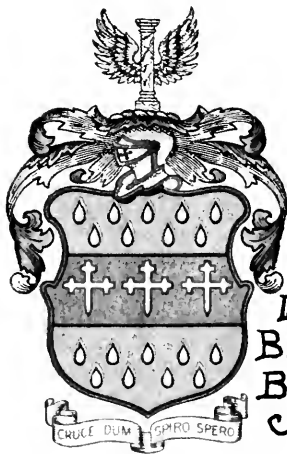




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SEEMINGLY

EXPERIMENTAL RELIGION, INSTRUCTORS UN-
EXPERIENCED—

CONVERTERS UNCONVERTED—

REVIVALS KILLING RELIGION—

MISSIONARIES IN NEED OF TEACHING—

OR,

War against the Gospel by its Friends.

BEING

The Examination and Rejection of Thomas Ledlie Birch, a foreign
ordained Minister, by the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, under the very
Rev. General Assembly's Alien Act;

The Trial of the Rev. John McMillan, before the Rev. Presbytery of
Ohio, for defaming Birch;

The Trial and Acquittal of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, before the
very Rev. General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of America,
for the Rejection of Birch; and

Injustice in permitting the Rev. John McMillan to escape Church
Censure.

WITH REMARKS THEREON,

ADDRESSED TO THE FRIENDS OF GOSPEL PROGRESS,

More particularly, those of the Presbyterian Church of America.

BY THE REV. THOMAS LEDLIE BIRCH, A. M.

=====
—*Shall shew great signs and wonders, in shewing that (if it were possible)
they shall deceive the very elect; Math. xxiv. 24. When the Son of Man cometh,
shall he find faith on earth? Luke xviii. 8. Having a form of godliness, but deny-
ing the power—lead captive silly women, laden with jewels, away with di-
vers lusts; 2 Tim. iii. 5, 6. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye
have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of
God; Heb. v. 12.*
=====

WASHINGTON—PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR—MDCCCVI.

*See Copy of Birch vs McMillan
Birney & Co. Reprint*





DEDICATION.

To the Religious of every Profession, and more particularly those of the Presbyterian Christian Church in the United States of America.

Highly respected Friends and Brethren,

OUR blessed Lord observes,* Wo unto the world, those earthly-minded persons who make religion subservient to their worldly purposes, by reason of offences,—because of the scandal and reproach they bring upon the Gospel, whereby the faith of the weaker brethren is staggered, and occasion is given to infidels and the other enemies of religion to blaspheme. Offences must needs come, so long as any class of mankind, and more particularly gospel professors, will not suffer their evil appetites and passions to be ruled by divine grace, but give an unrestrained bridle to the corrupt dictates of nature, instead of keeping them in subjection to reason and conscience, and being led to duty from the sense of the obligations they are under to Almighty God, their neighbour and themselves, they will, as a necessary consequence, bring a reproach upon religion, and cast impediments in the way of its progress. But wo to that man, or body of men, by whom the offence, this ruin to themselves or others, comes. They will have the detestation and abhorrence of the virtuous and good; the contempt and reproaches of those they led astray, when awakened from their delusion; and at all events, unless timely prevented by repentance and reformation, and flying to God, in Christ, for mercy,—divine judgments in time, and misery in hell through eternity; where they will have to answer for the crimes of others (to which they have been accessory) as well as their own.

It is with extreme reluctance that I solicit the superior attention of the public to a matter which would principally seem to relate to an individual. But as grievances affecting the community at large, generally do not assume their proud station at once, but are gradually in-

* *Math. xviii. 7.*

roduced, by attacks upon particular societies, or individuals (1)—it therefore becomes matter of public concern, to attend to the complaints of every member.

Is there, then, an attempt made by those bearing rule in the Church, upon any member, or members, (even though defenceless strangers) which might lay a foundation for the introduction of privileged orders, a Church establishment, and finally the Inquisition; things which have so long interrupted religious harmony, stopped the progress of the gospel, and caused such mighty torrents of blood to flow; it becomes the injured to complain, and the Church at large to hear.

Had I only received injury in my person and family estate, my reputation unfulfilled (though it was too much to wound him so sorely bruised before) I should not have made any public complaints, but comforted myself, by repeating with a great writer,—the thief that steals my purse, only takes my trash; but he that filches my good name, takes from me what does not enrich him, and makes me poor indeed. But when reputation, which should be dearer than life, is attempted; and, through me, to blast the honour and characters of dear worthy friends, some of whom (though strangers) have stood forward in the most trying circumstances; silence would be treason against truth, and must be construed into an acknowledgment of guilt.

Though there are many difficulties which necessarily prevent the discovery of truth, and the strict execution of justice, in all courts of judicature; yet when there is an open, candid decision, of the proper authority, where reason and conscience may be supposed to have been allowed their sway, submission is a duty, though injury may be sustained by some of the suitors. But where, for the evasion of justice, frauds are practised by the accused party, which must render all appeals to law nugatory, the court conniving at, or overlooking such, and passing a judgment thereon contrary to all precedents, and the individual tyrannized over, oppressed and ruined, under pretence of securing the Church's peace, doing evil that good may come of it;* and offenders, thus escaping justice, afterwards endeavouring to impose their deceptions upon the world, to the prejudice of the injured party, under the venerable name of Church Discipline; are deeds, for the exposure of which religion and the honour of Church Government imperiously demands.

There is an evident reason for an appeal to the people, when persecution, accompanied by falsehood, injustice, and the breach of those sacred ties of public faith, which keep mankind united in society, (2) is carried on by those who bear the venerable character of Teachers and Officers in the Christ's Church, aided and abetted by a combination of Church Judicatories, from the lowest to the highest, which have ne-

* *Rom. iii. 8.*

glected to punish such things, and finally the superior court having refused even to grant an hearing, and thereby shut the door against all legal redress, whereby a publick reproach is brought upon the society and nation to which they belong; a nation looked to by some people as destined by Providence to be the instrument (3) in setting on foot the great work of reformation throughout the world. And more particularly at this important period, big with the signs (4) of the time (5) when Antichrist should fall, as an introduction to the flowing in of Jew and Gentile into the Christian Church, (6) when the Old Dragon, the Devil, being cast out of Heaven, cast out from exercising a Church dominion, (as is now happily the case in these United States) whereby he had enslaved mankind in their bodies as well as their souls, in their temporals as well as their spirituals, the authority he once exercised in the Church by a spiritual agency, the Clergy alone, being now delegated, in great measure, to temporal powers, Church and State, as it is termed, or exclusive Religious Establishments under the direction of the civil Magistrate, as props to his usurpations; and knowing this time will not be long (as would appear from the crumbling state of these civil and religious fabricks, erected upon human pride) having great wrath.

That Civil Liberty must be the forerunner of Religious Reformation, is a truth which must be assented to by all persons of a sound mind; for without it there could be no free discussion, or embracing of truth when discovered. It has been a long received opinion with me, founded in common sense, that all reforms of public abuses must originate with the people, it being evident, that errors are never likely to be rectified by those who have an interest in preserving them. There has likewise for some years been a strong conviction upon my mind, that as the people of America were the chosen instruments to set an example to the world in the establishment of the natural rights of freedom; so they would be the leaders, under Providence, in the perfecting of the great work of man's happiness in this world, founding it upon true Religion and Morality, by cleansing and purifying the Church.

It has been matter of serious lamentation for some ages, that Church Judicatories have too frequently, in their decisions, been deficient in that justice, candour and impartiality, for which the Christian Church in early times was remarkable, and by which it commanded the *respect and esteem* of its greatest enemies. And it is still more humbling, that such things should be complained of in America, whose people so lately experienced the most fiery trial.

An Elder of the first respectability in the Presbyterian Church of America, having heard of my affair with the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, and the very Rev. General Assembly, observed to me, (*with many others who made similar remarks*) that he had long sat in Church Judi-

astories, but *seldom* ever found them to determine *with propriety*; that the matter *called aloud for redress!* and therefore most earnestly intreated me to lay my business before the public. And blessed be the name of the Most High! as the people have the right to reform their Church, so the good people of America have the power. They have no fear of loosing heads upon blocks, and planted upon market-houses; of expiring at stakes, on gibbets, or racks; or lingering in prison ships or dungeons, like their friends in the old countries; or banishment over an immense ocean, into a dreary wilderness, like their forefathers, or encountering the innumerable horrors of a late revolution. No! The wrath of man is put under due restraining bounds. They can stand peaceably in a commanding attitude, and tell their Teachers and Church Judicatories, with the Apostle, we will be your followers only so far as we are of Christ. Neither is the humble complainant in any danger of being sent to the tender or prison. He can plead his own cause, none daring to make him afraid.

As you the people of America have the power of reform, your prudent use of it (where necessary) under the divine blessing, may be the means of not only saving yourselves, your Church, but also your Teachers: and being exemplary to others, also receive the blessing of those who turn many to righteousness. But if you neglect your part, the guilt will be upon your own heads, as a Church, and as a nation; and may you not expect, that he who correcteth the nations will correct you?—I am extremely humbled to be reduced to the most disagreeable necessity of complaining against those whom it was my most earnest desire to have embraced in every bond of friendship; but every gospel method having been tried in vain, duty and necessity oblige this concluding scene.

If any thing which has been most humbly attempted, shall, under the divine blessing, serve to beget in you such a godly zeal as to induce you to rouse some profess'd gospel leaders, under the great Captain of our Salvation, to become helpers forward, instead of hinderers, of the glorious, long expected, universal Revival of Religion, the end will be answered; the desire and prayer being for reformation, not injury. Give God the glory, and pray for

Your unworthy Friend,

THOMAS LEDLIE BIRCH.

Point-Pleasant, near Washington, }
 Pennsylvania, 3d October, 1805. }

N O T E S.

(1.) Attacks upon particular societies or individuals.

THE Test Act passed in England and Ireland in the year 1708, and which is still in force in England, whereby all persons who did not receive the sacrament of the Lord's supper four times yearly, in the Episcopal church, were excluded from all posts, or offices, of profit or honour, under the government, (the office of constable excepted) was enacted under the pretence of securing a Protestant government, by shutting out Roman Catholics. The late Alien Law, empowering a President, by his nod, to transport all persons who were not citizens, was nearly of a date with the Sedition Law, whereby American citizens were subjected to fines and dungeons.

(2) Mankind united in society.

When nations violate treaties, or courts of justice forfeit their honour, by suppressing or defacing their records, and reparation of injury is refused, there is no other redress but an appeal to the longest sword.

(3) America seemingly destined by Providence to reform the world.

That America would be the first seat of the Millennium, or of the great universal Revival of Religion, might be argued from the methods hitherto adopted by Almighty God in spreading religion. The little province of Judea was the place from which the immense Roman empire, and the rest of the world, was enlightened. Obscure fishermen and humble tent-makers were the principal agents in spreading the gospel, in opposition to the most profound philosophers and orators, to the pulling down of the most impregnable strong holds of idolatry—and thereby manifested a divine power accompanying them—praise was perfected out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, Psal. viii. 2 Math. xi. 25.—and the weak of the world made choice of to confound the strong and mighty.

For a like reason, America, with her sons only just emerging out of the wilderness, far removed from the powerful nations of the old world, and unable by the din of fleets and armies to terrify or annoy their shores, might be considered as a fit instrument to teach them mental reformation. And if we are to reason from precedents, the western side of the Allegheny, being placed at a distance from the worldly refinement and pride of the cities and early settled country, will most

probably be the scene of the first considerable progress. And that the state of Pennsylvania, which ever since the time of its first worthy planter, has been most exemplary for its brotherhood, and particularly *the one of its towns* which bears the name of the *illustrious founder* (under God) of American liberty, I had almost said of the world, will most likely experience the first *out-set*.

Serious, judicious ministers, in the old countries, long ago observed to their people, in their sermons, that the gospel had taken its rise in the East, from whence it came to them; that for their abuse of it, it was leaving them and travelling westward to America; as it actually has done in the persons of the great clouds of witnesses, who, being indignant at the rights of nature and conscience being trampled under foot, have from time to time emigrated to these states. The gospel having thus made a circuit of the globe, and as Christ and his divine cause must increase, and all earthly powers and their devices decrease, John iii. 30. it is to be presumed (under the blessing of Providence) that the gospel will take root in America, and shoot forth its branches to the overspreading of the whole earth.

The sure word of prophecy would seem to point out America as the place of refuge for the persecuted gospel church. And here we would premise, that prophecy is given as a light to direct the church, just as the heavenly bodies, the compass, and certain land-marks, teach the mariner and traveller their right path; and there is no other way of judging of the accomplishment of prophecies, but by comparing the prediction with the event, as recorded in history, or as it shall fall out in our day; and as divine wisdom thought such things necessary, it is our indispensable duty to attend to them.

With this view of prophecy, let us look into Rev. xii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 14, 15, 16, where we are informed by John, that he saw a great wonder in heaven, a woman gloriously clothed, great with child, and cried, being pained to be delivered: and there appeared in heaven another great wonder, a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.

For the better understanding of the comment we are about to make, it may not be improper to observe, that this representation of John's is in allusion to the ancient method of writing by hieroglyphicks, sacred characters, or pictures, which was made use of before the invention of letters, which it would seem did not take place until the time of Moses, about the year of the world 2500. There is a specimen of this sort in Jacob's last blessing to his children, Gen. lix. 3, 28, where Judah is represented by a lion's whelp—the lion, styled the king of beasts, denoting strength, courage, and generosity: Benjamin a wolf, signifying cunning, swiftness and ferocity—and so of the rest. John is therefore to be understood as seeing, or beholding as represented to him, upon

one of the sheets of parchment, or leaves of the book, which the Lamb took out of the hand of him that sat upon the throne, and opened, Rev. v. 7. vi. 1. or upon one of the leaves of the little book (seemingly a codicil to the other) which John received out of the hand of the angel that had one foot upon the sea, and the other upon the land, and lifted up his hand and swore by him that liveth forever and ever, that time should be no longer; or he had presented to his mind, in visible characters, the pictures, or representations, of heaven, of a woman big with child and about to be delivered, and of a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.

By comparing Rev. xii. 9, 12. with Math. iii. 2. heaven will be found to signify (as it often does in Scripture) the gospel dispensation, or church, which is heaven begun upon earth, or the school in which Christ's children are trained up for heaven. From whence it would appear evident, that the scene of this prophecy was to be under a professed gospel agency, and not under an heathenish one, as some would have it. A woman represented the church, or a country; male children, a powerful church or country; a barren woman signified a desolate church or nation; a dragon, an evil disposition, cruelty, and want of mercy; a red dragon, very malicious and bloody; crowns or caps of state, temporal dominion; the dragon, and the whole of his appendages, denoting a desperately wicked spiritual power, united with temporal authority, in the same person. The idea of the dragon seems to be borrowed from flying serpents, some of which infest the wilderness between Egypt and Canaan; or certain snakes, or serpents, who, when they get old, become of an enormous size, the skin upon their sides gets loose, so as to form something like wings, which assist in darting upon their prey; they are extremely voracious, their wounds excruciating and deadly; their eyes like balls of fire, add much to the terrible-ness of their appearance, so that the animal they can glance, becomes so terrified and benumbed, as to be unable to fly their grasp. It is said some emblem of the dragon may be discerned in certain huge snakes discovered in America, some of whom are to be seen in the museums; a fit image of the highest depravity, of which the Devil is the chief agent. With these remarks we shall proceed.

The woman ready to be delivered of her man child, the church about to become numerous and strong; the great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads, having with his tail drawn after him a third part of the stars of heaven, stood before the woman ready to be delivered, to devour her child as soon as it was born,—the very mighty, bloody, persecuting, spiritual power, having assumed temporal dominion, and seduced to his interest, by worldly emoluments, a large number of the ministers of the Christian church,

Rev. i. 20. was at his post, ready to destroy the infant church as it progressed.

The woman being delivered of a man child, the infant is caught up to heaven, and the woman fled into the wild desert, to a place God had prepared for her, there to remain until the time appointed for her deliverance,—the church promising to be numerous and thriving, Almighty God took the different members under his own immediate protection (as the original phrase implies) and appointed their place of assembly, or rendezvous, the deserts and caverns in the mountains, to be shewn at this day in different nations of the old countries, where our pious old covenanting forefathers were accustomed to meet for religious worship, hence in derision termed *Mountain men*; the church to remain in this state of obscurity, and her members persecuted, until the accomplishment of a time, times, and half a time, or 1260 years.

War having taken place in heaven, between Michael and his angels and the dragon and his angels, the dragon and his angels were cast out of heaven into the earth,—the glorious Redeemer, the Likeness of God, (as the Hebrew word imports) the protector of his servants, who can make use of such agents as are best adapted to serve his purposes, having defeated the Devil and his soldiers, hurled them out of the gospel church, Rev. xii. 9, 12. Math. iii. 2. no longer to have power to practise their delusions and tyrannies under the sacred name of ministers of religion, but to have recourse to the earth, men of the earth. John iii. 31. Col. iii. 1, 2. corrupt worldly rulers, who made the blessed gospel subservient to temporal purposes, and their own aggrandizement, as has been, and still is, most lamentably the case, in church governments, in different parts of the world.

The dragon having obtained the agency of the powers of the earth, the temporal sword united with spiritual authority, the woman, the pure church, could no longer be secure in her retreat where she had fled, or in any part to be traced by the step of man; and therefore she was provided with the two wings of an eagle, and did fly beyond the path of man, over the great sea, into the *distant wilderness*, America, as would seem evident from the name, the wilderness; America being emphatically long so styled in the old countries, and *her emblem the eagle*.

The woman, the church, having reached the distant wilderness, America, her appointed place, the dragon, by one of his earthly organs, his mouth (which from the second verse of the next chapter, was like that of a lion, the ensign of Britain) cast out a flood of water to sweep away and destroy the woman, the church,—Britain having formed the plan of American subjugation, one part of which was Bishops in the different States, with suitable ecclesiastical establishments, in order to keep the church, now flocking to by the distressed in the different parts of the world, within restraining bounds, of which there is a specimen

in the Canada bill ; which America resenting, the British government, by a cry of church and state, religion and good government are in danger, caused a torrent of armed soldiery, Rev. xvii. 15. to be vomited into America, in which the offscouring of the jails of Britain and Ireland, nor the hireling butchers of Germany, were not omitted, that all opponents might be extirpated.

It is worthy of note, that the dragon is not represented as snatching after the woman with his teeth, or tearing her with his paws, but as pouring water out of his mouth ; the mouth being the organ of speech, and waters representing people, multitudes, nations and tongues ; he sounds the general alarm to all friends of his cause, and sets them in motion, as indeed has been, and still is the case with the British government, to raise the outcry, and form combinations against civil and religious liberty, no matter in what channel.

We may here observe the difference between what is vomited out of the mouth of the dragon cast out of heaven into the earth, the united arbitrary powers of church and state, and that which proceeded out of the mouth of him who sat upon the white horse, followed by the army clothed in white, the gospel soldiers upon earth, led forth by their generals, under the supreme command of the blessed Jesus, the only Head of the church, who, though his more immediate residence is in heaven, yet is present upon earth to govern and protect his church, by his providence, his word, and Spirit, Rev. xix. 11. 21.

The dragon subdued by butcheries, ignorance, degradation, slavery, the destruction of the most noble powers and faculties of the soul : he that sat upon the white horse, by the sword that went out of his mouth, the sword of the Spirit, being the word of God, subdued by reforming, by enlightening and exalting mankind ; only incorrigible enemies are cut off. It was the spirit of light and reformation which went out of the mouth of America (which received its birth from the gospel) that, under the divine agency, was the sword which gave the blow to civil and religious tyranny throughout the old countries, under which it is languishing, and will seemingly die—not the weak, short sword in her feeble hand.

The earth helped the woman, and opened her mouth, and swallowed the water which the dragon cast out of his mouth ; the dragon's earthly house became divided against itself, by the providence of him who sets bounds to the wrath of the wicked, some of his agents joined in defeating his cause. France (drawing into her train Spain and Holland) with prohibitions to Protestant houses of worship, and the Bastille, at home, sent forth to America her fleets and armies to support the standard of freedom ; her mouth filled with the songs of liberty, to render the cause popular ; and finally contributed to the establishment of the

most free and happy system of civil and religious government, of human invention, that ever existed in the world.

It may not be improper here to take some notice of the observations of those people who have opposed, or endeavoured to frustrate, every attempt to reform. Those men cry out, if one of the happiest states, in human society, which ever took place in the world, is now attained, should not the people stop? Will they run into anarchy? Will they pull down all government? If the people in some few countries, and those of the United States of America in particular, out of the many hundreds of millions who inhabit our earth, and lamentable and shameful to be spoken of, for countless ages have been the pack horses, hewers of wood and drawers of water, and the bloody victims of the fury of six or eight despots, of many of whom to say the best of them, they were, nor are, not wiser nor better than some of their humblest attendants—I say, if a small number of the people, out of the immense multitude in whom God's moral image has been defaced, have made one successful attempt towards the securing of their happiness from the grasp of tyranny, should they remain inactive, or should they peaceably endeavour to perfect the work? If some rude essay has been made towards a discovery in some eminently useful improvement, would it be wisdom to defer further researches? Are we commanded to be stationary in our attainments, or to grow in grace and knowledge?

The dragon, the Devil, being thus defeated, in the woman, the church, having obtained a secure retreat in America, his rage not being satisfied with the floods of water he vomited after her, the horrid, malicious, bloody, unnatural carnage he excited, to root out the church, though he abandoned the design of destroying the whole pure, free church, as impracticable, yet he resolved to prevent her growth, disturb her peace, and destroy her happiness, by doing all the mischief in his power. The dragon, therefore, set about the levying war upon the remnant of the woman's seed, who keep the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, by his agents, hurled destruction upon the heads of all those, who most eminently distinguished themselves as the virtuous friends of reformation, in whatsoever place or country their power or influence could reach; who through grace, under all terrors and seductions, held their integrity, as has been manifested by the pains, the imprisonments, banishments and tortures inflicted upon, and most patiently and heroically borne up under by the worthy advocates of reform in the old countries. And it is most humbling to observe, that there were (not seven years ago) in the highest offices of state, and in Congress, and still are in America, accusers of the brethren even at home, but more particularly those of France and Ireland, to whom they were and are under so many obligations, though the evils complained of at the American revolution, were as the drop of

the bucket to the ocean, yea rather imaginary, when compared with those of these nations and other places.

We may here learn the difference between the conduct of God's servants and the agents of the dragon, as set forth Rev. xi. 16, 17, 18. God's people are glad at seeing reformation; the followers of the dragon are enraged: the four and twenty elders, representing the church, thank God that he has taken to himself his great power and reigned, set up Christ over the church; that the gospel had obtained the desired effect, in making the earth happy, by a godly change in the hearts and lives of mankind—the nations, the men of the world, were angry.

That America is seemingly pointed to in Scripture, as the distant wilderness, or secure retreat, where the woman, who brought forth the man child, being furnished with eagle's wings did fly to, or the church, numerous and strong, should have appointed for her rallying post of safety, to make her stand against the dragon cast out of heaven into the earth, the allied powers of church and state, will appear more evident by looking into Rev. xiii. 1, 2, 4. where we have a description of the beast with the lion's mouth, and are informed from whence this beast derived his power, and how America became possessed of her eagle's wings.

John informs us, that after the dragon was cast out of heaven into the earth, he saw a beast rising out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his head the name, or names, of blasphemy. By comparing Rev. xiii. 1. with Dan. vii. 17. the Holy Spirit instructs us, that a beast denotes a king. The Greek word *therion*, translated a beast, signifies a wild beast.—The meaning of the hieroglyphick, or sacred picture, is, there arose out of the confused state of the nations, an unreasonable, inhuman, tyrannical ruling power, in the likeness of the dragon, connecting temporal royalty with spiritual dominion, and even exceeding the dragon in his pride and insolence in encroaching upon the prerogatives of heaven; the dragon, or spiritual power, having never assumed more than a delegated power, such as, God's Representative upon earth, Christ's Vicar-general; but the beast, the church and state power, had assumed the titles and prerogatives of Deity. Amongst the titles assumed by Kings styling themselves Christian, are, Sovereign Lord, Most Gracious Sovereign, Most August Majesty, Supreme Head of the Church upon earth—appellations unbecoming man, and only belonging to God, or Christ, the only Supreme Head of the Church.

The beast which John saw arise out of the sea, was remarkable for some distinguishing features. He was like a leopard, denoting France; his feet like those of a bear, representing Russia; his mouth like that of a lion, descriptive of Britain; the fourth resemblance is not mentioned by John, as not serving the design of prophecy, nor being prudent

or safe for the Christian church at that day, to speak of, being then in existence. But the vision being similar to that of the prophet Daniel, Dan. vii. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. the law being a schoolmaster to bring to Christ, under the Old Testament monarchies, viz. Assyrian, Persian, Grecian, and the Roman, the intermediate connecting power, typifying what was to take place under the New Testament dispensation, John having mentioned three of the four peculiar marks of the beast, he leaves it to the faithful to supply the fourth one, viz. the eagle, the Roman ensign, designating Germany—comprehending the four great powers of Christendom.

Voltaire when speaking of the French (no doubt as degraded under their absolute monarchy, for such as have made the experiment, have ever declared them to be, naturally, a brave, generous, hospitable people) is said to have compared the national disposition to be made up of that of the monkey and cat, or fox, said to be descriptive of the leopard, remarkable for being swift, strong and fierce, in little stature. The Russian bear is become a proverb; the arms, the coin, and the appellation assumed by the British, are clearly demonstrative of the government pointed out by the lion. It is worthy of note, that this beast has not the body and heart of the lion, his strength, courage and generosity, but the mouth, his roaring and voraciousness.

The Emperors of Germany boast that the blood of the ancient Cæsars flows in their veins; and until the late assumption of power by the Emperor of Germany, to be elected King of the Romans was an indispensably necessary qualification for a seat upon the Imperial throne of Germany.

In the book entitled, the *Lawsuit of the Kings or Nations*, the different powers are styled, France, Lewis Baboon (an animal much like those before mentioned;) England, the British Lion; Holland, Nick Frog, &c. shewing the enigmas by which the different nations are known—See a dissertation to this purpose, by Brassly Haldhead, a very learned member of the British Parliament; and from which we may seemingly derive some light in the present dreadful contest, which has deluged the earth with so much blood. John tells us, Rev. xvi. 13, 14. he saw three unclean spirits, like frogs, come out of the mouth of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, Mahomet, or the Turks, being the spirits of Devils, and who went forth unto the Kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty, and gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew, Armageddon, signifying the field of slaughter, in which we learn, Rev. xix. 12, 21. the dragon, the beast, the false prophet, and their armies, are to be destroyed.

The pretence for the combination against France, was upon account of the French invading Holland; but by looking into the treaty entered

into by the allied army, under the auspices of the Pope, at Plinitz, in Germany, about August, 1791, and to which the Grand Turk became a party, it will be found that the real design was to divide France, so as to render her incapable of giving any opposition to the wills of the *masters of the world*; to restore the old despotism in some diminutive fragment; and finally blot out liberty from the face of the earth. As the author never saw the whole treaty, but sketches, any one who could procure a copy of the treaty, and publish it, with the names of the powers who were parties, and at whose instance it was formed, will serve much to enlighten mankind.

The dragon gave the beast his power and his seat, and great authority, to lord it over the souls as well as the bodies of men.

Rev. xvii. 9. The seven heads ascribed to the dragon, and the beast upon whom the woman arraved in purple rode, are declared to be seven mountains or hills, which the generality of commentators, of all professions, agree to be Rome, seated upon seven hills, being the only city in the world, at the time, having this peculiarity in the original plan, as celebrated by her poets, Ovid, Virgil, Horace, and others. The Bishop of Rome has conferred titles upon temporal princes, and part of his assumed power has been transferred to some of them, and the whole to others: the King of Great-Britain, styled *Defender of the Faith*, a title bestowed upon King Henry the Eighth, by the Pope, for writing against Luther in opposition to the Reformation. King Henry afterward quarreling with the Pope, assumed the title of *Supreme Head of the Church*, a power ever since exercised by his successors. The Emperor of Germany, styled his Apostolick Majesty, oldest Son of the Church; the King of France, his Most Christian Majesty; the King of Spain, his Most Catholic Majesty; the King of Portugal, his Most Faithful Majesty, with many others, each enjoying their respective church prerogatives.

There is not here the least intention to cast any reproach upon any church, religious profession, or form of government, which the people may think proper to sanction with a view to temporal or eternal happiness. We bear the most hearty good will to people of all denominations, in each of which we believe there are many worthy characters, many of whom, we trust in the mercy of God, through a gracious Redeemer, will go to heaven. We only want to trace the rise of Antichrist, or the origin of tyranny in the Christian church, as seemingly foretold in Scripture; that mongrel authority of *church and state*, which, contrary to the wishes of the advocates of the *divine right of Kings*, had its origin in the most barbarous assassination of a virtuous prince, and the vile butchery of his innocent children. And by the name Antichrist we do imagine, that not any man, or class of men, is designed in Scripture, but a system now known in the world (particularly under

the name of a church establishment) planned and carried on, under various agencies, which (as occasion served) has persecuted all religions, and opposed all reformation.

The King of Great-Britain and Ireland is an Episcopal in England and Ireland, a Presbyterian in Scotland, and a Papist in Canada. All other professions in these different places, are obliged to support the established church. The King of Great-Britain and Ireland is sworn to maintain the Protestant Episcopal religion, and there are at least three prayers in the English church service, in use every Lord's day, for the downfall of Popery and Mahometan delusion; yet the Duke of York, as the grand representative of the British empire at the head of the late combined armies in Germany, caused publick obeisance to be made to the host, in the processions, by obliging the centinels, at the different posts, to present arms when the host was carried past their station.— British soldiers were sent to Rome, to guard the Pope, when Bonaparte was about to pay a visit to that capital, hence called the Roman legion. The sons of the British lion being so uncomplaisant as not to stay until the little hero paid his respects to them, they decamped for Ireland, and had arrived there, and were wearing the Pope's badge upon their breasts, and displaying the consecrated standard his Holiness had honoured them with presenting. When the author was banished from that unhappy nation, in the year 1793, the General of this distinguished corps, who was of the first nobility rank in England, published an address to the Roman Legion, (which the author had the honour of seeing whilst in the prison ship) putting them in mind that they had the honour of being under his Holiness's standard, and of wearing his badge upon their breasts; that the wicked infidels, the French, had deposed his Holiness; he therefore hoped that they would shew themselves worthy of the standard they were under, and the badge they wore, by fighting valiantly, cutting off these miscreants, and reinstating his Holiness: yet with all this, his Majesty of Great-Britain, or the Most Rev. Father, were not uttering one word relative to the poor degraded *Roman Catholics of Great-Britain and Ireland*, reduced to the state of *aliens and slaves* in the land of their forefathers, not being allowed to have one representative, of their religious profession, in Parliament.

The King of Great-Britain and Ireland co-operated with the Grand Turk in driving the French out of Egypt, the reducing the Egyptians to their former unexampled state of bondage, and the re-establishment of the Mahometan religion.

The French King, whilst co-operating in the establishment of a free church in America, retained all the penal statutes in force against Protestant heretics at home; and though worship might have been exercised in some remote part of the country, or back lane in the city or town, with shut doors, and connived at, yet such things were supposed

to be without the knowledge of the officer of police, who was armed with all the engines of destruction made use of at the massacres of Saint Bartholomew's day, or the revocation of the Edict of Nantz.

The Spanish king, though the ally of the French king in the American revolution, yet was still more rigorous in his persecutions in his own territory. It is well known that Americans, who occasionally removed into the neighbouring province of Louisiana, would not be allowed to erect any places of worship.

In the prophet Daniel's vision, Dan. vii. 4. which has been already taken notice of; and which evidently corresponds with the Apostle John's vision of the beast rising out of the sea, we are informed, that the lion had eagle's wings; the lion styled king of beasts, and the eagle king of birds; denoting the Assyrian or Babylonish empire,—a type of the New-Testament Babylon, Rev. xviii. 2. the scourge of God's Christian church, as ancient Babylon was of his Jewish church. In the representation which the Apostle John gives us of the downfall of the New-Testament Babylon, he introduces the prophecies of the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, relative to the destruction of ancient Tyre, the first commercial city in the world at that time, and the calamities that ancient Babylon would be the instrument in bringing upon Jerusalem, the seat of God's church and temple; which, as they were inflicted only for the purposes of human pride, should be repaid to her in like kind; Isai. xxxiv. 11, 14.—xlviii. 20.—lii. 11. xlvii. 7. xxi. 9.—xxiii. 14.—xlv. 23.—xlix. 13.—xxiv. 8.—xxiii. 8. Jer. l. 15, 19, 39.—li. 37, 64.—41, 48.—vii. 34.—xvi. 9.—xxv. 10. Ezek. xxvi. 13, 17.—xxvii. 29.

Whatsoever forced interpretations commentators may have put upon the Apostle's relation of the destruction of Antichristian Babylon, as designing the city of Rome, which only has spiritual arms, yet it must be evident to any attentive observer, the description in the eighteenth chapter of Revelation, is seemingly applicable, in its fullest extent, to no other city in the world but London, (the Defender of the Faith) the capital of the British empire; which if it should be the city intended, or any other one is pointed to, may Almighty God, of his infinite mercy in Jesus Christ, avert the tremendous judgment by a speedy and hearty repentance. The prophet Daniel observes, that he beheld until the wings of the lion were pluck'd, not cut off, but the great feathers torn out of them, the seventeen United States of America (the largest and most valuable feathers, indeed, Britain had in her wings) wrested out of the heart of her colonies, as will be evident by looking into the map of North-America; Canada and Nova Scotia on the north, and the West-India islands on the south, forming the two extreme points of the lion's wings.

We may here see Almighty God make use of an instrument to preserve his church, similar to that which was its scourge. The Babylon-

nish or Assyrian lion with eagle's wings, long distressed God's people of Israel, and finally destroyed the temple built by king Solomon, and led the whole nation into captivity. Almighty God, by the agency of Darius and Cyrus, the kings of Media and Persia, having seized the distant provinces, afterwards besieged and took the city of Babylon, and translated the empire to the Medes and Persians, Dan. v. 31. and restored the church, by releasing the Jews, and assisting them in rebuilding their temple. The eagle of Heathenish Rome destroyed the Jewish church and nation, Math. xxiv. 28. Christian Rome, by her church and state agents, has persecuted Christians. The American eagle, (seemingly God's eagle) Isai. xl. 31. has borne the Christian church, and with it the Jewish and Gentile people, into a safe retreat, and thereby has given, seemingly, an happy earnest of being the instrument, under God, of introducing or conducting the whole into one universal church, under the glorious Redeemer, the only Sovereign Head. And it is deserving of attention, that America is the first place the Jews have enjoyed the rights of citizens, since their dispersion, now being upwards of seventeen hundred years; a seeming presage of their calling in;—and that the Heathen, who, according to the apostle, being without the law, are a law unto themselves, having the law of God written in their hearts, have also an apparent earnest of their being speedily embraced in the arms of the church: all who acknowledge the being of a God, and a future state of rewards and punishments, being entitled to every privilege in the state.

The lion's wings being plucked, he was lifted from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to him, a corrupt heart, like Belshazzar's, who, instead of being warned and humbled, by the curtailing of the Babylonish empire, under his father Evil-merodach's and his own bad administrations, became more proud and insolent, and even insulted the Majesty of Heaven, by ordering the sacred vessels, taken out of the temple at Jerusalem, to be brought forth to regale his drunken guests, as tokens of his grandfather's conquests, Dan. v. 1—4. Britain, instead of sinking by the loss of her American colonies, or being thereby taught meekness, assuming the name of omnipotency, one of the Divine attributes, (the common expression being *ment acknowledged in every part of his dominions*) becomes more exalted, in the royal speeches, *his majesty will have the omnipotency of his parliament* more secure, more haughty and insolent, and better furnished with every necessary requisite to accomplish her ambitious worldly purposes; and whether this is the case, let it be witnessed by her conduct in different parts of the world, and particularly the influence of her wealth and merchandize in the cities of America, the insolence and tyranny of her navy to American citizens, with the impressments and piracies committed upon distressed foreign emigrants, under their protection, even in their harbours.

(4) Big with the Signs.

Some people think they discern in the signs of the times, the near approach of that glorious *universal revival of religion*, long sighed and prayed for by the truly religious and godly of every profession throughout the whole world.

Some of the signs mentioned by our blessed Lord, as the harbingers of this much to be desired event, may be found, Math. xxiv. 7, 11, 12, 13, 21, 22, 24. Luke xxi. 10, 11, 12. Though some of the things here mentioned may more immediately relate to the destruction of Jerusalem, and in some part to the last judgment; yet it must be evident to any judicious observer, that this prophecy could not be said to be fulfilled, in its fullest extent, in the desolating the very inconsiderable state of Judea, which would scarcely be missed if blotted out of the map of the world; neither was it a discovery worthy of the Divine Saviour, to inform his disciples of the self-evident truth, that the final judgment would put an end to the sufferings of his people. In the intimation, that for the Elect's sake those days shall be shortened, and he that endureth to the end shall be saved, it would evidently appear to be set forth, that there would be some quick, unexpected, effectual interposition of Divine Providence, on behalf of the gospel church, when in the last extremity, rescuing her out of the hands of, and destroying her enemies, and as a reward for her integrity, which through grace she had preserved, placing her in a state of security and happiness, such as she is promised to enjoy during the millenium, or thousand years, which we are informed will take place after the battle of Armageddon, as described in Rev. xx, 1, 2, 3. of which the destruction of Jerusalem, the freedom of the Christians, thereupon, from the persecutions of the Jews, their bitterest enemies, was a type; and both are types of the glorious eternal rest which the church will enjoy after the last judgment, when Christ will forever have put down all her enemies.

The signs and fearful sights in the heavens and the earth, noticed by our Saviour, are thought to have been displayed in the appearances which many people, of the first credit in America, relate to have seen in the sky before and during the Revolution in these states. Upon the 12th of November, 1799, from two to four o'clock in the morning, meteors (vulgarly called shooting stars) in countless thousands rushed from every point of the compass, into a centre, on an inclined plane towards the earth, visible from the American coast to the West-Indies, as attested by different sea captains, and a gentleman of the first respectability, (who could be mentioned) living near Carlisle, Pennsylvania. I have been informed by several persons in different states, that this phenomenon was discernible from their respective places. There was a similar appearance over the city of Richmond, in Virginia, (as set forth in the public prints) about two years ago. In December 1800,

there was a ball of light, (of such notoriety as not to require any authorities to be adduced) which travelled over at least one thousand square miles of country in about two minutes time, illuminating its path brighter than noon day, making a rumbling noise like distant thunder, and causing the earth to tremble. About April, 1803, upon a Lord's day, about ten o'clock in the morning, between Ten-mile and the town of Washington, Pennsylvania, there was seen by the people going to public worship, a shaft or pillar, like that which supports the arch of the rainbow, upon each side of the sun, and in the same quarter of the heavens. The public papers have also informed us lately of several extraordinary appearances. The Hessian Fly, which has, and is still consuming the crops of the fairest part of America, may be reckoned, with great justice, amongst the fearful sights upon the earth. I have been informed by people of the first credit from Ireland, (let people judge for themselves) that about six years ago, near the town of Dromore, upon the great road to Dublin, by Rath-fryland, at sun-down, the inhabitants saw, from their doors, military troops, in complete array, marching across the country; and those persons who were without the houses, called those who were within, to be spectators; though, upon inquiry, it was found that there was not any part of an army in the district, neither could any footsteps be traced where the troops were seen to march. The spectators proposed confirming their testimony by oath, and the facts were circulated in printed hand-bills. Some years before the late commotions in Ireland, the sky at night seemed frequently as clothed with a mantle of blood—at other times convulsed with the most lively agitations, resembling the evolutions of an army. Westerly, near the horizon, there was sometimes the resemblance of an immense pile of fuel, the flame just breaking out.

