school. It is however the highest praise we can give to logic or to rhetoric. The author has so cultivated the habit of looking at things in broad daylight, that his representations offer nothing to divert or distract the mind. The necessary result is beauty of diction; the style is achromatic. There is reason to fear that a way of writing, exactly the reverse of this, will become that of our day. Here we al-

lude not merely to the contortions and high-tumbling of Carlyle and Emerson, but "pace horum virorum" to the splendid vices of Chalmers, Melvill, and (shall we confess it?) of our favourite Hamilton. The bane of each and all is desire for *instant effect*. The holding forth of a great truth in clear light does in the end insure more beauty and more force; but it is not every one who knows this. We deck and bedizen the object, lest the hasty crowd should pass it by. The ancients, and especially the Greeks, understood this better, as is evinced by every poem, statue, and gem. The paintings which have been restored to us by the excavations in Italy show an analogy which may be applied to ancient and modern composition. "The pictures of the ancients," says a great judge, "produce a pleasing effect when only surrounded by a simple line of red; while the very best of modern paintings is very much indebted to the carver and gilder for its gorgeous and burnished frame."*

We will not conceal our conviction, that the genius of the author is chiefly exhibited in the former part of the work. The same reasons which led him to begin with the Internal Evidence, cause him to treat that portion with higher relish and greater flow of native vigour. In the latter part, he is more like other writers. But where any philosophical inquiry opens its path, he pursues it with a manly force which is unusual. Dr. Hopkins is not born to be a quoter of other men's words, and in several instances he makes respectful citation of authors who are unworthy of the honour. In the true acceptation of the term, he is an original writer. Not that his propositions are always new; but that they are so *set*, and the trains of thought are so thoroughly elaborated in his own mind, that the grand result is one of surprise and high gratification. In reading the better parts of the work, for it has its inequalities, the image which oftenest strikes us is the marble of the statuary. Lest we be thought to dwell unduly on this, we take leave to say that we fully adopt the maxim, *the style is the thought*; and that we hail with the warmth of hope an example of elegant and strong simplicity, in a day when we are dazzled by the glare and inflation and spangle and false-point of a Rhodian and almost African mannerism. The secret of such writing is unattainable: what-

* Pompeiana, second series, vol. i. pp. 106, 7.

ever the imitative herd may get, they cannot get the main thing—*good sense*. Such argumentation as this rises infinitely above the vulgar attempts of many among us, who stake everything on a reputation for profundity, and who procure the proper opacity of the shallow stream by troubling the mud at the bottom.

With such a judgment as this of the author's powers, we have but one regret in regard to his performance; and this we have already hinted. It is that he should have essayed this high argument on terms which seemed to shut him out from a full unbosoming of his intimate and warm belief with respect to the doctrines of grace. So great is our satisfaction in what is present, and so earnest our desire for what is absent, that we could even wish he might consent to re-cast his system of internal evidence, in such sort as to incorporate the striking and affecting proofs derived from the doctrine of Immanuel, the incarnate God, our Saviour.

In conclusion, we think it proper to observe, that our knowledge of the author is derived almost solely from the book before us. Of his person, or his peculiar opinions, we know nothing, and we have therefore written without predilection or any incidental bias. If, however, he can give us such works as this, we would fain hope that his appearances before the public may be frequent and long-continued.

ART. II.—*Sermons and Discourses*, by Thomas Chalmers, D.D., and LL.D. First complete American Edition. In 2 vols. Robert Carter. New York, 1844.

WE propose to notice two or three of these sermons in connection with the subject of the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. This is one of those troublesome points in theology which are ever rising up to give trouble and perplexity to the anxious inquirer, and to occasion sore distress to the advanced and experienced Christian. But we are persuaded, that it is troublesome only because it is misunderstood; and we cannot allow the sentiments in the sermons on this subject, in these vol-

umes, to go forth backed by the authority of so great a name as that of Chalmers, without lifting up our earnest voice of remonstrance, and calling upon those over whom we have any influence to pay some little regard to the rules of interpreting scripture. It may be thought rather late in the day to undertake this work, particularly as this is the second American edition. Better late than, than not at all; and we are warned to undertake this task, by a knowledge of the injury which these sermons have caused within the sphere of our observation; and that because of the unwarranted liberties which the doctor has taken with the context and text. We propose, then, in the present article, to devote ourselves to the examination of the subject of "The Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost," or "The Unpardonable Sin;" and the plan we propose to pursue, is the very simple and natural one, of ascertaining what it is the Bible says upon it; and we hope to make it appear that the interpretation so commonly given which represents this sin as frequently and ordinarily committed at the present day, will not endure the light of scripture, and is not at all susceptible of proof from its pages.

Scattered throughout the Bible, we find occasional intimations of a possibility that men may commit a sin for which there will be no forgiveness in time or eternity; that sinful as we may be up to a certain point, there may be mercy and forgiveness for all the guilt which a previous life-time has accumulated; that the mercy of the Most High will throw over all the mantle of his love, on the exercise of faith in Christ, and through the merits of his well-beloved Son, send down to our hearts forgiveness; that we may even deny the Son of God, and speak reproachfully of his work of mercy, and treat him and his redemption with contempt; that we may be possessed with awful and blasphemous thoughts of God, and his Son, and yet on repentance of all this fearful guilt, mercy will be in store for us, and the Holy Spirit will flow down to our hearts with the sweets of forgiveness; but that, when we pass that line, there is no forgiveness; the stores of infinite mercy are utterly and forever closed against us; that there is no repentance for the next sin that may be committed; that there is not even the possibility of repentance, because the heart will then become cased in an impenetrable hardness, and, utterly devoid of feeling, will be forsaken by the Spirit of God, and leave the soul to pursue its own course of guilt, to follow

out the workings of its own sinful lusts, with nothing before it but the blackness of darkness forever. We cannot study the sacred page, with even ordinary attention, without this awful truth being pressed with earnestness upon our attention, and though the passages are few in which it is brought before us, they are too solemn and too plain to admit of doubt or evasion. It is distinctly declared that all blasphemy against the Son of Man shall be forgiven; but that there is such a thing as blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, and that it shall not be forgiven. And as if to put the matter entirely beyond the reach of question, it is expressly added, "neither in this world, neither in the world to come." It is said by John that "there is a sin unto death," and its fearfulness is very distinctly marked when it is said, "all unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not unto death;" "if any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life, for those that sin not unto death; there is a sin unto death, I do not say ye shall pray for it." Peter tells us of those, who, having once "escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, become again entangled therein and overcome," and says of them that "their latter end is worse with them than the beginning;" and quotes this proverb as applicable: "The dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." Paul asserts in strong language, that "it is impossible for those who are once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance, seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame;" and in language of terrible power does he still speak: "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remained no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain, fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversary. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy, under two or three witnesses; of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace. Again do we read of a mysterious giving over unto

Satan, that we may learn not to blaspheme. And again do we read of certain that they "shall be called reprobate sinners because the Son hath rejected them;" and yet again of wickedness reaching such a height as that, "though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, walk in it, (the land in which the wickedness was rife) they shall deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord."

The passing beyond a certain point, then, it appears will place us beyond the reach of mercy or of hope; and it becomes a matter of the very deepest moment to us all, to ascertain as nearly as we can, the nature of the sin which cannot be forgiven, the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. But we think that a very ordinary attention to the passages quoted above will show that they cannot all refer to the same sin, and are not all to be ranked in the same class. And we hope to make it appear in the course of this discussion that there are two lines essentially distinct, laid down in the scriptures, up to either of which men may go, and short of which mercy may be found, but beyond which it cannot be; that these lines may be simultaneously crossed, but that the crossing of one by no means implies the crossing of the other; that the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is a sin that can readily be known, so that he who commits it can instantly know his doom; and that the other sin, in its utmost enormity, cannot be known, so that its consequences can be infallibly appropriated to ourselves. It will therefore be our object to show from the scriptures themselves, first what the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is not, and secondly, what it is; and having occupied, as we fear we shall, the greater part of this article on this main discussion, we will content ourselves with a short but distinct commentary upon those portions of scripture in which the other sin is mentioned or alluded to.

I. It is undeniable that there is such a thing as resisting the power of the Spirit of God upon the heart, and by a continued rejection of the offers of salvation, driving Him away forever from the bosom. It falls within the experience of every minister of Jesus, whose ministerial labours have been any while extended, that there are multitudes to whom the word of eternal life have been solemnly and faithfully proclaimed; on whose ears the truths of salvation have fallen from week to week; on whose hearts the Spirit of the living God hath striven with his

mighty power, and sought to bend it to obedience to the Saviour's will; who have resisted the power of the truth; whose affections were engrossed with earthly things; and whose desire was, that the Spirit of God might leave them until a more convenient season. And it often happens that through a long life this obstinate resistance to the Holy Spirit shall be continued, and when death approaches, find the soul of the impenitent man wrapt up in a hardness that nothing can subdue, though filled with a terror which nothing can remove. Their day of grace has passed away, somewhere along that season of resistance. There was then no possibility of repentance from the moment in which that day closed upon them. Forgiveness, neither in this world nor in the world to come, can be theirs; and forever forsaken by a rejected Saviour, whose spirit they have despised and turned away, their eternity will be filled with imprecations on their own folly and crime. There are multitudes to whom the offers of salvation are now made, and who are rejecting these offers, to whom, undoubtedly, salvation is now possible. The Spirit would not, we may well believe, plead with them thus, and seek to guide them into the way of life eternal, if repentance were impossible to them, and the avenues of escape utterly and forever closed. He would then have rather ceased to plead, and leaving them to a state of immoveable obduracy, have taken his everlasting flight. It is because we have no reason whatsoever to think that he has ceased to plead in any given case, though ignorant how soon his strivings even in that case may cease, that we still speak to them of the mercy that he offers, and still summon them to take, by repentance and faith in Jesus, the first step on their pathway towards the everlasting home which Jesus has prepared for those who love him.

Now it will be perceived that this case, so frequently occurring in our ministry, has this important feature stamped upon it, that there is a possibility of repentance through an indefinite period of the sinner's history, and for aught that we can determine, until the very moment of his entering upon eternity. He has resisted the Holy Spirit. He has undoubtedly grieved him. He has sinned deeply by his rebellion and impenitency. But the question is, has he blasphemed the Holy Spirit? He passes beyond the reach of mercy when he enters upon an eternity for which he is not prepared. But has he any where in time passed that

point beyond which it is expressly said, there is never forgiveness? There is no one amongst us who has not resisted the earnest strivings of the Holy Spirit; not one who has not refused to be drawn by him; not one who has not, when he has called, refused to listen and obey. And can we say of all these, that there is no forgiveness for them? That they have gone so far in guilty rejection of the Holy Spirit, that for them there is neither mercy nor hope? Who then would ever become a child of God? That period having come at which their reason can distinguish between right and wrong, and, told of their guilt as sinners before God, they hear of the costly provision that he has made on their behalf; if then they refuse to bow before the Redeemer, and do actually crush the motions of the Holy Spirit within them, their sin is very great; great beyond the power of man to estimate. But does it bear all the impress of the sin against the Holy Ghost; the sin which can know no repentance; the sin which can never be forgiven; for whose forgiveness no tears will avail, and for whose removal no prayer will be heard? If this were the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, it would be worth no effort, for it would be labour thrown away, to attempt to bring the sinful to Jesus, so soon as watching the motions of the young heart, we saw it take that one step which placed it beneath the dominion of sin. No sinner, from youth to old age, could then turn to God. The pathway of life would be one wide waste, a spiritual desert, with scarce one in a nation whose heart had received and cherished the Spirit of God in his motions. There are very few, indeed, who receive the Spirit of God in childhood, and choose the Saviour of the sinful as theirs; and what then becomes of all that vast number who pass from childhood without having received and cherished the Holy Spirit? If resistance to the strivings of the Holy Ghost be the unpardonable sin, one act of resistance is enough to bring the soul beneath the wrath of Jehovah, from which there is no escape possible. Now we have to ask, do not men, in after years, seek mercy from God and find it? Men, too, who have lived long in sin, and whose whole life has been spent in resistance to the will and love of God? From youth up to tottering old age, is not the spectacle familiar to every one in a Christian land, of men and women, in every period of life, turning from their sins, and seeking mercy at the cross of Jesus? If

this be so, and that it is so no one of our readers will deny, then mere resistance of the motions of the Holy Spirit on the heart, is not the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost; the sin which is unto death; the sin which can never have forgiveness in this world or the world to come. Who resists the Holy Spirit more than does he who spends a life in guilty refusal of the commands of God, and who bids a proud and resolute defiance to the entreaties and threatenings of heaven? Who heaps up to himself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgments of God, more industriously and fearfully, than does he who treats with contempt the ordinances of the Sabbath and the sanctuary, who rejects with contempt the message from heaven, as it speaks to him of a mercy that still suffers and endures on his behalf, and pleads with him by the agony and blood of Jesus to turn from his sins and be saved? But have none such ever sought and found forgiveness? The case is too common to need that we should say, in answer of our own question, that multitudes have had just this experience. Then, this resistance is not the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, for that "has never forgiveness." The man who commits that sin, can never know what mercy is. He cannot sorrow over sin. He cannot repent of guilt committed. He cannot feel the hardness and wretchedness of his sinful heart, and, wrapping around his soul the garments of a sullen indifference, he will live and die as though there were no eternity, unawakened by a single remorse, unsubdued by a single fear, and unmelted by one solitary emotion of pity and of love.

It is this important distinction which Dr. Chalmers has overlooked. But upon showing how great that guilt is which resists the Holy Spirit, he has traced the hardening process of sin from the first act of resistance to the last, and hence derives his conclusion that because the Holy Spirit is grieved away, therefore the blasphemy against him has been committed. Had he but examined, with his usual critical care, the history as recorded by the Evangelists, he would have seen that his exposition would not stand; that however true his statement of the fact that sinners do grieve away the Holy Spirit, and that their passage of a line somewhere in their history—but where, known only to God—places them beyond the reach of mercy and of hope; this is distinct from the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. And

we can scarcely believe that he would have penned the following passage had he but observed this distinction. He had been discoursing from Genesis vi. 3, that the text referred to the ordinary, every day resistance of the Holy Spirit; and then intending to argue from 1 John v. 16, he opens his discourse thus:

“If we assume that the sin unto death is the same with the sin against the Holy Ghost, then, from what has been said in a previous discourse, it will follow, that we regard those people to be on a wrong track of inquiry, who, with a view to ascertain whether they have committed this sin, look back to their by-gone history, and rummage the depositories of their past remembrance, and try to find, among all the deeds they have ever committed, that one deed of particular enormity, to which the forgiveness of the gospel will not and cannot be extended. There is, in truth, no such deed within the reach of human performance.”—Vol. I. Sermon vi. p. 43.

Of the latter sentence we shall have occasion presently to speak more fully; and we go on to observe that it will not be denied by any one, that there is a very grievous despite done to the Holy Ghost by a long continued resistance, and that this is a sin against the Holy Ghost. Neither will it be denied that if continued very long—say until the entrance of the soul into eternity—it is a sin that cannot be forgiven, when it has reached the utmost limit of aggravation. But if it had been possible to repent, any where at all along the sinner's history up to a certain point, and that point known only to God, then the reasoning which would identify the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, with the ordinary resistance done to the Spirit, appears, to say the least, like a singular confounding of things altogether distinct, and like a wilful and wanton obscuration of the Holy Scriptures. The two cases are essentially distinct. In the one case there is forgiveness; in the other there is not. In the one forgiveness can be sought and found; in the other it cannot be either found or sought.

There are few difficulties in the way of a person who is just entering upon the Christian life, more formidable than this, the supposition and fear that he has committed the unpardonable sin. It can scarcely be wondered at, that such a thought should take possession of men's mind, and, used by Satan to keep them back from embracing the provisions of redeeming mercy, should

fill them with alarm and deep distress, and cause their souls to heave with a long continued turmoil. No one can look back with pleasure over his past life. No one can love to trace back, step by step, his pathway through life, and count up all the incidents in his history, and bring them to bear the scrutiny of God's piercing gaze. The sinner who is just awakened to a view of his sinfulness feels all these instances of guilt with an overpowering force. He realizes them all as present before his mind, and his excited imagination, working upon the fearful amount of guilt that is upon his soul, stirs them up to call for wrath upon him, until overpowered by their presence, he sinks beneath the thought that his sins are beyond the pardoning mercy of the Highest; that free though the blood of Jesus is, it is free to others but not to him; that swift as God is to save, it is for others less guilty than himself; and that loving as God does to dwell with the contrite and humble, it is when sins are not so many, and guilt is not so dark. Now, did the Christian through all his history, keep such or similar impressions before him, in all their vivid colours, oftener than he does, would he lie humbled at the feet of Jesus, and with fervent and importunate prayers, plead for the mercy that flows alone through him. But in the hour when sins rise up before the mind for the first time, and appear in all their horror of gloom; when the wrath of God speaks of an eternity of pain; when the cross of Christ shows how much of suffering we have caused; it is then we fear that the sin against the Holy Ghost has been committed. We see our sins in all their blackness, and we ask in trembling fear, if sins like these can be forgiven? We compare our state with that of those who have not been blessed as we have, and we cannot avoid the conclusion that because we have sinned amidst a clearer and brighter blaze of light, our guilt can know no remission. We recall the hours when we listened to the wondrous revelations of a Saviour's bleeding love, and listened all in vain; when we heard the terrors of the judgment-seat of Christ, and sat all unmoved; when we stood beside the open grave of those we loved, and were unconcerned about his welfare and our own; or we recall to mind how often the Holy Spirit moved upon our hearts, and led us to feel deeply concerned about our spiritual state, and how often and how strenuously we resisted his motions; how we busied ourselves in the world and its enjoyments,

and by one expedient after another, sought to drown his entreaties, and to drive him away from our hearts; and now we feel constrained to conclude that we have committed the unpardonable sin. We have no other reason for thinking this, than that our sins are very great and very dark, and that we have resisted so long the influences of the Holy Spirit. We cannot give to those who ask us, any definite idea of what the unpardonable sin is. We know it is a dreadful sin; a sin committed against the Holy Ghost; and since our sin is dreadful, and is committed against the Holy Ghost, we conclude that it is unpardonable. With reference to all such cases, it might well suffice to ask the question, have any such been met by the remission of guilt? Have any sinful beings, beings as guilty as ourselves, ever found forgiveness? If they have, then clearly our sin is not unpardonable, and such statements as the following are wholly unauthorized.

“If there be some old among you, upon the obduracy of whose hackneyed consciences, the call we have now lifted in your hearing, makes no practical impression, then look not for the sin against the Holy Ghost in any guilty act by which some passage of your former history is deformed. It consists in that repeated act, by which you have turned the every call of the gospel away from you; and the evidence of it does not lie in any thing that memory can furnish you with out of the materials of the history that is past.”—Vol. i. p. 44.

We only wonder that while penning and revising the following sentence, he did not pause to give a fair interpretation both of the facts, and the subject under consideration:

“We have no power of divination, into the way or the word of the unsearchable spirit. All that we can do, is to put a fair interpretation upon the facts that are before us.”

Now we have no hesitation whatever in saying, that the mere fact of the long continued resistance to the Holy Spirit is no evidence whatever of the commission of the unpardonable sin. Such an interpretation is not legitimately based upon a solitary passage of scripture. It gives an ample room for rhetorical display, and even for solemn and awakening appeals to the conscience. But it is a dangerous practice to tamper thus with the Bible, and in the face of a plain scripture declaration as to what that sin is which can never be forgiven, to distort the scriptures

in such wise, and make them apply to every case in which our fancy pictures an application, but in which there is really no such application as pointed out by the context. It is very certain, that if mere resistance to the Holy Spirit may be forgiven within bounds which we cannot know, because known to God only; and if the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is one act, known both to God and the blasphemer; then mere resistance to the Holy Spirit, even in its worst features of long continuance, so as to pass the limits prescribed in the councils of Heaven, is not the same with the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. The whole of this course of remark applies as well to the sermon in the second volume, p. 332, "On the Nature of the Sin against the Holy Ghost." The same false system of interpretation runs throughout this sermon, that pervades the discourses of which we have spoken. But we shall have occasion to speak upon this sermon more at length in the following pages, and now proceed to show what the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is.

II. We trust that we shall not be considered as thinking lightly of either of the sins which we have declared to be not unpardonable, simply because we have endeavoured to award to them their proper places and rank in the catalogue of human guilt. We cannot resist the strivings of the Holy Spirit upon our hearts, without adding to the hardness of our hearts and the enormity of our guilt. We are bidding him away who comes in mercy to save us. We are drowning his entreaties who calls us in earnestness and in love, to turn from our sins and seek for pardon at the cross. We are stifling his remonstrances who warns us of our sins, and points us to the danger that awaits us in eternity. Each act of resistance renders his efforts more feeble upon our hearts; and the danger continually increases, that we will be left to ourselves even in this world, without hope and without God. And so with those who are Christians. Their calling is a peculiar one. It is a holy calling. They are the children of God. They are chosen in Jesus Christ. They are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. They are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, to show forth the praises of him who hath called him out of darkness into his marvellous light. They are heirs to an inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them. They are the temples of the Holy Ghost.

They cannot, then, live beneath the privileges of this their rank, without detriment the most serious to their everlasting welfare. They cannot remain idle, without losing riches of grace with which each moment of each day is loaded for them. The Spirit of God dwelling within them, busies himself continually to lift up their thoughts and desires to higher, and better, and purer things; and they cannot refuse compliance with his motions, without grieving him who labours thus for their unappreciated good, and without hardening their hearts in sin. The neglect of the privileges of the covenant of the gospel, though not the unpardonable sin, is a very grievous sin; and it can hardly be supposed that the Spirit of God who has so long endeavoured to lead them to a proper estimate of their privileges, should, when finding his efforts all unavailing, continue to waste his labour and his love upon them. We none of us can tell how soon these efforts may cease. The hour may soon come, when worn out by our resistance of him, the Holy Spirit may bid us a last farewell, and leave us to ourselves in all the misery of hopeless ruin.

But bad enough as all this is, it is not that sin which is termed the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost; for the Spirit may strive through many days, and months, and years, and be resisted all the while; and during all that period, the door of mercy and of hope may be open to us. The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is one act. That one act committed, anywhere along the pathway of life after reason has developed itself, the sinner is at that moment placed beyond the reach of mercy. He enters then an atmosphere of death. The Holy Spirit leaves him to himself. The ministering spirits from heaven desert him. No dew of mercy can ever more descend upon his soul. He stands among the beings who surround him like the oak that lifts up its head, only that the lightnings of heaven may make it their plaything, and then rive it to its root. He cannot repent. He cannot even wish to repent. He is lost, and he does not know it. Whenever this sin is committed, it is unpardonable; it can never know forgiveness from the first moment of its commission. But this is very different from the state of mind, in which, when under a deep conviction of sin, the penitent turns to God with earnest entreaties for mercy, he hears the voice of the Redeemer declaring that he will be merciful to his unrighteousness; that he will blot out as a cloud his transgressions, and as a thick cloud

his sins; and that his sins and iniquities he will remember no more.

To this obvious view of this subject—obvious at least to us—Dr. Chalmers has strong objections. He cannot believe in any such instantaneous blasphemy. He cannot read in the Bible one sentence that limits it to a single act; and he passes a sweeping censure upon all who do not read the narratives of this subject with his eyes.

“There is nothing,” he says, in a sermon upon this very portion of scripture, “mysterious in the kind of sin by which the Holy Spirit is tempted to abandon him to that state in which there can be no forgiveness, and no return unto God.”

This is very true, but our exposition of “the kind of sin,” would be very different from his. We believe it to be one act, known to the individual at the time of its perpetration. Dr. Chalmers, on the other hand, considers it to be the ordinary resistance of the Holy Spirit, persevered in through a lengthened period of life, and speaks of it as follows.

“This is the deadly offence which has reared an impassable wall against the return of the obstinately impenitent. This is the blasphemy to which no forgiveness can be granted, because in its very nature, the man who has come this length, feels no movement of conscience toward that ground on which alone forgiveness can be awarded to him, and where it is never refused even to the worst and most malignant of human iniquities. This is the sin against the Holy Ghost. . . . It may be seen at this day in thousands and thousands more, who, by that most familiar and most frequently exemplified of all habits, a habit of resistance to a sense of duty, have at length stifled it altogether, and driven their inward monitor away from them, and have sunk into a profound moral lethargy, and so will never obtain forgiveness.”—Vol. II., p. 333.

“If you look to the 31st verse of the 12th chapter of Matthew, you will perceive, that all who think the sin against the Holy Ghost to lie in the commission of some rare and monstrous but at the same time specific iniquity, cannot admit the first clause of the verse, without qualifying it by some of the undeniable doctrines of the New Testament.”—Vol. II., p. 336.

