



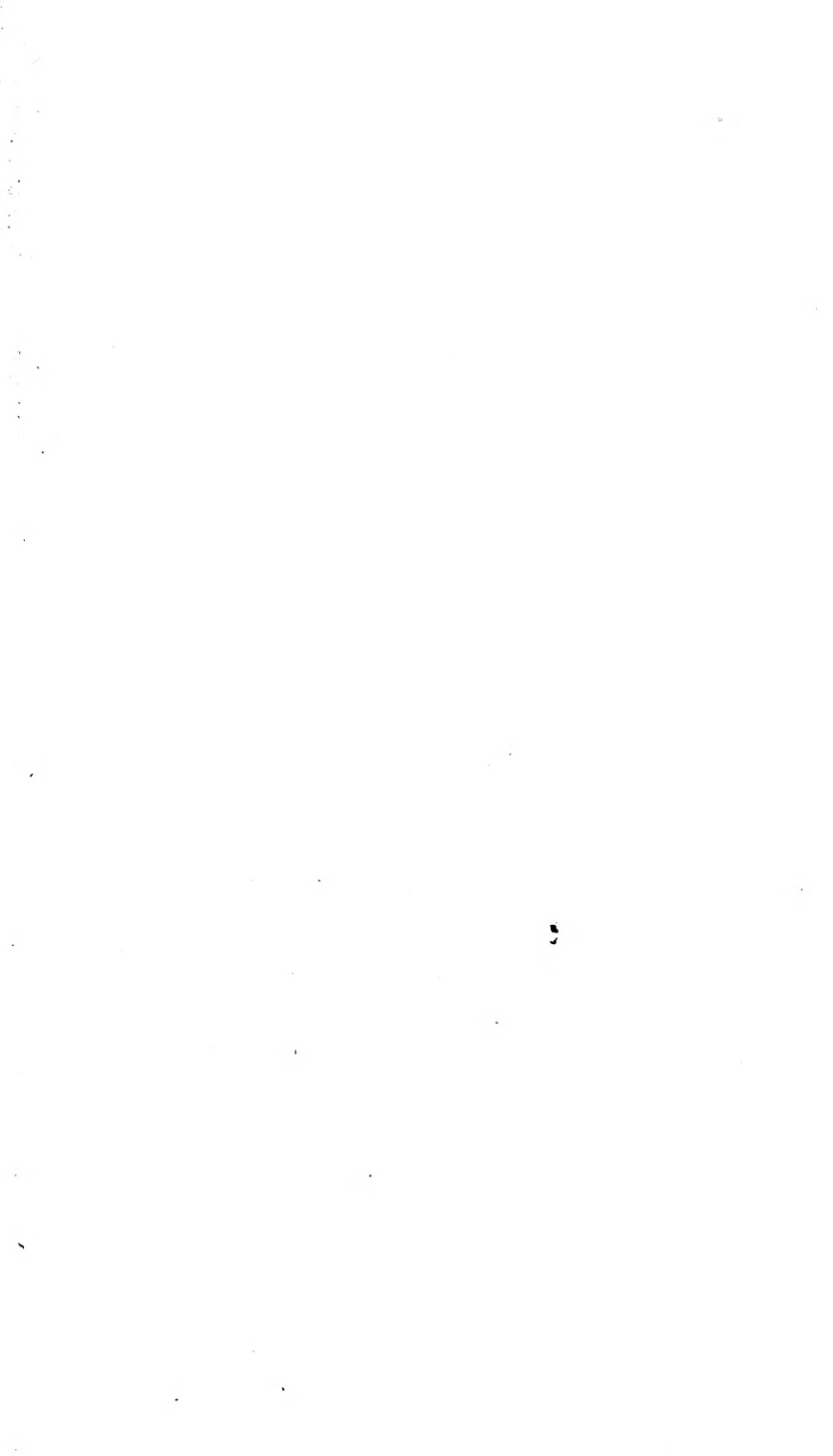
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T H E

Rev. Mr. DE COURCY'S

L E T T E R

O F

SOLEMN COUNSEL,

T O

*A Person in a declining State of Health.*

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A

L E T T E R

O F

SOLEMN COUNSEL,

F R O M

A MINISTER of the GOSPEL,  
(*Rev. Richard D. Courcy*)

T O A

PERSON in a *declining State of Health.*

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“ Knowing therefore the terrors of the LORD, we persuade  
“ men.” St. PAUL.

The kindest office of real *friendship*, the tenderest instance of true *benevolence*, and the noblest act of disinterested *charity*, which we can possibly extend to our fellow-mortals, is, to warn them of their danger through sin, and to point them to the great “ propitiation” of the SON of GOD; in order, that “ being saved from wrath thro’ HIM,” their happiness may be secure in life, death, and eternity. PHILANDER.

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S H R E W S B U R Y :

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## P R E F A C E.

*T*HE following pages (a few alterations only excepted) contain the copy of a manuscript, dispatched, not long since, upon the important errand, specified in the title-page. The person, to whom it was addressed, is now numbered among the dead. But, as ‘declining health’ is a symptom of mortality, that daily occurs; and, as multitudes sicken and die around us, without any real solicitude about matters of eternal moment, and without a single ray of gospel-light, to conduct them in their passage thro’ “the valley of the shadow of death;” the author has been prevailed upon to make that public, which he originally intended, only, as a subject of private admonition to an individual.

In order to apologize for the length of the following letter, as well as to obviate a suspicion of its being fictitious, merely from its prolixity; it seems necessary to inform the reader, that the peculiar circumstances of the patient, whose disorder was extremely lingering, and whose case, in a religious point of view, seemed to require a deliberate and minute consideration, suggested the probable utility

*of enlarging more, in the present instance, than is usual, in private epistolary correspondence. And, it is hoped, that the anxiety of the author, when engaged in a matter of so great importance, will be admitted as an additional plea for his transgressing the bounds of brevity on a subject, where had he said less, he would not, perhaps, have said enough.*

*And now, reader, whether you are in sickness or in health; in youth or in years; know, that the following epistle contains a subject, in which you are deeply concerned; and to which, on that account, I most earnestly and humbly solicit your attention. If you are young, gay, and healthy, you may, perhaps, ask, "Of what use, can an address to a person in declining health be to me?" I answer, Much every way. It may, thro' the divine blessing, teach you how to use health; how to prevent the abuse of it, and how to prepare for its decline. Health, in its utmost vigor, is but mortality in bloom: and life itself is but our death begun. A constitution in its prime, like a full-blown flower, is an inviting object that often tempts the hand of death to crop it. O how necessary, then, to be fore-warned and fore-armed, upon the approach, of an event so awful, and probably so very near! Go, learn what that meaneth "I die daily," & then judge,*

judge, whether you should not be reminded of a truth, which all know, but most forget; or whether it be too soon to prepare, for what may happen the very next hour.—Perhaps you are a little shocked at the sound of the terms “solemn counsel.” But, wherefore? Ought not that advice to be replete with solemnity, which relates to events the most solemn. O consider; is it not solemn, to be sick? Is it not still more solemn, to die? Is it not ten thousand times more so, to be brought to judgment? And, to receive from the mouth of the Judge of heaven and earth, a sentence never to be reversed, for an eternity of either bliss or wo; is not this an event, in all its circumstances so solemn, as to admit of no parallel whatever? To all these scenes, as they will occur in solemn and inevitable succession, you must one day be a witness. Would you wish then to banish the idea of them from your thoughts? Or, are you unwilling to read now, what you will, ere long, see as a solemn fact? God forbid! Rather, let me hope, that you will be neither startled at the title, nor offended at the subject of the pamphlet. Read it with candor: compare it with scripture. And, after you have well weighed its contents in that impartial balance of the sanctuary, may you be constrained

*strained to admit the force of truth, and to bow to its authority. Then you will know, that the great doctrines of the gospel, which treat of subjects of the greatest solemnity, lead no more to melancholy than to levity:—that, to be truly serious and mopish, are as little allied as health and disease, light and darkness:—and that a saving knowledge of the truths of revelation, is the grand cordial for low spirits; the balm of life; the soul's sunshine in death; and the key of paradise. May the grace of God incline you to enter upon the important trial! And may the blessing of Heaven crown the experiment! “Then shall you know, if you follow on to know, the LORD, that his going forth is prepared as the morning: and he shall come unto you as the rain; as the latter and the former rain unto the earth.” Hof. vi. 3.*

A LETTER



A

L E T T E R, &c.

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S I R,

**H**AVING heard, from some of your friends, that your bodily health is reduced to a state of extreme weakness; and that there is cause to apprehend, the present alarming symptoms, attending your complaints, may be the certain forerunners of your near-approaching dissolution: I thought, a few serious considerations, suggested at so critical a time, might be neither unacceptable nor unuseful. As you have often listened, with patience, to my exhortations from the *pulpit*, I have the greater hope, that you will bear with this address from my *study*; more especially, when I assure you, that it proceeds from a disinterested regard for your everlasting concerns. And, who

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knows

knows, how far it may please the Divine Goodness to give that blessing to a *letter*, which may not hitherto have accompanied a *Sermon*? In that case, I shall have abundant cause to bless God, that I have not *written* in vain; and you, still greater reason to praise him, that you have not *read* in vain.

I confess my expectations are raised not a little, when I consider, that I am about to address one, lying under the rod of affliction; and therefore in such circumstances, as generally lead to those solemn reflections, which, in time of health and strength, are banished from the mind as so many impertinent obtruders. If ever the ear of dissipated mortals will listen to the voice of *Wisdom*, or the heart admit her sacred dictates, it will most probably be, at the time that the voice of the *rod* is heard: \*

Under the influence of such hopes, therefore, as the word of God and the nature of affliction concur to inspire, permit me to address you, as a *dying man*; as one, just upon

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\* *In their affliction they will seek me early. Hos. v. 15. Lord, in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer, when thy chastening was upon them. Ps. 26. 16.*

the verge of eternity: for, such you certainly are, and such indeed the writer of this epistle is, even supposing that the largest share of health were the portion of us both. *In the midst of life we are in death*, is a declaration no less applicable to the healthy, than to the invalid. But, considering that the seeds of death, originally sown in the body by the fatal hand of *sin*, begin to spring up in your diseased constitution; and that you feel those pains, which indicate the approach of that great change, which will soon be succeeded by an awful eternity of bliss or wo:—considering, that that health, which has been hitherto preserved by almost a miracle of providence, begins to droop under the hand of pining sickness; and that your constitution (which perhaps you have, sometimes, in a vain-glorious fit, imagined to have been proof against disease) is now at last obliged to yield to the various shocks and injuries it has received:—considering too, that, in all probability, the declarations of the physician, the opinions of friends, and the apprehensions of the afflicted patient himself, all unite in pronouncing you a *dying man*:—is there not the greatest propriety

priety in my addressing you as such, now that perhaps your complaints appear to acquire gradual strength, and to baffle, at once, the skill of physicians and the power of medicine?

Consider then, Sir, (and it will even do you no harm, to *conclude*) that you are a *dying man*:—that in a little, perhaps a very little time, you will be gone, and your place shall know you no more for ever:—that your days, which always fled *swifter than the post*,\* now fly with still greater velocity, as they draw nearer to their final conclusion:—that the sands in your glass are just run out, and that the few remaining ones, ere they are all exhausted, as with so many voices, call upon you to redeem the time, and ponder your latter end:—that DEATH, the inexorable messenger, is making swift and sure advances toward the object of his solemn commission, and is just stretching forth his resistless and relentless hand, to cut the brittle thread of life:—that the same messenger is, as it were, presenting you with a copy of the *death-warrant*, signed and sealed by the hand of HIM,

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\* Job, 9, 25.



from whom are the issues of life :—that in a very short space, *the King of terrors* will arrest you as his prisoner; carry you into a *land of darkness, where all things are forgotten*;\* and separate you for ever from all the busy scenes of life, in which you have been conversant :—and that, as soon as the actual separation of soul and body takes place, your immortal part must instantly pass to the tribunal of God; there to receive that sentence, which shall be publicly, solemnly, and irrevocably confirmed, by the decisive judgment of the SON of GOD.

Tho' you may have known these things formerly in theory, yet I fear, the consideration of them never had a due influence upon your heart and life. Had this been the case, they would have been attended with the most happy consequences to yourself, at the same time that the effects would have administered the most pleasing sensations to your friends. But it is to be feared, you have treated these deep matters with that degree of indifference, peculiar to the fluctu-

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\* Job x. 21, 22.

ating Sceptic, whose business it is to speculate upon every thing, and believe nothing. Whatever may have been your views formerly, it is incumbent on you to get such a knowledge of things now, as will introduce a sort of *realization* of them into your inmost soul. Formerly, you *talked* about death and its consequences: but now you are (perhaps) actually *dying*: and it concerns you deeply, to bring the solemn scene as near to you as possible, in order that you may *feel* the subject, and be no longer contented with a distant representation of the matter.

Permit me further to observe, that in your present awful situation, with death, judgment, and eternity in view, it behoves you to make a serious retrospect to your past life, and impartially to examine your heart, by that infallible touchstone, the *Word of God*. I am well aware that the scrutiny may give you pain; but remember, it may on that account, be proportionably salutary. *Let us search and try our ways,*\* is an injunction as indispensable, as it is important and bene-

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\* Lam. iii. 40.

facial. Hence David prays, *Search me, O GOD, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.* † And in concurrence with the same petition, he says, *I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.* ‡ Yea, we are positively commanded by GOD himself, to enter upon this heart-searching work of self-scrutiny. For, *Thus saith the LORD of Hosts, consider your ways.* §

If, however, you feel a disinclination to the work, from a dread of inward remorse, and a fear of anticipating horrors, which I pray God may never be your portion; suffer me to sustain the office of a *remembrancer* to you. And if, in executing so important a task, I should take upon me to speak both plainly and faithfully, you will be candid enough, I hope, to attribute my plain-dealing, not to a love for severity, but to a love for truth, and a concern for your soul. Besides, you know who hath said, *Thou shalt in any*

† *Psalms* cxxxix. 23, 24.‡ *Psalms* cxix. 59.§ *Hag.* i. 5.

*wife reprove thy neighbor, and not suffer sin upon him.\**

Consider then, Sir, that, *As soon as you were born, you went astray.* You were ushered into the world, with a nature replete with enmity against God, his truth, his dispensations, his laws. This principle of universal rebellion in all the powers of the soul, and all the members of the body, the scripture calls, *the carnal mind.* † This is the fountain of corruption; the origin of every evil; and the root of all practical wickedness. This constitutes, what is emphatically styled, *The plague of the heart.* § And because it is a *connatural* malady, the word of God denominates us *Transgressors from the womb.* \*\* As this original pollution is the source of our apostasy; the *knowledge, the feeling conviction* of it, lies deeply at the root of genuine conversion to God: and without it, all mere outward reformation is but like skinning over a wound, whitening a sepulchre, washing the outside of the cup, or lopping

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\* Lev. x'x. 17.

† Rom. viii. 7.

§ 1 Kings viii. 38.

\*\* If. xlvi. 8.

off a few outward branches, while the root and trunk remain in the ground. A radical cure of sin must begin at the heart, in a conviction of our total ruin by nature.

That *you* have been under the influence of this in-born corruption, this in-bred enmity of heart against God, let your whole life, from the follies of child-hood up to the rebellions of adult years, bear witness. How early did this corrupt bias break forth in the desires of your heart, the words of your mouth, and the actions of your life! Perhaps you can recollect scenes, in which you very soon commenced a practical rebel against the LORD; and in which, you fully exemplified that mortifying description of human nature, in the book of *Job*, *Man is born like the wild ass's colt*;\* with a disposition, brutally stupid and refractory. And, if, during the years of your necessary subjection to parental authority, and under the discipline connected with a liberal education, you were kept within the bounds of tolerable decency: yet, how quickly did you cast off all fear, both

\* *Job*, vi. 12.

of parents, and of God? and give a sad proof, that mere *human* cultivation, unassisted by divine grace, is but like a temporary dam, opposed to a swelling stream! How soon were the dictates of reason, the clamors of conscience, the admonitions of parents, and the restraint of education, forced to give way, before the impetuous torrent of your headstrong corruptions.

After your arrival at manhood, what a scene must present itself to your view! Look back. Remember, if you can, the instances of your hardness and impenitency. Are they not without number? Do they not teem with aggravations? Can you recollect them, without fear and confusion? Were not some of your sins of a very deep dye? equal in hue to the crimson or the scarlet? or even black as hell itself? Did they not call for vengeance? And is it not of the Lord's mercies that you were not cut off in the midst of them? When *crossed* in the dispensations of Divine Providence, did you not toss and kick '*like a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke*?' \* and rage,

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\* Jer. xxxi. 18.

with impatience, *like a wild bull in a net?*\* When *bleſſed*, did you not forget the author of your bleſſings, and convert his very mercies into an occaſion of finning againſt him? Did you not *make proviſion for the fleſh to fulfil the luſts thereof?* § How often did your conduct ſay to the Lord, *Who is the Almighty, that I ſhould obey him?* † *I deſire not the knowledge of his ways.* ‡ —You have been frequently in perils, urgent and numerous; and your deliverances have been great beyond expectation, and gracious, infinitely ſo, beyond your deſerts. But, inſtead of *praiſing the Lord for his goodneſs, and declaring with your heart and life his wonderful works to the children of men,* ¶ you inſtantly forgot your danger, and the all-gracious hand that ſnatched you from it. You have, perhaps, ſometimes, ruſhed into ſcenes of moſt hazardous temptation, with your eyes open; and, through the impetuofity and wilful preſumption of your conduct, have ſet God at defiance, and as it were courted your deſtruction. And yet, when a miracle of mercy

\* *Iſa.* li. 20.      § *Rom.* xiii. 14.      † *Exod.* v. 2.

† *Job* xxi. 14.

¶ *Pſalm* cvii. 8.

hath interposed to rescue you from the impending danger, self-fought and self-procured, what return did you make unto the Lord? Instead of admiring his goodness and seeking *his favor, which is better than life*, you virtually trampled on the mercy that saved you from the jaws of death and the pit of destruction; and returned to your former course of ingratitude and rebellion, with as great vigor, and as little remorse, as ever.

Sometimes, the LORD hath been necessitated to cross you in your temporal affairs; to afflict you in your person, or in your family. While his chastening was upon you, what protestations of repentance did you make! and with what seeming humbleness and contrition did you lie under his mighty hand! But alas! when the chastisement was over, all your resolutions evaporated into empty air. Your promised *goodness was like the morning cloud, or the early dew that goeth away*.<sup>\*</sup> So that you have to answer for the guilt of broken vows, and solemn engagements flid in the very birth. Yea, no sooner did the

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\* *Hef. vi. 4.*



rod drop from the hand of relenting mercy, than you lifted up the fist of wickedness † against a gracious Sovereign, and sinned against him with a high hand and a stretched-out arm. Although, while the finger of God touched you, a dread of his impending indignation forced you, like *Pharaoh*, to say, *I have sinned, the Lord is righteous, and I am wicked.*\* Yet as soon as the storm subsided, like the same impenitent and incorrigible monarch, you *sinned yet more and hardened your heart.* ‡

And yet, after all these complicated provocations of offended Majesty and injured mercy; methinks, I behold the footsteps of Divine Goodness pursuing you still, and hear the voice of Infinite Long-suffering, weeping over you, and saying, *How shall I give thee up Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim? Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together.* ¶

Great and manifold as the offences already

† *Ist.* lviii. 4.

‡ *Exod.* ix. 34.

\* *Exod.* ix. 27.

¶ *Hof.* xi. 8.

mentioned, may be, there are still some behind, of greater enormity and more grievous aggravation; from which your conduct has not been exempt. Consider, Sir, how great your *religious advantages* have been, and how great must have been your guilt, in proportion to your abuse of them! You have been blessed with a relation to *pious parents*, who have taken not a little pains to infill the great truths of *revelation* into your mind; who have *advised* you; *reproved* you; *warned* you; *prayed* for you; and *wept over* you. A connexion with other godly relatives, though more distantly allied, has introduced you to similar privileges. You have shared in their addresses to the throne of grace, and have been often an ear-witness to their heavenly conversation. You have often heard them declare *the great things God had done for their souls*,\* with an intent of provoking you to seek after the same inestimable blessings. And when you were in the height of your sinful career, you have been made to feel *the wounds of a friend* † in some salutary reproof, given you, perhaps, by an

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\* *Psalms* lxxvi. 16.

† *Prov.* xxvii. 6.

old companion, who had once been your associate in iniquity, but now wished to bring you with himself, into the road to heaven. But alas! have not all these advantages, denied to thousands, been lost upon you? Have you not to regret, that parental instruction has been despised; the admonition of relatives disregarded; and the counsel of friends cast behind your back? Must it not fill you with exquisite compunction, to reflect, that you have very, very often, made a parent's heart to bleed, and have given melancholy occasion to friends, to mourn for you in secret places, because of your stubborn opposition to their united counsels? And will not the *sighs*, the *tears*, the *prayers*, and the *reiterated admonitions* of both, rise up as so many witnesses against you, unless the grace of God interpose?