It is deserving of notice, that astronomers tell us that the Aurora Borealis, called streamers, only made its appearance in the old countries about the beginning of the last century; and I have been told by ancient judicious men in America, that such appearances were not seen in America, until the late revolution in these states. The last century was the period in which (as alledged by some very judicious divines) the seven thunders uttered their voices, the seven wars (as the hieroglyphick imports, the last of which was the American) which were to introduce the final battle of Armageddon, in which, as is said by the angel with one foot upon the earth and the other upon the sea, Rev. x. 2, 3, 5, 6. when he lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by him that liveth forever and ever, who created the heaven and the earth, and the sea, and the things that are in them, that there should be time no longer; that the Almighty would not any longer defer answering the prayers of his servants, who were slain for the word of God and the testimony they held, whose souls John saw under the altar, Rev. vi 9, 10. in destroying tyrannical navies (which, though extolled by the butchers

of mankind as the constitutional force, yet are the thieves and robbers who infest the highway of the nations, and most out of the people's reach) as well as armies, and setting up his empire of peace.

It has been announced in the public papers, that in Prussia three funs were visible in the heavens at the same time.

Nation against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, has been evidenced (and is still in part) in wars the *most bloody* and *widely extended* that ever took place upon earth.

Famines have been verified, in France, when she was prevented receiving supplies from America, by the operations of the British treaty; in the combined army, when invading France, under the command of the Duke of Brunswick, which obliged them to eat their horses, the flux making the fields about the camp assume the resemblance of a lake of blood. Famine in Great-Britain and Ireland, about five years ago; in the latter, oat-meal, of an ordinary quality, sold at upwards of ten pence, Pennsylvania currency, per pound; from an half, to a pound of meal, mixed with some truck of greens, was frequently the dinner repast of a large family. Famines in the East-Indies, and elsewhere.

Pestilences, manifested in the visitation of the yellow fever in the principal cities of America, and other diseases gone forth to places once most healthy, particularly this season in the westerly side of the mountains; an annual visitation of a most destructive fever in the West-Indies; of the plague in Turkey and the Levant; sickness in Ireland, and through different parts of Europe, of late in Spain, which has nearly depopulated one of its first cities.

Earthquakes, displayed in one which early in the last century sunk Port-Royal, in Jamaica; another which greatly damaged Lisbon, the capital of Portugal; a third, about eighteen years ago, which overwhelmed in the sea, one hundred by ten miles of Calabria, a most fruitful part of Sicily; one this season, which much injured the capital city of Spain; with others which might be enumerated;—to which might be added, the late dreadful hurricane near Charleston, South-Carolina, with lesser ones through the states, and the very serious warning, of a like nature, we got very lately in our Washington county, Pennsylvania.—Judicious people notice an uncommon change in the seasons.

Father against son, and son against father, &c. opposition between the nearest relatives; the love of many waxing cold, from the abounding of iniquity; and a danger (if it were possible) of deceiving the very elect, from the cry of lo Christ is here, and lo he is there; abundantly realized at present in the unnatural civil wars which have taken place, the civil and religious divisions which prevail, the prevalence of infidelity, occasioned by the immoral conduct of those who bear the Christian name; and the little virtue, fidelity and real heart religion to be found amongst those who boast most of their soundness in the faith, their conversions, and experiences.

(5) The Time.

In the opinion of the most judicious commentators, and in my own humble opinion, the time of the promised reformation, when Antichrist, *the dragon*, the beast, and the false prophet, the opposing system of spiritual tyranny in the Christian and Mahometan worlds, will not only be put down, but Jew and Gentile have begun to flow into the Christian church, will be within the period of forty-two years hence. The year six hundred and six appears to be the most suitable period from which to date the setting up of the tyrannical, opposing system of church and state. In this year, Phocas, a centurion, having basely murdered the Roman Emperor, Maurice, and his children, assumed the empire. The bishops of Rome, Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria and Constantinople, had long contended for the supreme rule in the Christian church, to which not any of them had a better title than the bishop, or gospel minister, of any other place. Pope Boniface the third, bishop of Rome, thinking this a proper time to establish his claim to universal power, as Christ's Vicar-general, God's Representative upon earth, (doctrines ever exploded by the French church, and lately disclaimed by the Roman Catholics of Great-Britain and Ireland, and which it might have been thought the bishop of Rome, now reduced to a shadow, would have been ashamed of avowing in this enlightened period, as it appears he does; see the pope's address to his conclave, or council, upon his setting out to France to crown the French emperor, and cardinal Maury's letter to Lewis the eighteenth, lately published in the newspapers) solemnly confirms Phocas in the government, who in return dedicates the tenth to the church. Hence the origin of the present system of tithes throughout the old countries, and which for a time made some appearance in America.

In this same year six hundred and six, Mahomet began to receive his pretended revelations from the angel Gabriel, in a cave near Mecca, in Arabia. And as the beast which got up out of the earth, Rev. xiii. 11. having two horns like a lamb, but spake as a dragon, claiming civil and religious authority, professing to reform the religion of the meek and lowly Jesus, but propagated his doctrines by fire and sword, dates a later origin than the beast who rose out of the sea; Mahomet actually began his preaching two years afterwards, viz. in the year six hundred and eight.

The period of the reign of the beasts, is described by two different denominations of time, which signify one and the same thing, to shew that the space is certain and determinate; like Pharaoh's dream, which was doubled, and therefore sure. There are mentioned, forty-two months, a time, times, and half a time.

In Scripture, a time signifies a season or year, Dan. iv. 16. times two years, and half a time half a year, putting a day for a year, (according to prophetic style;) three years and an half of the moon, which

consist of three hundred and sixty days each, (as the Jews computed their sacred year) or forty-two months, will make in all twelve hundred and sixty lunar years, or twelve hundred and forty-two years, sixty-eight days, one hour and fourteen minutes of the sun, or our common year; add to this six hundred and six years, (the period of the Christian æra passed before the rise of the beasts) and we will be brought to the year eighteen hundred and forty-eight, or about forty-two years from hence.—And if all the obstructions which are cast in the way of an universal church, from tyranny, superstition and ignorance, are not only to be removed in such a short period of time, but the glorious work will have made marked progress; how must Almighty God (agreeably to the declaration of the Apostle, Rom. ix. 28. and what must be perceived in the world for thirty years past) finish the work and cut it short in righteousness; because a short work will the Lord make upon earth. And it must appear most striking to the considerate mind, that the American revolution should have taken place at the particular time, and should have been made the instrument, under Providence, of putting the springs in motion, which have since effected such mighty events throughout the world.

(6) Flowing in of Jew and Gentile into the Christian Church.

ADDRESS TO THE JEWS.

Having mentioned the Jews, and my opinion relative to their call into the Christian church, I would beg leave most respectfully to observe to that most ancient and venerable people, that I have for some years entertained thoughts of addressing them upon the subject of their opposition to *Him, whom we Christians have received as the true, promised Messiah of the Jews*. But, in hopes that the subject will afterwards be taken up by an abler pen, I shall at present confine myself to a few observations.

It is most respectfully requested, that the Jews will not consider themselves as hereby upbraided as incorrigible Infidels, to use the words of one of their most eminent prophets, having eyes, but will not see; ears, but will not hear; and hearts, but will not understand; not to be convinced by the clearest evidence;—but men of upright hearts and sound judgments, who can give a *reason for the faith they entertain*. It is likewise most humbly and respectfully hoped, that this address will not be considered as proceeding from ostentation, or with a view of holding up the Jewish people to the contempt of the Christian world; but as coming from one who is deeply interested in their happiness; who has long bewailed their *forlorn state*, and prayed for their restoration to their ancient native country; to whom not only the Jews, (who

may be considered as more immediately the descendants of the patriarch Judah) but the whole twelve tribes of Israel, are very dear, as being *once God's peculiar church, and still covenanted people*; the posterity of renowned forefathers, and chiefly of one, to whom the Gentiles, as well as the Jews, claim the relationship of children, as being one of the channels through which the covenanted mercies of Almighty God are conveyed to them; Abraham having the promise given to him, that of his seed should come the Divine Messiah, in whom all families of the earth should be blessed; Gen. xii. 3.—xviii. 18.

Christians do not charge the Jews with unfaithfulness in preserving the sacred records of Scripture; and they allow them to be highly justifiable in holding the common faith of the Old Testament. But what is most humbly and respectfully alledged is, that the Jews have erred; their Law not serving as a schoolmaster (as it appeared evidently designed) to bring them to Christ, who, according to the belief of Christians, is the true Messiah of the Old Testament. It is therefore most respectfully hoped, that some of the Jewish people will be pleased to give an answer to the following observations, and gratify those Christians who are anxious about their conversion to the Gospel, by informing them what ideas the Jews entertain of the person, character, and office of their long expected Messiah, and their reasons for refusing *Jesus Christ* as such. It is humbly presumed, that all Jewish teachers will perceive their character and the honour of their religion as deeply involved in complying with the request; and that they must be convinced, that it is a solemn duty they owe to their God, to reclaim error (if such they esteem the case with Christians) in those who are willing to hear them, and thereby bring over proselytes to their holy religion. I have some confidence that my earnest wishes will be gratified, from the meek, teachable disposition (I trust from the Almighty) which at present seems every where to pervade the Jewish people, instead of that spirit of rancour opprobrium, and spiritual pride, which before and since the days of Christianity proved so injurious to the Jewish interest; and also from a letter, by an old Jewish Rabbi, published in the newspapers of the old country and America—"That the Jews have some thoughts of attempting a return to Canaan, to rebuild their city of Jerusalem, secure a permanent residence, and restore their former greatness; that there has been a consultation of their learned men, about eight years ago, (said to be in Holland) whether Messiah, the son of Joseph and Mary, might not have been the true Messiah, the time when their expected Messiah should have appeared being so long past; and unless their expected Messiah should shortly manifest himself, a subsequent meeting be convened, to determine whether Jesus Christ should be embraced as their Messiah."

A judicious Christian informed me, that some time ago, endeavouring to persuade a Jew, that Jesus Christ was their Messiah, the Jew discreetly replied, that it might be so; but that Almighty God had not

yet taken away the veil from their faces so as to perceive him. And I hear from the best authority, that there are Jews in America of the first rate learning, and the most amiable, accommodating dispositions.

The time when the Jews' Messiah should have made his appearance, is long past, according to the prophecy of their great patriarch Jacob; Gen. xlix. 10. The sceptre was not to depart from Judah, nor the law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come: Judah should not be deprived of the exercise of civil government, until the Saviour, Peacemaker, the Son of the woman, or Sent, come, as explained by all the Chaldee paraphrasts, the Jewish Talmud, and acknowledged by divers latter Jews.

The civil authority in the family of David, or any branch of Judah's family, has ceased for upwards of seventeen hundred years; neither has the Jews existed as a body politick, or exercised any legal authority in any part of the world, during that period. And whatsoever disputes may be raised from the Hebrew word *shebet*, translated in our Bible, a sceptre, or staff, or badge of authority, which some Jews will have to signify a tribe, a rod of oppression, and therefore the meaning of the text is, that Judah will not cease to be a tribe, or be without oppression, until Shiloh come; which things might be shewn not to be more applicable to Judah than some other tribes; and the whole are refuted by the addition of the law-giver, which evidently points to dominion and exaltation, not degradation.

The time of the Divine Messiah's appearance, is particularly limited, by the prophet Haggai, to the standing of the second temple; Hag. ii. 7, 9. the glory of which should be greater than of the one built by Solomon, (though much inferior in magnificence) in that the *Desire of all nations* should come and honour it with his presence: a period which must long ere now have elapsed, the second temple having been many hundreds of years in ruins. The prophet Daniel has also (if possible) still more expressly noted the time of the Messiah's coming; adding the never-to-be-forgotten *memento* to the Jewish people, that he was to come at the end of seventy prophetic weeks, or four hundred and ninety years, (allowing a day for a year, agreeably to the prophetic style) from the going forth of the decree (by Cyrus or Darius, who were joint in authority; Dan. vi. 28.) to rebuild Jerusalem, the city and temple, and that Messiah should be cut off; after which the city and sanctuary should be made desolate, and he would cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease (without any promise of a renewal, as after the Babylonish captivity) with the overreading of the abominable desolations—the abominable desolating Roman armies, planting their standard, with the idolatrous eagle, the bird of Jupiter, thereon, in the holy city and sacred courts of the temple; Math. xxiv. 15.

The period of Daniel's seventy weeks, since the decree for the building of Jerusalem, is long past; and the destruction of the temple, and city of Jerusalem, by the Romans, upwards of seventeen hundred years

ago, and still continuing in the ruins in which they left them,—the sacrifice and oblation having ceased there ever since that period,—are facts which need no comment to prove that the time in which the Messiah should have made his appearance, is past. The situation of the Jews at present, with regard to their religious worship, would seem to afford a convincing proof, that their dispensation is at an end. Their priests are without employment; their sacrifices are suppressed; their feasts cannot be solemnized except in Jerusalem, Deut. xvi. 16. and to this they are not permitted to repair, being under the absolute dominion of the Turks.

Many Christian writers have most ably shewn the fulfilment of all the Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah, in the person of Jesus Christ—the family he was to spring of—his character, office, miracles, sufferings, death, resurrection and ascension. The Jewish records must attest to his genealogy; the reality of his miracles has never been disputed.

Our blessed Lord foretold certain particulars relative to the present state of the Jews, in the accomplishment of which they are standing monuments of the truth of his divine mission; Math. xxiv. 2. Luke xix. 44. and xxi. 24. that one stone of the temple, or city of Jerusalem, (which the Jews supposed would stand to the end of the world) would not be left upon another, that should not be thrown down; that the Jews should fall by the edge of the sword, and led captive into all nations, they should be a dispersed, subjected people, and Jerusalem should be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled; Jerusalem should not be rebuilt, until the time of the conversion of the whole Gentile or Heathen world to the Christian faith.

Some of these prophecies, as Josephus, their own historian, relates, book 7. chap. 44, 45 had their exact accomplishment. Titus, the Roman emperor, about forty years after our blessed Lord's crucifixion, demolished the city of Jerusalem, and raised the foundation of the walls which surrounded the city, with a plow; and though Titus religiously and humanely commanded his soldiers to spare the temple, yet the Roman soldiers, who were most remarkable for their discipline, animated one another in burning it; thus, saith Josephus, was the temple burned, against the will of Cæsar, God himself, with the Romans, assisting to the ruin of it.—Josephus further informs, that eleven hundred thousand of the Jews perished in the siege; that the number of the captives was ninety-seven thousand; that Titus sent many of them into Egypt, but dispersed the most of them into the Roman provinces;—and the Jews' own Talmud, and their other writers, mention a still greater slaughter, about fifty-two years after, by the emperor Hadrian, when they rebelled under their pretended Messiah, Barchochebas, and were besieged in the city Bitter. Other instances could be mentioned.

Every attempt to rebuild Jerusalem has proved ineffectual. The Roman emperor Julian, called the Apostate, for deserting Christianity and

turning Heathen, who lived in the fourth century, expressed himself in an epistle to the Jews, that he would defeat Christ's prophecy; that "Jerusalem, the holy city, which they so long desired to be inhabited, rebuilding by my own labours, I will dwell in it; and thereby the Jews would have had an opportunity of offering up their prayers and sacrifices; and accordingly he provided an immense quantity of materials, and, assisted by the Jews, pulled down two towers which the Romans left as monuments of their conquest, and began to clear out the rubbish; but such bursts of fire issued from the foundations, repeatedly burning the workmen so as to oblige them to desist; whereby Christ's prophecy was more completely verified, the two towers, the only remaining stones which stood upon one another, being pulled down." This story is related by many creditable historians of that time, Heathens, Jews and Christians; particularly, Ammianus Marcellinus, an Heathen, and Zornuch David, a Jew, who confesseth that Julian was hindered of God in this attempt. The learned Chrysostom, a Christian father, in a sermon to the Jews, told them, that "this fact was fresh in the memories of even their young men; that it happened but twenty years before that time; that it was attested by all the inhabitants about Jerusalem, where might still be seen the marks of it in the rubbish, from which the Jews deserted in so great a fright." This fact, which was in itself so indisputable, brought over many of the Jews to Christianity.

The Jews may likewise discern a convincing proof of Christ's prophecies and his disinterestedness, in what he has foretold relative to the falling away of his own church, even to such a degree as scarcely to preserve a shadow when the Son of Man cometh. See it most lamentably fulfilled, at the present time, in the false doctrines, the formality, the divisions, the follies, the enthusiasm, the persecutions, the tyrannies, and the immorality and want of principle, so prevalent amongst those who profess the Christian name; and perhaps in no one instance more humbling than the subject of this publication.

Our blessed Lord had no interest in imposing upon your nation, like your other pretended Messiahs. He came principally to the Jewish people. He went about preaching the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God, doing good to the souls and bodies of men. Under the greatest hardships, and the most injurious treatment, his love to the house of Israel was unabated. He refused proffered royalty; and died upon a cross, not only to shew you that all your sacrifices centered in him, but that he came for a more glorious purpose than temporal authority,—to set up a kingdom of righteousness, whereby mankind would be blessed, and made happy upon earth, and qualified for heaven. And it may be added, if Christ had been a temporal possessor, his disciples would never have supported his memory, and walked in his footsteps, experiencing like treatment with their master. And you have under Divine Providence, in America received an earnest of your calling into the Christian church,

by being admitted to all the privileges of freemen, which you never enjoyed since your dispersion, until American independence; and thereby may learn that brotherly love, peace and good will to men, which it was the design of Christianity to teach, and for the want of which in Jewish teachers, their religion was much limited in its progress.

In the present state of the Jews, there appears something like the Spirit moving upon the face of the waters, introductory to creation. In the letter from one of your Rabbi's, before alluded to, there is mention of some Jews entertaining thoughts of a return to Canaan, and inhabiting the land of their forefathers; of quitting their wandering life, rebuilding Jerusalem, purchasing Lower Egypt, and thus become the centre of commerce between the eastern and western world, as in the days of Solomon;—recommending deliberations upon the propriety of an application to a certain power, for assistance in their return; a power, under Divine Providence, every way qualified, and from its exact resemblance to the description of the character represented Rev. xix. 11. I have long believed destined by Heaven to accomplish the work.

The Jews of the present generation having a favourable prospect afforded them of returning to their promised land, from which Almighty God was provoked to banish them, for a time, upon account of their sins, but to which their title from Heaven, Deut. xxxii. 8. was never cancelled; being driven thence by intruders and robbers, and therefore entitled in justice to recover their inheritance; would it not be wisdom in them to take the advice of the Psalmist, Psal. xc. 8, 9, 10, 11. in improving their time, that it may not be with them like their unbelieving forefathers in the wilderness, who were excluded from the land of Canaan, and in rejecting the *earthly*, forfeit the *heavenly*: and should they be successful, as there is no doubt, under the Divine blessing, in due time they will, they will still experience a further test of the truth of Christ's prophecies, in their most wonderful preservation for so long a time, as a *separate, distinct people*, under such remarkable circumstances, contrary to the state of all other nations, the Egyptians excepted, who were also to be a *sign* in their calling, Isai. xix. 18—25. and out of whose land there is to be an highway into Assyria, that the kings of the east, the ten dispersed tribes of Israel, styled kings and priests to God, Exod. xix. 6 Rev. i. 6. may return over Euphrates to their ancient land. And according to another of Christ's prophecies, Math. xx. 16. the Jews being the people who were first honoured with the offers of gospel privileges, (before the Heathen) but rejected them, and therefore the last in being called in, after the conversion of many of the Heathen. They are thereby taught a serious lesson of humility; that all mankind are their brethren; that it was from the mercy and goodness of God they were made a covenanted people, and not upon account of any superior inherent excellency or worth they possessed beyond the rest of the world; that God is equally the God of the *Gentiles*, as well as of the Jews.

I most humbly and respectfully beg leave to conclude this short address in the words of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, Rom. xi. 15, 25, 26. who was a most zealous advocate for an adherence to the Jewish religion, until converted by the strongest evidence, and whose ardent love ever flamed towards his most beloved kinsmen, the Jews, with unabated fervour, most humbly and fervently praying the covenanted God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, through Jesus Christ, my Lord, that as the casting away of your Jewish nation, which was rejected from being God's peculiar church, for refusing the gospel, was the reconciling of the world, the means of sending the gospel to a considerable part of the Heathens, and restoring them to peace with God, being his enemies by their abominable corruptions; may the receiving of your twelve tribes, the whole family of Israel, be life from the dead; may the embracing of you in the Christian church, give such a stroke to infidelity throughout the Heathen world, (as upon due consideration it must) as will not only root out the folly and wickedness by which it is dead to every sense of good, but revive such a life of true religion and godliness, as will resemble the resurrection of the dead to life! And as blindness in part is happened unto Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; as a number of you Israelites and Jews did not, like some of your brethren, embrace the gospel at its first preaching by the Apostles, but have continued your opposition, from father to son, until the fixed time for the conversion of the Heathens; so may all Israel, not only you Jews, Judah and Benjamin, but your other ten tribes, with the fulness of the Gentile world, be saved! brought under God's more immediate covenanted protection,—blessed and made happy in time. and prepared for a glorious eternity,—by a reception into the Christian church. Amen.





SEEMINGLY

EXPERIMENTAL RELIGION, INSTRUCTORS UNEXPERIENCED, &c.

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FROM a long course of unbrotherly treatment, experienced in endeavouring to obtain an admission into the Presbyterian Church of America, I was reduced to the most disagreeable necessity of withdrawing from the meeting of the very Rev. General Assembly, in Philadelphia, in May 1803, and decline all further attempts towards having any connection with that very Rev. body; in consequence of which (as I learn) the Assembly proceeded to reject me from their community.

My unhappy business in the American Presbyterian Church, having engrossed much public attention in America and the old world, and being variously represented,—to prevent misconceptions, the following statement is most humbly and respectfully submitted to the public.

After being an ordained minister for 20 years, in one of the first rate Presbyterian churches in Ireland, for only being suspected of favouring the people of that unhappy nation in their late unsuccessful attempt to recover their liberties, I was dragged from my house by a military band, and had for my choice immediate death, or transportation for life;—when I adopted the latter, and made choice of the kindred States of America as my place of residence.

Having officiated about a year in the city and neighbourhood of Philadelphia, I took a circuit into the western country, where, in the year 1800, being twice invited to settle in the town and neighbourhood of Washington, Pennsylvania, a congregation in which there was a number of my old hearers and neighbours from Ireland, with the concurrence of the stated committee of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, consisting of the Rev. John McMillan, the Rev. Samuel Ralston, and John McDowell, Esq. Having declined sundry offers of settlement upon the eastern side of the Allegheny mountain, I removed there, at great expence, as a place adapted to a stranger in my situation, with a numerous family, and the small wreck of a desolated fortune.

Shortly after my arrival at Washington, the Rev. Synod of Winchester, Virginia, held their meeting there. Upon one of the evenings, the Rev. Joseph Patterson, of the Presbytery of Ohio, after he had

preached, gave notice (as he afterwards informed me in his apology) at the instance of the Rev. John M^cMillan, that a Mr. Hoge, of Virginia, would supply the congregation of Washington next Lord's day; thereby implying, that the congregation was vacant: which unfriendly attack upon a stranger, though a worthy minister proposed to bring the matter before the Synod, which by the intimation was insinuated to have been sanctioned by that Rev. body, to the great surprize of my friends, and exultation and encouragement of opponents, was for peace's sake passed over in silence.

At a meeting of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, at Racoon, the 23^d of October, 1800, I attended, accompanied by Messrs. William M^cCam-
mant and Robert Anderson, commissioners, with a supplication from the congregation of Washington, praying my reception under the care of their Rev. body, and to proceed with me, agreeably to the rules of the church, in such steps as were necessary to my settlement in said congregation,—when the following credentials and collateral testimony of my standing as a gospel minister, were produced, preparatory to my being taken upon trials under the Assembly's alien law. (1)

Credentials from the Rev. Presbytery of Belfast, Ireland.

This is to certify, that the Rev. Thomas Ledlie Birch was a long time a member of the Presbytery of Belfast, and Minister of the Presbyterian congregation of Saintfield, in which station he maintained a good moral character, and was much respected by his congregation.

Belfast, July 21st, 1798.

SINCLARE KELBURN, Mod'r. pro tempore.

SAMUEL PATTEN, Min'r.

ALEXANDER HENRY, M.

A Letter from the Rev. William M^cKee, Camden, Delaware, to the Rev. Samuel Miller, New-York.

DEAR SIR,

Yesterday I received a letter from the Rev. Mr. Birch, who expresses the warmest gratitude for the kindness received from you. He nearly speaks that emphatic language, "I was a stranger, and you took me in." The value of this instance of philanthropy is still more enhanced, from the consideration of its happening at a time when you are so busily engaged in the discharge of your parochial duties to your fellow-citizens in the present calamity. I sincerely lament the distressing situation of my worthy friend Mr. Birch, whom the hand of violence and cruel persecution has driven from his country and friends, to seek an asylum with us. Such is the merciless treatment of the government of that country to Presbyterian Clergy, unless they are clamorous in praise of every measure of government. And such is the effect in general of establishments. Mr. Birch's accusers could prove nothing against him, and yet they were not satisfied, but he must either forfeit his

life or country. His situation in this country is somewhat embarrassing, rendered so by the many impositions on the Presbyterian church from strangers, and which makes it necessary for the future by every prudent measure carefully to guard against. But in the present case, we ought to consider that it is a matter of necessity, and not of choice. Mr. Birch was settled in one of the best congregations in the north of Ireland, both for numbers and respectability, with whom he has lived (I believe) upwards of twenty years, with usefulness, and in harmony. He was a member of the Presbytery of Belfast, one of my spiritual fathers, and for integrity, soundness of judgment, and uprightness of conduct, was always rated with the leading members of the body. If any thing I could advance, with respect to this amiable character, would have any weight with my acquaintances, in order to give him a kind reception; I should think myself bound to throw it into the scale, not from a sense of friendship which I have experienced from this friendly man, but from a sense of duty which I owe to him and to truth. Were I called in the most solemn manner to declare what I knew of him, I would say, that my personal knowledge of him whilst in Ireland, and many accounts by letter since, enable me to say, that I believe him to be a faithful minister of the New-Testament, and sound in the Doctrines of Grace, viz. truly Calvinistic; a man noted for those principles of benevolence and philanthropy, which his distressed situation has induced others to confer upon him.

The cold and frost which has prevailed for these four days past, will, I hope, be an effectual check to the yellow fever, both in your city and in Philadelphia.

I am, Sir, with sentiments of respect and esteem,
your most humble servant,

WILLIAM M'KEE.

THE REV. SAMUEL MILLER.

Camden, Nov. 1st, 1793.

A Letter from the Rev. Samuel Miller, New-York, to the Rev. Doctor Ewing, Philadelphia.

New-York, Nov. 9, 1798.

REV. & DEAR SIR,

Though I wrote to you by yesterday's mail, I am again called upon to address you, for the purpose of introducing the Rev. Mr. Thomas Ledlie Birch, a gentleman who arrived at this port from Ireland a few days ago. This gentleman produced to us a testimonial from the Presbytery to which he belonged in Ireland, certifying that he was a minister of the gospel of good character and standing, and settled as Pastor of the Presbyterian church at Saintfield, near Belfast: and such farther collateral evidence has offered, from various quarters, as fully satisfies me and my colleagues, that he sustained a good moral and religious character, and was much respected among his ecclesiastical connections in his own country. He has preached several times for us in this city, and his preaching also confirms the favourable account which

his testimonials give of his piety and talents. He says he was considerably acquainted with your character, when you visited his native country, many years ago, on a public mission. Any civilities or advice which you may be able to afford him, will, I am persuaded, be bestowed on a very worthy character.

I am, Rev. and Dear Sir,
Yours most respectfully,

SAMUEL MILLER.

*A letter from the Rev. Samuel Miller, to the Rev. Doctor Davidson,
Vice-President of Dickinson College, Carlisle.*

New-York, Nov. 8, 1798.

REV. & DEAR SIR,

This letter will be handed to you by the Rev. Thomas Ledlie Birch, who lately arrived at this port from Ireland. Mr. Birch brings a testimonial from the Presbytery to which he belonged, certifying that he was a minister of the gospel, of good character and standing, and settled as Pastor of the Presbyterian church of Saintfield, near Belfast.—In addition to this testimonial, he has produced such other collateral evidence, as fully satisfies my colleagues and me, that he sustained a good moral and religious character, and was much respected among his ecclesiastical connections in his own country. He has preached several times for us in this city, and his preaching confirms the account which his testimonials give of his piety and talents. I have no doubt you will be disposed to pay him attention, and to forward his views, as far as you can consistently with duty. Whatever civilities you may shew him, I am persuaded will be bestowed on a worthy character.

I remained in New-York through the whole of the late sickness,—and was very ill with it; but, through Divine goodness, have survived. Our city is now restored to its usual health, and the inhabitants have generally returned.

I often think of Carlisle, and my friends there; and of none with more affection than you and your good lady. I hope I shall be enabled to visit you, and brighten the chain of friendship, in a year or two. With my best compliments to Mrs. Davidson, and with sentiments of the highest respect and esteem, I remain, Rev. and Dear Sir,

Your friend and humble servant,

SAMUEL MILLER.

Minute of the stated Committee of the Rev. Presbytery of Philadelphia.

The Committee of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, appointed to examine the credentials of foreign and travelling ministers, and to make them temporary appointments, met at the house of the Rev. Dr. John Ewing, in the city of Philadelphia, November 19th, 1798.

Present—Rev. Dr. John Ewing, Modr.	} Ministers.
Mr. Nathaniel Irwin,	
Dr. Ashbel Green,	
Mr. Robert Smith, Elder.	

Dr. Green was chosen clerk.

The Rev. Thomas Ledlie Birch, an ordained minister from the Presbytery of Belfast, in the kingdom of Ireland, appeared before the committee, and produced such testimonials of his good moral and religious character, as fully satisfied the committee of the propriety of recommending him to the congregations within the bounds of the Presbytery of Philadelphia: and the committee accordingly did, and hereby do, freely recommend him to the congregations, both settled and vacant, within our bounds, till the next meeting of Presbytery:

A true copy of the record of the committee.

ASHBEL GREEN, Clk.

The Certificate of the Elders of the third Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia.

We the subscribers, Elders of the third Presbyterian church in Philadelphia, do certify, that the Rev. Thomas L. Birch came to America from Ireland last fall, and arrived in Philadelphia in the month of November last, and after being examined by the committee of our Presbytery, was received and taken under their care; and that he preached for our congregation nearly three months past, and gave general satisfaction: and as he is now about to travel, we do recommend him to all Christian societies where it may please the Lord in his providence to call him.

FERGUSON MELWAINÉ,
JOHN PINKERTON,
JOHN McCULLOH,
ROBERT McMULLIN,
JOHN McMULLIN.

Philadelphia, 8th April, 1799.

The Certificate of the Rev. Doctor Read, Wilmington, Delaware.

The bearer, the Rev. Mr. L. Birch, having produced ample testimonials of his being a regular Gospel Minister of the Presbyterian society in the kingdom of Ireland, and being fully convinced, from collateral testimonials, as well as personal acquaintance, of his worth and merit as a Christian Minister; he is hereby recommended to the notice of any of our churches in the bounds of New-Castle Presbytery, fully convinced, that if they employ him, it will meet the approbation of Presbytery.—Certified by me,

THOMAS READ.

Wilmington, June 30th, 1799.

The Certificate of the Session of East-Nottingham, Maryland.

We, the Session of East Nottingham, state of Maryland, do certify, that the Rev. Thomas Ledlie Birch, of the Rev. Presbytery of Belfast, Ireland, came to our place recommended by the Rev. Committee of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, and other respectable authorities, and has occasionally preached, and performed other ministerial duties, for about twelve Lord's days, in our church; and we have had a personal acquaintance and frequent conversation with him for about five months past, during which time his conduct was that of the Christian and gentle-

man: and being now about to travel, we give him this testimony, and recommend him to our brethren in the United States—as witness our hands this 10th day of November, 1799.

DAVID WHERREY,
SAMUEL WHAN,
JAMES STEEL,
THOMAS MAFFITT,
HUGH BLACK,
JAMES MACKEY.

The Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, having examined my credentials, certificates, and collateral testimony, proceeded to examine me agreeably to the mode prescribed by the very Rev. General Assembly's Alien Law; (1) when I was desired to give my religious experience, or the inward discoveries I had received from the Divine Spirit, of my gos-

(1)—(1) *This law, which is mildly termed "Rules and Regulations for the introduction of foreign Ministers," but might with justice be styled a shutting out of strangers, and a declaration of war against the sister churches in the old countries, was enacted by a party in the Assembly, when a similar law was passed in Congress, about the year 1798. Seven of the most numerous and respectable Presbyteries, in opposition to nine, (including the Presbyteries upon this side the mountain—Quere—did these Presbyteries consult their congregations?) have protested against this law, as being unconstitutional, or that the General Assembly, without previously having obtained the consent of the several congregations, had not a right to pass such a law.*

By this law, a foreign minister is not only subject to an enquiry into his credentials and qualifications,—a suspension or deposition from office, for immoral conduct, as of right he ought to be, and which doleful experience proves has not been executed with too much mercy; but he, no matter how eminent, together with repeated examinations like a schoolboy and licentiate, must complete a year's probation in the Presbytery in which he is examined; otherwise he must begin and finish a year's probation in the Presbytery he removes to, and so on, before he can be admitted into a full standing in the church, or accept a call for settlement; which upon meeting with unfriendly brethren, and unhappily being somewhat popular, might perhaps occasion a labour like that of Jacob's with his father-in-law Laban. The foreign Minister, if he thinks himself injured by the decision of Presbytery, has the liberty of complaining to the next General Assembly; but the Assembly has not any power to order the Presbytery to receive him, though he may have received the highest injustice; but only to allow him liberty to apply to some other Presbytery, which he is debarred from when he is rejected by a Presbytery, until he appeals to the Assembly: so that generally, all that the foreign Minister is to expect from his complaints to the Assembly, is to be sent back to return in a like situation—until by travelling hundreds of miles, year after year, without redress, he is obliged to desist.

How different from this is the cordial reception given by the very Rev. Associate Reformed Synod, to their brethren from Ireland and Scotland—see their Minutes at New-York, October 1802. Quere—Did the benevolent very Rev. Associate Synod, when they formed the Article of Agreement with the very Rev. General Assembly, that they would not receive any member from their body until such had first settled all matters with the Assembly, take the Assembly's Alien Bill into their consideration?

pel conversion, and assurance of my great stewardship-account being passed with approbation, and the time when I obtained these sensations or experiences.

In Ireland, Scotland, and other parts of Europe, Presbyteries, Synods, or Assemblies, presume not to insult the Presbyterian churches of any nation, by examining into the qualifications of their ordained Ministers; they only made enquiry relative to the testimonials from their church, shewing their moral character and standing as Ministers; and if these proved satisfactory, they were always admitted, (conforming to the church standards) and recommended to the people, to receive them agreeably to their deserts.

In licensing candidates for the Gospel Ministry, Presbyteries require to be satisfied, "whether a reasonable time has been devoted to study," "in some proper seminary of learning; of the progress in knowledge, good report, soundness in the faith, and views in entering upon the Gospel Ministry; whether (though it is necessary and reasonable that a Minister should have a support—*he that serves at the altar should live by the altar*) in preaching the Gospel, or taking upon them at ordination the care of souls, their ruling motive was the glory of God, the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom, and the salvation of souls; or the greed of filthy lucre." From the established maxim, that man can only discern the outward part—and instructed by their Divine Master, that the tree is known by its fruits—the Presbyterian Ministers in the old countries never ask candidates concerning the notions they entertain of themselves—well knowing that hypocrites will tell lies—and the greater the deceiver, (as daily experience proves) generally the more confident. And indeed such partial creatures are we, that very few of us wish to hear or say a bad story of ourselves.—For these reasons, thinking that the Rev. Presbtery of Ohio meant by *religious experience*, faith, evidenced (through grace) in godly practice, in giving my experience, I observed that "I believed in the doctrines of the Christian Religion; particularly, in the being of a God, the existence of three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the same in substance, equal in power and glory; in a future and eternal state of rewards and punishments; in the fall and degeneracy of man in our first parents, and approved by him in actual transgression; and the recovery through the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by his atoning sacrifice, paid the debt for his people, who by faith lay hold upon his merits, and by the Holy Spirit, the other part of his purchase, quickens us, infusing into us a new spiritual life; opens the eyes of our understanding to see our lost state by nature and practice, our own insufficiency, and Christ's all-sufficiency, and works in us that faith which is pleasing in the sight of God, and is productive of those graces and dispositions which qualify for heaven: that I trusted, through grace, my belief so influenced my conduct, as to beget in me love to my God, gratitude to my Redeemer and the Holy Spirit, good will to mankind, leading in practice to abhorrence of sin and attachment to righteousness; a careful parent, an attentive Minister, an obliging neighbour, a kind friend &

“ a man of truth, honour and justice ; exercised in secret and family
 “ prayer ; that through the merits of my gracious Redeemer, in the in-
 “ fluence of his Holy Spirit, I had a hope of eternal life, which I would
 “ not forfeit for thousands of worlds : that I had strong impressions of
 “ religion from my earliest recollection, progressing with various checks
 “ and alarms : that the awakening from which I could date the most
 “ decided change of mind, was at the death of a very dear companion,
 “ about twenty-seven years ago.” What would have pleased the Pres-
 bytery (as I have frequently learned since) was, if I had told them of a
 certain time and place when I became assured of eternal happiness, or,
 to use their own words, knowing myself once blind, now I see. Happy
 are they who have attained to such things. I will not say such things
 are not attainable, and should not be earnestly sought after ; and Scrip-
 ture and credible testimony gives us reason to believe, that Almighty
 God, in his mercy, to some of his most eminent servants, has made a
 discovery of this sort before a dying hour. But we have equal reason
 to believe, that millions of humble souls, now, or hereafter chaunting,
 or to chaunt, hallelujah’s in Heaven, had not, nor will not have, the
 complete assurance until that endearing welcome, come, ye blessed of
 my Father, inherit the kingdom, provided for you from the founda-
 tion of the world ; I was a stranger, and ye took me in, &c. and
 they shall say, Lord, when saw we thee thus ; Math. xxv. 34—40 —
 And I will most humbly and respectfully beg leave to add, that if the
 ruling powers of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, think themselves assu-
 red of everlasting happiness, which I humbly pray, of God’s infinite
 mercy in a Redeemer, they may finally obtain ; yet I hope in the same
 mercy, that I shall never be permitted to look for assurance in a course
 of life similar to their late and present conduct. I trust I shall only be
 assured by faith, through grace, evidenced in truth, honour, mercy and
 charity.

The Presbytery proceeded to ask me some questions ; particularly,
 the Rev. Thomas Marquis desired me to give a lengthy definition of
 regeneration. I defined regeneration to be, a work of the Holy Spirit
 upon the soul, whereby spiritual life is infused into it ; the soul of man,
 who, morally speaking, was before dead, is made to live ; the eyes of
 the understanding are opened, and the sinner is brought to discover his
 lost state by nature and practice, his own insufficiency, and Christ’s all-
 sufficiency, and an actual embracing of Christ in all his saving offices,
 with hearty resolutions, through Divine grace, of walking in him in all
 holy conversation, thereby evidencing the sincerity of his faith, and his
 desire of obtaining those qualifications which will fit him for the en-
 joyment of God in the upper house.