Now, we say unhesitatingly, that we admit the first clause of the verse, and the whole narration, without any qualification

whatever, and that just because we believe the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost to be one act of "rare and monstrous and specific iniquity." Let our readers turn to the several accounts given by the evangelists, of the transaction in which this blasphemy is recorded, and if they do not perceive that the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, to which it refers, is one distinct, specific act of iniquity, and not the rejection of the Holy Spirit through all our history, we shall be obliged to confess that we are mistaken, and that we do not understand the meaning of words. St. Matthew informs us that he had just cast out a blind and dumb devil from one who had been possessed, and that he healed him, so that the blind and dumb both spake and saw. Opposite effects appear to have been produced by this miracle of mercy and of might; for while the people stood wrapt in amazement at the power thus displayed over the unseen world by one who was apparently none other than one like themselves, and in view of its stupendousness were led to exclaim, "Is not this the son of David?" the Pharisees, on hearing the question asked by the multitude, moved, as we are led to infer, by a spirit of pride, prejudice, envy, and malicious hatred, answered in tones of petulant impatience, "This fellow doth not cast out devils but by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils." To this shocking remark, displaying as it did the heinousness of their sin in rejecting the clear testimony of their own consciences to the divine power of the Son of God, and in their ascribing this miracle to the agency of the devil, our Lord replied, by showing how unreasonable it was to suppose that Satan would overturn his own work, and seek to destroy his own kingdom. "And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself, shall not stand. And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself, how shall then his kingdom stand? And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. But if I by the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come unto you. Or else, how can one enter into a strong man's house and spoil his goods except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house. He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad. Wherefore I say unto you, All

manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him, but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." Such is the account given by Matthew. Mark has substantially the same statement, but delivers the sentence in these words: "Verily I say unto you, all sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation;" and then adds these words: "because they said 'He hath an unclean spirit;'" thus giving us the reason for this sentence of our Lord.

Luke, who gives the same sentence, very much as it is recorded by Matthew and Mark, introduces it in a somewhat different connexion. He represents our Lord as delivering a solemn charge to his apostles respecting their ministerial career, particularly enforcing upon them, a firm reliance upon the unchangeable providence of God. He then told them of the respective allotments of those, who, under their ministry, should and should not confess him before men; and then says, what Matthew and Mark both represent him as saying of the Pharisees—"And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven." Yet, if we go back over the 11th chapter, and connect together the 11th and 12th, we will find that there is one continuous narration, and that the charge of our Lord to his Apostles was made immediately after he had cast out the devil from the blind and dumb; so that his withering address to the Pharisees in the 11th chapter, and his caution to his disciples in the first verse of the 12th chapter, to "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees which is hypocrisy," must be considered only as remarks elicited by the incident of the miracle, and which the other evangelists have omitted, as not necessary to the consecutiveness of the narrative. We thus have the sentence uttered by our Lord, distinctly before us, with all the circumstances attendant upon its utterance; and are now in a position from which we are able to view more

clearly than otherwise we could, the nature of the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.

1. The first remark we have to make is, that the substance must be taken in connection with the incident with which it is here mentioned. It cannot indeed be separated from it without a degree of violence which would render it impossible to obtain any intelligible idea of the sentence, and without involving the whole subject in a fathomless obscurity. And Mark expressly limits it to the working of the miracles and says that it was uttered by our Lord, "because the Pharisees said, he casts out devils by Beelzebub." We are persuaded that the whole difficulty upon this subject has arisen from the violence with which the text has been distorted from the context, and from the forced and fanciful interpretations which in consequence, have been placed upon it; for if attention had been paid to the express statement of Mark, it would at once have been seen that it had reference to the conduct of the Pharisees in ascribing miracles wrought by divine power, to the agency and power of the devil, and not to the ordinary resistance done to the motions of the Holy Spirit; and thus the pain and anguish of mind which now attend so many respecting this sin, and which hinders their enjoyment of peace with God, would, in a measure, at least, have been spared, and admission would sooner be found into the light and joy of hope. When taken in connexion with the context it unquestionably means that because the Pharisees had attributed to the agency of the devil, the miracle wrought by our Lord, they had been guilty of a sin for which no forgiveness could possibly be had. And unless it can be shown in the instance of any inquirers after eternal life, or of any believer in Jesus, that this conduct has been exhibited under circumstances at all similar to those under which the Pharisees committed their sin, we do not see that it can be at all committed now. But on this point we shall have occasion, presently, to speak again; and we go on to observe in the second place, that

2. There was much in the state of mind and heart which lent peculiar aggravation to this sin in the case of the Pharisees. A miracle had been performed before them, the reality and divinity of which they could not question. The blind and dumb devil was, without any doubt, cast out; for the man in whom he had dwelt, was at that moment restored to the use of his senses, and

was then present before them all. And we must observe, that they do not pretend to question that a miracle had been wrought. They admitted that our Lord did cast out the devil, and that he who had been possessed, was at that moment before them fully restored to the use of his senses. Instead, however, of acknowledging immediately, and with candour, that our Lord had wrought the miracle by his almighty power, and instead then of honouring him as a Being who was divine, they alleged in terms of mingled hatred and contempt, that he never cast out devils, except through the agency of the devil. There must then have been something very peculiar in this their sin, to have called down the instant judgment of Heaven, so as to shut up the avenues of escape against them forever. And this peculiarity, whatever it was, was that which stamped their present conduct with its deep impress of guilt, and lent to their guilt its peculiar aggravation. And with the facts before us, as here recorded, we surely need not be at a loss to determine what that peculiarity was.

Now there was that in the single assertion, that works effected by the Holy Spirit were wrought by the agency of the devil, which reflected upon the Holy Ghost a foul dishonour, and tended to degrade him in the estimation of men. It is he to whose power all works of mercy and of love are to be ascribed; whose life-giving breath animates and sustains all living things; whose vivifying touch first awakened all nature from the sleep of death; and now sends down into all creation, and into the souls of men, the life and power which animate them. To charge upon him an agency that was infernal, was to rob him of all his glory, and to ascribe it to him who is his most subtle and malicious foe. Satan ranges himself over against the Holy Spirit; and it is he who contests with him the supremacy of the human heart. This warfare is ever going on. With a malice which no prostration and defeat can subdue, is it carried forward on the one hand, resisting the power of the Holy Ghost, warring with him in all his works of mercy, and straining every energy to keep from him his dominion of the human heart. With a resolute purpose to guide the human will, with a firm and strenuous effort to lead the affections of the heart away from sin and sinful things, to fix them exclusively upon God, and of saving the soul forever, does the Holy Spirit of God, on

the other hand plead with the sinful, and endeavour to wrest from Satan the dominion he has so basely usurped. The sin of the Pharisees was no less than the deliberate ascribing to this enemy of God, the attributes of God himself, and of charging upon him by whose power the miracle was wrought, the evil attributes of the devil. It is difficult to conceive wherein a greater sin can consist. It was effecting, at least attempting, a dethronement of God from his high and holy place, and the coronation of Satan in his stead, as Lord over all, and his investment with the attributes of Godhead. It was no less than casting God down from his lofty height and turning him into an agent of evil; an agent for the cultivation and dissemination of that which his soul most hates. It was sullyng all his attributes. It was deliberately declaring him unworthy of their possession; and then, arraying his most unrelenting enemy with them, ascribing to him the character which none but God can wear. There are many, very many, open sins of deep and glaring atrocity, at which heaven and earth may stand appalled; sins, at whose black and fiendlike character the cheek of many a bold bad man might blanch into whiteness; sins, so unnatural, so inhuman, so satanic, that even they who have ranked among the most desperate of men might congratulate themselves that these they have not yet attained to. But these, however dark and desperate, come far short of the sin of which the Pharisees were now guilty. Between the two, an immensity of distance stretches itself; and while for the one there is forgiveness, because, though deeply dyed, it has not been a deliberate investment of Satan with the attributes of the Holy Spirit; for the other there is no forgiveness, because the heart that could conceive this mischief, and bring forth this iniquity, had sunk into a state of adamant hardness, and of fiendish depravity, such as would resist utterly the power of God to subdue it. We can scarcely imagine such a state, and yet it is easier to imagine than describe it. The Pharisees had reached the height of human guilt when they gave indulgence first, and then an utterance to this deliberate blasphemy of the Holy Ghost; and the reason why, for it there could be no forgiveness, was that their hearts were now in a state for which repentance was utterly impossible. They could never feel again the motions of that Spirit, whose motions they had described as the agency of the devil,

and beneath whose gentle and life-giving influences they had until that moment been. They called the motions of the Spirit of God, the motions of the prince of devils; and all the sacred impulses which at times they had felt; all the mysterious and unearthly longings for some brighter and better home, where they might live forever, which occasionally they had experienced; all these were attributed to the immediate agency of the worst and most malignant foe to God and to the happiness of man. It was to him, the evil one, they desperately ascribed whatever of good is effected in the world, and in thus avowing themselves the subjects of Satan in preference to the Holy Spirit of God, they placed themselves where mercy could never reach them, amongst the outcast and reprobate of men. Until the commission of this awful sin, the door of mercy was open, and to no one among them would the grant of repentance have been denied. But the commission of this sin was the passing of the limit which God had appointed, as that within which alone mercy could have flowed down to them; and as they stepped over the separating line, they stood in a region on which the shadow of death forever rests, and breathed an element whose only effect was to harden them more fearfully, and to case the heart in an obduracy which nothing could ever subdue.

But we are yet to inquire if there was nothing in the state of the heart and mind, in the instance of the Pharisees, which imparted its peculiar character to their sin. Was the heart not desperately wicked that could give indulgence to such a thought as this? Was it not fearfully beneath the power of the evil one, to allow of such unblushing enormity as was now committed? Was not this wickedness something more than human, when God and Satan were declared by them to have exchanged their thrones and their operations; the Holy Spirit himself, whose ministry is only good, converted into an agent of undisguised, and perverse, and malicious evil; the evil one, whose ministry is only evil, and that continually, converted into an agent of pure, holy, and beneficent conduct? We must admit that this sin had an intimate connexion with their views and treatment of the Messiah. They expected a Messiah of a totally different character from him who at that moment stood before them. They had sketched out in their imagination, a Messiah of their own, and as they brought from

the ancient prophecies some features which they ascribe to him, they overlooked others which were equally important to constitute him a deliverer of the world. It was because these disregarded features were worn by Christ, while those with which they had adorned their Messiah were not now apparent, that they rejected his mission, spurned him with a bitter hatred, and persecuted him even unto death. The pride of their hearts was touched to the quick, when summoned by the humble being before them to receive him as their Redeemer and God. It was an insult they could not brook, to demand from them, and for himself, the homage of their heartfelt adoration. Must all their brilliant pictures of the Messiah be proved utterly worthless? Must all the hopes which once they had formed of a rescue by his mighty arm from the dominion of the Roman power, be dashed to atoms? It was a heavy trial of their faith. It was one of a series of trials, all along which mercy was possible, though a failure to meet each successive one left the soul more hardened and more mysteriously encased in guilt. They failed utterly to meet this trial. They suffered the pride of their hearts gradually to gain the mastery over their judgments, and to silence the remonstrances of conscience; and though mercy, and though repentance were still possible, they approached the last of this series of trials with a mind beneath the dominion of pride, habituated to resistance to the Holy Spirit, prepared for any guilt however malicious and however desperate, and ready even to exalt the devil to the throne of God, rather than confess that Jesus was the Son of God, the Messiah. Beyond that, no guilt of man could extend, and the commission of that sin placed the soul forever beyond the reach of mercy, or even of repentance.

But however connected this state of mind and heart with their estimate of the Messiah's character, such estimate could never palliate their crime. They might have had false views of the Redeemer of the world; did it therefore follow that they must blaspheme the name and power of the Holy Ghost? They were not alone in this false estimate. It was that which nearly all their countrymen had, and yet it is very certain that all these did not commit this wilful and unpardonable sin. But had any among these given utterance to this blasphemy, the same fearful malediction would have come down upon them, and the hand of the omnipotent God have placed around them a barrier which

they could have had no power to pass. To the one, however, forgiveness was possible. They had not blasphemed the Holy Spirit by ascribing this agency to the devil, and repentance was open to them, and mercy might yet steal down from heaven upon their souls. To the other forgiveness was not possible. They could not repent. They were given up forever to the dominion of Satan, and no softening emotion could ever reach their guilty hearts.

III. One important question remains yet unresolved, viz: Whether this blasphemy against the Holy Ghost can be committed at the present day. In order to give an accurate solution of this question, it will be proper to examine the circumstances in which it was originally committed. Making this examination, we find the Pharisees, in common with the whole body of the Jews, looking for a merely temporal deliverer, and having no reference to a Saviour from the curse and dominion of sin. We then find the Pharisees and rulers of the people convinced that the humble being before them was the Messiah, and that he was able to save them from the power of Satan. But we also find, that, disappointed at not perceiving in their Messiah the deliverance they had looked for, from a merely temporal bondage, they were filled with malice and hatred against him. All this, as we have intimated, was common to all the Jews, and could hardly be said to be peculiar to the Pharisees. Their crime then could not have consisted in this alone, nor yet in their rejection of the Saviour, because our Lord expressly assured them that a word spoken against him was capable of forgiveness. We must look then still further, in order to ascertain the precise nature of their guilt. Now, we know, that when our Lord performed miracles, the Pharisees knew that the miracles were wrought by him, and they could not question it. But though unable to question it, and equally unable to deny the evidence that this furnished to his Divinity, we find them cavilling at his works of mercy, and objecting against him that he was drawing away the nation of the Jews to follow him. They gave thus a plain indication that they were hardening their hearts against God, and that they were governed in their treatment of the Saviour by the most bitter hatred, the most settled malice, and the most unholy envy. The guilt attendant upon this state of mind and heart could not have been of an ordinary

dye, and the settled opposition to the Saviour, to which it led, of course aggravated the crime. Still, all this, bad as it was, we are assured by our Lord was not beyond the reach of forgiveness. Mercy might still have come down to their hearts; the grant of repentance might still have been made to them, had they not added to this their sin, one of a still deeper cast. But when they blasphemed the name of the Holy Ghost; who, knowing as they did, that it was his sacred influence as the third person of the Godhead, by which the miracles of the Jews were wrought, they not only refused to attribute them to his divine power, but attributed them to the agency of the devil; their malice and hatred, all the evil passions of their nature, indeed, seem to have gained the ascendancy over them, and to hold them entirely in their dominion. It was this guilt that our Lord said could not be forgiven.

Now, we cannot, at the present day, sin against precisely the same kind of evidence as that against which the Pharisees sinned. We have never yet seen a miracle wrought, and so cannot resist that evidence. We are not looking for a Messiah to come, and so cannot have preconceived notions of what he is to be. But may there not be the same state of mind and heart? the same degree of resistance to the evidence that is already furnished? The Pharisees had no more evidence than we have. The evidence was different in kind, but not in degree. They saw, and certainly the seeing gave them unquestionable evidence. We hear; hear not an unauthenticated rumour, nor yet a rumour that has been simply confirmed. The evidence that we have now, is the accumulated evidence of centuries. Each century that has rolled by, has added to the mass and weight of the testimony which the first record gave in. Eye witnesses have given in their testimony, which other eye witnesses have not contradicted; and if testimony can ever be received in any case, this testimony certainly can be. Now, we suppose it entirely possible that this evidence may be resisted; that it may be not only overlooked and slighted, but resisted and spurned away; that the heart may be so deeply buried in guilt, and be so hardened, as to cause the assertion, in the face of all the evidence accumulated, that the miracles of our Lord were wrought by the power of the devil. Whether the case ever occurs or not, we cannot pretend to say. That it may occur we see no reason to doubt;

nor yet that when it does occur, the individual to whom the guilt attaches passes at once and forever beyond the reach of forgiveness; a monument of His wrath who will not give his honour to another.

The apprehension of final wrath, arising from the supposed commission of this sin, constitute one serious difficulty in the way of many inquirers after eternal life. Without attending to the circumstances in which our Lord gave utterance to the fearful sentence against those who committed this sin, they charge themselves with it, because they know they have resisted the Holy Spirit by long continued and persevering impenitency. But as we said before, so we say again, if long continued resistance is this sin—resistance itself must be it; and where is the limit defined in the sacred word? or who then could become the children of God at all? It needs only attention to the narrative as it is recorded by the several evangelists, in order to perceive that the sin that was pronounced blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, was not mere resistance of the Holy Spirit—but attributing his works to the devil. Unless, therefore, the inquirer after eternal life is satisfied that he has done this, (and it really appears to us to be impossible for one who has been guilty of this crime, to have a heart sufficiently soft to feel any concern about his spiritual welfare,) his concern about his commission of this sin, is groundless in itself, and is one of the temptations of Satan to lead him to utter despair.

Others there are who when brought to a consciousness of their lost condition, fancy that because this life has been one of peculiar guilt; because they have ridiculed the most sacred things; because religion in all its developments and appurtenances, has been reviled, and mocked, with a most infamous levity; and because they have blasphemed the holy name of him by whom they have been redeemed—they have committed the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. But has no such person ever found forgiveness in this world? Did Bunyan find that the blood of Jesus Christ was sufficient to cleanse him from all his sins? Did Rochester, after all his guilt, find that mercy was open to him, and that God was rich unto all that call upon him? If so, then we say of all such cases, as well as of cases comprehended in another class (that of sinful suggestions of a blasphemous character made suddenly to the mind, without the concurrence of the indi-

vidual) that they have not the least resemblance to the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, as illustrated by the history of the Pharisees.

IV. As we predicted, we have but a small space in which to examine the texts to which we have had occasion to refer, as appearing, to many minds, to countenance the idea that blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is something like a mere resistance to the Holy Spirit. The first passage is that in Hebrews vi. 4-8. The connection in which it stands indicates that it has some relation to the inculcation of the principles of the doctrine of Christ. Now the earnest exhortation of Paul to leave these principles, and not to stop to lay over again the foundation of the Christian faith, implies that there were some amongst the Hebrew Christians who were not disposed to make any advances in the knowledge of the truth; men who had obtained an insight into the excellences of Christianity, who had known that the Christian dispensation was now opened upon them; who had been enabled to work miracles, and had consequently experienced in themselves the power of that day when the Spirit shall be widely and universally diffused over all the earth; and of these persons, Paul declares, that if they shall fall away it will be impossible to renew them again unto repentance. If such men, after all the evidence they had in themselves that Christianity was true, should "fall away," or apostatize—their restoration would be impossible, because their apostacy would be in the face of the clearest possible evidence of the truth and reality of the Christian religion. But this is not the case at this time; and the sin here charged is not certainly the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.

Another passage is that in the 10th chapter of Hebrews, 26th, 27th verses. The slightest examination of the whole chapter will satisfy any one that this text does not afford the slightest ground on which to build the theory of the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. If the sacrifice of Christ is rejected—such is the reasoning of St. Paul—all other sacrifices are now done away with; and to what else can we fly? Obviously to none at all. Then this continuance in a state of sin, unpardoned and unreconciled, must entail the vengeance of the Almighty upon the guilty.

We have room but for one passage more. John speaks of a

sin unto death, for which we must not pray—because prayer can be of no avail. Now, it seems never to occur to inquirers that this must be a sin, of whose commission the evidence must be very clear and distinct. Are we not to pray for those who do despite to the Holy Ghost? Then we are never to pray at all for the unconverted. Are none of the unconverted brought to a saving knowledge of the truth? If they are, then their's is not, of course, the sin unto death. What this sin is it has been our endeavour in this article to show; and we are well persuaded that explanations such as that given by Dr. Chalmers, are calculated to throw an entire air of difficulty over the whole Bible; and by attempting to explain away particular parts, to render the whole gospel scheme uncertain.

ART. III.—*The Life and Remains of the Rev. Robert Housman, A. B., the Founder, and for forty years the Incumbent Minister of St. Anne's, Lancaster, and formerly Curate to the Rev. T. Robinson, M. A., of Leicester.* By Robert Fletcher Housman. Slightly abridged. New York: Robert Carter 58 Canal Street; 58 Market Street, Pittsburgh.

ONE good effect attends the publishing biographies of pious men, and especially of distinguished ministers; good people are encouraged and comforted by finding that there has been and is, more religion in the world than they had supposed, and more faithful men preaching the gospel than they ever dreamed of. Who, among us, for example, until now knew anything of such a man as the Rev. Robert Housman? And yet, as is abundantly evident from this volume, he was a man of uncommon excellence, and possessed preaching gifts surpassed by few of his contemporaries. And as he boldly preached the pure gospel of the grace of God, for more than forty years, he was the instrument of the conversion of many souls; and in the midst of enemies, and opposition from those in high places, courageously persevered in holding forth the word of life, in a part of the kingdom where evangelical preachers were few. He was also greatly beloved by the children of God, and numbered among his intimate friends,

some of the most excellent of the earth. We would strongly recommend our readers to get the volume and read for themselves; but as many may not have the opportunity to peruse this well prepared piece of biography, we will furnish a succinct account of this very excellent Christian, and useful minister.

The Rev. Robert Housman was born at Skerton, near Lancaster, England, Feb. 25, 1759. After attending the grammar school in Lancaster, which was under the tuition of the Rev. James Watson, he was bound apprentice to a surgeon; but finding this profession uncongenial with his disposition, he relinquished it before his apprenticeship was completed, and placed himself under the tuition of Mr. Watson, the second time, to prepare himself for an entrance into the holy university.

About this time he seems to have experienced some change in his religious views and feelings; but of this important part of his life, he has left no account. From this time, however, his mind was turned toward the sacred ministry. On a certain day he resorted to a grove which was near, and in a deliberate and solemn manner, accompanied with prayer, he dedicated himself to the service of God. His parents, especially his father, were resolutely opposed to the purpose which he had formed; but through the mediation of a sister, he succeeded in removing their opposition, and they both had the satisfaction of hearing their son preach, before they died.

Upon leaving Mr. Watson's school, he went to Cambridge, and entered as a sizer, into St. John's College, on the 17th March, 1780. In less than sixteen months after entering the university, Mr. Housman received deacon's orders, at a general ordination, from the hands of Markhem, archbishop of York. He now became curate to the Rev. Mr. Croft, of Gargram, in Yorkshire. Mr. Croft had taken lessons in elocution from Mr. Garrick, and was considered one of the finest readers in England, to which may probably be referred his own excellence in the management of his voice in the pulpit, both in reading and speaking. "Those who remember," says his biographer, "what the late venerable pastor of St. Anne's was, twenty or thirty years ago, or even at a much later period, will bear ready testimony to the finished beauty of his performance of the service of the established church of England, and to the chaste and peculiarly impressive delivery of his ministerial addresses." But alas! like many

others who assume the awful responsibilities of the sacred office, "he mistook decency for devotion, and a scrupulous avoidance of covert acts of evil, for vital Christianity. He was, in fact, though perfectly conscientious, and, if tested by the world's standard, unexceptionably moral, totally unacquainted with the design, the character, and the power of the gospel, as well as with the full extent and spirituality of the law." His own account of the matter, as given to his biographer, late in life, is as follows: "How little did I know, either of myself or others—how little of the nature of sin, or the nature of holiness, when I entered the church! I had always felt an earnest wish to be what is called *good*; and I vainly fancied, that the engagements of the ministry would afford, not only ample facilities, but adequate securities for the accomplishment of my desires. What deplorable ignorance! I knew nothing of the human heart. I had to learn that the root of sin lies *there*; and that unless that be changed, which it never can be, except by the renewing energies of the Holy Ghost, the best situation is worthless. There is, depend upon it, but one safe and suitable situation for all of us—THE FOOT OF THE CROSS. Of the cross I knew nothing but the name."

At another time, he made a similar confession: "I lived," said he, "through many a guilty year, as ignorant of the true character of the Saviour, as the beasts that perish, and as devoid of any right affection towards him as Satan himself. But *patience* reigned, and the curse did not come upon me. And *grace* has reigned, and I believe on the evidence of feelings that cannot betray me, that *now* the very first desire of my soul habitually is this—to perceive by a realizing faith, the Saviour's glory, to find his presence near, and to taste that he is gracious. What an advantage it is, when young people seek the Lord early."

Mr. Housman, after some time, returned to Cambridge, and received priest's orders from the hands of the bishop of Peterborough, on the 26th of October, 1783.

During his second residence at Cambridge, he contracted a very close and permanent intimacy with the Rev. Mr. Timson, by whom he was introduced to the family of Mr. Audley, who were highly respectable Independent Dissenters; a member of which, a young, beautiful, well educated and pious woman, became his wife in 1785. By this marriage Mr. Housman had one

son, whose birth the mother did not survive many weeks. She was spared great and protracted suffering, though she had faith and patience to endure any trial. Her brother, Mr. John Audley, of whom a memoir is published in the *Congregational Magazine*, for August, 1827, was a man of respectable talents, profound piety, diffusive benevolence, and untiring activity in the service of Jesus Christ. Between him and Mrs. Housman, the warmest attachment subsisted; her death affected him greatly; but his prayer, entered in his diary, is for "a sanctified use of the afflictive providence." Mr. Housman took his degree of bachelor of arts in 1784; beyond this he never proceeded.