But, you have been favored, moreover, with the unspeakable privilege of hearing the *gospel*; that *word of reconciliation*; that message of peace and good-will to men; which is the crowning mercy in our longest list of blessings. In these *glad tidings of great joy* to sinners, you have had a full offer of life,  
thro'

thro' the abounding grace of God, and the complete propitiation of his co-equal Son. This offer has been made you in the call of *Christ's* ministers, who have again and again exhorted you to *chuse life that you might live.*\* But you have *made light of these things*: † you have not given full credit to their message; and by *unbelief* (that *damning* sin) you have *rejected the counsel of God against yourself*, ‡ and provoked him to *swear in his wrath that you should never enter into his rest.* § By not receiving the gospel *in the love of it*, you have avowed your disapprobation of God's method of saving sinners thro' JESUS, and have *crucified to yourself the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.* ¶ And tho' sometimes the flames of *the mount that burned with fire* \*\* have flashed in upon your mind with irresistible horror, and scorched your conscience with inexpressible anguish; yet you have never fled for refuge from this *fiery* Law, †† to the blood of the Lamb, that you might be saved from its curse thro'

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\* Deut. xxx. 19. † Mat. xxii. 5. ‡ Luke vii. 30. § Heb. iv. 3. ¶ Heb. vi. 6. \*\* Heb. xii. 13. †† Deut. xxxiii. 2.

Him ; but have continued still on the confines of Mount *Sinai*, tho' you were in danger every moment of perishing under the *extreme maledictions* which issue from it. Neither the terrors of the law, nor the charms of the gospel, prevailed upon you to flee from the wrath to come.

By your attendance upon a preached gospel, you have acquired a speculative knowledge of the plan of Salvation, it holds forth. This, though in certain cases, a distinguished blessing, has proved to you an eventual curse. For, hereby you have (after the manner of all self-deceiving professors, who hear the word, but do it not) procured to yourself the aggravated method of sinning against gospel-light, as well as against the convictions of natural conscience. Thus, you become more inexcusable than thousands, because *you knew the gospel in theory, but rejected and disgraced it in practice.*

Consider then ; and O, for your soul's sake, consider it seriously, Sir ; that the retrospect to your past life is truly an awful one.—What **MERCIES** abused ! What **DELIVERANCES** forgotten ! What **PRIVILEGES** slighted ! What **SINS** committed ! What **GOODNESS** contemned !

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What

What COUNSEL despised! What LOVE trampled upon! What WRATH treasured up! What rebellion against GOD! What injury to FRIENDS! What ruin to YOURSELF! What a SAVIOR overlooked! What a SALVATION spurned! What a GOSPEL disobeyed! What THREATENINGS trifled with! What PROMISES disbelieved! What precious TIME lost! What TALENTS misapplied! What OPPORTUNITIES disregarded! But above all; What GUILT incurred! And what a GOD provoked!

When I view the awful consequences attendant upon this many-linked chain of rebellions, I am induced to address you, not only as *a dying*, but as a *dead man*;—*dead*, by the sentence of God's righteous law—*dead*, in trespasses and sins—*dead*, to every thing of a truly sacred nature; and obnoxious to that dreadful penalty, *the second death*, which is the consummation of misery, and the final wages of iniquity. *To die*, in such circumstances, is to lie under the curse of a violated law; to fall into the hands of a sin-avenging God; to carry the guilt of innumerable transgressions to the bar of infinite justice; to leave the world unforgiven, and unconverted; to feel the gnawings of *the worm*  
*that*

*that dieth not; and to plunge into that fire which shall never, never be quenched.*

And does not the apprehension of these things move you? Is your heart so steeled, and your conscience so callous, that the consideration of your extreme danger leaves no relentful impression upon your mind? Can you reflect on the uttermost wrath of God, without a single sensation of horror? Dare you meet your sins, set in array before you, and not stand appalled at the sight? Can you grapple with Almighty vengeance? Can you *dwell with everlasting burnings*? \* Are the awful threats of incensed sovereignty to be trifled with? Do you suppose, that infinite veracity will falsify, when it says, *The wicked shall be turned into hell*? † Can you look *upward* to the bar of God?—*downward*, to the jaws of death, and the pit of destruction?—*backward*, to your past life?—*inward*, to that mystery of iniquity, your *heart*?—and *forward*, to the boundless eternity, opening to your eye?—Can you, I say, take this *five-fold* view of the awful scene in which you are on all sides surrounded, and stand

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\* *Isa.* xxxiii. 14.

† *Psalms* ix. 17.

totally undismayed, upon the very confines of the invifible world? No. Let me indulge the hope, that your heart, although fo long immerfed in iniquity, is not altogether feared; and that there fubfifteth, now at leaft, fome faint defire to liften, patiently, to thofe fuggeltions of a friend, which once you may have been difpofed to reject, as the attack of an enemy. Be affured, I mean to act the part of a friend; and that, in the moft important fenfe of the word: I wifh to be a friend to your beft interefts.

If I have been rather fevere in your apprehenfion; let me ask, *Is there not a caufe?* A finner, upon the brink of the grave, is neither to be trifled with, nor flattered: fince adulation or negligence in fuch a cafe, would be abfolute cruelty. Wounds, that have been long feftering, and that threaten death, fhould not be tickled with a feather, or fkinned over with a palliative: they fhould be fearched to the bottom, and made to feel the fcripture-probe: otherwife they will be *healed flightly*, \* and break out with deeper and more wide-fpredding malignity.

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\* Jer. vi. 14.



Having now, laid before you your guilt, and its aggravations, may I not fondly hope, that you are ready to adopt the publican's cry, *God be merciful to me a sinner?* † to join in the jailor's grand inquiry, *What must I do to be saved?* ‡ and to take up the self-bemoaning lamentation of poor *Ephraim*, *Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn thou me, and I shall be turned?* ||

Should such be the subject of your anxious inquiries, Lo! I have good words and comfortable to bring you, from the volume of inspiration. There, in that fair garden of God, stands the *tree of life*, which furnishes poor diseased sinners, with the *balm of Gilead*; whose fruit is the life of the world, and *whose leaves are for the healing of the nations*. There the SAVIOR of SINNERS shines, like the sun in the firmament, in all the heavenly lustre, suitableness, sufficiency, and glory of his grace, There he is exhibited as *Jehovah our righteousness, mighty to save to the uttermost, all who come unto God*

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† *Luke* xviii. 13. ‡ *Acts* xvi. 30. || *Jer.* xxxi. 13.

*through him.* Hear how graciously he opens his commission, as *the messenger of the covenant*, and in what language of inexpressible consolation he describes the contents of it! *The Spirit of the LORD GOD is upon me, because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek: he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.\**

In order that you may entertain suitable conceptions of his high office; of his personal qualifications for it, and of the glorious manner in which he hath executed it, consider I. *Who he is*: II. *What he has done*.

I. He is, *the brightness of his father's glory, and the express image of his person*; \* possessing an union of essence with him, in all the glorious attributes and perfections, peculiar to Deity: for, *in him dwelleth ALL THE FULLNESS OF THE GODHEAD bodily*. † The inspired writings give him the divine titles of **JEHOVAH**; ‡ of the **I AM**; § of *the only*

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|| *Is.* lxi. 1, 2. \* *Heb.* i. 3. † *Col.* ii. 9. ‡ *Jer.* xxiii. 6. *Isa.* vi. 3. compared with *John* xii. 41. § *Exod.* iii. 14, compared with *Acts* vii. 30, and *John* viii. 58.

*wife God our Savior*; || *the true God*; ¶ whom all the angels of God are commanded to *worship*; \*\* and all men to *honor*, even as they honor the Father. †† Exalted titles and dignities these, which the oracles of heaven would never have attributed to a mere *creature*; and which can be the proper claim of *Emmanuel*, only as he is, in full co-equality, the *Fellow* ‡‡ of the Almighty. But, that it might not be supposed, such divine epithets are names of compliment, intended only to describe a subordinate or a *derivative* God; the scriptures of truth take care to ascribe to the LORD JESUS CHRIST, all those perfections of *nature*, which are declarative of existence underived, and of *glory* incommunicable to any created being whatever. Hence the distinguishing characteristics of his glorious person, are, *wisdom* §§ and *knowledge*, in all their infinite and exhaustless treasures;—*Power*, |||| almighty, unlimited, and irresistible;—*Glory*, ¶¶ supreme and incomprehensible;—*Omnipresence*, \* by

|| *Jude* xxv. ¶ I *John* v. 20. \*\* *Heb.* i. 6, compared with *Psa.* xcvi. 7. †† *John* v. 23. ‡‡ *Zech.* xiii. 7. §§ *Col.* ii. 3. ||| I *Cor.* i. 24. *Rev.* iv. 11. *Rom.* i. 4. *Mat.* xxviii. 18. ¶¶ *Psa.* xxiv. 7---10. *James* ii. 1. *Rev.* xviii. i. *John* xvii. 24. \* *Psa.* cxxxix. 1---12.

which

which he filleth the higheft heavens, and eftablifheth his feat in the loweft hell ;—*Omnifcience*, † equally privy to the tranfactions of the univerfe, as to the moft fecret re- cefles of the human heart ; and to which the gloom of midnight is no more a veil, than the blaze of day ;—*Self-Exiftence*, ‡ that prerogative peculiar to the divine effence, which crowns all the other attributes with infinite and inexhauftible fulnefs.—Such, together with the moral perfections of *juftice*, immaculate *holinefs*, inviolable *truth*, boundlefs *mercy*, and *loving-kindnefs*, are the inherent and natural qualities of that divine Perfon, who, though *made lower than the angels* § in his humiliation, neverthelefs *thought it no robbery to be EQUAL WITH GOD.* ||

In further proof of the ftrict corre- fpondence of his titles with his perfections, and of his perfonal glory founded upon both ; view him in thofe *works*, which exhibit an univerfal attestation to the important truth ; and, as with ten thoufand voices, proclaim

† *John* xvi. 30. and *Rev.* ii. 23, compared with *Jer.* xvii. 10.

‡ *John* viii. 58, compared with *Rev.* i. 18. § *Heb.* ii. 7.

|| *Phil.* ii. 6.

his *eternal power and Godhead*. The creation of all things, is attributed to him, as the LORD GOD OMNIPOTENT; while, to support and superintend the universe, is no less a proof of his supreme sovereignty and unremitting care. *By him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, as the Agent, and for him, ¶ as the End.* By his almighty *Fiat*, unnumbered worlds were created out of nothing; so that *the things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.* § His infinite wisdom, which, in concurrence with his divine power, furnished materials for the grand machinery of the universe, arranged them in all that order, beauty, and perfection, which crown the heavens, and adorn the earth; which exhibit a system infinitely-diversified, and yet harmoniously one;

“ Where order in variety we see,  
Where all things differ, and yet all agree.”

¶ Col. i. 16.

§ Heb. xi. 3.

As he is the Creator, so he is also the Supporter of the universe. *By him all things consist.* † Were he to withhold his hand, or to withdraw, for one single moment, his all-sustaining influence; creation, in all its parts, and through all its powers, would feel an instant shock, that would reduce it to its primitive chaos of darkness, disorder, and inaction: for, in nature, as in grace, CHRIST is the *life* of the world. So that, as long as the sun continues to shine; the moon and the stars, *which he hath ordained*, to communicate their borrowed light; the planets to move in their prescribed stations, with a regularity as exact, as their velocity is prodigious; the seasons, to roll in constant and unvaried succession; or the animal and vegetable worlds, to put forth their respective productions, with punctuality and profusion: so long the heavens will declare the *Redeemer's* glory, and the earth shew his handy-work; while both will unite to publish, in silent, yet irresistible eloquence, the supreme dignity of his person; and, in full confutation of every soul-mouthed blasphemer, to

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† *Col. i. 17.*

announce to men and angels, that Christ is GOD *over all, blessed for evermore.*\* If in his works, so glorious, and so fair; *himself*, how wonderous then! Even the vast furniture of the universe, with all the assembled beauties of heaven and earth, are but the shadowy *out-skirts* of the glory of HIM, whose Divine perfections no tongue can express; no heart can comprehend or conceive; and no works whatever, fully delineate:—LORD, *what is man*, then, that *he* should be singled out as the favorite of such a Savior?

When the essential dignities of his person are taken into consideration; how mysterious! how condescending! how gracious! that he should stoop so low as to become *man*! and thereby disarray himself of all that majesty, splendor and glory, annexed to *the form of God*!† This is that distinguishing *mystery of godliness*, which *angels desire to look into*,§ with admiration and delight; which saints contemplate with inexpressible transport and triumph; *viz.* that GOD *was manifest in the flesh*!‡ that the High and lofty One, who in-

\* Rom. ix. 5.

† Phil. ii. 6.

§ 1 Pet. i. 12.

habited eternity, put off his robes of royalty, and put on the humble garment of humanity, together with an innumerable train of sorrows, issuing, at last, in ignominy the most complicated, and dissolution the most excruciating! Hence his name is called WONDERFUL; \* EMMANUEL, GOD *with us*. † Incomprehensible wonders centre in the constitution of his person. Being GOD and man in one CHRIST, all the extremes of finite and infinite, of power and weakness, of glory and humiliation, of riches and poverty, form the mysterious contrast in his character, as our incarnate Messiah: but a contrast this, big with divine significancy, in the grand affair of our salvation. As *man*, he became our *Representative*, our *Surety*, our *Days-man*, our *Substitute*, our *Sacrifice*. By the assumption of our nature, he became capable of suffering; and in correspondence with the condition and requirements of the new covenant, he fulfilled the law, in his life, and gave ample satisfaction to justice, by his vicarious death. As GOD, he communicates unutterable glory to every part of his mediatorial undertaking. So that the

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\* *Is.* ix. 6.      † *Mat.* i. 23.



sufferings and obedience, of his human nature, receive infinite sufficiency from the perfections of the divine, to which it is united. The blood, which purchased our pardon, procured our ransom from captivity, and expiated our guilt, is called by the ineffimably-precious and glorious title of *the blood of God*:\* and the righteousness, which renders us accepted at the tribunal of infinite justice, and ascertains our title to everlasting glory, is *the righteousness of God*. † Having accomplished the work, which law and justice required of him, he is seated at the Father's right hand as King of saints, and Head of the church: and, that he might have in all things the pre-eminence, *God hath given him a name, which is above every name, that at the name of JESUS every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is LORD, to the glory of God the Father*. ‡

Thus possessing infinite dignity in his person, and communicating infinite merit to his sufferings and obedience, he is in every point of view, qualified for being the mediator of the

\* Acts xx. 28.

† Rom. iii. 21, 22.

‡ Col. ii. 9, 11.

new covenant. Men and angels are commanded to do him homage as such; whilst all the ends of the earth are exhorted *to look to him and be saved*. He is the sure, the immovable foundation laid in Zion, for wisdom, holiness, and righteousness; and there is none other. As the infallible *Prophet* of his church, he is *Wonderful, Counsellor* †; the only person in heaven and earth, who is able *to open the book with seven seals*; \* to reveal the secrets of his Father's counsels; and to teach the mysteries of his kingdom. As our great *Melchisedeck*, he possesseth an unchangeable priesthood; hath offered up the great atonement for sin, and carried the merit of his sacrifice into the Holy of Holies.

As our *King*, he fights the battles of his church militant; goeth forth conquering and to conquer, till sin, Satan, the world and death are made his footstool. Thus considered in his person as God-man, and in his mediatorial offices as *Prophet, Priest, and King*, he is inestimably precious to them that believe; *the chief among ten thousand*.

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\* *Isa.* ix. 6.

*Rev.* v. .9

II. But what hath he DONE for us men, and for our salvation?—*That*, which excites the astonishment of angels, the envy of devils, and the triumphant praises of redeemed finners!—*That*, in which human and angelic beings durst not have so much as engaged!—*That*, which exhibits a more illustrious display of all the attributes of the Godhead, than all the glories of creation!—*That*, which reconciles, in the sweetest harmony, the opposite claims of mercy and truth, justice and peace!—*That*, which brings the highest honors to Jehovah, and secures the richest grace for perishing finners!—And *that*, in the exalting of which, heaven and earth, creatures animate and inanimate, are summoned to unite. *Sing, O ye heavens, for the LORD hath DONE it: Shout ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into Singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein, for THE LORD HATH REDEEMED JACOB, and glorified himself in Israel.*\* This is, what JESUS hath done. He hath redeemed finners. He hath paid down a ransom-price, by the sovereign application whereof, their souls are delivered, now, from the captivity under sin and Satan, and through

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\* *Iſa.* xliv. 23.

which

which, their bodies shall be hereafter ransomed from the power of the grave. He hath borne the curse of the law; hath trodden the great wine-press of the wrath of God; hath carried our sorrows, and sins; hath satisfied the awful demands of divine justice; hath conquered death, and him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; hath wrought out a deliverance from hell, and opened a way to the once-forfeited inheritance of eternal life! He hath finished the transgression, made an end of sins, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness.\*

And is not this good news, Sir? that infinite mercy hath provided a Savior, who in his *person* is so great, and in his redeeming *work*, so glorious? Is it not, in every point of view, adapted to the deplorable condition of ruined sinners? and is it not especially suited to the surrounding miseries of your own state, in particular? What the news of pardon is, to a condemned criminal; of liberty to the galley-slave; of an act of grace to the imprisoned and insolvent debtor; of health and life, to the diseased and dying:—all that, and ten thousand

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\* *Dan. ix. 24.*

times more, is the proclamation of forgiveness and peace in the gospel, to condemned finners! Glorious tidings! Well might a choir of angels be commissioned at the nativity of *Christ*, to announce such *good-will* to the children of men. Surely, if such good news had been carried to the confines of hell, it would have gladdened the hearts of apostate devils themselves. But the gospel is not for *them*. Its heavenly message contains no reference to *their* state. No. It is sent to such finners, as *yourself*. To rebels like *you*, its divine invitation calls, *Come, for all things are now ready*.—A *pardon*, bought with blood, † ready for finners obnoxious to

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† “ ————— Survey the wond’rous cure;  
 And at each step let higher wonder rise.  
 Pardon for *infinite* offence! and pardon  
 Thro’ *means*, that speak its *value* infinite!  
 A pardon bought with *blood*! with *blood divine*!  
 With *blood* divine of HIM, I *made my foe*!  
 Peristed to provoke! Tho’ *wou’d* and *aw’d*,  
 Blest and *chastis’d*, a flagrant rebel still!  
 A rebel, ’midst the *thunders of his throne*!  
 Nor I alone! A rebel *Universe*!  
 My *species* up in arms! Not *one* exempt!  
 Yet for the *foulest* of the foul he dies!  
 Most joy’d, for the redeem’d from *deepest* guilt!  
 As if our race were held of highest rank;  
 And Godhead dearer, as more kind to man!”

*Night Thoughts.*

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the sentence of death; an immaculate *robe* of righteousness, for the *guilty* and *unrighteous*; a purifying fountain of water and blood, for the *filthy*, and *unclean*; unsearchable riches of grace for the poor; divine anointing for the blind; a sovereign and infallible remedy for all disorders of the sin-sick: Almighty strength for the weak and helpless; and life for the dead. Whilst, moreover,

“ For us the loving Savior stands,  
And spreads for us his bleeding hands :  
Ready the Father is to own  
And kiss each LATE-RETURNING SON.

Ready the Spirit of his love,  
Just now the stony heart to move ;  
T’ apply and witness with the blood,  
And wash and seal us sons of God.

Ready th’ inquiring angels wait,  
To triumph in our blest estate ;  
Tuning their harps, they long to praise,  
The wonders of REDEEMING GRACE.

And now, since every thing on the part of God, is in perfect readiness, let me ask, are *you* also ready? or rather, has the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus *made* you ready, to listen to those glad tidings of great joy  
in

in the gospel, and to credit their full report respecting the Redeemer's ability to save? Are you ready to close in with his gracious tender of mercy? Consider, that in all probability, the duration of this tender, with respect to *yourself*, will soon come to a period: and if you do not accept of it, before you are enclosed in the cold embraces of death, it will be lost for ever.

“Haste! haste! he lies in wait! he's at the door!  
 Infidious DEATH! shou'd his strong arm arrest;  
 No composition sets the pris'ner free.”