Question, by the Rev. John M. Millar—Wherein consisted the dif-
 ference between regeneration and conversion ?

Answer.—Regeneration, the work of salvation begun ; conversion, the
 work completed, ending in progressive sanctification.

Quest. by the Rev. John M. Millar.—From whence Christ became
 the object of my worship and love ?

Answer.—Christ being possessed of all those glorious attributes, un-

created perfections and excellencies which constitute Deity, rendered him the qualified object of my worship, highest veneration and esteem, and every way a complete Saviour: bearing to me the covenanted relation, not only of Creator, but also of Redeemer, demanded my particular worship and love.

Quest. by the Rev. Samuel Ralston—Whether Christ died for the purpose of placing all mankind in a salvable state, or a condition in which they might be saved; or only with the design of saving a particular number?

This is that very difficult, hard question proposed to our blessed Lord by a certain Jew, the opinion of whose nation at the time was, that they alone were God's favourite people, who would be brought to Heaven, and that all others were destined for Hell. Our Divine Master, who alone could have solved the difficulty, having declined answering, and in room thereof given an advice to be more concerned to know how we may be saved, than having our curiosity satisfied in learning how many will be saved; seems to have discountenanced such enquiries. Luke xiii. 23, 24. Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, strive to enter at the straight gate, for many, I say to you, shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

Intending in all things to be very candid, and designing before the close of the work to give my opinion upon this point, connected with the doctrine of the decrees, I shall only here subjoin my answer.

Ans. I dont think that Almighty God created any part of the human race with the express view of damning them. Christ died for those whom the Father hath given him; and these are drawn of God, justified alone by the Redeemer's righteousness, adopted by his grace, and sanctified by his Spirit; and those that perish are passed over upon account of their inexcusable impenitency, sin and wickedness.

Being desired to withdraw, the Presbytery, after long and mature deliberation, called me in, when the Moderator communicated to me the following minute:

“ Thursday, October the 23^d, 1800.

“ A certain Thomas Ledlie Birch, an ordained Minister from the
 “ Presbytery of Belfast, in the kingdom of Ireland, appeared before
 “ Presb-tery, and expressed a desire of being taken under their care.
 “ The Presb-tery, after examining his credentials, and such other col-
 “ lateral testimony as was laid before them, proceeded to converse with
 “ him upon his experimental acquaintance with the things of religion,
 “ and soundness in the faith, but did not receive such satisfaction as would
 “ induce them to take him on any further trials.

“ A true copy extracted from the minutes.

“ JOHN McMILLAN, Pby. Clk.”

Against which T. L. Birch lodged a complaint, (as it is termed) or an appeal to the next very Rev. General Assembly. The Moderator expressed to me the Presb-tery's approbation of my credentials, &c. but it is observable from their minute, that this is kept from public view.

Continuing to exercise my ministry in Washington, under my appeal to the very Rev. General Assembly, I paid a friendly visit to the

Rev. Joseph Patterfon, Presbytery Moderator, and remonstrated with him upon the hasty proceedings of his body, in rejecting me; seeing the General Assembly had allowed twelve months probation, where there was any prospect of usefulness, which (from my standing in the church) I hoped was in some degree the case. Mr. Patterfon informed me, and gave me a certificate as an individual member of Presbytery, that the late proceedings towards me, were not in any degree considered by Presbytery as a final rejection, or as precluding me from a future application.

At a meeting of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, about January 1801, at Cross-Creek, (for there is not any record of their proceedings with me at this or the subsequent Presbytery) I attended.

For the better understanding of matters, it may not be unnecessary to observe, that the Presbytery of Ohio makes not any reply to answers of questions, nor observations, before the candidate, upon his conversations or discourses; and (if not a favourite) when ordered to retire, the most unfriendly observations are passed, and distortions and misconstructions are put upon his meanings; and upon his being called in, only receives the intimation from the Moderator, approve, or not pleased: so that a candidate for the ministry might be under trials for ages, without being any better informed by his spiritual fathers; nor indeed could he discover what they wished to be at, and perhaps stabbed in the most vital part without knowing his antagonist.

Still imagining that the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio meant, by experimental acquaintance with religion, gospel faith influencing practice, but that perhaps I had not been sufficiently expressive; I entered into a very long detail of my childhood religious views and practices; of the like when I came to think for myself; of my views when entering upon the Gospel Ministry; of the progress in my congregation; conduct in the Irish General Assembly, and their consequences; of my coming to America, and circuit therein, accompanied with remarkable Providences, from which I had been led to comfortable views in this world, and happy prospects in the world to come.

The Rev. Presbytery now proceeded to examination; particularly the Rev. James Hughes.

Quest. prefaced with the observation of its being a very familiar case— A person deeply convicted of sin, and its dreadful consequences, and his own insufficiency to a recovery; convinced of a Saviour, and his admirable fitness, and the notable provisions of the Gospel; ardently wishes to exercise faith, but has not that comfort in believing he desires: what directions should a Gospel Minister give in such a case?

Ans. To be exercised in the petition made use of by the Apostles when our blessed Lord was enjoining upon them the duty of forgiving enemies and loving them as brethren, which is most opposite to corrupt nature; Luke xvii. 5. Lord increase our faith: or like the poor man, who, in our Saviour's absence, brought his son, who was dumb, and grievously tormented of the Devil, to the disciples, but they could not heal him; and therefore, upon our blessed Lord's coming, he applies to him for relief; upon which he informs the poor man, if he can but believe,

(which supposes his faith not of the strongest kind) to which the poor man replies, Mark ix. 24. Lord I believe, help thou my unbelief.

Quest. by the Rev. Mr. Brice—Has God chosen a particular number, whom he will take to Heaven?

Ans. Yes; all penitent sinners in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Quest. Was it upon account of their worth and excellence?

Ans. No; they were made holy in pursuance of their calling; for by grace ye are saved through faith, not of works, lest any man should boast.

Quest. by the Rev. John Watson—Does God hate sinners?

Ans. He hates sin; and when sin, through grace, is repented of, and washed away in the atoning blood of a Redeemer, like the sun when the cloud is removed, his divine love and mercy shines.

Quest. by the Rev. John Watson—Do sinners hate God?

Ans. The glorious perfections of Deity cannot be thought to be an object of hatred to sinners, or even to Devils: or even if it should be my unhappy lot to be condemned to everlasting misery upon account of my sins, Almighty God could not be hateful to me on account of his absolute rectitude of nature: but his righteous moral government is so opposite to corrupt nature, that it becomes a most grievous object of hatred to the wicked, as would seem implied in the declaration of the evil spirits our Lord was casting out, importing a veneration of the person, but an horror at the execution of his laws;—Math. viii. 29. What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the Most High God? Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?

Being now ordered to retire, the Presbytery, after a short deliberation, called me in; when I was informed by the Moderator, that the Presbytery had not clearness to proceed any further in my trials; upon which I renewed my complaint to the very Rev. General Assembly. The Rev. John Watson observed to me, that I must not think that my appeal to the General Assembly entitled me to preach; thereby implying a censure for my continuing to preach in Washington since the former Presbytery; in which the Presbytery appeared to acquiesce. I replied, that a Minister of Mr. Watson's supposed knowledge (Mr. Watson being President of Canonsburgh Academy) could not think that an inferior Church Judiciary could inflict the highest censure under an appeal to the superior Court; more particularly, as there was not any supposed immorality, but difference of opinion. The Presbytery remained inflexible. I most humbly and respectfully remonstrated with the Presbytery upon my hasty rejection, alledging "that I had received a liberal education, "had moderate abilities and knowledge, like other individuals; but "would not presume to say I was as wise as a Presbytery: That the "very Rev. General Assembly, in their wisdom and benevolence, had "prescribed one year's probation at least, where there was any prospect "of usefulness; which my standing in the church gave some humble "reason to presume: That I did not pretend to dictate how soon my "trials might be passed: That it was a most affecting circumstance at "my time of life, with a family in a strange country, to be cast out of "the Ministry in the church which I was attached to; and therefore,

“ if they would be pleased to take me under their care, (my intension, under Providence, being the pursuit of truth) if I had error in principle or foible in practice, or my studies had been in a wrong course, under their direction, I should endeavour to be an humble, attentive pupil.” But I addressed the deaf. The reply was, “ begone,” or “ go about your business—we will have nothing to say to you !”

Having retired from the Presbytery, I sent in a message to the Rev. Samuel Ralston, to know of him in what the Presbytery was not satisfied. Mr. Ralston informed me, that the Rev. John M^cMillan, if I would apply to him, would tell me. Requesting Mr. Ralston to bear a message to Mr. M^cMillan, he came on—and in answer to my request to know the particulars in which the Presbytery was not satisfied, Mr. M^cMillan observed, “ that the Presbytery charged me, with not receiving Christ as an all-sufficient Saviour—

“ With bearing to Christ the love of an harlot, in alledging Christ the peculiar object of my love in bearing to me the relation of Creator and Redeemer.”

I think, also, Mr. M^cMillan told me, (it is well known to be a tenet of the Presbytery of Ohio—let them renounce it and I submit) “ that I was held in error for asserting the terrors of hell were a motive,” meaning I suppose, any of the gospel motives; and “ that I also maintained that an unregenerate person could have saving faith.”

The Presbytery’s charge against me, for not laying hold upon Christ as an *all sufficient Saviour*, appears to be founded upon the Rev. John M^cMillan’s question, viz. “ From whence Christ became the object of my worship and love ?”

The Rev. Presbytery of Ohio will please to inform the Christian Church, from what part of my answer to Mr. M^cMillan’s question, or any other question, they have rejected me, and held me forth to the world as unfounded in the faith, as implied in their minute, in not laying hold upon Christ as an all-sufficient Saviour.

Christ being possessed of all those glorious uncreated perfections and excellencies which constitute Deity; does not such render him the qualified object of religious worship? If not possessed of such, and only a creature, would not the worshipping of him be idolatry? The blessed Jesus being, as to his Divine nature, *God over all, blessed forever*, did it not render him every way fitted for the work of a Saviour; if finite merit to atone, Almighty power to protect, and length of days to apply? As God, he could not die—Was it not necessary, then, that he should become man, that he might be capable of dying; that the sacrifice of his humanity upon his divinity, might yield the most complete satisfaction to injured justice, and righteous moral government, and that in the very nature in which the transgression was committed; and that he might be a merciful High Priest, bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, acquainted with all our infirmities, sin only excepted; Heb. vi. 15.

I, then, sinners will embrace Christ as an all-sufficient Saviour, must they (as seemingly implied here by the Presbytery of Ohio, and more strongly in some of their following objections) lay hold on him as the

all-perfect Jehovah; or as the Immanuel, God in our nature? If he is to be embraced by sinners in the former character, though a most glorious object to angels who have preserved their unfulfilled purity, and our first parents in their state of innocence; yet a presence from which all the human race must now fly, with their degenerate first parents, to hide their nakedness; Gen. iii. 10. a sight at which, with the Israelites, when the Almighty came down upon Mount Sinai to deliver the law, they must exceedingly tremble; Exod. xix. 16. yea, an appearance which must cast sinners into the depths of agony and despair, and force them to cry out with the devils, Math. viii. 29. O thou Most High, art thou come to torment us before the time? Of which sort there are too many unhappy specimens in the Presbytery of Ohio, in arraiguing sinners before the bar of the all-glorious Jehovah, arrayed in his most terrible attributes of justice and holiness, without directing them to the city of refuge, the Saviour, where they may escape the manslayer of divine justice; and thereby give too much reason for the observation, that they are famous for preaching sinners into hell, (which they are conscious they deserve) and leaving them there; but their great desire is to learn how they can escape that place of torment.

The Apostle Paul, who had as much legal righteousness to boast of as the Presbytery of Ohio, or any of its members, durst not presume to lay hold on uncreated excellency, holiness and justice, but as reflected upon him from the face of the anointed. And as the Apostle was once very proud of his legal righteousness, and was thereby led to persecute his neighbours; and as the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio mention this same Apostle, and what befel him upon his road to Damascus, before his conversion, as a precedent for the *falling*, in what they call their late *Revival of Religion*; they may learn of him what were his sentiments with regard to his legal righteousness, and in what way he laid hold upon Christ as an all-sufficient Saviour: and from whence I, as an humble scholar of his, as he was a follower of his Divine Master, 1 Cor. ii. 2. Phil. iii. 4—9. that he was determined not to know any thing, in his preaching, but the God-man Christ Jesus, and him crucified; that he counted all his legal qualifications, prerogatives and attainments, but loss, yea, as dung, the mire of the street, that he might win Christ, and be found in him, not having his own righteousness, which was of the law, which he well knew, being filthy rags, would not stand him in any stead, unless he was shielded from infinite holiness and purity, under the spotless robes of a Redeemer's righteousness.

The charge of my love to Christ being that of an harlot, appears to be founded upon the latter part of the answer to Mr. M'Millan's question we have just been treating upon, viz. from whence became Christ the object of my worship and love; the first part of my answer to which was, his glorious perfections of Deity rendered him a fit object of worship, commanded our highest esteem and veneration; and that his bearing to us the relation of Creator and Redeemer, claimed our peculiar worship and love.

Though the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, from their universal character, and uniform behaviour to defenceless strangers, would have been

amongst the last class of mankind which would have been suspected of pretending to hold the principles of disinterested benevolence; yet I shall most respectfully beg leave to shew, that their sentiments in this particular, are not agreeable to common sense, and contrary to Scripture. Because the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio have for their wives most accomplished, virtuous, amiable ladies, commanding the high esteem and respect of those acquainted with them, (as I well know some of them do) and their husbands bearing a superior esteem and love to them, not only upon account of their good qualities, but as being their wives; is this the love of the fornicator to his whore; a love of lust and the gratification of brutal passion? Is this any part of the religious experience of the Ministers and Elders of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio? Is there not such a thing as a chaste love that subsists between husband and wife? And because the chaste bride, the church, loves the bridegroom, the blessed Redeemer, not only as being more estimable and delightful in her sight than ten thousand, and altogether lovely; yet loving him, particularly, because he is her spouse and husband, because she is her beloved's and her beloved is hers, Song Solom. vi. 3. is her love therefore that of an harlot? Is gratitude to be banished the world, and with it every endearing relationship?

Does not the Psalmist set forth God's mercy and goodness as particularly the object of our worship and gratitude? Psal. ciii. 2. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction. Almighty God himself prefaceth to the Israelites, his glorious attribute of Deity, and the covenanted relation of being their God and benefactor, as laying the foundation of their obedience to all his laws he was then about to publish from Mount Sinai; Exod. xx. 2. I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, and out of bondage. And Almighty God, so far from intimating that the gratitude of his creatures, for his mercy and goodness in his relation of Creator and Governor, detracts from the honour and reverence challenged by the perfections of Deity, that he esteems it to manifest his glorious essential attributes to shine with higher lustre in his declarative glory; Mal. i. 6. A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master; if I then be a father, where is mine honour; and if a master, where is my fear? saith the Lord of Hosts unto you, O priests that despise my name.

As it is now become fashionable with some people, who call themselves religious, to look lightly upon some books of the Old Testament, if we turn to the New, we will hear the same doctrine. The Apostle Paul, whom your converts take for a pattern in their religious exercises, tells us, 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. that the love of Christ constrained us, in that he died for all, that henceforth they should live unto him. And the Apostle John, the beloved disciple of his Master, possessed of the most disinterested benevolence, declares God's love to us, in Christ, not only as a reason why we should love him, but a motive to love one another; 1 John iv. 10, 11. Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins; — we ought also to love one another.

The charge of my holding the doctrine of the terrors of Hell being a gospel motive, most probably arose from the declaration of the articles of my faith or belief, which influenced my Gospel practice, in my experience, one of which was a future state of punishments.

Above all denominations of preachers, it never would have been thought such an objection would have come out of the mouths of the members of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, whose almost constant topics are, the terrors of the law, accompanied with everlasting torments, painted in the most glaring colours, with scarcely ever glancing at the remedy; and the louder the shrieks and groans of the seemingly terrified audience, the louder the excommunications. Surely these things cannot be intended only as idle rants, or to accustom people to hear with indifference, what they nor their forefathers could never bear. Ought they not to be used to induce sinners to fly, through grace, to Christ, who is the end of the law, for righteousness, sanctification and redemption? Undoubtedly the goodness of God, and his adorable excellencies, the love of Christ, the beauty of holiness, the joys of a good conscience, the glories of Heaven, are the most dignified motives; but to less generous minds, the last desperate remedy must be applied, life and death, blessing and cursing, lest any should perish through Ministers' neglect; Ezek. iii. 18. Our blessed Lord, with a peculiar emphasis, holds forth to sinners the terrors of everlasting punishment, and represents to us his passing the sentence; Luke xii. 5. Math. xxv. 41. Fear him, who, after he hath killed the body, hath power to cast the soul into Hell; yea I say unto you, fear him—Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, &c. The Apostle Paul declares, 2 Cor. v. 10, 11. We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, to receive according to that we have done, whether it be good or bad; knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men: and we have a famous sermon of his to this purpose, preached to the Idolaters of Athens, Acts xvii. 22—34. in which he observes, that God hath commanded all men every where to repent, because he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained.

The last charge which the Rev. John McMillen told me the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio had against me, was, maintaining that an unregenerate person could have saving faith. This arose from the question of the Rev. James Hughes, viz. What directions should be given to a person "convicted of sin and all its dreadful consequences; convinced "of his own insufficiency, and the Redeemer's all-sufficiency; wishing "and endeavouring, through grace, to exercise faith, but could not "have that comfort in believing he desired."—Answ. To use the petition of the Apostles, when our blessed Lord was enjoining upon them a duty most opposite to corrupt nature, that of forgiving injuries and loving enemies as brethren, *Lord increase our faith*; or that of the poor man to whom our Lord observed, if he had sufficient faith, his much afflicted son would be healed—*Lord I believe, help my unbelief*.

This business was most probably helped forward by a story of the Rev. Thomas Moor's, which was as follows:—Mr. Moor and I being in a room by ourselves in Judge Edgar's house, before my examination,

and where the Presbytery had adjourned. He observed to me, that he learned that a woman, an hearer of his, in a most distressed state of mind, had called upon me for advice; that he was at a loss to know what to do with her, and therefore wished to have my opinion. I told him, that the woman called upon me, and informed me that she had attended publick worship, societies, family prayer, attempted private devotion; that in these solemn exercises, evil, blasphemous thoughts were uppermost in her mind; when blessing God was pronounced, cursing was ready to burst forth; that she doubted attending to any thing sacred was a sin, and she might be led to some bad consequence; and therefore wished to know if I would advise her to drop every thing that was religious. I replied, that I would not advise her to lay aside all religion, but to double her diligence therein, and her intreaties at the throne of grace; to read some good books; and particularly to go into religious, knowing company, who would both instruct and divert the mind; that a God of mercy, though he might try her for a time, like some of his servants of old, (some of whom I think I mentioned) if she waited with patience, he would comfort her; that the gracious Saviour who died for her, would not forsake his servant; that to put an end to her life was the most dreadful of all crimes, to rush ourselves into the presence of our judge without his call, to suffer the Devil to lead us astray, and then, worst of all, to tempt us to despair of the Divine mercy, which is unbounded, and throw ourselves headlong into Hell, and so become sure of us; if she died, let it be at the threshold of mercy.—

The woman observed, she had a very severe temporal malady, incident to women, about which, as a Physician, she wished to consult me. To those conversant in such things, the disease is known to be usually accompanied with the most distressing hysterical complaints. I said I hoped I could be of use to her. She asked if the medicines I would prescribe would ease the heart; I told her I did not think they would; but that there was an intimate connection between soul and body, and the infirmities of the body damped the powers of the soul; that our blessed Lord acted as a Physician in curing the diseases of the body, as well as the maladies of the soul; and perhaps by relieving the infirmities of the body, the faculties of the soul might be rendered more vigorous, and spiritual remedies applied with more effect. Mr. Moor, when I retired from the Presbytery, told that the woman I conversed with was unregenerate; such things, it seems, being perfectly known to some worthy members here, by looking in the face; that I had estimated her a weak religious woman; and therefore confirmed the opinion of my holding that an unregenerate person could have saving faith; and finally, that I only prescribed *barks and wine* for her spiritual complaint.—

The woman, under the wholesome, sharp, stimulant spiritual medicines administered to her afterwards, poisoned herself.

An alarmed, awakened person, void of faith, we would undoubtedly direct such to the blessed Redeemer, and prayer to Almighty God, that he would work in him that saving faith which is his gift, Eph. ii. 8. and which is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen, Heb. xi. 1. But what evidence will Mr. Hughes, or the Rev.

Presbytery of Ohio, give, that the person represented was void of saving faith? Out of their own mouths let them be judged. How could a person expect comfort in believing, if he knew he had not any saving faith? But they say the person they describe is unregenerate, and therefore could not have saving faith. Let us repeat the description—A person convicted of sin, his lost estate by nature and practice, his own insufficiency to a recovery; convinced of the all-sufficiency of a Redeemer, and the admirable fitness of the gospel, and its suitableness to all his necessities; wishes to exercise faith, but receives not that comfort he desires. Are these the works and desires of corrupt nature,—or of the Spirit, which are termed regeneration? Can the dead raise themselves? And can corrupt nature, dead in trespasses, quicken itself without the Spirit of the Almighty, and produce such convictions and desires? The Apostle teaches otherwise: Ephes. ii. 1, 2. You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in times past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. What are the desires of unregenerate nature? Are they resolutions to quit sin, to renounce their own righteousness, and exercise faith in Christ? Job, who was not equal to the least in the kingdom of Heaven, or under the Gospel, could have informed Mr. Hughes and the Presbytery of Ohio, that their language would be, depart from us, thou Saviour, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.

But, adds Mr. Hughes and the Presbytery of Ohio, this person must have been unregenerate, otherwise he must have immediate comfort in believing, from the assurance afforded him of all his sins being pardoned. David, the sweet singer in Israel, who must be allowed to have been regenerate, and to be possessed of real saving faith, seems to have had his inquietudes and want of inward comfort, (as a trial of his faith and patience for a time) which this person complains of: yea, David's state of mind goes so far as nearly to despair of mercy; Psal. xl. 5 — li. 8, 11. Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance. Make me to hear joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me—Exercises like those of the person Mr. Hughes represented, and to whom I prescribed prayer to Almighty God, through a gracious Redeemer, in the influence of his Holy Spirit, to obtain similar relief.

But perhaps it may be argued that David was unregenerate, as it is become fashionable, with late converts, to throw away David's Psalms altogether; or perhaps, to hoodwink some bigots for a time, sing them in the congregation, but always betake them to their hymns when in their extacies in society—others culling what they think suits their taste, casting the remnant out, exclaiming, are there not now as good men as David, and cannot they make as good Psalms? though they might very well know, that the glorious author of the Christian religion has given testimony to David's inspiration as a prophet, and the divinity of his Psalms. Hear his warrant; (let them produce theirs)

Math. xxii. 41—43. Luke xxiv. 44 Jesus asked them, what think ye of Christ? Whose son is he? They say unto him, the son of David. He saith, how then doth David in the Spirit call him Lord? And he said unto them, (his disciples) these are the words which I spake unto you while I was with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the Psalms concerning me.

But if David will not pass for regenerate, let us pass to others who must. Elijah, the great restorer of the law to Israel, who was wrapped up to Heaven in a fiery chariot without tasting death, despaired not only of one, but of God's power to preserve a church, whilst he entertained high notions of himself as being the only member; 1 Kings xix. 14—18 —And the Apostle Paul, who was carried up to Heaven, and thereby received an earnest of eternal life, was fearful, lest when he preached to others, he should be a castaway; 1 Cor. ix. 27.

But indeed the Rev. James Hughes, and the highly Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, may charge the error to themselves they attribute to me. They dress up the mock shew, and then ridicule their own handy work. The folly arises either from their not knowing rightly to distinguish between, or blending together, regeneration, the new birth, the quickening grace, which is the work of the Holy Spirit preparatory to our coming to Christ, and which is instantaneous, and sanctification, which is the work of the Divine Spirit after the sinner has embraced Christ, and is progressive—the one, viz. regeneration, to use the similitude of man in the natural life, conferring upon us the powers and faculties in childhood; sanctification, the ripening of those powers and faculties into action in manhood. What would have been pleasing to the Rev. Presbytery, would have been to declare sanctification prior to, or before justification; and therefore to have advised the person to use his endeavours to search after some inward experience, some acquired self-righteousness, in coming to Christ, whereby he might have comfort (or get relief, or ease, as it is termed) in the assurance of a hearty welcome, accompanied with the pardon of all his sins. To use the words of some of the followers of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio to myself, they had long been thinking about *getting religion*, as the laying hold upon a Redeemer is termed; but could never get the something necessary to recommend them, to take in their hand along with them. Perhaps their model was the pharisee who went up to the temple to pray, who it seems had a great many of these introductory ornaments in his hand; his payment of tythes, his fasts, his prayers, &c. in which the Presbytery of Ohio, in their societies, monthly and quarterly meetings, attending sacraments, giving experiences, fully equal him; which, when observed with becoming decorum, are highly commendable in their own place; and they far exceed the pharisee in their fallings, accompanied with other gestures, which are reckoned by many, clergy not excepted, the infallible test; neither are they a whit behind him in undervaluing their neighbours. Did the pharisee, however, fare any thing better upon account of the recommendations he brought with him? He who will be the judge of quick and dead, tells us, that the poor humbled publican, who pretended not to bring any thing in his hand (as indeed neither he nor any of

the fallen children of Adam have any thing to bring except a broken heart for sin) but standing afar off, not daring to lift up his eyes to Heaven; smote upon his breast, saying God be merciful to me a sinner; went to his house justified rather than the other; Luke xviii. 10—15. But from whence are we to get this something to carry in our hand to recommend us to the blessed Redeemer, or the work of sanctification wrought in us before coming to Christ? Of what tree is it a branch or scion, and where will it shoot or grow? Were not the Rev. Presbytery great Masters in Israel,—*one of the two first enlightened bodies in America*, as they and some of their adherents style themselves,—but even versed in the natural art of the gardener, they might know, that unless the scion be ingrafted in a stock, it cannot bear fruit; neither do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles. The tree will produce fruit agreeably to its kind. Where then must this branch be ingrafted in order to its shooting forth, and producing sanctification, bearing fruit unto holiness? Is it upon the stock of nature, the wild vine, fallen Adam; or in the true vine, the Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious second Adam? The Apostle informs us of the fruit produced upon the stock of nature; Rom. ii. 29—32. Filled with all unrighteousness, maliciousness, debate, deceit, whisperers; backbiters; boasters; without natural affection, unmerciful; who, knowing the judgment of God, that they who do such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them: fruit very like that borne by some converts and converted, which affords ground for suspicion relative to the stock on which they have been ingrafted. Our blessed Lord and his Apostle Paul would have informed these Rev. Gentlemen, if they had consulted them, where the branch of sanctification flourishes; John xv. 5. 2 Cor. v. 17. I am the vine, ye are the branches; he that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing.—If any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature. The Presbytery of Ohio contradict their Divine Master and his Apostle, and maintain, that the branch not in the vine can bear fruit; that without Christ we can do something, and he that is out of Christ Jesus may be sanctified and a new creature; and raise the cry against me, which has resounded from one part of the American continent to the other, beware of the monster! Shun the heretick who asserts the contrary!

The Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, had they but reflected with the judgment of an ordinary Christian, would have discovered that the notion of bringing something in our hand to recommend us to our all-gracious Redeemer, or an impudent belief, called by them *religious experience*, that somehow or other we may get ourselves wrought into, that we think ourselves worthy, in its consequence overturns the Doctrine of Grace, and in its stead establishes the doctrine of justification by the Law. If any endeavour, or exertions, can obtain us one particle of recommendation, a still greater will gain more, and so on until we have sufficient recommendation in ourselves, and consequently not stand in need of a Saviour's recommendation; it being obvious, that he who has pleas-

ty of money in his own coffers, has not any need to borrow, much less to become a beggar; he that is every whit clean, has not occasion to go to the fountain to be washed; he that is gorgeously adorned in purple and fine linen, requires not to go in search of clothes to cover his nakedness; John xiii. 10. Rev. iii. 17, 18. Yea, our text will carry us further, and land us at the doctrine of *supererogation*, or performing more than duty, and consequently having something to spare, which, being laid up as a stock in the church, may be retailed out in indulgences to those who may have neglected, or not rightly performed their duty: for certainly, if those who go on only in the ordinary course have wherewith to recommend themselves, they who perform double, perhaps treble, have a great deal more than is necessary, and therefore can spare some.

Though this doctrine is expressly contradicted by our blessed Lord and his Apostle Paul, (which from what went before does not seem to be much attended to) who declare, Luke xvii. 10. Rom. iii. 20. that in performing the highest duty, (which is mightily incumbent on us) unless we will do more than we can do, we are unprofitable servants, having but done our duty, not having any thing to recommend ourselves, without sparing to others; and that by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight. And this point is besides intestibly established from all our performances of duty being merely for our own good, in that we cannot better the Almighty as one man can serve another. Yet perhaps, with all this, the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio may not think the doctrine of merit inexpedient, as it has been useful in times past, so it may be yet serviceable to popularity and worldly emolument; more particularly as they have some stock on hand, and (surprising to relate, that people will endeavour to act rationally in every thing but religion) they have still a market. They have preachers, that, if others preach before them, no matter how rationally pious, all is as calm as the forest without the midnight breeze—upon their mounting the pulpit and extending their oratorical powers, exclaiming, “I am not attended to—my labours are useless—I may sit down,” accompanied with the usual theme, some dreadful terrors, the congregation becomes like the waves of the ocean when the storm rushes forth: again, as if possessed of some supernatural power, lowering their tone and desiring their audience to be still, they have something of the last importance to relate, all is silent as the grave!—The Apostle preached otherwise, and taught his hearers to make another use of his preaching; 2 Cor. iv. 5. He preached not himself, but Christ Jesus the Lord. They have fallers, Ministers not excepted, who, not having occasion for such things themselves, fall for others. The Apostle tells of one, Heb. vii. 25 who has fallen once for all, able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him. The noon-day sun needs not the glimmering taper; the fulness of the riches of the Godhead wants no supply from the beggary of humanity. The Rev. Presbytery of Ohio have had among them a seminary termed (I had almost said blasphemously) THE COLLEGE OF

GRACE, (2) out of which their body has been chiefly recruited.— Though this College since a late imposition is not so highly sonorous in titles, (for where wisdom is there is humility;) yet as the old rule is still considerable, and the people are broken to the pace, until they awaken, lazy people, bachelors, or widowers, who cannot get wives, as soon as they get the grammar into their hands may still get married to Minister's daughters, or if to others, their father-in-laws, if they have not cash in hand, can pass bonds for their College fees; or if old men having wives, pass bonds themselves; no matter how short they stay, what abilities, or how qualified, the College certificate imports real conversion, and will pass the Presbytery as current bank stock, and a congregation saddled, (whilst foreigners, no matter who, will be shut out, as wanting what the Elder said was deficient the other side of the mountain;) for it must be known, that it is the Minister's daughter's portion, to get in the bonds due, and the people have to pay them; neither can they doubt that such a sterling Presbytery will give them proper value for their money.

Common sense would tell the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, that justification must necessarily precede sanctification. A criminal, upon his professions of amendment of life, (similar to the awakening in regeneration) must have time, in a reprieve, or pardon, to shew the sincerity of his declarations. A criminal must be pardoned, before a state will

(2) *A gentleman in Pittsburgh (attached to the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, which officiously sent preachers to that town, though not in their bounds) observed to my worthy, learned friend, the Rev. Robert Steel, then invited to settle, and preaching in the congregation, that he would recommend to Mr. Steel to go six or a number of months to Cannonburgh Academy, which he styled "the College of Graces;" to which Mr. Steel very judiciously replied, that grace was not a gift to be conferred in a human College.*

The late President of the Cannonburgh Academy, (now College) told me, when I was upon my first visit there, and preached, that they had not any notion of Colleged Ministers.

Though learning does not confer grace, yet in the opinion of the Apostle Paul, (who was not a novice) it is an excellent handmaid; and therefore he exhorts Timothy to give attention to reading, to doctrine, to meditation, that his presiding might appear to all, that in Timothy preachers of a future day might have an example; foreseeing, as he intimates, that in the last days fools would pass for wisdom. doctrines adapted to catch the ears of silly womers, old women's fables, would be wanted for preaching; 1 Tim. iv. 7. 13—16 2 Tim. iii. 7. And our blest Lord warns such preachers and hearers of the consequences of their neglect of knowledge; Mat. x. 14. if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

An Elder of Chartiers congregation, who lives near Washington town, remarked to me, agreeably to the common sentiment, that the Ministers raised upon the west of the mountain were not only equal in oratory to those upon the east side, but had the inward part the other wanted. As this Elder is a very old gentleman and professes to be a great convert, he might have learned from the Apostle Peter, who was a bigot until changed by grace, that dignity God is a respecter of persons or places; Acts x. 34.

restore him to the exercise of the privileges of citizenship: and one great design of Christ's, in bestowing pardon upon sinners, is, that consistent with God's righteous moral government, he may confer upon them the other part of his purchase, viz. the aid of the Spirit to prepare them for, and carry them to Heaven. Agreeably to this, our blessed Lord, having first purchased the pardon upon the cross, afterwards sent the Spirit, the Sanctifier. Accordingly, the Apostle informs us, Rom. viii. 30. whom God called, or awakened, (as in regeneration) to embrace the offers of the Gospel, them he justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified, conformed them to the image of his blessed Son, their elder brother; which is the work of sanctification only begun in their calling; conferred upon them all the privileges of his children, union and communion with him, as an earnest of Heaven, evidenced in peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, and perseverance unto the end: which the Apostle terms a blessing us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, and a raising us up together with Christ, and making us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; Eph. i. 3. ii. 6. a glorification evidently in time, for the Apostle speaks of it as past, whereas when he mentions the glorification in Heaven, he speaks of it as yet to come; Rom. viii. 17, 18. And indeed, besides, it must be evident to any considerate mind, that a soul truly sanctified stands in no need of justification afterwards, being incapable of going to Hell, as no way suited to the place or society; neither could it be miserable, having the seeds of complete happiness within itself; neither would a God of infinite holiness and justice condemn his own moral image.

After the late Presbytery, the Rev. Thomas Moor, one of the members, accompanied by the Rev. Mr. Badger, Missionary from the eastern states, attended at the Washington Academy. Mr. Badger preached, and prayed that the congregation might be directed to a suitable Gospel Teacher; and Mr. Moor read me out an excommunicate. If this is law and Church discipline, it cuts up all appeals to superior courts by the roots; it being evident to the humblest capacity, that it is a matter of little importance to a man, when executed, whether he is tried or not. From the specimens of Missionaries we have had at Washington, if the design of their mission was to convert the Heathen, their business here has been to disgrace, and cast out of the Church, their brethren in the Gospel Ministry from the old countries. Perhaps the reason may be, they have not thirty-three dollars and one-third per month for converting these, and worse than all, the intruders might be looking for a bite of the loaves and fishes. Let those who think they stand take heed lest they fall. The Rev. Thomas Moor's two congregations, in the midst of the late great Falling Revival, with societies every night in the week, read him out at home and in Presbytery, and obliged him to leave their society.

The cause of these mistakes is, persons never framed by nature to be preachers, without knowledge, and not unfrequently without talents and principle, must of themselves, or from the partial ill-digested notions of relatives or connections, push forward into the sacred office of the Ministry, for which persons every way of the first eminence are but ill

prepared, and at the serious prospect of which, the Apostle Paul, that profound master of eloquence, so ably instructed at the feet of Gamaliel, was forced to exclaim, from a sense of his inability to the arduous task of executing the most exalted, perilous office of Ambassador between Christ and sinners, 2 Cor. ii. 16. and who is sufficient for these things? Such Teachers, like the vessel in the tempestuous ocean, with a great deal of sail and little ballast, and therefore will not obey the helm, having not any opinion of their own, are carried about with every wind of doctrine broached by speculative, imaginary, most probably well-meaning theorists, as serves the popular current, such as a Rev. Mr. Bellamy, and writers of a like cast, who have made attacks upon a pious and very judicious Marshal, in his treatise upon sanctification, and a venerable Hervey, on a like subject, in his *Theron and Aspatio*; men whose praise is in the churches, and whose eminent piety and good sense will be held in esteem, by the real lovers of truth and vital religion, when the writings and memories of their opponents will cease to be remembered, except in pity for their errors.

Such Teachers are encouraged in their folly and imposition, by superstition in the people, thinking it sufficient to belong to a Church called after a certain denomination, pride in having a party, and above all, carelessness in attending to the difference between the name and the qualifications of a Gospel Minister; and in no part of the world is this more the case than in America, where it might be least expected, and particularly upon the west side of the mountain; and thereby giving too much reason to the judicious Mr. Rankin for the observation, in his remarks upon what has been called the Religious Revival in Kentucky and these parts: "The people of America are esteemed extremely judicious, and they act so in their temporals. If they have a lawsuit about their plantation or estate, they select the best Lawyer; dangerously sick, they make choice of the most skillful Physician; but any Quack will do for the soul." (3) Of which daily examples are to be met with, like two which occurred lately where I was on an excursion to preach. A sensible, religious young man told me, that a few Lord's days before, he had been detained with very long preaching, and

(3) *There is nothing here said with the smallest intention of casting reflections upon any society or person preacher or layman, being in, or rising from the lowest state of life, with the humblest talents, and smallest portion of knowledge, who, from piety and zeal for the glory of God, the advancing of the Redeemer's kingdom, and the salvation of precious, immortal souls, attempt to contribute their mite even to the giving a cup of cold water to a disciple in the name of Christ, in their proper station, with becoming humility; but it is most humbly and respectfully alleged, that persons who, from their childhood, have devoted time, fortune, talents and industry, to prepare themselves for the ministry, are not only better qualified to teach, but, being instructed in the school of the prophets, 1 Sam. xix. 18 2 Kings ii. 3—5.—10. 38 they may be more reasonably expected to have the inward call of the Spirit, and a blessing attending their labours; more especially than those who, having been the jacks of all trades, and bankrupts in the whole, afterwards betake themselves to the living God: the most difficult of all callings, to recruit a broken fortune.*

would have been extremely happy in staying, if he could have learned what the Preacher meant to be at. My friend with whom I lodged, informed me that a most respectable, exemplary neighbour, who had come to hear his Minister, a great master in a certain work, requested him to enquire what point he meant to establish by his discourse upon that occasion.

At the time I had the conversation with the Rev. John M'Millan, relative to the Presbytery's objection against me, as there was not sufficient time then, we fixed that I should wait upon him at his own house, which I did accordingly. I observed there to Mr. M'Millan, that I wished not to be further troublesome to the Presbytery, but would make short work, take a circuit round the members, (which I afterwards did) and therefore requested his sentiments first, as the father of the Presbytery, which he would be pleased to commit to writing; and if I had not encouragement I should desist. Mr. M'Millan said he was not for discouraging me; but that he would not write with me, but would write to, or consult the other members, which he afterwards informed me was not done. He told me he did not see what right I had to come to their Presbyterian body for admittance, as my hearers out of the old country, (some of whom he named in his own bounds) all turned Seceders. I replied, that I was raised an old side Presbyterian, and was well pleased with my profession, and would be sorry to leave my church; but there were certain inquiries and modes of Psalmody made use of by some Ministers, very different from those they had been accustomed to, and therefore not pleasing to us old country people,—such preachers they left, and went to Seceders as being most agreeable to what they were taught to believe as Presbyterianism. Mr. M'Millan said he believed so.