It was not until after his return to Cambridge, that Mr. Housman became attached to what are distinctly designated evangelical principles. This change he constantly attributed to his acquaintance with the Rev. Charles Simeon. He was, indeed, Mr. Simeon's first convert, and was playfully called his "eldest son." His testimony to the Christian character and consistency of Mr. Simeon, deserves our notice; especially as on one occasion, he spent three months an inmate with this excellent man in his rooms in college. "Never," says he, "did I see such consistency and reality of Christian devotion and warmth of piety, such zeal and such love. Never did I see one who abounded so much in prayer. I owe that great and holy man a debt which never can be cancelled." Through the kindness of Mr. Simeon, Mr. Housman was introduced to the acquaintance of some of the most excellent men of the age. Among these was the venerable and highly gifted Henry Venn, who always took pleasure in attributing to Mr. Simeon his knowledge of the genuine doctrines of the gospel; and it is a tribute due to Mr. Simeon, to say, that he was the instrument of enkindling and extending evangelical religion in England, in a much greater degree than any other man. This he effected by his seeking the acquaintance of ingenuous young men of the university, who had the ministry in view, and leading them to just views of the great doctrines of Christianity; and also, by his preaching and his evangelical homiletics, by means of which, many were led to just views of truth, who at first only sought helps to the composition of their sermons.

The views of Mr. Housman respecting preaching the gospel, may be learned from a manuscript paper, which he wrote about this time, from which the following is an extract:

“The preaching of truth is owned of God; the preaching of error is left to itself. We read of a divine power and blessing accompanying the preaching of the gospel. It is written, ‘my word shall not return to me void.’ ‘Lo, I am with you always to the end of the world.’ The gospel came to the ‘Thessalonians, ‘not in word, but in power;’ and in every instance in which it bringeth salvation, it bringeth it through the power of God, applying the word to the soul. Now the Lord will never set his seal to error; but he *will* set his seal to the truth. I meddle not with others, I speak of myself. For upwards of two years after I entered the ministry, I preached mere moral discourses. I declaimed against sin; I recommended virtue; and I had the blindness and boldness to tell the people, that when they fell short, Christ would make up defects. Do you ask what was the effect produced? I answer, none. In no instance, and in no degree, was any ignorance removed, or any soul benefitted. But when, through the grace of God, I saw *clearly* the nature of the gospel of Christ, and was enabled simply to preach it, effects soon followed; effects have always followed, wherever I have been placed. In a greater or less degree, the blind have received their sight, drunkards have become sober, and profligates have learned to pray; the miserable have found peace, and immortal beings have found a blessed immortality. I have seen hundreds, perhaps thousands, drawing near to their last home, where the gospel was unknown or unfelt, I never saw an instance of that peace of which the Scriptures speak. But where Christ has been known, loved, and trusted, I have seen more than peace. I have seen death deprived of its sting, and the grave of its victory. I have seen sunshine and joy brightening the countenance, and the saint of God eager to be gone, to sing his praises before the throne forever. These effects, exactly agreeing with what the God of truth promises in his word, and I am confident, a stronger proof of what is truth, than if an angel were to appear and declare it.”

From having relied for acceptance on human merit, he was brought to depend upon the infinite sacrifice and eternal merit Christ *alone*. Good works, he perceived, could not constitute a passport to heaven; but still he held them to be indispensable as signs or tokens of a meetness for the enjoyment of heaven. “Works really good,” he was accustomed to say, “are nothing

else than holiness in exercise; and holiness, without which we are distinctly told, no man shall see the Lord, consists of principles, dispositions, and affections, springing from the grateful love for a divine Redeemer, and a pardoning God."

The following comprehensive and beautiful paragraph, will show the true character of Mr. Housman's system of theology as fully as a volume. "Nothing but the *blood* of Christ can save from destruction; nothing but the *righteousness* of Christ can give a title to heavenly bliss; nothing but the *intercession* of Christ can make prayers and duties acceptable; nothing but the *grace* of Christ can give a meetness for the inheritance and company of heaven, and nothing but the *presence* of Christ can be the light, joy, and glory of the eternal kingdom. Without Christ all is darkness, and ruin, and despair."

Mr. Housman's adoption of decidedly evangelical principles, may be attributed to two circumstances, ordered in Providence for his salvation and usefulness as a minister; the one was, his connexion by marriage with a Calvinistic family, remarkable for their devoted piety; the second was his intercourse with Messrs. Simeon and Venn, and also with Romaine, Newton, Scott, Beveridge, and other evangelical men. For with all those mentioned he enjoyed the privilege of free and frequent intercourse.

The summer and autumn of 1785, Mr. Housman spent in Lancaster, where he officiated at the afternoon service in St. John's church. Here he formed a society of young men, who met at his house on Sunday evening, for prayer and religious conversation. This innovation attracted attention, and gave offence to some; for hitherto, prayer meetings had been restricted to dissenters; information was given to the bishop of the diocese, respecting the practice; but he prudently declined interfering. Mr. Housman therefore, went on in his pious work, and an evident blessing attended these meetings.

After the death of his wife, which occurred in the winter of 1785, he determined to return to Cambridge; he therefore preached a farewell sermon at St. John's, in which he gave a comprehensive view of the doctrines of the gospel. This discourse gave great offence; especially what he said respecting the utter depravity of human nature; and the absolute inefficacy of good works to gain acceptance with God. Many of his hearers abruptly left the house, in the midst of the discourse.

As a clamour had been raised against the sermon, the preacher thought it expedient to publish it; which, however, drew forth a pamphlet in which it was assailed in a very angry style. To this pamphlet he returned no answer; but the Rev. George Burder, being then resident at Lancaster, thinking the pamphlet might do harm if unnoticed, prepared and published an able and temperate vindication of Mr. Housman's discourse. Against the delusive and dangerous doctrine of baptismal regeneration, Mr. Housman delivered a faithful testimony. His words are, "Many have been the attempts of the opposers of true religion, to set aside the necessity or disguise the nature of the great work of regeneration. As to those who deny its necessity, their denial must be ascribed to their own ignorance of God, of themselves, and of the Scriptures; and they who disguise its nature, generally call it baptism. But while we have the Bible in our hands, we need not scruple positively to assert, on the combined authority of innumerable isolated passages, and of the general scope of the New Testament records, that baptism is not regeneration. Baptism is an outward work on the body; regeneration is an inward work on the soul. Baptism, I grant, is a sacramental *sign* of regeneration, just as the Lord's Supper is a sacramental sign of the body and blood of Christ; and therefore baptism may be called regeneration, by the same figure which Christ used when he says of the bread, 'this is my body.' The outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace."

The occasion of Mr. Housman's removal was threatening symptoms of consumption, which made it necessary that he should seek a milder atmosphere.

Upon leaving Lancaster, Mr. Housman, in 1796 came to reside at Market Harborough, within four miles of which place he had a curacy, but he did not remain here much more than a year; but though greatly opposed by some of the principal people of the neighbourhood, his labours were greatly blessed. But having become acquainted with Mr. Robinson, of Leicester, the author of "Scripture Character," he was invited by that excellent man to act as his curate, which he did for twelve months. In this large parish he had full employment, not only in the pulpit, but in other pastoral duties, in which he took his full share. It was here he became acquainted with the Rev. Thomas Scott, the author of the judicious and useful commentary on the Bible. Here

also he formed an acquaintance with Mrs. Adams, who soon afterwards became his second wife. This lady possessed a masculine understanding, and was the author of a very popular tract entitled, "Susan Ward." The clergyman mentioned in the tract, as the instrument of bringing this ignorant woman to the knowledge of Christ, was no other than Mr. Housman. Mrs. Housman had received a truly religious education, and had been for some time a pupil of Mr. Robinson. Her mother, whose maiden name was Bateman, had in her youth suffered persecution for her attachment to the gospel. Her father, who was an irreligious and worldly man, upon learning the inclination which his daughter had to the people called Methodists, told her that she was free to choose for herself, but if she joined these people he would certainly disinherit her. She took time for consideration, consultation, and prayer; the result of which was, that she resolved to obey her heavenly rather than her earthly father. When she made known her purpose to her father, he gave her a shilling, and turned her out of doors, and commanded her never to let him see her face again. The Countess of Huntington, so celebrated for her piety and evangelical labours, having heard the circumstances, sent for Miss Batemen, and took her as a companion and friend into her own house, where she remained until she entered into the matrimonial state with the Rev. Mr. Adams. From correspondence inserted in this volume, it appears that Mrs. Adams continued to enjoy the warm friendship of Lady Huntington; and also of the many excellent and distinguished persons who frequented the house of this extraordinary woman.

Trained by such a mother, and accustomed from her infancy to the society of the excellent of the earth, Mrs. Housman possessed a character for exemplary piety and prudence. But like many other persons of sterling worth, it required an acquaintance of some intimacy to know her worth. She was not a noisy or an ostentatious Christian, but sincere, devoted, and ever active in doing good. An opportunity of doing good assumed in her eyes the nature of an obligation. From morning to night, the year through, she was about on her Father's business; performing her duty in a spirit of entire devotement, and in entire dependence on divine aid. "A quick imagination, great candour of heart and mind, uncompromising honesty of purpose, and determined will to execute it, fitted her in no uncommon degree, for

her numerous self-incurred and often harassing engagements; while a more than ordinary skill in discriminating minute and subtle differences of character protected her from the various artifices to which religious people are so peculiarly exposed. To Mr. Housman in his ministerial character she proved invaluable. Profoundly respecting her principles, her understanding, and her judgment, he proposed to her all his doubts, and consulted her in all his difficulties; and without her sanction he did nothing. She possessed great influence over his mind, which she exerted with unrelaxing consistency for the glory of God, and the happiness of men. How immensely the cause of pure and undefiled religion is indebted to the energetic instrumentality of this admirable woman, will be proclaimed with honour, when the "Lord Jehovah maketh up his jewels."

In the year 1792, Mr. Housman undertook the rectorship of the large and ancient church of Leicester, where he was attended by a numerous and respectable audience, who received the word at his mouth with apparent satisfaction. But though his voice was clear and sweet, it had scarcely power sufficient to fill that large church. He next became curate to Mr. Ludlam, at Faston, a small village seven miles from Leicester. To this he was accustomed to walk every Sunday morning, and having performed the service, to return again to Leicester and preach at St. Martin's in the evening. The people of Faston were so attached to his ministry, that many of them, regularly attended his afternoon services at St. Martin's. While resident at Leicester, Mr. Housman preached a series of discourses on the names and titles, given in scripture to JESUS CHRIST, which were published in 1793. About this time, he published also, a very eloquent discourse on the subject of Christian benevolence, before the Governors of the Leicester Infirmary and Lunatic Asylum. The thanks of the society were conveyed to him for this excellent discourse, and it was printed at their expense, in quarto form. Bishop Tomline, also his diocesan, complimented him handsomely, for this discourse.

But though Mr. Housman acquired a high reputation as a preacher at Leicester, and though his evangelical labours were signally blessed to the salvation of many, it is believed, both there and at Faston; yet, as his symptoms of pulmonary disease had disappeared, his inclination led him strongly to his native place. And on a visit to his parents with his wife, in 1794, he

formed the purpose of attempting to erect a new church in the city of Lancaster. Having received the approbation of Dr. Warren, the diocesan, and of Mr. White, the vicar of Lancaster, in December, of this year, he issued his proposals for a new church. But the feeling of opposition which had been excited by his farewell sermon, was far from being extinct; for no sooner was the design to erect a new church made known, than a meeting of the most wealthy and influential inhabitants was convened in the Town Hall, to consider of the propriety of erecting a new church or chapel in the place. This was manifestly intended to thwart Mr. Housman's purpose. But though he was a timid, retiring man by nature, yet he possessed much moral courage; and when he knew that he was engaged in a righteous cause, he disregarded the opposition of worldly and wicked men. He, therefore, determined to go forward with his scheme, and to encourage those who had expressed a willingness to embark in this enterprize, he wrote and published an animating "Address to the gentlemen who have encouraged the design of building a new church, to be called St. Anne's, in Lancaster." In this address, Mr. Housman defends himself against the calumnies and reproaches of his enemies. They not only accused him of preaching antinomian doctrines, but they inconsistently charged him with being "righteous over-much," and to crown all, they accused him of being a METHODIST. At the first meeting of the opposers of his enterprize, four thousand pounds were subscribed for their new church, for a certain Mr. Colton; but notwithstanding this spirited beginning, the church was never built; yet the spirit of opposition did not cease with the abandonment of their design. Indeed, there is reason to believe, that their only object in starting the scheme was to intimidate Mr. Housman and his friends; but when they failed in this, they, without apparent cause, relinquished the whole affair. Two clergymen of Lancaster were among the bitterest of his opposers; who, when they could not arrest the progress of the building, applied to the bishop to induce him to refuse to license St. Anne's, but they utterly failed of their object; for the bishop had already given his approbation to the measure, and even approved the sermon which had produced all this hostility. Mr. Housman in building St. Anne's, had the assistance of many distinguished men. Mr. Wilberforce contributed twenty pounds, and Mr. Thornton fifty;

and he received encouragement and aid from Mr. Simeon and Mr. Robinson, of Leicester. That Mr. Wilberforce entertained a high esteem for Mr. Housman, is manifest from a single sentence in one of his letters. "It is," says he, "abundantly sufficient for me to know that Mr. Housman approves the scheme. His approbation is a satisfactory guarantee." And the regard was mutual, for Mr. Housman says, "'The Practical View of Christianity,' after the Bible, deserves the serious perusal of those who would see on the one hand, a complete exposure of some prevailing and destructive errors, in the religious system of many professed Christians; and those who, on the other, would obtain a clear and consistent view of real holiness, flowing from its legitimate and only source, the doctrines and principles of the gospel."

Before returning to Lancaster, Mr. Housman had frequently indulged in extempore preaching, in which he is said to have been uncommonly successful. This practice he was obliged to lay aside in deference to the absurd prejudices of his townsmen. His biographer relates an amusing anecdote, respecting the circumstances of his first preaching without notes. Being on a visit to the Rev. Mr. Glazebrook, of Warrington, this gentleman urged him to lay aside his paper, and after full meditation, to venture to speak what he had prepared. He, however, pleaded unconquerable timidity. But on a certain occasion, when he was going into the pulpit, Mrs. Glazebrook contrived to abstract the written sermon from his pocket; but she was terribly frightened when she saw him rise to read the hymn, immediately before the sermon, for she saw that his countenance was very much flushed and disconcerted. But after reading his text, he seemed to acquire composure, and went on and preached an admirable and searching discourse. The experiment, however, was a dangerous one. In Lancaster, while he was beloved by the pious, he was hated and despised by the principal men of the place; so that when walking the streets, if they saw him approaching they would cross over to the other side. And on occasion of an Episcopal visitation, the charge being on the evils of enthusiasm, the clergy stood aloof from him, and avoided every token of friendly recognition.

Some years after his permanent residence in Lancaster, he published a beautiful sermon on the "new creation." This af-

forded abundant merriment to his clerical brethren; and on one occasion, one of them scoffingly read aloud what he called "Housman's Creation," amid peals of laughter from the company. This obloquy extended to his congregation, and it was common to call St. Anne's, "the hotbed of dissent." In addition to his popular pulpit talents, Mr. Housman possessed in an unusual degree, the talent for religious conversation; or what Dr. Watts calls, "Parlour Preaching." The late truly excellent Mrs. Dawson, testifies, that Mr. Housman could make an exclusively religious conversation more attractive, and sustain it longer, than any of the eminent men with whom she was conversant in her early days. "Whereas," says Mr. Stator, "in Christians of an ordinary standard religious conversation might seem to be the effect of labour and self-denial, in Mr. Housman it was just the reverse. He could not but speak of the things which he had seen and heard. What was labour to others, was pleasure and relaxation to him. If privileged to enter his retirement, you found yourself in a new and heavenly atmosphere. In listening to the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth, you felt yourself in the company of one who had fellowship and intercourse with heaven. In the depth and tone of his spiritual feelings, he had few equals, and no superiors, in our day. There were times, indeed, when his friends observed that his mind would seem to labour beneath the weight of his conceptions. And it was pleasing to observe, that when his mental powers began to fail, this 'unction of the Holy One,' still remained. In this respect he resembled the aged apostle John, who when he could say no more, would still repeat the exhortation, 'little children, love one another.'"

Though Mr. Housman possessed the talent for religious conversation in so eminent a degree, yet in his common intercourse with men, he had the appearance of reserve; and he did not spend much of his time in pastoral visitation, because he was of opinion, that the main usefulness of a pastor depends on his preparation for the pulpit. Those ministers, who for the sake of frequent visits to their people, neglect preparation for the pulpit, in his opinion, commit a serious mistake. When on this subject, he was fond of relating an anecdote of a poor Scotchman, who being asked, whether his minister frequently visited the members of his flock, answered, "he lives in heaven all the

week, and on the Sabbath he comes down and tells us what he has seen and heard." But in visiting the sick, especially those of the poorer classes, he was most exemplary. He would go out on this errand, in the darkest, coldest, and stormiest night of the winter. He was also frequent in visiting the unhappy inmates of the prison, and in order to have free access to them accepted the office of justice of the peace.

The enmity of his opposers seemed to be incapable of being overcome. It broke out afresh, when any occasion occurred which was suited to call it forth. To promote piety and Christian fellowship, Mr. Housman compiled a small Hymn Book. This was treated as not only a gross impropriety, but an impious act. To forsake Hopkins and Sternhold, which their fathers had sung, for those novelties, they represented as an intolerable innovation. And not content with censuring the Hymn Book themselves, they made complaint to the diocesan bishop, who having no more liking to evangelical hymns than themselves, advised, that the use of the book should be discontinued.

To show how much our religious liberty should be prized, which we so richly enjoy in this land, it may be for edification to give a somewhat particular account of the persecution endured by the Rev. Wm. Carus Wilson, rector of Whittington, as it will at the same time show the fidelity, and tender sympathy exercised by Mr. Housman towards his suffering friend. This young gentleman had received deacon's orders; but on application to Dr. Law, bishop of Chester, for priest's orders, he was refused, on account of some Calvinistic opinions which he held. And shortly afterwards, for the same reason, his license to preach was taken away, and he was suspended from the ministerial functions. As Mr. Housman entertained the highest opinion of Mr. Wilson's piety, and had formed a tender friendship for him, he was greatly pained and deeply distressed by this unchristian treatment; and especially as the vilest slanders against the young man, were industriously circulated. He, therefore, prepared a statement for the gazette, of which the following is an extract. This publication was signed VERITAS. "A regard not only to the honoured individual who is calumniated in his absence, but to circumstances far more imperious than the partialities of friendship, compel me to correct the cruel misrepresentation. It is affirmed amongst us, that it is Mr. Wilson's

opinion, 'that if a person can only once persuade himself that his state is safe for eternity, he may indulge in the grossest sins, without fear or danger.' If there could be only ten men found in the United Kingdom, who, with true religious sensibility would shudder with abhorrence, at the first mention of such an abominable position, among the foremost of the ten would appear my very excellent friend." He then draws a portrait of Mr. Wilson's character, as a preacher and as a Christian. "In the pulpit, Mr. Wilson was plain, faithful, earnest, and affectionate. His whole manner was an echo to an apostle's declaration, 'I seek not yours, but you.' He collected the children of the parish to the amount of one hundred, and formed a Sunday School in his own house, where he and his friends were the willing and assiduous teachers. That he might preserve the Sabbath from violation, he received into his house on the morning of that day, the young men from the village, where he endeavoured to improve them in reading, and in the knowledge of their several duties to God and to man. He was also attentive to the temporal distresses of his people, and had formed excellent plans for the permanent comfort of the poor. He considered the parish as his extended family, and his thoughts, his time, his purse, and his heart, were devoted to their service. He was their prudent counsellor, their kind friend, and their upright pastor. He is followed by their benedictions, and their tears, and his name will remain fragrant among them—perhaps to distant generations."

This letter produced the desired effect—the triumph of his enemies, in this gazette, though continued up to the very day of its publication, suddenly ceased. On which Mr. Housman makes this important practical remark. "People seldom reply to facts, if these facts are stated with proper temper and strict regard to truth." In a letter addressed to Mr. Wilson, Mr. Housman says, "I desire to be thankful and to rejoice, that you have mercies as well as trials. The peace of God in your soul and domestic prosperity without, are a very gracious counterbalance indeed, to the sufferings which you are called to endure. I suppose, before this reaches you, you will have heard from the bishop. I do not expect much that is favourable. However, if his plans be not the Lord's, they will be strangely overruled."

Soon afterwards, Mr. Wilson was ordained to the vicarage of Gunstal. In a letter to Mrs. Wilson, Mr. Housman writes, "I

hope that you will soon receive back your husband, commissioned and fully authorized by man to preach the everlasting gospel. He long since received his commission from the exalted Redeemer. And what an account have they to give by whom the execution of that commission was suspended! William has been more calumniated in Lancaster than anywhere else—I wish him to preach his first sermon in my pulpit.” In a sympathizing letter to Mr. Wilson, occasioned by a severe domestic affliction, he writes, “You are all in the furnace, but purification, everlasting purification, will be the issue. And then what a mercy, to have such occasion, from the states of mind in which your dear sisters are preserved, to mingle hallelujahs with sighs.”

In the year 1816, Mr. Housman published the first number of “The Pastoral Visitor,” or a “Summary of “Christian Doctrine and Practice.” This he prefaced by an affectionate address to the congregation of St. Anne’s, from which we take the following extract, which may serve as a specimen of the author’s spirit and style.

“MY DEAR FRIENDS—The shadows of the evening are drawing fast around me. Increasing years and a feeble constitution concur in reminding me, that the time cannot be far distant, when the place which knoweth me must know me no more. But the moments which are hurrying forward, the hour of our final separation, find me, if I mistake not, more and more anxious that you *all* may obtain salvation, by our Lord Jesus Christ. I seem to perceive with more affecting clearness than ever, the straitness and the difficulties of the way to eternal life; and that, between the favour and the wrath of God, between a soul saved and a soul lost forever, there is a difference which nothing but the experience of eternity can explain. Under these views and impressions, it is my intention, so long as I am continued among you, to place in your hands, at the close of each succeeding quarter of a year, a *plain* discourse upon some important subject. The doctrines which may be stated, explained, and applied, are those which you have heard for nearly twenty years. I am well persuaded that they are the doctrines of the established church, and I have evidence also, which cannot deceive, that they are the truths of the gospel of Christ. That evidence is nothing less than the seal and witness of the living God. He has borne the testimony of his approbation to the preaching of ‘Christ

crucified.' He has fulfilled the promise that his word shall not return to him void. He has given the increase."

Of this work, only sixteen numbers were ever published; barely enough to make a single volume. He was averse to the care and pains necessary in preparing works for the press, and therefore he relinquished a publication which promised considerable pecuniary profit; and many of his best discourses remain in manuscript. The following evangelical sentiments are from one of these. "The foundation for a sinner is the foundation of God. It is written, 'The foundation of God standeth sure.' If we compare Isaiah xxviii. 16, with 1 Pet. ii. 6, who, and what in the strong sense of the word, is that *foundation*. It is Jesus, the Son of God: Jesus dying and rising from the dead: Jesus, magnifying the law, and enduring its curse: Jesus, undertaking to bring many sons into glory, and to bring much glory to every perfection of his Father. Jesus is the foundation, and the foundation of God. He is the foundation of God—for the *wisdom* of God in the everlasting counsels, planned the wonderful redemption. He is the foundation of God, for the *love* of the Father, gave, as the Saviour of sinners, his only-begotten Son. This is the foundation of God—for by the authority and appointment of the Father, other foundation never has been laid, and never will be laid. Upon this foundation are you resting and building?"

From the year 1816, Mr. Housman's health began evidently to give way; and in the year 1818, he began to think of resigning his important charge, and retiring to some small parish in the country; and as soon as his wishes were known, he had the offer of such a situation; but he found it more difficult to separate from his people of St. Anne's, than he expected; and he declined the offer of another parish.

Soon after his settlement in Lancaster, Mr. Housman purchased a place, which he improved, and to which he was much attached; but pecuniary embarrassments, not brought on by any imprudence of his own, now in his declining age, made it necessary to dispose of this beloved spot. While here, he was subjected to many bereavements and heart-rending afflictions, all which he bore with meek and uncomplaining submission and patience. "In him," says Mr. Statter, his friend, "patience may be said to have had its perfect work. He not only endured, as

seeing Him that is invisible, but he gloried in tribulation. His faith, as his people can tell, always came from the furnace, as gold seven times purified. There he learnt his choicest lessons of heavenly wisdom. Thence he was so well able to comfort the mourners, to strengthen the weak, to confirm the wavering, to guard the tempted, and to raise the fallen." In one of his sorest trials, he writes to a friend, "I have been in a hotter furnace than I ever was before; but I humbly trust that the form of him who walked with me was that of the Son of God. . . . Oh! that I could tell you the thousandth part of the exceeding peace and gladness of my soul, as I lay awake in the stillness and darkness of the past night." Of a truth, the Lord was with me. I think I never before had such a sense of the greatness, and purity, and loveliness, and glory of God in Christ. My heart was enlarged in a very uncommon degree, and if I mistake not, in a very uncommon way. Jesus was felt to be 'Immanuel,' with peculiar power." A few weeks afterwards, he writes, "Within the last three or four days, I have had *such* views of the glory and excellence of Jesus! I have seemed to see more into it than ever. There is no true happiness in this world, but in the nearness of the soul to Christ; there is no happiness in the eternal state, but seeing the Lord as he is, and being like him forever. The beatific vision is CHRIST. We shall all see him as he is, in the perfection and glory of his character. We shall be like him, in the perfection and glory of our own." Many of his letters, in this volume, are replete with the same sentiments which breathe in the above extracts. They cannot be read by the Christian without sensible refreshment and encouragement.