What *objections* can you reasonably entertain against this method of salvation! It is *not of works, lest any man should boast*.\* And as you have no works whereof to make your boast, unless you will venture to glory in that which is your shame; consequently the gracious plan exactly suits *you*.—But it is salvation *by grace*; † therefore it comprehends the most rich and glorious provision for the deepest wants of necessitous sinners, and extends the most inestimable blessings *freely*, to those who have no personal claim to

\* *Ephes. ii. 9.* † *Ephes. ii. 8.*

them, founded on their own merit. Read *Iſa.* lv. 1.—It is alſo *through faith*. ‡ The condition of the *law* is, *Do this and live*. But, as *the whole world is become guilty before God* of a breach of this condition, the voice of conſolation in the *gospel* is, *Believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved*. § It is a free ſalvation for *ſinners*; for thoſe that are loſt; for ſinners under the curſe of the law, and obnoxious to eternal death; for the wretched, the unrighteous, the ruined, the poor, the helpleſs, and the blind; for all forts of ſinners; high and low, rich and poor, old and young; for thoſe who owe the law of God *five hundred talents*, as well as thoſe who ſtand charged with a ſmaller debt of obligation; for the moſt flagrant offenders, the vileſt of the vile; yea the moſt abandoned of the human race are included in its glorious plan, and may be ſharers in its extenſive bleſſings, upon believing the *gospel*.—It is a ſalvation from *ſin*; from *all manner of ſin and blaſphemy*; from ſins of the deepeſt dye; of the moſt flagrant

‡ *Ephes.* ii. 8.§ *Acts* xvi. 31.

enormity ;



enormity; of the most complicated aggravation; of the most damnable quality. *Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.\** The author of this glorious salvation was called JESUS, *because he should save his people from their SINS: †* tho' the multitude of them were equal to the stars of heaven, or the sands, which are upon the sea-shore, innumerable. And the apostle *John* declares, that *the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from ALL sin; ‡* including thereby every kind and degree of sin; of the most God-provoking and foul-destroying nature; whether original or actual; of heart, or life. And the same Almighty Deliverer, who saves from sins however heinous and numerous, includes in this salvation, two properties, which constitute the very pinnacle of its glory, and the crown of all its blessings; and these are *perfection* and *perpetuity*. Hence an apostle and a prophet say, *He is able to save to the uttermost, εἰς τὸ πᾶν ἄλως, perfectly, or for*

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\* *Iſa.* i. 18.    † *Mat.* i. 21.    ‡ *1 John* i. 7.

ever. § *Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation; ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end. || My salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished. ¶*

And now, Sir, since, thro' the perfect nature of this salvation, mercy can be extended to the vilest sinner under the heavens:— since JESUS can save all sorts of sinners:— from every species and degree of iniquity:— and that too, perfectly, and for ever: why should not *you* put in your humble claim to the grace of the gospel? You will say, perhaps, “*I am unworthy;*” but to such it is offered: your *unworthiness* affords a strong argument for urging that claim; and a *sense* of that unworthiness, is the grand preparative to your receiving the mercy proposed. “*I am too great a sinner,*” you will perhaps add. But are you greater than MANASSEH? than RAHAB? than MAGDALEN? than SAUL? than the THIEF on the cross? or those, who imbrued their hands in the Savior's blood? Yet these were saved

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§ *Heb. vii. 25.*

|| *Isa. xlv. 17.*

¶ *Isa. li. 6.*

thro' Christ; and, as subjects of his free grace, are now surrounding with their praises, the throne of God and of the Lamb. Is your guilt deeper, than, that of those *fornicators, idolators, adulterers, effeminate, abusers of themselves with mankind, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners*, whom the apostle mentions in 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10? and among whom he declares, in the very next verse, that his *Corinthian converts* had once classed; adding, *And SUCH were some of you?* Yet of such he says, *But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.*—In short, do you think yourself a sinner, too enormous for CHRIST to save? If you do, then you must suppose, that there is greater *demerit* in your *sins*, than there is *sufficiency* in the SAVIOR. But as such a supposition is big with blasphemy and unbelief; admits as a truth, one of the Devil's most bare-faced and yet most dangerous falsties; derogates from the glory of the LORD CHRIST; and carries damnation in its very nature: let me beseech you to reject it, as you love your soul, and wish to flee from the

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the wrath to come. To every such unbelieving and infernal suggestion, let the declaration of the apostle ever furnish you with an answer; viz. *Where sin abounded, grace did MUCH MORE abound.* \* And, in order to make you victorious over Satan's accusations, as well as to bear you above every inward fear, let me intreat you to weigh well the import of the following scriptures: *Who is a GOD like unto thee, that PARDONETH INIQUITY, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger for ever, because HE DELIGHTETH IN MERCY. He will turn again, he will HAVE COMPASSION upon us: he will subdue our iniquities: and thou wilt CAST ALL THEIR SINS into the depths of the sea.* † *The LORD is slow to anger.* ‡ *O Israel, thou hast DESTROYED thyself, but IN ME is thine HELP.* § *I even I am he that BLOTTETH OUT thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will NOT REMEMBER thy sins.* || *If any man sin, we have an ADVOCATE with the Father, JESUS CHRIST the righteous.* ¶ *Whom God hath set forth to be a*

\* Rom. v. 20.

† Mich. vii. 18, 19.

‡ Nah. i. 3.

§ Hos. xiii. 9.

|| Jer. lxxiii. 25.

¶ I John ii. 1.

*propitiation*

*propitiation through faith in his blood, \* that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. †*

If it please God, to give you a reliance on the free and boundless mercy, revealed in the above scriptures, and on the glorious salvation, which gilds those precious promises, with light and consolation; you will then have a SAVIOR to go to, who is the Father's Delight; and thro' whom you will be furnished with a plea, founded on the blood and righteousness of the Divine Surety of the new testament; a plea, which God himself will not, cannot, reject. Your conscience will then be purged from dead works, to serve the living God. Its wounds will be healed; its galling sensations of guilt removed; and its peace established. Your heart will become the residence of CHRIST; where he will set up his blessed throne, and sway every faculty by the sceptre of his love. And, howsoever your soul may have formerly been the seat of every abominable lust and tyrannical passion, which made it like the *troubled sea, that casteth up mire and dirt*; § you will then be interested in a Savior,

\* Rom. iii. 25.

† John iii. 15.

§ Job. lvii. 20.

to whom you may, in faith and confidence, cry,

“Thou, that canst still the raging of the seas,  
Chain up the winds, and bid the tempests cease  
Redeem my shipwreck'd soul from raging gusts,  
Of strong temptations and deceitful lusts.”

Here, you will perceive, I am indulging a degree of charitable hope, that you may at length be brought to see the things which belong to your peace, and to make the LORD JESUS CHRIST all your desire and all your salvation. Should my hopes prove as well-founded, as my wishes, relative to that event, are extensive, and my supplications, ardent; you will then begin to taste of that real *happiness*, from which you have been hitherto estranged, and respecting the true *nature* of which, you have been as grossly mistaken, as the man, who should take all imaginable pains to pursue a *shadow*, and, after various mortifying disappointments, should nevertheless still run himself out of breath in the fruitless chase. A stranger, all your past life, to solid bliss, you will then begin to see and admire the un-  
speakable

speakable pleasure arising from the knowledge of Jesus. And, the contrast in your feelings will make former pursuits appear the more fordid, and your latter enjoyments, proportionably the more solid, and delightful. Sitting at the feet of CHRIST, as an humble pupil, ready to admit his blessed instructions; you will hear that voice, and catch those words of life and peace, which distil, with greater sweetness than the honey-comb, and with an influence, refreshing to the Soul, as the dew to the tender herb. Tasting his pardoning love, you will find a heaven begun upon earth. This will make you a possessor of, what is with great propriety called, *the soul's calm sun-shine, and the heart-felt joy*, peculiar to those, who walk in the light of the *Sun of Righteousness*. Washed in the blood of the Lamb, and renewed by his blessed Spirit, you will be at a loss for words to describe that grace, by which we are made new creatures in CHRIST JESUS: and, taking a review of yourself as a sinner, saved at the *eleventh hour*, you will be constrained to ask men and angels, *Is not this a brand pluck'd out of the fire?*\* Standing in

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\* Zech. iii. 2.

CHRIST your righteousness, and strength, and triumphing in his glorious salvation; you will then be able to look the King of terrors in the face, without the least dismay; to touch the monster's sting, and to feel it blunted, or rather totally extracted, through the virtue of a dying SAVIOR's blood; to behold the *accuser of the brethren* silenced; sin canceled; the terrors of the law changed into blessings; the mouth of the pit shut; heaven, with all its glories, opening to your view; and JESUS, with his arms of love, wide-expanded, ready to clasp you to his bosom. Under such soul-ravishing foretaste of future joys, you will then exult with the poet, and sing, even in the jaws of death.

“ The *world* recedes, it disappears,  
*Heav'n* opens to my eyes; my ears,  
 With sounds seraphic, ring:  
 Lend, lend your wings, I mount, I fly,  
 O death, where is thy victory?  
 O grave, where is thy sting?”

But, lest I should be too sanguine in my expectations, I will endeavor to check, what they  
 they



they would otherwife induce me to anticipate ; 'till I hear what reception the preceding reflections meet with. In the mean time, let me befeech you to confider, that time flies : health declines : death urges : eternity is juft in view : God calls : heaven invites : hell threatens : minifters warn : the judge is at the door : and all things around you cry, **PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD.**\* That you may be enabled to liften to the univerfal alarm, and make the folemn preparation ;—that you may no longer trifle with God, and overlook the concerns of your immortal foul ;—and that the **LORD JESUS CHRIST** in life and death, may be your hope, your ftrength, and your falvation ;—is the unfeigned and moft ardent prayer of your foul's fincere well-wither,

**R. D.**

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\* *Amos. iv. 12.*

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A

# REPLY

TO

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*By the AUTHOR of "FREE THOUGHTS, &c."*

---

“ Let me see wherein  
My tongue hath wronged him: if it do him right,  
Then hath he wronged himself: if he be free,  
Why then my taxing, like a wild goose, flies  
Unclaim'd of any man.”

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A REPLY, &c.

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*DEAR SIR,*

MUCH as I admire the strength and cogency of your excellent letter, I am sensibly mortified to perceive that I have so inaccurately expressed my sentiments, in the pamphlet you have done me the honour to notice, as to lead you to imagine that I have delivered opinions hostile to the freedom of election. Considering the subject to be of vast importance, as it clearly involves the most valuable rights

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of the democratic branch of the Constitution, though I feel really hurt to have been so misunderstood, I have great pleasure in the opportunity afforded me by your friendly address, to explain and illustrate my meaning.

I shall begin my reply rather abruptly, with a denial of your charge. I cannot discover where I have said, either directly or by fair implication, that one man has a right “to *demand* the vote of another:” nor do I find that I have stated any possible case from which it can justly be inferred, that “whatever be the judgment or the choice of the person obliged, his vote is mortgaged, and must be made over to his employer.”

I am not a little shocked to be suspected by *you*, Sir, of having even unintentionally advanced such an arrogant, presumptuous, and tyrannical doctrine. Were I convinced that I had ever uttered such  
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a sentiment, I should think myself a culprit of no ordinary magnitude. But I apprehend that no such language or doctrine is to be found in the Free Thoughts.

I have said, that where “ a menial servant, an uneducated tenant, or a mechanic of the common order,” refuses to obey the impulse of gratitude in voting with his landlord or master, it is morally certain that some worse motive would prompt him to the disposal of his vote. Upon this remark respecting the *motives* of many voters, has been founded the serious accusation of attempting to subvert the freedom of election. And I am perfectly astonished it should have escaped your keen observation, that there is a wide difference between a spontaneous vote, springing from “ considerations of kindness, good-will, and gratitude;” and a compulsory vote following a demand: and that you should not perceive an equally clear distinction between the

*reasons* for voluntarily giving a vote, and the *right* to an unbiassed exercise of the elective franchise. I never disputed this right, for it never occurred to me as being a disputable question. I am well aware that no human being has authority, in this land of freedom, to say to the meanest elector breathing, “*you must* vote for this man or for that man.” The very expression *you must*, in my opinion, would cancel all former obligations, and justify the voter, if he had no higher motive, to bestow his suffrage in direct opposition to such an insolent command.

All that I have contended for, is “the natural, gentle, and perfectly lawful influence of fortune, rank, and character,” in opposition to — what? — not to the deliberate opinion of respectable and intelligent voters — not to the declared wishes of tradesmen, manufacturers, and artisans — not to the settled conviction of the lowest voter in the kingdom, conscientiously

tiously and sincerely felt. But I have contended for this influence, in opposition to an uncivilizing dogma, never preached in this town before the last election, “that a poor man should take a pride in voting against the advice of his master or his friend,”—and in opposition also to the tumult-exciting harangues of a wily candidate. Had I even overstrained this influence, still the occasion would have been ample apology. Extraordinary disorders demand extraordinary remedies. When the river has been diverted from its natural channel, it requires vigorous and multiplied efforts to restore it to its former bed.

The influence of property naturally arises out of the relations it produces. For, although these relations are productive of mutual advantage to the parties, yet as there generally exists a preference on one side, this preference will always be considered as a favour. Now the re-

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ceiving of favours naturally begets in well disposed minds a desire to oblige in return. It seems to me impossible for the relation of landlord and tenant, for example, to exist for any length of time between two upright men, without the tenant feeling a degree of respect and esteem for his landlord, and without the latter feeling much hearty good-will towards his tenant: the same in the various other connexions which property gives rise to. It is no objection to the principle of the natural tendency of these connexions to produce kindness and gratitude, that many cases occur wherein hatred and strife are engendered. For as well might we say that the natural affinities, as of parent and child, do not tend to produce mutual affection and esteem, because some instances unhappily arise of opposite passions and sentiments being excited. The influence I am speaking of, however, is of a most delicate kind, and such as the laws wisely refuse either to recognise or prohibit;

prohibit; leaving every man to obey or disobey its injunctions according to his own discretion. Nor would it have been decorous to insist upon this influence in the manner I have done, had we not witnessed a flagrant attempt to rupture the bands by which it unites the different orders in society.

Had the man, “ who wrote 149 letters with his own hand to persons of rank and property in the borough and in the county,”\* succeeded in his wish to procure their interest, we should have heard nothing of oppressive landlords and tyrannical masters. But being disappointed in this expectation, society is instantly converted into what you describe it.—The old picture ceases to be a true representation—it is now reversed—and we discover, “ that imperious claims on one side engender unwilling obedience or hostility on the other.” Pandora’s Box is opened for the second time, and

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\* See Appendix to “ Free Remarks.”

a fresh brood of mischiefs is let loose upon mankind. Formerly landlords and tenants, masters and servants lived in tolerable harmony, and something like a generous intercourse subsisted between them. But that golden age is all a fable now. It is true, no man can say that he is himself oppressed, but he hears that many have been threatened! And when Ucalegon's house is on fire, it is natural for his neighbour to take the alarm. But surely we are not to be terrified, by this hue and cry about the freedom of election and undue influence, out of our persuasion, that this same influence, now so frightful, was the very instrument which the Popular Candidate wished himself to employ. It is easy to perceive the meaning of this terrific phrase "*undue influence*," in the vocabulary of election candidates: all influence exerted *for* me is due influence, but all influence exerted *against* me is undue influence.

I am

I am not fond of offering adulation to the great: on the other hand, I equally despise flattering the prejudices and vices of the populace. Now during every election it is notorious that the multitude, composed both of voters and non-voters, who may be enlisted under the banners of Independence, or any other banners, are puffed up by their leaders with I know not what notions of freedom, of consequence, and of personal importance; while at the same time, it is well known, that unless many of these worthy electors are caajoled by certain nameless arts and blandishments, it is ten to one but they go to offer their votes to the opposite party. Such things occur at all elections, as those engaged in them will frankly confess when the business is over. But to read your account, my dear Sir, of the fine feelings of electors, one would imagine they were all virtue and perfection, that they were perpetually sinned against, without ever themselves sinning — that  
the

the legislature had taken infinite pains for nothing, in passing acts against bribery; (mere works of supererogation!) for electors are too tenderly alive to the finer emotions, to be susceptible of the gross influence of a bribe. Oh virtuous Honiton! Oh caluminated Athlone! how basely have ye been traduced! how truly amiable the spotless purity of your incorruptible integrity! what a dignified race of voters! how brimful of noble, generous, and exalted sentiments!

To be serious, the freedom of election is in no danger, when the influence of property comes in check of such dispositions as would be governed by a bribe.

Your remarks on the propriety of attaching a sense of importance to the freedom of election, I greatly admire; and only object to them, as being inapplicable to the description of persons I alluded to, when I spoke so strongly of selfish  
and



and corrupt voters. I hope I have over-rated the proportion, but I have no fear that you, or any other sensible critic, will literally interpret a common figure of speech.\*

You say, “Let us not treat the understanding of any human being with such contempt, as to tell him he has the right by law to give his unbiassed vote, but that there is something above the law which restrains the exercise of it.” This excellent remark, with many others you have made, proceeds on the supposition of votes being commonly given at elections from a sincere conviction of mind  
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\* Matt. xviii. 10.—“Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus said unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but until seventy times seven.” Would the most scrupulous adherent to the words of scripture think it necessary to forgive an offender exactly four hundred and ninety times?

as to the fitness of the candidate for discharging the duties of a legislator.\* Wherever this seriousness of mind exists, it would be mockery and insult to talk of the obligations of gratitude, as persuasives to bestow a suffrage, in contradiction to settled judgment. For such voters I feel unfeigned respect. I esteem the honest judgment of an upright mind a very sacred thing, not to be treated lightly, or trifled with. Characters of this kind, I hope and believe, are seldom persuaded to sacrifice principle to interest. It matters not how inferior the understanding, how imperfect the knowledge, how lowly the condition, of such a man. Let no creature dare to violate his sanctuary.

Believe me, Sir, it is not of such electors,  
what-

\* I am informed that there are not less than thirty charges of bribery at this time made against persons concerned in the late election.

whatever be their rank, that I have spoken with disrespect. I am afraid, however, there are too many who are guided by selfish and personal considerations—these men I heartily despise; their cant about the freedom of election and undue influence is intolerably disgusting: I shall be at no pains to conceal my contempt for their conduct, nor shall I feel any compunction “in lacerating their feelings.”

As you have said my pamphlet may undesignedly have been of disservice to Mr. Bennett's Cause, you will, I am sure, excuse me for mentioning a few particulars, which otherwise I should not have thought worth communicating to the public. The Free Thoughts were written, during the intervals of business, in the space of four or five days; and they were written under a strong feeling of horror at the disorganizing speeches and mischievous conduct of the Popular Candidate.

date. Being of opinion, however, that no individual, who is acting with a party, can be justified in publishing his peculiar views of the common cause, without the concurrence of his associates, the pamphlet was submitted to the inspection of certain friends of Mr. Bennett: who instantly sent a very urgent request to the author to publish it without delay. It was accordingly sent to the press in its rough state; a few additions being afterwards made while it was in the hands of the printer: and it is a fact, that the *whole together* was not read by the writer until after it was published. Upon reading it over coolly and deliberately, when it was printed, he was a good deal startled at the force of some expressions, which he thought were much too general, and too comprehensive, and he immediately ordered the pamphlet to be suppressed. Accordingly, one day's interruption to the sale took place. But unfortunately, eight or ten copies having

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ing got into circulation, it was too late to prevent whatever bad effects might arise from it. Indeed the free circulation was then become necessary, in order to falsify the assertions already made of its contents.

This plain history of the production of the “Free Thoughts,” will satisfy every candid mind, that there was no deliberate intention to injure the feelings of any of Mr. Jones’s respectable friends: and it is with real concern the author has learned that any such persons have supposed themselves glanced at in the most distant manner—nothing could be farther from his wishes and designs.

But while I thus sincerely apologise to my respectable fellow-townsmen, for any offence unintentionally committed against *them* I beg to be understood most unequivocally, as not retracting a single word of observation upon the conduct of  
 their

their Candidate, and his Nominator. They have come forward *publicly*; and, as public characters, are bound to bear all the censure their behaviour has merited. I have never alluded to them as private individuals, being utterly ignorant of every thing relating to them, except so far as they have declared themselves to all the town. And, as a Townsman and Voter, I claim, and will exert my right to canvass their conduct, as strictly and as severely, as it appears to me to deserve.

With thanks to you, dear Sir, for affording me this opportunity of explaining all that I was anxious to explain in the "Free Thoughts," I subscribe myself,

Very respectfully,

Your obliged and obedient Servant,

*The Author.*

12th Jan. 1807.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

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The facts upon which certain assertions and charges in the "FREE THOUGHTS" are grounded, having lately been disputed; the Author intends to publish his documents, as soon as he can find leisure to arrange them.

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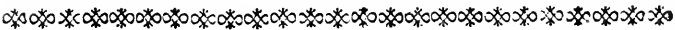
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D I A L O G U E

FOUNDED UPON REAL FACTS,

Between Mrs. CLINKER and Miss MARTHA STEADY.