Mr. M'Millan observed, that he had not heard me express my Gospel Doctrines from the pulpit. I reminded him that he heard me in his Academy, and asked him how he approved of my performance at the time. Mr. M'Millan said, aye, he had heard me, and could not say I spoke any ill, but could not say I spoke much good. I told him, if he would be pleased to allow me an opportunity of preaching, I hoped I should let him hear some good; and having learned of Mr. M'Millan when their next monthly meeting at the Academy was to take place, I appointed to attend that day; and having spent a night with him, most hospitably entertained, parted in seemingly great friendship, whereby I was induced, in the town of Canonsburgh, upon my road from Mr. M'Millan's, in conversation with one of his subscribers, to reprobate any insinuations that he or others had alledged, relative to Mr. M'Millan's opposition to me; to which the gentleman simply replied, "Mr. Birch take care of yourself!" In my circuit round the members of Presbytery, one of the Ministers told me, that he was informed by a neighbour, that M. M'Millan had been saying that Mr. Birch had mentioned to him his intention of preaching in the Academy,—but if Birch came, he would not permit him to preach. The clergyman observed, that he would not advise me not to go, but he was pretty certain that I would not be allowed to preach. Not receiving any message

from Mr. McMillan, I attended, lest I might be charged with a breach of promise, as without doubt would have been the case. I met the Rev. John Watson, the President, at the door, and informed him, that Mr. McMillan had fixed with me to preach that day. Mr. Watson said Mr. McMillan was in the country, and that I could not be permitted to preach in his absence; and proceeding into the Academy, he began worship by giving out a Psalm, and afterwards desiring some laymen and Elders to pray. After some time the Rev. John McMillan came into the Academy, followed by a great body of people, a number of whom, upon Mr. McMillan's proceeding into the pulpit, turned about and left the house, and a number of my friends in the house would have done so, only out of respect for the worship. But the All-wise Disposer of human events frequently overrules intended injuries into blessings. Without Mr. McMillan's conduct upon this occasion, I might perhaps have been forever ignorant of what the Rev. Presbytery meant by Religious Experience,—which the Rev. John McMillan described, in the most florid strains, to consist of certain operations, alledged by him to be wrought in the mind, or soul, by the Holy Spirit, whereby sinners are brought to experience particular inward feelings, from which (without taking consequent practice, our blessed Lord's text, Math. vii. 16. ye shall know them by their fruits, into the account) they may conclude, infallibly, relative to their great stewardship account being finally passed with acceptance. And these feelings are such an indisputable test, as I have heard from another great master in the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, (though the Wise man has declared, Prov. xxvi. 12. what hopes are to be formed of those who are wise in their own conceit) that even without knowledge, they were the unobjectionable qualifications even for the grand sealing ordinance of the Lord's Supper, from which, in the late, what has been called, Revival, (Ministers, he said, had observed) they did not see how they could keep back children of eight years old, and actually persons grossly ignorant are admitted; and (though not immediately in the bounds of the Presbytery of Ohio) young persons not of sufficiently ripe years (as I have been credibly informed) have been introduced to the Lord's table by some of their disciples, particularly the Rev. Thomas Hughes, of the Rev. Presbytery of Erie, and brethren down the river,—of whom I have been informed by those who were present, that childish inconsideration, at the Lord's table, was evidenced, in their looking about them like so many pigeons upon an eminence basking in the sun.

Having discovered what the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio understood by experimental acquaintance with religion, I set about the arrangement of some of the religious sensations or feelings of my mind, which a survey of its operations or workings, in the several stages of life, and under various impressions, presented to my view.

In my journey to the members of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, which being in winter, was not only extremely fatiguing, but sometimes in peril of my life, I called upon Judge Edgar, an Elder reputed of great piety and the first influence, and married to the sister of a most steady friend, and intreated his good offices, lest my business with the Rev

Presbytery of Ohio, under the agency which the Rev. John McMillan was said to be carrying on, might not be for the interest of religion. For the like reason, I rode a great part of a night in waiting upon Mr. John Lyle, another most respectable Elder and connection. And learning that the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio was to meet upon the third Monday in April, I waited upon them.

A circumstance took place before my examination in Presbytery, in which (if that Rev. body had manifested a Gospel spirit) all the unhappy consequences which have since ensued, would have been prevented. A few persons in the town of Washington, headed by a gentleman not of the most orthodox principles or greatest religious fervour, opposed my coming to Washington, not from religious views, as the gentleman afterwards told me, but from a party spirit of aggrandizement. Some few others, who were the most forward in inviting me to Washington the first time, finding I would not be cordially received by the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, and especially by the Rev. John McMillan, declined, and rather united with the other opposing party. However, peace and good will were become nearly restored, Andrew Swearingen, Esq. an old Elder in Washington congregation, was Commissioner from the opponents for obtaining supplies, and Mr. Samuel Whan Commissioner from my friends. I observed to Mr. Swearingen, that I wished for peace, and therefore, if he would be pleased to concur in an application to Presbytery, to have the minds of the Washington congregation taken, and for that purpose send a notice the first Lord's day, and a placed Minister the next one; and if I had not the most decided sense of the people, I should immediately resign, provided Presbytery would declare me only admitted upon trials, so that under the Alien Law I would not be obliged to apply to the next General Assembly, to prevent suspension, and thereby be put back another year. Mr. Swearingen and Mr. Whan most heartily concurred with me in the proposal, Mr. Swearingen observing, as he did upon other occasions, that for his part he had no objection to me; and as for the obstacle with the others, it was that I was thought to be in the way of their carrying their meeting-house election ticket, in which he did not think them right. The Rev. Samuel Rulston, being applied to, declared his willingness to attend at Washington, and take the people's minds. The matter being communicated to the whole, or the greater part of the members of Presbytery, the Rev. John Watson observed, that they could not agree to any such proposal, as they did not know whether they would pass my trials; and so overruled, and proceeded to appoint supplies to Washington, which was considered as a declaration of hostility by the Presbytery, against my ever having any peaceable settlement in the congregation. The Presbytery shortly after proceeded to my business, when I was called upon to give evidence of my experimental acquaintance with religion; upon which I addressed them in substance as follows:—

From the mode practised in examinations in Presbyteries in Ireland and Scotland, and what is set forth by such European Divines as I have been conversant with, thinking that faith evidenced by, or leading to practice, was what was meant by religious experience, I arranged

my evidence to the last Presbytery accordingly, in which, perhaps, I did not represent my conceptions of religion, the inward discoveries and operations of my mind, in a sufficiently clear point of view. I shall therefore attempt a further explanation of these particulars.

As to my conceptions of religion, I consider man as dead in trespasses and sins, opposite to that which is good; and that as a dead body is incapable of any act, in common life, so the soul, until quickened, and the bent of its corrupt will changed, by the Spirit of God, is incapable of complying with any one saving act. The soul is passive in the renewing operation; it is active, when thus enabled, in coming to Christ, and embracing him upon God's own terms.

I believe a Saviour not only absolutely necessary, but also, that he who is to be embraced as such, must be infinite in all perfections and excellencies; such I believe the Divine Jesus to be, the Immanuel, God in our nature; and as such I embrace him, and look for salvation only as freely coming through his merits, not for any works of righteousness, lest any man should boast. And when come to Christ, I am convinced it is only through the influence of the Divine Spirit that the work of sanctification is perfected, and all Christian victories are to be gained, until the Redeemed arrive in Heaven.

Though I imagine I did not see things so clearly as now, I bless God in thinking I was very early under the influence of Divine grace, so that I can scarcely date a beginning; and to this I attribute my early delight in religion, my love to God, Christ and the Holy Spirit; my heart being cheered at the sound of God's praises; my fondness to say my prayers, to attend Divine worship, respect for fast days, abhorrence of profane expressions and evil company. I remember when very young I was much delighted with reflecting upon the infinite condescension of Almighty God, in deigning to attend to the prayers and praises of a little one like me, and thereby induced to sing, with Doctor Watts in his first Divine Song for Children,

*How glorious is our Heav'nly King,
Who reigns above the sky!*

*How shall a Child presume to sing,
His dreadful Majesty?*

*How great his pow'r is, none can tell,
Nor think how large his grace;*

*Not men below, nor jaints that dwell
On high before his face.*

I was much enraptured in contemplating the infinite love and condescension of Christ, in coming to die for lost sinners; and upon representations of the sufferings he endured from ungrateful men, I was induced to let fall showers of tears of love and gratitude. I reflected how honourable must it be to be God's servant, especially a Minister. Such as bore that station I greatly respected, thinking how holy must they be. I was much captivated with the thoughts of living in Heaven with the Holy God, the Divine Saviour, the blessed Spirit, angels, and the souls of the religious, where there would not be any sorrow nor

wickedness, but holiness and eternal hallelujahs; and that my little feet might tread the heavenly arch, and this supported me under all troubles. I was most devout, and had these contemplations most frequent, about sacrament times, or fast days, sickness, the deaths of relatives and neighbours. Though believing these works of grace, yet upon mature reflection, I think that perhaps I had too much of self-righteousness in all these works, esteeming myself, like the pharisee with the publican, better than some of my neighbouring little boys, who were not so circumspect as myself.

After I went to the College, through insinuating company, I had wanderings. By Divine grace, through checks of conscience, I returned to duty, and became more circumspect. I had repeated conflicts, the interest of Christ always finally prevailing; after which I went on in my religious exercises, much humbled. I had a severe fever about this time, in which my life was despaired of; which gave a powerful awakening, and furthered the business. A considerable time after, I had new out-breakings, followed by sharp conflicts, the spirit finally conquering the flesh, followed by much self-abasement, and complacency in Divine grace having brought back a straying prodigal.

This victory was confirmed by an awakening some months before my leaving the College, accompanied with tears and pious resolutions. About three years after this time, say about twenty-four years ago, at the death of a dear companion, I had a most alarming awakening for some months.

Though I am convinced there never was any time that I looked for salvation, except through the merits of the Lord Jesus, and them only, I think that, especially since the fore-mentioned awakening, I have gradually received clearer views; I have more fully discovered my lost and undone state by nature and practice, and that all my attainments were filthy rags; and to loath myself in sackcloth and ashes, and cry out with the leper and publican, unclean, unclean.—God have mercy upon me a miserable sinner, for I have grievously offended against thee; Lev. xii. 45. Luke xviii. 13. I have been brought to contemplate God's majesty and holiness, and my sinful impurity; my own total insufficiency, and Christ's all-sufficiency. Viewing God's purity and holiness, and my own guilt, I am covered with shame and confusion of face; discovering him as reflected in the face of his Anointed, I am white as snow. I discern all his attributes beautifully harmonize in the salvation of Christ,—his unbounded wisdom in the plan; his justice, righteous detestation of sin, and love of mercy, in the atonement; his holiness in the sanctification of the sinner, qualifying him for Heaven; leading me to sing, with the holy Psalmist, Psal. lxxxix.—lxxxv. Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne; mercy and truth shall go before thy face; mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. When I have been brought to view the majesty of God, and his condescension, amidst the immensity of his works, in the salvation of lost sinners, at such a price as the death of his well beloved and only begotten Son, I have been filled with rapture, tears of love and gratitude flowing from my eyes, causing me to cry out, with

the Apostles John and Paul, this is not after the manner of men, O Lord God; O the height, the depth of the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus! We may reverence and adore what we cannot comprehend. When I have viewed the inexhaustible riches of Christ, his free invitations, Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and ye that want money, and buy milk and honey without price—Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and ye shall find rest to your souls,—and my own desperate poverty, I have been most powerfully constrained to a closing with Christ, not only, I hope, from an outward speculative knowledge, but a thirsting, a going to him, like the blind men to receive their sight; something inwardly sweetly drawing me, making me willing, and causing me to cry out, with the Psalmist and twelve Apostles, Lord, whether should I go, but unto thee; thou art the Lord our God; thou alone hast the words of eternal life.

In this way I have made many frequent, free dedications of myself to God, through Jesus Christ, more particularly at the Lord's table, accompanied with most hearty resolutions of forsaking (through his grace) all sin, and devoting myself to his service, singing with holy David, depart from me all ye evil doers, for the law of my God I do purpose to obey. Sometimes reflecting upon the amazing condescension of Christ, to allow creatures to sit at his table, and unworthy me to preside, and how unlike this was to the haughty demeanor of the reptiles of this world to their dependants, or those in an humbler station, I have been led to cry out with the Psalmist, Psal. viii. 4. Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him,—the son of fallen Adam, a worm, a child of the Devil, that thou shouldst thus honour him? Upon occasions of this sort, viewing the crimson dye of my sins, I have been struck with melancholy; contemplating the inexhaustible fund of mercy in God and merit in Christ, I have been cheered in the most reviving hope, causing me to sing with Dr. Watts, li. Psalm,

*My sins are great, but can't surpass
The sov'reign power of thy grace;
Great God! thy goodness knows no bound,
And let thy pard'ning grace be found:*

And looking to Christ as conferring upon me the unspeakable gift of redeeming love, I have sung with holy David, Psalms ciii. lxxxix. cxlv,

*Bless, O my soul, the Lord thy God,
And not forgetful be
Of all his gracious benefits,
He hath bestowed on thee:*

*Who doth redeem thy life, that thou
To death may'st not go down:
Who thee with loving kindness doth,
And tender mercies crown.*

*God's mercies I will ever sing,
And with my mouth I shall
Thy faithfulness make to be known,
To generations ail.*

*Will thee extol, my God. O King,
I'll bless thy name always ;
Thee will I bless each day, and will
Thy name for ever praise.*

*The Lord is very gracious,
In him compassions flow ;
In mercy he is very great,
And is to anger slow.*

I think I see more and more that all fulness dwells in God and Christ ; convinced of the life-giving and soul-satisfying nature of religion, the one thing needful ; counting all things but loss, yea dung, the mire of the street, for the excellency of Christ Jesus my Lord, not having any righteousness of my own, which is by the law ; and thereby a sweet inward joy and composure of mind, from the hope of being freed from the condemning power of the law ; the bent of the mind, in Divine strength, leading me to greater cheerfulness and constancy in duty ; — causing me to cry out and sing, with the Prophet and Psalmist, teach me, O Lord, and I shall be taught ; turn me, and I shall be turned ; draw me, and I shall run after thee : so they go from strength to strength unwearied, until every one appears before the Lord in Zion. Lord God of Hosts hear my prayer, O Jacob's God give ear. One day spent in thy courts, is better than a thousand in tents of sin. I would rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than dwell in the palaces of iniquity.

Sometimes I have a dulness, a deadness, (at periods) bordering upon despondency ; which I take to be the withdrawing of the Divine influences, in some measure, that I may feel the necessity thereof ; causing me to cry out with David, why art thou in heaviness, O my soul ; why art thou disquieted within me ? Trust in the Lord ; thou shalt yet perceive the light of his countenance : after which I have had a flow, filling the soul with life and vigor.

I am fond of retirement for contemplation and devotion, and for many years, when alone, at home or travelling, have been accustomed to sing my meditations ; and bursts frequently rush into my soul, by which I am so enraptured in a Divine love, that I could with the utmost cheerfulness, resign myself to the loss of property or even life, if Christ or his cause should require ; saying with Job, the Lord gave, and the Lord taketh away, and blessed be the name of the Lord ; with Paul, I have learned in every state therewith to be contented ; with my Divine Master, thy will be done on earth as it is Heaven.

The glory and majesty of God are every where presented to me in his works, in the woods, particularly in your America, where the humblest of mankind, from the unbounded munificence of their Creator, have the most superb domains planted, and the poor strange traveller may pass on secure from the parching rays of the sun, in serpentine walks and meanderings, not to be exceeded by the decorations of the first lords of the earth ; causing me to sing with David, the trees of God are full of sap, even the great cedars on Lebanon, planted by his

almighty hand: the earth is full of thy bounty. Contemplating the infinite number of human beings, and other creatures, inhabiting our earth, all fed by the bounty of the common parent and Lord, and this contrasted with the want of charity, or penury of man, I have been led to sing with the Psalmist, Psal. cxlv. the eyes of all things wait on thee, thou giver of all good; thou openest thine hand liberally, and satisfies all their wants. In storms at sea, I have discovered a most striking emblem of Divine power, and viewed them with very little fear, convinced that God's Providence equally extended to the sea as the dry land; and looking at the immense liquid rolling mountains, threatening death at every bound, have sung, as in the lxxxix. Psalm,

*Ev'n in the raging of the sea,
Thou over it dost reign;
And when the waves thereof do swell,
Thou stillest them again.*

In the sun I have discerned a lively emblem of Christ; the sun dispelling the fogs or mists, cherishing by his genial heat, man, beast, and fruits of the earth; and sung as in the xix. Psalm,

*The heav'n's God's glory do declare,
The skies his hand-works preach, &c.
In them he set the sun a tent,
Who bridegroom-like forth goes, &c.
God's law is perfect, and converts
The soul in sin that lies, &c.*

In the moon and stars I have discovered a fainter representation.—The moon, (her light reflected from the sun) Christ clothing the sinner with righteousness, and illuminating him with his Spirit; God's mercy reflected from the face of the Anointed. The moon hung up as a grand lamp in the heavens, and the stars lesser ones, to light poor wandering strange travellers, and surveying them, sung, (as it were invoking them to join me in my tribute of gratitude) as in the cxlviii. Psalm,

*Thou moon that rules the night,
And sun that rules the day,
Ye lesser stars of light,
To him your homage pay, &c.*

Contemplating myself a poor sinful creature, of an inferior order of beings, totally unequal to the task of praising Almighty God, I have joined David, as in the ciii. Psalm, in invoking the assistance of angels of the first order;

*O ye his angels that excel
In strength, bless ye the Lord,
Ye who obey what he commands,
And hearken to his word:
O bless and magnify the Lord,
Ye glorious hosts of his,
Ye ministers, that do fulfil
Whatever his pleasure is.*

The advancement of the blessed Redeemer's kingdom has been long uppermost in my mind, the great object of my wishes, and daily and

hourly petitions at the throne of Grace; what I most love to converse about; and unconnected with this main business, I am wholly indifferent.

Reflecting sometimes how much Christ did for me, and how cold my love and gratitude to him, and how little I did to promote his glory, has induced me (in abatement of heart) to shed tears. Feeling a strong inward principle impelling me to engage and stand forward on Christ's side, and knowing my great insufficiency for the warfare, I have been induced to reply with the Prophet, *Isai. vi. 8.* when enquiry was made who would stand forth as God's messenger to perverse Israel and Judah, here am I, Lord send me; give me of thy own wherewith to serve thee; endue me with the zeal of an Elijah, the amiable disposition of a John, the eloquence of a Paul: and I trust in his mercy, from thousands of witnesses, I have been sent to some effect.

I have been mightily rejoiced, delighted and comforted, with the Scripture prophecies and promises of the mighty progress which Christ's kingdom is to make upon earth; *ii. Psalm, Isaiah ii. 2, 3, 4* these long hidden mysteries now seemingly rapidly unfolding themselves in the mighty shakings of the heavens and the earth, whereby our world is convulsed to the centre. I have much rejoiced with holy Abraham, seeing, as I thought, by the eye of faith, the near approach of the Redeemer's day, when there will be a reign of justice, godly rulers and people, an end of wars and dissensions, an orthodox gospel, religion without superstition, hypocrisy and persecution; mankind forming a peaceful, happy family, under the great Lord, Father and Head of the Church. And this has caused me daily to pray and meditate,—when shall that happy period arrive, when Christ shall have the Heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession;—when the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow into it; and many people shall go and say, come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem: and he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more: when shall be realized the song of the angels at the Redeemer's birth,—glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace, good will to men.

I have been much delighted by reflections upon the peace, the holiness, the love, the society, the Divine communications of Christ's kingdom above, raising an holy thirsting after that heavenly country, and causing me to cry out, with holy David when persecuted from God's Church and people, and obliged to take refuge amongst Heathenish Philistines, how amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord God of Hosts! My soul longeth for the courts of the Lord.

As to my present state of mind,—I have not only a speculative knowledge of Christ, whereby I am convinced of his ability to save; but

trust in God's mercy I have a vehement thirsting after him, and a going to him, not only as a sinner, but a weary, heavy laden one; an inward motion sweetly drawing me, and making me willing to clothe with him in all his offices, and actually placing my whole trust and confidence in him; causing me to cry out, whom have I in Heaven but thee; and there is none upon earth I desire in comparison with thee. I most humbly hope that Almighty God has in some measure evidenced to me the sincerity of my clinging with Christ, by disposing me to a most hearty cheerfulness in obeying his laws, and affording me an easier victory over temptations; begetting in me hatred of sin, attachment to the cause of truth in the most trying circumstances, good will to mankind, but especially the household of faith, forgiveness of injuries, and prayer for the reformation of enemies, his sovereignty quieting all my troubles; causing me to say with the Psalmist, the Lord being my helper, I will not be afraid.

I think I am moved to duty infinitely more by love to God, gratitude to Christ and the Holy Spirit, and the beauty of holiness, than any terror of punishment.

I perceive every day an increasing sense of the burden of sin, its cursed nature, dishonouring God's laws, derogatory to his holiness, debasing the soul; and with this, a most humbling sense of my worthlessness and degraded state, a deep conviction of my own insufficiency, and Christ's all-sufficiency; and therefore, were my attainments infinitely greater than they are, they must all be renounced, with the Apostle, as filthy rags, and adopt the words of the Psalmist, not unto us, Lord, not to us, but do thou take the glory to thyself; and with the redeemed, in the Revelation, to him who loved us, and redeemed us, and washed us from our sins in his blood, to the only wise God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, in the influence of the Holy Spirit, be the glory, honour and blessing.

THOMAS L. BIRCH.

March, 1801.

When I delivered my experience, being ordered to retire, I was called in a few minutes, and rejected by the Presbytery, without being asked any questions; against which I lodged a complaint to the very Rev. General Assembly. Having afterwards enquired of Mr. John Lyle, Elder, why he did not speak at the Presbytery, he told me it was to no purpose, for my rejection was determined upon before the meeting; and which was also confirmed to me by one of the Ministers.— Whether Judge Edgar at any time interposed, I never learned.

I attended at the meeting of the very Rev. General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of America, in Philadelphia, in May 1801, when the following complaint and supplication, from the congregation of Washington, (my friends) being presented to the committee of overtures, and being licensed by them, was read in the Assembly.

To the very Reverend the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of America, to meet at Philadelphia the third Thursday in May 1801; the complaint and supplication of the Congregation of Washington humbly and respectfully sheweth:

That your complainants and supplicants invited the Rev. Thomas

Ledlie Birch, an ordained Minister from the Presbytery of Belfast, to be our stated Pastor, as far as consistent with the regulations of your Alien Law, and having twice supplicated the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, that Mr. Birch might be taken under their care, he was each time (as we were given to understand) rejected under pretence of want of experimental acquaintance with religion, or conversion; against which Mr. Birch lodged a complaint to your Assembly.

Learning from the Minutes of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, that an invitation was held forth to Mr. Birch to come forward and give further satisfaction, we supplicated their Rev. body, that he might be taken under their care, professing ourselves friends of order, highly respecting all Church Judicatories, unwilling to oppose such, or interrupt their harmony, by an appeal to a superior Court, except for conscience sake. Esteeming Mr. Birch a sound Gospel Minister, with a suitable conversation, which we hoped proceeded from a work of grace upon the heart; and from the increased number of our society, the rapid progress of peace and good will, and flattering religious appearances, we humbly hoped he had a Divine call to our place; we therefore most respectfully requested, that if Mr. Birch was rejected, their Rev. body would be pleased specifically to inform us of the points of *faith*, or *knowledge*, in which he was deficient; to which we received an answer, (as will appear by their annexed minute) adding, as we most respectfully suppose, reproach to injury, without affording us any satisfaction upon the undefined term, "experimental acquaintance with religion," styling us, (instead of the Congregation of Washington) "a number of the inhabitants of Washington and its vicinity;" they inform us, that Mr. Birch has never, since his last application to the Presbytery, had their authority to preach the Gospel; and that his ordination of Elders, and attempt to establish a Congregation within the bounds of an old organized Congregation, is deemed highly irregular, and directly contrary to the order of the Presbyterian Church. In reply to which we beg leave to state the following facts, which can be proved if disputed:— Mr. Birch, travelling in this back country about fifteen months ago, received an unanimous invitation to settle in our Congregation of Washington, Messrs. Stoddard and Wherry, two of our Elders, acting as Commissioners, and our subscriptions (when filled up) to be transmitted to the Head of Elk, from which he was to return an answer.— A letter from Mr. Birch to Mr. Wherry, intimating his design to come to Washington, (if every thing was agreeable) being detained in the post-office near seven weeks, Mr. Birch, having offers of settlement elsewhere, called at Washington on his way, where, in the mean time, a Mr. Leacock had been preaching, and after public intimation, a poll took place, all our four Elders present, when it carried Mr. Birch by a three-fold majority, and after public notice, upon a second trial, Mr. Birch unanimously; Mr. Swearingen, an Elder, intimating to Mr. Birch, in the presence of Gen. Taylor, that all opposition would cease, he (Mr. Birch) coming in by the rules of the Church: and Mr. Birch, being admitted by the Committee of the Rev. Ohio Presbytery, consisting of the Rev. Messrs. John McMillan and Samuel Ralston, and

John M'Dowell, Esq. and obtaining their approbation, as far as consistent with the Alien Act, removed to Washington in August last.— Parties at that time running high, (for purposes not of a religious nature) after allowing Mr. Birch to preach one day in the Academy, under pretence of official authority our Congregation had the doors locked against them, though they had contributed to the building and had contracted for two years occupation, and paid for erecting seats: and the same party having previously, through cunning, obtained a decree to shut the Court-house, we were obliged for one day to worship in the street, and might have done so ever since, unless Mr. Fox, a worthy citizen, had afforded us an asylum; all which we have patiently submitted to; and before seeking legal redress for these flagrant outrages, (of which we have the best assurances) we are taking the Gospel method of complaining to the Church.

A few days after these proceedings, the Rev. Synod of Virginia having met in Washington; after evening sermon, the Rev. Joseph Patterson, now Moderator of the Rev. Ohio Presbytery, published (as he since declared, by order of the Rev. John M'Millan, the known influential member of the Presbytery) that Mr. Hoge, of Virginia, would preach in this congregation next Lord's day, though Mr. Birch at the same time was supplying Washington, under the sanction of the Committee of the Rev. Ohio Presbytery, whereof Mr. M'Millan was Moderator, (he, Birch, not yet rejected) whereby a far spread report, most injurious to Mr. Birch's settlement, was sent out and is still in circulation; that Mr. Birch, being rejected by the Synod, cannot have any prospect at the General Assembly. We are sorry to observe, that our Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, instead of attempting to heal our divisions, which long ere now would have subsided, have rather fomented them by sending three times as many suppliers to Washington as when altogether vacant; and the Rev. John M'Millan, in his Fatherly authority, has come a day, though he did not favour us with his presence for a long time before.

Esteeming ourselves the congregation of Washington, and having but four Elders, which we judged inadequate to the purposes of holding a sacrament, (one of which was never yet solemnized in this place) with visitations and other discipline preparatory to that solemnity, we nominated four additional Elders, not excluding the old ones, as was publicly declared, but warmly inviting them to exercise their office; and Mr. Birch having consulted a member of Presbytery, and being instructed by him, he set them apart agreeably to the form prescribed in the Directory of the Presbyterian Church of America. To perform his office we judged Mr. Birch competent, from the words of the Alien Law; he may preach the Gospel when regularly called, (which we humbly suppose Mr. Birch was by the appointment of the Committee) and if an ordained Minister, perform every part of the Ministerial functions. Different Presbyteries in America have permitted Mr. Birch the exercise of these functions; and we most humbly apprehend, that by allowing a complaint, it is evidently implied, that the wisdom of the

Assembly, in their Alien Act, could never design, especially without any imputation of morality, that the sentence of a Presbytery should prevent a poor unprotected stranger from exercising his Ministerial functions, and thereby be exposed to poverty and contempt, pending his appeal to the superior Court; a man always being deemed innocent until found guilty. And we most humbly and respectfully presume, that the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, by their invitation held forth to Mr. Birch to give them further satisfaction, and their admitting him to do so, was a tacit acknowledgment of his right to exercise his Ministerial functions, under his complaint to the General Assembly; and therefore their rejection of him at their last meeting, under the pretence of the exercise thereof, was evasive, and that the real cause was something else, as may be premised from the following transaction; which immediately preceded the event.—The fore-mentioned Andrew Swearingen, Elder and Commissioner from the Dissenters, and Samuel Whann, Elder and Commissioner from our Congregation, entered into a compromise for a friendly union of parties, whereby we would be rendered one of the first societies on the continent; Mr. Swearingen declaring in favour of Mr. Birch, and that the Presbytery should be requested to send a member to take the poll; Mr. Birch, or any other who had the majority, to be acquiesced in as Minister: for which benevolent purpose, the Rev. Samuel Ralston tendered his services; Mr. Birch consenting that, provided the Presbytery would admit him so far, that he could retire without prejudice, if he was not the favourite object, he would resign; and this was communicated to most of, if not all, the members of the Presbytery. The Presbytery however, without taking any notice of the business, proceeded to appoint Suppliers to Washington; which was considered as announcing Mr. Birch's rejection. There is a report, which, if true, must strike in the most glaring point of view the Minutes of the Ohio Presbytery, which they have been notified to have before your very Rev. body, will ascertain the fact: it is, that the supplying of Washington is given in a partition treaty between the Rev. Messrs. McMillan, Watson and Anderson of Buffalo, three of Mr. Birch's most decided opponents. The preaching of Mr. Anderson next Lord's day is already announced.

Wishing to be friends of order, and highly respecting Church authorities, if we or Mr. Birch have transgressed any rule, (which we hope we have not) we are sorry for it—we humbly plead misconception, no design.

We doubt not but that your known humanity and zeal for the Gospel will be moved at hearing of our state. Our town, the most populous in this part of the continent, in the centre of a close settled country, not less than sixteen miles square—the Lord's Supper never dispensed during fifteen years—not ever comforted in our families by our Ministerial visit, until lately by Mr. Birch—not more than two or three solitary supplies in a season, until now from contention.

We therefore most humbly and respectfully supplicate, that you pity our forlorn condition, and be pleased to take the Rev. Thomas Ledlie Birch under your protection, whom we hope you will find a d

erving member; and take such steps towards the settlement of our Congregation, as to your wisdom shall seem meet: as many of our principal members, now grown weary from all their attempts to obtain a Gospel Minister being so many times frustrated, have declared that if Birch is obliged to leave us, they will withdraw, and in consequence, we must nearly cease from being a worshipping society. And your Supplicants, as in duty bound, shall ever pray.

We constitute and appoint John Wilson, Esq. Washington, and Capt. Samuel Young, and Mr. William Smylie, of Philadelphia, Assistants to our Commissioner, to present this our complaint and supplication to the very Rev. the General Assembly, and agreeably to the premises, to act in our name as if all personally present.

Done in our name, and with our unanimous concurrence, at our place of worship, in Washington, this 26th day of April, 1801; and signed by our order.

SAMUEL WHANN,
JAMES CHAMBERS,
WILLIAM M. CAMMANT,
HENRY TAYLOR,
ABSALOM BAIRD,
ROBERT ANDERSON.

The very Rev. General Assembly proceeding to discuss my complaint against the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, for rejecting me under the pretence of want of experimental acquaintance with religion, I was desired to relate to the Assembly, the experience delivered to the Presbytery of Ohio. This was objected to, by the delegates from the Presbytery and their advocates, upon the ground, that perhaps I might deliver experience different from that given to the Presbytery of Ohio, observed, that I had notes of the heads of the former experience, and which were produced: The Presbytery of Ohio not having any minute to confront or contradict my notes, the Assembly acquiesced that they should be received as evidence, that the experience about to be delivered, was the same as exhibited to the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio.— This business was totally overruled by another review of the subject, which was, that “ even supposing the Assembly should approve of my qualifications, yet the Presbytery of Ohio had a right to think for themselves; and therefore, unless something blame-worthy in their conduct should be made evident, they were not censurable for expressing their opinion relative to such persons as they had taken upon trials.” And upon this view of the matter, the Assembly after a debate which lasted nearly the whole day, came to a resolution to the following purpose, (see printed minutes for 1801:) “ That there appears to this Assembly nothing censurable in the conduct of the Presbytery of Ohio, in rejecting Mr. Birch, in that there is necessarily lodged with every Presbytery, the power of judging of the qualifications of its members, or of those they receive as members.” The Assembly resolved, that they were willing to examine said Birch upon his experimental acquaintance with religion, provided he should request it.

Agreeably to the invitation held out by the very Rev. General Assembly, I requested them to examine me. Being desired to relate my experience, I expressed myself nearly as in the last trial before the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio; after which a variety of questions were asked by different members of the Assembly, which (together with many others) produced the following answers and explanations.

The discussion of the doctrine of regeneration, or the new spiritual birth, to the same effect as before the Presbytery of Ohio, but more lengthily.

My opinion of the person and dignity of Christ, relative to which expressed, that if I could be brought to think with the Socinians, that Christ was a creature, a mere man, though the most dignified Messenger of Heaven; or even, with the Arians, esteem him only the *first* of the creation of God, I should renounce Christianity, its author being altogether unqualified for the office of a Saviour: for sin being of an infinite nature, a transgression against a God infinite in all perfection done in despite of the promise of eternal happiness in Heaven, and the threatening of everlasting punishment in Hell, the atonement must be infinite. Man, if he had never fallen, or had not sinned of his own, for which he was subject to punishment; yet he is finite. Even angels though they never fell, yet being but creatures, they are of limited value, therefore unable to discharge the debt. And as infinite merit requisite to atone, so infinite power and length of days are necessary to defend and govern the Church with perfect security. Man fell, angels have fallen, and they might still fall, with the loss of the whole Church of God. Men are mortal; angels are not necessarily self-existent, they depend upon another for the preservation of their being, and it is at his pleasure, only, how long they shall continue in existence; and therefore with the Apostle, when speaking of the weakness of the high priest under the law in comparison of Christ, they are not able to save to the uttermost, in all generations, all that would come unto God through them, like him who was the necessarily self-existent Jehovah, who ever lived and liveth, and therefore could be with his Church to the end of the world.

In explanation of the answer to the question, for whom did Christ die? and which was, that he died for those whom the Father had given him; it was observed, to the satisfaction of the Assembly, that it was meant by those whom the Father had given Christ, those who, through grace would be brought to embrace Christ by faith, evidenced in a holy life and conversation. The question in its consequences appears to have been designed to strike at the doctrine of Universalists, which of late has made some progress in America, viz. that impenitent unbelievers after they are damned in Hell, and even Devils, are included in Christ's purchase, and will finally be brought to Heaven. Being asked if I believed that any persons will suffer everlasting punishment in Hell's flames and having declared in the affirmative, and being farther asked if I could think that Christ's blood was shed for such, and having answered in the negative, I observed that the doctrine contained a manifest absurdity in itself. If the damned in Hell will ever get to Heaven, in order to

happy there, they must have their dispositions suited to that holy place and company. Persons are most likely to acquire habits similar to those with whom they associate. If, then, the mercy of God, the love of Christ, the influence of the Holy Spirit, in a society not the worst, did not lead to repentance, and work the heavenly qualifications, it is not reasonable to think they shall be obtained, with the absence of Divine grace, in the company of Devils (4); and consequently, if never fitted for Heaven, they could not have any happy enjoyment there. Besides, the notion that any sufferings in Hell, or a purgatory, can do away the penal consequences of sin, and bring sinners to Heaven, at one stroke overturns the doctrine of the Redeemer's satisfaction: for if punishment, however long, can atone for one sin, proportionable sufferings will satisfy for a'l, and still there remains an eternity for happiness.

After the conversation the Assembly had with me, which lasted nearly two hours (and during which the Rev. John McMillan and the other delegates from the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, were desired, by the members of the Assembly, to ask me such questions as they should think proper, but which they modestly declined) I was ordered to withdraw, and the Assembly proceeded to deliberate; when (as I was informed by some friends) the remaining part of the forenoon was taken up in general encomiums and compliments upon my performance; and at the adjournment for dinner, I was given to understand, that I might expect a speedy and honourable termination of my probationary trials under the Alien Law, and an admission into the American Church.

(4) *If it was not more fit to send the broachers of such doctrine to Bedlam, (as being nuisances to society) than give them a serious refutation,—they might be asked, what end do they mean to serve by their preaching? Is it not reasonable in a God of justice and holiness, to give abandoned sinners, who, in contempt of his grace, gratify their lusts and court Hell and destruction, their wish, in being forever united with such society? Even granting the punishment of Hell was not eternal where is the loss sustained by the follower of the preacher of everlasting punishments, when he is taught to escape ever coming to that place of torment? Was it not a pity, if there is such a secret, that the punishments of Hell will have an end, that for the sake of our poor unhappy earth, it was not kept undiscovered, instead of being revealed to a very few, who have blabbed it out; and thereby has rendered our world in a higher degree an howling wilderness, by affording additional encouragement to the tyrants and butchers of the human race, the midnight assassin, the adulterer, the whoremonger, the robber, the drunkard, the liar, and every breaker of the Divine and human law, who may exclaim: "it is but a few years burning in Hell, followed by an eternity of happiness in Heaven; we know the worst; who's afraid? Let us drink and merryl!" But let these gentlemen be cautious, and take the advice of a friend, and not push their secret too far, lest their craft should be in danger by the people getting enlightened; for well knowing how much human misery is increased upon earth by the society of the wicked they will be much abated in their zeal after a Heaven, which they will have learned will be but an eternal association of blackguards.*

In the afternoon, some of the principal members of the Assembly being called off to the committee of funds, or to regulate the money affairs of the Assembly, which are very extensive, (amongst whom were the Rev. Doctors Green and Allison) the residue proceeded to discuss my business; when there were motions and counter motions; arguments, replies and rejoinders; voting and re-voting; in which the Rev. Ohio delegates (their Presbytery being now acquitted of censure) were allowed to take a part, and forgetting their former modesty, lent their good services;—and at a very late hour of adjournment in the evening, came to the following resolution:—

In General Assembly, at Philadelphia, May 26, 1801—Morning session—

“ Mr. Birch having expressed a desire that the Assembly would undertake his examination, agreeably to the resolution of yesterday; the Assembly proceeded to examine Mr. Birch on his experimental acquaintance with religion; when, after a full and free conversation with him, on this subject, the Assembly adjourned.

In the afternoon—

The consideration of Mr. Birch's examination was resumed; when after maturely deliberating on the subject, it was resolved, that, from the full and free conversation which the Assembly have had with Mr. Birch, upon his experimental acquaintance with religion, they find no obstruction against any Presbytery to which he may apply, taking him up, and proceeding with him agreeably to the rules and regulations in this case made and provided.”

Extracted from the minutes of the Assembly.

ASHBEL GREEN, Stated Clerk.