Mr. Housman continued in charge of St. Anne's, until the year 1836, when finding the infirmities of age rapidly increasing on him, he in a respectful letter made application to his diocesan to resign the parish into the hands of a Mr. Levingston, of whom he gave a high character. His request being granted, he now retired to Greenfield. But his afflictions were not ended, for here, in 1837, he was deprived of his second wife, who had ever been a helper, comforter, and prudent counsellor. This stroke he considered the heaviest which he had ever borne. But he had not long to mourn the loss; for in the following year the summons came for him to join his departed friends. He died in peace,

surrounded by his affectionate children and faithful friends. His decease occurred on the 22d of April, 1838. His remains were interred in Skerton, near Lancaster, on the 27th. A great crowd attended his funeral, mostly dressed in black. The funeral service was performed conjointly, by the Rev. Charles Bury, and Rev. Henry O'Neill; and a handsome tablet with a suitable inscription, was placed in the wall of St. Anne's.

From the preceding narrative, the character of the Rev. Mr. Housman, as a Christian, and as an evangelical and eloquent preacher will be readily understood. We shall, therefore, conclude our account, by a few short extracts from the volume under review, relating to his person and manners.

"The personal appearance of Mr. Housman was exceedingly prepossessing. His forehead was high and nobly expanded; his nose and mouth were beautifully moulded; his eyes—the colour of which was the lightest and most perfect blue—were soft, tender, bright, and placid; the prevalent and habitual expression of his countenance was that of seraphic thoughtfulness—the radiant and unruffled contemplativeness of a heart full of faith, love, and hope, and of the peace which passeth all understanding. His aspect presented the infallible indication of a Sabbath within. . . . It was impossible to see him without thinking of what Christ said of Nathanael, 'Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.' . . . His voice, never of any great compass—was full, clear, well modulated, and manly. Solemnity and sweetness were its main characteristics. His stature was about five feet nine inches; his body thin, though not slight; being well proportioned; and his general deportment, until bowed down and enfeebled with the weight of nearly eighty years—was easy, dignified, and graceful. In his disposition he was uniformly cheerful and sometimes even gay. His manners were those of a man of education, and social advantages—gentle and unobtrusive; yet always distinguished by the attribute of moral greatness." To strangers, however, he was reserved; and disliked very much to be entrapped into the company of such persons as were not of a congenial disposition. Though naturally timid, he yet possessed a large share of moral courage, and was unflinching in a good cause. In him it was manifest that meekness is not inconsistent with intrepidity. Nothing could daunt him, when he felt that he was right.

Upon the whole, we would remark, that from the character given of Mr. Housman, in this volume, though some allowance may be made for the partiality of the biographer, yet it is evident, that he was a clergyman of rare accomplishments. Although he did not possess the very highest order of intellectual powers, yet his mind was well balanced; and all his faculties were of that kind which qualified him for eminent usefulness. We could wish and pray that the church might be supplied with many ministers exactly of his mould. His life, though protracted, was useful and comfortable to its close.

ART. IV.—*General Assembly.*

THE General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America met, agreeably to appointment, in the Tent, Presbyterian Church, in the city of Philadelphia, on Thursday, the 21st day of May, 1846, at 11 o'clock, A. M., and was opened with a sermon by the Rev. John M. Krebs, D.D., Moderator of the last Assembly, from Galatians vi. 14: "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

After the sermon, the Assembly was constituted with prayer. The Permanent Clerk, from the Standing Committee of Commissions, reported the names of persons entitled to be enrolled as commissioners.

Title of Bishop.

When the roll was read in the afternoon of the first day of the sessions of the Assembly, Dr. R. J. Breckinridge moved that the word Bishop be struck out in every case where it was applied to the clerical delegates, and that the word minister be substituted in its place. This motion prevailed by a large majority. With regard to the title Bishop, there are certain points as to which all parties may be considered as substantially agreed. One is that in the New Testament, the title is given to those officers in the Church who are appointed to rule, teach, and ordain. Another is, that the terms Presbyterian and Bishop are applied

to the same officers. Prelatists long contended against this position, but have at last, with common consent, conceded it. In so doing they have conceded almost the entire ground of argument from scripture in behalf of prelacy, and assumed the task of proving that though in the apostolic age a Bishop was a Presbyter, and nothing more, in the immediately succeeding age he was a prelate. That is, that during the time of the apostles the term designated one office, but immediately and forever after a different one. We find while the apostles lived a set of men called Bishops; we find the same thing in the next age, and we are called upon to believe that these men filled offices essentially different. This sudden change in the meaning of a title is unexampled and incredible. A third point beyond dispute is, that though Bishop and Presbyter were convertible terms in the apostolic church, yet as the hierarchial principle gradually gained ground the term Bishop was appropriated to one class of the clergy, and Presbyter to another, and that the *usus loquendi* of the whole church for centuries has given this restrictive meaning to the word Bishop. The question then is, is it desirable to change this long-established usage, and to restore to the word its scriptural meaning. We have no hesitation in saying that if practicable, it would be desirable; but believing it to be impracticable, we regard the attempt as altogether inexpedient. If all Protestant christendom at the time of the Reformation had reverted to the scriptural usage, and called all invested with the cure of souls, all who had the right to rule, teach and ordain, Bishops, it would have deprived prelatists of an advantage to which they admit they are not entitled, and to which they are more indebted than to any of their arguments either from scripture or antiquity. As we admit the office of a Bishop to be a scriptural office, to all appearance, Episcopalians have that office, and we have it not. In relinquishing to them the title, the churches of the Reformation, in appearance, conceded that their ministers were not Bishops, whereas, if those churches had claimed the title, and thus established a Protestant *usus loquendi* agreeable to the admitted usage of scripture, making the word Bishop mean a minister of the gospel, prelatists would have been forced to the constant avowal of their real doctrine, viz: that prelates are not Bishops but apostles. This would have placed them on their true ground. But as this was not done, and as the usage of all

churches and of common life, has made Bishop and prelate synonymous, we think it as hopeless a task to attempt a change now as to make the word white mean black, and black white. If all who use the English language would agree that black hereafter should mean white, the change might in time be made, though with great difficulty even then, as all books written before such determination was come to, would have to be expurgated. In like manner if all Christian nations should agree to revert to the scriptural usage of the word Bishop, its original meaning might gradually be restored. But for any one portion of the Church to effect that change in the meaning of the word, we hold to be impossible; and if impossible the attempt is obviously unwise. We are glad, therefore, that the motion to substitute the word minister for that of Bishop in the minutes of the Assembly prevailed, and we hope the matter will rest where it is.

Choice of Officers.

The Rev. Charles Hodge was chosen Moderator, the Rev. Revaud K. Rogers, Temporary Clerk; and the Rev. Willis Lord, Stated Clerk in the place of Dr. Engles, whose resignation was tendered and accepted, and the thanks of the Assembly given to him for his services. Four vacancies having occurred in the Board of Trustees of the General Assembly, one by the death of Solomon Allen, Esq., and the others by the resignation of Alexander Henry and Charles Chauncey, Esqs., and of Rev. H. A. Boardman, D.D., their places were supplied by the election of Rev. Courtland Van Rensselaer, D.D., Rev. John Krebs, D.D., Alexander W. Mitchell, M.D. and J. Dunlap, Esq. The thanks of the Assembly were tendered to the gentlemen whose resignations were accepted, for their faithful services; and the following minute was adopted in reference to the case of Mr. Allen, viz: "The Assembly has learned, with much regret, the decease of Solomon Allen, for many years a member of the Board of Trustees of this body, and they deem it but a reasonable tribute to his memory, to record their testimony to the disinterested zeal and unwearied fidelity with which he discharged his various responsible duties as a Trustee of the General Assembly, and also as a member of the several Boards of the Church."

Slavery.

This subject was before the Assembly on several occasions.

It was first brought forward during the reading of the letter from the Synod of Canada. That Synod indulged in the common-places of declamation and fault-finding which abolitionists have rendered so familiar to our ears. Their letter was remarkably deficient in courtesy, violating the common rules of propriety, and betraying such a want of knowledge of facts, and such a lack of due discrimination, that it was difficult for the Assembly to listen to it with patience or respect. A motion was made to arrest the reading of the letter, which gave rise to some discussion. The house finally decided that it should take the usual course; i. e. be read and referred to the Committee on Foreign Correspondence. That committee, at a subsequent meeting, reported an answer, which the Assembly determined not to adopt and transmit. Different members, doubtless, voted for that course from different motives. ¹ Some, because the answer did not meet their approbation; ² others, because they preferred expressing disapprobation of the letter from Canada by silence; and others because they thought indefinite postponement the easiest method of disposing of the subject. While we seriously disapprove of the whole spirit of the Canada letter, we cannot fully sympathize in the strong feeling towards our brethren which several members expressed; much less can we consider their letter as furnishing any adequate ground for breaking off our intercourse with a branch of the church to which we are bound by so many ties. We ought to bear with each other's infirmities. It is an infirmity which easily besets our brethren from the old world to assume that they know, on all subjects, as much more than we do as their country is older than ours. This is a mistake which will gradually correct itself, and our brethren will soon cease to claim the right of speaking to us as children, simply because England is our mother country.

In the letter from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, this subject was brought forward in a much more becoming manner, and an answer, expressing clearly and forcibly the views of our Church respecting slavery, was reported by the committee, adopted and ordered to be transmitted.

The Committee on Bills and Overtures had this matter brought before them in various ways, and submitted in reference to it, the following report, viz:

“Overture No. 17. A collection of memorials and petitions

on the subject of slavery, containing an expression of opinion by the General Association of Massachusetts; seven petitions from a number of ministers, elders, and private members of our Church; five memorials from Presbyteries, viz: the Presbyteries of Beaver, Hocking, Blairsville, New Lisbon, and Albany, and a resolution from the Synod of Cincinnati; all requesting of the Assembly to utter additional testimony on the subject of slavery; or, at least, to re-affirm or explain its former testimony. In view of these memorials and petitions, the Committee recommended the adoption of the following minutes, viz:

“Our Church has, from time to time, during a period of nearly sixty years, expressed its views on the subject of Slavery. During all this period it has held and uttered substantially the same sentiments—believing that this uniform testimony is true and capable of vindication from the word of God; the Assembly is at the same time clearly of the opinion that it has already deliberately and solemnly spoken on this subject with sufficient fullness and clearness, Therefore,

“*Resolved*, That no further action upon this subject is at present needed.”

It was moved as an amendment to the resolution with which this report concludes, that a clause should be added declaring that the decision of the Assembly of 1845 on the subject of slavery, was not to be understood as contradicting or rescinding any previous testimony of the General Assembly on the subject. The majority of the house preferring a direct vote on the report, laid this amendment on the table, and the report was adopted by a large majority. Whereupon, the Rev. R. M. White gave notice of his intention to enter a protest against the above decision; and Rev. Thomas S. Thomas gave a similar notice, for different reasons. In the afternoon, however, Mr. White moved the following resolution: “*Resolved*, That in the judgment of this house, the action of the General Assembly of 1845 [in reference to slavery] was not intended to deny or rescind the testimony often uttered by the General Assembly previous to that date.” As substantially the same thing had been proposed in the morning as an amendment to the report of the committee on Bills and Overtures, some doubt was expressed as to whether the above resolution was in order. But as the house did not reject the amendment, and had not in any way expressed a judgment

contrary to the sentiment which it expressed, it was pronounced in order and adopted, ayes 88, nays 32. The report of the committee was adopted by a vote of ayes 126, nays 29; but Mr. White and five others subsequently, as appears from the following minute, declared themselves satisfied with the subsequent action of the house on this subject, the vote, therefore, should stand *ayes* 132, *nays* 23. The minute referred to is as follows: "We, the undersigned, respectfully protest against the action of this Assembly in the adoption of the report of the committee on Bills and Overtures on the subject of slavery, upon the ground that that report declares further action on this subject to be unnecessary. But as this Assembly has since taken the action we desired, by the resolution subsequently adopted, we ask that this paper be recorded as explanatory of our vote on this subject. Robert M. White, James M. McGee, Josiah D. Smith, A. T. Henricks, Joseph H. Chambers." To this protest the following answer was placed on record: "The Assembly did not regard the additional resolution which was adopted, as taking any further action on the subject of slavery, but as explanatory of the true meaning and design of the resolution previously adopted." It thus appears that these brethren and the Assembly were exactly of the same mind as to what ought to be done, though they differed as to the import of the report of the committee against which the above protest was entered.

The results above indicated were not arrived at without a good deal of debate, which was conducted in an uniformly kind and Christian temper. The two brethren who alone appeared as technical abolitionists, Messrs. Fullerton and Thomas, we fear would lose caste with their own party, could the reasonable and mild spirit with which they presented their views be known. Whatever may be their doctrines, they certainly exhibited nothing of the animus which has distinguished and disgraced the abolitionists as a body. No one could listen to the debate on this subject without being satisfied that in our Church there is a remarkable and cordial unanimity of opinion in regard to it. Should a collision in reference to this matter ever occur, it must arise from misunderstanding, or from a culpable want of a right spirit. It is notorious that, in this country, men are divided into three classes as regards slavery. The one hold that slaveholding is in itself a sin, and ought to be made a term

of Christian communion; that every man who holds slaves, should, after due admonition, be excluded from the Church. This is the distinguishing doctrine of the abolitionists, popularly so called. This is the burden of their writings. This is the ground of their denunciations. This was the offensive principle in the letter from the Synod of Canada. This is the popular doctrine in England and Scotland; one which the Rev. Dr. Cunningham had the moral courage to resist in the Free Church, and over which, as unscriptural and destructive, he bids fair there to triumph. This is the doctrine against which our southern brethren have rightfully protested. They would be justified in abandoning any church which should undertake to enforce any such doctrine. We are not aware that this doctrine had a single advocate on the floor of the Assembly. Even the two brethren above mentioned, who claimed to be abolitionists, carefully avoided taking this ground, and so long as northern churches of any denomination repudiate this unscriptural dogma, there can be no justifiable cause of schism, as far as this matter is concerned, between them and their southern brethren.

A second class go to the very opposite extreme and maintain that slavery is a good and desirable institution and ought to be perpetuated; that is, since there must always be a labouring class of society, it is best in an economical, social and moral point of view, that they should be in a state of slavery. They insist that the slaves are better off, not merely as to physical comforts, but in their moral and social condition, than the free labouring population of any nation in the world. This is a doctrine which had few, if any advocates even among men of the world, in this country, until within a few years; and we know no presbyterian minister who has ever avowed it. We can easily imagine that a Christian man may believe that, in certain states of society, that is, where one portion is in a high state of cultivation, and another in a state of ignorance and degradation, it may be for the good of the whole that the latter should be in bondage to the former, but we cannot see how any Christian can say that this is a desirable condition, or that the ignorance and degradation without which slavery cannot exist, should be perpetuated, in order that one part of society may hold peaceful sway over the other. It is one thing to say that a despotic form of government is in a low state of civilization the best, and another that a

low state of civilization should be perpetuated for the sake of despotism. The doctrine in question is, however so monstrous, it is in such obvious conflict with the principles of the word of God, which require us to do all we can to diffuse knowledge and to elevate the character of our fellow men; it is so opposed to the inherent rights of men, who have an inalienable right to knowledge and the means of improvement; it is so contrary to common sense, inasmuch as it implies that a nation of ignorant, uncivilized men is better off, that is, is in a more desirable state for all the ends of society and of human existence, than a nation that is enlightened and cultivated; it is so opposed to all experience, to the contrast every where exhibited between despotic and free states, and between communities of free men and communities where the majority are slaves; it is so opposed to the judgment of the good in every part of the world and to the opinions of the enlightened statesmen as well as Christians of the south, that we have no fear that even the spirit of opposition or of self-interest in southern men, can lead to its extensive prevalence, and much less that it can ever make any inroad on a Christian church. We do not know a single presbyterian minister, either south or north, who has ever ventured to teach that slavery is a desirable institution which ought to be rendered permanent. This doctrine, as far as we know, is confined to certain politicians and men of the world.

The third class, which includes the great body of our church, and of the enlightened and good men, in every part of our country, maintain the doctrine which our General Assembly has from first to last inculcated, and which was proclaimed so clearly and with so much unanimity last year at Cincinnati. That doctrine is:

1. That since Christ and his apostles did not make the holding of slaves a bar to communion, we have no authority to do so. The Assembly says, they cannot pronounce slave holding a heinous and scandalous sin, calculated to bring upon the church the curse of God.

2. That the laws of many of the states relating to slaves are unjust and oppressive; that it is sinful to traffic in slaves for the sake of gain, or for a like motive, or for the convenience of the master, to separate husbands and wives, or parents and children.

3. That the slaves have a right to religious instruction, and to be treated as rational, accountable and immortal beings; and con-

1845 ✓

sequently that it is the duty of their masters so to regard and treat them, performing towards them all the duties belonging to this relation specified in the word of God. The Assembly, therefore, exhorted masters to remember that they have a Master in heaven, and that they are bound to do unto others, what they would have others do unto them. Such is the obvious sense of the declaration adopted by the Assembly of 1845, which has commended itself to the judgment and conscience of the vast body of our own church and of true Christians in every part of the land. Such has ever been substantially the testimony of our church on this subject. It has always taught on the one hand, that slaveholding is not in itself sinful, and on the other hand that there are many things which slaveholders often do and too often justify, which are sinful; such as keeping their slaves in ignorance, preventing their hearing the gospel, disregarding their conjugal and parental rights, denying to them the right of property, and the like. If the doctrine above stated is agreeable to the word of God, about which we have no doubt, then the church which teaches that doctrine and acts upon it, may allow the denunciations of abolitionists, and the threats of excommunication from other churches, to pass by as idle wind. We are sorry to see that the managers of the Evangelical Alliance, have for the sake of conciliating errorists, and contrary to their own avowed conviction of the rule of Christ on the subject, agreed that slaveholders are to be excluded from that alliance. This is a determination which, if ratified, will cut off all American churches, who determine to adhere to the rule of communion laid down in the scripture. This concession to what is really only one form of the spirit of infidelity, is not a very happy omen as to the results of the long contemplated alliance of Christians.

Though there is this general agreement on this subject throughout our church, it is very evident there is great diversity of sentiment as to what ought to be the action of the Assembly in relation to it. Some take the ground that the Assembly has no right to say a word on the subject; that slavery is a civil institution and lies as much beyond the province of church courts, as matters of government or politics. It is, however, as far as we know, only one here and there who take this extreme ground. It is too obviously untenable for any but excited men to venture to assume. If the Bible recognises the relation of master and

slave as one which may exist in the church, it is a relation with regard to which the church has a right to teach, to exhort, and to exercise her watch and care. If the Bible tells believing masters what is their duty with respect to their slaves, the church is as much bound to see that her members perform those duties, as that they conform in any other respect to the law of Christ. Her duty here, is just what it is in relation to parents and children, subjects and rulers. She is bound to teach parents what their obligations are, to exhort them to act agreeably to them, and to visit their neglect of duty with her spiritual admonitions and censures.

Others again, who readily admit that the Assembly has the right to speak on this as on other subjects involving questions of duty, still hold that the less that is said the better; that such is the state of mind of southern men that they receive with impatience the annunciation even of truths which they themselves are ready to avow, when that annunciation comes from non-slaveholders, and that more good would be done by allowing the matter to rest in southern hands. There may be some foundation for such remarks, but it must be remembered that the General Assembly is not a northern body, it is the representative of the whole church, of the south as well as the north. It should be remembered too that the church is one; it has a common character and common responsibility. If false doctrine, or evil practice prevail in one part of the church, it is the sin of the whole, and of course the obligation to correct the evil lies on the whole. The General Assembly therefore as representing the whole church has not only the right, but is bound to declare the duties of her members, wherever they may live. To the General Assembly therefore other churches have a right to look, and in fact ever have looked for a testimony on this subject. While all this is true and obvious, it may readily be admitted that it is unreasonable to be calling on the Assembly every year to be affirming the same thing. Unless there is satisfactory evidence that the inferior judicatories are in any part of the church, north or south, neglecting their duty or tolerating abuses contrary to the laws of Christ and our common standards, it is evidently proper that those judicatories should not be interfered with, but allowed to pursue their course unmolested. There is a great neglect of parental duty and of the faithful religious education of children

at the north, yet we do not expect the General Assembly to be every year reiterating its admonitions on that subject. It is of necessity left in a great measure to the presbyteries and synod whom it concerns.

Joint Communion.

At an early period of the session of the Assembly, the committee on Devotional Exercises reported, "That a proposition had been made to them by the committee on Devotional Exercises of the Triennial Assembly, meeting in the First Presbyterian Church, to the effect that the two Assemblies unite in the celebration of the Lord's supper, and recommending the adoption of the following resolution, viz: *Resolved*, That the General Assembly accept the proposition of the General Assembly meeting in the First Presbyterian Church, that the Assemblies unite in the celebration of the Lord's supper; and that the committee on Devotional Exercises, in connexion with the corresponding committee of the other Assembly, make arrangements for the same."

The Rev. Mr. Palmer, as the minority of the committee, offered the following resolution as a counter report: "*Resolved*, That in the judgment of this Assembly, it is inexpedient in our ecclesiastical character, to accept the proposition made by the body now holding its sessions in the First Presbyterian Church in this city, in consideration of the relations which these two bodies sustain to each other, but that the whole question of intercommunion be determined by the consciences, and at the discretion of the members severally."

This was one of the most embarrassing subjects which came before the Assembly, and gave rise to a debate protracted at intervals through several days, and was finally determined by the adoption, with great unanimity of the following minute: "The committee on Devotional Exercises having reported to this General Assembly a communication from a similar Committee of the General Assembly in session at the First Presbyterian Church, representing that the said Assembly has authorized its committee to confer with the committee of this Assembly, in relation to a joint celebration of the Lord's supper by the two bodies; it was ordered, that the committee respectfully acknowledge and reciprocate the courtesy of the communication, and say

in reply, that while this Assembly recognises the above mentioned body as a branch of the Church of our common Lord, and for this reason would, as individuals, under appropriate circumstances, unite with our brethren in the celebration of divine ordinances, yet as this Assembly has never in its corporate and official capacity, united with any other body in celebrating the Lord's supper, it judges it inexpedient to institute a new usage at this time.

On motion, the committee on Devotional Exercises was directed to communicate a copy of the above minute to the committee of the other Assembly."

As this invitation purported to come with the sanction of the unanimous consent of the Triennial Assembly, it naturally excited no little surprise. It was notorious that many members of that body held it to be unlawful to commune with slaveholders, and that one of their synods had suspended from the ministry, one of their members for teaching on the subject of slavery, the very doctrine that our General Assembly had publicly avowed, the question naturally arose, How could those members join in an invitation of this kind addressed to a body, some of whose members were known to hold slaves, and which had officially sanctioned doctrines which they had pronounced merited suspension from the ministry? The true solution of this difficulty, we believe to be this. The proposition was never brought fully before that house for consideration. It was simply moved that their committee be authorized to *confer* with ours on the subject, and this motion was adopted without consideration or debate. Had it been brought before them as it was before us, we are bound to believe it would have met with quite as much opposition in that body as it did in ours. The Rev. A. W. Campbell, chairman of the committee on the part of the Triennial Assembly, has furnished through the New York Observer, the true history of this matter. He says: "At Bowling Green, Ky., as I was coming on to this city, a memorial upon this subject, drawn up without my knowledge by an honoured member of the Old School Church, and signed by all the elders of both Presbyterian Churches of that place, was put in my hands. A copy of the same paper was put in the hands of the commissioner to the other Assembly, and, if I mistake not, by him put in the hands of their committee of Bills and Overtures. I was permitted

to attend an exceedingly interesting union meeting of the two Presbyterian churches of Newark, Delaware. The elders of these churches also signed similar memorials to both Assemblies, which were placed in the hands of the lay delegate to the other Assembly, to bring to this city. After my arrival in this place, I saw in the *Christian Observer* a suggestion from the pen of a layman in reference to a joint celebration of the Lord's supper by the two Assemblies. It harmonized with my feelings. I was delighted with the suggestion. I felt as if I could return with higher conceptions of the power and glory of our common Christianity, were I permitted to see two such bodies, so venerable, so learned, so influential, and hitherto so alienated, sit down together at the Lord's table. Without committing any one, and wholly under the impulse of such feelings, I arose in our Assembly and moved that the committee on Devotional Exercises be instructed to confer with the committee of the other Assembly upon this subject. Without debate, unanimously, and almost by acclamation, the resolution passed. Such is the origin of this matter."