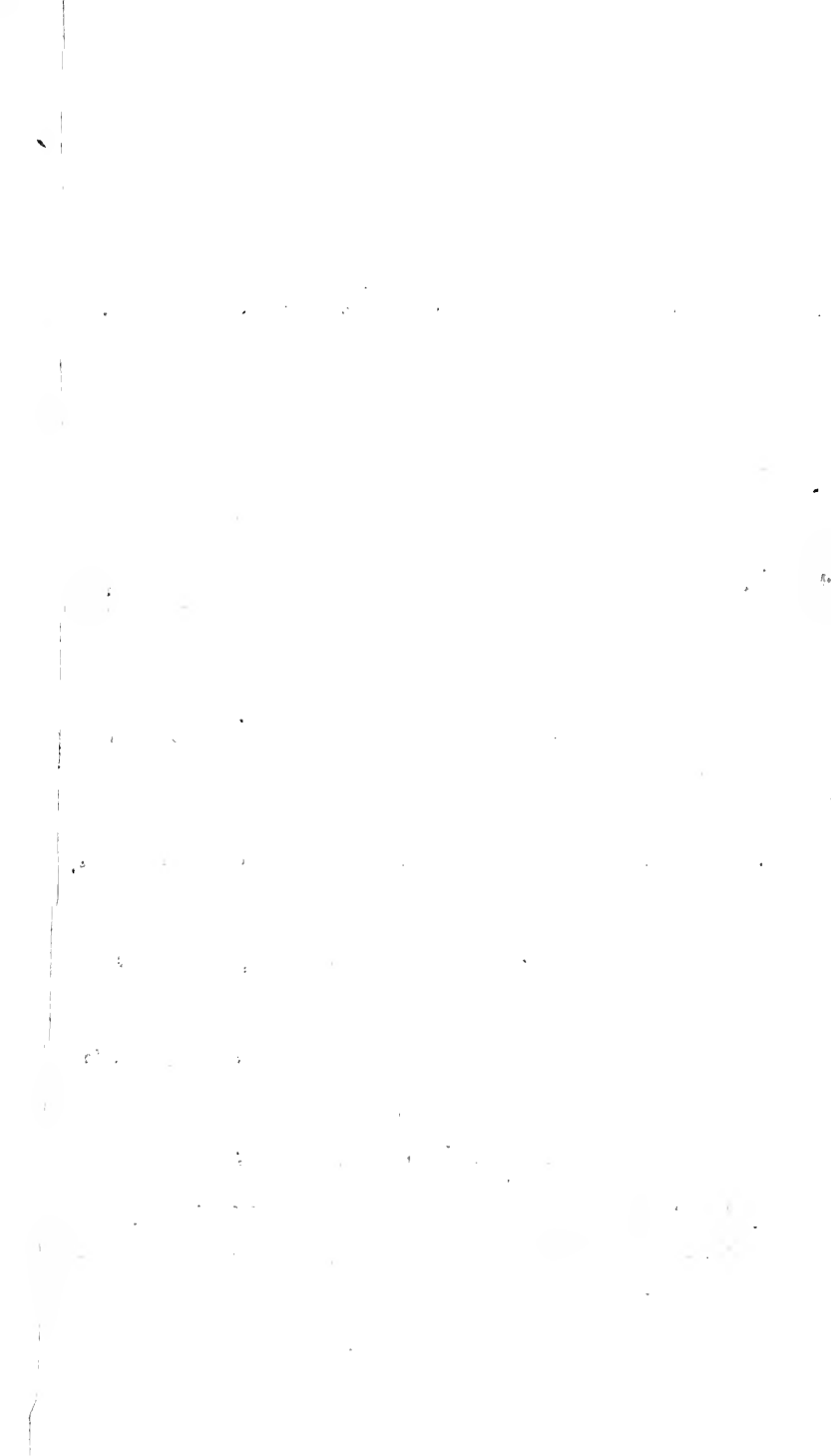
— *If the cap fits, put it on.*



S H R E W S B U R Y :

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[ Price SIX-PENCE. ]





## A D I A L O G U E

Between Mrs. Clinker and Miss Martha Steady.

*Mrs. C.* SO Miss *Patty*! You have made a fine piece of work on't; I hear our famous new preacher Mr. *Jewel* (*a*) has persuaded you to change your religion, and to turn Methodist. — Believe me there's talk enough about it.

*Miss S.* I wonder, Madam, that a person of my insignificance should be the cause of so much conversation: and as to what is reported of my having chang'd my religion, I can only say that it is impossible for me to have chang'd that which I never had.

*Mrs. C.* Lord child! don't talk such nonsense, I am sure you were always good enough before you ever heard any of these canting sort of preachers.

*Miss S.* Pray Ma'am by what rule cou'd you form any judgment of my goodness?

*Mrs. C.* Why nobody was more constant at church and sacrament than yourself; nobody more ready to do a charitable action when it was in your power; and nobody more universally well spoken of by all the world.

*Miss S.* These I apprehend are no scriptural proofs that I was in the right way to heaven, for we are told by an authority more than human, that the friendship of the world is enmity with God (*b*); and that we may give all our goods to feed the poor, and yet have no charity at all (*c*).—'Tis true indeed, I was a constant attender at church; but I am forced to own that tho' I drew nigh unto God with my lips, my heart was far from him: and indeed it is too common a case to see hundreds who make a point of going every day within the church walls——

A

*Mrs. C.*

(*a*) A Descendant from that venerable Prelate Bishop *Jewel*.

(*b*) James iv. 4. (*c*) 1 Cor. xiii. 7.

*Mrs. C.* Now you are going to be uncharitable ; this is what I detest in people of your way of thinking ; you will allow none to be right but yourselves.

*Miss S.* Nay, my dear *Mrs. Clinker*, only hear me out with patience, and if there's any want of charity in the supposition, I have a right to retort it upon you : don't you remember that you told me yourself no longer since than Thursday last, that tho' old *Mrs. Trimwell* and *Mrs. Mary Save-all* never miss'd weekly prayers nor monthly sacrament ; yet that the one was so miserably covetous that nobody could live with her, and the other scolded her servants to such a degree that they were for ever complaining of her bad tempers ? And you said at the same time that *Lady Gamble* who constantly sits in the same pew with you, makes no scruple of looking over her adversary's hand at cards, and is so much out of humour whenever she loses a shilling, that it is quite disagreeable to play with her ; and whenever she wins she will never own it.

*Mrs. C.* I fancy *Miss* if we were to search narrowly into the lives of some who make high pretensions to saintship, we shou'd find 'em not much better than their neighbours : and to tell you the truth, I believe they are all a parcel of designing hypocrites, and I think if they had their deserts, they ought to be well ———

*Miss S.* Softly, softly, good *Mrs. Clinker*, who is uncharitable now ?—It is too true, and with sorrow I confess that some who have made great pretensions to religion, have disgraced their holy profession by not living agreeably to it ; but is this any proof that none are sincere ? the scriptures tell us that offences of this sort will come, and that they must needs afford matter of stumbling to the world ; but still the religion of the gospel is the same, however unworthy of it any of its professors may behave themselves : surely you won't say that because there is counterfeit coin there is therefore no real gold

gold; or because Judas was a traitor, that all the other apostles were so likewise.

*Mrs. C.* Oh! but you have so many disputes among yourselves, that it is enough to make one conclude it is impossible to know what is truth; and therefore for my own part I assure you I shall always continue in the way that I was brought up.

*Miss S.* In the common affairs of life, we think that which is not worth disputing about is not worth having; and we have an apostle's command to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints whenever that faith is attacked by men of pernicious principles who would corrupt the word of God, and handle it deceitfully: but it is a singular proof of the truth and power of real christianity, that in spite of all the opposition and prejudices which are raised against it, it still makes its way into the heart, and breaks through every intervening cloud and obstacle. — But methinks we have a little departed from our subject; if I remember right, you mentioned Mr. *Jewel's* name when you first came in: pray did you ever hear him?

*Mrs. C.* No thank God: and I can tell you moreover that good Mr. *Stiff*, Mr. and Mrs. *Screwup*, Sir *Gilbert Guttle*, the Widow *Fondle*, old Lady Dowager *Crabstock*, Miss *Giggle*, Mrs. *Manille*, Mrs. *Bridget Spade*, Miss *Fanny Painter*, and I know not how many more of the very best in the parish are resolved never to go within side of the church, so long as he continues there.

*Miss S.* Surely Mrs. *Clinker* it shews great want of candor to condemn any man unheard.

*Mrs. C.* But you know very well what an uproar there is, and what divisions are made in families by his preaching, infomuch that the pulpits ring again. I'm sure I wish he had never come here disturbing the peace of a quiet congregation.

*Miss S.* Yes, yes, I doubt not but their Reverences have been furbishing up their armour and preparing

their ammunition ever since they heard of Mr. *Jewel's* presentation : and truly they never preach with any degree of life and spirit but when they are opposing the zealous ministers of Christ.—But pardon me my good friend, if I say that your objections are quite unreasonable : when our Lord himself was upon earth there was much division because of him ; for some said he is a good man, others nay, but he deceiveth the people (*d*) ; and as it was then, he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the spirit, even so it is now (*e*). True religion, as I remark'd before, has numberless prejudices to fight against, and we are apt to steel our hearts against its impressions, because it wou'd rob us of those pleasures and idols which promise us a deceptive happiness here below ; and among the many charges which are brought against the faithful ministers of the gospel, there is none more frequent than that they are movers of sedition, pestilent fellows (*f*), and disturbers of domestic peace. When the apostle Paul first delivered his message at Theffalonica we read that the whole city was in an uproar, and that the mob assaulted the house where they supposed he was harbour'd, and drew out certain of the brethren, crying out, these that have turned the world upside down are come hither also (*g*). Jesus himself has also told us that he came not to send peace on the earth but rather division ; that five in one house shou'd be divided, three against two, and two against three, the father against the son, the son against the father, the mother against the daughter, the daughter against the mother, the mother-in-law against the daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against the mother-in-law, and that a man's greatest foes shou'd be those of his own household (*h*).

*Mrs. C.* I well remember hearing a sermon upon those very words, and the minister told us that all such texts of scripture related to the primitive ages of the church, and

(*d*) John vii. 12.    (*e*) Gal. iv. 29.    (*f*) Acts xxiv. 5.  
 (*g*) Acts xvii. 5, 6.    (*h*) Mat. x. 34. Luke xii. 51, 52, 53.

and that now christianity is establish'd, *it is attended with ease and honour*, and that all opposition to it is ceas'd.

*Miss S.* Where real christianity is establish'd in the heart and life of any person, in such an one this opposition is ceas'd indeed; but there are many devices of men which go under the name of christianity, and are made so palatable to our corrupt reason, and to the self-righteous pride of our hearts, and withal appear so specious to our natural ideas of religion, that we easily swallow the gilded bait, and often receive that for truth which only leads us further and further from it. — I agree with you that this smooth insipid kind of religion will never meet with any opposition whatever: but when the gospel is preach'd in its life and power, when the depths of the fallen nature are faithfully open'd, when man is stripp'd of all his fancied excellencies, when he is held forth to view in the language of scripture as guilty, helpless, miserable, blind and naked; when he is told that he hath neither wisdom, righteousness, sanctification nor redemption but in and through Christ Jesus; when he is boldly admonish'd of the utter impossibility of reconciling God and Mammon; when his ears are made to tingle with that unwelcome but apostolic declaration, "Whosoever will be the friend of the world, is the enemy of God (*i*);" I say when these grand truths are honestly applied to the consciences of the hearers, then great offence will always be taken, especially by those who have the form of godliness, but deny the power thereof.

*Mrs. C.* Really Miss you run on very glibly; I find Mr. *Jewel* is now become your oracle; but however you may be captivated with his long extempore harangues, and his theatrical gestures, I shall always be much better pleas'd with a good, sober, moral discourse.

*Miss S.* Indeed my dear Mrs. *Clinker*, I make no man my oracle but so far as he speaks agreeable to the oracles of God: and with regard to what you have thought  
proper

proper to stile *long extempore harangues and theatrical gestures*, if it be a receiv'd maxim that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, then, where the preacher's heart is really season'd with grace, there will be no need of the black manuscript book, or of Doctor *Trufiler's* copper-plates (*k*): But it is a fine easy way of proceeding for a minister to get fifty-two old sermons, with two or three more for the great festivals, and to mumble these over and over and over to the same congregation (perhaps now and then changing the texts) for years and years together, and when he is thus fet up with one twelvemonth's stock in trade, he may then spend his leisure time as most suits his own inclination.

*Mrs. C.* Fie *Patty*, you are absolutely quite severe and satirical.

*Miss S.* Not at all Madam. I am far from condemning all written sermons, tho' you are pleas'd to condemn all extempore ones; but this I must say, that I shou'd have a very mean opinion of my lawyer, and shou'd think he had not enter'd very deeply into the merits of my cause, if he cou'd not plead for me without having all he said written down before him; neither shou'd I think that man a very able speaker in the house of commons, who cou'd proceed on his subject no longer than whilst his speech was before his eyes.—In every station of life we think that whosoever is acquainted with his profession, shou'd be sensibly affected with the importance of what he is engaged in; hence the music-master (especially if he have the direction of a concert) seems to strain every nerve of his body, and to have all the powers of his soul call'd forth into action, not only because he himself sensibly feels the force of harmony, but because he wishes his auditory shou'd be alike touch'd with the pleasing sound. Shall then the lawyer, the senator,

(*k*) Dr. *Trufiler* in his Address to the Clergy proposes to furnish them with sermons printed by copper-plates in such manner as not to be distinguishable from written hand.



antor, the musician, be so zealously affected about the things of time and sense, and shall the ambassadors of the King of kings, the heralds of the Lord of hosts, who are appointed to proclaim glad tidings of great joy to lost sinners, shall they who deliver the message of God to man speak in a cold unaffecting manner, as if neither they themselves nor any of their hearers had the least concern in the subject? It cannot be: and therefore the Lord Jehovah commanded his prophets of old to cry aloud and not spare, to lift up their voice like a trumpet, and to smite with their hand (*l*); and as if that were not sufficient to prove their earnestness, to stamp with their foot (*m*), that they might shew the people their transgression, and point out to them the way of hope and deliverance. But alas! how is all zeal for the glory of God and the good of souls now condemn'd as frenzy and enthusiasm; and whilst so few ministers speak *from* the heart themselves, how is it possible they shou'd speak *to* the hearts of their hearers? but as soon as they have mutter'd over the last page of their ditty, what can we expect but that they shou'd fall into worldly trifling discourse with their congregations even at the church door, and that the congregation themselves, instead of asking one another in the language of the disciples going to Emmaus, did not our hearts burn within us while he open'd to us the scriptures (*n*)? shou'd begin talking over all the miseries and follies of their neighbours, and perhaps expressing their deep concern that they want a fourth to make up a private party at quadrille the next evening; whereas if they had been at a playhouse they wou'd not have fail'd to have spoken of all that they had seen and heard. And this puts me in mind of that well known answer of Mr. *Betterton* the player to a great dignitary of the church, when he ask'd Mr. *Betterton* what cou'd be the reason that tho' the players spoke of imaginary things and the clergy of real ones, yet an audience was generally much more affected with a play than with a sermon? " My  
" Lord,

(*l*) H. lviii. 1. (*m*) Ezek. vi. 11. (*n*) Luke xxiv. 32.

“ Lord, replied Mr. *Betterton*, I apprehend the reason  
 “ to be this, that we players speak of imaginary things  
 “ as if they were *real*, whereas too many of the clergy  
 “ speak of *real* things as if they were *imaginary*.”

*Mrs. C.* Monstrous ! Girl, will you never have done ?  
 Do you suppose that Mr. *Jewel* knows better than so  
 many great Divines who are twice his age ? or do you  
 think that there was no religion in the town till he came  
 among us ?

*Miss S.* Truly Mrs. *Clinker* I am not for making in-  
 vectives, or throwing out personal reflections, however  
 ’tis an happiness that the word of God has given us some  
 unerring marks whereby to know who are the true, and  
 who the pretended ministers of Christ.

*Mrs. C.* Pray Miss what are those marks ?

*Miss S.* By the doctrines they preach, and by the lives  
 they lead. — Besides that in all ages the true ministers  
 have been few in number, and have always met with  
 contempt and reproach by those who rejected their mes-  
 sage ; whilst the false prophets were many in number,  
 and lived in ease and good repute among those who were  
 deceived by them. Hence God complain’d by the mouth  
 of his faithful messenger Jeremiah, saying, the prophets  
 prophecy falsely, and the people love to have it so : and  
 our blessed Lord himself in his sermon upon the mount  
 says, “ Woe be unto you when all men shall speak well  
 of you, for so did your fathers of the false prophets ; but,  
 blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they  
 shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach  
 you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of  
 Man’s sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy ; for  
 behold, your reward is great in heaven ; for in the like  
 manner did their fathers unto the prophets (o).” That  
 is, unto the *true* prophets as put in contradistinction to  
 the *false* prophets mention’d in the verse before quoted.

*Mrs. C.* But I desire to know by what rule you judge  
 that Mr. *Jewel*’s doctrine is sound and true ?

*Miss S.*

*Miss S.* First, by bringing it to the only touchstone of truth and falsehood, the word of God.—Secondly, by comparing it with an authority which I hope always to esteem next to the scripture itself, the church of England in her liturgy, articles, and homilies.

*Mrs. C.* Articles and *homilies*! what are those? I confess I never read them, and don't recollect that I ever heard of them.

*Miss S.* The articles and homilies are our grand bulwarks against Popery; they contain all the fundamental truths of the reformation; and no minister can be ordained in the church of England without making the most solemn declaration and subscription that he believes them *from his heart*, to be perfectly agreeable to the word of God; and that he will never preach any other doctrine than that which is contain'd in them; and every clergyman who does preach any other doctrine, is liable to be excommunicated and suspended by the bishop, until he repent of his wicked errors (*p*).

*Mrs. C.* Pray let me hear what those doctrines are.

*Miss S.* They set forth to us the true nature of God, that he exists in three distinct persons, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and that these three are one; that is, one in nature and in essence. They insist universally upon the Divinity and Godhead of Christ: They teach that man is fallen from his original state of innocence, and that all the faculties of his soul are so disorder'd by sin, that he hath neither will nor power to recover himself: That salvation is by grace through faith only, and not of works: That all works done before the grace of Christ and the inspiration of his spirit, are not pleasant and acceptable to God; but that where there is true and living faith in the heart, it will be as evidently discern'd by the good works which it produces, as a tree is known by its fruits (*q*).

*Mrs. C.* Are these indeed the doctrines of the established church? B *Miss S.*

*Miss S.* They certainly are ; and of every other protestant church whatever : nay, there is not a petition which the minister puts up from the desk, not a collect throughout the whole book of common prayer, but what breathes the same humbling language, and in which we do not confess either directly or indirectly that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves—that we put not our trust in any thing that we do — that without God’s holy inspiration we cannot so much as think a good thought ; and that we are accounted righteous before God *only* for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works and deservings.

*Mrs. C.* To be sure no man, unless he has a fear’d conscience, will ever subscribe to what he does not believe, meerly for the sake of getting the church’s emoluments ; and it is also certain that the prayers and the sermon ought to harmonize together, and yet I cannot say that I ever remember to have heard the doctrines of Christ’s divinity, the total corruption of human nature, salvation by grace, and, what you call, the work of the spirit upon the soul, much insisted upon by our own minister ; and to deal plainly with you, *Miss Patty*, nothing wou’d be more disgusting to me than to hear so much about the *Spirit*, and about *inspiration*, as I look upon every thing of this sort to be little better than cant and enthusiasm.

*Miss S.* In whatever light you may look upon it, we have the voice of an apostle on our side when we assert, “ That if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his (*r*) : ” and if it be cant and enthusiastism to expect the illumination, comforts, and sanctifying influences of the Spirit, then you yourself pray’d no less than ten times in the church service last Sunday morning that you might be a *canting enthusiast*.

*Mrs. C.* If I do all that our minister tells me to do,

(*r*) Rom. viii. 9.

I believe I shall stand a very good chance for all that ; and if I am not safe ; God help a many !

*Miss S.* When obedience flows from the principle of faith working by love, it is certainly pleasing and acceptable to God ; but if you were to keep the whole law in order to entitle you to heaven, and yet fail in one point, whether in thought, word, or deed, you wou'd lie under the sentence of God's wrath, and be for ever shut out from all hope of being saved by your own doings : for thus it is written, Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all (*s*) : and again, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them (*t*). Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh living be justified (*u*).

*Mrs. C.* Heighy, tighy, Miss ! why you have got scripture at your finger's end : to be sure you have been finely tutor'd for so short a time ; but if I can't be sav'd by doing my best, how am I to be sav'd at all ?

*Miss S.* By believing in Jesus Christ, who hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us (*v*).

*Mrs. C.* What then do you take me for a Jew, a Turk, or an Heathen ? I tell you I *always* believ'd in Jesus Christ.

*Miss S.* It is an observation of the pious and learned Bishop *Reynolds*, that " there are no such *bad* believers as those who think they were *always* believers : " and indeed there is a wide difference between the faith of custom and education, and that faith which is the gift of God, and the work of his spirit in the heart ; the former is common to all who profess themselves christians ; the latter is only to be found in those who have felt the burden of sin, and who under a deep sense of their lost estate both by nature and by practice, have fled for refuge to the hope set before them in the gospel of peace and salvation.

B 2

*Mrs. C.*

(*s*) James ii. 10. (*t*) Gal. iii. 10. (*u*) Gal. ii. 16. (*v*) Gal. iii. 13.

*Mrs. C.* I don't like carrying on the dispute with you, but I'm resolv'd you shall never persuade me to turn.

*Miss S.* You grieve me exceedingly, dear Madam, to see you so much prejudiced, and still harping upon the same string. — I declare I know not what you mean by *turning*: however as you yourself have mention'd the expression, permit me in few words to tell you what sort of *turning* the scripture makes essentially necessary, namely, a turning from nature to grace; from sin to holiness. In this sense of the word our excellent church teaches us to offer up our supplications that “the hearts of the disobedient may be *turned* to the wisdom of the just;” and in the service for Ash Wednesday we each pray for ourselves, “*turn* thou us O good Lord, and “so shall we be *turned*.”

*Mrs. C.* I tell you once more, that I *hope* I shall get to heaven as well as those who make so much ado about it: so pray let us change the subject or I must go.