Some of my friends expressing to me their surprize and displeasure at the unexpected turn matters had taken in the Assembly, in doing away what had been agreed upon in the forenoon, and leaving me in nearly the same undeterminate footing as when I arrived in America; I waited until a future day, when some of the absent Ministers returned from the committee of funds to the Assembly, when I requested of that very Rev. body, to know in what state of ministerial probation I stood under the Alien Law, having now been nearly ten months and a half in the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio. I was informed, by a friend of the Presbytery of Ohio, upon the same footing as when I arrived in America, (being nineteen months past.) I asked, had I not, with the time spent in probation, now passed an examination in the very Rev. General Assembly with approbation? I was replied to by Doctor Edwards, (another warm advocate, who took a very active part in asking me questions, without objecting to any of my answers) that the Assembly had not altogether passed or approved of me, or words to that effect: upon which Dr. Green called for the reading of the foregoing minute, which being read, he exclaimed, in reply to Dr. Edwards, is not that approbation? and turning himself so as to have a view of the Rev. John McMillan and the other Ohio delegates, he observed to them, “ you have examined and rejected this Minister three times, and he has complained to us, and we have examined and approved of him; and in that

we have declared he was right, and you wrong. Let us not see, therefore, you shall dare to examine him, and oblige him, again, to complain to us; for do you think we will suffer you, the inferior Court, to come to our bar and tell us we are wrong?"—And much, indeed, would it have been to the honour of the very Rev. General Assembly, to the credit of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, and many wounds given to religion would have been prevented, if Dr. Green's orderly, dignified sentiments had been attended to.

So much time having been taken up with the business, the votes of two-thirds of the Assembly being requisite to command a re-hearing of any matter at the same meeting, and a number having expressed an unwillingness to go again into the business, the affair rested. I was much encouraged in my acquiescence, by the opinion of some of the first-rate ministerial characters, my friends, that I had come off most honourably; and with the observations of one of the very judicious delegates from Connecticut, who said, that the resolution of the Assembly was most certainly a very heavy censure upon the Presbytery of Ohio, and from what had passed in the Assembly, Presbyteries, he presumed, would be taught to be more cautious, and to give more respectful treatment.

Going out of the Assembly house, I met the Rev. John M'Millan, and observed, that it was my desire for us to go home, and be good friends, and in future to keep matters amongst ourselves; to which he replied with a surly grumble.

The very Rev. General Assembly, in their first resolution, declare, that they find nothing censurable in the conduct of the Presbytery of Ohio, in rejecting Birch, in that there is necessarily lodged with every Presbytery, the power of judging of the qualifications of those they shall receive as members. The Presbytery of Ohio is not, indeed, censurable for ignorance, or error in judgment, provided they were avoidable: the very Rev. General Assembly themselves are rather censurable, in framing Alien Laws instituting inquisitorial examinations into the qualifications of Ministers of sister Churches, who have conformed to the same standards, and have their recommendations in their hands, and giving these things over to Presbyteries ill qualified for the business.—But perhaps it would appear, that there was something more than ignorance, or error in judgment, in the Presbytery of Ohio rejecting Birch, viz. the Rev. John M'Millan causing the Rev. Joseph Patterson to proclaim, at the Synod in Washington, (and the business passed without notice) that the Rev. Mr. Hoge would supply that congregation, after Birch was inducted by said Mr. M'Millan, the Rev. Samuel Ralston, and John M'Dowell, Esq. the stated Committee of Presbytery; the colleaguing with the shutters of the Academy, and sending three supplies to Washington, for one sent before Birch's coming there, and the refusal of the Washington Commissioners' and Birch's request, to send a member to take the people's minds, (and if not for edification, Birch to leave the place) were acts of the Presbytery of Ohio, which, if not censurable, at least not evidencing the first-rate hospitality, and zeal for the peace of the Church. But other Ministers, in their turn, will

have their sons-in-law to provide for, their Academy bonds to get in, and their party to serve—the children's bread is not to be cast to dogs; and therefore such things must be pass'd over!

The very Rev. General Assembly resolve, from the full and free conversation the Assembly have had with Mr. Birch, upon his experimental acquaintance with religion, they find no obstruction to any Presbytery proceeding with him, &c.—the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio reject Birch, at three different examinations, for the want of experimental acquaintance with religion. If the Rev. Dr. Edwards did not conceive that this resolution of the very Rev. General Assembly was an approbation of Birch, and a censure upon the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, his superior judgment must have discerned, if words have any meaning, that the two Rev. bodies at least flatly contradict each other; and as he was one of the framers of the Assembly's resolution, unless he and the Rev. Ohio delegates had been possessed of more of the Christian temper than some others, they would have charged each other with giving the lie, and perhaps have proceeded to fatal consequences. However, petty evasions were unworthy the representatives of the American Presbyterian Church, and to be advocated by the son of a Dr. Edwards, whose name is renowned throughout the world. There was a point at issue between the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio and Birch, referred to the supreme Church Judicature: if the Presbytery of Ohio was right, why was not their zeal in keeping error, ignorance, imbecility of mind, and a profligate reprobate out of the Church, applauded by an honourable acquittal, and the rejection of their defamer? If Birch was injured, why was he not redressed by censuring his persecutors, and declaring the point in dispute determined in his favour; and ten months and a half of his year of probation under the Alien Law pass'd, (Birch having refused that time in the bounds of the Presbytery of Ohio) enjoining or commanding the Presbytery of Ohio to receive him, (of the latter of which there was a precedent in the Assembly of 1800, where four Ministers were disfranchised from the Rev. Presbytery of Baltimore, and annexed to that of New-Castle, without consulting the latter) instead of turning him back to another year's probation, and renewed examinations, perhaps without end? The most ignorant member of a Congregational Session, who has any knowledge of Church discipline, (not to speak of a number of profoundly learned Ministers, styling themselves the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of America) knows well, that an appeal to the superior Court puts a final stop to all litigation in the inferior Court; otherwise all appeals must be nugatory, and ruinous to the appellant. But it is probable those who have digged the pit will fall into it themselves. In the opinion of many, the Presbytery of Ohio, in their secret conclave, rejected me, not only from evil motives, but from principles which are inconsistent with Presbyterianism, I had almost said Christianity; and if the very Rev. General Assembly do not speedily declare who are censurable, the people will discern who are the patronizers of such doctrines and practices.

The congregation of Washington, where I was invited to the exercise of my Gospel labours, and the chief object of my attachment, na-

usually lying within the bounds of the Presbytery of Ohio, that I might not seem to retain malice, I determined to pay them the first compliment of a request to receive me; and accordingly, clothed with the approbation of the very Rev. General Assembly, I waited upon the meeting of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, at Buffalo, the last Tuesday in June 1801, accompanied by Messrs. Robert and Hamilton B. L., Commissioners, with a supplication from my friends in the congregation of Washington, joining me in my request to the Presbytery for reception. Upon the Tuesday evening, having presented the minute of the very Rev. General Assembly, I had a most flattering interview. Being asked if I had any new experience to offer, and having observed that I had not any upon a new foundation, but something progressive upon the old one, I was desired to retire; and the Presbytery, after mature deliberation, called me in, when the Moderator informed me, that the Presbytery was hearty in proceeding with me, (and as some members told me since, it was observed in their consultation, that they could not refuse me;) I was therefore desired to attend the next morning at nine o'clock, and I waited upon Presbytery according to appointment.

The Rev. John McMillan desired me to step out, as the Presbytery wished for a private conference; when, after being kept out of doors upwards of four hours, I was called in, and the Moderator ordered the following minute to be read to me:—

“Buffalo, July the 1st, 1801—A petition was handed, from a number of the inhabitants of the town of Washington and its vicinity, styling themselves the majority of the congregation of Washington, praying that this Presbytery would be pleased to take Mr. Birch under their care; Mr. Birch also came forward with a similar request.

Whereupon, after considering the matter, the Presbytery did resolve, that they would have nothing farther to do with Mr. Birch, as to his trials for the Gospel Ministry; in doing which, they conceive themselves justifiable, from the frequent and full conversations which they had formerly with him, and from the general report which prevails, with respect to his imprudent, irregular conduct.”

I observed, that the wisdom of the highest Court having approved, they could not think themselves justifiable in rejecting me from their former examination.

The Rev. Mr. Anderson, of Buffalo, replied, (and which was concurred in by the Presbytery) that no Assembly could oblige them to admit any member, but such as they pleased. Surely a weak Church authority!

Requesting to know what “imprudent, irregular conduct” I was chargeable with, the late Rev. John Watson, son-in-law to the Rev. John McMillan, started up, and in a menacing posture exclaimed, (without being called to order) was I going to insult the Presbytery! If I did not go out, they must turn me out! I observed to the Moderator, that I was not insulting their Presbytery, and should be extremely sorry to do so; but they had insulted me, in terming me, in their minute, *imprudent* and *irregular*; whereas I had a character alledged to square with the chiefest of them; and instead of insult, I only wished

to adopt the method prescribed by my blessed Lord, for dealing with offending brethren before complaining to the Church, viz. to try to have the matter compromised in presence of two or three witnesses; and accordingly, calling forward Messrs. Robert and Hamilton Bell, and a Mr. Jenkins, (as will appear by the depositions of the two former) I demanded to name any charge; but unable to obtain any satisfaction, I was obliged to turn out of doors.

Being called back, the Moderator attempted to excuse the Presbytery, only by mentioning my baptizing of children, and ordination of Elders, in the congregation of Washington, already decided in my favour in the superior Court; upon which I lodged a complaint to the next Assembly. Had the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio only expressed the sentiment, that perhaps there would not be happiness in their having a connection with me, without passing a defamatory sentence upon me unheard, whereby I was deprived of a reception elsewhere, and my usefulness attempted to be destroyed, I should not have esteemed myself ill-treated.

Previous to this meeting of Presbytery, a Mr. Andrew M'Mekan, an hearer of mine, travelling from this back country to Philadelphia, conveyed me a message, (as will appear by his oath) by another hearer returning backwards, to beware of the Rev. John M'Millan; for meeting said M'Millan returning from the General Assembly, he had told him, that he had traced me, Birch, staggering drunk upon the road, upon account of which he called me a Minister of the Devil, and would do every thing in his power to put me out of this; and hearing from all quarters, that the Rev. John M'Millan continued to propagate this report, especially upon sacramental occasions; and particularly, receiving a message, by Messrs. Alexander Litle and Henry Tarr, both of Washington town, from Mr. Joseph Wherry, an Elder in the Washington congregation, who was a most zealous advocate, at first, in inviting me here, but now an opponent, and who, seemingly lest I should doubt that Mr. M'Millan propagated such a report, or that it was not believed to be founded in truth, made use of these emphatic words; (the matter of fact, as to Mr. M'Millan's declaration, has been acknowledged by Mr. Wherry himself, upon oath, in the Supreme Court)—
 “Tell him, Birch, from me, that I, Joseph Wherry, heard the Rev. John M'Millan, upon his *sacrament Monday*, tell the report of his, viz. Birch's, drunkenness at Strasburgh, on his road from the General Assembly:” the congregation, or my hearers in Washington and its vicinity, and I, wrote a letter to, and appointed Messrs. Alexander Litle and Andrew M'Mekan Commissioners to wait upon, the Rev. John M'Millan, (as will appear by their depositions) with Gospel offers of reconciliation, viz. intimating, if Mr. M'Millan could support guilt against Birch, to be pleased to prosecute his charge; or if he had propagated slander, he should be forgiven upon acknowledgment of offence; and requesting a written answer by the bearers.

Mr. M'Millan confessed to the Commissioners (as will appear by their oaths and his own declarations afterwards) the spreading of the report of Birch's intoxication at Strasburgh, and gave Messrs. Thomas

McConnel, and James Mahon, blacksmiths, as his authors; said he had called Birch a Minister of the Devil, and added that he would do every thing in his power to put him out of this; but instead of drunkenness, gave as his reason, that Birch was unconverted; for that in three examinations he had not satisfied the Presbytery. Judge of the compliment paid to the discernment of the very Rev. General Assembly, at which the Rev. gentleman himself had been present! Mr. McMillan did not return a written answer, to the congregation's and my letter, and thereby avoided being unequivocally bound to any particular expressions; but sent me a message, that he would call upon me personally, at Washington. Having learned Mr. McMillan's authors for my being intoxicated at Strasburgh, I wrote to Mr. John Bell, the keeper of the tavern where I should have been drunk, requesting the depositions of Messrs. Thomas McConnell and James Mahon upon the subject. A few days afterwards, the Rev. John McMillan, accompanied by James Allison, Esq. one of his Elders, called upon me at my house in Washington. I refused converse, until I should call in some other witnesses besides my family. I obtained Mr. Robert Anderson, silversmith, in Washington; and, as will be evident from his deposition, Mr. McMillan repeated what he had told to the Commissioners, (as stated above) at Canonsburgh; and added that he had made matter of conscience in telling to the interlocutor, or private consultation of the late Presbytery, viz. where I was rejected, the report of my intoxication at Strasburgh; and that William McComb, Elder in Washington congregation, told at said meeting, that upon an evening in February, 1800, I had taken three drinks in his house, with a gill and a half of whiskey in each of them, and the same evening in Robert Stockton's, Elder, two drinks of a gill and a half each, but that I was not intoxicated.

The next post brought to hand the following depositions of Messrs. Thomas McConnel and James Mahon, blacksmiths, Mr. McMillan's authors of defamation, together with the oath of Mr. John Bell, the tavern-keeper.

Franklin County, &c. Personally appeared before John Gilmore, one of the Justices in and for said county, Thomas McConnel, of Strasburgh and said county, blacksmith; and being duly sworn as the law directs, deposed and saith, that on or about the fifth day of June, the Rev. Thomas Ledlie Birch stopt at John Bell's tavern, next door to my shop, and applied to me to shoe his horse. He said he was going home from the General Assembly, and told this deponent, that if he would be expeditious, he would treat him. After the horse was shod, he ordered the tavern-keeper to give him a dram, and he did give it into the hands of this deponent, and he invited Mr. Birch, once or twice, to drink part of it, but he refused, and would not drink any part of it. A few days afterwards, the Rev. Mr. McMillan stopt at said John Bell's tavern, and likewise applied to said deponent to shoe his horse, and said that he was returning home from the General Assembly. At the time this deponent was shoeing said horse, he told Mr. McMillan, that he had shod Mr. Birch's horse a few days ago. Mr. McMillan then said to this de-

ponent, he supposed he treated the blacksmith; this deponent said Mr. Birch was a jolly man, but that a great number of clergymen were too hard to pay their tradesmen without giving them a treat. Mr. M^cMillan then said that Mr. Birch was an everlasting talker, and he hated to be in his company. This deponent enquired at Mr. M^cMillan, if Mr. Birch belonged to the General Assembly. Mr. M^cMillan said he did not, but he was trying to get admittance, but the General Assembly would not admit him; and further said, that it was reported about Washington, that he drank too much, but they could not prove it against him; likewise enquired of this deponent, if he saw Mr. Birch drink any liquor here in town; he said he did not see him drink any. And this deponent further saith not. Sworn and subscribed this thirtieth day of July, Anno Domini, 1801, before me,

JOHN GILMOR.

THOMAS M^cCONNEL.

Franklin County, ss. Personally appeared before John Gilmore, one of the Justices of the Peace in and for said county, James Mahon, of Strasburgh, blacksmith by trade,—saith that on or about the eighth day of June, the Rev. Mr. John M^cMillan came into the shop of Thomas M^cConnel, where this deponent was then working with said M^cConnel, to get his horse shod. After some little conversation, Mr. M^cMillan made particular enquiry at this deponent, if he saw Mr. Birch drink any, or if he thought he was intoxicated. This deponent answered, and told M^cMillan, that he thought he was not in the least intoxicated, neither did he see Mr. Birch drink any liquor of any kind. Then Mr. M^cMillan requested this deponent, if he knew any thing about his drinking, he ought to tell it, for it was a scandal to religion not to discover it; and if he (this deponent) could tell any thing about Mr. Birch, he need not be afraid, for he would not be put to any trouble about it. This deponent further saith not. Sworn and subscribed this thirtieth day of July, 1801, before me,

JOHN GILMOR.

JAMES MAHON.

Franklin County, ss. Personally appeared before John Gilmore, one of the Justices of the Peace in and for said county, John Bell of Strasburgh, tavern-keeper, and being duly sworn, as the law directs, deposeth and saith, that on or about the fifth day of June last, the Rev. Mr. Thomas Ledlie Birch stopt at my house, and made inquiry if he could get his horse shod; I told him, that a certain Thomas M^cConnel, blacksmith, lived in the next house to me, and he could do it. He ordered his horse to be fed the time the blacksmith was preparing and making the nails. After some short space of time, Mr. Birch desired me to bring in a gill of whiskey and some cool water, and after he ordered the drink, he immediately stopt out of my house, and went over to Mr. Gilmore's, opposite to where I live, and shortly after came back again, and Mr. Gilmore along with him, and they both went into the room where I had took the drink, and they staid some considerable time together; then said Gilmore went over to his own house, and Mr. Birch and myself went to the stable, where the blacksmith was shoeing his horse. Some short time after said Gilmore came over to my house again, and staid some

time with Mr. Birch, and they two in company drank the greatest part of the gill of whiskey betwixt them. After the two parted, Mr. Birch called for his reckoning, and paid me for the gill and his horse feed.— At the time he was paying, he desired me to take pay for another gill, and give it to the blacksmith when he would call for it. Immediately the blacksmith came in, and agreeably to Mr. Birch's orders, I gave Thomas M-Connel, who was the blacksmith, the gill of whiskey, and after I gave it to him, I heard said M-Connel more than once insist upon Mr. Birch to taste it; but I am not certain whether Mr. Birch tasted any of it or not. Said M-Connel drank about the half of said gill, and then handed it back to me; and I took it and put it into the bar, and there was no more of said gill drank. Then Mr. Birch called for his horse and went on his journey. This deponent further saith, that when Mr. Birch alighted at his house, he was duly sober to all appearance, and when he went away was likewise so. The time he staid at my house was about the space of two hours.— A few days afterwards, the Rev. Mr. M-Millan, the Rev. Mr. Moorehead, and the Rev. Mr. Watson, called at my house, (on or about the eighth day of said month) and ordered their horses to be fed. Mr. Moorehead came into my house immediately after said horses were fed, and sat down in the room, and I sat down in said room along with him, and we had some conversation together. Shortly after Mr. M-Millan came into said room, and the first words he spoke, after he came in, were, "Mr. Bell, how happened you made Mr. Birch drunk the other day?" I answered much in the same manner, Sir, he was not; and then told Mr. M-Millan exactly what liquor Mr. Birch called for, and that was only one gill; and that Mr. Gilmor was in company a considerable time he was here, and they two drank it, the greatest part, betwixt them. I likewise mentioned the other gill that Mr. Birch allowed me to give to the blacksmith, as is mentioned before; and immediately after I had done telling him the above statement, Mr. M-Millan stepped out of the room. Mr. Moorehead was in said room, and heard the whole of the discourse that passed. This deponent further saith not. Sworn and subscribed the thirtieth day of July, Anno Domini, 1805, before me,

JOHN GILMOR.

JOHN BELL.

Upon the receipt of the above depositions, relative to the Rev. John M-Millan's report of my intoxication at Strasburgh, I procured M-Mrs. William M-Cammant, Alexander Litle, (now Esq.) and Robert Anderson, all of Washington, to wait upon Mr. William M-Comb, Elder, for the purpose of gospel reconciliation, and to make inquiry relative to my behaviour at his and Mr. Robert Stockton's, Elder, houses.— The following depositions will shew the final result relative to M-Mrs. M-Millan's and M-Comb's reports.

Washington County, ss. Personally appeared before me, William M-Metkirk, one of the Justices of the Peace in and for said county, Alexander Litle, cabinet-maker, and being duly sworn as the law directs, deposeth and saith, that on or about the fifteenth of July last, this deponent, along with Andrew M-Mikan, near Washington, was deputed by the congregation of Washington, and the Rev. Thomas Ledue

Birch, to wait upon the Rev. John M. Millan, for the purpose of a gospel accommodation, relative to certain reports propagated by said M. Millan concerning said Birch; when the said Rev. John M. Millan acknowledged his having reported, that he was told by Thomas M. Connel, blacksmith, of Strasburgh, and James M. Hon, his journeyman, that the Rev. Thomas Ledlie Birch, was staggering drunk in their shop, on his road from the General Assembly, on the fifth of June last; and did not deny, that on the Philadelphia road, he said M. Millan being on his way from the General Assembly, did stile said Birch, in presence of said M. Mekan, a Preacher of the Devil, (being unconverted) and said M. Millan further declared to said deponent and said M. Mekan, that he would do every thing in his power to put Birch out of this place. And this deponent further saith not. Sworn and subscribed this 19th day of October, 1801, before me,

W. M. MEETKIRKE.

ALEXANDER LITTLE.

The above-named Andrew M. Mekan being duly sworn, saith, that the statement made by Alexander Little, is just and true to the best of his knowledge. Sworn and subscribed before me, January 23^d, 1802.

ANDREW M. MEKAN.

Washington County, ss. Personally appeared before me, William Meetkirke, one of the Justices of the Peace in and for said county, William M. Cammant of Washington, tavern-keeper, and being duly sworn as the law directs, deposeth and saith, that upon a Saturday, being about the seventeenth of February, 1800, the Rev. Thomas Ledlie Birch having dined in said deponent's house, requested him to accompany him, the said Birch, to the house of William M. Comb, Elder, near Washington; upon an invitation; and this deponent did go along with him. Said deponent was in said M. Comb's house, along with said M. Comb and Birch, until they got ready to set off to spend the evening at Robert Stockton's, Elder. Along with other entertainment in said M. Comb's, Birch and this deponent were presented with spirits, water and sugar. And whereas it has been reported, that said Birch drank a pint of whiskey in M. Comb's at said refreshment; this deponent declareth that such is false, as Birch did not seem to exceed a common refreshment; neither, to his belief, did the whole company, consisting of said M. Comb, his son, Birch, and this deponent, drink a pint amongst them. And this deponent saith, that upon the Tuesday following, he conveyed Birch on his road leaving the country—and further saith not. Sworn and subscribed this 19th day of October, 1801, before me,

W. M. MEETKIRKE.

WILLIAM M. CAMMANT.

Washington County, ss. Personally appeared before William Meetkirke, one of the Justices of the Peace in and for said county, Robert Anderson, silversmith, and being duly sworn as the law directs, deposeth and saith, that on or about the 15th day of September, 1800, having met William M. Comb, Elder of Washington congregation, on the Redstone road, near the town of Washington, this deponent asked said M. Comb what great misdemeanor the Rev. Thomas Ledlie Birch had been guilty of in his house; M. Comb replied, had he, the deponent, ever heard, that he or his family ever spread such a report? for he, the

said M^cComb, would be qualified that he, or his family, had never said any thing of Mr. Birch, further than that Birch, leaving their house in the evening, having a tumbler and drink in his hand, shook hands with them, drank their healths and a good night to them. And this deponent further saith not. Sworn and subscribed this 19th day of October, 1801, before me,

ROBERT ANDERSON.

WM. MEETKIRKE.

Washington County, ss. Personally appeared before William Meetkirke, one of the Justices of the Peace in and for said county, William M^cCammant, tavern keeper, Alexander Litle, cabinet-maker, and Robert Anderson, silversmith, all of Washington; and being duly sworn as the law directs, depose and say, that on or about the third day of August last, at the desire of the Rev. Thomas Ledlie Birch, they called at the houses of Robert Stockton and William M^cComb, Elders, to inquire into certain reports, said to have been propagated by said M^cComb, relative to said Birch's intemperance in their houses, viz. Birch's drinking a pint of whiskey in M^cComb's house, and three gills in Stockton's the same evening. Robert Stockton, his wife, and son, declared that what was drunk in their house was very trifling, not exceeding half a pint amongst a company consisting of Robert Stockton, his son, (a man) a Mr. Smith, and Messrs. M^cComb and Birch. William M^cComb's wife said, in presence of her husband, who kept silence, that it was not him, but her who had spoken of Birch; but she never said he was drunk. Alexander Litle informed said M^cComb, that the Rev. John M^cMillan had made public said M^cComb's report in Presbytery, relative to Birch's intemperance. Said M^cComb, in seeming confusion, acknowledged the fact. The Monday immediately following the Saturday of Birch's alleged intemperance, Robert Stockton and Joseph Wherry, Elders, (the congregation being assembled agreeably to public notice) as Commissioners, presented to Birch an unanimous invitation to settlement. William M^cComb held the subscription paper for his quarter. At Mr. Birch's return to Washington, after near six months, there was a poll between him and a Mr. Leacock—all our four Elders present, Messrs. Swearingen, Stockton, M^cComb and Wherry—a majority for Birch—neither was there any report of Birch's intemperance, until he was gone for his family, to bring them to this place. Sworn and subscribed this 19th day of October, 1801, before me.

N. B. William M^cComb's words to us, William M^cCammant, Alexander Litle and Robert Anderson, were, that he told the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, (when insisting to name the quantity Birch drank) that Birch took three draughts in M^cComb's house, and two in Robert Stockton's, of a gill and a half each. Sworn and subscribed before me, October 19th, 1801.

WM. MEETKIRKE.

WILLIAM M^cCAMMANT,
ALEXANDER LITTLE, ROBERT ANDERSON.

At the next meeting of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, which was at Bethel, otherwise Peter's-creek, the 21st October, 1801, accompanied by Alexander Litle, Esq. and Mr. Robert Irwin, as witnesses, I waited upon them, and lodged the following complaint to the next very Rev.

General Assembly, which contained the substance of the complaints lodged at the former Presbytery, with some additional reasons; and therefore, for brevity's sake, the publication of the heads thereof; as they will afterwards be detailed, may serve for both. There were also laid before the Presbytery, the foregoing depositions; and the depositions of Mr. Robert Anderson and Elizabeth Birch, relative to Mr. McMillan's acknowledgments in Birch's house; with proposals of gospel accommodation.

Buffalo, the 1st day of July, 1801.

The Rev. Presbytery of Ohio having resolved, "that they think themselves fully justifiable in refusing to proceed any further with my trials, (agreeably to the rules of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, for the introduction of foreign Ministers) from the frequent and full conversations they have formerly had with me, and a general prevailing report of my imprudent, irregular conduct"—I, Thomas Ledlie Birch, do most humbly and respectfully complain of the proceedings of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, to the next very Rev. General Assembly; to meet at Philadelphia the third Thursday in May, 1802, for the following reasons:—

1st. I complain of the procedure of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio towards me; as contrary to a Church discipline.

2dly. For want of stability in the resolves of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio; they having in the Tuesday evening's session determined to proceed with my examination, and ordered me to attend for that purpose next morning; yet next day, after being obliged to wait out of doors upwards of four hours, I was rejected without any hearing.

3dly. For the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio's being led to this unbrotherly act, by hearing reports, from the Rev. John McMillan, and William McComb; Elder, behind my back.

I wish not to impeach others, but to support my own character; and therefore to shew what credit is due to reporters, I shall prove, if required; that William McComb; Elder, was intoxicated, and behaved much out of character, at a public meeting some time ago; and that he, when I was at the late Assembly, declared, that he wished from his heart I might defeat the Presbytery; and that Mr. McMillan could drink him down.

4thly. For the sentence of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio being unjust, defamatory, and contrary to the letter and spirit of the gospel.

5thly. For insult, threatened violence and intimidation.

6thly. For the decision of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio being void of mercy.

And finally, being willing, and hereby declaring my readiness, to end all disputes with the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, or any of its members, and to effect a reconciliation agreeably to gospel rules; I hereby charge them, as alone accountable to their God, for any trouble that may be given to the Church, or scandal brought upon religion, which has already been very great.

THOMAS LEDLIE BIRCH.

*Delivered to the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, at Peter's Creek, }
the 20th October, 1801, in presence of A. Little, Robert Irwin. }*

We, Robert and Bell and Hamilton Bell, do in the name and by the authority of the congregation of Washington, join the Rev. Thomas Ledlie Birch in the above complaint to the very Rev. General Assembly; and we further protest against the decision of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, in refusing to allow some of their members to come and assist Mr. Birch in dispensing the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, (of which we were never favoured with one opportunity) and to preside if thought most expedient; as in our opinion inconsistent with the spirit of the Gospel.

ROBERT BELL, } Commission-
HAMILTON BELL, } ers.

Dated as above.

Washington County, fs. Personally appeared before John Wilson, Esq. one of the Justices in and for said county, Robert Bell, who, being duly sworn as the law directs, deposes and saith, that he was a Commissioner from the congregation of Washington, in conjunction with Hamilton Bell, at the Presbytery alluded to in the annexed complaint, the contents of which, to his knowledge and belief, are true;—and he particularly remembers the circumstance of the Rev. Thomas Ledlie Birch's requesting of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio to be pleased to inform him wherein he was imprudent and irregular, and upon that the Rev. John Watson's starting up and asking Birch, was he going to insult the Presbytery? for if he would not go out, they must put him out: and upon this the Rev. Thomas Ledlie Birch called forward (agreeably to the method prescribed in the Gospel) Hamilton Bell, Nathaniel Jenkins and myself, and requested Presbytery to name their charges, and not any being named, Birch left the house. This deponent further saith, that he passed a deposition similar to this one, in April last, for the purpose of being laid before the late very Rev. General Assembly—and deponent further saith not. Sworn to, and subscribed, before me, this 8th day of April, 1803.

JOHN WILSON.

ROBERT BELL.

Washington County, fs. Hamilton Bell being duly sworn, saith, that the within facts are just and true. Sworn and subscribed this 8th day of April, 1803, before me,

JOHN WILSON.

HAMILTON BELL.

The Presbytery informed me that nothing would be done in the way of an amicable settlement of matters; that they would try Mr. McMillan, and I must libel him and prove his reports false, and if he was not satisfied with the decision, he could appeal to the higher Church Judicatories. I told them that I was not, as under the *Inquisition*, to prove myself innocent; my accuser must prove me guilty. The Presbytery insisting that I should prove Mr. McMillan's reports false, and that Mr. William McComb, Elder, must be brought to an account for his deaming of the Rev. John McMillan, and intoxication, I consented to that both, provided the depositions of Messrs. Thomas McConnel, Jas. Mahon and John Bell, now in hand, would be received by the Presbytery as correlative evidence, in the case of the Rev. John McMillan; and accordingly I hastily, upon the spot, wrote and handed to Presbytery the two following libels, the Rev. John McMillan's one containing the above express proviso.

To the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio.

I charge the Rev. John M'Millan, a member of your Rev. body, with slander and falsehood towards me, in the interlocutor of your Rev. Presbytery, upon or about the first of July last, informing you that he was told by Thomas M'Connel, blacksmith, Strasburgh, and James Mahon his journeyman, unasked, upon his road from the late General Assembly, on or about the 8th day of June last, that I, the Rev. Thomas Ledlie Birch, was as fond of whiskey as a Dutchman; and added, as an evidence (upon Mr. M'Millan's enquiring their reasons for saying so) that Birch a few days before that, was talking fool talk in their shop, and staggering through the street. *It to be proved.* The fact of reporting acknowledged by Mr. M'Millan, in the house of Birch, in Washington, on or about the 1st day of August last, in presence of James Allison, Esq. Robert Anderson and Elisabeth Birch, both of the latter of Washington town: see their depositions on your table. Mr. M'Millan's ground of report to be proved unfounded by the depositions of Thomas M'Connel, James Mahon and John Bell, all of Strasburgh.

2dly. I charge the Rev. John M'Millan with slander and unchristian threats, at or upon the fifteenth day of July last, near Cannonburgh, (in presence of Alexander Litle and Andrew M'Mekan, sent by the congregation of Washington and Birch, for the purpose of Gospel accommodation) Mr. M'Millan not only acknowledged the fact of his report of Thomas M'Connel and James Mahon's telling said M'Millan, that Birch was drunk in Strasburgh; he Mr. M'Millan having called Birch a Preacher of the Devil, before said M'Mekan, about the sixth of June last, upon the Philadelphia road near, near Somerset; but added, he, M'Millan, would do every thing in his power to put Birch out of the place.

THOMAS LEDLIE BIRCH.

To the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio.

I charge William M'Comb, Elder, near Washington, with defamation in the interlocutor of your Rev. Presbytery, at Buffalo, on the first of July last, asserting, that upon a certain afternoon, supposed about the middle of February, 1800, that I drank in his house, three draughts of whiskey, and the same evening two in Robert Stockton's Elder, a gill and an half in each draught.

The fact of report acknowledged by said M'Comb, in his own house, about the 18th of July last, in presence of William M'Camant, Alexander Litle and Robert Anderson, all of Washington town; to be proved false by the depositions of said William M'Camant and Robert Anderson, the joint depositions of William M'Camant, Alexander Litle and Robert Anderson, and also by Robert Stockton and son John, who refuse to give evidence without a citation.

THOMAS LEDLIE BIRCH.

Peter's Creek, the 21st of October, 1801.

The Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, instead of taking cognizance of Mr. William M'Comb, Elder, for an alledged transgression committed in their Court, being a member, (agreeably to the invariable rule of all Courts) told me he must be prosecuted before the Session of Washington; thereby exposing me to much additional trouble, and before party

judges, as his three brother Elders, now in opposition to me, would only be allowed by the Presbytery to be the Session.

The Rev. Presbytery of Ohio have noted, in their minutes relative to the libel against the Rev. John M^cMillan, that Mr. Birch not being prepared for trial on the first charge, it was deferred to the next meeting of Presbytery. The Rev. Fathers are here incorrect in their minutes, and this insertion is only to cloak an iniquitous, shameful pervarication and evasion of justice, carried from Presbytery to Presbytery, and to another Court, for the purpose of oppressing and overwhelming an individual. Birch was ready for trial, in the first, and all charges against Mr. M^cMillan: for looking into the paper against Mr. M^cMillan, handed to Presbytery, it will be seen that the evidences by which I pledged myself to establish the facts, and which were expressly agreed to by Presbytery, to be received as *conclusive evidence*, upon my libelling, were the depositions there specified, all then either a perusing by the members, or lying on the Presbytery table. But the documents by which the libel was to be established, are omitted to be inserted in the Presbytery records; lest they might have stood as monuments of their deeds, as indeed they have (as will afterwards appear) *omitted to record* in their minutes; in other instances; what did not suit themselves. This *slip* made by the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, will be made evident by looking into the original paper, now in my hands, containing the libels to Presbytery against Messrs. M^cMillan and M^cComb; which I long sought for in vain; but could never get produced, (as will afterwards be shown lamentably to be the case with other papers) until found among papers produced by the delegates of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, upon the table of the very Rev. General Assembly, the May following, and which has been preserved to confront a series of imposition; and the *genuineness* of the paper may be ascertained from the minute of Presbytery, as far as it goes, being an exact copy, even to the error of a letter committed in haste and confusion; and I defy the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio to produce any other document, under my hand; that will justify their statement. The truth was, the Presbytery of Ohio and Mr. M^cMillan, were chargeable with the delay of trial: some of the members began to cavil, saying; Mr. M^cMillan was not present when the depositions of Thomas M^cConnel, James Mahon and John Bell were taken, to have an opportunity of examining them—most probably if he had been there, they would have sworn otherwise. It might be said, neither was Birch present. *The matter need not be forgotten*: Mr. M^cMillan having the depositions from Strasburgh in his hand, (as has appeared by the oaths of Alexander Little, Esq. and Mr. Robert Irwin) denied that he ever said that Thomas M^cConnel and James Mahon told him Birch was drunk; but Thomas M^cConnel only, in presence of Jas. Mahon; and said that it might be seen, by looking into the deposition of Thomas M^cConnel, that he had *cautiously avoided swearing, that he did not tell him, M^cMillan, so; and therefore, if Thomas M^cConnel would swear that he, M^cConnel, did not tell him, M^cMillan, so, he, M^cMillan, must lie under it.* I must therefore produce evidence, where Mr.

Mr. Millan might have his privilege of examination. I replied, I had laid such evidence before them as I could conveniently procure; that it did not suit me to travel three hundred miles in search of other; they had this evidence, and Mr. M. Millan and they might act as they thought proper;—and was about to withdraw, when the Rev. Mr. Moor, the Moderator, observed, that Mr. M. Millan, their head, or father, or words to that purpose, was impeached, and they would assist me in having the matter issued. An expedient was proposed by the Rev. Mr. Ralston, from the precedent of the very Rev. General Assembly, which admits such testimony as will pass in civil Courts when witnesses live at a distance, viz. depositions taken before a Magistrate, giving the opposite party proper notice. The Rev. Mr. Marquis, after consulting the Directory, objected to this mode as unconstitutional—the depositions must be taken before an ecclesiastical Court. And therefore it was determined, that the Rev. Presbytery of Carlisle (in whose bounds the witnesses lived) should be wrote to, to take their depositions; and when these came to hand, they would judge whether the witnesses should be brought upon the spot. The Rev. John M. Millan intimating that James Mahon was shortly expected in this neighbourhood, proposed that a committee should be struck to take his deposition; and a committee, consisting of the Rev. Samuel Ralston and the late Rev. John Watson, was appointed accordingly, Mr. M. Millan and Birch to attend. But of this (as appears by a copy of the Presbytery minutes now before me, attested by the Rev. John M. Millan, as stated Clerk) there is not any mention. The business was now let rest in this stage, from the suggestion, that Mr. M. Millan acknowledged the second charge, viz. calling Birch a Minister of the Devil, and saying that he would use his best endeavours to put Birch out of the place, or Washington; and therefore Presbytery might proceed to try the matter. Presbytery concurring, Mr. M. Millan having alledged in justification, my rejection by the Presbytery upon the topic of experimental religion, and I having mentioned the examination by the very Rev. General Assembly upon that point, without any further evidence being produced, the business was referred to the judgment of Presbytery.

The Presbytery, after mature deliberation, (say for two hours) resolved, (very contrary to their opinion at the outset) as the two charges were in some measure connected, to defer the decision until both can be tried together.

In the opinion of myself and one of my witnesses who was present in the house at the time, the term made use of by the Presbytery was, *retain sentence*, instead of “defer decision,” as in the minute at present. But either of the terms amount to all that is objected to, viz. the not coming to a determination, or pronouncing judgment, at the time.—The truth was, there was no connection (as may be obvious to the humblest capacity) between the two charges, as then stated, and gone into by Presbytery. But it was evident they must condemn Mr. M. Millan, and it was a bad omen, for him to begin to fall before his opponent at the first outset: they therefore determined to evade justice for the present, in prospect of getting a hole to creep out at on a future day.

Requesting Presbytery to be pleased to appoint the committee, to write to the Rev. Presbytery of Carlisle, to obtain the depositions of the gentlemen in Strasburgh, I received for answer, that they supposed Mr. McMillan and I knew our own business. Observing, that I had not £150 to spend in the business, I withdrew.

My character being very much hurt by the Rev. John McMillan's report of my drunkenness at Strasburgh, the allegation that if he had been present the evidences would have sworn otherwise, with many having nearly established the truth of the matter, and the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio deferring an inquiry into the business, under the pretence that Birch was not ready for trial, making things still worse, I resolved to have new depositions taken; but from the great popularity of the Rev. John McMillan, and supported by the reputed eminently pious, converted, Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, in opposition to a stranger, I could not get a person who was willing to serve a notice upon him, and afterwards attend to give evidence, and besides, the trouble and expence his way had been already greater than I could well bear; I therefore published the following notice in the Western Telegraphe.

To the Rev. John McMillan, near Cannonsburgh.

REVEREND SIR,

You having reported, (as can be proved by Messrs. Alexander Lisle, Andrew McMekan, and Robert Anderson, Elder, all of Washington Congregation, with others,) That Messrs. Thomas McConnel, of Strasburgh, Blacksmith, and James Mahon, his journeyman, told you, that I was staggering drunk, and using fool-talk in the town of Strasburgh, upon, or about the 5th day of June last, and I have in my hand the depositions of said Thomas McConnel, and James Mahon, with the deposition of Mr. John Bell, Tavern keeper, all of Strasburgh; taken before John Gilmor, Esq. of said place, (who was in my company the greatest part of time I was in said town) declaring our report false. And you and some of your Brethern having complained that you were taken advantage of in not having notice, to be present at taking the depositions.—All Gospel offers of accommodation have been rejected, and necessity obliging a prosecution of the matter, before the proper court—You will be pleased to take notice, that Mr. James Mahon is here upon the spot. And if you think proper, you may attend an examination of Messrs. Thomas McConnel, and John Bell, in the town of Strasburgh, at the house of said Bell, upon the 21st of January, 1802.