It is obvious from his account, the motion, as far as the other Assembly was concerned, was a mere matter of impulse, and that as far as the real movers in the business were concerned, it was intended as preliminary to a motion for the union of the two bodies. Accordingly Mr. Campbell informs us, that he presented the memorial from Bowling Green upon the subject of reunion, praying the Assemblies to appoint committees of conference, and adds, "unanimously, if I mistake not, the memorial was accepted, and a committee appointed, of which I had the honour to be the chairman." This is another evidence of the want of consideration with which such matters sometimes pass large bodies. Here is the momentous question of the reunion of the Presbyterian Church, disposed of as far as the appointment of a committee of conference is concerned, without debate. Yet no man can believe that the Triennial Assembly unanimously regards such a reunion in the present state of affairs as either possible or desirable. How could their abolitionists consent to an union with us, when they would suspend four-fifths of our ministers from their office, and excommunicate one-half our Church members? This matter was brought before our Assembly by a note from Mr. Campbell to the moderator, but as it

seemed to be an unofficial communication, it was simply laid upon the table.

As before stated the proposal for the joint celebration of the Lord's supper, gave rise to a protracted debate. The leading speakers against accepting the invitation, were Dr. R. J. Breckinridge, Dr. W. L. Breckinridge, Dr. McFarland, Dr. Reed, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Torrance. Those in favour of the report of the committee, were Mr. Watt, Dr. Young, Dr. Musgrave, Dr. J. McDowell, Mr. Baker, Dr. Lindsley, Mr. Backus, Judge Grier, Mr. Blauvelt, Mr. Todd. The reasons assigned by the speakers on either side, were very different, and no one is responsible for any reason, other than those assigned by himself. Two, and as far as we are aware, two only, of the speakers objected to accepting the invitation on the principle of close communion. It is well known as a peculiarity of some of the smaller Scotch sects, that they regard the act of communing with an individual or a church, as implying approbation of all their avowed religious doctrines and practices. They will not commune, therefore, with any out of their own narrow circle. The common doctrine of Christians, the doctrine of our church, clearly expressed in her standards and ever manifested in her practice, is that we are bound to commune, on all proper occasions, with all who give evidence of being the disciples of Christ. We have no right to refuse to receive those whom Christ receives, nor to prescribe other conditions of admission to the Lord's table, and to our Christian fellowship, than he has prescribed for admission into his kingdom and into heaven. We believe there is no one principle more deeply rooted than this in the hearts of our ministers and members, nor one for which they would feel constrained to make greater sacrifices. We rejoice therefore that the opposite doctrine was so generally repudiated by those who opposed the report of the committee, and that the true doctrine is so explicitly avowed in the minute adopted by the Assembly.

One, if not more of the speakers, founded his objection on the ground that the celebration of the Lord's supper was the work of an organized church, and could not be properly attended upon, by an ecclesiastical body as such. It is true that to celebrate the Lord's supper is the work of a church, and therefore we as Protestants protest against private communion and private masses

but it is not true that a permanent organized number of professing Christians, united in covenant is alone a church. This is the Brownist or Independent doctrine, utterly opposed to scripture and to presbyterianism. A church, in the sense in which the word must be taken in the above proposition to make it consistent with scripture, is a company of professing Christians. Any such company, wherever met, may if they see fit, unite in the breaking of bread in memory of the Saviour's death, provided they in other respects conform to the directions of Christ in relation to this ordinance. Our Assembly accordingly has often united as a band of Christians in this solemn service. They have not merely resolved to commune altogether with some church, but to commune as an Assembly, that is, the ministers and elders of which it was composed, have celebrated the Lord's supper together. And it would be hard to find in the Bible or out of it any reason against such a course.

The main objections, however, were of a very different character. The grand source of diversity of opinion as to the propriety of accepting the invitation, arose from difference of opinion as to the necessary or natural interpretation of our answer. A large portion of the Assembly thought that the only proper interpretation of an affirmative answer, would be, we recognise you as Christian brethren, and of a negative answer, we cannot thus recognise you. Those who took this view of the matter were of course in favour of accepting the invitation. Many others, however, thought that while declining the invitation, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, would not imply a denial of the Christian standing of the other Assembly, an affirmative answer would imply a great deal more than they were prepared to say. They thought it would imply that there was a state of harmony between the two bodies, whereas the fact is that in many places the two parties are in constant conflict. Attempts to divide congregations, to proselyte, to weaken and in every way to thwart are still to a lamentable extent prevalent. It was thought, it would imply that we were prepared to undo all that had been done, i. e. withdraw our protest against the doctrinal errors against which we have so long lifted up our testimony. It was said that the natural inference from the two Assemblies communing together would be, that there was never any adequate reason for a separation, and that they ought now

to be reunited. It is not wonderful that those who looked upon the matter in this light, should strenuously oppose the measure. We doubt whether there was a single member on the floor of the Assembly, who was prepared to do any thing which he regarded as a recantation of the testimony borne in years past against the prevalent errors of the New Divinity, or who regarded the union of the two churches as at present constituted, as even possible, much less as desirable. The difficulty was to see how the mere act of communing together, which according to the avowed doctrine of the speakers themselves, implies nothing beyond Christian fellowship, could fairly be interpreted as a recantation of our former testimony, or as an avowal of a desire for ecclesiastical union. We do not renounce our Calvinistic creed when we commune with Arminians, nor express the idea that the Episcopal and Presbyterian churches should be united, when we join with Episcopalians in commemorating the death of our common Lord.

There were again a large portion of the Assembly, who would have gladly voted for accepting the invitation, could it have been done with unanimity, but who thought it undesirable after the matter had been so much debated and opposed. The minute adopted was a compromise, satisfying no part of the Assembly entirely, yet generally agreed to as the best thing that could be done under the circumstances. That minute, by distinctly recognising the other Assembly as a branch of the church, by professing towards them Christian courtesy and fellowship, and by placing the refusal of the invitation upon the ground of usage, deprived the refusal of every thing that could wound the feelings either of the other Assembly or the Christian community.

Parochial Schools.

A committee of which the Rev. Dr. James W. Alexander was chairman, appointed by the last Assembly, made an important report on the subject of Parochial Schools, which was read and ordered to be printed for the use of the members. The report closed with the following resolutions, viz:

“*Resolved*, 1st. That, in the judgment of the General Assembly, any scheme of education is incomplete which does not include instruction in the scriptures, and in those doctrines of

grace which are employed by the Holy Spirit in the renewal and sanctification of the soul.

"*Resolved*, 2d. That, in consideration of the blessings derived to us, through our forefathers, from the method of mingling the doctrines of our church with the daily teachings of the school, the Assembly earnestly desire as near an approach to this method as may comport with the circumstances of this country.

"*Resolved*, 3d. That the Assembly regards with great approval, the attempt of such churches as have undertaken schools under their proper direction; as well as the zeal which has led individuals friends of the truth to aid the same cause.

"*Resolved*, 4th. That the Assembly recommends the whole subject of Parochial Education to the serious attention of the church—counseling all concerned to regard the maintenance of gospel faith and order, in the founding of new schools, the appointment of teachers, and the selection of places of education."

On motion of Dr. Young the following additional resolution was adopted.

"*Resolved*, That the whole subject of the report be referred to the Board of Education; that they may, from time to time, report to the General Assembly any further action that may be needed for extending through our churches a system of Parochial Schools."

The whole report was finally adopted and ordered to be printed in the appendix to the minutes.

The only point which gave rise to any debate was that contained in the second resolution, which affirms that "the doctrines of our church" ought to be mingled "with the daily teachings of the school," necessarily implying that there ought to be schools under the control of the church. This brought up the great question, whether Presbyterians ought to join with other denominations and sustain the common schools of the state, or whether they should as far as possible establish Parochial Schools under their own exclusive control. When the matter first came up Dr. R. J. Breckenridge made a short and effective speech against the principle of Parochial Schools; and Dr. Tallmadge spoke in reply and in favour of the report. The subject was then postponed and made the order of the day for the afternoon of the following Thursday. When that time arrived, after a short debate, the discussion was again postponed, and finally the

report was acted upon without having been debated to any extent according to its importance. The principal objections urged against the report were, first, that the whole spirit of the age and of our country is in favour of popular education, that spirit we cannot effectually resist, it must have its course, and therefore it is the duty of every evangelical denomination to throw its influence into the movement, and give the common schools of the country as Christian a character as possible. Secondly, that, since Presbyterians, in consequence of their general intelligence, have an influence disproportioned to their relative number, they are of all denominations the last which should withdraw from this general partnership; they are sure to derive more benefit from it, and to have more power in controlling it, than would be due to them on account of their numbers. Thirdly, that it must be disastrous for any body of Christians to separate themselves from the community, sitting apart as on an insulated tripod, out of communion with their fellow citizens. If they would prosper they must enter heart and hand in the common enterprises of the country, in which they have an interest, and not attempt to set up for themselves. Fourthly, that the diversity of sects to be found in all our towns and villages, renders it impossible that each church should have its own schools. Fifthly, that the plan proposed would involve a vast expenditure of men and money; millions would be required to erect and sustain a school in connexion with every Presbyterian congregation in our land.

These arguments have certainly great weight, but they do not seem exactly to meet the case, nor to counterbalance the considerations on the other side. Dr. Lindsley, Dr. Reed, Mr. Mebane and Dr. Young sustained the report, the latter speaking at some length and with great strength of argument in its support. It is a conceded point that children ought to be religiously educated; that not merely natural religion, but Christianity, and not merely Christianity in general, but in the definite form in which we believe it has been revealed by God for the salvation of men, ought to be inculcated on the infant mind, so that the rising generation shall be imbued with the knowledge of divine truth. Secondly, it may be assumed as conceded that it is the duty of the church to impart this religious education. This is one of the most important parts of her vocation. She received her commission to teach; she is by the will and authority of her author an insti-

tute of education, established to communicate and preserve the knowledge of God, of Christ, of the way of salvation and of the rule of duty. Thirdly, this is a duty which the church cannot devolve on others; she cannot throw the responsibility on the state, for it is the very work God has given her to do, and she might as well look to the state to preach the gospel, as to make disciples of the nations by *teaching* them. Fourthly, the only question then is how the church is to acquit herself of this obligation; how is she to fulfil her vocation as teacher as far as the young are concerned? Can she safely rely upon family instruction, on Sunday schools, on the religious teaching of pastors, separately or combined? It is acknowledged that all these modes of religious education are legitimate and important, and ought to be assiduously used, but they are all inadequate. With regard to family instruction, it is obvious that many parents have no disposition to teach their children the doctrines of the gospel; others who may have the disposition, have not adequate knowledge or skill; so that if the church were to rely on this method, a very large part of the young for whom she is responsible, would grow up in ignorance. As to Sunday schools, they are inadequate for two reasons, first, because in most cases they embrace children of various religious denominations, the instruction given is consequently often too general; and secondly, because only an hour a week is devoted to the subject, a portion of time altogether insufficient to attain so great an end as teaching Christianity to the rising generation. As to pastoral instruction, this is or ought to be the main reliance of the church, and is an agency of divine appointment which no other should be allowed to supercede or weaken. Much in many parts of the church is effected by this means, and more ought doubtless to be accomplished. The pastor by catechetical instruction, by teaching the Bible, and by other means, has it in his power to do a great deal towards attaining the great end in view. The pastor is the teacher, the *διδασκαλος* of his whole people. But at best this brings under instruction only the children of the church-going part of the population, leaving a large portion of the whole number unprovided for. Then again it is rare that the pastor can, or at least does, bring even all the children of his own people under this course of training. Either their number, or the wide extent of country over which they are scat-

tered, or the pressure of other duties, or the remissness of parents, or other reasons, prevent this agency from fully accomplishing the desired end. It is an obvious fact that if the children of the country had no other religious instruction than that derived from the pastor, they would to a vast extent grow up unenlightened by the knowledge of the Bible. Our condition is greatly modified by the peculiarity of our political institutions. In Prussia and other countries of the old world, the law intervenes and requires the attendance of the children on the instruction of the pastor, and makes it obligatory on the pastor at stated times to give that instruction. Every pastor has always under instruction all the children of his district, between the ages of thirteen and fourteen for boys, and eleven and twelve for girls. He is required by law to meet them once a week and take them through a prescribed course, and they are required to attend his instructions, and at the end of the year they are publicly examined. A certificate of having satisfactorily sustained that examination, is demanded of every young person before he can marry or in any way settle in life. Any thing of this kind among us, is of course out of the question. Unless therefore the church can employ some other agency than those already mentioned, she will not accomplish her vocation as the teacher of the people. That other agency is the common school. In all ages of the church and in every part of Christendom it has been considered a first principle that religious teaching should be incorporated with the common school system. This is not peculiar to Protestantism. In Popish countries it ever has been, and still is the great aim of the priesthood to get the children imbued, while pursuing their secular education, with the doctrines of the church. In this they are right. Their error lies not in thus incorporating religion with early education, but in teaching a false system of religion.

Until the difficulty arising from diversity of sects began to be felt, it was the universal rule that the church system, the doctrines of the gospel as held by the church, should be sedulously taught in the schools. To meet the difficulty just suggested, the first plan proposed was to fix upon some common standard of doctrine in which the several sects could concur, and confine the religious teaching within those limits, leaving denominational peculiarities to be otherwise provided for. On this plan in Great

Britain the attempt has been made to unite not only evangelical Protestants, but even Protestants and Romanists in the same schools. This plan has satisfied no party, and though still persisted in, has proved in a great measure a failure. It is peculiarly inappropriate for this country. Because as we are obliged to act on the principle of excluding no class of the people from the common school, this common standard of doctrine, is of necessity that with which the very lowest and loosest of the sects of the country, will be satisfied. It is not only the Episcopalian, Romanist, Presbyterian, Methodists or Baptist that must be satisfied, but Socinians, Universalists, and even Infidels. An immediate out-cry is made about religious liberty, and the union of church and state, if in a public school any religious instruction is given to which any of these parties object.

This has led to the plan of confining the instruction of the schools to secular branches exclusively, and leaving the parent or pastor to look after the religious education of the children. This is becoming the popular theory in this country. It is already difficult, in many places, to retain even the reading of the scriptures in the public schools. The whole system is in the hands of men of the world, in many of our states, and is avowedly secular. Now with regard to this scheme it may be remarked that it is a novel and fearful experiment. The idea of giving an education to the children of a country from which religion is to be excluded, we believe to be peculiar to the nineteenth century. Again, it is obvious that education without religion, is irreligious. It cannot be neutral, and in fact is not neutral. The effort to keep out religion from all the books and all the instructions, gives them of necessity an irreligious and infidel character. Again, the common school is the only place of education for a large class of our people. They have neither parental nor pastoral instruction to supply its deficiency or correct its influence. Again, this plan is so repugnant to the convictions of the better part of the community that its introduction into our colleges has been strenuously resisted. Where is the Christian parent who would send his son to a college from which religion was banished, in which there were no prayers, no preaching of the gospel, no biblical instruction? But if we shrink from such an ungodly mode of education for the few who enjoy the advantages of a classical education, why should we consent to the great mass of the chil-

dren of the country, being subjected to this system in the common schools? Under the plea and guise of liberty and equality, this system is in fact in the highest degree tyrannical. What right has the state, a majority of the people, or a mere clique, which in fact commonly control such matters, to say what shall be taught in schools which the people sustain? What more right have they to say that no religion shall be taught, than they have to say that popery shall be taught? Or what right have the people in one part, to control the wishes and convictions of those of another part of a state as to the education of their own children? If the people of a particular district choose to have a school in which the Westminster or the Heidelberg catechism is taught, we cannot see on what principle of religious liberty, the state has a right to interfere and say it shall not be done; if you teach your religion, you shall not draw your own money from the public fund? This appears to us a strange doctrine in a free country; and yet it is, if we mistake not, the practical working of the popular systems in every part of the Union. We are not disposed to submit to any such dictation. We cannot see with any patience the whole school system of a state, with all its mighty influence, wielded by a secretary of state, or school commissioner, or by a clique of unitarian or infidel statesmen, as the case may be. We regard this whole theory of a mere secular education in the common schools, enforced by the penalty of exclusion from the public funds and state patronage, as unjust and tyrannical, as well as infidel in its whole tendency. The people of each district have the right to make their schools as religious as they please; and if they cannot agree, they have the right severally of drawing their proper proportion of the public stock.

The conviction, we are persuaded, is fast taking possession of the minds of good people that the common school system is rapidly assuming not a mere negative, but a positively anti-christian character; and that in self-defence, and in the discharge of their highest duty to God and their country, they must set themselves against it, and adopt the system of parochial schools; schools in which each church shall teach fully, fairly and earnestly what it believes to be the truth of God. This is the only method in which a religious education has hitherto ever been given to the mass of the people of any country, and the novel

experiment of this age and country, is really an experiment to see what will be the result of bringing up the body of the people in ignorance of God and his word. For if religion is banished from the common school it will be excluded from the whole educational training of a large part of the population. It is an attempt to apply to the whole country, what Girard has prescribed for his college. Under these circumstances the church of every denomination is called upon to do its duty, which is nothing more or less than to teach the people Christianity, and if this cannot otherwise be done thoroughly and effectually, as we are persuaded it cannot, than by having a school in connexion with every congregation, then it is the duty of the church to enter upon that plan and to prosecute it with all her energy. It is often said that we cannot argue from the case of European countries to our own. But the Free Church of Scotland has taught us that it is not only in established churches that the system of parochial schools is feasible. The devoted men who are laying the foundation of the new system in Scotland, never imagined that their duty would be done if they planted a pastor and a church in every parish. They at once, and with equal strength of conviction and purpose, set about establishing a school in connexion with every church. It is as much a part of their system as having ministers or elders. And it should be ours also. A school of this kind, established and controlled by the session of the church, becomes a nursery for the church, the ministry and the whole land. Its blessings are not confined to any one denomination. The people are so anxious to get a good education for their children, that they will not hesitate to send them to a Presbyterian school, if that is the cheapest and best. Do we not see Romish schools crowded with Protestant children, attracted by the reputation of the teacher or the facility of acquiring some trifling accomplishment? If we do not adopt this course, others will. If Presbyterians do not have schools of their own, other denominations will soon have the education of Presbyterian children. Romanists are every where setting up for themselves; and as the principle on which they act commends itself to the judgment and conscience of good people, other denominations will soon follow their example.

The objection on the score of expense does not seem very formidable. The portion of money for each school which comes

from the public treasury is, in most of our states, very small. And if the several denominations adopt the plan of parochial schools, the state will soon be forced to the obviously just method of a proportionate distribution of the public funds, whether derived from taxation or lands or a capital stock. A beginning has been made on this plan in New York, in favour of the Romanists, and what has been granted to them cannot long be withheld from others. But even if we are to be permanently cut off from all support from the state, still the expense can be borne. Any good parochial school would soon sustain itself, and be able to afford gratuitous instruction to those who need it. Nor can we see that we should thus isolate ourselves. We have too many points of contact with the community of which we form a part, to admit of any such isolation. Action and reaction to any degree that is healthful to us or useful to others cannot fail to be kept up. Our having separate churches, pastors and church courts, do not make us a separate people in the country, and we see not why having separate schools should produce that effect. The greatest practical objection to the plan proposed would seem to be the minute division of the population into sects. In reference to this difficulty we would only remark, that a population that can sustain a church is large enough to have a school; and secondly, if the school be good its support will not be confined to Presbyterians. Methodists and Baptists will not refuse to educate their children at all rather than send to a school under the charge of Presbyterians. All experience shows this to be true. We sincerely hope, therefore, that the plan proposed by the report, and sanctioned by the Assembly may be adopted and strenuously prosecuted by the churches. Let the session of the church look out for a competent teacher; let them prescribe the course of instruction, making the Bible and the Catechism a regular part of every day's studies, and we doubt not the plan will meet the concurrence of the people and the blessing of God.

Foreign Missions.

Mr. Lowrie, the Secretary of the Board, laid the report for the last year upon the table, and in an interesting discourse gave a general outline of their past operations and of their plans for the future. After noticing the death of several members and

three missionaries, the report states that the receipts of the year have been \$91,764.28, and the expenditures \$89,814.93, and that of the *Missionary Chronicle* there have been published over 8000 copies, and of the *Foreign Missionary* 13000 copies, and that ten new missionaries have been sent out during the year. They have a missionary at each of the following stations in Texas—at Houston, Victoria, Galveston and San Antonio; four missionaries among the Choctaws, and a school, supported chiefly by the Indians, and designed to accommodate one hundred pupils; among the Creek and Seminole Indians are five labourers and a boarding school of twenty scholars, with buildings for fifty pupils soon to be completed; and a church consisting of ten members. Among the Sac and Iowa Indians there are six missionaries, who have nearly completed buildings for a manual-labour boarding school, to which many natives are desirous of admittance. Portions of the scriptures have been translated, and a synopsis of a grammar of the Iowa, Oote and Missouri languages. Among the Chippewas and Ottowas there are four missionaries, and a school of more than thirty scholars and fourteen native members of the church. The mission has to contend against the whiskey trader and the Roman priest, the latter offering the Indian a religion that will not seriously interfere with his traffic with the former. The Indians, however, are advancing in temperance and comfort in proportion as the influence of the mission prevails. There are thirteen missionaries, male and female at Liberia who have several flourishing schools under their charge. At this mission a larger force is much needed. In India there are stations in Lodiana, Saharunpur, Sabathu and Merat, and connected with these are thirteen labourers, five of whom are natives; and also stations at Allahabad, Futtehghur, Mynpoory and Agra. At all these missions there are scholars, of whom one hundred and seventy are boarded and supported. At Lodiana and Allahabad there are printing presses and book binderies. The press at Allahabad printed upwards of 4,500,000 pages. Tours were extensively made for preaching the gospel, and the distribution of the scriptures, and in short the labours of the missionaries appear to have been abundant.

“In Siam two missionaries have been engaged; there is one at Canton, two at Amoy, and at the Ningpo mission there are ten labourers, four of whom are females.

"In the China missions, the brethren are all diligently prosecuting the study of the language. There are boarding-schools at Macao, Ningpo, and Chusan, with fifty-seven scholars. The press has been removed from Macao to Ningpo, and 3,376,000 pages have been printed since June, 1844.

"Moneys have been remitted to the amount of \$3400, to the Evangelical Society of France, and the Evangelical Society of Geneva, for the support of evangelists and colporteurs among the Romanist population of France.

"A missionary has been engaged for the Jews, who will be ready to enter upon his work. It is considered highly desirable that he should be accompanied by another minister."

The committee to which this report was referred, presented the following resolutions for the consideration of the Assembly, which were adopted:

"1. *Resolved*, That the report of the Board of Foreign Missions be approved and referred to the Executive Committee for publication.

"2. *Resolved*, That this Assembly consider the work of diffusing a missionary spirit among our churches at home, and the consequent spread of the church in foreign lands, as of great importance in itself, and its prosecution a great advantage to any church, and an evidence of God's Spirit among them.

"3. *Resolved*, That while we rejoice over the indications of the increased missionary spirit in some of our churches, we feel called upon also, to grieve that so many do nothing in aid of this cause, and cordially invite such of our brethren as aid the heathen through other channels, to unite with us in the great enterprize of spreading the Redeemer's kingdom, both as a means of reaching the heathen no less directly than by their present mode of operation, and also as a means of increasing the spirit of missions in the church.

"4. *Resolved*, That as a means of awakening a proper spirit in our churches, we recommend to every session prayerfully to consult over this matter, especially in reference to the circulation of the *Missionary Chronicle and Foreign Missionary*; to all our church members to observe diligently the monthly concert; and to the Executive Committee to hold missionary conventions on central points of influence, especially where the spirit of the churches is defective or declining.

"5. *Resolved*, That in view of the fact that by the different fields now occupied, the church is brought into direct contact with three-fourths of the heathen world, with large masses of Mohammedans in India, with Popery in Europe, and with the seed of Abraham, the time has fully come when the whole church should unite as one man in earnest prayer for the divine blessing, and in furnishing the means necessary to carry forward this work.

"6. *Resolved*, That this Assembly, entertaining no doubt of the ability of our churches to sustain this enterprize, recommend that the Board increase, as rapidly as possible, the force at each station, and follow, as far as practicable, the indications of Providence in opening new fields, ever remembering that the greatest ultimate success at each station will be secured by the most thorough and patient instruction of those reached by its instrumentality.

"7. *Resolved*, That as the blessings of the gospel are yet in store for the house of Israel, it is the duty of the church to preach Christ and him crucified to the Jews in this and foreign countries, as well as to the Gentiles; and the General Assembly believe that the time is come for them to engage in this great work, and they would again express their full conviction of the ability of the church to sustain a mission to the seed of Abraham without impeding enlarged and increased efforts for the perishing heathen.

"8. *Resolved*, That as Texas has now become one of the states of the Union, the care of the missions in that state be transferred to the (Domestic) Board of Missions.

"9. *Resolved*, That this Assembly express to all their missionaries, their affectionate sympathy and encouragement. Whilst we exhort and charge all our brethren in the foreign field to be diligent and faithful in their great work, our daily prayer is that the Saviour may be present with them, and that the blessing of the Holy Spirit may rest upon their labours."

Domestic Missions.

The report was read by the, Secretary Dr. W. McDowell, from which it appears that eleven hundred churches and missionary stations have been supplied during the past year, between fifty and sixty itinerant missionaries have been employed; fifty

new churches have been organized, about one hundred places of worship been erected. The report was referred to a committee who at subsequent session brought in the following resolutions, viz:

“1. *Resolved*, That the said report be approved by the General Assembly, and be returned to the Board for publication; and that the board be requested to furnish the stated clerk of the Assembly with an abstract of the report for publication in the appendix to the minutes.