*Miss S.* Do, let me intreat you to sit down quietly a little longer, and suffer me to observe in answer to what you say, that there are two sorts of *hope* mention'd in scripture, the hope of the hypocrite or self-deceiver, which shall perish (*w*); and that lively hope full of immortality, which purifieth the soul, and which maketh not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost (*x*). This is that glorious, well grounded hope which I sincerely pray may be yours, and which shall never fail, till both faith and hope are swallow'd up in everlasting love.

*Mrs. C.* For my part I wish to have every thing go on in peace.

*Miss S.* So does the common enemy of souls.—Pardon the force of my expression, but as it is founded upon scripture I cou'd not help speaking plainly: for we read in the xi<sup>th</sup> chapter of St. Luke, that when a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: but when a stronger than he shall come upon him

him and overcome him he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted and divideth his spoils. Now by the strong man is *Satan* evidently pointed out in the context, and by the stronger man Jesus Christ is as clearly set forth. Here then I must take the liberty of observing that as there are two sorts of *faith* and two sorts of *hope*, so there are two sorts of *peace* mention'd in the word of God: the one is that wretched security which rests upon every heart of man by nature, and is represented under the striking images of *sleep*, *darkness*, and even of *death* itself: Hence that call of the apostle, in which all these three images are implied, "Awake thou that  *sleepest*  and arise from the  *dead* , and Christ shall give thee  *light (y)* ." This then is that false peace which the prince of this world wishes never to have disturb'd, and which universally prevails over all those who thank God that their consciences were never uneasy about sin.— But there is another sort of peace, even that peace which Jesus bequeath'd as a dying legacy to his sorrowing disciples, when he said, "My peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you (z)." This is that true solid peace which the world can neither give, nor take away; a peace which is the effect of a lively faith in Jesus Christ, and of which St. Paul bears this strong testimony, "That it passeth all understanding." — The worst wish I harbour in my heart towards dear Mrs. *Clinker*, is, that she may speedily be made partaker of it.

*Mrs. C.* Thank you my dear, but I am very well satisfied with myself already. — Pray what do you think became of all the people who died in L——r before this preaching about faith and regeneration came? Do you suppose they are all damn'd?

*Miss S.* God forbid that I shou'd pass sentence upon any person whatever; for tho' it is certain that where the blind lead the blind, both must fall into the ditch (a); yet at all times and in all places, every soul that is really converted to God and chang'd by grace, shall in the end

in-

(y) Eph. v. 14. (z) John xiv. 27. (a) Mat. xv. 14.

inherit everlasting life. But I am sorry you have no better argument to produce than that which is in the mouth of every bigotted Romish priest, “Where was your religion (say they to the Protestants) before *Luther’s* and *Calvin’s* time,” and “what is become of all the people, say you, who died in L—r before this preaching came?”

*Mrs. C.* All I meant was to express my dislike of innovations.

*Miss S.* Nobody I assure you can more seriously lament the innovations which have crept into the doctrine, discipline, and practice of the christian church than myself; yet from the very same principles as you now argue, the Papists at the time of the reformation reproach’d the Protestants, and call’d them “the men of the new religion;” whereas in truth their religion was the pure religion of the bible, long before the corruptions of popery had any existence. — But so it is, that when truth has been long banish’d, and error has been long prevalent, no sooner does the former attempt to recover her place, than the latter most impudently denies her the pre-eminence, or because she may have been for a few years in exile, or a stranger, even dares to affirm that her origin is spurious, and to treat her as an intruder.

*Mrs. C.* What is all this to the purpose?

*Miss S.* I presume it is very much to the purpose; because thousands in this land, tho’ reform’d as to some superstitious ceremonies, are nevertheless sunk into the very dregs of popish doctrine, without so much as suspecting it; and tho’ Bible, Articles, Homilies, and the whole church of England liturgy are point blank against them, yet they as readily swallow down the proud, anti-christian, jesuitical tenets of free-will, man’s merit, two-fold justification, and even of sinless perfection, as if they were the genuine growth of scripture and of protestantism; whereas in truth and in fact they are some of the rankest weeds of the popish and pelagian dunghill.

*Mrs. C.* Hey-day, Miss! I fancy you intend to take Orders soon.

*Miss S.*



*Miss S.* The subject we are upon, *Mrs. Clinker*, is of too important a nature to be put off with a sneer. I pretend not to argue with you as a *divine*, but as a *christian*; and under this character, it is incumbent upon you, upon me, and upon all who profess the name of Christ, to be ready to give a reason for the hope that is in us (*b*).—Surely in a matter on which my eternal salvation depends, it wou'd argue the most extravagant folly to be able to assign no other cause why I call myself a *christian*, than because my father and grandfather were so before me; nor why I am a *protestant*, than because I was born in the island of *Great Britain*. Upon the very same principles, had I been born in *Japan* I must have been an *heathen*; had I been born in *Turkey* I shou'd have been a *mahometan*; and had I been born in *France, Spain, Italy, or Portugal*, I must have been a *romanist*: and every pagan, mussulman, or papist, might give as good a reason why they are any of the three.

*Mrs. C.* Not to hold any further dispute on that point, I must now mention an objection which I have very often heard brought against *Mr. Jewel*, particularly by my very good friends *Mr. Canon Temple* and old *Lady Church*, as also by *Mr. Bishop, Mrs. Chancel, and Doctor Steepleton*. It is, that he is a very great favourer of the dissenters, many of whom it is notorious come frequently to hear him.

*Miss S.* *Mr. Jewel* is a man of a candid benevolent temper, who hates all narrowness and bigotry of spirit; and tho' as a minister of the establishment he bears a particular attachment to the church of England, yet he loves all sincere christians, by whatever denomination they may be distinguished, and has the happiness of being loved by them in return. And if some worthy persons among the dissenters come often to hear him, surely this is a good proof of *their* catholicism, and cannot justly be made a matter of objection against *him*; for which of the two is the best friend of the church, he who by  
preaching

preaching unfound doctrine drives his hearers from the church to the dissenters, or he who by faithfully declaring the whole council of God, brings the dissenters from the meeting to the church?

*Mrs. C.* I confess the objection appeared to me rather frivolous when I first heard it mentioned, and now you have intirely convinced me that it is so.

*Miss S.* I am happy to find you so ingenuous my dear friend, and since we are upon the subject, permit me to observe concerning dissenters that we ought always to rank them into two classes, viz. those who *dissent* in some essential points of faith, and those who *dissent* only in some little circumstantial matters of external worship and discipline. The former are the *dangerous dissenters*, and we ought the more to be on our guard against them; because legions of them who love the church's preferments, much better than her doctrines, have taken possession of our pulpits, from whence they vent their poisonous errors without dismay or controul. With these dissenters it is impossible to live in harmony and friendship, and we are even enjoined not to bid them God speed, nor even to receive them into our house, lest we should be partakers of their sins (*c*).— But whereas I observed before, there is no other dissention than about some trifling modes and ceremonies, there we may still be united in heart and affection, seeing we may be all members of that same mystical body whereof Christ himself is the head. Thus that man is no dangerous dissenter who perhaps scruples to put on a surplice when he prays in public, for he may nevertheless have *put on* the Lord Jesus Christ, and may *pray* with the spirit and with the understanding (*d*): but he is a dangerous dissenter who, whether he wear the surplice or no, is not clothed with that white linen which is the righteousness of the saints (*e*), and who denies that the spirit helpeth our infirmities and teacheth us to pray (*f*). In short, the whole world is di-

(*c*) 2 John x. 11. (*d*) Rom. xiii. 14. Pf. xlvii. 7.

(*e*) Rev. xix. 8. (*f*) Rom. viii. 26.

divided only into two sorts of people, converted and unconverted, the children of God and the children of this world: and at the great day it will not be ask'd whether a man receiv'd the communion sitting or kneeling, nor whether he was baptiz'd sooner or later, by sprinkling or by immersion; but whether the blood of sprinkling was ever applied to his conscience, whether he ever knew what it was spiritually to feed upon Jesus Christ by living faith; and whether he was ever made partaker of the baptism of the Holy Ghost; for in both sacraments "the outward form or visible sign" (as our catechism calls it) can be of no avail without "the inward and spiritual grace," or thing signified.

*Mrs. C.* I thank you for thus stating the distinction, and cannot help acknowledging the justness of it. But I must still beg leave to mention one or two other matters which I have heard objected against Mr. *Jewel*.

*Miss S.* Pray Mrs. *Clinker* speak without reserve: I assure you I shall be far from vindicating him in any thing that may appear improper.

*Mrs. C.* Last night I happened to be playing a pool at Mrs. *Shuffleton's*, with old Mrs. *Honour Cutwell*, Mrs. *Pryabout*, Lady *Wormwood*, and a few other friends, and who should come in but Doctor *Arius Chadman*, and with him the grave and sedate Mr. *Heartwhole* — During the time of tea, and between the deals, the conversation almost intirely turn'd upon Mr. *Jewel*. Mr. *Heartwhole* said he wondered any body shou'd be so *absurd* as to run after him, and that in general the people of this way were either poor ignorant creatures who knew no better, or else, such as had been very loose and profligate in their morals. Doctor *Chadman* immediately acquiesced in the remark, as did also the whole company, and indeed I was so much struck with the propriety of it, that I gave my hearty approbation to every word which was spoken.

*Miss S.* From the very first ages of the church down to the present period, the same cavils have always been rais'd against the gospel and its faithful ministers, by men of the same character with Doctor *Chadman* and Mr. *Heartwhole*. When God himself was manifest in the flesh, tho' the common people (we read) heard him gladly, yet it was taunted against his disciples "have any of the Rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?" and he himself was reproach'd as being a friend of publicans and sinners. But by those very means which man makes use of to pour contempt upon true religion, God does and will get himself the greatest glory, viz. by instructing the most ignorant, and pardoning the most guilty. Had Jesus intended to propagate his gospel by worldly grandeur and worldly wisdom, he never wou'd have appeared on earth as the reputed son of a carpenter, nor have chosen poor illiterate fishermen to be his chief companions, and the principal instruments of accomplishing his great designs, and however these objections may and do prove "as stones of stumbling and rocks of offence, to men who are wise in their own conceits, and righteous in their own eyes;" yet our blessed Lord instead of endeavouring to obviate them, plainly told the self-justifying pharisees, that publicans and harlots wou'd go into the kingdom of heaven before them, that the whole needed not a physician, but those that were sick; and never perhaps did he know an happier hour, (for it is written "that he rejoiced in spirit,") than when he said "I thank thee father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even to Father, for so it seem'd good in thy sight."

*Mrs. C.* Pray Miss *Patty* did you ever converse with Parson *Squabble* upon these subjects? I'm persuad'd he wou'd soon set you right, if you wou'd but mind what he says.

*Miss S.*

*Miss S.* I am no stranger to the real character of Parson *Squabble*. He is as fly a fellow as any in England; there's he and the Rev. Mr. *Guzzle* go every now and then to dine with 'Squire *Gawkey* at *Noodle-hall*, and there they sit and cram themselves up to the throat, and by way of making the 'Squire laugh tell him a parcel of ridiculous lies about methodists, and then they go away and in return laugh at him in their sleeves. And if you have a mind to have any farther insight into good Parson *Squabble's* character, I can assure you that if he was but half as active to save his parishioner's souls as he is to wrangle with them about assessments, he would be one of the best clergymen in the county, but the truth is that poor *Squabble* is much more expert in worrying the sheep, than in feeding them.

*Mrs. C.* Well, well, may be so. — But I shall now mention a very great oddity that I have heard of Mr. *Jewel*.

*Miss S.* What is that, Mrs. *Clinker*?

*Mrs. C.* They tell me that he goes a visiting all about his parish; and that he is scarcely got into an house but he begins about religion. For my own part I shou'd be frighten'd to see him come in.

*Miss S.* If the subject were not too serious my friend's objection wou'd really extort a smile from me. 'Tis true Mr. *Jewel* looks upon it to be his incumbent duty to visit his parishioners, pursuant to the solemn charge he receiv'd from the Bishop for that purpose; and when he *does* visit them, he thinks it wou'd be the highest prostitution of his time and office not to converse with them upon those subjects on which all their happiness both here and hereafter depends; and therefore he is not ashamed to introduce the bible in preference to a pack of cards, or to declare the love and grace of his Saviour, rather than hear or relate all the idle tittle tattle of the town. No, he leaves these things for those who hope to be fav'd by their own virtue and good works, whilst

it is the determination of *his* heart to know nothing *comparatively* among his flock, but Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

*Mrs. C.* You may run on as long as you please, Miss but it is a certain evidence to me, that a person either, wants good breeding, or is a very great enthusiast, who talks so much about religion.

*Miss S.* That the topic is a most unfashionable one, I very readily allow; and yet the apostle Paul neither fear'd having his politeness call'd in question, or being branded as an enthusiast, when he commanded us to exhort one another *daily*, to have our conversation in heaven; and to let our communication ~~to~~ be *always* to the use of edifying, fit to minister grace unto the hearers(*g*). Now let not my dear Mrs. *Clinker* be angry, if I desire her to examine whether she has not as much liv'd in direct opposition to these divine injunctions, as if there were no such words to be found in the bible.

*Mrs. C.* I always talk of those things that the rest of my acquaintance talk about; and indeed I am not one of those who are for making a shew of religion, and yet I trust I have as good an heart as those who are always canting, whining, and praying.

*Miss S.* Though we are call'd upon to pray without ceasing(*h*), which at least means that our hearts shou'd be always in a praying frame, yet I am as much against *canting* and *whining* as you can be: however don't let us call things by wrong names, since these expressions are frequently made use of in order to pour contempt upon every thing that has the least shadow of real piety. And tho' I don't mean to form any worse judgment of your heart than of my own, or of others, yet I never found it recorded in scripture that the heart of any individual is naturally good in the sight of God, but deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked(*i*); and I'm persuaded that

(*g*) Heb. iii. 13. Phil. iii. 20. Eph. iv. 29.

(*h*) 1 Thess. v. 17.

(*i*) Jer. xvii. 9.

that if you cou'd but call to mind every thing that has pass'd in your heart this one day, even when you were engaged in your closet duties, how little you have thought about God and eternity, and how much about the world and yourself, that you wou'd find cause enough for the deepest repentance and humiliation, especially when you reflect who it is that has said, "My son give me thine heart (*k*)."

*Mrs. C.* But tho' nobody loves a good play or an innocent game at cards better than *Mrs. Shuffleton*, yet you must certainly allow that she is a very religious woman, for she has prayers in her family night and morning, and gives both money and medicines to many poor sick people, and yet you know how much she spoke against *Mr. Jewel* the other night at *Lady Squeese's*.

*Miss S.* I believe indeed that there are few who go further in the externals of religion than *Mrs. Shuffleton*; but as soon as her duties are over do they leave any divine favor upon her heart? Does she seem to make up her happiness in Christ? Is she not as trifling in her conversation, as worldly in her disposition, and is she not delighted with the very same follies and entertainments that amuse the most abandon'd and profane? However admitting all you say of *Mrs. Shuffleton's* devotion, yet we read in the Acts of the Apostles that *devout women*, have before now been instrumental in raising persecutions against the faithful ministers of Christ.

*Mrs. C.* Mercy on us, *Pat*, why you wou'd condemn all the good people in L——r at this rate.—And positively you make me quite sick; I tell you I am for having every body good, without chattering and making a rout about it.

*Miss S.* I sincerely join with you in wishing that there was much less *chattering* and *making routs* than there is; but let us remember that light cannot be hid, and that we are not to take a candle and put it under a bushel,

but

but on a candlestick, that all that are in the house may see the light (*l*): now real christians are said to be the light of the world, and the salt of the earth, and are compar'd to cities set on an hill (*m*); sooner therefore can light itself be turned into darkness, sooner can salt lose its favor; and sooner can an high conspicuous city be invisible to the eyes of the beholder, than a true believer can be unnoticed from the multitude of nominal professors round about him: But is it not strange, that tho' we are creatures of a day, that tho' we have immortal souls within us which must be for ever happy or for ever miserable; that tho' Jesus Christ has vouchsafed to die for our sins, and to rise again for our justification; yet that the grand subject which most of all concerns us is the only one that is quite kept out of sight. There is time enough to talk about dancing assemblies and card assemblies; who and who made themselves very particular together; who dresses the most genteely; and who makes themselves the most awkward figure; who makes the grandest entertainments, and who gives the most paltry dinners; we can hold forth for hours together about elections, politics, races, deaths, and marriages; and nevertheless if but a single word is dropp'd about Jesus Christ, and the salvation of the soul, silence or disgust is the immediate consequence.

*Mrs. C.* May be so. But I can never give up the necessity of a prudent compliance with the world.

*Miss S.* Then it is certain that you must *give up* your bible; but whilst we are in health and spirits, and strangers to any work of grace upon the soul, we can plead as loudly for our favourite indulgences as the scriptures plead against them; but when a severe sickness comes, and lays us upon the bed of languishing, and particularly when death the king of terrors stares us in the face, when anxious friends are weeping all around us, when the silent physician shakes his head, and the fluttering

(*l*) Acts xiii. 50. (*m*) Mat. v. 13, 15.



ing punè indicates a speedy diffolution ; in fuch an hour, will it be a more comfortable reflection that we have thro' divine grace devoted our *whole* hearts to the Saviour of finners, or that we have ftrenuously flood up for the expediency of giving up a part of them to the world and its gratifications ?

*Mrs. C.* O dear, I fhall certainly have the vapors — Is'nt it almoft nine o'clock, Ma'am ?

*Miss S.* No Ma'am it has not yet ftruck eight ; but give me leave to continue the fubject, and to obferve that when death and judgment —

*Mrs. C.* Pray *Patty* let's have done, for I perceive that what *Mrs. Blabington* and *Mrs. Cackleworth* told me the other day is too true—You are irrecoverably gone; however I hope thefe notions won't make you mopifh and melancholy.

*Miss S.* So far from it Madam that I never knew what folid happinefs was till I found it in religion, and whatever prejudices may be taken up againft it by thofe who are ftrangers to its delights, yet one who had tried every earthly enjoyment affirm'd them to be all vanity and vexation of fpirit (*n*); but fpeaking of religion he fays her ways are ways of pleafantnefs and all her paths are peace (*o*).

*Mrs. C.* Indeed *Miss Patty* it's later than you think for, therefore I fhall wifh you a good night : and I muft fay that I really believe you mean well; however I hope you won't make yourfelf fo very particular, but will go a little more into the world.

*Miss S.* Whilft I read fuch texts in my bible as Be not conformed to this world (*p*). No man can ferve two mafters (*q*). Whofoever will be my difciple, let him take up his crofs daily and deny himfelf and follow me (*r*). If any man love the world the love of the father is not in him (*f*). She that liveth in pleafure is dead while ſhe liveth

(*n*) Eccl.i.14. (*o*) Prov. iii. 17. (*p*) Rom. xii. 2. (*q*) Mat.vi.24.  
 (*r*) Mat. xvi. 24. (*f*) 1 John ii. 15.

liveth (*t*). Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth (*u*). Strive to enter in at the strait gate, for strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it; because wide is the gate and broad is the way which leadeth unto destruction and many there be which go in thereat (*w*); I say, when I read these texts and a thousand more of the like import, I can never believe that a divided heart is a sacrifice with which God will be well pleased.

*Mrs. C.* I still think that all extremes ought to be avoided; and that it is safest to keep the middle way.

*Miss S.* We read in scripture, as I was just now observing of a *strait* way to heaven, and a *broad* way to destruction, but we no where here read of a *middle* way; however there is mention made of a *middle state* between hot and cold, and the following is the sentence which the word of inspiration punisheth upon all such as are in that state. I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I wou'd thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth (*x*). Here you see as an open enemy is preferable to a pretended friend, so they who are totally careless and indifferent about religion, are much less offensive to God, than such as are for keeping the *middle way* of lukewarmness; the reason of which must appear very clearly to you if you will suffer me to put the sentiments of such persons into the form of a prayer, which we may suppose wou'd run in some such expressions as the following. " O Lord thy word  
 " requires that I shou'd love thee with all my heart, with  
 " all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my  
 " strength (*y*), that I shou'd renounce the world, and  
 " shou'd present myself as an holy, reasonable and  
 " lively

(*t*) 1 Tim. v. 6.      (*u*) Col. iii. 2.      (*w*) Mat. vii. 13.

(*x*) Rev. iii. 16.      (*y*) Mark. xii. 33.

“ lively sacrifice unto thee (z); but Lord these are  
 “ such over righteous extremes as I cannot away with;  
 “ therefore grant that thy love, and a moderate share  
 “ of the love of this world, may both reign in my  
 “ heart at once. I ask it for Jesus Christ’s sake Amen.”  
 Now my dear Madam if you are shock’d at such a  
 petition consider that it is the exact language of your  
 own heart, whilst you can plead for what you call the  
*middle way* in religion.

*Mrs. C.* To be sure religion is not to be neglected,  
 yet I am apprehensive lest so much of it shou’d make  
 the common people idle.

*Miss S.* Your objection madam is as old as Pharaoh’s  
 time, when the oppress’d Israelites requested leave to go  
 and sacrifice to the Lord in the wilderness; the language  
 of the haughty monarch was, ye are idle! ye are idle(a)!  
 therefore ye say let us go and sacrifice to our God (b).  
 For my own part I am so far from countenancing idleness,  
 that I believe it is as necessary for the common  
 people to labour as to pray, and am well persuaded  
 that the heart may often be engag’d in the work of  
 heaven, whilst the hands are about the necessary business  
 of earth: nor can I maintain a favourable opinion  
 of any man as a christian, who makes religion an excuse  
 for neglecting his duty in the station wherein God has  
 plac’d him, and therefore those two things which the  
 apostle joins together, no man ought to put asunder.  
 Not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving  
 the Lord (c).