This notice is published to save the trouble and expence of carrying witnesses to a great distance, which already has been very burthensome.

THOMAS L. BIRCH.

Washington, Dec. 18, 1801.

Upon the above notice the following remarks were published several times in the Western Telegraphe, of January 1802, by Andrew Swearingen, Esq. Robert Stockton, Joseph Wherry and William McComb, Elders in the Congregation of Washington.

To the Public.

A publication has appeared in the last *Telegraphe*, under the signature of Thomas L. Birch, of which we deem it our duty, as Elders of Washington Congregation, to take some notice. When the man who attacks the pious and irreproachable character of the Rev. John McMillan, meets with any countenance in the community, we cannot wonder at the general prevalence of calumny, nor be astonished that the slanderer of the innocent and virtuous should find advocates among the people.—The cause of our noticing Mr. Birch's publication does not proceed from his attack of Mr. McMillan, whose character cannot be affected by the idle tale of a man, who, to say the least of him, is not remarkable for his prudence; but it proceeds from Mr. Birch's insidious attempt to degrade the Washington Congregation, by associating it with himself in his attack of Mr. McMillan.—We deplore the general depravity of manners, and we lament that a dispenser of the Gospel, should descend to act unworthy of the character he assumes; but when this is the case, the garb even of a Minister of the Gospel, must not be permitted to conceal his depravity of heart.—The Washington Congregation was organized many years before Mr. Birch attempted to disturb its harmony, or claim its patronage; and we the undersigned Elders of it, were regularly ordained under the authority of the Ohio Presbytery, at the time of its organization, and still act as such to the said Congregation. Yet, notwithstanding the fact is as above stated, Mr. Birch has the unparalleled imprudence to mention the names of Alexander Litle, Andrew McMeek, and Robert Anderson, and declare that they are all Elders of the Washington Congregation, when he must have known that neither of them are, or ever were, recognized by the congregation as such.—If either persons are Elders in the Washington Congregation, it is asked, at what time, and by whom were they ordained?—It behoves Mr. Birch to give an answer to this question, for we positively assert that no person under the authority of the Ohio Presbytery within our knowledge assisted at the ceremony.—If therefore they had been ordained Elders, it must have been by the mere authority of Mr. Birch himself, who probably had the concurrence of his followers, very few, if any, of whom ever belonged to the Washington Congregation.—But we again ask by what authority Mr. Birch acts, or ordains Elders, in a congregation under the direction of the Ohio Presbytery.—We know that he has not been received and sustained by that Presbytery, and we do not know that he has been received by any Presbytery in America.—Whence then has Mr. Birch his authority, and why should he, whom we will not call a fugitive from the justice of his own country, be permitted to disturb the peace of ours.—If Mr. Birch has no authority himself, he can bestow none on his Elders, nor can such Elders with propriety be called the Elders of the Washington Congregation, with whom Mr. Birch has no connection.—We cannot but hope that the base attempt to impose on the public and destroy the peace of that congregation, may fail in its at-

complishment, and that its author may see his error, and be brought to repentance.

A. SWEARINGEN,
ROBERT STOCKTON,
JOSEPH WHERRY,
Wm. M'COMB, } *Elders of
Washington
Congregation.*

[*Erratum (by the Editor of the Telegraphe.)* In our last week's impression, the word *Elders*, in Mr. Birch's publication, was a typographical error, and should have been *Elder*.]

Birch made a reply to the Elders' remarks, the one insertion of which cost him nineteen dollars and a half, (the whole of his friends and his publications being, to avoid offence, charged as advertisements.) The publication at large may be seen in the *Western Telegraphe* of the 11th and 18th of January, 1802.

To A. Swearingen, Esq. R. Stockton, Joseph Wherry, and Wm. M'Comb,
the regularly ordained Elders of the Congregation of Washington.

MOST WORTHY SIRS,

I have been duly honored with your favor in the *Telegraphe* of the 28th ult. I cannot but venerate your religion in deploring (I will not say a general) but too great a 'depravity of manners,' and the neglect of holding virtuous characters in the estimation to which they are entitled; and must also join with you, in 'deeply lamenting, that dispensers of the Gospel should disgrace religion, and give room to Infidels to blaspheme, by descending to acts unworthy of their sacred calling'—that they, and even regularly ordained Elders should under the 'amiable garb of religion' exercise hypocrisy, falsehood and slander—that even 'the pious and irreproachable character of the Rev. John M'Millan (if he does not deserve it) should have come in for its share;' and all lovers of truth and righteousness must be deeply humbled with us, in observing, that, in a period of so much light, when seemingly, Scripture, the signs of the times, and universal expectation, point to an immediate blaze of reform throughout the earth, such should still continue to have some followers.

The Wise man observes, Prov. xviii. 17, he that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.

Persons, who might not be supposed to have the knowledge of regularly ordained Elders, might discern that I (whom the worthy Elders style, in their genuine strain, 'a man, who to say the least of him, is not remarkable for his prudence') do not in my publication attack the 'pious, irreproachable character of the Rev. John M'Millan;' I only attempt to vindicate my own; and whilst doing this, call upon him to be present, lest his should receive injury.

The Church must be much edified by the 'regularly ordained Elders' regard for the sacred obligation of an oath, when they call six oaths, subscribed by a Magistrate, who was an eye witness upon the occasion, *an idle tale*—Well for the Apostle, when he said, 'receive not an accusation against an Elder, (meaning a Gospel minister) except at the mouth of two or three witnesses,' that these worthies did not live in his day, or they had taught him other things.

I cannot but revere minds like yours, so full of that 'charity, which covereth a multitude of sins,' that memory cannot serve to relate to the public one instance of my imprudence, which even in characters far superior to mine, must be very many; and must heartily congratulate you upon the seeming dawn of general reform; when even the civil authority is beginning to oblige, (at least regularly ordained Elders) not to supply the defects of bad memories, by little innocent inventions of their own. If you mean, by not being remarkable for prudence, that, in order to keep in with some persons, who wish to be esteemed leading characters, I should have taken the advice frequently hinted to me, to act the hypocrite, and now and then to tell a little fib, your benevolence would assign me a task I am not any way equal to; for if even the sacred dictates of conscience, and the reverential awe of an Omnipresent Being, would permit, the act would be highly imprudent, having such superior masters to deal with.

How wise you are in making out, that my saying I have three persons (even allowing them to be Elders of Washington congregation) who were witnesses that the Rev. John M'Millan defamed me, is an insidious attempt in me to cover the badness of my heart, by making the Washington congregation a party! Are three Elders, or even you four, (as it seems you modestly arrogate to yourselves) the congregation of Washington? And are you, even regularly ordained Elders, such adepts in the knowledge of the Ninth Commandment, as to proclaim to the public, that Elders, being appealed to as witnesses, for the maintaining and promoting of truth between man and man, makes either congregation or Elders defamers? Surely, Mr. Wherry, your friendly message* to me has not put you into the predicament of a defamer—N, no; you would not join me in an attack upon the pious, irreproachable John M'Millan! Some ignorant well meaning people are of opinion, that professions of friendship before faces, and calumnies behind backs, more especially with a man who wishes to adhere to truth, who wishes to be at peace with all, and has forborne to drag the most base calumniators (regularly ordained Elders not excepted) to open justice, were concealings of a bad heart. But your most eloquent logic must convince them to the contrary! The public cannot but applaud your extreme modesty and benevolence, in taking upon you to judge and decide, in your superlatively high Court, my ministerial qualifications, before the Supreme Court of the Church was permitted to pass an opinion upon my complaint against the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio; whereby all parties are saved farther trouble: and this act of kindness to me was the more unexpected, as I had not mentioned you at all, nor questioned whether you were regularly ordained Elders of the Washington congregation, how long you have been organized, or how well you have officiated. Perhaps it might have been for public edification, if you had told in your epistle, how you have acted, and the valuable purposes you have served.

Your conduct towards me having been so disinterested and obliging, I shall gratify you in informing the public how I came by the honour

* See page 74.

of being connected with, and claiming the patronage of the Washington congregation:—Upon a visit to this back country, having a letter to Mr. Joseph Wherry, from his late worthy father,* I called upon him, and was very hospitably received. The Elders, as is customary, having a discretionary power to admit occasional supplies, I staid in Washington three Lord's days; (after the first, I waited on the Rev. John M'Millan, Moderator of the standing committee of Presbytery, who asked me to preach in Canonsburgh Academy, and gave me a line importing no objection to my preaching (some days in the bounds) when it was unanimously agreed to present me an invitation to settle. Mr. William M'Comb held one of the subscription papers. Mr. Wherry, who was appointed to transmit to me the subscriptions, when filled, after considerable delays, wrote to me to the Head of Elk, that he "heard a certain leading Clergyman† would oppose my admission into the Presbytery; that he was given to surmise, that some friendly visits from Mr. Stockton to Mr. M'Comb, in behalf of a near relative,‡ did not help his exertions for me; that he proposed to lift the subscription paper from Mr. M'Comb, but he chose to retain it; that a certain excise Elder§ had spread unfavourable reports about me; and perhaps, that with contending parties, there might not be every happiness; but that nothing but my immediate presence and union with the Church would settle the congregation." I wrote back, that I believed in charity no Clergyman would oppose me; aspersions and calumnies I was ready to meet; requesting him to lay the letter before the congregation, as I thought myself bound in honour first to them; and I expected their determination to meet me in a certain time at Shippensburgh. My letter was somewhere in Washington for about seven weeks, without being communicated to the people, I wont say by Mr. Wherry's fault;—when, coming to Washington, upon my journey to other places where I had invitations, another Minister having been there a few Lord's days, on a set day, the four regularly ordained Elders being present, a poll was set up, with a view (as there is good reason to believe) to defeat both; being deemed of certain principles;|| when there was a majority of more than three to one for me. Having before the poll received from the committee of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, a certificate of admission, under the express declaration of a view of settling in Washington, and at Mr. Wherry's desire lodged it in his hands, I learn he did not shew it at the poll, though there were cavils thrown out against me. Some days after my leaving Washington, a report was set on foot, that I was addicted to habitual intemperance, and particularly, that I was guilty of gross acts of this nature in the houses of Messrs. William M'Comb and Robert Stockton, Elders, about six months before this time, viz. upon the Saturday preceding the Monday when I received the first invitation; the whole, as I learn, through the suggestions of Messrs. William M'Comb and Joseph Wherry, who professing conscientious scruples, some of my most zealous friends were prevailed upon, in their private capa-

* An Elder whose name is signed to the East-Nottingham Certificate.

† The Rev. John M Millan.

‡ Mr. Stockton's son.

§ Mr. James Brice.

|| Republican.

city, to write a letter, charging me with the alledged intemperance, and remonstrating against my coming to Washington. The letter being directed to my friend Col. Blythe, near Shippensburgh, did not reach me until I had hired a waggon for the whole journey, and was arrived with my family in Shippensburgh. I determined to proceed to Washington and meet the calumny, and if not agreeable, proceed elsewhere. Upon my arrival at Washington, all my accusers had *vanished like the baseless fabric of a vision*. A number of the opposition having joined us, and as we, from plighted faith, expected a junction of the whole, but at all events, from the established rules of society, esteeming ourselves the congregation of Washington, and supposing four Elders too few for the purpose of dispensing the Lord's supper, visitation, &c. the people thought proper, pursuant to public notice, to meet and elect four additional ones. I being an ordained Minister, not indeed raised in a hot-bed, like some, known to thousands in America, (let them speak) the rules of the Supreme Council of the Church having declared, that wheresoever an ordained Minister is regularly called, during his probation, he shall be entitled to perform every ministerial function; and I being upon an equal footing with the "pious, irreproachable, Rev. John McMillan," the father and ordainer of the Rev. Ohio Presbytery, and you all, though never installed himself; they were set apart according to the form of the American Church.

Your great wisdom must have taught you, that the ordination of Elders is not a presbyterial, but a ministerial act. However, the business has already been before the Supreme Judicature of the Church. No doubt you have read their sense of the matter in their printed minutes, which it was supposed your extreme modesty would have prevented you from commenting on. Their determination at their next meeting I meet with humble respect and composure, and not doubting it will be humane and honourable. No doubt they will be extremely careful in their final decision, lest they should fall under your high censure!

Your known humanity and universal benevolence, must dispel every doubt of your intending to rake up the yet smoking embers of tyranny and human misery, the last spark of which has been seemingly drenched with human blood! But it is naturally to be expected, that where there are any remains of the image of *Cain*, the language will in some degree discover the mark set upon that eminent Patriarch!—You say, you will not call me a *fugitive* from the *justice* of my country.—You are right; for it would be an *untruth*—and regularly ordained Elders should speak the truth. I stood my ground until justice exacted infinitely beyond her utmost farthing. Being not an *hireling*, I did not fly. Having manifested a sympathy for the "American rebels" in '75, I was marked a devoted object by the "friends of morality, religion, and regular government." And when that mad phrenzy infected the country, as a supposed leader, I was beset in the night, torn from the tender embraces of a wife and children—hurried to a guard-house amidst the huzzas of a royalist mob—tried by a *Court-Martial*—and the mild alternative (though unconvicted) was offered, of transportation for life, and thereby be torn forever from my estate, dear congre-

gation, relatives and country; or be hanged, my head severed from my body, and stuck upon the spire of a market-house. The sacrifice of death being of no public avail, life was accepted of, and the kindred states of America were the chosen spot for residence, ashamed to be further indebted to the British government or her trumpeters, for their tender mercies. Next, an armed band of the friends of *order and regular government*, having previously bought two ropes, attempted to rescue me out of the guard-house to hang me, but being prevented by the foolish, unthinking soldiery, I was ushered to the prison-ship (the pleasures of which I need not relate, as they must be still sounding in your ears, from the rehearsals of those who have experienced its charms) until I could purchase a freight for my family.—Providentially, however, before my arrival in the United States, the Woman and her Man child, (the Church and her hopeful progeny) carried by her Eagle's wings, (Columbia's resurgent standard) into these United States, where, under the sole influence of her Divina Head, she now shines so gloriously, to the illumination of the whole world—was assisted by the Earth, (the men of the earth, now called the Great Republic) in swallowing up the floods of water, which the great Red Dragon vomited after her, to drown her and her child, in overthrowing the murderous hireling legions, which the bloody, persecuting power of Church and State (which had its origin from the old Serpent) sent here to blast the hopes of the Gospel Church, by setting up an image of herself in its stead: otherwise, perhaps, I should only have been a fugitive from the justice of the Dragon's halter and block, to his agent's fiery furnace! In a word, I am a fugitive, after experiencing that justice which turned your churches in New-York into riding houses and barracks, at Boston into play-houses, and burned those at New-London, &c. &c.—that justice which shed the blood of 50,000 of your best citizens; butchered the illustrious Washington's guards near Valley-Forge, in their beds; ravished your chaste virgins and matrons; burned your citizens houses; set on the merciless savages, with their scalping knives, who, for pastime upon days of leisure, exercised themselves in roasting, dancing round, and then feasting upon their unhappy victims: a justice which destroyed eleven thousand prisoners in the Jersey prison-ship at New-York, and immense numbers in other prisons; poisoned two thousand at Amboy, by mixing lime with their flour: in fine, that justice, (which some blessing must, of course, attend) which your grateful hearts cannot forget, and of which thousands of your citizens yet bear the marks, though seemingly become incurable in their phrenzy.

If by disturbing the peace of the congregation, you only mean, that attendance on public worship every Lord's day, out of rivalry to us, is too troublesome, must bear heavy upon the mind, not having time for recreations—you have a happy expedient at hand: It is said, that the regularly ordained Elders of the Washington congregation have a contract for the Washington Academy, for the purposes of religious worship—the Academy, though shut against our society, (who assisted in building and seating it) and all preachers of a certain description, un-

til lately to ~~save~~ appearances, since a letter has been sent to the big house,* as appears by the public newspapers, has been devoted to stage plays, and wine brought from a distance to cheer the assembly. Weary intervals beyond former custom, may be filled up with dramatical performances to divert the gentlemen and ladies. The custom is not without a precedent—Be not surpris'd! King Charles II. the famous covenant-keeper, a sovereign of my late country, of whose justice you are such admirers, introduced the book of sports and plays after church was over. The justice of my country set you an example in a meeting-house in Boston—And regularly ordained Elders have a precedent in Scripture, which perhaps might have been looked to in the Academy affair: A number of Israelites, in the wilderness, who, it seems, were admirers of the happy state of their nation when in Egypt, and therefore angry at Moses, a “fugitive from the justice of his country,” for bringing them away towards Canaan, they, in his absence, when receiving the Commandments upon mount Sinai, to keep up the remembrance of their former happy state, forced Aaron to make them a golden calf, in imitation of the Ox, the Egyptian object of worship, and held a feast at its dedication: “The people eat and drank and rose up to play; Exod. xxxii. 6.

Some humble people are of the opinion, that regularly ordained Elders, and others, would better serve the end of their calling, and the interest of religion, by a meek, candid, merciful behaviour; and further think, (perhaps superstitiously) that a blessing is most naturally to be expected to attend such conduct; and something of an opposite nature is much to be dreaded, from the experience of ages, by those who have wantonly injured the Ministers of religion, opposed their labours, or unnecessarily disturbed the peace of religious societies. “Thou who teachest another, teachest not thyself: He that rejecteth you, rejecteth me: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in.” And besides, it is thought by some persons, who feel for the dignity of their country, that certain transactions with me, considering the circumstances which brought me here, might perhaps in some degree tend to tarnish the name of the American people, the illustrious leaders in the work of reformation amidst the other nations of the earth. But the friends of morality and religion think otherwise! However, I despair not of success under an all-wise, powerful, good Providence. He who delivered his eminent servant of old out of the mouth of the Lion, † [Nero, the Roman tyrant] and all his other troubles, and delivered me, a very humble one, out of the jaws of the British Lion, and preserved me through so many dangers, will, I trust in his mercies, through my gracious Redeemer, deliver me now, and from all other troubles in life, and bring me to his kingdom, where there is a ceasing from such troubles,—to whom be the glory. And blessed be God, that the night of darkness is far spent, and the signs of the times hail and usher in the long-wished-for day of reformation, to be hoped, never to draw to an evening—And glory to his name, that I a “fugitive from the justice” of cruel,

* A petition to the State Legislature.

† The Apostle Paul—2 Timothy, *sw.* 17, 18.

unreasonable men, have the distinguished honour of proclaiming this is a land of light and liberty, where restraining bounds have been put to the wrath of man, and it is caused to praise him.

Some judicious persons were of opinion, that your epistle was unworthy of notice. However, lest the respectable name of Elder might mislead the unwary, I have given an answer. Let the Public be no more troubled with milk and water addresses, which perhaps the subscribers never indited.

If you deny any of my positions, naming time and place, I am ready for a public discussion.

Your injured, but reconcilable friend, upon Gospel terms,
THOMAS L. BIRCH.

Washington, January 2d, 1802.

Alexander Litle, Esq. and Messrs. Andrew M'Mekan and Robert Anderson, published the following observations upon the remarks of A. Swearingen, Esq. and Messrs. Robert Stockton, Joseph Wherry and William M'Comb, three times in the Western Telegraphe of the latter end of January and beginning of February, 1802.

To Messrs. William M'Comb, Joseph Wherry, Robert Stockton, and Andrew Swearingen, Esq.

GENTLEMEN,

We the undersigned, viz. Alexander Litle, Andrew M'Mekan and Robert Anderson, of Washington Congregation, having seen two publications in the Western Telegraphe, to which we particularly allude at this time—the one dated the 18th Dec. 1801, by way of an address from the Rev. Thomas Ledlie Birch to the Rev. John M'Millan; but as the public, no doubt, have duly considered it, we forbear to make any comment on it at this time: the other alluded to, is an address to the public under your four joint signatures. Here we will take the liberty to make some observations. And, Gentlemen, we confess it is painful, and with reluctance, that we have any thing to do with public disputes; But finding our reputations, which we esteem most dear to us, trified with by you, we are impelled to make you some reply.

The fact is, we three are witnesses, and have given solemn testimony, that the Rev. John M'Millan, some time last summer, did propagate a defamatory, slanderous report upon the Rev. Thomas L. Birch, by saying that he had traced Mr. Birch drunk at Strasburgh, on his way from the General Assembly, about the fifth day of June last; and that Thomas M'Connel, blacksmith, and James Mahon, his journeyman, were his authors for said report. We, moreover, have seen the depositions of Messrs. Thomas M'Connel and James Mahon, together with the deposition of John Bell, tavern-keeper, all of Strasburgh, taken before John Gilmor, Esq. of the same place, all going pointedly to prove the Rev. John M'Millan's report false.

Now, Gentlemen, notwithstanding all this light on the matter, in your public address you have stated, that the Rev. Thomas Ledlie Birch had made an attack upon the pious and irreproachable character of the Rev. John M'Millan, and that we have been the countenancers of the slanderer of the innocent and virtuous; and conclude, that the character of

Mr. M'Millan cannot be affected by the idle tale of a man, who, to say the least of him, is not remarkable for his prudence. We do not admire your manners, but we deplore the depravity of your malicious hearts, that you should wound religion and degrade yourselves so much by descending to acts unworthy of the character of regularly ordained Elders. Are the solemn oaths of six honest men, taken in due form, a mere idle tale? We entertain a higher opinion of your good understanding in this affair—we cannot by any means whatever admit, that you yourselves, as honest men, believe it to be an idle tale. The public have seen Mr. Birch's address to Mr. M'Millan; they have also seen yours in reply; they will likewise see this; and, upon the whole, they will be able to judge pretty correctly who has been the aggressor and slanderer of the innocent. It will be seen, whether it was Mr. Birch who made the attack, or whether it was not the pious Mr. M'Millan himself. Then, Gentlemen, when that is discovered, it will be easily discerned who are the countenancers and the advocates of the slanderer—you or us. It will be known who are the followers of the slanderer among the people—you or us. We now call upon you, as honest men, and regularly ordained Elders, to explain yourselves, and make answer: Do you mean, by calling our oaths an idle tale, that we have sworn falsely in the matter? Or do you mean by your insinuations, that we have given undue countenance to either Mr. M'Millan or Mr. Birch, in their dispute, or advocate either of them unduly? We desire you to give a direct answer to these queries, without evasion; otherwise, stand convicted in the eyes of the public, whom you have addressed; that public whom you have wantonly insulted; and who will mark the slanderer of the innocent, and his followers; with the point of a diamond.

ALEXANDER LITTLE,
ANDREW M'MEKAN,
ROBERT ANDERSON.

Washington, Jan. 23, 1802.

The following anonymous piece appeared in the Western Telegraph of the 8th of February, 1802.

To the Public.

It is understood that the Elders of the Washington Congregation have been requested by a number of the members of it, to take no further notice of Mr. Birch's newspaper publications; and it is also understood, that the said Elders have prepared a correct statement of facts, founded on the testimony of respectable witnesses, to which they have added the sanction of their oaths, containing charges against Mr. Birch, which are to be presented to the next Presbytery, at the request of the Congregation, for the purpose of being forwarded to the General Assembly. It is hoped, therefore, that the public will suspend their opinion on Mr. Birch's extraordinary newspaper publications until the regular investigation takes place, when the whole proceedings shall be laid before the public. Perhaps some notice may be taken hereafter of an infamous publication under the signatures of Alexander Little, Andrew M'Mekan and Robert Anderson.

January 28, 1802.

The Rev. Presbytery of Ohio sent an order to the Session of Washington, to try Mr. William M^cComb, Elder, and I was called upon by Mr. Joseph Wherry, Elder, to attend a meeting of Session for that purpose, upon the third Thursday in February, 1802.

Agreeably to appointment, Andrew Swearingen, Esq. and Messrs. Robert Stockton and Joseph Wherry, Elders, (styling themselves the Session of Washington) having called to their assistance the Rev. John Anderson as Moderator, Messrs. Smylie and Dinsmore, and James Brice, Esq. Elders, all of Buffalo, and Mr. Josiah Scott, Elder, of Chartiers, (Mr. M^cMillan's congregation)—present, the Rev. John M^cMillan.

I entered an objection to the Court, as being incompetent and labouring under prejudice; the members styling themselves the Session of Washington belonging to the minority of the congregation, and being all present at the poll when I was chosen Minister; that they stood convicted, before the public, of publishing a mistake, viz. that I had made an attack upon the pious, irreproachable, Rev. John M^cMillan, whereas it appeared he made an attack upon me; that the Rev. John Anderson had attempted to intrude himself into Washington since I received an invitation, and had been extremely officious in his visits ever since: (5) James Brice, Esq. and Mr. Josiah Scott, had been active in spreading unfavourable reports. However, from the declared sense of the justice of the cause, I did not wish to urge these objections, so as to prevent an hearing of the matter. And accordingly the Court, thus constituted, proceeded to the trial of Mr. William M^cComb, Elder, for declaring in Mr. William M^cCamman's tavern, in Washington, (during the time Birch was complaining to the former very Rev. General Assembly) that he wished Birch might defeat the Presbytery of Ohio, for the Rev. John M^cMillan could drink him down.

(5) *The Rev. John Anderson of Buffalo, who in all transactions in the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, or with the Rev. John M^cMillan, relative to me, has been one of the most active agents—is reputed the most eminent saint, and the first experimental preacher in the Presbytery of Ohio—Though Mr. Anderson is amongst the last of men who would be suspected of being called an orator; yet being most remarkably endowed with the virtue (in the first estimation with some people who wish to be thought religious) called prudence, this, along with some occasional hints, leading people to think and speak highly of themselves, (a subject upon which all preachers can be extremely eloquent) has gained him the character of one of the most persuasive speakers. The Rev. John Anderson, as I have been informed by some of his Session and others, told at Middle Spring congregation, that he had an engagement in Carolina he must return to: coming to Buffalo, he had Carolina, and something pressing at Middle Spring;—but Carolina he must return to. Leaving Buffalo, he repents at the Allegheny mountain—the good people of Buffalo get word of his grief at leaving them—he is flattered back—can stay but a year from Carolina—in a few days after his return, I having set off for my family, Mr. Anderson accepts an invitation to visit Washington; and he even told some of his Buffalo friends, that he would have left them and gone to Washington, only*

Mr. John Taylor deposed, that Mr. William M^cComb wished Birch success in his appeal to the General Assembly, in opposition to the Presbytery of Ohio, asserting that the Rev. John M^cMillan could drink him (M^cComb) or any one in the company down.

Mr. Edward Todd deposed, that Mr. William M^cComb declared that the Rev. John M^cMillan could drink any one or two in the company down; but alledged he understood it as alluding to the Rev. John M^cMillan's constitutional strength.

Mr. William M^cComb, Elder, observed in explanation, that he had wished Birch success, if deserving; that he had seen Birch drink, but never saw the Rev. John M^cMillan drink any, but that he could name a person, if desired, who had told him, in his (M^cComb's) house, that he had seen the Rev. John M^cMillan drink grogs that would make any two of them drunk, or words importing uncommonly large draughts. The Rev. John Anderson over-ruled, by observing that this did not relate to the subject.

Mr. Samuel Dickey, the only witness produced by Mr. William M^cComb, Elder, deposed that the above conversation passed.

The Session having heard evidence, resolved (agreeably to their Rev. Presbytery's precedent) to retain sentence, and adjourned to the third Thursday in March.

Upon the third Thursday in March, Mr. Joseph Wherry only, of the three Washington Elders, attended; of the assistants, the Rev. John Anderson, and Elders James Brice, Esq. and Messrs. Dinsmore and Scott, present; absent, Mr. Smylie. I, Birch, being called off to the distance of one hundred and fifty miles, to procure evidence in the cause then pending between the Rev. John M^cMillan and me, had requested my witnesses to attend. The members of Session assembled, instead of adjourning, from their number not being complete, or at least deserring any business to which they were not competent, proceeded to form themselves into a Church Judicature, and acquitted Mr. William

his principal inviters did not want any Minister. Yet still the religious people were persuaded to be pleased; for eminent converts could do without such a pious Minister. But certainly Mr. Anderson was wrong in not coming to Washington, because his friends were irreligious—they had the more need of so good a man as him. It was a shame, for me to outdo him, with my friends. Mr. Anderson should have remembered what Mrs. Reed told him, (and which struck him dumb) when, the time of Synod, in his arrogance and self-sufficiency, he was telling in a company, that he preached in the Academy, and shut out Birch, with the Riff-raff, who preached somewhere down town; she replied, it spoke much for Mr. Birch that he could reform the Riff-raff. The curious may enquire what other offers of settlement Mr. Anderson had besides Buffais. They may learn his high birth: one glimpse of the eye must discern his elegant appearance; and all must discover in his mild, endearing expressions, the profound humility of the Christian, and the genuine sort of the inward exercise; which, Mr. Anderson told his religious friends, directed him in dealing with his numerous calls.

McComb, Elder, of the charge relative to his declarations concerning the Presbytery of Ohio, M^cMillan and Birch, in Mr. M^cCamant's tavern, Washington. Alexander Litle (now E(q.)) by Birch's written order, called upon the Rev. John Anderson, and the reputed members of Session, to demand of Mr. William M^cComb the name of the man who had told of his seeing the Rev. John M^cMillan taking *uncommon draughts*, and to have the declaration inserted in the minutes, to prove that Mr. M^cComb spoke of the Rev. John M^cMillan's drinking as from some *evidence*, and not supposed bodily strength. But they refused to insert this most material circumstance.

The Session next proceeded to try William M^cComb, Elder, on the charge of intoxication.

Messrs. Joseph M^cKee and Robert Bell, (as appears by a copy of their depositions now before me) swore positively, that Mr. William M^cComb, Elder in Washington congregation, was *intoxicated* and staggering, at the raising of Mr. Daniel Carter's barn, where these deponents acted as captains-managers at the said raising.

Mr. William M^cComb produced a number of witnesses, who swore that they did not see him, or take notice of his being, drunk; but not, that they did not believe he was drunk. Mr. William Brownlee, one of Mr. M^cComb's evidences, said that from his knowledge of M^cKee's and Bell's characters, he was inclined to believe they swore the truth.

The Session resolved, that the charge was not supported.

The Session was now requested, by Mr. Alexander Litle, to proceed to the trial of Mr. William M^cComb, Elder, for defaming Birch, behind his back, in the interlocutor of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, 1st July, 1801. But this they positively refused; though it was supposed to be the *principal design* of their meeting: artfully straining every nerve to establish my adversaries' characters, and evading every thing which could vindicate mine: pretending, as an excuse, that I knew how to apply for redress. A complaint was lodged to the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio against the whole proceedings of the Washington Session, along with an intimation, that the fact of Mr. William M^cComb, Elder's, intoxication, could be established by more positive evidence.

It being requisite, in order to my receiving an hearing at the very Rev. General Assembly, that I should serve a notice upon the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, and furnish them with copies of all such charges as I should bring against them; I attended the next meeting of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, at Canonsburgh, the 19th of January, 1802, accompanied by Messrs. Robert and Hamilton Bell, Commissioners from the congregation of Washington, (or my subscribers) when a joint complaint was lodged to the very Rev. General Assembly against the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, for neglecting to exercise the discipline of the Church upon the Rev. John M^cMillan, and inquisitorial proceedings towards Birch in the business; and further most humbly and respectfully charging the Rev. Presbytery, in the name of the very Rev. General Assembly, to exercise the discipline of the Church upon the Rev. John M^cMillan, for asserting a corrupt deliberate falsehood, before them;

at their late meeting at Bethel, or Peter's creek, in October last, to evade Church censure for defaming Birch, viz. said Rev. John M^cMillan denied that he ever reported, that James Mahon, blacksmith, told him that said Birch was staggering drunk and using foolish talk in the town of Strasburgh, on his road from the General Assembly, upon the fifth day of June last. (6) The fact, if denied, to be proved by Mr. Alexander Litle; and claiming the testimonies of the Rev. Messrs. Ralston, Marquis, Patterson, or any other member present at said meeting.— Gofsel terms of reconciliation to be accepted of, naming time and place.

Upon the delivery of the above papers, the Presbytery asked me if I was prepared for trial on the charges brought against Mr. M^cMillan at the October meeting. I told them they had refused the testimony which Presbytery had plighted faith to receive upon my engagement to libel M^cMillan, and I had not any other. The Presbytery have inserted in their minutes, that for the above reasons, I said I was not prepared for trial. Was the fault the Presbytery's, or Birch's? The Presbytery have it recorded in their minutes, (to inform posterity that Birch was inexcusable) that they had told him, at the former meeting at Bethel, or Peter's creek, they would receive the depositions of Messrs. M^cConnel and Mahon, provided they were taken in a legal manner, viz. previously giving Mr. M^cMillan proper and timely notice to attend when they were taken; and to hand down Birch as a Church defamer to all generations, that he had denied this notice; and that the several members present at said meeting, were solemnly called upon, and each declared that they well recollected, that such information was given to Birch at said meeting.

How surprising, that gentlemen so expert in making and unmaking minutes, have not any record at their former meeting, of notice given to Birch, that depositions under certain qualifications would be accepted of; but all left to memories which appeared shortly afterwards to be so treacherous. Is not Birch's unimpeached declaration at least as good as the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio's impeached one; and more particularly, as he can prove his statement (see former Presbytery meeting) by Alexander Litle, an uninterested witness? But there was not any need for cavils of the sort,—for I expressly told the Presbytery of Ohio, that unless they assisted me, (agreeably to promise) I would not trouble myself in obtaining other depositions to lay before them.

The Presbytery holding out, that they were ready to try the new charge, and that they would accept depositions, taken as above, in the Strasburgh affair; I told them, though extremely embarrassing, I would accept their terms, and would withdraw my complaint to the Assembly. The withdrawing of the complaint they would not agree to, un-

(6) *As an accusation or charge against an Elder, labouring in word and doctrine, or a Minister, is not cognizable in any Church Judicature, unless supported by at least two witnesses, 1 Tim. v. 19 if therefore Mr. M^cMillan could have established, that it was only Mr. Thomas M^cConnel told him the report of Birch's intoxication, M^cConnel's denial that he told him to M^cMillan, would not have been convicting evidence.*

less I acknowledged offence, as (they said) it contained many high, groundless charges, now read before a large assembly, which they wished for that reason to go before the Assembly. I said I would not make acknowledgments contrary to truth; I was ready to meet them at the Assembly; the lifting of the complaint was a compliment intended to them. I therefore closed with their offer without this condition; all charges to be tried next meeting; and accordingly, upon the spot notice was given to the Rev. John M'Millan, to attend at Strasburgh, at the office of John Gilmor, Esq. upon the 19th day of February ensuing. I requested a copy of the minute of Presbytery to be conveyed to Strasburgh, but this was declined by Presbytery as unnecessary. I wrote to Squire Gilmor to have Messrs. M'Connel, Mahon and Bell noticed, and procured Mr. Robert Anderson, silversmith, of Washington, to go for me to Strasburgh (156 miles distant from Washington) to be present at the taking of the depositions.

When the witnesses assembled, (as I learn from Squire Gilmor's letter which was dispatched to me upon the occasion, and is now in my possession) they observed, that as they had passed their depositions before, and their swearing might be endless, they would not pass any other depositions, unless by an order of Presbytery, or a civil court. It being now in March, and the meeting of Presbytery near approaching; accompanied by Mr. George Anderson, of near Canonsburgh, as a witness, I called at the Rev. John M'Millan's house; being from home, went in pursuit of him, and informed him of particulars, and requested of him a copy of Presbytery's minute, as stated Clerk. Mr. M'Millan made sundry equivocations—that Presbytery Book was at his house, which Birch proposed to have brought; that Birch need not be uneasy, for he, M'Millan, would have the matter enquired into, and would write, and have the depositions taken,—perhaps as well as he wrote to the members of Presbytery about Birch's reception. Telling Mr. M'Millan that I was determined to have some Presbyterial document, and an acknowledgment of his having received notice, or a refusal; but that a certificate that there was a Presbytery minute, and that notice was served, would suffice, he complied. Asking Mr. M'Millan if he designed to attend at Strasburgh, and telling me he could not; I told him I should be at the trouble of calling upon any person he wished to be present. Mr. M'Millan, naming the Rev. Mr. Herron, of Rocky Spring, near Strasburgh, gave the following certificate, as can be made appear by an attested copy, under his hand, now in my possession:—

“It was agreed by the Presbytery of Onio, at their last meeting, that upon Mr. Birch's giving me notice to attend, that the depositions of Thomas M'Connel and James Mahon, taken before a magistrate, should be accepted as evidence in the cause now depending between Mr. Birch and myself. This I certify as the stated Clerk of the Presbytery.

“March the 8th. 1802.

JOHN M'MILLAN.

“N. B. Notice has been served upon me, and I have no objections against their depositions being taken before John Gilmor, Esq. or any other magistrate, the Rev. Mr. Herron being present.”

Upon which I wrote to 'Squire Gilmor, to have the witnesses noticed, and afterwards set off myself, in a very inclement season, for Strasburgh, providentially arriving a day before the time appointed. Mr. James Mahon's father (who is an hearer and a zealous advocate of Mr. M^cMillan's) was there, and was about to set off with his son for Caronsburgh next day, *from strong circumstances, with an evident design.*

At the stated time, the depositions of Messrs. Thomas M^cConnel, James Mahon and John Bell, were taken; the several depositions, and the Rev. John M^cMillan's attestation, were annexed to each other by a ligament and seal, (as would appear by producing the original papers) certified by John Gilmor, Esq. as taken by order of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, in presence of the Rev. Francis Herron, the Rev. Thomas Ledlie Birch and others, and being sealed up, were handed to said Birch to be delivered to the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio.

At the next meeting of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, April the 21st 1802, I attended.

Upon the first charge against the Rev. John M^cMillan, for defaming me in an interlocutor of Presbytery, the 1st July, 1801, by informing them of Thomas M^cConnel's and James Mahon's report of my drunkenness at Strasburgh, having no witnesses to prove Mr. M^cMillan's acknowledgment of defamation in the interlocutor of Presbytery, except Mr. Robert Anderson, silversmith, Washington, and Elisabeth Birch my daughter; the latter of whom I did not wish to produce, and Mr. Anderson's deposition alone not being convicting testimony; I proposed to extend the charge, so as to include defamation at Caronsburgh along with that in the interlocutor of Presbytery, by Mr. M^cMillan upon the report of both M^cConnel and Mahon, to establish which had sufficient testimony. And my proposal was not unreasonable. Mr. M^cMillan then peremptorily denied, that he ever said that any but M^cConnel told him the report. The Rev. Mr. Marquis insisting (as which was concurred in by the Presbytery) that the charge should be limited to the interlocutor; and knowing that by insisting upon Mr. M^cMillan's information to Presbytery, from the authority of both M^cConnel and Mahon, I would have to combat with all the quibbles and evasions of the conclave, or private meeting of Presbytery, where I had no witness; I therefore agreed to go to trial, upon M^cMillan's own confession, viz. that M^cConnel alone told him the story of Birch's intoxication, and Mahon was present and assenting to it; and which is as follows, in the Presbytery minute in his own hand-writing:—

“Mr. M^cMillan acknowledged that he told the Presbytery, that was told, upon his return from the General Assembly last June, Thomas M^cConnel, blacksmith, Strasburgh, that Mr. Birch appeared to him to love whiskey as well as a blacksmith; that upon his asking whether he thought that Mr. Birch was the worse of spiritous liquors he replied that he thought he was, as he could not walk without staggering. He then asked him, whether or no he talked foolishly? he replied, that he never heard him talk before, and therefore knew not how he talked in common; but he thought that he talked foolishly. Mr. M^cMillan farther said, that as James Mahon was present w

the substance of the above conversation took place, and not contradicting any part of it, he understood that he assented to it, and was of the same opinion with Mr. M^cConnel; though he does not remember that he said a word to him about Mr. Birch; and therefore, in repeating the matter, he might, at times, have said that they told him so; though he believes he can prove by many witnesses, that he generally said, that it was M^cConnel alone that spoke."