“2. *Resolved*, That the General Assembly have heard with great pleasure of the increasing prosperity and usefulness of their Board of Domestic Missions, and do hereby express their gratitude to the great head of the church for his gracious smiles upon this precious cause.

“3. *Resolved*, That while we rejoice at the increased interest which the churches have manifested in the work of Domestic Missions, yet, in view of the magnitude of the work—the extent of the field to be occupied—and the rapid increase of the population of our country, we earnestly exhort the churches to augment their contributions to this object and to pray with increased earnestness for its enlarged success.

“4. *Resolved*, That it be recommended to *all* the churches under our care to take up an annual collection in behalf of Domestic Missions, and it is hereby again enjoined upon such Synods and Presbyteries as have not acted in the premises, to adopt such plans as seem best suited to secure the contributions of all the church members in its own bounds with system and certainty, and to report its action in this matter to the next General Assembly.

“5. *Resolved*, That the inquiry respecting the propriety of either enlarging the Missionary Chronicle, or issuing a separate periodical, as a channel of communication with the churches on the subject of Domestic Missions, be referred to the Boards of Foreign and Domestic Missions, and that they be authorized to make any change which they may deem expedient.

“6. *Resolved*, That it be recommended to all the churches under our care, to aid, as far as practicable, in the work of Church Extension, and to take up for this important object, a collection *distinct* from that in behalf of Domestic Missions. The General Assembly regret that so few of the churches have

contributed any thing towards this object during the past year, and unless much more should be done during the present year, it would be probably better to abandon the present plan, and to leave this matter to the action of the presbyteries. But it is believed that if the churches generally, would contribute according to their ability, to this object, the present plan would be found advantageous and useful. If each church would contribute only five dollars, the aggregate would amount to at least eighteen thousand dollars.

In view of the demand for greatly increased efforts, which will certainly be made upon the board during the present year, your committee feel that it is very important, not only that they should be sustained by a perfect union of all our churches in this work, but also that all obstructions, so far as practicable, should be removed, and the board, under its responsibility, to the General Assembly and to the church, should be left free to adopt such plans as, in their wisdom, will most effectually accomplish the great object—and believing, as we do, that the act of the last General Assembly, requiring the Board to have two distinct co-ordinate Executive Committees, must produce embarrassment, without adding any thing to the strength or efficiency of the work, the committee submit to the Assembly the following resolution :

“7. *Resolved*, That the resolution of the last General Assembly requiring the Board of Missions to appoint a second co-ordinate Executive Committee at Louisville, be, and the same is hereby rescinded—and the Board are directed to make such arrangements and adopt such measures, as in their view will most effectually promote the interests of this cause, in all sections of the great Missionary field.”

The report was adopted with the exception of the seventh resolution with its preamble, which after a protracted debate was rejected, yeas 47, nays 94.

The Secretary of the Board, who was heard twice at length on the subject, sustained by a very powerful speech from Dr. Musgrave, was in favour of the resolution. It was opposed by Mr. Scovel, secretary of the western committee, by Dr. Wm. L. Breckinridge, Mr. Thomas, Dr. Young, and most of the brethren from the west.

Board of Education.

“The Board of Education presented their annual report. It stated the number of new candidates during the year to be sixty-seven, making from the beginning one thousand five hundred and sixty-seven. Whole number assisted during the year, three hundred and eighty-five; in a theological course, one hundred and twenty-five; collegiate one hundred and seventy-eight, academical fifty-one, stage of study unknown four, teaching to procure funds twenty-seven. During the year forty-eight have finished their studies; four have devoted themselves to foreign missions; six have died; thirteen have ceased to need aid; four have been discontinued; and seven have abandoned study. Cash received during the year, \$34,953 25. Amount paid on orders of the executive committee, \$32,486 26. The report noticed the fact, that, for the last two yeas, the number of candidates has been diminished. The number for the past year, has been decreased by twenty-six. This statement called forth interesting remarks from Dr. McFarland, Dr. Young, and others.”

The following resolutions were adopted in reference to this subject:

“1. *Resolved*, That the training up of young men for the ministry of reconciliation is a great work, on which depend the general interests of religion, and all our hopes of usefulness as a church of Christ, in the regeneration of the world.

“2. *Resolved*, That the General Assembly earnestly enjoin upon the Board of Education to exercise the utmost vigilance in maintaining the high standard of ministerial qualification in regard to piety and scholarship, so often insisted on by former Assemblies, and so urgently demanded by the wants of the church and the age.

“3. *Resolved*, That for the sake of guarding against an indolent, imbecile, or unacceptable ministry, the Presbyteries be enjoined, in their selection of candidates, to have a special regard not only to their piety and talents, but also to their natural disposition and habits, their promise of aptness to teach, readiness to engage in self-denying service, and their general acceptableness of character. And pastors are also enjoined to make themselves personally and thoroughly acquainted with the qualifications, in

these respects, of those whom they recommend to the notice of the Presbyteries.

"4. *Resolved*, That in order more systematically to remind our churches of their responsibility in the education of the rising generation, and to invoke the blessing of God upon this work by united and special supplications, the first Sabbath of December be set apart for the offering up of special prayer to the Lord of the harvest, to send forth labourers into the harvest, and that it be recommended to every minister to preach at that time on some topic connected with the obligations of the church to train up a pious and educated ministry.

"5. *Resolved*, That the annual report of the Board of Education be committed to the Board for publication.

Board of Publication.

The committee to whom was referred the annual report of the Board of Publication, together with certain memorials touching the operations of the said Board, beg leave to propose to the Assembly for its adoption, the following resolutions:

"1. *Resolved*, That the report be approved and returned to the officers of the Board for publication.

"2. *Resolved*, That the experience of each successive year has furnished increasing evidence of the high importance of this enterprise as a means of diffusing those religious truths which our church holds dear, and of promoting purity of doctrine, and a spirit of enlightened piety throughout our bounds, and while in view of the encouraging success which has thus far attended the undertaking, we would thank God for the pleasure he has been pleased to show it; we would call on our ministers and churches to lend a more vigorous support, by their patronage and their prayers to an institution which is continually sending forth streams of healthful influence to make glad the city of our God.

"3. *Resolved*, That we view with much satisfaction, the pious liberality of those friends of the Board, whose contributions have enabled it to make donations of libraries to a number of ministers, destitute churches, and Sabbath schools, and we would earnestly recommend this mode of doing good to all who have it in their power.

"4. *Resolved*, That it affords us peculiar pleasure to find

among the works published by the Board, so large a number specially adapted to the young, and well fitted for a place in the libraries of Sabbath schools, and that we recommend to pastors and church sessions to take measures for introducing these publications generally into their Sabbath schools.

“5. *Resolved*, That in the spirit of recommendations made by former Assemblies, we recommend to our Synods, where it can be advantageously done, to employ colporteurs for circulating the publications of the Board, and also to establish, where it is practicable, depositories, to be owned and managed by themselves.

“Further, in reference to the alterations of works published by the Board, concerning which this Assembly has been memorialized, the committee report, that on examination they find but one instance stated in which such a measure was adopted, and this consisted in the omission of a paragraph on the subject of slavery, in one of the books republished by them.

“Although the General Assembly have never given any explicit directions to guide the Board in re-publishing foreign works, they appear to have made it a rule to themselves never to alter historical statements, never to put sentiments into an author’s lips which he did not hold.

“In the case complained of, the proof reader of the Executive committee in revising for the press, omitted the passage from an apprehension that if it was retained, the church might regard the Board as assuming the right to dictate on a much litigated subject, and that, too, in a way seemingly at variance with the general sentiments of the church.

“He therefore concluded that to omit the passage would be the safer course, and the one least likely to give offence to any portion of the church; for if the Board might publish sentiments on one side of this vexed question, they might also on the other.

“When, however, the subject of this omission was brought before the committee, the passage, by their order, was restored.

“In view of these facts, your committee are of opinion that no censure in the present instance is demanded. And to prevent any ground of blame for the future, they recommend that it be enjoined on the Board to exercise special caution, so as to avoid any thing which might be justly interpreted as a mutilation of books republished by them.”

The McQueen Case.

The General Assembly having in 1845 recommended the Presbytery of Fayetteville to restore, if they saw fit, the Rev. Archibald McQueen, who had been suspended from his office for having married the sister of his deceased wife, that Presbytery referred the case back to the Assembly, praying them to take action in the case. When the case came before the house, Rev. Dr. Reed, of Virginia, moved that the reference be indefinitely postponed. This motion was carried, ayes 75, nays 55. The commissioner from that Presbytery not being present when the vote was taken, requested that it might be reconsidered. A motion to that effect having been made and seconded, Mr. Shaw presented with much earnestness, a series of reasons why the case ought to be considered and decided by the Assembly rather than the Presbytery. The Assembly, however, refused to reconsider, and left the matter where it was last year. The house felt that it was the proper business of the Presbytery to restore as well as to suspend a minister. They alone could tell whether the deportment of the person, in question, merited restoration or not; and for them to call upon the Assembly to do their work, was precisely as though an inferior court should refer to a higher one a troublesome case which they did not wish to have the responsibility of deciding. When a case decided in an inferior court is brought up by complaint or appeal, the higher court is bound to decide it. But it is under no obligation to decide any case merely referred to them, otherwise the Assembly might have all the judicial cases in the whole church thrown on their hands. The prayer of the Presbytery was not that some decision should be reviewed, but that that Assembly should perform an executive act, which it was at full liberty to do or not to do, as seemed wise.

Commissions of Presbytery.

When the minutes of the Synod of Virginia were reviewed, the committee recommended that they should be approved. Dr. McFarland moved that the censure passed by the Synod on the Presbyteries of Lexington and Winchester, for having appointed a commission with presbyterial powers, should be excepted. After some debate it was resolved that the minutes of the Synod be approved, but that so doing the Assembly was not to

be understood as expressing any opinion on those parts of the record which relate to the cases above mentioned. All the arguments urged against the right of Presbyteries to act by commission, or in other words, to appoint committees with presbyterial powers, were founded upon the assumption that the presbyteries derive their powers from the constitution. It was said that a commission of Presbytery was a body unknown to the constitution; to appoint such a commission was to create a judicatory, which the constitution does not sanction; that the constitution prescribes what Presbyteries may do, and beyond those limits, they cannot go. If, however, the constitution gives no power whatever to the Presbyteries; if on the contrary it limits the free exercise of powers inherent in those bodies; if it is of the nature of a treaty between different presbyteries prescribing certain rules according to which they agree to act, then it is evident all the arguments above mentioned fall to the ground.

The least reflection we think must lead to the conclusion that the latter is the true view of the matter. The Presbyteries have certain inherent powers, which they derive from Christ the source of all authority in the church. So long as there is but one Presbytery, or one standing out of ecclesiastical connection with any other, there is nothing to limit the exercise of those powers but its own discretion and the word of God. But as soon as it becomes united with other similar bodies, then they become interested in its acts, and it becomes proper that they should agree upon certain terms according to which they will exercise the powers common to all. Thus, for example, every Presbytery has the right to ordain. If a Presbytery is independent it may ordain any man who it believes has the scriptural qualifications. But if it is united with other Presbyteries, the conditions under which the right to ordain shall be exercised, become a matter of contract, in other words, a matter to be determined by the constitution. This is obviously proper, because a man ordained by one Presbytery becomes thereby a member of Synod, and eligible to the General Assembly, and thus has jurisdiction over all other Presbyteries. Hence all have a right to say under what conditions each Presbytery shall exercise its right to ordain. Our presbyteries have agreed that no man shall be ordained who has not studied theology at least two

years, who has not had a classical education, who cannot write Latin, and read Greek and Hebrew. Were it not for these limitations of the constitution, a presbytery might ordain a man who had studied but one year, or but six months, or who did not know a word of Latin. Again our Presbyteries have agreed that they will exercise no presbyterial power unless three ministers be present. It is obvious this is an arbitrary provision; it might have been five or two ministers, or three ministers and two elders, or any other condition that the contracting parties chose to agree upon. We might thus go through the book and show that every prescription it contains is of the nature of a limitation of the exercise of rights recognised as inherent in the Presbyteries, and which but for such limitations might be exercised at discretion. The same thing is of course true with regard to other churches. According to the episcopal theory, every bishop is independent in diocese, having certain rights and powers derived from Christ, which he can exercise at discretion. If he chooses to unite with other bishops, they agree upon certain rules or canons according to which they will exercise their powers, but they do not get their powers from those canons. It is here as with the states of our union. They have certain powers which inhere in them as sovereignties. Having entered into a treaty with each other, however, they have given up entirely the right to exercise some of those powers, and greatly limited themselves with regard to others. But no man ever thinks of looking into the constitution of the United States as the source of the powers of the several states. It is a treaty limiting those powers. As, therefore, it would be absurd to say that the legislature of New York has no right to contract debts, or to create a committee with powers, because the constitution of the United States is silent on those subjects; it is no less inconsequent to say that a Presbytery may not appoint a commission with presbyterial powers, because the constitution says nothing about such commissions. The only pertinent questions are, first, Does the right to appoint such a commission inhere in every Presbytery? and second, If it does inhere in such a body, does the constitution prohibit its exercise? If the former of these questions must be answered in the affirmative, and the latter in the negative, then it is plain that the Presbyteries have

the right to act by commission, and that the Presbyteries in Virginia were perfectly justifiable in exercising it.

As to the question, whether the right to appoint a commission belongs originally, to a Presbytery, we suppose there can be little doubt. It is difficult to see on what principle it can be denied that an independent Presbytery, trammelled by no contract with other Presbyteries, could not rightfully appoint a committee to act in its name and with its authority and subject of course to its control. No one denies that the acts of such a commission must be subject to the review and control of the Presbytery; because such oversight is not only, on the part of the Presbytery, a right but a duty. We are not aware, however, that any one has ever ventured to say that a Presbytery has not in itself the right to appoint a commission, the whole argument was that it has not the right under our present constitution. Our early history, and the history of all other churches, are too full of examples of the exercise of this right to admit of its being denied. Almost the first page of the records of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, contains an account of a committee sent to Cape May, invested with the power to examine and ordain a candidate for the ministry. And our minutes abound in instances of a similar kind, where commissions have been appointed to examine and decide judicial and other cases, and report their action for the revision of Presbytery, just as the acts of a Presbytery are revised by a Synod. In other Presbyterian churches this is done every year. There can be, therefore, and we presume there is not any question, as to the inherent right of a Presbytery to appoint such commissions. The only debateable point is the question whether that right is taken away under our present constitution.

On this point we would remark first that we heard no argument to show that such was the case, other than that the constitution says nothing about it. But this as we have shown, proceeds on the false assumption that the Presbyteries get their powers from the constitution. It is not enough to show that the power is not granted, because no power is granted. It must be shown that it is taken away. A second remark is, that the prohibition ought to be explicit, and not merely inferential or implied. It is too serious a thing to take away important inherent rights by mere implication. But thirdly, we are not

aware that there is any thing in the constitution which even implies that the Presbyteries have no longer the right to act by commission. It may be said that this may be inferred from the fact, that since the adoption of the present constitution our ecclesiastical bodies have ceased to appoint such commissions, though they did it freely before that time. But even admitting the fact, the conclusion does not follow. Other circumstances may have led to the non-exercise of the right in question. It is only when the church is widely scattered, and the meeting of a whole Presbytery is difficult, or in cases of peculiar emergency, that it is desirable to act by commission. As our church filled up, and Presbyteries became more numerous, this custom became less common. And being unusual in old Presbyteries, it was not generally adopted in new and widely scattered portions of the church. But the fact is not as assumed. The custom of appointing a commission, or a committee with full powers, has never gone out of use. In all our presbyteries it is still common to appoint a committee to instal; which is a Presbyterial act. The same thing is virtually done when a committee is appointed to take part in the ordination of a minister, and the Presbytery adjourn to meet at the time and place appointed. Though none are present but the committee, they proceed to the ordination. Besides this, in various parts of the church, the custom has not been abandoned. Much of the synodical action of the Synod of Kentucky in reference to the Cumberland Presbytery, was by a commission, though involving the standing of licentiates and ministers. We contend, however, that the mere neglect of Presbyteries to avail themselves of this right is no proof that it has been taken away by the constitution. If it existed before, it still exists, unless it can be shown that the constitution expressly, or by necessary implication prohibits its exercise. No express prohibition is contended for, and the necessary implication has not yet been exhibited.

It may be thought that the agreement of the Presbyteries not to exercise any presbyterial power except when three ministers are present, necessarily forbids the appointment of a commission. It, however, only renders it necessary that such commission should include three ministers, if clothed with presbyterial powers. Nothing beyond this can be fairly inferred from that provision of the constitution.

If it be said that all our rules, referring to licensing and ordaining ministers, trying and censuring church members and officers, relate to Presbyteries, and suppose these duties to be discharged by Presbyteries, and therefore forbid by necessary implication, their being performed by a commission of such bodies, it may readily be answered, that if all these were presbyterial powers before the adoption of the constitution, and if all were exercised by the Presbyteries or by commissions appointed by them for that purpose, then these rules do not imply that the Presbyteries may not do, what they did before under precisely similar rules contained in the Westminster Directory. That Directory as clearly implies, as does our present constitution, that to license, ordain, or censure, are presbyterial acts, and yet no one doubts that under that Directory, those acts were performed by commission. Then how can it be inferred that those same rules prohibit now, what was before allowed? The fact is, all these rules are to be the letter complied with, when a Presbytery appoints a commission, subject to its review, and clothed with full powers, for a special purpose, provided such commission include three ministers. We cannot, at present, see any thing in our constitution, that prohibits the Presbyteries from exercising a right which beyond dispute originally belonged to them; nor can we see any ground in reason, for such a prohibition; on the contrary it seems to us, highly important that such power should be recognised, and on due occasion, freely exercised. It is certainly often a matter of great convenience, when a Presbytery is numerous or widely dispersed, that a few competent members near at hand, and able to devote the requisite time to the business, should be selected to discharge some special duty, or to settle some case of discipline. This not only saves the time of the judicatory, but promotes the ends of justice. It gives all parties a better opportunity of being heard. And in case there is dissatisfaction with the result, the Presbytery is still accessible. It is in fact, giving as it were, an additional remedy against error or injustice. The cases are very numerous which would be better investigated and decided by a commission, than by a Presbytery, for the same reason that they could be better dealt with by a Presbytery, than by a Synod or General Assembly. The only real question, however, is, does the constitution take from

the Presbyteries this power? If it does not, then as it confessedly once belonged to them, they still possess it.

Many of the remarks made in the Assembly, referred really to the propriety of a commission of the General Assembly. This, however, is a very different question. Many who contend for the right on the part of the Presbyteries, advance no such claim on behalf of the General Assembly. In our church the Assembly is a creature of the Presbyteries, and can exercise only such powers as the presbyteries agree to commit to its hands. It is a disputed point whether even with regard to the Assembly the constitution is a grant, or a limitation of powers, which belong *jure divino* to such councils. Into that question it is not necessary to enter, because the cases under consideration, referred solely to Presbyteries.

As the house had not the time to enter into the constitutional question involved in this matter, a motion presented by Dr. Lindsley affirming it to be contrary to the constitution and practice of the Presbyterian church, for any of our courts to appoint a commission for the decision of any judicial case, was referred to a committee, who were directed to report to the next General Assembly. The matter being thus brought before the church, we thought it right to call the attention of our readers to it by the foregoing cursory remarks, which occur to us on the first view of the question.

ART. V.—*Lectures on Biblical History, comprising the leading facts from the Creation to the death of Joshua. Designed for the use of families, Bible classes and young people generally.* By William Neill, D.D. Philadelphia: William S. Martien. 1846. pp. 343.

THESE lectures, thirty in number, were originally prepared for the benefit of a Bible class under the pastoral charge of their respected author. Having found them useful and acceptable on other occasions, he has been induced to commit them to the press, to extend the range of their influence. Their principal bearing is, as it ought to be, of a moral and religious character.

The author has evidently endeavoured to make the incidents of the early history of our race a channel of communicating to his hearers or readers lessons of practical wisdom. He has succeeded in presenting those lessons in a style remarkably simple and flowing, and in a manner adapted to awaken and sustain attention. As appropriate to this subject and as interesting in themselves, we here insert two tables relating to the early chronology of the world, prepared by one of our correspondents, the Rev. J. U. Parsons, of Georgia.

TABLE I.—*From the Creation to the Flood, exhibiting 1, the number of years that each Patriarch was cotemporary with the other. 2, The years of the world in which each was born and died. 3, The age of each.*

| | Adam. | Seth. | Enos. | Cainan. | Mahalaleel. | Jared. | Enoch. | Methuselah. | Lamech. | Noah. | Shem, &c. | Anno Mundi. | | |
|------------------|-------|-------|-------|---------|-------------|--------|--------|-------------|---------|-------|-----------|-------------|------|-----|
| | | | | | | | | | | | | Born | Died | Age |
| Adam, | 930 | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 930 | 930 |
| Seth, | 800 | 912 | | | | | | | | | | 130 | 1042 | 912 |
| Enos, | 695 | 807 | 905 | | | | | | | | | 235 | 1140 | 905 |
| Cainan, | 605 | 717 | 815 | 910 | | | | | | | | 325 | 1235 | 910 |
| Mahalaleel, | 535 | 647 | 745 | 840 | 895 | | | | | | | 395 | 1280 | 895 |
| Jared, | 470 | 582 | 680 | 775 | 830 | 962 | | | | | | 460 | 1422 | 962 |
| Enoch, | 308 | 365 | 365 | 365 | 365 | 365 | 365 | | | | | 622 | 987 | 365 |
| Methuselah, | 243 | 355 | 453 | 548 | 603 | 735 | 300 | 969 | | | | 687 | 1656 | 969 |
| Lamech, | 56 | 168 | 266 | 361 | 416 | 548 | 113 | 782 | 777 | | | 874 | 1651 | 777 |
| Noah, | | | 84 | 179 | 224 | 366 | | 600 | 595 | 950 | | 1056 | 2006 | 950 |
| Shem, &c., | | | | | | | | 100 | 95 | 450 | 600 | 1556 | 2156 | 600 |
| The Flood, | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1656 | |

From this table several very valuable points of information are gained. The thought has probably arisen in the mind of every liberal student, "Is there not reason to apprehend that the account of creation and of the early events in the history of the world, such as the garden of Eden, the temptation, fall and expulsion of our first parents, &c. would be greatly corrupted by passing through so many generations, when there were no letters to perpetuate a historical event? Would not the imaginations of men, and the love of the marvellous intermingle much of fancy with truth, in the account transmitted to subsequent generations?"

This sceptical suggestion arises from the idea that the story must have passed through many narrators, and that few opportunities of comparing and correcting one account by another were enjoyed. Look at the table as illustrating these points.

And first, the number of times that the story must be repeated by different persons. Noah and his three sons could receive the account of creation at the second rehearsal, and that through several distinct channels. 1. Adam could relate it to Enos for six hundred and ninety-five years, and Enos to Noah for eighty-four years. Or, 2. Adam, during six hundred and five years could discourse of it to Cainan, and Cainan one hundred and seventy-nine years to Noah. Again, 3. Adam could rehearse it for five hundred and thirty-five years to Mahalaleel, and Mahalaleel for two hundred and twenty-four years to Noah. 4. Adam had four hundred and seventy years to instruct Jared in those sublime facts, and Jared was contemporary three hundred and sixty-six years with Noah. Through these four distinct channels Noah could receive a direct account from Adam. But again, 5. Adam lived till Methuselah was two hundred and forty-three years old, time enough surely to obtain an accurate knowledge of all those facts pertaining to the dawn of created existence; and Methuselah lived six hundred years with Noah, and one hundred with his three sons. And once more, 6. Adam lived to see Lamech, the father of Noah till he was fifty-six years old, and Lamech lived with Noah five hundred and ninety-five years, and ninety-five years with Shem, Ham and Japheth. Through these six channels the account could be brought down to the time of the flood.

Now the directness of this communication is the same as the following. My grandfather was a sergeant in the revolutionary war, and was wounded in the arm by a musket ball. How do I know that, seeing he died before my birth? He related it to his children, among whom was my mother, and she to me. He was contemporary thirty years with her, and she twenty-five years with me, and that fact is as well established, distinct and certain to my mind as any recorded in history. Precisely such was the directness of Noah and his sons' information relative to creation; and at the same time the certainty of accuracy was increased by much longer periods of contemporary life, and a six fold chain of testimony.

II. This table shows how many opportunities there were of comparing and correcting different accounts. The perpendicular column of names shows how many were contemporary with generations before them, and the figures in the horizontal line denote the number of years common to both. Thus, Jared, was cotemporary with Adam four hundred and seventy years, with Seth five hundred and eighty-two, Enos six hundred and eighty, Cainaan seven hundred and seventy-five, Mahalaleel eight hundred and thirty, and with himself nine hundred and sixty-two. The horizontal column of names and the perpendicular line of figures under them, show the generations after them with which each was contemporary, and the length of time. Thus take the name Jared over the perpendicular line of figures, and follow it down, and he will be found to have lived with his son Enoch, three hundred and sixty-five years and survived him, with Enoch's son Methuselah seven hundred and thirty-five years, with Lamech five hundred and forty-eight, and Noah three hundred and sixty-six.