*Mrs. C.* I must acknowledge that what you say on  
 this point appears reasonable enough, but I have observ’d  
 that during our whole conversation you have talk’d to me  
 just as if I was a very wicked bad creature.—Pray do you  
 make no difference between me and any naughty woman  
 who walks the streets.

D

*Miss S.*

(z) Rom. xii. 1. (a) Exod. v. 17. (b) Exod. v. 8.  
 (c) Rom. xii. 11.

*Miss S.* That there is a great difference between one sin and another in point of guilt and aggravation, there is no doubt; yet before the law of God I make no difference between the most decent formalist, and the most abandon'd profligate, because the scripture itself makes none, having declar'd in exprefs terms that there is no difference, seeing that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God (*d*). Ignorance of this important truth is the destruction of thousands, who instead of comparing themselves with the law, and seeing that the least deviation from it subjects them to the curse, (for sin is the transgression of the law) (*e*) and the wages of sin is death (*f*), are ready to cry out with the pharisee of old, God I thank thee that I am not as other men are (*g*); by this means their souls remain in blindness both as to their disease and as to their remedy; for as nothing gives them greater offence than to be told that they stand upon a level with the very publicans and harlots, and that the pride, enmity, unbelief and self-righteousness of their hearts are perhaps sins of a deeper die than those outward immoralities which they condemn in others, so they will not be persuaded but that God will be much more inclin'd to receive them and to shew them mercy on account of something that they think good in themselves, than he will to receive or shew mercy to those who have gone great lengths in the grossest abominations.

*Mrs. C.* I can never think myself so bad as you would make me.

*Miss S.* 'Tis not what I make you, but what the word of God makes you that you ought to attend to: however, if you will but call to mind what you said of yourself last time you went to church and approach'd the Lord's table, you will find that your own mouth condemn'd you much more than I have done; for you  
then

(*d*) Rom. iii. 23.

(*e*) 1 John iii. 4.

(*f*) Rom. vi. 23.

(*g*) Luke xviii. 11.

then confess'd over and over again that you were a miserable sinner, a lost sheep, that the remembrance of your sins was grievous unto you, and the burden of them intolerable (*h*); and therefore you besought God pitifully to behold the sorrows of your heart: now if you did not feel the truth of these expressions in your inmost soul, whilst you acknowledg'd them with your lips, it is to be fear'd you have only been guilty of a solemn mockery of the most high, and if you did feel the force of them, then it is certain that I have not set you forth in any worse colors than those in which you have painted yourself.

*Mrs. C.* But I have endeavoured to repent and amend; and upon this account I doubt not but God will be merciful to me.

*Mifs S.* Repentance and amendment are certainly right in their proper place, and no soul shall be sav'd without them; yet it is not on account of these that God will be merciful to any sinner whatever; but only on account of what Jesus has done and suffer'd. Repentance, obedience, and even faith itself are not meritorious causes of our salvation, but they are those gifts and graces which God is pleas'd freely to bestow upon all those whom he has taken into covenant with himself. Besides, suppose you were to be ever so sorry for sin, this sorrow wou'd indeed prove your guilt, but cou'din no wise undo what is past.

*Mrs. C.* This doctrine is enough to drive one to despair.

*Mifs S.* If it drive you to despair of being sav'd by any thing you have done, or can do, either in whole or in part, it is well; since this is the only way whereby you can be brought to set a due value upon the gospel of Christ; and when you can take him as all your salvation, and can rely upon his promises, then you will find that a sense of your interest in him, and of his par-  
doning

doing love shed abroad in the heart, is the very opposite of that gnawing corrosive sensation and anguish of conscience which are properly meant by the word despair.

*Mrs. C.* Indeed, Miss *Patty*, I can bear it no longer—so once more, good night.

*Miss S.* Good night, Mrs. *Clinker*; but let me not part with you without one promise.

*Mrs. C.* What is that?

*Miss S.* That you will not condemn Mr. *Jewel* upon the report of others; but that you will divest yourself of prejudice, and will go and hear for yourself, at least three times, as it is impossible to form any competent judgment of the general scope of a minister's preaching from one single sermon. Remember that when an Apostle preach'd, some went out contradicting and blaspheming, but others had candour enough to say, "We will hear thee again as to this matter (*i*):" therefore let me address Mrs. *Clinker* with "Go and do thou likewise:" and if some shou'd be hardy enough to say, "He has a devil and is mad, why hear ye him (*k*)," I trust you will soon be convinc'd that the words which he speaks are not the words of him that hath a devil.

*Mrs. C.* But his sermons are so horribly long, and the weather is so cold, that I shall be both tir'd and starv'd to death.

*Miss S.* When you came from the play last Tuesday evening, you said you were so charm'd that you cou'd have sat all night, and yet you cannot bear to sit one hour to hear the word of God.—'Tis true, a cold sermon and a cold church are neither of them very desirable; and if I had been one of *Parson Droner's* auditors I shou'd willingly have admitted his plea for coming to a speedy conclusion on account of *the inclemency of the weather*; but I hope when you are at *St. Giles's* you will hear something which will at once command your attention and warm your heart.

*Mrs. C.*

(*i*) Acts xvii. 32.

(*k*) John x. 20.

*Mrs. C.* For my part, I am well contented with my own parish church.

*Miss S.* And so shou'd I Madam if I cou'd hear the good old scripture doctrines of our own church constantly preach'd in it; otherwise I can see no such mighty attraction in church walls.—We blame not the hungry beggar who wanders from door to door because he has nothing to eat at home, nor are you yourself surprized when you see the Lawyer *Sipwell*, or your neighbour Mr. *Swillington* making such frequent enquiries where they may find the best tap, surely then——

*Mrs. C.* What a zealous creature you are to make converts to your own way of thinking?

*Miss S.* When I see the great zeal of many to promote the service of the world, and to discountenance every appearance of godliness which goes beyond the fashion of the times, instead of fancying that I have any unnecessary degree of zeal for God, I may justly be ashamed of my cowardice, especially when I consider how good a matter I serve, and how good a cause I am engaged in — But why does my friend suppose that religion is merely a way of thinking; whereas it is nothing less than a change of state, and a change of nature, and therefore set forth in scripture by the striking expressions of a new birth (*l*) and a new creation (*m*).

*Mrs. C.* [Pulling the bell] I take the liberty Ma'am of ringing the bell for *Sam* to come up, and open the street door.—Good night, Miss *Steady*, good night.

*Miss S.* Adieu, Mrs. *Clinker*, I heartily wish you well.

(*l*) John iii. 5.      (*m*) 2 Cor. 5. 17.

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I N A

# D I A L O G U E

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TO WHICH IS ADDED,

An Evening Conversation between four very good old  
Ladies over a comfortable Game at Quadrille.

----- *If the cap fits, put it on.*

---

The SECOND EDITION, enlarged.

---

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M. DCC. LXXVIII.

[ PRICE SIXPENCE. ]





# A D I A L O G U E

Between Mrs. Clinker and Miss Martha Steady.

*Mrs. C.* **S**O Miss *Patty*! You have made a fine piece of work on't; I hear our famous new preacher Mr. *Jewel* (*a*) has persuaded you to change your religion, and to turn Methodist. — Believe me, there's talk enough about it.

*Miss S.* I wonder, Madam, that a person of my insignificance should be the cause of so much conversation: and as to what is reported of my having chang'd my religion, I can only say that it is impossible for me to have chang'd that which I never had.

*Mrs. C.* Lord, child! don't talk such nonsense, I am sure you were always good enough before you ever heard any of these canting sort of preachers.

*Miss S.* Pray Ma'am, by what rule cou'd you form any judgment of my goodness.

*Mrs. C.* Why nobody was more constant at church and sacrament than yourself; nobody more ready to do a charitable action when it was in your power; and nobody more universally well spoken of by all the world.

*Miss S.* These I apprehend are no scriptural proofs that I was in the right way to heaven, for we are told by an authority more than human, that the friendship of the world is enmity with God (*b*); and that we may give all our goods to feed the poor, and yet have no charity at all (*c*). — 'Tis true indeed, I was a constant attender at church; but I am forced to own that tho' I drew nigh unto God with my lips, my heart was far from him: and indeed it is too common a case to see hundreds who make a point of going every day within the church walls —

A 2

*Mrs. C.*

(*a*) A Descendant from that venerable Prelate Bishop *Jewel*.

(*b*) James iv. 4.      (*c*) 1 Cor. xiii. 3.

*Mrs. C.* Now you are going to be uncharitable ; this is what I detest in people of your way of thinking ; you will allow none to be right but yourselves.

*Miss S.* Nay, my dear *Mrs. Clinker*, only hear me out with patience, and if there's any want of charity in the supposition, I have a right to retort it upon you : don't you remember that you told me yourself no longer since than Thursday last, that tho' old *Mrs. Trimwell* and *Mrs. Mary Save-all* never miss'd weekly prayers nor monthly sacrament ; yet that the one was so miserably covetous that nobody could live with her ; and the other scolded her servants to such a degree that they were for ever complaining of her bad tempers ? And you said at the same time that *Lady Gamble*, who constantly sits in the same pew with you, makes no scruple of looking over her adversary's hand at cards, and is so much out of humour whenever she loses a shilling, that it is quite disagreeable to play with her ; and whenever she wins she will never own it.

*Mrs. C.* I fancy *Miss*, if we were to search narrowly into the lives of some who make high pretensions to faintship, we should find 'em not much better than their neighbours : and to tell you the truth, I believe they are all a parcel of designing hypocrites, and I think if they had their deserts, they ought to be well ———

*Miss S.* Softly, softly, good *Mrs. Clinker*, who is uncharitable now ?—It is too true, and with sorrow I confess that some who have made great pretensions to religion, have disgraced their holy profession by not living agreeably to it ; but is this any proof that none are sincere ? the scriptures tell us that offences of this sort will come, and that they must needs afford matter of stumbling to the world ; but still the religion of the gospel is the same, however unworthy of it any of its professors may behave themselves : surely you won't say that because there is counterfeit coin there is therefore no real gold ;

gold ; or because Judas was a traitor, that all the other apostles were so likewise.

*Mrs. C.* Oh ! but you have so many disputes among yourselves, that it is enough to make one conclude it is impossible to know what is truth ; and therefore for my own part I assure you I shall always continue in the way that I was brought up.

*Miss S.* In the common affairs of life, we think that which is not worth disputing about is not worth having ; and we have an apostle's command to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, whenever that faith is attacked by men of pernicious principles who would corrupt the word of God, and handle it deceitfully : but it is a singular proof of the truth and power of real christianity, that in spite of all the opposition and prejudices which are raised against it, it still makes its way into the heart, and breaks through every intervening cloud and obstacle. --- But methinks we have a little departed from our subject ; if I remember right, you mentioned Mr. *Jewel's* name when you first came in : pray did you ever hear him ?

*Mrs. C.* No, thank God : and I can tell you moreover that good Mr. *Stiff*, Mr. and Mrs. *Screwup*, Sir *Gilbert Guttle*, the Widow *Fondle*, old Lady Dowager *Grabstock*, Miss *Giggle*, Mrs. *Manille*, Mrs. *Bridget Spade*, Miss *Fanny Painter*, and I know not how many more of the very best in the parish, are resolved never to go within side of the church, so long as he continues there.

*Miss S.* Surely, Mrs. *Clinker*, it shews great want of candor to condemn any man unheard.

*Mrs. C.* But you know very well what an uproar there is, and what divisions are made in families by his preaching, insomuch that the pulpits ring again. I'm sure I wish he had never come here disturbing the peace of a quiet congregation.

*Miss S.* Yes, yes, I doubt not but their Reverences have been furbishing up their armour and preparing their  
their

their ammunition ever since they heard of Mr. *Jewel's* presentation: and truly they never preach with any degree of life and spirit but when they are opposing the zealous ministers of Christ:---But pardon me my good friend, if I say that your objections are quite unreasonable: when our Lord himself was upon earth there was much division because of him; for some said he is a good man, others nay, but he deceiveth the people (*d*); and as it was then, he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the spirit, even so it is now (*e*). True religion, as I remark'd before, has numberless prejudices to fight against, and we are apt to steel our hearts against its impressions, because it would rob us of those pleasures and idols which promise us a deceptive happiness here below; and among the many charges which are brought against the faithful ministers of the gospel, there is none more frequent than that they are movers of sedition, pestilent fellows (*f*), and disturbers of domestic peace. When the apostle Paul first delivered his message at Thessalonica we read that the whole city was in an uproar, and that the mob assaulted the house where they supposed he was harbour'd, and drew out certain of the brethren, crying out, these that have turned the world upside down are come hither also (*g*). Jesus himself has also told us that he came not to send peace on the earth but rather division; that five in one house shou'd be divided, three against two, and two against three, the father against the son, the son against the father, the mother against the daughter, the daughter against the mother, the mother-in-law against the daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against the mother-in-law; and that a man's greatest foes shou'd be those of his own household (*b*).

*Mrs. C.* I well remember hearing a sermon upon those very words, and the minister told us that all such texts of scripture related to the primitive ages of the church, and

(*d*) John vii. 12.      (*e*) Gal. iv. 29.      (*f*) Acts xxiv. 5.  
 (*g*) Acts xvii. 5, 6.      (*b*) Matt. x. 34. Luke xii. 51, 52, 53.

and that now christianity is established, *it is attended with ease and honour*, and that all opposition to it is ceased.

*Miss S.* Where real christianity is established in the heart and life of any person, in such an one this opposition is ceas'd indeed; but there are many devices of men which go under the name of christianity, and are made so palatable to our corrupt reason, and to the self-righteous pride of our hearts, and withal appear so specious to our natural ideas of religion, that we easily swallow the gilded bait, and often receive that for truth which only leads us further and further from it. --- I agree with you that this smooth insipid kind of religion will never meet with any opposition whatever: but when the gospel is preach'd in its life and power, when the depths of the fallen nature are faithfully open'd, when man is stripp'd of all his fancied excellencies, when he is held forth to view in the language of scripture as guilty, helpless, miserable, blind and naked; when he is told that he hath neither wisdom, righteousness, sanctification nor redemption but in and through Christ Jesus; when he is boldly admonish'd of the utter impossibility of reconciling God and Mammon; when his ears are made to tingle with that unwelcome but apostolic declaration, "Whosoever will be the friend of the world, is the enemy of God (*i*);" I say when these grand truths are honestly applied to the consciences of the hearers, then great offence will always be taken, especially by those who have the form of godliness, but deny the power thereof.

*Mrs. C.* Really Miss you run on very glibly; I find Mr. *Jewel* is now become your oracle; but however you may be captivated with his long extempore harangues, and his theatrical gestures, I shall always be much better pleas'd with a good, sober, moral discourse.

*Miss S.* Indeed my dear Mrs. *Clinker*, I make no man my oracle but so far as he speaks agreeable to the oracles of God: and with regard to what you have thought

proper

proper to stile *long extempore harangues and theatrical gestures*, if it be a received maxim that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, then, where the preacher's heart is really season'd with grace, there will be no need of the black manuscript book, or of Doctor *Trusler's* copper-plates (*k*): But it is a fine easy way of proceeding for a minister to get fifty-two old sermons, with two or three more for the great festivals, and to mumble these over and over and over to the same congregation (perhaps now and then changing the texts) for years and years together, and when he is thus set up with one twelvemonth's stock in trade, he may then spend his leisure time as most suits his own inclination.

*Mrs. C. Fie Patty*, you are absolutely quite severe and satirical.

*Miss S.* Not at all Madam. I am far from condemning all written sermons, tho' you are pleas'd to condemn all extempore ones; but this I must say, that I shou'd have a very mean opinion of my lawyer, and shou'd think he had not enter'd very deeply into the merits of my cause, if he cou'd not plead for me without having all he said written down before him; neither shou'd I think that man a very able speaker in the house of commons, who cou'd proceed on his subject no longer than whilst his speech was before his eyes.---In every station of life we think that whosoever is acquainted with his profession, shou'd be sensibly affected with the importance of what he is engaged in; hence the music-master (especially if he have the direction of a concert) seems to strain every nerve of his body, and to have all the powers of his soul call'd forth into action, not only because he himself sensibly feels the force of harmony, but because he wishes his auditory shou'd be alike touch'd with the pleasing sound. Shall then the lawyer, the senator,

(*k*) *Dr. Trusler* in his Address to the Clergy, proposes to furnish them with sermons printed by copper-plates, in such manner as not to be distinguished from written hand.



nator, the musician, be so zealously affected about the things of time and sense, and shall the ambassadors of the King of kings, the heralds of the Lord of hosts, who are appointed to proclaim glad tidings of great joy to lost sinners, shall they who deliver the message of God to man speak in a cold unaffecting manner, as if neither they themselves nor any of their hearers had the least concern in the subject? It cannot be: and therefore the Lord Jehovah commanded his prophets of old to cry aloud and not spare, to lift up their voice like a trumpet, and to smite with their hand (*l*); and as if that were not sufficient to prove their earnestness, to stamp with their foot (*m*), that they might shew the people their transgression, and point out to them the way of hope and deliverance. But alas! how is all zeal for the glory of God and the good of souls now condemn'd as frenzy and enthusiasm; and whilst so few ministers speak *from* the heart themselves, how is it possible they shou'd speak *to* the hearts of their hearers? but as soon as they have mutter'd over the last page of their ditty, what can we expect but that they shou'd fall into worldly trifling discourse with their congregations even at the church door, and that the congregation themselves, instead of asking one another in the language of the disciples going to Emmaus, did not our hearts burn within us while he open'd to us the scriptures (*n*)? shou'd begin talking over all the miseries and follies of their neighbours, and perhaps expressing their deep concern that they want a fourth to make up a private party at quadrille the next evening; whereas if they had been at a playhouse they wou'd not have fail'd to have spoken of all that they had seen and heard. And this puts me in mind of that well known answer of Mr. *Betterton* the player to a great dignitary of the church, when he ask'd Mr. *Betterton* what cou'd be the reason that tho' the players spoke of imaginary things and the clergy of real ones, yet an audience was generally much more affected with a play than with a sermon? "My

B

" Lord,

(*l*) If lviii. 1. (*m*) Ezek. vi. 11. (*n*) Luke xxiv. 32.

“ Lord, (replied Mr. *Betterton*,) I apprehend the reason  
 “ to be this, that we players speak of imaginary things,  
 “ as if they were *real*, whereas too many of the clergy  
 “ speak of *real* things as if they were *imaginary*.”

*Mrs. C.* Monstrous! Girl, will you never have done? Do you suppose that Mr. *Jewel* knows better than so many great Divines who are twice his age? or do you think that there was no religion in the town till he came among us?

*Miss S.* Truly Mrs. *Clinker* I am not for making invectives, or throwing out personal reflections, however 'tis an happiness that the word of God has given us some unerring marks whereby to know who are the true, and who the pretended ministers of Christ.

*Mrs. C.* Pray Miss what are those marks?

*Miss S.* By the doctrines they preach, and by the lives they lead.---Besides that in all ages the true ministers have been few in number, and have always met with contempt and reproach by those who rejected their message; whilst the false prophets were many in number, and lived in ease and good repute among those who were deceived by them. Hence God complain'd by the mouth of his faithful messenger Jeremiah, saying, “ the prophets prophesy falsely, and the people love to have it so:” and our blessed Lord himself in his sermon upon the mount says, “ Woe be unto you when all men shall speak well of you, for so did your fathers of the false prophets; but, blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy; for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets (c).” That is, unto the *true* prophets as put in contradistinction to the *false* prophets mention'd in the verse before quoted.

*Mrs. C.* But I desire to know by what rule you judge that Mr. *Jewel*'s doctrine is sound and true?

*Miss S.*

*Miss S.* First, by bringing it to the only touchstone of truth and falsehood, the word of God.--Secondly, by comparing it with an authority which I hope always to esteem next to the scripture itself, the church of England, in her liturgy, articles, and homilies.

*Mrs. C.* Articles and *homilies*! mercy on us child, what are those? I confess I never read them, and don't recollect that I ever heard of them.

*Miss S.* The articles and homilies are our grand bulwarks against Popery; they contain all the fundamental truths of the reformation; having been compiled by the Archbishops and Bishops in the reigns of King Edward the sixth, and of Queen Elizabeth; and no minister can be ordained in the church of England without making the most solemn declaration and subscription that he believes them *from his heart*, to be perfectly agreeable to the word of God; and that he will never preach any other doctrine than that which is contain'd in them; and every clergyman who does preach any other doctrine, is liable to be excommunicated and suspended by the bishop, until he repent of his wicked errors (*p*).

*Mrs. C.* Pray let me hear what those doctrines are.

*Miss S.* They set forth to us the true nature of God, that he exists in three distinct persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and that these three are one; that is, one in nature and in essence. They insist universally upon the Divinity and Godhead of Christ: They teach that man is fallen from his original state of innocence, and that all the faculties of his soul are so disorder'd by sin, that he hath neither will nor power to recover himself: That salvation is by grace, through faith only, and not of works: That all works done before the grace of Christ and the inspiration of his Spirit, are not pleasant and acceptable to God; but that where there is true and living faith in the heart, it will be as evidently discern'd by the good works which it produces, as a tree is known by its fruits (*q*).