In support of the charge, Birch presented the sealed packet, containing the depositions of Messrs. Thomas M^cConnel, James Mahon and John Bell. Let it be noted, that the Presbytery of Ohio, in their minutes, assert only that the deposition of Thomas M^cConnel was presented, without any record of evidence, except "see No. 4." The deposition of Thomas M^cConnel is the same in substance with the one taken before, (which be pleased to see) except his answers to the following questions; and that it was Mr. M^cMillan who introduced the conversation, by *far fetched inquiries*, if M^cConnel had seen any Ministers returning from the General Assembly—to use M^cConnel's own words when passing his deposition, *fibing*; as I learn Mr. M^cMillan did in other places along the road.

Question 1st. Did you ever tell the Rev. Mr. M^cMillan, in your shop or elsewhere, that the Rev. Thomas Ledlie Birch was staggering through the streets in Strasburgh; or did said Birch evidence drunkenness, by using foolish expressions and staggering, upon said day; or had you any reason to suppose Birch intoxicated?

Ans. No.

Quest. 2. Did James Mahon, your journeyman, ever in your presence, tell the Rev. John M^cMillan any reports of the Rev. Thomas Ledlie Birch's drunkenness, or seeming intoxication?

Ans. He never did in my hearing.

Quest. 3. Did not the Rev. John M^cMillan seem to you rather officious in his inquiries relative to the Rev. Thomas Ledlie Birch's character?

Ans. I thought he was.

Quest. 4. Did this deponent ever tell Mr. M^cMillan, that he thought that Mr. Birch was as fond of spiritous liquors as a blacksmith?

Ans. No. But I recollect of saying, that I saw no more impropriety in a Clergyman taking a drink when dry, than a blacksmith, or any other man.

Mr. James Mahon, one of the deponents, was present, apparently by design. The Presbytery, contrary to their plighted faith, refused to allow his deposition to be read; but insisted upon his verbal declaration. Being solemnly called upon, he answered the following questions:—

1. Had you and Mr. M^cConnel any conversation about Mr. Birch, after he was at Strasburgh, before Mr. M^cMillan arrived there?

Ans. No: as I remember.

2. Did Mr. M^cMillan ask you if Mr. Birch appeared intoxicated?

Ans. Yes.

3. What did you say? Ans. I gave a little smile, and answered, I believe not, or something like that.

4. Why did you answer Mr. M^cMillan with a smile?

Ans^w. Because Mr. M^cMillan told Mr. M^cConnel, that if he would tell any thing about Mr. Birch, he would not be put to any trouble about it.

5. What reason did Mr. M^cMillan give, why Mr. Birch was not received by the General Assembly?

Ans^w. I do not recollect any reason.

6. Was there any conversation between you and Mr. M^cConnel, about Mr. Birch, previous to the depositions being first taken?

Ans^w. I do not recollect any.

7. Does M^cConnel frequently get drunk?

Ans^w. Yes he does frequently.

8. Does M^cConnel, to your knowledge, speak falsehoods?

Ans^w. Yes—he has frequently spoken falsehoods to myself.

9. Do you think that Mr. M^cConnel, by drinking spiritous liquor, has injured his mental powers?

Ans^w. I think he has.

After Mr. James Mahon's answer to question 2d, viz, "Did Mr. M^cMillan ask you if Birch was intoxicated?" and to which he answered "Yes," Presbytery omitted to insert, that Mr. M^cMillan exclaimed, (as can be proved by Alexander Litle, Esq. and others) *that he thought it his duty to ask him!*

Amongst other important questions Presbytery refused to ask James Mahon, was, whether Thomas M^cConnel was to be believed upon his oath?

James Mahon's written deposition, refused to be read, did not vary from his former one; and besides, it contained the following answers to queries:—

Quest. 1. Did Thomas M^cConnel, in your presence, ever tell the Rev. John M^cMillan any reports of the Rev. Thomas Ledlie Birch's drunkenness, or seeming intoxication; or did you ever assent to such a truth? Ans^w. No.

Quest. 2. Did you hear Thomas M^cConnel ask Mr. M^cMillan whether Mr. Birch was a member of the General Assembly, and what was Mr. M^cMillan's answer?

Ans^w. That he had applied, but was not admitted.

Quest. 3. Did not the Rev. John M^cMillan seem rather officious in making inquiries, on said day, relative to the Rev. Thomas Ledlie Birch's character?

Ans^w. He did make a good deal of inquiry.

Quest. 4. Did you hear Mr. M^cConnel tell Mr. M^cMillan, that he thought Mr. Birch was as fond of spiritous liquor as a blacksmith?

Ans^w. No—but I heard Thomas M^cConnel say, he saw no impropriety in a Clergyman taking a dram, more than any other man, if he was dry.

Quest. 5. Did you hear Mr. M^cMillan ask Mr. M^cConnel, whether Mr. Birch talked foolishly?

Ans^w. No—but I heard Thomas M^cConnel tell Mr. M^cMillan, that he thought Mr. Birch was a jolly, free talking man.

Quest. 6. Did you hear all the conversation that passed between Mr. M^cMillan and Thomas M^cConnel ?

Ans. I think I heard the greater part of it, but cannot say I heard it all.

John Bell's deposition was not received as evidence. He added to his former deposition, that both of Mr. M^cMillan's son-in-laws, viz. the Rev. John Watson and Mr. Moorehead, were present in his parlour when he told Mr. M^cMillan, that Birch was not intoxicated in his house.

John Mahon deposed, that from respectable information at Strasburgh, he heard Mr. M^cConnel generally spoken of as a man dosed with drink, and who often spoke falsely.

Birch objected to the Presbytery's holding a court of scandal, to defame Thomas M^cConnel, not present to defend himself, and who, as Mr. M^cMillan was allowed to go to trial upon his own confession, was the principal witness, and whose deposition Presbytery had pledged themselves to receive as conclusive evidence. But Presbytery would not hear.

The deferred decision upon the charge, for M^cMillan calling Birch a Minister of the Devil, and threatening to put him out of the place, (upon which, by former agreement, no evidence was to be produced) was now resumed; and Mr. M^cMillan, starting up in exultation, exclaimed, he had, and still said so; and gave in part reason, Birch, from the Presbytery's examination, being unconverted; and he could prove him a liar, a drunkard, and a profane person, and then he must be a Minister of the Devil; and proceeded to call a number of witnesses. I objected, (as was proved by Col. M^cKennan, of Washington, in another court, and can be supported by many others) besides breach of contract, and want of notice, the introduction of interested witnesses, when disinterested ones could be produced, (and for a time left the house)—but Presbytery paid no attention. To prove drunkenness against Birch, Mr. M^cMillan produced the following:—

Mrs. Mary M^cComb (wife of the aforesaid William, Elder) solemnly declared, that Birch came to their house about February 1800, in company with Mr. Joseph Wherry, and at three periods of the day, in her computation, at each time, drank a gill and a half of whiskey, and then went away—came back about eight days after; drank twice, such a quantity as before; took a laced dish of coffee; some time after drank again, and went to Mr. Stockton's, Elder; drank after he returned, does not recollect how much. Interrogated, thought Birch drank too much the last time at their house; repeated stories—Birch invited back the Saturday after first visit; all the family went with Birch to worship the next day; had private scruples—Mr. M^cComb held a subscription-paper for Birch after his leaving Washington, but never presented it to any person.

The Rev. Presbytery of Ohio neglected to insert in their minutes, that Mrs. M^cComb, in the middle of her testimony, declared with warmth to Birch, that he should not have impeached her Bally with irregularities—who struck first?

Mr. Joseph Stevenson solemnly declared, that he saw Birch drink in

Mr. Comb's before he went to Stockton's, but did not notice how much; that he saw Birch drink after his return—he observed Birch stagger when he got up to go to the candle, for family worship, but did not then suspect him of being drunk, but afterwards had doubts, from Birch's telling and repeating stories then and after going to bed; more confirmed by Birch's staggering in the room where both slept; that Birch talked politics in bed for a long time, though after twelve, and his first conversation in the morning was about the Rev. Mr. Porter's political sentiments; that Stevenson arose an hour before the sun, Birch lay longer; the family took whiskey and ginger for a dram, and expressed surprise at Birch's saying he must take water with his spirits; took a pretty large draught, and a laced dish at breakfast.

Mr. William M'Comb, Elder, solemnly declared, that Birch, in February 1800, drank three drinks, in his house, of a gill and an half each, and on a Saturday following, took three drinks, like quantity; went to Mr. Stockton's, took two drinks, quantity as before; returning home, Birch drank some whiskey and water. Interrogated, thought Birch intoxicated the last evening at his house, from repeating stories, and unfavourable conversation in the evening and morning.

Mr. Robert Stockton, Elder, solemnly declared, that Birch one evening, in his house, in company with Mr. M'Comb, drank two draughts of strong peach-brandy, cannot say how much, but observed no signs of intoxication on said Birch.

Mr. William Moore solemnly declared, that he saw Mr. Birch in Thomas Officer's tavern, Washington, the 4th of July last, reclining with his head upon his arm, which rested upon the table, as if asleep; that he saw Birch get up and walk, without staggering.

Robert M'Comb declared as above.

Mr. Hugh Cotton solemnly declared, that being in widow Taylor's in December last, Birch sat down to dinner; before eating, filled a large half pint glass half full of liquor, then mixed water, drank it about half down; then filled the glass full of liquor, and drank off the whole, and went off without evidencing intoxication.

To establish profanity, Hans M'Clelland solemnly declared, that Birch, upon an evening he preached in his house, having difficulty in getting his horse to turn his head to the rack in the stable, said either "the Devil's in the horse," or "what the Devil ails the horse," but does not remember which; that Birch drank spiritous liquor frequently and largely, but did not appear intoxicated. Interrogated, did not promise seven bushels of wheat yearly to Mr. Birch as a Minister; he did not afterwards invite Mr. Birch to preach at his house, as his wife thought he made too free with the bottle; Birch since the horse affair, preached at his house, and he informed the people.

Mr. George Anderson, being produced by Birch, solemnly declared, that he was in the stable with M'Clelland and Birch, very near them; did not hear Birch use any improper expressions to his horse, but heard him grumbling; that he often heard Hans M'Clelland say he would give Birch seven or eight bushels of wheat while he staid in the parts; that he had asked said M'Clelland, and he told him he had not given him any

thing. Interrogated, does not remember whether McClelland said he would give wheat to Birch, since the alledged affair in the stable.

Mr. McMillan then read the copy of a letter from a number of the inhabitants of Washington, sent to Mr. Birch in order to prevent his coming among them, in which they expressly charged him with intemperance. This letter is not inserted in the minutes of Presbytery, but only "No. 5."

In order to prove deliberate falsehood in Birch, Mr. McMillan, having read paragraphs out of the Western Telegraphe of the 11th and 18th Jan. 1802, viz. Birch's answer to A. Swearingen, Esq. and Messrs. J. Wherry, R. Stockton, and W. McComb's address to the Public, (see before,) Andrew Swearingen, Esq. solemnly declared, that in a conversation with Birch after the late General Assembly, he told Birch Mr. McMillan was not opposed to any man taking a dram in moderation; that he had seen Mr. McMillan taking a dram, but never saw him drinking grog; that he never told Birch that Mr. McMillan had lost his reputation; does not remember telling him of McMillan's using any rough expression of a neighbouring Clergyman; that there was not one word of truth in Birch's asserting, that he, Swearingen, told him, when setting off for his family, that Birch complying with Church rules, the opposition would fall in one by one, but for shame they could not all fall in at once; that said Swearingen, from a previous concert with Mr. Wherry, told Birch, that if he depended upon the poll that had been taken, he would be deceived; that he knew the minds of the people were not for him, and advised him, in the presence of General Taylor, not to come to Washington; that Swearingen, the last summer, upon Birch's coming to his house, to request him, as an Elder, to assist him in dispensing the sacrament of the Lord's supper, and intimating, that his good example would cause the opponents to fall in one by one, told Birch, that supposing the Presbytery would receive him, yet the principal people of the congregation would continue their opposition, so many things being against his character; for it was reported that he was found lying in bed with a woman; that some time after this, Birch came to Swearingen's house, in company with two others, viz. Messrs. John Taylor and Alexander Litle, to inquire if Swearingen had told him it was reported he was charged with adultery; Swearingen replied that he had told him so, and was surprised he did not remember; for if Birch would go into the house, he would give him two depositions that he had told him so.

The Presbytery omitted to insert what Swearingen declared before them, and in other courts, viz. that Birch had *his leg* over the woman he was said to be in bed with; and that it was introduced and received by Presbytery as a *matter of ridicule*, that Birch said in the conversation before Gen. Taylor, that he was not afraid, through Divine assistance, to quiet all opposition by a punctual discharge of the duties of a Gospel Minister, with a suitable conversation.

Sarah Clark solemnly declared, that Mr. Birch, in Mrs. Read's, Washington, being asked what Mr. Swearingen said to the inquiry about the telling of his being charged with adultery or fornication, he replied,

that Swearingen said he did not remember of having told Birch any such thing.

Mr. Robert Stockton, Elder, being called the second time, solemnly declared, that he was not ordained by Mr. M^cMillan, but by the Rev. John Craighead, of Rocky Spring; that he never went to Birch as a Commissioner from the congregation, to invite him to settle as their Minister; that he did wait on Birch to ask him to preach three months, or some time, on trial, which he refused; that Mr. Wherry was not with him.

Mr. Joseph Wherry, Elder, solemnly declared, that Messrs. Stockton and Hazlett were sent by the congregation to Birch, to see if he would come for a time upon trial, which he refused; that deponent and Mr. Hazlett were sent back to Birch about the matter; that Birch drew up a subscription paper binding the parties only so long as they agreed, to which most of the people consented. Here Mr. M^cMillan's evidence closed, and the whole proceedings formed a scene worthy of notice, and which will long be remembered by the friends of humanity present.

The fame of a trial involving the character of the most distinguished Rev. Father in the back country; the contest with a foreigner, more noted from the circumstances which introduced him into America; attracted a concourse of people from all quarters. The Rev. John Anderson being to be installed in the congregation the seat of Presbytery, very much enlarged the crowd. The installation was put off to Friday, and thereby the multitude was detained. Upon Wednesday, Birch proceeding to call evidences to support his charges against Mr. M^cMillan, which would have served much to impeach his character and vindicate his own, which was much injured; Mr. M^cMillan got up and confessed all his charges. I expressing a desire to produce witnesses, I was dissuaded by the cries from the Moderator and all quarters of Presbytery, "Will you prove what is confessed? Mr. M^cMillan will own every thing!" Whilst in the mean time, witnesses raked from prejudice and party in all quarters, were ushered forward to blast my reputation, accompanied with the murmurs and applauses of partisan followers.—When I asked a question of a witness, or made an observation, I was generally put off with "that's not proper," or interrupted. My witnesses, in indignation starting up and leaving the house, could scarcely be persuaded from going home, exclaiming, they could be of no use to me, for I might see I was not going to obtain justice before such a court! added much to my distress; besides, a deafness I was afflicted with at the time, much increased my embarrassment. This part of the drama lasted till Friday, about noon, when the Rev. John M^cMillan, rising from his seat and stretching forth his hand towards me, addressed me repeatedly (as has been proved by the oaths of Col. M^cKennan and Mr. George Anderson) with the following exclamation, (amidst the reiterated peals of laughter from the surrounding crowd) "Ha, ha, ha! are you not now a Minister of the Devil!"—The scene was now shifted. The installation being announced, the Rev. Thomas Moor, Moderator, and two other Ministers who assisted at the installation, instead of retiring to the tent (as is customary) staid in the *house*, and

thereby engaged the people's attention, whilst the other members of Presbytery, without giving any public notice, withdrew, and I got a whisper that the Presbytery was going to proceed with my business.— and we were (as can be proved by the oaths of Alexander Little, Esq. and Andrew M'Mekan) marched to a schoolhouse at a distance in the woods; the Rev. Joseph Patterson chosen Moderator, and I was called upon to support my third charge against the Rev. John M'Millan, viz. his asserting a corrupt, deliberate falsehood, before Presbytery in October last, to escape censure for defaming Birch, viz. that he denied that ever he reported that James Mahon, blacksmith, told him that said Birch was staggering drunk, and using tool-talk, in the town of Strasburgh, on his road from the General Assembly, upon the 6th day of June last.

Mr. M'Millan, now from before the crowd, would not confess any thing: Birch must even prove what he said before them, now when none were to hear. Birch in the confusion not distinctly recollecting whether Mr. Robert Irwin was in the meeting-house at Bethel, or Peter's creek, with Mr. Little, when Mr. M'Millan made the denial, he omitted him, and agreeably to notice, called upon some Ministers.

The Rev. Joseph Patterson solemnly declared, that he does not remember Mr. M'Millan saying before Presbytery, or elsewhere, that he never reported, that James Mahon never told him that Mr. Birch was staggering drunk in the town of Strasburgh.

The Rev. Thomas Marquis solemnly declared similar want of recollection.

The Rev. Samuel Ralston solemnly declared, that he remembered Mr. M'Millan saying, that he had no conversation with Mahon upon the subject of Birch's drunkenness at Strasburgh, but with M'Connel.

Mr. Alexander Little solemnly declared, that at the Presbytery of Bethel, Mr. M'Millan on reading the deposition of M'Connel, said he had cautiously guarded himself upon his oath, for he had not denied one word he had told him; and further said, that James Mahon never told him any thing respecting Birch: and that at Canonsburgh, when said deponent was in company with Andrew M'Mekan, Mr. M'Millan told them, that he put the matter seriously to M'Connel and Mahon, whether or no they thought Birch intoxicated, and they said he appeared like it for he staggered. Interrogated—M'Millan said Mahon told the report.

Mr. Andrew M'Mekan solemnly declared (and answered an interrogatory) the same (as above) with Mr. Little, relative to Mr. M'Millan's declarations at Canonsburgh.

Mr. Robert Anderson, silversmith, Washington, solemnly declared, that some time after last harvest, in Birch's house, Birch said to M'Millan, in presence of James Allison, Esq. that as a Christian, and a brother in the ministry, if he had heard any thing of his character, he should have informed him, and if he had not received satisfaction, then he might have told of his intoxication; that Mr. M'Millan replied, that he "did not take it up, Mr. Birch; but it was the first thing he heard coming to the smith's shop to get his horse shod; they told me they had

shod a horse lately for you, and he, or they, (Mr. Anderson could not remember which) asked me whether Birch belonged to the General Assembly; I answered, he did not—he had applied but was not admitted; and he, or they alledged Birch was fond of whiskey:” after some conversation, Mr. M^cMillan said he put it seriously to them, whether they thought Birch drunk; that they said they alledged so; that he came into their shop staggering, talked fool-talk, and went out staggering.—Mr. Birch then told Mr. M^cMillan, Mahon had not a good character, as he and another young man were blamed for having a league with a young woman, upon account of which he went off; that then Mr. Allison, and he thought Mr. M^cMillan, replied that he had cleared up his character; that Birch told Mr. M^cMillan, he should be cautious of repeating what the like of Mahon would say.

James Allison, Esq. solemnly declared, that he did not hear Mr. M^cMillan say, in Birch’s house, that Mahon told M^cMillan of Birch’s drunkenness at Strasburgh, but that M^cConnel told him, Mahon present. Interrogated,—that he heard Birch say to M^cMillan, it was unbrotherly, to spread an injurious report upon an authority like Mahon’s; but vindicated Mahon, not as Mr. M^cMillan’s author, but as impeached by Mr. Birch.

Presbytery asked me if I had any more testimony to offer. For an obvious reason, (not having notice of many defamers produced, and what they were to prove) I answered in the negative. Being asked if I wished for longer time; this being with a manifest design, under the garb of doing me justice, to deprive me of an appeal to the General Assembly, where I could have the depositions of my witnesses to repel calumnies, and thereby put me to another year’s quarantine, under the Assembly’s Alien Act; I told them I wished for their immediate decision. Being further asked, if I would prosecute my appeal from the Session of Washington in the case of William M^cComb, Elder; I said, from the specimen I had already of their justice, I would not trouble them any more.

The evidence on all sides being closed, and the installation being shortly after over, the collected Presbytery proceeded to deliberate, but not having come to a determination, adjourned to Saturday morning. All my friends patience being exhausted, and they gone home, I awaited the Presbytery’s decision. About three o’clock, afternoon, they gave judgment, the four members who had been absent at the installation voting upon every charge.

1st charge—For M^cMillan defaming Birch, by reporting drunkenness at Strasburgh, and foolish behaviour, Thomas M^cConnel, blacksmith, his author, and James Mahon, his journeyman, assenting—*Not supported.*

3d charge—For M^cMillan telling a deliberate falsehood in Presbytery, at Bethel, or Peter’s creek, to evade Church censure for defaming Birch, viz. that he never reported, Mahon told him Birch was staggering drunk, and talking fool-talk, at Strasburgh—*Not supported.*

2d charge—For M^cMillan calling Birch a Minister of the Devil, and unchristian threats to put Birch out of the place—*Not fully supported;* and Presbytery were of the opinion, that from the testimony adduced by

Mr. McMillan, that he had reason to think very unfavourably of Birch; but withall, they esteemed the phrase *Minister of the Devil*, as very harsh and unguarded; Presbytery therefore judged, that Mr. McMillan be admonished to be more guarded in his expressions.

I now having no mode of redress in the Church, except the General Assembly, I requested Presbytery (as there was no time for copies) to return me my papers, which were requisite for the very Rev. General Assembly, with their attestation, that such were before them (to prevent disputes as before.) Being about to lift off the Presbytery table the last depositions of Messrs. McConnel, Mahon and Bell, of Strasburgh, which cost my friend and me 624 miles travel, the Rev. Samuel Ralston snatched them up, and said they were theirs. Mr. McMillan withholding the first depositions of these gentlemen, given for the purpose of being compared with the other ones, I threatened to lodge examinations, upon which they were returned. Calling upon the Rev. Messrs. Ralston, Scott, and I think Moor, as witnesses, to be summoned upon their oaths, I demanded a receipt for my papers, which was promised. Messrs. Ralston and Scott then going away, after some evasion and considerable altercation, I obtained the following:—

The Rev. Presbytery of Ohio will be pleased to acknowledge the receipt of a complaint lodged at Peter's creek, in October last, to the very Rev. General Assembly; a complaint lodged at Canonsburgh in January last; a complaint lodged against Elders in Washington, styled by the Presbytery of Ohio "the Session;" a complaint to Assembly lodged at Buffalo in April last; the depositions of Messrs. Thomas McConnel, James Mahon and John Bell, all of Strasburgh; and will be pleased to take notice, that certain papers will be laid before William Meekirk, Esq. in Washington, upon Thursday the 29th inst. to be verified upon oath, for the purpose of being transmitted to the General Assembly.

THOMAS LEDLIE BIRCH.

To the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio. Buffalo, April the 24th, 1802.

The Presbytery acknowledge the receipt of the above papers. Signed by order,

THOMAS MOOR, *Moderator.*

A complaint to the Assembly was handed to Presbytery, for corrupt, partial, inquisitorial judgment in their late decisions in the case of Birch and McMillan; and notice served, to have said complaint, and their minutes relative to Birch since the former Assembly, at the ensuing one.

Upon my arrival at the Assembly, I applied to the Rev. Thomas Marquis, one of the Presbytery of Ohio's delegates, for my papers to be presented to the committee of overtures, who told me my papers could be had. The committee of overtures having met next morning at six o'clock, I presented the receipt of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, (as will afterwards appear by the oath of Mr. William Smiley, Philadelphia) and called upon said Mr. Marquis, who was one of the members, to produce my papers, which he evaded by telling what heavy charges were laid against the Presbytery of Ohio. If false, why not let innocent worth be vindicated?

The Rev. committee, instead of obliging Mr. Marquis to deliver my papers, upon the motion of Col. John Bayard, Elder, Presbytery of New-

Brunswick, (who acted with high majesty) I was ordered, in opposition to every remonstrance, to go and procure the committee written heads of my charges against the Presbytery of Ohio; and I was obliged to spend two days in transcribing from the rough papers in my possession, fair copies of my complaints, and other necessary documents in support of my charges. Upon leaving the committee, I observed to Mr. Smiley, that it was surprising the committee did not see the matter. He said they saw it well enough, and Mr. Marquis had my papers, for he heard him back in the crowd intimate as much.

The committee of overtures having licenced my papers, I attended in the very Rev. General Assembly, and presented them. The Assembly expressing a desire that I would make a brief abstract of my specific charges against the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, I hastily drew up one. My statement not being thought sufficiently brief, and I being from various occurrences much agitated, the Rev. Doctor Green was so obliging as to form an abridgment (supposed to contain the sense of the original. The Assembly having Doctor Green's paper, and not having any copy—I publish my own original paper (now to be seen in my hands.)

Philadelphia, the 21st May, 1802.

Thomas Ledlie Birch's complaint to the very Rev. General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of America, against the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio.

1st. For the very Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, rejecting me, in opposition, to the expressed superior wisdom, of the very Rev. General Assembly: see minutes of their meeting, about the first day of July last, at Buffalo.

2dly. For the Presbytery of Ohio passing an unjust defamatory sentence upon Birch, during an interlocutor of Presbytery, upon the testimony of the Rev. John M'Millan, and Wm. M'Comb, Elder; viz. a general report of imprudent and irregular conduct—whereby, as it appears they had no intention to receive him, they unmercifully deprived a stranger of the benevolence of the late very Rev. General Assembly, if refused by one Presbytery, the liberty of applying to another; and this accompanied with insult and threatened violence.

3dly. For rejecting all offers of Gospel accommodation; whereby scandal has been brought upon religion, the peace of the church disturbed, and Birch exposed to heavy trouble.

4thly. For (after subjecting Birch to long delays, much trouble and great loss) exercising inquisitorial corrupt judgment in the case of the Rev. John M'Millan for defaming Birch, by reporting drunkenness in Strasburgh.

5thly. For using unchristian language and threats, calling Birch a Minister of the Devil, and would use every endeavor to put him out of the country.

6thly. For telling a corrupt falsehood in Presbytery to escape censure, viz. that he never said that James Mahon told him that Birch was drunk at Strasburgh. (Be pleased to see complaint, No. 2, 3, 4)

To be proved by depositions ready to be laid upon your table; and the depositions of Messrs. Thomas M'Connel, James Mahon and John

Bell of Strasburgh, now in the hands of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio for which Birch has their receipt, and humbly requests this very Rev. General Assembly to have them produced on your table, with the minutes of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio.

T. L. BIRCH.

There was a supplication (now in my hands) from the congregation of Washington (or my adherents) handed to the Assembly by Capt. Samuel Young and Mr. William Smiley, of Philadelphia, Commissioners, signed in the name of the people, by Robert Bell, Samuel Whann, John Mitchell, James Chambers, Arthur Chamberlain, Robert Hamilton, Hugh Workman. The supplication, besides those things mentioned in the above charges, thanked the Assembly for the judicious decision of the former meeting, whereby the prerogative and honour of the inferior court was preserved, and the complaint relieved; lamented that the Presbytery of Ohio, instead of seconding their laudable views, had further disturbed the peace of the Church; requested that a cautious ear should be lent to reports of revivals from this quarter, (though such were earnestly prayed for, and viewed by the eye of faith as approaching) nature being as corrupt here as elsewhere, and not more refined; the proceedings here, for at least a year past, having staggered the faith of many serious people, and caused infidels to blaspheme, indicating a dread of its being the dark time, when faith would hardly be found upon earth: mentioned the number of the society presenting the request, about 140 families, making a rational, gradual, religious progress; that the Assembly, in their benevolence, had sent missionaries to the Heathen, which afforded ground of hope, that they would not refuse their fostering care to them, who had long been nearly as destitute: wished not to connive at any breach of order, want of qualification, or immorality in Birch, but an admission into the Church, or a rejection upon a candid examination, as it was respectfully hoped matters would bear the strictest scrutiny; humbly suggesting, that as Birch, under heavy trials, had rejected every persuasion to apply for civil redress, (for which there was strong ground) looking only to the Church for redress, would be some recommendation in his favour: appointed Capt. Samuel Young and Mr. William Smiley, of Philadelphia, and Mr. Andrew Hunter, of Washington, Commissioners.

Having presented to the Assembly the above charges and supplication, I produced the receipt of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, and requested their delegates to be called on to bring forward the depositions of Messrs. Thomas McConnel, James Mahon and John Bell, of Strasburgh. The delegates (Messrs. Watson and Marquis) found means to slip upon the table the complaints suppressed in the committee, now useless to me. Mr. Watson presented also a detached fragment of paper, said to be McConnel's deposition, (of which I can say nothing, as being torn from the other papers to which 'Squire Gilmore had affixed it with a seal; see taking of last depositions at Strasburgh)—Mr. Watson made use of the emphatic words, *It will be of little use to you*; perhaps alluding to the manner in which McConnel was defamed before Presbytery. Bell's deposition, he said, I must not look for, but he would grant that he told Mr. McMillan I was not drunk; Mahon's deposition I must take as it

the minutes of Presbytery. I told the Assembly, that from the Rev. Thomas Marquis's information to myself, the depositions in question could be produced, and I could prove the same from a similar declaration before my friend Mr. William Smiley, in the committee; therefore requested the depositions to be delivered up. Mr. Marquis being now called upon, and urged to come forward with the depositions, he replied, "I thought these depositions were amongst the other papers, until I examined my pocket"!! And thus, as has been proved by the deposition of Captain Young, two of my papers or depositions were kept back. Mr. Watson, under the plausible shew of wishing to accommodate matters, proposed to grant the reading of Bell's deposition taken at Strasburgh the first time, instead of the one now kept back. By comparing the two depositions, a glaring circumstance was kept out of view, and which in the confusion escaped my memory, viz. that *the Rev. John Watson, himself, was in Mr. Bell's parlour, when the Rev. John M. Millan abruptly rushed in, and exclaimed, &c.*

Thus embarrassed, I knew not what to do; neither would I have gone to trial prepared as I was, only from a conviction that the superior wisdom of the Assembly must have discovered something dark in the business—the Presbytery of Ohio having broken their solemn pledged faith under the signature of their Moderator, therefore I acquiesced.

A novel proposal was made by the Rev. Doctor Rodgers, of New-York, and agreed to by the Assembly, (seemingly with a view to blast me at the outset, by making a bad impression) viz. that the Ohio delegates should be heard in reply to my charges, before I was allowed to produce evidence to establish them. And accordingly, though the Rev. Ohio delegates were such indifferent stewards of my papers, the Rev. John Watson ushered forward the minutes of Presbytery, and read a detailed account of all the defamations of which we have given the heads. He also read a paper, signed Andrew Swearingen, Joseph Wherry, Robert Stockton and William M'Comb, styling themselves the Session of Washington congregation, setting forth, that of one hundred (I think) and seventy odd families in the town of Washington, I had not more contributors than twelve families, but had withdrawn;—and amongst these were, William M'Camman, *taylor*; John and Samuel Mitchell, two drunken *carpenters* from Ireland; Robert Anderson, *silversmith*; Alexander Little, an *admirer of Tom Paine*; and Charles Fox, *Baptist*; and all the rest, in town or elsewhere, *out-casts of society, &c. &c.* I observing at the introduction of this paper, that I hoped the very Rev. General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of America was not going to be formed into a court of scandal, to asperse the characters of their absent neighbours, and being seconded by a cry of "shame! shame!" a cry of "let us hear," or "read on," by the old, venerable Doctor Rodgers, carried. In reply, I observed, (but was heard with some no occasions for that) that the taxable inhabitants of Washington were a mixed people, Methodists, Episcopalians, Germans, Presbyterians, Roman Catholics, Baptists, Quakers, &c. scarcely an half go any where: the behaviour of Clergy rapidly making such converts there, and other places in our western country, Mr. Watson the

last time he was in Washington, had, it is supposed, not ten hearers, even in the Academy; that one-fifth of our congregation did not consist of the town; if sinners, they were not to want the Gospel preached, being willing to hear; let the guiltless throw the first stone! The Divine Jesus came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. It would not have been thought, that in an enlightened country like this, any should be so unblushing as to cast a stigma upon honourable industry. Unhappy Birch! in that he was never learned to dig!—Some who would be esteemed quality in Washington, lately had not a coat to their back. Two Rev. delegates from the Ohio Presbytery, if fame tells truth, one of them was lately a shoemaker, or some other trade, on Cross-Creek; the other a bar-keeper in a tavern, in Washington town. Our Divine Master wrought at the occupation of a carpenter. The scribes and pharisees said he was a glutton and a drunkard, Math. xi. 19. and his unworthy servants are not to expect better usage, until the accuser of the Brethren, *the Dragon*, is shut down in the bottomless pit, Rev. xx. 2, 3. the dawn of which glorious day, it is hoped in God's mercy, is now to be discerned by the eye of faith.—I then proceeded to name some of my contributors, as a contrast; of which more afterwards. Along with the depositions already published, the following were produced and read in support of my character against the defamations of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, and the Rev. John McMillan, at the Buffalo meeting in April last—of the taking of which the parties had due notice.

Mrs. Mary McComant's (wife of the aforesaid Mr. William McComant) oath, taken before Wm. Meekirk, Esq. of Washington, the 29th April, 1802—That in a conversation at deponent's house between Wm. McComb, Elder in Washington congregation, and her, about the middle of July, 1800, respecting the establishment of a Gospel Minister in the town of Washington, McComb said to this deponent, that he had no objection to Mr. Birch as a Minister; but he liked Mr. Leacock better. Said deponent further said, that at the same time shortly after the conversation with said Wm. McComb, she had a conversation with Mary McComb, his wife, when deponent asked her what were the reports (understood by deponent to have originated at said Wm. McComb's house) respecting Birch's drinking whiskey there—Mrs. McComb replied, that she never said Birch was drunk; and asked deponent, if she ever heard any person say, that she (Mrs. McComb) said Birch was drunk.

The deposition of Mr. Robert Anderson, silver-smith, of Washington, sworn before John Wilson, Esq. of said town—That on or about the middle of July, 1800, he was present at a conversation between Andrew Swearingen, Esq. Elder in Washington congregation, the late General Taylor, and the Rev. Thomas Ledlie Birch, in the court-house yard; heard Gen. Taylor observe to Mr. Birch, that he doubted he would not have much satisfaction, as party spirit ran so high; the time was, when he could go down one side of the street and up the other, and the people in every door appeared ready to give him a cordial

reception; but now he could pass six doors together, and the people in the doors not let on they seen him;—however, if Birch came, he was quite willing to contribute his part. Andrew Swearingen, Esq. answered, that he did not know but that if Birch came regularly, he might expect they would all fall in one by one; but that, after so much opposition, they would be ashamed to fall in all at once; but that he had observed there, when Mr. Birch was preaching, some were ashamed to come in the house, but they gathered about the door outside;—for his own part, he would have no objection.

Washington County, ss. Before me the subscriber, one of the justices of the peace in and for said county, came personally Jane Taylor, wife of the late General Taylor, and being duly sworn according to law, deposeth and saith, that on the fourth of December last, Messrs. Joshua Anderson, Hugh Cotton, John White, Mathew Taylor, John Taylor and John Colmery, being present at my house, appraising my late husband's estate, and being at dinner, I set down a pint bottle of whiskey and a glass holding upwards of a pint. At the close of dinner, the Rev. Mr. Birch coming in, I asked him to take dinner; I brought in some water in the same glass, no other of the same kind being in the house, the same bottle and whiskey remaining on the table, without any being added thereto. And this deponent further saith not. Sworn to and subscribed before me, this 30th day of April, 1802.

JOHN WILSON.

JANE TAYLOR.

Washington County, ss. Before me the subscriber, one of the justices of the peace in and for said county, came personally John Colmery, and being duly sworn according to law, saith, that being at the house of the late Gen. Taylor, on the fourth day of December last, in order to appraise the aforesaid deceased's estate, and that Joshua Anderson, Hugh Cotton, John White, Mathew Taylor, John Taylor and myself, were all present at dinner; there was a pint bottle with whiskey set on the table, with a glass holding better than a pint, and that to the best of my knowledge, we all partook of it; and that the Rev. Mr. Birch came to the door just as we had done with dinner. And this deponent further saith not. Sworn to and subscribed before me, this 30th day of April, 1802. JOHN WILSON. JOHN COLMERY.

Depositions passed at the same time, by Messrs. Joshua Anderson, John White, Mathew and John Taylor, establishing the same point, were read in the Assembly; the originals now in Birch's hands. Mr. Mathew Taylor, along with the fact proved by all the oaths, that the bottle only held a pint out of which the deponent and five others partook before Birch, and that the glass was larger than the bottle, noticed that the glass held a pint and about three half gills.

Washington County, ss. Before me the subscriber, one of the justices of the peace in and for said county, personally came Jane Officer, who being duly sworn as the law directs, deposeth and saith, that the Rev. Leslie Birch was in her house on the fourth of July, 1801, and that he was in company with some people who were drinking cider, but that she did not see him drink, nor did she observe him the least intoxicated; nor to her knowledge was he, nor doth she believe that he was, in her

house but once during the day, and that but for a short space of time.
Sworn to and subscribed before me this 3d day of May, 1802.

JOHN WILSON.

JANE OFFICER.

At the same time, Mr. Thomas Officer, husband of the above Jane, tavern-keeper, Washington, made oath, (the original read in the Assembly, now in Birch's hands) that the Rev. Ledlie Birch lived his neighbour for a year, and that he never observed him in the least intoxicated.

Having closed my evidence, and made some comments upon it, the very Rev. General Assembly ordered the parties to withdraw, and proceeded to consider the business, when, after mature deliberation, they determined all my charges against the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio *unsupported*. The charges being declared unsupported, there was a resolution put, viz. That the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio did not treat Birch with a becoming candour and brotherly affection—which was negatived, 21 to 19. The whole proceedings presented a scene not to be delineated by the masterly pencils of a Michael Angelo or a Hoggarth, or described by the almost life-giving eloquence of a Demosthenes, or the tragic powers of a Shakespear; but only by the figures and language of inspiration, Prov. xxx. 20. Math. xxiv. 31—44. the adulterous woman eating, and wiping her mouth, and saying I have done no wickedness—the Judge seated upon his throne making inquest, and a certain number, in dismay and confusion, excusing themselves—when saw we thee hungry, a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, &c. and for which (if not averted by a speedy repentance) there will be an awful reckoning one day, when there will be no hiding of records, and the agents in such things will in vain call to the rocks and mountains to hide them.—Birch, a stranger, appears in the Assembly, complaining that the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, which had rejected him last year, had, in the face of that very Rev. body, not only kept him a second year out of the Church, but grossly defamed him—the Rev. John Watson (son-in-law to Mr. McMillan, the chief defamer) in a far advanced stage of the consumption, stood up to defend his relative; knowing guilt, kept back *Bell's deposition*, which would have exposed his own infamy, and for which the faith of Presbytery was pledged, under the signature of the Rev. Thomas Moor, their Moderator. Mr. Watson, in fervent zeal defending the detention of the papers, and proceeding to read the defamations in the minutes of the Presbytery of Ohio, and the representation of facts by the Washington Elders, became exhausted and panting for breath, so that in order to his going on, it was necessary to have a chair brought for him, and placed upon an eminence. The very Rev. General Assembly, solemnly constituted by prayer in the presence of the Judge of the earth, with the declared purpose of exercising justice and judgment, instead of taking admonition at the affecting spectacle, encouraged and connived at the business. When Birch, much discomposed by the withholding of his papers, attempted to speak, he was snapped at and interrupted by officious partisans in different quarters—and an infirmity of deafness, which he laboured under at the time, added much to his embarrassment in making re-

plies : so that on the whole, (as the Assembly did not take any notes of evidence) the transaction seemed rather like a scold where the greatest noise carried, than a process in a judicial court; whereby the late learned and very judicious Dr. Nesbit, of Carlisle, was led to observe, repeatedly, to others and myself, "If Demosthenes had been interrupted as often as Birch, he would not have made a speech worth a farthing." If the late Rev. John Watson had manifested a modest, affectionate desire to excuse the weakness of a parent, and a willingness to repair injury, and Mr. McMillan's friends in the Assembly had evidenced a meekness, in restoring an offending brother, esteemed useful in the Church, with a tender concern for the character and honour of a stranger, their conduct would have been most laudable.