These two combined, show the whole number of generations with which each was contemporary. Thus, Adam was contemporary with none before him; but all after him down to Lamech. Again take the horizontal name Methuselah and trace it along the horizontal line of figures, and you find him contemporary with all before him, till you come to himself; then turn down the column under his name and he is contemporary with all after him down to the very year of the flood, being one hundred years with Shem and his brothers.

In this way it will be found that all the generations from Adam to the flood were eleven. Of all these Adam was contemporary with nine, Seth with nine, Enos ten, Cainaan ten, Mahalaleel ten, Jared ten, Enoch nine, Methuselah eleven, Lamech eleven, Noah eight, Shem and brothers four. Thus there were never less than nine contemporary generations from Adam to the flood, which would give, in one lineal descent, eighty-one different channels, through which the account might be transmitted.

III. Another important point illustrated by this table, is the occurrence of the flood at the precise time, and the only time, when it could have occurred, without contradicting the sacred history, and the chronological account. The reason assigned in sacred history for the deluge, was the great wickedness of men,

for which all were to be destroyed, except Noah and his family. Now, if the flood had occurred ten years sooner than it did, it would have involved Methuselah and Lamech in the destruction of the wicked; for the former lived to the very year of the flood, A. M. 1656, and the latter within five years of it, A. M. 1651. And again it would have involved a contradiction, for if the ark had been completed in fifty instead of one hundred years, and the age of Methuselah and Lamech had been given as it is, it would have brought their death fifty years after the flood! And there is not one year from the creation, at which the date of the flood could have been fixed without involving such a contradiction, till the very date given! This is a very remarkable coincidence; and if the accounts given are fabrications, a most fortunate escape from a fatal blunder.

The results of the second table are no less striking and instructive. Who ever imagined, without making the comparison, that Noah lived to see Abram sixty years old, and that Shem lived to witness all the glorious things transacted between God and Abram, and finally to see him buried and to unite in the general mourning for the father of the faithful! Who would have supposed that Abram lived his whole lifetime, Isaac for one hundred and eight years, and Jacob for forty-eight years with those who for one hundred years of their early life witnessed and assisted in the building of the Ark; who were borne triumphantly in it through the swelling flood, saw the opening heavens, felt the heaving earth when its deep foundatoinis were broken up, and heard the groan of a perishing world! Yet such was the fact, as will be seen by comparing births and deaths in the second table. Noah was contemporary with every generation after him down to Abram; Shem down to Jacob; and Arphaxad down to Isaac; Salah and Eber again down to Jacob, and probably Eber to the twelve sons of Jacob.

Every one disposed to do so, can trace the same facts in regard to the manifold channels of communication from the flood to Abram, Isaac and Jacob, as we found from the creation to the flood. We will only notice here the whole chain from Adam to the fathers of the Hebrews. Three narrations only were necessary to bring the account of creation to those fathers; and a part of the cords entwined in this "cable strong," may be seen from the following collation:

| | | | | | | |
|------|------------------|--|------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------|--|
| ADAM | could narrate to | Enos, Cainaan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Methuselah, Lamech, | could narrate to | NOAH, Shem, Ham and Japheth, | could narrate to | Shem, &c., Arphaxad, &c., Nahor, Abram, Isaac, } Jacob, } |
|------|------------------|--|------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------|--|

Three narrations bring the account to the time when minute and particular history commences; and when the art of inscribing upon papyrus and probably upon parchment was understood. The participators in the awful scenes of the flood lived to see the Pharaohs, the pyramids and obelisks of Egypt, and probably to have those scenes stereotyped on monuments and in hieroglyphics which have come down to us. So that we have the account, in a manner, second-handed from Shem.

We here leave this interesting field of observation to be pursued by the intelligent Christian at his leisure.

TABLE II.—*From the Flood to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.*

| | Noah. | Shem. | Arphaxad. | Salah. | Eber. | Peleg. | Reu. | Serug. | Nahor. | Terah. | Abram. | Isaac. | Jacob. | Anno Mundi. | | |
|--------------|-------|-------|-----------|--------|-------|--------|------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------------|------|-----|
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Born | Died | Age |
| Noah, . . . | 950 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1056 | 2006 | 950 |
| Shem, . . . | 450 | 600 | | | | | | | | | | | | 1556 | 2156 | 600 |
| Arphaxad, | 350 | 438 | 438 | | | | | | | | | | | 1658 | 2096 | 438 |
| Salah, . . . | 315 | 433 | 403 | 433 | | | | | | | | | | 1693 | 2126 | 433 |
| Eber, . . . | 285 | 433 | 373 | 403 | 464 | | | | | | | | | 1723 | 2187 | 464 |
| Peleg, . . . | 209 | 209 | 209 | 209 | 209 | 209 | | | | | | | | 1757 | 1916 | 209 |
| Reu, . . . | 221 | 239 | 239 | 239 | 239 | 170 | 239 | | | | | | | 1787 | 2026 | 239 |
| Serug, . . | 189 | 230 | 230 | 230 | 230 | 165 | 207 | 230 | | | | | | 1819 | 2049 | 230 |
| Nahor, . . | 158 | 148 | 148 | 148 | 148 | 67 | 148 | 148 | 148 | | | | | 1849 | 1997 | 148 |
| Terah, . . | 130 | 205 | 177 | 205 | 205 | | 100 | 130 | 148 | 205 | | | | 1878 | 2124 | 205 |
| Abram, . . | 60 | 175 | 148 | 175 | 175 | | 78 | 101 | 49 | 175 | 175 | | | 1948 | 2123 | 175 |
| Isaac, . . . | | 108 | 58 | 78 | 139 | | | 1 | 76 | 75 | 75 | 180 | | 2048 | 2228 | 180 |
| Jacob, . . . | | 48 | | 18 | 79 | | | | 16 | 15 | 15 | 120 | 147 | 2108 | 2255 | 147 |

SHORT NOTICES.

ART. VI.—*The Mount of Olives, and other Lectures on Prayer.*

By the Rev. James Hamilton, National Scotch Church, Re-

gent's Square, author of "Harp on the Willows," "Life in Earnest," &c. New York: Robert Carter. 18mo. pp. 163.

WHOEVER has read "Life in Earnest" will get this book, if he is able. There may be more profound religious writers than Mr. Hamilton, but we have none more sprightly. The perpetual effervescence and sparkle are sometimes purchased at the sacrifice of some stateliness. We confess ourselves of the number of those who applaud him for the exchange. It is delightful to see such aids to religion. In our busy and hurried age, it is vain to put into men's hands a book over which, with the best intentions, they find themselves growing graver and graver till at last they fall asleep. We defy any one to go to sleep in Mr. Hamilton's company. Let the reader buy and try the volume, and he will know where to go the next time.

The old White Meeting House; or Reminiscences of a Country congregation. New York: Robert Carter, 58 Canal Street. 1846. 18mo. pp. 240.

THIS is rather an entertaining book, and contains many incidental reflections which will prove useful. The reminiscences of the "meeting house," are not exactly those of the "church" of our childhood; but they bear marks of being just and graphic in respect to the particular locality indicated. We would seriously advise the author, who is altogether unknown to us, to disuse italics, in all places where their object is to show the point of the sentence. A number of really striking sentences are spoiled by means of this superfluous aid.

Solace for Bereaved Parents; or Infants die to live. With an historical account of the doctrine of Infant Salvation. Also very full selections from various Authors, in prose and poetry. By the Rev. Thomas Smyth, D.D. New York: Robert Carter. 1846. 12mo. pp. 314.

IT is amazing to us, we will freely own, to witness the fertility of Dr. Smyth, especially when we consider his labours and his most signal success as a parochial minister. His recent blessed ingathering shows plainly that his authorship has not stood in the way of his preaching the gospel. The subject here taken up is an interesting one to every parent. It is also one, in re-

gard to which our confession needed vindication against ignorant or malignant impugners. We have been charged with maintaining infant damnation; and noisy itinerants have gone about the land blaspheming our faith by means of the outworn invention of "infants a span long in hell." Dr. Smyth, with his characteristic industry, has ransacked the libraries, and completely turned the tables on the adversary, by showing that the odious dogma is the genuine progeny of those who assume the name of Catholic, and that the doctrine of Infant Salvation was first advocated and received by Calvinists. The topic is so discussed, as to furnish a solid basis for confidence to bereaved parents. A large part of the volume is taken up with quotations and selections, in prose and verse, and indeed presents us with almost every thing valuable, on this consolatory subject, which our literature contains. It supplies a vacancy in pastoral helps, and will be at hand, as a most appropriate gift, to parents whose hearts have been wounded.

An Exposition of the Law of Baptism; as it regards the Mode and the Subjects. By Edwin Hall, Pastor of the First Congregational Church, Norwalk, Conn. Third edition, revised and enlarged. New York: Baker and Scribner. 1846. 12mo. pp. 200.

THIS treatise first appeared six years ago, and has been well received by the public. The zeal and activity of those who reject infant membership will constantly demand to be met by renewed discussions. The present work has been reviewed by Mr. Carson, the great champion of anti-pædobaptism; and this review is answered in the new edition. In this conflict, Mr. Hall, in our judgment, comes off nobly. He has said enough to silence the oft repeated defiance of Baptist authors, in regard to the exclusive sense "immerse;" alleged to be given by lexicographers. We invite notice, especially, to his authorities from Hesychius, Suidas, and Gazes. He very fairly laughs at Mr. Carson's exposition of the immersion of those in the ark; 1 Pet. 3: 21. He discusses (and this makes his book seasonable) the vexatious question which bigotry has sprung upon us, respecting new translations. The *subjects* of Baptism have scarcely a proportional space in this discussion. Mr. Hall's points are these: 1. The Abrahamic and Christian church are one and

the same. 2. Circumcision and baptism are alike seals of the same covenant, and signs of the same thing. 3. The children of believers, as they were connected with the Abrahamic church, are recognised in the New Testament as sustaining the same relation to the Christian church. 4. There is reason to believe that the apostles and early church acted on these principles. The argument, though brief, is well conducted. We could wish that Mr. Hall had allowed himself more room to discuss the relation which baptized children sustain to the church. It has long been our conviction, that a consistent and thorough carrying out of pædobaptist theory on this point, would lead many of us much beyond our actual practice. We consider the treatise here noticed as a valuable accession to the literature of this subject.

The Simplicity of the Lord's Supper. By Stephen Tyng, D.D. Rector of St. George's Church, New York. New York: Robert Carter. 1846.

THIS very small sermon, or tract, is of great value in our eyes. It states the true, reformed doctrine on this great subject. It makes prominent the commemorative character of this sacrament. And it is silent on several supposed aspects of the Eucharist, which have been pressed too far, by some good men, to the disturbance and perplexity of simple hearts.

A Brief Sketch of the Life of the late Miss Sarah Martin, of Great Yarmouth; with extracts from the parliamentary reports on prisons, &c. New York: R. Carter. 1846. 18mo. pp. 162.

THIS is a character which will shine brighter in heaven than on earth. For three-and-twenty years, this admirable person, of humble condition but exalted mind, devoted all her energies to the religious good of prisoners in Yarmouth gaol. Her means were small, her manners were unpretending in the extreme, but her gentleness, love, diligence, zeal and constancy, wrought wonders. Her soul was congenial with that of the saintly Elizabeth Fry, whose aid she sometimes enjoyed. Miss Martin was a member of the Church of England, but was imbued with evangelical sentiments.

The Antiquities of the Christian Church. Translated and

compiled from the works of Augusti. With numerous additions from Rheinwald, Siegel, and others. By Rev. Lyman Coleman. Second edition. New York: Baker and Scribner. Svo. pp. 557.

ON the original appearance of this work, five years ago, we commended it to the notice of our readers; and this opinion we would now cordially reiterate. It is high time that our people should get their notions of Christian antiquity through some other channels than the sickly, puling, representations of so-called Churchmen. This is a field, if there is any such in the world, in which German erudition and impartiality may expatiate, without fear of bad results. Mr. Coleman's familiarity with these, his residence in Germany, his acquaintance with Neander and other living authorities, and his enlightened zeal for primitive simplicity, have enabled him to produce a work which should not be wanting in any clergyman's collection.

The Great Supper, or an Illustration and Defence of some of the Doctrines of Grace, in Three Familiar Discourses, by Ashbel G. Fairchild. Second edition revised and enlarged. With an Introduction by Rev. Alexander T. McGill, D.D., Professor in the Western Theological Seminary. Pittsburg. Published by Luke Loomis, Agent. Sold also by Wm. S. Martien, 37 South Seventh street, Philadelphia.

THESE discourses of the Rev. Dr. Fairchild, we have not before seen; though we have heard that they were the cause of considerable sensation in western Pennsylvania, and led to an animated controversy. Truth never shuns the light, nor fears fair and thorough discussion. When any advantage is gained over truth, it is always by misrepresenting her true character. Can any Arminian writer be produced who has represented Calvinism as held by the able advocates of the system? If there be such a writer, we should be gratified to know who he is. The object of Dr. Fairchild in these able discourses is, not only to confirm the truth of the "Doctrines of Grace," but to clear these doctrines from the misrepresentations of certain persons by whom they have been assailed. The doctrines of the Presbyterian church, on several important points which are most unpalatable to many, are here vindicated by clear scriptural testimonies, and

by solid arguments. We cordially recommend the work to all who are sincerely desirous of coming to the knowledge of the truth.

The Young Christian's Guide, containing important instructions, with Scriptural answers; designed to establish their Faith, regulate their Affections, and govern their conduct.

By Rev. James Eells, A. M., Pastor of the Church in Westmoreland, New York. Newark, New Jersey. Alfred H. Dennis, 248 Broad Street. 1846.

THIS manual is calculated to be instructive to young Christians, both as it relates to doctrines to be believed, and duties to be performed. Every event which leads men directly to the Holy Scriptures, as the foundation of faith, and the rule of life, deserves encouragement. The reader will find here answers to many interesting questions, expressed in the very words of scripture; and a copious enumeration of other passages which are referred to. The author discovers himself to be a skilful textuary; and that which costs the reader little labour, required much pains and attention in the writer. The sentiments advanced, are highly orthodox, as being purely scriptural. To one or two answers, we might be disposed to make some objection; but even in these, though not expressed exactly to our mind, we believe the author entertains correct opinions. We would then give our recommendation to this unpretending, little volume.

Protestant Episcopal views of Baptism explained and defended,
by J. H. Fowles, Rector of the church of Epiphany in Philadelphia. H. Hooker. 16 South Seventh, 1846.

WE are pleased to find the successor of the Rev. Dr. Tyng walking in his footsteps, and exhibiting such views of the sacraments and their efficacy, as are held by other evangelical Christians. And as far as the author expresses his doctrinal opinions, we have observed nothing which is not orthodox, according to our own standard. And though the writer defends the rite of confirmation, as having its authority from scripture; yet he so explains its meaning as to avoid those notions which are most offensive to other Protestants. We think this little volume will be useful to the members of the Protestant Episcopal church, for whom especially it was intended. It may also be read by others

with profit; as it contains eight concise arguments, for infant baptism, every one of which appears to us to be solid.

God's People kept by God's Power. A Sermon preached by the appointment of the Presbytery of Montgomery, at Wytheville, Va. By the Rev. Henry K. Paine, Pastor of the Presbyterian church Fincastle. Published by the Presbytery. Fincastle, Va.

THIS is a sensible, orthodox sermon. We only doubt respecting the mode of explaining the texts adduced as objections to the doctrine which the preacher undertakes to establish.

The complete Works of Rev. Daniel A. Clark, edited by his son, James Henry Clark, M. D., with a biographical sketch, and an estimate of his powers as a preacher, by Rev. George Shepard, A. M., Professor of Sacred Rhetoric, Bangor Theological Seminary. Second Edition. In two volumes. New York. Baker & Scribner, 145 Nassau Street. 1846. Svo. pp. 480, 440.

MR. CLARK was a sermonizer of unusual strength and vivacity. Some of his separate discourses and tracts attained great celebrity, during his life time; and the volumes now published contain much valuable matter. Without going to the extravagant length of placing the author on the same level with Davies and Edwards, we nevertheless rank him high in regard to argument and style. The engraving which serves as a frontispiece does not strike us as adding to the value of the work.

Lives of the Apostles of Jesus Christ. By D. Francis Bacon. New York. Baker & Scribner, 1846. Svo. pp. 633.

THIS large and elegant volume is full of information and erudition, and treats of a great subject, in a manner which shows originality and taste. At the same time that it is fitted for continuous perusal, as a lively and entertaining narrative, it is enriched with an uncommon amount of critical, hermeneutical and classical learning; derived in part from the best and latest of the German scholars. The author seems to have had the advantages of foreign travel, even in Asia and Africa. The book will maintain a place on the shelves of theologians. Having said this, and agreeing with the writer in most of his statements, we find some of them too bold for us; and are constrained to dissent from

minor opinions, which he offers with unusual confidence. Lest we should be misunderstood, it is just to add, that we now allude to judgments of facts and authorities, to critical rather than to doctrinal differences. As a whole, we esteem it highly, and would gladly aid its circulation.

The Puritans and their Principles. By Edwin Hall. New York. Baker & Scribner. 1846. Svo. pp. 440.

IN the battle waged between hierarchy and the Puritans, we certainly take sides with the latter, though we are not their descendants. We also feel ourselves in far better agreement with the old Puritans, than with the new, and cordially rejoice at every thing which brings to view the doctrines and the spirit of the seventeenth century. It is therefore with unfeigned good will, that we respond to the excellent author, when in castigating the frivolous and ill-natured volume of Dr. Coit, he prays that the peace between us may be unbroken. Mr. Hall has done his work in a way to command our thanks. He begins with the days of Wickliffe, and comes down to the settlement of New England. He discusses the rule of faith, the doctrine of schism, liturgies, church-government, prelacy, succession, and the like. It will not be expected that we should assent to those statements which express the congregationalism of the author: but we welcome the production, as one which will serve the cause of truth.

Letters on the most important subjects during a correspondence of twenty years. By the late William Romaine, A. M., author of the "Life, Walk and Triumph of Faith." Published from the original manuscripts. By Thomas Wills, A. B., Minister of Silver Street Chapel, and formerly of Magdalen Hall, Oxford. From the fifth London edition. New York. 1846. 12mo. pp. 225.

MR. CARTER has done well to give us, in so large a type, a book which will be for the comfort of many an aged disciple. In all the circle of our acquaintance with authors, there is no one who confines himself so closely to one topic, the Lord Jesus Christ, as Mr. Romaine. And among all his writings there are none which we so highly esteem as his letters. Those now presented breathe the same spirit with the others contained in

his collected works. If any are afflicted they may here find what they will confess to be the gospel indeed.

The Moral Tendency of the Doctrine of Falling from Grace examined. A Sermon preached before the Synod of Alabama at the opening of its sessions in 1844. By J. L. Kirkpatrick, Pastor of the Presbyterian church, Gainsville. Published by the Synod. Mobile. 1845.

WE are rather late in coming to the knowledge of this excellent discourse. The aspect of the subject which it presents has been too much overlooked. It is a well-argued series of strictures on the Arminian error. The latter is clearly and we think conclusively shown to impair respect for the character of God, as sovereign in the dispensation of his favours, unlimited in his resources, invincible in his undertakings, unchangeable in his purposes—to impair confidence in the completeness and sufficiency of the offices of Christ, by representing them as failing to secure their ends—to impair confidence in the Holy Spirit as a guide and sanctifier—to appeal, first and mainly, to motives different from the genuine gospel incentives—to turn the soul away from the true sources of strength and perseverance, to others which are fallacious—and to obscure the doctrine of gratuitous justification. Such is a bare sketch of the argument. With the exception of one or two trifling infelicities of expression, the style is accurate, clear and energetic.

The doctrine of the Resurrection of the body asserted and defended; in answer to the exceptions recently presented by Rev. George Bush. By Robert W. Landis. Phila.: Perkins & Purves. 1846. pp. 379.

WE regard this as a very valuable book. It consists of two parts. In the former the doctrine is stated and the argument from reason is considered. In the latter, the scriptural argument is reviewed. Both these departments of the work evince learning, research and ability. An amount of pertinent materials is here presented, which the student of the Bible will find of real value. To say that Mr. Landis has refuted Professor Bush would be saying very little. We have from the beginning regretted that Professor Bush's work was ever noticed by the periodical press, and we reluctantly joined in doing what, at the time, we thought

of very questionable expediency. There are certain works which need no answer. They either are so inconsistent that they refute themselves; or they are in such direct opposition to the strong current of scripture or reason, that they are necessarily soon borne along to oblivion. Both these causes combine to render the speedy death of Professor Bush's book certain. It is self-contradictory, and it is in conflict with what every man and child know to be the meaning of the Bible. It asserts three inconsistent doctrines as to the nature of the resurrection body. First one, then another, then a third is declared to be the only true or possible theory. They are taken up and laid down and mixed together, to the utter confusion of the reader, so that no man is in danger of being converted to a theory which no man can understand. The only power which the book had, arose from its giving the sanction of a man of reputed orthodoxy and piety to the common-place objections of infidels. Had the work been written by a professed heretic or sceptic, it would not have attracted even the short-lived attention which has been given to it. The fact is, Professor Bush, like many other men, entirely mistakes his own powers. He has learning, imagination and eloquence, but he is as remarkably deficient in the ability to conduct rationally an argument, in the power to distinguish between what is sound and what is fallacious, what is pertinent and what is irrelevant and inconclusive, as any man of repute we ever knew or heard of. If an idea pleases his fancy or falls in with his favorite theory, he can prove it to his own satisfaction to be true, by arguments which would excite a smile in the face of any other man. The lamentable shipwreck of reason, we would fain hope not of faith, which he has recently made, in turning Swedenborgian, is only a revelation of the same obliquity of understanding to which the work on the resurrection owes its origin. If Mr. Landis's merit, therefore, was only the slaying a moribund book, we should estimate the value of his labours at a much lower rate than we actually do. In refuting Professor Bush he has presented arguments of permanent value in defence of the truth.

Early Lost, early Saved. An argument for the salvation of Infants. To which are added original and selected poems on

the same subject. By Geo. W. Bethune. Phila. Mentz & Rovoudt. 1846. pp. 252.

THE fact that two works on this subject should issue from the press, the one in Charleston, the other in Philadelphia, at the same time, shows that pastors need some manual of consolation to place in the hands of bereaved parents. All the light that Revelation throws upon the destiny of infants falls on the path which leads to heaven. It is only the gloomy forebodings drawn from a sense of guilt, unappeased by a knowledge of redemption, that creates those painful misgivings, which ministers find it so often necessary to combat. The scattered beams of divine light flowing from the word of God, Dr. Bethune has here concentrated, and brought to bear so directly on this subject that we trust his book may calm many a parent's heart, and lead them to prepare to meet their infant children in heaven.

Sermons. By George W. Bethune. Mentz & Rovoudt. 1846. pp. 301.

THIS elegant volume contains fourteen discourses by one of the most admired of our living preachers. The friends of Dr. Bethune are so numerous that this specimen of his ordinary sermons must find in them a ready and adequate welcome; while those who have not heard him in the pulpit, will be glad to have the opportunity of reading what in hearing has given so much pleasure to others. These sermons are not rhetorical discourses. They are serious, evangelical and earnest exhibitions of saving truths. The doctrines of the Gospel are exhibited with plainness, though in the characteristic attractive manner of the author.

Manliness in youth; a Discourse delivered in the North Dutch Church, New York, and published at the request of the young men who heard it. By the Rev. David Magie, D.D. of Elizabethtown, New Jersey. Svo. pp. 31. Fanshaw, 1846.

THIS is an excellent sermon, rich in appropriate thought, simple, unaffected, clear and nervous in style, and well adapted to make a deep impression on the youthful audience to whom it was addressed. We do not wonder that the publication of it from the press was requested. We have seldom read a discourse with more entire satisfaction.

A Sermon preached in the Presbyterian Church, Jersey City, September 14, 1845, on occasion of the death of David Henderson. By the Rev. John Johnstone, Pastor of said Church. Svo. pp. 39. 1845.

MR. DAVID HENDERSON, whose unexpected and melancholy death gave occasion to this discourse, was a gentleman of peculiar public spirit, activity and usefulness in the society to which he belonged. The mournful dispensation of Providence which deprived him of life, bereaved his family of a most affectionate, exemplary and beloved head; the community of a citizen greatly distinguished for all the social and patriotic virtues; and the Christian church of one of its warmest, most liberal, and persevering friends. Seldom has the stroke of death occasioned in the neighbourhood in which it occurred more general and heartfelt mourning. The reverend author of this discourse, in preparing and delivering it, seems to have felt all the force of public sympathy, of private friendship, and of pious concern for the welfare of the church, and the heavy infliction which it had experienced. He, therefore, calls into view the plain and simple truths of the gospel on the occasion; applies them in an appropriate and affectionate manner; and shows, in the spirit of his text, that "it is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting."