*Mrs. C.* Are these indeed the doctrines of the establish'd church? *Miss S.*

B 2

*Miss S.* They certainly are; and of every other protestant church whatever: nay, there is not a petition which the minister puts up from the desk, not a collect throughout the whole book of common prayer, but what breathes the same humbling language, and in which we do not confess either directly or indirectly, that “we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves”--that “we put not our trust in any thing that we do”---that “without God’s holy inspiration we cannot so much as think a good thought;” and that “we are accounted righteous before God *only* for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works and deservings.”

*Mrs. C.* To be sure no man, unless he has a fear’d conscience, will ever subscribe to what he does not believe, merely for the sake of getting the church’s emoluments; and it is also certain that the prayers and the sermon ought to harmonize together, and yet I cannot say that I ever remember to have heard the doctrines of Christ’s divinity, the total corruption of human nature, salvation by grace, and, what you call, the work of the Spirit upon the soul, much insisted upon by our own minister; and to deal plainly with you, *Miss Patty*, nothing wou’d be more disgusting to me than to hear so much about the *Spirit*, and about *inspiration*, as I look upon every thing of this sort to be little better than cant and enthusiasm.

*Miss S.* In whatever light you may look upon it, we have the voice of an apostle on our side when we assert, “That if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his (r):” and if it be cant and enthusiasm to expect the illumination, comforts, and sanctifying influences of the Spirit, then you yourself pray’d no less than ten times in the church service last Sunday morning that you might be a *canting enthusiast*.

*Mrs. C.* If I do all that our minister tells me to do,  
I

I believe I shall stand a very good chance ; and if I am not safe ; God help a many !

*Miss S.* When obedience flows from the principle of faith working by love, it is certainly pleasing and acceptable to God ; but if you were to keep the whole law in order to entitle you to heaven, and yet fail in one point, whether in thought, word, or deed, you wou'd lie under the sentence of God's wrath, and be for ever shut out from all hope of being saved by your own doings : for thus it is written, Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all ( *f* ) : and again, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them ( *t* ). Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh living be justified ( *u* ).

*Mrs. C.* Heighy, tighty, Miss ! why you have got scripture at your finger's end : to be sure you have been finely tutor'd for so short a time ; but if I can't be sav'd by doing my best, how am I to be sav'd at all ?

*Miss S.* By believing in Jesus Christ, who hath redeem'd us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us ( *v* ).

*Mrs. C.* What then do you take me for a Jew, a Turk, or an Heathen ? I tell you I *always* believ'd in Jesus Christ.

*Miss S.* It is an observation of the pious and learned Bishop *Reynolds*, that " there are no such *bad* believers as those who think they were *always* believers : " and indeed there is a wide difference between the faith of custom and education, and that faith which is the gift of God, and the work of his Spirit in the heart ; the former is common to all who profess themselves christians ; the latter is only to be found in those who have felt the burden of sin, and who under a deep sense of their lost estate both by nature and by practice, have fled for refuge to the hope set before them in the gospel of peace and salvation.

*Mrs. C.*

*Mrs. C.* I don't like carrying on the dispute with you, but I'm resolv'd you shall never persuade me to turn.

*Miss S.* You grieve me exceedingly, dear Madam, to see you so much prejudic'd, and still harping upon the same string.---I declare I know not what you mean by *turning*: however as you yourself have mention'd the expression, permit me in few words to tell you what sort of *turning* the scripture makes essentially necessary; namely, a turning from nature to grace; from sin to holiness. In this sense of the word our excellent church teaches us to offer up our supplications that "the hearts of the disobedient may be *turned* to the wisdom of the just;" and in the service for Ash Wednesday we each pray for ourselves, "*turn* thou us, O good Lord, and so shall we be *turned*."

*Mrs. C.* I tell you once more, that I *hope* I shall get to heaven as well as those who make so much ado about it: so pray let us change the subject or I must go.

*Miss S.* Do, let me intreat you to sit down quietly a little longer, and suffer me to observe in answer to what you say, that there are two sorts of *hope* mentioned in scripture, the hope of the hypocrite or self-deceiver, which shall perish (*w*); and that lively *hope* full of immortality, which purifieth the soul, and which maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost (*x*). This is that glorious, well grounded hope which I sincerely pray may be yours, and which shall never fail, till both faith and hope are swallow'd up in everlasting love.

*Mrs. C.* For my part I wish to have every thing go on in peace.

*Miss S.* So does the common enemy of souls.---Pardon the force of my expression, but as it is founded upon scripture I cou'd not help speaking plainly: for we read in the xith chapter of St. Luke, that when a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: but when a stronger than he shall come upon him

(*w*) Job viii, 13.

(*x*) Rom. v. 5.

him and overcome him he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted and divideth his spoils. Now by the strong man *Satan* is evidently pointed out in the context, and by the stronger man Jesus Christ is as clearly set forth. Here then I must take the liberty of observing that as there are two sorts of *faith* and two sorts of *hope*, so there are two sorts of *peace* mentioned in the word of God: the one is that wretched security which rests upon every heart of man by nature, and is represented under the striking images of *sleep*, *darkness*, and even of *death* itself: Hence that call of the apostle, in which all these three images are implied, "Awake thou that *sleepest* and arise from the *dead*, and Christ shall give thee *light* (*y*)."  
 This then is that false peace which the prince of this world wishes never to have disturb'd, and which universally prevails over all those who thank God that their consciences were never uneasy about sin.-- But there is another sort of peace, even that peace which Jesus bequeath'd as a dying legacy to his sorrowing disciples, when he said, "My peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you (*z*)."  
 This is that true solid peace which the world can neither give, nor take away; a peace which is the effect of a lively faith in Jesus Christ, and of which St. Paul bears this strong testimony, "That it passeth all understanding."---The worst wish I harbour in my heart towards dear Mrs. *Clinker*, is, that she may speedily be made partaker of it.

*Mrs. C.* Thank you, my dear, but I am very well satisfied with myself already.---Pray what do you think became of all the people who died in our town before this preaching about faith and regeneration came? Do you suppose they are all damn'd?

*Miss S.* God forbid that I shou'd pass sentence upon any person whatever.--for tho' it is certain that where the blind lead the blind, both must fall into the ditch (*a*); yet at all times and in all places, every soul that is really converted to God and chang'd by grace, shall in the end  
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inherit everlasting life. But I am sorry you have no better argument to produce than that which is in the mouth of every bigotted Romish priest, “ Where was your religion (say they to the protestants) before *Luther's* and *Calvin's* time,” and “ what is become of all the people say you, who died among us before this preaching came?”

*Mrs. C.* All I meant was to express my dislike of innovations.

*Miss S.* Nobody I assure you can more seriously lament the innovations which have crept into the doctrine, discipline, and practice of the christian church than myself; yet from the very same principles as you now argue, the Papists at the time of the reformation reproach'd the protestants, and call'd them “ the men of the new religion;” whereas in truth their religion was the pure religion of the Bible, long before the corruptions of popery had any existence.---But so it is, that when truth has been long banish'd, and error has been long prevalent, no sooner does the former attempt to recover her place, than the latter most impudently denies her the pre-eminence, or because she may have been for a few years in exile, or a stranger, even dares to affirm that her origin is spurious, and to treat her as an intruder.

*Mrs. C.* What is all this to the purpose?

*Miss S.* I presume it is very much to the purpose; because thousands in this land, tho' reform'd as to some superstitious ceremonies, are nevertheless sunk into the very dregs of popish doctrine, without so much as suspecting it; and tho' Bible, Articles, Homilies, and the whole church of England liturgy are point blank against them, yet they as readily swallow down the proud, anti-christian, jesuitical tenets of free-will, man's merit, two-fold justification, and even of sinless perfection, as if they were the genuine growth of scripture and of protestantism; whereas in truth and in fact they are some of the rankest weeds of the popish and pelagian dunghill.

*Mrs. C.* Hey-day, Miss! I fancy you intend to take orders soon.

*Miss S.*



*Miss S.* The subject we are upon, *Mrs. Clinker*, is of too important a nature to be put off with a sneer. I pretend not to argue with you as a *divine*, but as a *christian*; and under this character, it is incumbent upon you, upon me, and upon all who profess the name of Christ, to be ready to give a reason for the hope that is in us (*b*).---Surely in a matter on which my eternal salvation depends, it wou'd argue the most extravagant folly to be able to assign no other cause why I call myself a *christian*, than because my father and my grandfather were so before me; nor why I am a *protestant*, than because I was born in the island of *Great Britain*. Upon the very same principles, had I been born in *Japan* I must have been an *heathen*; had I been born in *Turkey* I shou'd have been a *mabometan*; and had I been born in *France, Spain, Italy, or Portugal*, I must have been a *romanist*: and every pagan, mussulman, or papist, might give as good a reason why they are any of the three.

*Mrs. C.* Not to hold any further dispute on that point, I must now mention an objection which I have very often heard brought against *Mr. Jewel*, particularly by my very good friends *Mr. Canon Temple* and old *Lady Church*, as also by *Mr. Bishop, Mrs. Chancel, and Doctor Steepleton*. It is, that he is a very great favourer of the dissenters, many of whom it is notorious come frequently to hear him.

*Miss S.* *Mr. Jewel* is a man of a candid, benevolent temper, who hates all narrowness and bigotry of spirit; and tho' as a minister of the establishment he bears a particular attachment to the church of England, yet he loves all sincere christians, by whatever denomination they may be distinguished, and has the happiness of being loved by them in return. And if some worthy persons among the dissenters come often to hear him, surely this is a good proof of *their catholicism*, and cannot justly be made a matter of objection against *him*; for which of the two is the best friend of the church, he who by

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(*b*) 1 Peter iii. 15.

preaching unsound doctrine drives his hearers from the church to the dissenters, or he who by faithfully declaring the whole council of God, brings the dissenters from the meeting to the church?

*Mrs. C.* I confess the objection appeared to me rather frivolous when I first heard it mentioned, and now you have intirely convinced me that it is so.

*Miss S.* I am happy to find you so ingenuous, my dear friend, and since we are upon the subject, permit me to observe concerning dissenters, that we ought always to rank them into two classes, viz. those who *dissent* in some essential points of faith, and those who *dissent* only in some little circumstantial matters of external worship and discipline. The former are the *dangerous dissenters*, and we ought the more to be on our guard against them; because legions of them who love the church's preferments, much better than her doctrines, have taken possession of our pulpits, from whence they vent their poisonous errors without dismay or controul. With these dissenters it is impossible to live in harmony and friendship, and we are even enjoined not to bid them God speed, nor even to receive them into our houses, lest we should be partakers of their sins (c).---But where as I observed before, there is no other dissention than about some trifling modes and ceremonies, there we may still be united in heart and affection, seeing we may be all members of that same mystical body whereof Christ himself is the head. Thus that man is no *dangerous* dissenter who perhaps scruples to put on a surplice when he prays in public, for he may nevertheless have *put on* the Lord Jesus Christ, and may *pray* with the Spirit and with the understanding (d): but he is a *dangerous* dissenter, who, whether he wear the surplice or no, is not clothed with that white linen which is the righteousness of the saints (e), and who denies that the Spirit helpeth our infirmities and teacheth us to pray (f). In short, the whole world is di-

(c) 2 John x. 11. (d) Rom. xiii. 14. Pf. xlvi. 7.

(e) Rev. xix. 8. (f) Rom. viii. 26.

divided only into two sorts of people, converted and unconverted, the children of God and the children of this world: and at the great day it will not be ask'd whether a man receiv'd the communion sitting or kneeling, nor whether he was baptiz'd sooner or later, by sprinkling or by immersion; but whether the blood of sprinkling was ever applied to his conscience, whether he ever knew what it was spiritually to feed upon Jesus Christ by living faith; and whether he was ever made partaker of the baptism of the Holy Ghost; for in both sacraments "the outward form or visible sign" (as our catechism calls it) can be of no avail without "the inward and spiritual grace, or thing signified."

*Mrs. C.* I thank you for thus stating the distinction, and cannot help acknowledging the justness of it. But I must still beg leave to mention one or two other matters which I have heard objected against Mr. *Jewel*.

*Miss S.* Pray Mrs. *Clinker* speak without reserve: I assure you I shall be far from vindicating him in any thing that may appear improper.

*Mrs. C.* Last night I happened to be playing a pool at Mrs. *Shuffleton's*, with old Mrs. *Honour Cutwell*, Mrs. *Pryabout*, Lady *Wormwood*, and a few other friends, and who should come in but Dean *Drawler*, and with him the grave and sedate Mr. *Heartwhole*---During the time of tea, and between the deals, the conversation almost intirely turn'd upon Mr. *Jewel*. Mr. *Heartwhole* said he wondered any body shou'd be so absurd as to run after him, and that in general the people of this way were either poor ignorant creatures who knew no better, or else, such as had been very loose and profligate in their morals. The good Dean immediately acquiesced in the remark, as did also the whole company, and indeed I was so much struck with the propriety of it, that I gave my hearty approbation to every word which was spoken.

*Miss S.* From the very first ages of the church down to the present period, the same cavils have always been rais'd against the gospel and its faithful ministers, by men of the same character with *Dean Drawler* and *Mr. Heartwhole*. When God himself was manifest in the flesh, tho' "the common people (we read) heard him gladly," yet it was taunted against his disciples "have any of the rulers or of the pharisees believed on him?" and he himself was reproach'd as being "a friend of publicans and sinners." But by those very means which man makes use of to pour contempt upon true religion, God does and will get himself the greatest glory, viz. by instructing the most ignorant, and pardoning the most guilty. Had Jesus intended to propagate his gospel by worldly grandeur and worldly wisdom, he never wou'd have appeared on earth as the reputed son of a carpenter, nor have chosen poor illiterate fishermen to be his chief companions, and the principal instruments of accomplishing his great designs, and however these objections may and do prove "as stones of stumbling and rocks of offence, to men who are wise in their own conceits, and righteous in their own eyes;" yet our blessed Lord, instead of endeavouring to obviate them, plainly told the self-justifying pharisees, that "publicans and harlots wou'd go into the kingdom of heaven before them," that "the whole needed not a physician, but those that were sick;" and never perhaps did he know an happier hour, (for it is written "that he rejoiced in spirit,") than when he said "I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seem'd good in thy sight."

*Mrs. C.* Pray *Miss Patty* did you ever converse with *Parson Squabble* upon these subjects? I'm persuad'd he wou'd soon set you right, if you wou'd but mind what he says.

*Miss S.*

*Miss S.* I am no stranger to the real character of Parson *Squabble*. He is as sly a fellow as any in England; there's he and the Rev. Mr. *Guzzle* go every now and then to dine with 'Squire *Gawkey* at *Noodle-ball*, and there they sit and cram themselves up to the throat, and by way of making the 'Squire laugh tell him a parcel of ridiculous lies about methodists, and then they go away and in return laugh at him in their sleeves. And if you have a mind to have any farther insight into good Parson *Squabble's* character, I can assure you that if he was but half as active to save his parishioners souls as he is to wrangle with them about tithes and assessments, he would be one of the best clergymen in the county, but the truth is that poor *Squabble* is much more expert in worrying the sheep, than in feeding them.

*Mrs. C.* Well, well, may be so.---But I shall now mention a very great oddity that I have heard of Mr. *Jewel*.

*Miss S.* What is that, Mrs. *Clinker*?

*Mrs. C.* They tell me that he goes a visiting all about his parish; and that he is scarcely got into an house but he begins about religion. For my own part I shou'd be frighten'd to see him come in.

*Miss S.* If the subject were not too serious, my friend's objection wou'd really extort a smile from me. 'Tis true Mr. *Jewel* looks upon it to be his incumbent duty to visit his parishioners, pursuant to the solemn charge he receiv'd from the Bishop for that purpose; and when he *does* visit them, he thinks it wou'd be the highest prostitution of his time and office not to converse with them upon those subjects, on which all their happiness both here and hereafter depends; and therefore he is not asham'd to introduce the Bible in preference to a pack of cards, or to declare the love and grace of his Saviour, rather than hear or relate all the idle tittle tattle of the town. No, he leaves these things for those who hope to be fav'd by their own virtue and good works, whilst  
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it is the determination of *his* heart to know nothing *comparatively* among his flock, but Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

*Mrs. C.* You may run on as long as you please, Miss, but it is a certain evidence to me, that a person either, wants good breeding, or is a very great Enthusiast, who talks so much about religion.

*Miss S.* That the topic is a most unfashionable one, I very readily allow; and yet the apostle Paul neither fear'd having his *politeness* call'd in question, or being branded as an *enthusiast*, when he commanded us to exhort one another *daily*, to have our conversation in heaven; and to let our communication be *always* to the use of edifying, fit to minister grace unto the hearers (g). Now let not my dear Mrs. *Clinker* be angry, if I desire her to examine whether she has not as much liv'd in direct opposition to these divine injunctions, as if there were no such words to be found in the Bible.

*Mrs. C.* I always talk of those things that the rest of my acquaintance talk about; and indeed I am not one of those who are for making a shew of religion, and yet I trust I have as good an heart as those who are always canting, whining, and praying.

*Miss S.* Though we are call'd upon to pray without ceasing (b), which at least means that our hearts shou'd be always in a praying frame, yet I am as much against *canting* and *whining* as you can be: however don't let us call things by wrong names, since these expressions are frequently made use of in order to pour contempt upon every thing that has the least shadow of real piety. And tho' I don't mean to form any worse judgment of your heart than of my own, or of others, yet I never found it recorded in scripture that the heart of any individual is naturally good in the sight of God, but deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked (i); and I'm persuaded  
that

(g) Heb. iii. 13. Phil. iii. 20. Eph. iv. 29.

(b) 1 Theff. v. 17. (i) Jer. xvii. 9.

that if you cou'd but call to mind every thing that has pass'd in your heart this one day, even when you were engaged in your closet duties, how little you have thought about God and eternity, and how much about the world and yourself, that you wou'd find cause enough for the deepest repentance and humiliation, especially when you reflect who it is that has said, "My son, give me thine heart (*k*)."

*Mrs. C.* To be sure it's very right that we shou'd all give up our hearts to God. But pray, Miss *Steady*, tell me now what is your objection to playing at cards.

*Miss S.* When we consider how exceeding short the time is which we have to continue here, when compared with an awful eternity, and how much depends on our right improvement of that time; I believe there are very few, who when they come to die, wou'd wish to reflect on *one* hour, much less on (perhaps) *one thousand* spent in an amusement, where, to say the least, every thing relating to the concerns of another world is intirely kept out of sight.—But this is not all. I believe it seldom happens that they who sacrifice their time in card playing, do not find their tempers much hurt and affected by it: else why so much anxiety? why so many disappointed looks and wry faces when a trifle is lost? why so much secret joy at pocketing a few shillings of one's neighbour's property? why so much jarring and jangling with one's partner for leading the ace instead of the deuce? and why so much playing the whole game over again both in mind and words even after the assembly is broke up?—You know, *Mrs. Dealer*.—Nobody more constant at cards every evening; nobody more regular at church every morning than herself. It was but the other day that coming into the pew when the psalms were reading that she asked the lady next her what was trump? meaning to inquire what day of the month it was?

*Mrs.*

*Mrs. C.* Well! Miss, and if the next time she had been playing at cards she had ask'd what day of the month it was, pray where would have been the harm of that?

*Miss S.* It is not so much the particular question of *Mrs. Dealer* that I condemn, as the temper of her heart, which was so much set upon cards that they were uppermost in her mind even when her body was performing the outward duties of religion: but I apprehend there was no great danger of her asking the revers'd question you propose, unless religion engaged as much of her thoughts at the card table, as it is to be fear'd the card table often does at the church.

*Mrs. C.* But tho' nobody loves a good play or an innocent game at cards better than *Mrs. Shuffleton*, yet you must certainly allow that she is a very religious woman, for she has prayers in her family night and morning, and gives both money and medicines to many poor sick people, and yet you know how much she spoke against *Mr. Jewel* the other night at *Lady Killtime's*.

*Miss S.* I believe indeed that there are few who go further in the externals of religion than *Mrs. Shuffleton*; but as soon as her duties are over do they leave any divine favor upon her heart? Does she seem to make up her happiness in Christ? Is she not as trifling in her conversation, as worldly in her disposition, and is she not delighted with the very same follies and entertainments that amuse the most abandon'd and profane? However admitting all you say of *Mrs. Shuffleton's* devotion, yet we read in the Acts of the Apostles that *devout women* have before now been instrumental in raising persecutions against the faithful ministers of Christ.

*Mrs. C.* Mercy on us, *Pat*, why you wou'd condemn all the good people in — at this rate.—And positively you make me quite sick; I tell you I am for having every body good, without chattering and making a rout about it.