Mary not a perpetual Virgin, nor the mother of God; but only a sinner saved by grace, through the worship and mediation of Jesus Christ, her God and our God. Together with a view of the true position, duty, and liberty of woman, under the gospel dispensation. By the Rev. Thomas Smyth, D.D. Charleston, S. C. Svo. pp. 32. Jenkins, 1846.

THIS ample title page sufficiently discloses the object of the pamphlet to which it is prefixed. Dr. Smyth establishes the various positions here assumed, with that learning, and that force of reasoning of which those who are acquainted with his writings know that he is master. It is truly wonderful that, in the absence of all testimony in its favour, and in the face of so much decisive evidence against it, the papists should inculcate the worship of the Virgin Mary, and insist on her perpetual virginity. It cannot be said that, even in a Protestant country, this is an unseasonable or inappropriate discussion. So large a part of

the superstition and gross idolatry of the church of Rome is connected with the doctrine opposed in this treatise, that we cannot help thanking Dr. Smyth for its publication, and for the ample and satisfactory manner in which he has treated the subject.

The duty of interesting children in the Missionary cause, and how this is to be done. By the Rev. Thomas Smyth, D.D. Charleston, S. C. Svo. pp. 30. 1846.

WE know not a more radical and effectual human means of extending the missionary cause than that which is suggested and urged in this pamphlet. In regard to this, as well as every other department of human duty, we cannot have a better guide than the inspired maxim, "train up a child in the way that he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." When pains are taken to teach our children, from their mother's lap, the misery and danger of the heathen; to show them the duty of feeling for them in all their intellectual and moral desolation: to persuade them that it is a high privilege as well as a solemn duty to contribute the smallest mite toward sending the glorious gospel to the destitute and the perishing; and that this system of contribution cannot be begun too early, or be innocently neglected by any human being, we may be said to be merely pursuing an essential part of their Christian education. We owe it to their own spiritual welfare, as well as to the best interest of the church of God. What interest is more closely bound up with the missionary cause than the great majority of Christians appear to be aware of. Dr. Smyth well exhibits the importance of this subject, and well points out the best means of interesting our children in the hallowed cause of evangelizing the world. We recommend the perusal of this pamphlet, not only to every parent who professes to be a Christian; but also to every father and mother who wish to promote the temporal or eternal welfare of their offspring; firmly believing, as we do, that by training children in the spirit of this discourse, we shall better prepare them for their own real elevation here as well as hereafter.

Exercises at the Ordination and Installation of John Woodbridge, as Pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Greenport, Long Island, November 4th, 1845. New York. Svo. pp. 48. 1846.

THIS is an interesting and instructive pamphlet. It has a value beyond that of the common products of such occasions, inasmuch as it contains a considerable amount of historical information. We think that, in the settlement of ministers, the historical element ought to enter largely into every thing that is preached, and especially into every thing that is printed. This is too much neglected. All the gentlemen who were called upon to officiate on the occasion to which this pamphlet relates performed their respective tasks well. The sermon, by the Rev. Sylvester Woodbridge, Jr. of Hempstead, is an instructive and solemn one. The charge to the pastor, by his father, the Rev. Sylvester Woodbridge, of Westhampton, Long Island, is peculiarly interesting, as marking so much of the parent's heart, happily expressed; and adverting to the unusual and animating fact, that the last of his four sons was that day set apart to the sacred office; and the charge to the people, by the Rev. Henry Clark, of Franklinville, is appropriate and judicious.

History of the Presbyterian Church of Mercersburg, Pennsylvania. By Thomas Creigh, Mercersburg. 12mo. pp. 32. 1846.

WE are rejoiced to see publications of this kind multiplied. It is painful to think that so many churches in our land have neglected the collection of materials for their own history so long, that many of the most valuable have been irrecoverably lost. If we could extend an entreaty to every pastor, and to every church-ruler in the United States, we should beseech them no longer to delay, but, as soon as practicable, to gather up every fragment, and to commit the best narrative in their power to the press. Mr. Creigh, in the pamphlet before us, has executed his task very much to our mind. We wish every congregation in the United States had an equally faithful and able historian.

Burdens to be cast upon the Lord. A Sermon before the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions, at the thirty-sixth annual meeting, Brooklyn, N. Y., Sept. 1845. By Mark Hopkins, D.D., President of Williams College. Boston: Svo. pp. 31. 1845.

WE have read this discourse with more than common pleasure. It is enlightened, original, eloquent and pious. It contains much correct thought, much wise counsel, much happy illustration of

duty, much seasonable warning, much appropriate application of truth to Christian effort, and especially to the Missionary enterprise. May it be widely circulated, and eminently useful.

Zion's Pilgrim, or the way to heavenly Canaan, familiarly illustrated. By Robert Hawker, D.D., Vicar of Charles, Plymouth. New York: Robert Carter. 1846. 18mo. pp. 171.

THE composition here republished has passed through many editions, and has proved itself to be adapted to a very extensive class of evangelical Christians. Some of the opinions of the author have appeared to us unsound; but no objection of this sort lies against *Zion's Pilgrim*. It belongs to a class of which we cannot have too many in the present day; books, we mean, which exalt Christ, and the freeness of his grace, and which dwell more on privilege than obligation, more on love than fear, and more on the gospel than the law.

The Christian Ministry; with an inquiry into the causes of its inefficiency. By the Rev. Charles Bridges, A. M., Vicar of Old Newton, Suffolk, and author of 'An Exposition of Psalm cxix.' From the sixth London Edition. New York: R. Carter. 1846. Svo. pp. 491.

THIS is greatly preferable to all the previous forms in which this standard work has appeared. If the spirit of the author, as manifested in his book, could prevail in all our churches, we are persuaded that a new day would dawn on the earth. No young pastor can be much in the study of such a volume without becoming a better man and a happier minister. It is characterized by scriptural research, sound doctrine, mature judgment, practical detail, exuberance of pertinent counsel, and affectionate, humble devotion. Those things which bear the impress of Episcopalianism are not prominent and not offensive. The large reference to works which treat of the same subject, up to the very latest date, increases its value to the student. Unless we err, there is a growing laxity in parochial labours, out of proportion to the stress laid on learning and eloquence in the ministry. Such a tendency may be corrected by familiarity with works like this. As coming from an Anglican, the remarks on extemporaneous preaching merit special respect;

they are evidently the fruit of experience. To notice and review such books is delightful, because we foresee the delight of every reader whom we procure for them.

Napoleon and his Marshals. By J. T. Headley. In two volumes. Vol. I. New York: Baker and Scribner. 1846. 12mo. pp. 331.

LONG before we knew the author's name, we were attracted by his communications to the New York Observer. The pith and brilliancy of these productions could not but ensure their republication. Mr. Headley is now reckoned, with justice, among the most popular authors of the day. The volume before us is dedicated to General Scott, and is embellished with six plates. It contains ten sketches of the great commander and his group of worthies. The reader will find a view of Napoleon's character, quite remote from that which is presented by English historians; and, in giving this view, the author is frank enough to acknowledge, that his reading of history has entirely changed the opinions which he formerly published. The subject is one of the greatest in human annals, and it is discussed with a vivacity which will make the book a rival of the thousand fictions which are occupying too much the mind of easy readers.

The Discourses and Essays of the Rev. J. H. Merle d' Aubigné, D.D. With an introduction by Robert Baird, D.D., translated from the French, by Charles W. Baird. New York: Harper and Brothers. 1846. 12mo. pp. 466.

THE youthful translator of these discourses has acquitted himself well in his work. His perfect acquaintance with both languages gives him obvious advantages, which we confidently expect to see turned to good account in future publications. Most of the articles which are comprised in this volume are now for the first time given in an English translation. They are all marked with the singular vivacity and the earnest piety, which belong to the distinguished author, who seems to have been raised up in providence to gather and fan into a flame the half-dead coals on the Huguenot altars. Such is the charm which his name carries with it, that we shall not be surprised if the present collection has a wide and rapid circulation. While we cannot conceal our opinion, that Dr. Merle's great strength

lies in historical description, we recognise in these essays and addresses the same qualities, in a less degree. A work of so much soundness, so varied information, and such glowing devotion, must be welcome in every truly Protestant circle.

The First Six Books of Cæsar's Commentaries on the Gallic War, adapted to Bullions' Latin Grammar, with an introduction on the Idioms of the Latin language, copious explanatory notes; and an Index of Proper Names, etc. By Rev. Peter Bullions, D.D., Professor of Languages in the Albany Academy; and Author of the series of Grammars, Greek, Latin and English, on the same plan. Third edition. New York: Pratt, Woodford & Co. 1845. 12mo. pp. 312.

THE reputation of Dr. Bullions, as a grammarian and an instructor, prepares us to receive any classical edition from his hands with peculiar confidence. To speak competently of such a work requires, we know, careful use of it in actual teaching. To this we cannot pretend; but such examination as we have been able to bestow, results in a high esteem of the edition now presented. It strikes a good medium between the naked text, on one hand, and the voluminous apparatus of some learned editions. To all who use Dr. Bullions's valuable series of Grammars, it will be exceedingly convenient. The notation of the quantity, and the references in the margin, are great recommendations. In size and appearance, it is well suited for schools. And as we greatly approve the selection of Cæsar, for the first classic of our boys, we also approve the learned editor's method of dealing with him.

The Apostolical and Primitive Church, Popular in its Government and simple in its worship. By Lyman Coleman, author of 'Antiquities of the Christian Church.' With an Introductory Essay, by De Augustus Neander, Professor of Theology in the University of Berlin. Second edition. Boston. 12mo. pp. 456.

MR. COLEMAN should have the thanks of the American churches, for his care and zeal with which he has devoted himself to a department of Christian research, which, in our country, has been too much surrendered to prelatists. His advantages have been great, and the results are learned and interesting. The short

introduction, by Neander enhances the value of the book; as does the likeness of that venerable man, in the frontispiece. From the materials which the author has gathered, we perhaps should have erected a system more decidedly presbyterian in its character; but, with the exception herein implied, we feel that he is pleading our cause in every page. The resort to antiquity seems thorough, honest, and conclusive. The rise of prelacy is stated in a way which has satisfied many of the ablest judges. The defence of a simple worship, on grounds strictly archaeological, we believe to be as complete as it is reasonable. The work also contains incidental matters which are very important; and among these we would ask special attention to the whole chapter on the psalmody of the Primitive Church. It is not only interesting, in an unusual degree, but instructive and just. The remarks on congregational singing, on the evil influence of secular music, and on the power of sacred song, are in our judgment, worthy of separate publication, and universal regard. While, then, we do not hold ourselves responsible for all Mr. Coleman's conclusions, we prize and recommend his work.

Sacred Philosophy of the Seasons; illustrating the perfections of God in the Phenomena of the Year. By the Rev. Henry Duncan, D.D. Ruthwell. *Spring.* New York: R. Carter. 1846. 12mo. pp. 391.

THE venerable author has gone to his rest since this volume appeared. It is a happy picture of his mind and heart; containing much science, much religion, and much beautiful literature. Many works of this sort have been written, but none which we prize more than this. It is a treatise on Natural Theology, in one of its most delightful provinces. We are glad to know that it is one of a series. There is no work which we would more readily name, to be taken into the country by Christian visitors, or to be read by those who have a taste for natural scenery, horticulture, or vegetable physiology. It is, therefore, with uncommon cordiality and hope that we recommend it to readers of every class, but especially to the tasteful and the young.

Lectures on the Law and the Gospel. New edition, revised and enlarged. By Stephen H. Tyng, D.D., Rector of St. George's Church. New York: R. Carter. 1846. 12mo. pp. 349.

THIS is any thing rather than new theology; being the very matter with which we have been long furnished, from the pens of Nonconformists and Presbyterian theologians. We rejoice that there are some of the Episcopalian denomination who continue to speak such things; we could wish that all in the Presbyterian church were willing so rightly to decide the word of truth. For here we find the law represented as a guide to Christ; we find Christ set forth as the righteousness of the law, answering both its precepts and its penalty, to the utmost of their claims. We find the doctrines of the sinner's "entire inability," and of justification as the free gift of God to faith. If, in certain places, we miss that fulness of statement, in regard to the definite object of Christ's work, which characterizes the older Calvinists, we may remember that the truths propounded are those in which we fully concur, and which we esteem to be the essence of the gospel.

John Maurice; or the effects of a passionate temper.—The Apple-Tree and its blossom.—Richard and Rover.—Who would not pray? a true Narrative.—The Wonders of Vegetation: the Leaf.—Victory of Jesus Christ; a missionary story.—Patty; or Beware of Meddling.—The Search after Happiness; or What is your wish?—The History of Lucy Neville: a true story.—Alice Blake, or the thankful little Girl.

THESE are little books, but, in our esteem, of great moment. They constitute a portion of that literature which the American Sunday School Union is throwing abroad, for the most important part of our population. The adult has his character already formed, and it matters less what he reads; but the child has its character yet to form, and every page and line must leave its impression. We have looked for many years at the labours of the American Union, and have considered the objections which have sometimes been made to them. We do not claim perfection for them; in some respects their performances admit of improvement; but, take them all in all, for ability, variety, attractions, seasonableness, and evangelical piety, we regard their books as among the greatest blessings of our rising race.

Sacred Philosophy of the Season. By the Rev. Henry Duncan,

D.D. Ruthwell. *Summer*. New York: R. Carter. 12mo. pp.

THE remarks which we have made above, upon the former volume of the series, all apply in their full force, to the present seasonable work. It is equally fraught with scientific instruction and evangelical devotion.

Essays in a series of Letters. By John Foster, author of an Essay on Popular Ignorance. New York: Robert Carter. 1846. 12mo. pp. 352.

THIS is a good edition of a work which has long since assumed its place among Christian classics. Instead of any remarks of our own, we prefer to give the following judgment, from the pen of the late Robert Hall. "He paints metaphysics, and has the happy art of arraying what in other hands would appear cold and comfortless abstractions, in the warmest colours of fancy. Without the least affectation of frivolous ornaments, without quitting his argument in pursuit of imagery, his imagination becomes the perfect handmaid of his reason, ready at every moment to spread her canvass and present her pencil."

The Cyropædia of Xenophon, according to the text of L. Dindorf; with notes; for the use of Schools and Colleges. By John J. Owen, Principal of the Cornelius Institute. New York: Leavit, Trow, & Company. 1846. 12mo. pp. 573.

WE consider Mr. Owen as deserving well of the scholarship of the country, by his series of classical editions. All that he does in this way is marked with learning and care. The commendations, which we have already bestowed on his *Anabasis* and *Odyssey*, might here be repeated. We find the same elegance and correctness of text, and the same fulness and variety of annotation. Indeed we do not see what more can be required, by the students in schools and colleges, towards the successful perusal of this delightful historical romance. For the sake of those who may think of using the work, we add, that the grammatical references are chiefly to Sophocles's grammar, and to the school grammar of Kühner.

Documents and Letters intended to illustrate the Revolutionary Incidents of Queens' County; with connecting narratives,

Explanatory notes, and additions. By Henry Onderdonk, Jr. New York: Leavit, Trow, & Co. 1846. 12mo. pp. 264.

THE motto of the book is good: *Posterity delights in details.* The details of this volume belong to a period concerning which we still love to hear. There is something full of promise, in the awakened interest of intelligent inquirers, in regard to all that is recoverable of our national history. And it is by faithful and minute contributions, of the documentary kind, that the basis of sound history must be laid. In a few years more, it will be too late to secure those which are most valuable. The recollections of the aged will soon be buried with them, and even now are becoming more and more like the books of the Sibyl. Such publications as this, therefore, have a value, far beyond the entertainment or instruction of a first perusal. The author is one of the few who fully understand this bearing of antiquarian labour. His work, as he modestly says, "is not a history, but rather a contribution towards a history." It is evidently the product of affectionate patriotism and unwearied diligence. A large number of the documents have never been published before. The anecdotes of a time, which we earnestly desire our children and our children's children may never cease to regard with interest, are worthy of being perused; and we are pleased to observe that the author is preparing another volume, on the Revolutionary Incidents of Suffolk and Kings Counties. Most sincerely do we wish him success in his laudable undertaking.

Revival Sermons. By Daniel Baker, formerly Pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church, Washington city, now of Holly Springs, Mississippi. With an Appendix. Phila. Published for the author, by William S. Martien. 1846. pp. 376.

MR. BAKER has been long and very extensively known, especially at the south, as a successful preacher of the gospel. God has, on various occasions, remarkably blessed his labours, and these sermons will be to multitudes who have profited by his preaching, a very grateful memento of their author. Mr. Baker as a preacher, is doctrinal, experimental and graphic. His discourses evince a sincere desire to convince and persuade those whom he addresses, and from the abundance of scriptural truth which they contain, and from the pointed manner in which that

truth is stated and applied, are remarkably suited to be useful. Few men seem to have greater skill in tracing the evasions of a heart struggling against the truth, or of depicting the exercises of a mind on which that truth has begun to take effect. As the volume has come into our hands just as the last sheets of our review are going to the press, we cannot do more than bespeak for it the favour of our readers.

(*Der Anglogermanismus, eine Rede u. s. w.*) *Anglo-Germanism, an Address delivered to the Schiller Society of Marshall College.* By Philip Schaf. Mercersburg. 1846. Svo.

THE design of this address is to enforce upon the educated German population of this country, the importance of yielding to the force of circumstances, by adopting so much of the English character and culture as will really promote their intellectual and moral advancement, while they hold fast to their natural connexion with the history, learning and religion of Germany, and to those traits of German character in which the English races are defective. At the same time the author takes occasion, less directly and less earnestly, yet strongly, to advise his Anglo-American readers to combine with their hereditary energy and practical wisdom the thorough learning and profound intellectuality of Germany. On this amalgam of the strength and virtue of the kindred races he bestows the expressive name of *Anglogermanismus*. The advice thus offered to his own compatriots we look upon as eminently wise and timely, and we also think the counsel to ourselves not only well meant but judicious, if correctly understood and duly qualified. We shall not even quarrel with the favourite theory on which the practical suggestions rest, the doctrine *decies repetita* of German heads and English hands, but content ourselves with asking whether the distinction between theory and practice, as involved in this discussion, is not one of the chamber-speculations which the author pleasantly charges on his countrymen; whether vast successful enterprises, which effect the character and destiny of nations either for good or evil, can exist without the highest exercise of intellect, as well in their conception as their execution; and whether the speculative part of German literature is not precisely that which all experience has proved to be most worthless, while the really valuable portion has been yielded by

the sweat and labour of her literary drudges, her archæologists, her lexicographers, her compilers, calculators and observers, whose employments are as far from being purely intellectual as those of any legislator, statesman, or projector of internal improvements, whether British or American. We know that this is not the German *Standpunkt*, and that Germans generally if not universally regard their national pre-eminence as springing from their speculative superiority, while the gigantic labours, which have been referred to are considered as a kind of condescension to the notions and necessities of other men. But we have also heard of admirable artisans and mechanics, who despised their own professional performances as mere means of subsistence, while their leisure hours were spent in earning immortality by efforts to discover what is non-existent and to do what is impossible. However unphilosophical their views may be, we shrewdly suspect that they will comfort many a poor Anglo-American under the disgrace of his intellectual inferiority, and even lead some to indulge the audacious hope, that in the end, those who have done most for the cause of God and Man will not be found the lowest in the scale of rational existence, or shut out from any higher place in the universal organism than that of the trudging feet or even that of the contriving hands. The address, like all that we have seen from the same author, is vivacious, clear, original, and simple, which is more than can be said of some devoted Anglo-Germans, whose idea of Anglo-Germanism seems to be directly the reverse of Dr. Schaf's, and to consist in combining, not the strength and the perfection, but the weakness and defects of the two races.

French Orthoepy, or a New System for acquiring with ease the accurate pronunciation of the French Language, by means of elementary sounds. By the Rev. Jonathan Trumbull Ely, Principal of a French and English Boarding School for boys at Rahway, N. J. New York. 1846. pp. 72.

WHILE we feel some doubt as to the practical effect of new methods, in any hands but those of their original inventors, and still more as to the possibility of doing much by books towards the real acquisition of strange sounds, we have no hesitation in expressing our opinion that this little book is a good one of its kind, and displays, not only an intimate knowledge of the

French, (which, as the author says, is almost vernacular to him,) but an acquaintance with the general laws of spoken language, which is seldom found in works so elementary and unpretending.

Prospectus der der Odessaer Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Alterthümer gehörenden ältesten hebräischen und rabbinischen Manuscripte. Ein Beitrag zur biblischen Exegese von Dr. Pinner, Herausgeber des Talmud mit deutscher Uebersetzung. Odessa. 1845. pp. 92. 4to.

THIS book would deserve notice, were it only as a recent publication from so distant a press as that of Odessa. But it has still higher claims to the attention of biblical scholars. A learned Jew of the Karaite or anti-talmudical persuasion, named Abraham Firkowitsch, made a laborious collection of Hebrew manuscripts in the Crimea and the Caucasus, the fruits of which he deposited in 1839 with the Historical and Antiquarian Society of Odessa. The collection was somewhat increased by the subsequent labours of another. In the course of the last year Odessa was visited by Dr. Pinner, a learned Rabbi of Berlin, the editor and German translator of the Talmud, who was so much impressed with the value of these manuscripts, that he prepared this Prospectus or Descriptive Catalogue, which has since been published at the expense of the Society. Besides a number of Talmudical and Rabbinical manuscripts, the list includes fifteen synagogue rolls of the Law or Pentateuch, one of which is referred by an inscription to the year 843, and twenty manuscripts in the book form containing various parts of scripture. Of these last the most remarkable is a volume of 225 parchment leaves, containing the latter Prophets, i. e. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Twelve, in a character perfectly legible, but differing materially from any generally known, and bearing strong marks of antiquity. The pointing is still more peculiar, being not only different in form from the common points, but written for the most part above the letters, while in some places there is a double pointing, and in others none, although the whole appears to have been written with the utmost care and in accordance with fixed rules. Of this interesting codex, the inscription of which dates its completion in the year 916, Dr. Pinner has given a specimen, consisting of a lithographed facsimile of Habakkuk. He has also given

the variations from the common text, some of which he seems to think important, although such as meet our view in turning over the leaves seem to be chiefly of the kind afforded by previous collations. So far as we have seen, indeed, the value of these manuscripts is rather historical and philological than exegetical. The editor himself in his preface speaks of the particular manuscript above described as *sui generis*, and such as he had never met with either in the libraries of Europe or in those of the East, and adds that it is likely to afford new lights in relation to the points, the accents and the masorah, which may possibly open an entirely new path to future grammarians. With all due allowance for the zeal of a discoverer and the bias of a Jewish scholar, we may safely conclude that there is some real ground for these strong expressions. The true state of the case is probably intimated in the following extract of a letter to the Rev. T. S. Ellerby, St. Petersburg, from a friend in Odessa, dated Jan. 27, 1846. "I send you under government seal a book published here about a fortnight ago. It is a description of some very old Hebrew manuscripts, still unknown in Europe, found in the Crimea about six years ago. A Jewish Rabbi, Dr. Pinner of Berlin, the translator of the Talmud, came hither last spring, has examined the manuscript, and has published what I now send you. Some of the Doctor's statements will probably give rise to controversy, but the book contains much that is most interesting and valuable to Hebrew scholars. The manuscripts in question are thought to be the oldest Hebrew manuscripts that are known, and are in good order." In connexion with this last sentence it must be borne in mind that the extant Hebrew manuscripts are far inferior in age to those of the Greek New Testament, so that 500 years is regarded by the modern critics as a very high antiquity. For the quotation above given, as well as for the copy of the work itself which lies before us, we are indebted to the library of our Board of Foreign Missions, to which it was presented by the Hon. Charles S. Todd, lately United States Minister to Russia.

Homer's Iliad. Translated by William Mumford. Boston: Charles C. Little & James Brown. 1846. Vol. I. pp. 452. Vol. II. pp. 524.

A NEW metrical translation of the Iliad, by an American gen-

tleman, is a work having peculiar claims to attention. As however these elegant volumes have come into our hands whilst the last sheet of our journal is passing through the press, we cannot at present speak of their merits. We hope to be able in our next number, to devote a portion of our pages to an examination of a work in which every American may be presumed to take an interest.

The Bible Manual, comprising Selections of Scripture, arranged for Occasions of Private and Public Worship, both special and ordinary. Together with Scripture Expressions of Prayer, abridged from Matthew Henry. With an Appendix consisting of a copious Classification of Scripture Text, Presenting a Systematic View of the Doctrines and Duties of Revelation. By W. W. Everts, Pastor of Laight Street Church. New York. Lewis Colby & Co. 1846.

ALL books calculated to make readers better acquainted with the truths of the Bible, are useful, and deserve to be encouraged. In this volume, we have collected at one view, various passages which relate to the same subject. The object of the author is to facilitate the labours of ministers and others, in finding appropriate scripture texts, for special occasions. The selection of passages, as far as we have examined, appears to be judicious and well adapted to the occasions on which they are to be used. We have observed no sectarian bearing in this volume, which is observable in some manuals of this kind. The appendix contains a large list of texts under particular heads, intended for reference. These, in many cases, will answer all the purposes of a concordance, and may be rendered available, with less trouble than looking them up in a concordance. We would, therefore, recommend this Bible Manual to clergymen, and especially to theological students, who greatly need helps of this kind.