*Miss:*



*Miss S.* I sincerely join with you in wishing that there was much less *chattering* and *making routs* than there is; but let us remember that light cannot be hid, and that we are not to take a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that all that are in the house may see the light (*l*): now real Christians are said to be the light of the world, and the salt of the earth, and are compar'd to cities set on an hill (*m*); sooner therefore can light itself be turned into darkness, sooner can salt lose its favor; and sooner can an high conspicuous city be invisible to the eyes of the beholder, than a true believer can be unnoticed from the multitude of nominal professors round about him: But is it not strange, that tho' we are creatures of a day, that tho' we have immortal souls within us which must be for ever happy or for ever miserable; that tho' Jesus Christ has vouchsafed to die for our sins, and to rise again for our justification; yet that the grand subject which most of all concerns us is the only one that is quite kept out of sight? There is time enough to talk about dancing assemblies and card assemblies; who and who made themselves very particular together; who dresses the most genteely; and who make themselves the most awkward figure; who makes the grandest entertainments, and who gives the most paltry dinners; we can hold forth for hours together about elections, politics, races, deaths, and marriages; and nevertheless if but a single word is dropp'd about Jesus Christ, and the salvation of the soul, silence or disgust is the immediate consequence.

*Mrs. C.* May be so. But I can never give up the necessity of a prudent compliance with the world.

*Miss S.* Then it is certain that you must *give up* your bible; but whilst we are in health and spirits, and strangers to any work of grace upon the soul, we can plead as loudly for our favourite indulgencies as the scriptures plead against them; but when a severe sickness comes,

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and lays us upon the bed of languishing, and particularly when death the king of terrors stares us in the face, when anxious friends are weeping all around us, when the silent physician shakes his head, and the fluttering pulse indicates a speedy dissolution; in such an hour, will it be a more comfortable reflection that we have thro' divine grace devoted our *whole* hearts to the Saviour of sinners, or that we have strenuously stood up for the expediency of giving a part of them to the world and its gratifications?

*Mrs. C.* O dear, I shall certainly have the vapors—Is'nt it almost nine o'clock, Ma'am?

*Miss S.* No, Ma'am, it has not yet struck eight; but give me leave to continue the subject, and to observe that when death and judgment---

*Mrs. C.* Pray *Patty* let's have done, for I perceive that what *Mrs. Blabington* and *Mrs. Cackleworth* told me the other day is too true—You are irrecoverably gone; however I hope these notions won't make you mopeish and melancholy.

*Miss S.* So far from it, Madam, that I never knew what solid happiness was till I found it in religion, and whatever prejudices may be taken up against it by those who are strangers to its delights, yet one who had tried every earthly enjoyment affirm'd them to be all vanity and vexation of spirit (*n*); but speaking of religion he says her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace (*o*).

*Mrs. C.* Indeed, *Miss Patty*, it's later than you think for, therefore I shall wish you a good night: and I must say that I really believe you mean well; however I hope you won't make yourself so very particular, but will go a little more into the world.

*Miss S.* Whilst I read such texts in my bible as Be not conformed to this world (*p*). No man can serve two masters

(*n*) Eccl. i. 14. (*o*) Prov. iii. 17: (*p*) Rom. xii. 2.

masters (*q*). Whofoever will be my difciple, let him take up his crofs daily, and deny himfelf and follow me (*r*). If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him (*s*). She that liveth in pleafure is dead while ſhe liveth (*t*). Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth (*u*). Strive to enter in at the ſtrait gate, for ſtrait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it; becauſe wide is the gate and broad is the way which leadeth unto deſtruction, and many there be which go in thereat (*w*); I ſay, when I read theſe texts and a thouſand more of the like import, I can never believe that a divided heart is a ſacrifice with which God will be well pleaſed.

*Mrs. C.* I ſtill think that all extremes ought to be avoided; and that it is ſafeſt to keep the middle way.

*Mifs S.* We read in ſcripture, as I was juſt now obſerving of a *ſtrait* way to heaven, and a *broad* way to deſtruction, but we no where read of a *middle* way; however there is mention made of a *middle ſtate* between hot and cold, and the following is the ſentence which the word of inſpiration pronounceth againſt all ſuch as are in that ſtate. I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I wou'd thou wert cold or hot. So then becauſe thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will ſpue thee out of my mouth (*x*). Here you ſee as an open enemy is preferable to a pretended friend, ſo they who are totally careleſs and indifferent about religion, are much leſs offenſive to God, than ſuch as are for keeping the *middle way* of lukewarmneſs; the reaſon of which muſt appear very clearly, if you will ſuffer me to put the ſentiments of ſuch perſons into the form of a prayer, which we may ſuppoſe wou'd run in ſome ſuch expreſſions as the following. “ O Lord, thy word  
“ requires that I ſhou'd love thee with all my heart, with

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“ all.

(*q*) Mat. vi. 24. (*r*) Mat. xvi. 24. (*s*) 1 John ii. 15. (*t*) 1 Tim. v. 6.  
(*u*) Col. iii. 2. (*w*) Mat. vii. 13. (*x*) Rev. iii. 15.

“ all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength (y), that I shou’d renounce the world, and shou’d present myself as an holy, reasonable and lively sacrifice unto thee (z); but, Lord, these are such over righteous extremes as I cannot away with: therefore grant that thy love, and a moderate share of the love of this world, may both reign in my heart at once. I ask it for Jesus Christ’s sake, Amen.” Now, my dear Madam, if you are shock’d at such a petition, consider that it is the exact language of your own heart, whilst you can plead for what you call the *middle way* in religion.

*Mrs. C.* To be sure religion is not to be neglected, yet I am apprehensive lest so much of it shou’d make the common people idle.

*Miss S.* Your objection, Madam, is as old as Pharaoh’s time, when the oppress’d Israelites requested leave to go and sacrifice to the Lord in the Wilderness; the language of the haughty monarch was, Ye are idle! ye are idle! therefore ye say Let us go and sacrifice to our God (a). For my own part I am so far from countenancing idleness, that I believe it is as necessary for the common people to labour as to pray, and am well persuaded that the heart may often be engaged in the work of heaven, whilst the hands are about the necessary business of earth: nor can I maintain a favourable opinion of any man as a Christian, who makes religion an excuse for neglecting his duty in the station wherein God has plac’d him, and therefore those two things which the apostle joins together, no man ought to put asunder. Not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord (c).

*Mrs. C.* I must acknowledge that what you say on this point appears reasonable enough, but I have observed that during our whole conversation you have talk’d

(y) Mark xii. 33. (z) Rom. xii. 1. (a) Exod. v. 17. (c) Rom. xii. 11.

talk'd to me just as if I was a very wicked bad creature, — Pray do you make no difference between me and any naughty woman who walks the streets.

*Miss S.* That there is a great difference between one sin and another in point of guilt and aggravation, there is no doubt; yet before the law of God I make no difference between the most decent formalist, and the most abandon'd profligate, because the scripture itself makes none, having declar'd in express terms that *there is no difference*, seeing that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God (*d*). Ignorance of this important truth is the destruction of thousands, who instead of comparing themselves with the law, and seeing that the least deviation from it subjects them to the curse, (for sin is the transgression of the law) (*e*) and the wages of sin is death (*f*), are ready to cry out with the pharisee of old, God I thank thee that I am not as other men are (*g*); by this means their souls remain in blindness both as to their disease and as to their remedy; for as nothing gives them greater offence than to be told that they stand upon a level with the very publicans and harlots, and that the pride, enmity, unbelief and self-righteousness of their hearts are perhaps sins of a deeper die than those outward immoralities which they condemn in others, so they will not be persuaded but that God will be much more inclin'd to receive them and to shew them mercy on account of something that they think good in themselves, than he will to receive or shew mercy to those who have gone great lengths in the grossest abominations.

*Mrs. C.* I can never think myself so bad as you would make me.

*Miss S.* 'Tis not what I make you, but what the word of God makes you that you ought to attend to: however, if you will but call to mind what you said of yourself

(*d*) Rom. iii. 23. (*e*) 1 John iii. 4 (*f*) Rom. vi. 23.

(*g*) Luke xviii. 11.

yourself last time you went to church and approach'd the Lord's table, you will find that your own mouth condemn'd you much more than I have done; for you then confess'd over and over again that you were a miserable sinner, a lost sheep, that the remembrance of your sins was grievous unto you, and the burden of them intolerable (*b*); and therefore you besought God pitifully to behold the sorrows of your heart: now if you did not feel the truth of these expressions in your inmost soul, whilst you acknowledg'd them with your lips, it is to be fear'd you have only been guilty of a solemn mockery of the Most High, and if you did feel the force of them, then it is certain that I have not set you forth in any worse colors than those in which you have painted yourself.

*Mrs. C.* But I have endeavoured to repent and amend; and upon this account I doubt not but God will be merciful to me.

*Miss S.* Repentance and amendment are certainly right in their proper place, and no soul shall be sav'd without them; yet it is not on account of these that God will be merciful to any sinner whatever; but only on account of what Jesus has done and suffer'd. Repentance, obedience, and even faith itself are not meritorious causes of our salvation, but they are those gifts and graces which God is pleas'd freely to bestow upon all those whom he has taken into covenant with himself. Besides, suppose you were to be ever so sorry for sin, this sorrow wou'd indeed prove your guilt, but cou'd in no wise undo what is past.

*Mrs. C.* This doctrine is enough to drive one to despair.

*Miss S.* If it drive you to despair of being sav'd by any thing you have done, or can do, either in whole or in part, it is well; since this is the only way whereby  
you

(*b*) Communion Service.

you can be brought to set a due value upon the gospel of Christ; and when you can take him as all your salvation, and can rely upon his promises, then you will find that a sense of your interest in him, and of his pardoning love shed abroad in the heart, is the very opposite of that gnawing corrosive sensation and anguish of conscience which are properly meant by the word despair.

*Mrs. C.* Indeed, Miss *Patty*, I can bear it no longer, —so once more, good night.

*Miss S.* Good Night, *Mrs. Clinker*; but let me not part with you without one promise.

*Mrs. C.* What is that?

*Miss S.* That you will not condemn Mr. *Jewel* upon the report of others; but that you will divest yourself of prejudice; and will go and hear for yourself, at least three times, as it is impossible to form any competent judgment of the general scope of a minister's preaching from one single sermon. Remember that when an Apostle preach'd, some went out contradicting and blaspheming, but others had candor enough to say, "We will hear thee again as to this matter (*i*):" therefore let me address *Mrs. Clinker* with "Go and do thou likewise:" and if some shou'd be hardy enough to say, "He has a devil and is mad, why hear ye him," I trust you will soon be convinced that the words which he speaks are not the words of him that hath a devil (*k*).

*Mrs. C.* But his sermons are so horribly long, and the weather is so cold, that I shall be both tired and starv'd to death.

*Miss S.* When you came from the play last Tuesday evening, you said you were so charm'd that you cou'd have sat all night, and yet you cannot bear to sit one hour to hear the word of God.—'Tis true, a cold sermon and a cold church are neither of them very desirable; and if I had been one of *Parson Droner's* auditors I shou'd willingly have admitted his plea for coming to a  
speedy

(*i*) Acts xvii. 32.

(*k*) John x. 21.

speedy conclusion on account of *the inclemency of the weather*; but I hope when you are at Mr. *Jewel's* church, you will hear something which will at once command your attention and *warm* your heart.

*Mrs. C.* For my part, I am well contented with my own parish church.

*Miss S.* And so shou'd I, Madam, if I cou'd hear the good old scripture doctrines of our own church constantly preach'd in it; otherwise I can see no such mighty attraction in church walls.—We blame not the hungry beggar who wanders from door to door because he has nothing to eat at home, nor are you yourself surprized when you see the Lawyer *Sipwell*, or your neighbour Mr. *Swillington* making such frequent enquiries where they may find the best tap, surely then——

*Mrs. C.* What a zealous creature you are to make converts to your own way of thinking?

*Miss S.* When I see the great zeal of many to promote the service of the world, and to discountenance every appearance of godliness which goes beyond the fashion of the times, instead of fancying that I have any unnecessary degree of zeal for God, I may justly be asham'd of my cowardice, especially when I consider how good a master I serve, and how good a cause I am engaged in—But why does my friend suppose that religion is merely a way of thinking; whereas it is nothing less than a change of state, and a change of nature, and therefore set forth in scripture by the striking expressions of a new birth (*l*) and a new creation (*m*).

*Mrs. C.* [Pulling the bell] I take the liberty Ma'am of ringing the bell for *Sam* to come up, and open the street door.—Good night, Miss *Steady*, good night.

*Miss S.* Adieu, Mrs. *Clinker*, I heartily wish you well.

(*l*) John iii. 5.      (*m*) 2 Cor. v. 17.

T H E E N D.



An Evening CONVERSATION between four very good old LADIES over a comfortable Game at *Quadrille*.

1<sup>st</sup> Lady. **I** Have had a melancholy Piece of News to-Day in a Letter from my good Friend Mrs. *Formal*: she tells me, that M. *F*'s eldest Son is certainly turned *Methodist*.

2<sup>d</sup> Lady. Turned *Methodist*! Sure you don't say so; I'm certain, if it is true, it will be a great Grief to his Parents, who are very worthy good Sort of People as ever lived.—Pray Ma'am did you play *Basto*?

3<sup>d</sup> Lady. I ask leave. *Hearts* and the King of *Diamonds*.

4<sup>th</sup> Lady. Indeed Mr. and Mrs. *F*. are both much to be pitied, for they have had a great many undeserv'd Afflictions in their Family.—I think it is but lately that their eldest Daughter died of a violent Fever, and now their Son is turn'd *Methodist*.—*Spadille*.

1<sup>st</sup> Lady. I think, Ma'am, they have another Son who is in Orders.

2<sup>d</sup> Lady. Yes, Ma'am, they have so; it was his own Inclination to have gone into the Army, but there being a very good Living in the Family, his Father determined he should be bred to the Church.

3<sup>d</sup> Lady. Pray, Ma'am, what is a *Methodist*?

4<sup>th</sup> Lady. Indeed, Ma'am, I don't know.—*Manille*.

1<sup>st</sup> Lady. O Lord, Ma'am, it is something very bad. I have heard Mr. *Cæcus*, the Sub-Dean, who you now generally makes a fourth at our private Parties, preach two excellent Sermons against them at the Cathedral: In the one he told us, that their Doctrines tended to set aside good Works, and to countenance all Manner of Sin and Immorality; and in the other, he proved that they carried Matters a great deal too far, inculcated an unnecessary Strictness and Preciseness, and were so mighty over-righteous, that they denied good Christians the innocent Amusements of Life.

*All*. O Shocking! Shocking!

2<sup>d</sup> Lady. Perhaps this strange Turn that he has taken may be constitutional, and owing to some melancholy Disorder that is in the Family; and I'm sure if this is the case, there's no Madness so terrible, nor so hard to cure as religious Madness; and for my Part, I wish his Friends would consult some able Physician, in Time, for I'm really very uneasy about him, as I

look upon *Enthusiasm* to be——O fy Mrs. *Patchup*, how could you be so cruel as to trump my King?

4<sup>th</sup> Lady. I should be apt to think as you do, Ma'am, but I have known the Family many Years, and never remember any thing of this Sort in any of them before; besides, he was always very gay and lively till he got into this Way. Don't you remember (Mrs. *Lurch'em*) how we admir'd his Dancing last Assizes?

1<sup>st</sup> Lady. O yes, Ma'am, very well, and at the Races too. 'Tis really ten thousand Pities that he should be so lost to the World, for I suppose he'll now banish himself from all Society, except that of a few poor moping uncharitable *Crators*, that are more likely to encourage him in this unhappy Way, than to do him any good—Lord have mercy, Mrs. *Patchup*, will your Trumps never be all out.

2<sup>d</sup> Lady. I was afraid of a *Sans Prendre*.

3<sup>d</sup> Lady. Poor young Gentleman! 'Tis pity he should be so mistaken, for I really believe he means well. I think his Friends should endeavour to force him into Company, or to get the Bishop to speak to him.—  
*Ponto.*

1<sup>st</sup> Lady. Mrs. *Formal* mentions in her Letter, that his Father got his good Friends Dr. *Daub'em* and Mr. Arch-Deacon *Smoot'tongue*, to endeavour to reason him out of his odd Notions, but all in vain. (—As I hope to be saved I had like to have revoked; I think you led *Clubs*, Ma'am) Well! the Lord defend me from Extremes, I am for keeping the middle Way, and would have every Body good, without making themselves particular; but People now-a-days must be either Saints or Devils.

4<sup>th</sup> Lady. Please to cut, Mrs. *Lurch'em* 'Tis I to deal. Pray, Ladies, were you at Prayers this Morning?

All. O yes, Ma'am.

2<sup>d</sup> Lady. Did you take Notice of that ridiculous Figure, Lady *W.* in her old turned Damask, mended under both Arms? She sat in the next Pew but one to me.

3<sup>d</sup> Lady. That I did indeed; and it is such a nasty, flimsy, greasy Dab, that nobody would pick it off the Street. I believe she has had it above these dozen Years, and to my certain Knowledge it has been both cleaned and dyed.

4<sup>th</sup> Lady. Her Maid told my Maid that she never left off a Rag, so long as it would hang on her Back

2<sup>d</sup> Lady.

2<sup>d</sup> Lady. I looked her full in the Face when I turned towards the Altar to say the Belief, but she refused to make me a Curt'sey. I fancy she was in a very sour Humour, because Mrs. M. did not let her pass to the Upper End of the Pew. You know she's a very proud Woman.

4<sup>th</sup> Lady. And so was her Mother before her.

3<sup>d</sup> Lady. I think Ma'am, that you and she are not upon visiting Terms.

2<sup>d</sup> Lady. No Ma'am, never since that little Tiff we had at Cards last Winter. I'm sure she behaved monstrously rude to me, and so I'd have her to know that I shall never be so mean as to stoop first.

4<sup>th</sup> Lady. I think, Ma'am, you are quite right to shew a proper spirit upon the Occasion.—*Trump about.*

1<sup>st</sup> Lady. For my Part, I make it a Rule never to miss Church *Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saints Days*, and did not touch a Card all Passion Week; and if Lady Gadwell had not come to Town, I question whether I should have play'd all Lent; however, I gave all my Winnings to the Poor.—O good God, I shall certainly be beasted.

2<sup>d</sup> Lady. Tho' Lady Gadwell is an intimate Friend of mine, and I wou'd not say so before every Body, yet I'm afraid she is one of those who have their Religion to choose, for she makes no Scruple of eating Breakfast on a Communion Morning, and would fain have had me play at Cards on *Easter Eve*, a Thing which I thank God I never did in all my Life; but I had a very good Excuse, being engaged to drink Tea with Mrs. Tattle, and old Lady Scandal, who you know wou'd neither of them play the Night before the Sacrament for all the World. So our Party was put off till the *Mondy*, when we played six *Bools*.

3<sup>d</sup> Lady. In deed, what between one Thing and what between another, I was a good deal hurried myself during Lady Gadwell's Stay, and with me had come at some other Time; but I bless my stars I always found Leisure to read over the Psalms and Lessons when I did not go to Church, and tho' I was unavoidably engaged *Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday*, I went thro' the whole Week's Preparation on the *Friday and Saturday*.—*Spadille.*

4<sup>th</sup> Lady. I'm sure, Ma'am, that's more than could possibly have been expected, considering you had such a particular Friend in Town.—*Mantadores.*

1st Lady. Pray, Mrs. *Allprop*, where did you buy the salt fish you had on *Friday*, it was exceeding good? I'm sure I eat so prodigiously, that I was obliged to take a little Surfeit Water before I went to Bed.

4th Lady. I'm very glad you lik'd it, Ma'am. I bought it at the Corner of the Street, and had bespoke some for last *Wednesday*, but the Man disappointed me, so I was obliged to give Two Shillings a Pound for Salmon, for Mrs. *Patchup* and Mrs. *Bolsterup* both know that I never eat any Flesh Meat *Wednesdays* and *Fridays* in *Lent*.—*Basto*.

3d Lady. I remember dining with you, Mrs. *Allprop*, on King *Charles's* Martyrdom, after we had been twice at Church, and I thought your Cook made the best Fish Sauce I ever tasted.—O Lud! the Cards stick together so I can't deal.

2d Lady. For my Part, tho' I'm as much for a prudent Compliance with the World as any Body, yet I wonder how People can be easy whilst they lead such bad Lives as they do. The World surely was never more wicked: They actually say that Mrs. ——— and Capt. *D.* are much more intimate than they ought to be, and you may depend upon it for Truth, for it was told me by a Lady, who had it from another Lady, to whom it was communicated by another Lady of undoubted Authority, as a most profound Secret; so pray Ladies let it go no further for the World.

All. O no, Ma'am, no to be sure.

1st Lady. And good Mrs. *Formal*. in the same Letter that she relates the unhappy Account of poor Mr. *F's* being turned *Methodist*, sends me Word, that Lady *G.* made herself so particular at the last *Soho* in flirting with Lord *B.* that they are the Town's Talk; and that Miss *P.* has certainly lain in privately, and that Sir *Francis*——is grown immensely jealous of his Wife; but I hate Scandal, and therefore only mention this among Friends.

3d Lady. Ladies, the *Pool* is out, and my Coach waits, shall I have the Pleasure of your Company to-morrow Evening after *St. Ann's* Prayers are over?

1st Lady. I fancy, Ma'am, we shall none of us choose to miss Prayers, and as we shall meet at Church we can then settle our Engagements for the Week.

*Excunt Omnes.*

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