Being now removed from the arbitrary controul of a very Rev. body who would only permit me (as will appear afterwards) to support my cause in the way that suited their notions, and freed from the interruptions of Rev. loose-tongued gentry, who wished to stifle and bear down truth; I shall beg leave, most humbly and respectfully, (before a judicious and enlightened people, who can discern, and, I know, are well disposed to hear truth) to use my weak abilities in examining the decision of the very Rev. General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of America, upon my charges brought against the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio. The reader, to save repetition, will be pleased to look back, and see the respective charge, out of those delivered to the Assembly against the Presbytery of Ohio, as it shall be commented upon, in its order.

1st. charge—The evidence produced by Birch to support this charge, was, 1st. The minute of the former Assembly, which declared that from the free and full conversation the Assembly had with Mr. Birch, upon his experimental acquaintance with religion, there is no obstruction, upon that point, to any Presbytery, &c. 2d. The minute of the Presbytery of Ohio, of the 1st of July following, that they would have nothing further to do with Mr. Birch, as to his trials for the Gospel ministry; and in this they think themselves justifiable, from the frequent and full conversations they had formerly with him, &c.

Those who might be supposed to be possessed of less discernment than the General Assembly, might have discovered by comparing the two minutes, that the Presbytery of Ohio did not pay the highest respect to the superior wisdom of the General Assembly. But that the Assembly might not mistake the hint, and perhaps (from the last year's work) learning that a majority of them were not very squeamish, the Rev. John McMillan called Birch, just piping hot from their hands, an unconverted Minister of the Devil; and the Presbytery of Ohio sustained their own examinations, in opposition to the Assembly's, as part ground of Mr. McMillan's defence—passed judgment, that Mr. McMillan had reason to think most unfavourably of Birch, and admonished him, not for want of truth, but for the harshness of the expression. So that if Birch is a Minister of the Devil, (and of necessity, greater are they who send, than he that is sent) and the Assembly being the third rank in the Church; in the opinion of the Presbytery of Ohio, they must be three-fold Ministers of the Devil above Birch! Was not the matter too se-

rious, I might adopt the reply of James Mountain, Esq. Lawyer, to the Rev. John M^cMillan, when the depositions of a Mr. John Dunnan were about to be taken, concerning some of Mr. M^cMillan's expressions, and Mr. M^cMillan observed, that a number of us Lawyers and Clergy, by our contentions, were going to the bad place—Mr. Mountain replied, he was happy in having such *good company as the Rev. John M^cMillan*. But alas! broad is the way, the place sufficiently capacious, and the power equal to the punishment of the whole. And does the General Assembly propagate Ministers of the Devil? Let them take care they may not! 1 Tim. v. 20, 22. Prov. xxix. 15. Them that sin, rebuke before all, that others also may fear—be not partaker of other men's sins. The rod and reproof giveth wisdom,—but the child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.

2d charge.—In support of the first part of this charge, Birch produced the latter part of the minute of the Presbytery of Ohio cited in support of the foregoing charge; viz. Birch's having a general report of imprudent, irregular conduct. The Presbytery of Ohio were undoubtedly censurable, if they passed a defamatory sentence upon Birch without any evidence—they were censurable if they decided from the verbal reasons by which they afterwards attempted to excuse themselves, viz. my continuing to preach, ordain Elders, and baptize children, during my appeal to the superior court. These things being solemnly decided in the Assembly, and besides, this misconduct was known the evening before, when Presbytery told Birch they were hearty in proceeding with him; there remains not any evidence for Presbytery to found their decision, but the reports of Messrs. M^cMillan and M^cComb. Presbytery acknowledge they received charges against Birch from these gentlemen. Mr. M^cMillan vindicated himself, on trial, for doing so. Mr. M^cComb's confession of doing the like, is proved by the oaths of Messrs. M^cCamment, Little and Anderson. And undoubtedly Presbytery was censurable for condemning Birch upon these reports, without granting him an hearing. But even granting Birch had been guilty of the charges attributed to him by Messrs. M^cMillan and M^cComb, they were censurable in exhibiting such to Presbytery, and Presbytery in receiving them, (agreeably to our blessed Lord's own injunctions, Math. xviii. 15, 16, 17.) until they had called upon Birch privately, and made use of *Gospel methods to reclaim him*. Of this they had a precedent in their own body, (as I have been informed by the late Gen. Henry Taylor) in the person of John M^dDowell, Esq. Elder in Chartiers congregation, now Associate Judge WASHINGTON county.—A number of young ladies having assembled in Gen. Taylor's house, to what is called, in this western country, a quilting frolick; the quilting being over, a number of young people, among whom were John Riddle, Esq. now Elder, Mr. Samuel Riddle, and their sister, now Mrs. Venimon, proceeded to take a dance. Elder M^dDowel having paid a visit to the General the same evening, both sat in a room separate from the young folks, without interrupting them in their amusement. Elder M^dDowel lodged a complaint against Gen. Taylor, before the Rev. John M^cMillan and the Session of Chartiers, for having dancing in his house. After a

wearisome litigation, it was finally determined in Presbytery, that John M'Dowel Esq. Elder, was censurable, in that he did not admonish the disorderly company in General Taylor's house.

In support of the second part of this charge, Birch produced the Assembly's Alien law, (see printed minutes of 1800) which expressly declares, if a foreign Minister is rejected by one Presbytery, he shall not be received by another; or if received, as soon as the fraud is discovered, he shall be dismissed. So that the Presbytery of Ohio, when they had not any intention of receiving Birch, their proceeding to pass any sentence, except a civil refusal, and that a verbal one, was a wanton piece of cruelty.—In support of the third part of this charge, viz. insult and threatened violence, Birch produced the oaths of Robert and Hamilton Bell, who positively swear, that upon Birch requesting to be informed by the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, with what imprudent, irregular conduct he was chargeable, the Rev. John Watson starting up, and lifting up his hands in a *menacing posture*, in a *threatening tone* exclaimed, (without being called to order) if Birch would not go out, they must put him out! and without any apology, he was obliged to turn out. The Presbytery of Ohio's friends in the Assembly ridiculed the idea, that I should speak of danger from a person of Mr. Watson's appearance. They were right. Birch had no dread of the menaces of Mr. Watson, unless the fear that if he should even touch him, he might kill him! and I will grant more, could not be intimidated by any of the partisans in the Presbytery of Ohio or the General Assembly; for gentry of their cast, are not fighting people; they rather choose to deal in the assassin way, unless they have a manifest advantage. A very insignificant being may be the instrument of insult, and of beginning a quarrel, and the less worth notice, the more likely to come off with impunity; and such an one may be supposed to carry with him dread of violence to a single person, when aided and abetted by thirty or forty others, and more especially if some of them are not of the most refined manners. And surely the Ministers of Peace, in the very Rev. General Assembly, did not mean to insinuate, that order was only to be preserved in their church by buffing matches! Though indeed the insolence of some of their members well deserved broken heads, and they appeared incapable of being wrought upon by any other argument. Let them however take care, that the good people of America may not be provoked to make use of such persuasives, as seem fast approaching; or they may depend upon it, the question will be decided against their very Reverences.

3d charge.—Birch produced in support of this charge, his message to the Rev. John M'Millan, his supplications to the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, and complaints lodged against them to the very Rev. General Assembly, every one of which concludes with Gospel offers; and that such were made by Birch, and spurned at by the Presbytery of Ohio, was proved (as may be seen before) by the oaths of Messrs. Alexander Little, Andrew M'Mekan, Robert and Hamilton Bell, at least in four instances—and in these, in not hearing Birch, the Presbytery was censurable: as they pronounced John M'Dowel, Esq. Elder, for not admo-

nishing. (See the fore-cited Gospel authority.) The wide extended ferment the business is well known to have spread—the large portion of the time of the Presbytery of Ohio, and the General Assembly, it has engrossed for two years past, Birch having in this stage been kept nearly two years out of the communion of the American Presbyterian Church, and obliged to travel upwards of two thousand miles;—to attempt to prove that a reproach was brought upon religion, the peace of the Church greatly interrupted, and Birch reduced to great difficulties, would be an insult to the good sense of the people of America.

4th charge.—Long delay in trying Mr. McMillan, was proved to the Assembly against the Presbytery of Ohio, as here set forth, by the minutes of said Presbytery,—from which it appears, that Birch lodged his complaint in October the 22d, but was not heard until the 21st April. From his fore-mentioned travel, the Assembly was left to judge of Birch's trouble and loss. Inquisitorial, corrupt judgment was alleged to be proved, by the Presbytery refusing to oblige Mr. McMillan to make good his charge of Birch's drunkenness at Strasburgh, or to admit, agreeably to contract, the depositions of Messrs. McConnel, Mahon, Bell, Litle, Anderson and McMeckan, and Elisabeth Birch, laid upon the Presbytery table, and then on the Assembly's table, to prove Mr. McMillan's propagating a falsehood, but insisting upon Birch to procure new depositions. We know well, that in happy America no Clergy dare put a citizen to the torture, to oblige him to criminate himself; nor for not obeying the arbitrary dictate of a Church, can the writ *de excommunicato capiendo*, for laying hold of the excommunicate, issue after forty days, and imprison him for life. And happy is it, that some Clergy have not the power. But there is also character dearer to a man of honour than life; and more particularly to a Minister of the Gospel. It most certainly must be inquisitorial proceedings, to oblige such an one, and more especially a stranger, either to sink under a lost reputation, or be subjected to tedious journeys, grievous trouble and heavy expence, to prove himself innocent, (in many cases impossible) instead of obliging his accuser to establish his guilt. Corrupt judgment was proved, by Presbytery not allowing the new depositions of McConnel, Mahon and Bell, procured by Birch, to pass as conclusive evidence; refusing to ask Mahon, if McConnel was to be believed upon his oath; and acquitting Mr. McMillan on this charge, contrary to Scripture and evidence, as must be plain from attending to the following particulars: If Mr. Thomas McConnel was Mr. McMillan's only witness, McMillan was censurable in telling the report, and Presbytery in receiving it; for the cloak of an Elder, which (as I learned by a member of Presbytery) covered Mr. McMillan from censure, should have much more shielded Birch (also an Elder) from defamation—and the Presbytery and Mr. McMillan were doubly criminal, Mr. John Bell, the tavern-keeper, having told Messrs. McMillan, Watson and Moorehead, that the report was false. But the Presbytery were guilty of corrupt judgment, in permitting the cloak of an Elder to screen Mr. McMillan, for the veil is taken off any pretended quirk of his, viz. that he did not remember having any conversation with Mahon, and from

Mahon not contradicting any part of M^cConnel's discourse about Birch, M^cMillan took him as assenting;—for Mahon positively swears, in his three depositions, (which please to see) that M^cMillan *asked him, and urged him,* with a promise of indemnity, to tell if Birch was drunk, and he told him Birch was not drunk. Mr. M^cMillan also exclaimed upon his trial before Presbytery, that *he thought it his duty to ask Mahon.* So that the cloak of an Elder could not shade Mr. M^cMillan from condemnation, an accusation being supported against him by three witnesses, Messrs. M^cConnel, Mahon and Bell—1 Tim. iii. 19.

The Rev. Francis Herron, of Rocky Spring, (before-mentioned) who it seems is esteemed by the Presbytery of Ohio, the first, if not the only genuine convert in the Rev. Presbytery of Carlisle, and, it is said, attempted to engraft on the good people of Rocky Spring, what is called our Western Revival, but it did not thrive well. This gentleman, in unison with his brethren of Ohio, made a dreadful attack on absent M^cConnel's character; from whence it would appear that a sacred regard for their neighbour's good name, is no part of a certain revival. Mr. Herron being *deservedly reprimanded* by the Rev. Mr. Cathcart, and asked by Birch what he had to impute to *Squire Gilmor and Mr. John Bell, who were also present, the tongue of calumny was forced to slip approbation. The Rev. Mr. Herron, and the other advocates of their Brethren of Ohio, should have remembered, that *Mr. Thomas M^cConnel was Mr. M^cMillan's,* and not Birch's evidence.

5th charge.—Proved to the Assembly, by Mr. M^cMillan's having taken his trial before Presbytery, and justified his having called Birch a Minister of the Devil, and declaring his intention of using every endeavour to put Birch out of the place, partly from Birch's being unconverted, (not having satisfied the Presbytery) and partly from M^cMillan having produced witnesses and attempted to prove Birch a drunkard, a liar, and a profane person—though undoubtedly the Presbytery of Ohio were censurable for corrupt judgment, in allowing Mr. M^cMillan to take new ground of defence in this charge, and to call in witnesses to blacken Birch's character, without any previous notice; it having been agreed at their meeting at Bethel, October 1801, when they made their deferred decision upon this charge, (see minute) that no further evidence was to be produced. But we shall waive this, and meet the Assembly on the Presbytery of Ohio's own ground. Birch, to refute Mr. M^cMillan's part justification for calling him a Minister of the Devil, and the threat of using every endeavour to put him out of the place, viz. Birch not being converted, as not satisfying the Presbytery in three examinations, produced to the Assembly, as he had before done to the Presbytery of Ohio, the minute of the former Assembly, where Birch was examined and approved of. If the very Rev. General Assembly wished to proclaim to the world, that they did not esteem it censurable in the Presbytery of Ohio, to account Ministers approved of by them, (the highest court of the Church) Preachers of the Devil, and as such, use every exertion to put them out of the place; Birch is sorry he applied for so poor a recommendation, and is afraid it is useless to reason with such gentlemen.—Birch, to set aside the other

part of Mr. M-Millan's justification, viz. having proved Birch a drunkard, a liar and profane reprobate, proved by witnesses, and from consequences shewed, that Mr. M-Millan's allegations were false, and if true, had no relation to his calling Birch a Minister of the Devil, as will appear evident from the following particulars:—How can it be thought that Mr. Wm. M-Comb, Elder, or his wife, believed that Birch was drunk in said M-Comb's house in February 1800? Mr. M-Comb and family attended next day after the scene, with Birch, at publick worship, without the smallest private whisper to any of the society—as an Elder, recommended persons to get their children baptized—Birch being invited to settle, as Minister, in Washington, had the subscription-paper of his quarter put into his hands(7)—attended a poll in opposition to Birch in July 1800—October sat in Presbytery, with Mr. M-Millan, then a professed opponent, when Birch's character and certificates were approved of—July 1801, Messrs. M-Millan and M-Comb remained silent, when Birch, calling forward witnesses, challenged Presbytery to name any charge—Mrs. and Mr. M-Comb denied to Mrs. M-Cammant, Mr. M-Comb denied, with a test, to Mr. Anderson, and both, in their own house, in August 1801, denied to the Commissioners, that Mr. M-Comb said Birch drank any, until they learned that Mr. M-Millan had blabbed out the secret told for the good of the Church, (no doubt Birch being supposed drowned in the pit he had dug for him) when M-Comb in confusion remarked, upon Presbytery insisting, he told them how much Birch drank, but informed them he was not intoxicated. After all this, and the lapse of so long a period, M-Comb

(7) Mrs. Mary M-Comb, wife of William, Elder, declared that her husband did not present Birch's subscription paper to any person, insinuating his being offended at Birch's behaviour in their house, and not being prevented by what was insinuated (see before) in Mr. Wherry's letter. The following depositions, of which Mr. M-Comb had due notice, will serve to shew his sentiments and conduct after Birch's avowed irregularities in his house.

Washington county, ss. At the request of the Rev. T. L. Birch, personally appeared before me, Alexander Little, one of the Justices of the Peace in and for said county, Andrew Nickell, Secedee, of Canton township, and being duly sworn as the law directs, deposed and saith, that in or about February, 1800, said deponent asked William M-Comb, Elder in the congregation of Washington, if they were going to try to get the Rev. Thomas Ledlie Birch here: said M-Comb answered, "Yes, if you Seceders will join and help us." Nickell said, he is a brave thundering preacher. "Yes," says said M-Comb, "a number of you Seceders think an heap of him—If you join us, I think we will get him." And further saith not. Sworn and subscribed before me this 19th day of December, 1805. ALEXANDER LITTLE. ANDREW NICKELL.

At the same time appeared as above, Joseph Clark, and being duly sworn as the law directs, deposed and saith, that in or about spring, 1800, William M-Comb, Elder in Washington congregation, told said deponent, that they were about getting the Rev. Thomas Ledlie Birch to be their Minister; and in two or three conversations, at different times, warmly recommended said Birch, in his presence, before large meetings; and informed said deponent that he had a subscription paper, and requested said deponent, who is a Secedee, to subscribe etc. said Birch. And further saith not. Sworn and subscribed before me this 19th day of December, 1805. ALEXANDER LITTLE. JOSEPH CLARK.

impeached for drunkenness by the oaths of Messrs. M·Kee and Bell, corroborated by one of his own witnesses, and what was called the Washington Session under complaint for permitting him to escape censure (still untried) for defaming Birch. Mrs. M·Comb, professing her rage for Birch meddling with her Billy, was brought forward to give testimony against Birch, exculpating her husband from one of Birch's principal grounds of charge—Wm. M·Comb, along with the breach of the sacred laws of hospitality, (to use the words of an upright judge, of the first abilities, when speaking of approvers, vulgarly called king's evidences) "here is a criminal come forward with the halter about his neck, wishing to hang his neighbour in his stead—you know what credit is due to such a witness!" Mr. and Mrs. M·Comb took a very suspicious time, not even when Mr. Wherry was there who was witness to the first drinking bout, but did not perceive it, though Birch went home with him. However, it will appear that their memories were not so good before another court as in Presbytery, (see Appendix) and perhaps they had a good deal of hear-say from their guest Stevenson.—It was too generous of Mr. M·Comb, to let Birch's last day's drinking of four gills and a half, go before Presbytery for a pint, when Mrs. M·Comb computed six gills and a half. However, at the lowest measure, comparing the oaths of Messrs. Wm. M·Cammant, Alexander Litle and Robert Anderson, and the declarations of Mr. Robert Stockton, his wife, and son John, Birch must have drunk a whole pint himself, out of a pint of whiskey, in M·Comb's; though Messrs. M·Cammant, M·Comb, and son, equally partook with him; and the same evening, in Mr. Stockton's, drunk three draughts of peach brandy, out of half a pint partook of by five persons, and left the house duly sober. Mr. Robert Stockton, Elder's, declaration, explained by himself, wife, son and co. to be but a mouse brought forth by the mountain, the *two draughts of strong peach brandy*, which might have been a gallon, being but the fifth share of a half pint.—Joseph Stevenson's declaration relative to Birch's drunkenness in Mr. Wm. M·Comb's house, confuted by what was proved against Mr. and Mrs. M·Comb. From his private allegations in the bed chamber, Birch was protected as being an Elder—but Birch, with the Roman Empress, wishes not his character even to be suspected—(See in appendix Mr. Stevenson's testimony in another court.) Mr. Stevenson, I hear, has since gotten married to a daughter of the Rev. Mr. Marquis's, and become a student of divinity in Canonburgh College.—Birch red-faced, but did not stagger, the fourth of July, in Mr. Thomas Officer's tavern, Washington—though a blank, Mr. and Mrs. Officer passed their oaths to prevent any doubts. Mr. Officer was subpoenaed to two Supreme Courts, for the purpose of swearing, that he had withdrawn his subscription from Birch for no other reason, than Birch's not being admitted into the communion of the American Presbyterian Church. But at all events, Mr. M·Millan's birds took wing before the fourth of July, 1801.—Mr. Hugh Cotton, Elder's oath:—The Rev. John M·Millan's zeal began to burn, upon the Philadelphia road, the 10th of June, 1801—the meeting in the late Gen. Taylor's house, the 4th of December following,

comparing Mrs. Taylor's, &c. oaths, (see before;) Prophet M^cMillan called Birch an unconverted Minister of the Devil, and would put him out of the place, foreseeing that six months after, Birch would drink a pint and three half gills out of a pint of spirits, Mr. Cotton, said not to be the most squeamish little gentleman, and five others, having taken a dram before him. That the copy of the letter noted No — (8) in the minutes of the Presbytery of Ohio, sent by certain persons to Birch, requesting him not to come to Washington, charged him with intemperance from the knowledge of the writers, is not true. Let the Presbytery of Ohio produce the copy, or stand convicted of recording a falsehood. Col. Thomas Acheson and Mr. John Israel, two of the writers, swore in the Supreme court, they never saw Birch intemperate, and all the rest declared the same, and that they were instigated by pious insinuations from Mr. William M^cComb, Elder, who had gotten Mr. Joseph Wherry into his train, perhaps set on with the same zeal which warmed Mr. Hugh Cotton.

Mr. Hans M^cCleland, an hearer of Mr. M^cMillan's, profanity about the horse in the stable, and excessive drinking—the stable business confuted by Mr. George Anderson, and Mr. Mathew Anderson could prove the same—Hans M^cCleland, before giving his testimony at Presbytery, endeavoured to persuade Mr. Anderson to go home. Mr. Joseph Soence attended two Supreme courts, at Washington, to prove that Mr. Hans M^cCleland promised seven bushels of wheat yearly to Birch, long after what took place in the stable; but Mr. M^cCleland did not appear with his scandal. If worthy Hans was not sufficiently known, it could be proved, that instead of excess, there was not even common decency in his house—hat he declared his willingness to Birch, to give testimony against Mr. M^cMillan, for certain slanders he had told him concerning Birch, and expressed sorrow for Birch's state. But after this, it seems, he got a son into Canonisburgh academy, had a clearer view of things, and saw the good cause in danger.

Andrew Swearingen, Esq. Elder, proving against Birch deliberate falsehood, (see his deposition, and *Telegraphic*, before) Birch's conversation with said Swearingen after Mr. M^cMillan had *traced*, discovered, and (to use the words of Lawyer Semple) procured the spade, at Strasburgh, to dig the pit for unregenerate Minister of the Devil, Birch, and therefore overshoots the mark. Besides, Mr. Robert Anderson (see his oath) winged Elder Swearingen, in shewing, at least, that he did not

(8) *It is well deserving of notice, that every testimony which can serve to blacken Birch's character, and transmit his name with odium to posterity, is inserted at large in the minutes of the Presbytery of Ohio and when needful, embellished. Many parts of evidence (such as Messrs Thomas M^cCornel's and John Bell's oaths, some of Birch's complaints, the letter from some gentlemen in Washington to Birch, &c.) which would heavily impeach themselves and vindicate Birch, are either unnoticed, or only noted "see No. ..." And where will these papers be found if called for? Perhaps we will be told, in the Rev. Thomas Marquis's pocket, from whence they will have fled; or in the archives of the school-house in the wood—they loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil; John iii. 19.*

advise Birch not to come to Washington. It has been proved since, by Squire Swearingen's own confession, (see appendix) that he encouraged Birch, and in the name of his party held out ample support, Squire Swearingen declared, he never told Birch, that Mr. M'Millan was losing his character. Birch, without using the cloke of an Elder, waves that point, it being in the way of being decided, from disinterested testimony, before a competent tribunal. Elder Swearingen was more modest in what he next declared, viz. that he did not remember to have mentioned any rough expression Mr. M'Millan made use of. Whilst the following deposition may serve as a specimen of the Rev. John M'Millan's meek conversation, it will perhaps help to bring some once known objects to gentlemen's view; I will not say to Andrew Swearingen, Esq. Elder.

Washington County, fs. Personally appeared before me John Wilson, one of the Justices of the Peace in and for said county, John Donning of Hickory creek, county of Beaver, and state of Pennsylvania, who, being duly sworn as the law directs, deposeth and saith, that in or about the year of our Lord 1800, the deponent had occasion to go to Mr. Pollock's, his neighbour, where he found the Rev. John M'Millan engaged in family prayer, after which Mrs. Pollock introduced said deponent to said Mr. M'Millan, who gave him a very cool reception. Said deponent observed to said M'Millan, that he supposed he did not know him; said M'Millan replied, it was well if said deponent knew himself; deponent alledging Mr. M'Millan was addressing him in a spiritual point of view, said it was a question if he did. Said M'Millan observed to deponent, where were you yesterday? I saw your wife here, (he having preached there the day before.) Said deponent told him, he had been hearing Mr. Duncan, it being the preparation Lord's day. Upon which said M'Millan asked said deponent, Ah! are you going to the Deal too? and further observed, that there was Mr. Duncan, Mr. Smyth and Mr. Lang,* that you might hear them for a month, and you would not hear from them a word of religion, or Gospel sermon, or words to that effect. Upon which said deponent, being much agitated, without making any reply left the house—and further saith not. N. B. The Rev. John M'Millan admitted before deponent passed this deposition, that the words he made use of were, is that the way deponent was going to the Devil. Sworn to and subscribed before me this 29th day of October, 1805. JOHN WILSON. JOHN DONNAN.

Mr. Robert Stockton, Elder, called a second time, proved falsehood against Birch, not ordained with Messrs. Swearingen, Wherry and M'Comb, Elders, in the Presbytery of Ohio, (see Birch's address, *Telegraphe*) but by the Rev. John Craighead, of Rocky Spring—confuted by the words of Andrew Swearingen, Joseph Wherry, Robert Stockton and Wm. M'Comb, Elders, own address, (see before) "We the undersigned Elders of Washington congregation, were regularly ordained under the authority of the Ohio Presbytery." This is the proving of falsehood with a vengeance! Four regularly ordained Elders, published an unprovoked attack upon a stranger, in behalf of a Rev. Father whom they held forth to the world as *pious and irreproachable*, though charged by six oaths, in contempt of the highest court of his church, with having forged and spread the vilest calumnies—when the stranger, in defence of his character, gave a statement in their own words, these Elders appeared in defence of the *Father*, and one of them, for doing so, upon his solemn declaration, pronounced the stranger a

* *Ministers of the Associate Reformed Synod, whose abilities and principles are so well known as to need no comment.*

liar. The public has been given to understand, in the *Western Telegrapher*, (see before) that the Washington Elders were preparing a correct statement of facts and charges against Birch, founded upon the testimony of creditable witnesses, (viz. as has since appeared, chiefly their noble selves) to which they have added the sanction of their oaths, at the desire of the congregation, to be laid before Presbytery, in order to be transmitted to the General Assembly; and the publick were requested to suspend their judgment. The "correct statement" has been before Presbytery and the Assembly, but after so long a suspense, the publick has not been gratified by the Elders—they may now judge.—Messrs. Stockton and Wherry, Elders, proved falsehood against Birch, in having asserted they acted as Commissioners in inviting him to settle, as Minister, in Washington, (see before) confuted by themselves; see their declarations. Mr. Wherry declared he acted as Commissioner, and finished the contract. He might have added, (let John Wilson, Alexander Little, Esqs. and the whole country be asked) that after drunken Birch's leaving Washington, he recommended him, and solicited subscriptions for him, *with the zeal of an enthusiast*. As it is not easy to know when some men think themselves bound, Mr. Stockton should have made it appear, (there not being any written list of Commissioners) that he informed Birch he was not included in the second message, or had an objection to his settlement. But all such cavils are answered by the oaths of Messrs. McCamant, Little and Anderson.—James Allison, Esq. proved that in Birch's house, M'Millan said M'Connel, alone, in the presence of Mahon, conversed with him—confuted by the circumstance of Messrs. M'Millan and Allison vindicating Mahon's character from Birch's observations: Why should Birch challenge a man, if not given as an author? There being great tenderness expressed here for character, in comparison of what was shewn to M'Connel, and a dark stab seemingly aimed at Birch, it might be gratifying to the publick for these gentlemen to inform them how Mahon's business was cleared up, with his associate, on the road leaving this place; and it will be highly pleasing to Birch, to know his worthy friend Mahon was wronged by slanderers. Squire Allison further confronted by Mr. Robert Anderson, who has sworn that Mahon was mentioned by Mr. M'Millan as an author.—Mrs Sarah Clark, to prove falsehood against Birch, after due, the 15th August, 1801, Birch granted that he said in Mrs. Reed's, Washington, that Andrew Swearingen, Esq. Elder, denied in presence of Messrs. Little and Taylor, that he ever told Mr. Hugh Wiley, Washington, Birch was charged with adultery; yea, further added, that he never had the slightest belief of any such thing—confuted by Swearingen's testimony being impeached in other things. The affair has since been decided in Birch's favour in another court.—In the foregoing testimony, from which the Rev. John M'Millan justified himself for calling Birch a Minister of the Devil, and threatening to do every thing in his power to put him out of the place, the testimonies of Messrs. Swearingen, Wherry and Stockton, as well as Mr. M'Comb, were impeached, as being self-interested. These four Elders were also charged upon the oaths of Messrs. Little, M'Mekan and Anderson, with publishing a false libel upon Birch, (see before.) The whole of the evidence was confuted by disinterested testimony; many things shewn to be absurd and impossible; and some witnesses having established the opposite of what they intended to prove—Mr. M'Millan's principal charges against Birch, if true, had taken place after his attack upon Birch; and that Mr. M'Millan did not know of any charge, was evident from his having made that the ground of his suing

at Straßburgh, (see M'Connel and Mahon's oaths) and of his never thinking of such when he solicited his trial for this charge, at Bethel, in October 1801, (see Ohio minutes before) whereby the whole of this part of his defence fell to the ground. Yet the Assembly justified the Presbytery of Ohio, from what might be termed, to use the words of the ingenious Rev. Nathaniel Irwin upon the occasion, a *side swipe*; in having decided that the Rev. John M'Millan, in calling Birch a Minister of the Devil, and threatening to do every thing in his power to put him out of the place, was to be admonished for the harshness of the expression, though they were of the opinion, "that from the evidence produced; Mr. M'Millan had reason to think most unfavourably of Birch." The Assembly asked Birch, would he have M'Millan twice censured? A petty, low evasion to blind the ignorant. I said no—but it was Birch, and not M'Millan, who was censured! One censured for calling me a thief, and me branded as dishonest. If Mr. M'Millan had reason to be of the opinion, that Birch was a Minister of the Devil, the Presbytery of Ohio and the General Assembly, with deference to their high wisdoms, were both censurable for admonishing him for making use of the expression; for the danger of hell fire is expressly limited by our blessed Lord, to those who shall, without a cause, call their brother, thou fool, Minister of the Devil, or agent of hell in seducing God's people, Math. v. 22. Acts xiii. 8—10. Mr. M'Millan and some members of Presbytery have denied, that he started up in Presbytery and stretched out his hands towards Birch, and exclaimed, are you not now a Minister of the Devil, &c. But how many criminals would have been condemned, if their own words had been taken?

6th charge—Birch produced to the Assembly in support of this charge, Mr. M'Millan's having taken it as the ground of his defence before Presbytery, at Buffalo, April 1802, (please to see) that he had only conversation with M'Connel. The Rev. Samuel Ralston and James Allison, Esq. declared that they ever understood Mr. M'Millan as telling so. Mr. Alexander declared, that Mr. M'Millan having the Straßburgh depositions in his hands, said, "it was M'Connel only who told him about Birch, and he had never said Mahon had told him, and it might be seen M'Connel had cautiously avoided denying one word."* That Mr. M'Millan reported both Thomas M'Connel and James Mahon, was proved to the Assembly by the oaths and declarations of Messrs. Alexander Litle, Andrew M'Mekan and Robert Anderson, (see before) with the emphatick words, that Mr. M'Millan said *he put it seriously to both of them*. There would have been further indisputable proof, only for a little forget of Presbytery, viz. Mr. M'Millan telling Mahon before them, that *he thought it his duty to ask him about Birch*.

The sweeping resolution which was put by some members of the Assembly, viz. that the Presbytery of Ohio did not act towards Birch with a becoming justice, candour and brotherly affection, and was negatived 21 to 19, was occasioned by the following:—It was allowed on all hands, with scarce a murmur, that the conduct of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio was out of character; but Birch's colourings were alledged, by some, too high; therefore, a number of most respectable members, as some of them told me themselves, joined in voting my charges unsupported; with the view of putting this resolution, which they thought would have been almost generally adopted; and with which Birch would have been satisfied. But as the proceeding with Birch was begun in injustice and *breach of faith*, so it ended in *hypo-*

*Mr. M'Millan's denial before Presbytery, of having reported James Mahon one of his authors, can be proved by Mr. Robert Irwin; see appendix.

crisy and deception with the worthy members of the Assembly. The Presbytery of Ohio were not only screened from censure, but their conduct towards Birch declared just and benevolent! If such is the merey a majority of the very Rev. General Assembly approved of, it might be edifying to the publick to let them know what they esteem cruelty. O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their Assembly, mine honour, be not thou united;—Gen. ix. 6. Upon this decision taking place, Birch requested to know of the Assembly in what standing he was to consider himself in the Church; when he was informed, in the same state as when he came into America. Birch observed, being upwards of three years in the United States, nearly two years in the bounds of Ohio Presbytery under appeals, and having passed an examination in the Assembly, he expected an immediate reception into the Church, if, upon trial, his qualifications should be approved of; upon which the very judicious Rev. Mr. Irwin addressed me, (as I thought, assented to by the Assembly) *Mr. Birch, from the allegations set forth against you, it is not wrong to continue you another year upon probation!* The expressions pierced me to the heart, and the high opinion I had entertained of the man, rendered the wound more mortal. I retired from the Assembly, and shortly after returned and handed a paper in substance as follows, and having called upon the highly Rev. Moderator and Rev. Clerks, as witness that such a paper was presented, withdrew.

Birch most respectfully begs leave to inform the very Rev. &c. that he is now reduced to the most disagreeable necessity of bringing a civil action against the Rev. John McMillan, for the vindication of his character; that there was amongst the papers necessary to prosecute his charges, presented to them, against the Presbytery of Ohio, for which he presented the receipt of Presbytery, signed by Thomas Moor, Moderator, but none of which he could obtain, one most material in his present business, and clearing his reputation, viz. the depositions of Messrs. McConnel, Mahon and Bell, taken before, &c. and by authority of, &c. and testified by, &c. therefore most respectfully notifies, that if necessary, he will avail himself of the testimony of D. & C. Green, Cooper, Messrs. Greer, Cathcart, Col. Rutger, or any other member of their very Rev. body, that this paper was not produced by the Presbytery of Ohio, though repeatedly called for by Birch; that Birch, agreeably to the Alien Law, most respectfully alleges he is entitled to a standing in the Church, and therefore begs leave to decline the favour of accepting him upon further probation, requests to be looked upon only as a foreign Minister, upon the same footing he stood upon his arrival in America; and if the General Assembly, or any person under their jurisdiction, have any charge to alledge against Birch, he most respectfully informs them, that either now, or upon notice in Washington, he is ready to meet them in any court; that Birch being dismissed and withdrawn from the Assembly, he hereby most humbly and respectfully gives notice, that as soon as their minutes are made publick, he intends, (God willing) and will think himself justifiable in publishing remarks upon the decision in his case.—With the most earnest desire for brotherhood upon Gospel terms.

Philadelphia, 27th May, 1802.

T. L. BIRCH.

Birch having left the Assembly, a number cried out, (as he was informed) will we not publish a warning to the people of America not to hear him? A judicious member silenced the assembly, by asking them what they would publish, Birch having challenged the whole of them to name an item against him—when the cry was changed; he is a foolish, hot-headed fellow! If any member shall see him, let him be desired to return. My

worthy friend, the Rev. Mr. Cathcart, at the adjournment for dinner, seeing me in the street, told me the Assembly considered my proceedings too hasty, as they had not concluded my business; that the observation of Mr. Irwin was only considered as that of *an individual*. Expressing to Mr. Cathcart, that nothing was more disagreeable to me than misunderstanding with the very Rev. General Assembly, I waited upon them at the opening of the afternoon session, when I was presented with the following (to use the words of a most worthy Rev. Doctor, to whom I shewed it on my road home) *evasive, permitting, forbidding, allowing, dissuading* resolution, (as appears by the original copy, in the hand-writing of the Rev. Mr. Cathcart, assistant Clerk, upon the back of the declinature handed to the Assembly, which I withdrew, and have now in my possession) and even with which I expressed myself satisfied, viz. "Although Mr. T. L. Birch has handed a paper to the Assembly, declaring that he no longer wishes to be considered as any way connected with the Presbyterian body, yet as the Assembly wish to act with candour and integrity towards all men, the Assembly resolve, that any Presbytery, to whom he may apply, are at liberty to receive him, agreeably to the regulations of the General Assembly, and may shorten the time of his probation, if they think adviseable and proper." This resolution, which might have been considered as a settled contract, was reconsidered next day in my absence, and saddled with the clause, "provided Birch did not continue to exercise his ministry within the bounds of the Presbytery of Ohio, without the permission of that Presbytery." Thus, by *craft*, a total separation was not only made between Birch and his friends in Washington, but himself and family injured and defamed, as they were driven out of the immense district westward of the Allegheny mountain, it being evident that neither the Presbytery of Ohio, nor any under their influence, would likely grant such indulgence; and this might have satisfied the advocates of the Ohio Presbytery, who said I had only to blame myself for all my trouble, in having applied to that Presbytery the second time. They might have known, that along with the reasons already given, viz. Birch's desire to shew that he did not retain malice, Washington being in the bounds of Ohio Presbytery, and a cheap country being best adapted to Birch's resources; there was not any other Presbytery where he had a prospect of being received, nearer than 170 miles, and that upon the east side of the Allegheny mountain; and that a man with a numerous family and small estate, was ill fitted for long journies; and particularly with an impeached character, he could but move with a bad grace, and little prospect of success, into places where circumstances were not known. But men void of humanity, and who, seemingly, paid no regard to character, perhaps never thought of such things.

Considering the decision of the Assembly a stigma upon me, whom I considered the injured person, and fraught with the forementioned evils, I observed to a Rev. Doctor, of the first respectability, that it was hard for me to be banished: he observed this was not the case; for though some misunderstanding had prevented my reception in the Presbytery of Ohio, yet being received by another Presbytery, their certificate could not be refused any body under the Assembly's jurisdiction. I therefore patiently submitted, before my being subjected to a little inconvenience, should be the cause of disturbing the peace of the Church: but, alas! I quickly learned that all my surmises were more than realized. Returning to Washington by the Rev. Presbytery of Huntingdon, upon presenting the Assembly's minute, and requesting admission, the Rev. John B. Patterson, their delegate

at the late Assembly, observed that the Rev. Thomas Marquis told him, that Mr. McMillan would support certain charges against me. The Presbytery being about to decide upon my admission, consulting the Assembly's permission, viz. agreeably to rules, &c. it was found I must be dealt with as landing in America. Having presented my testimonials, &c. to the former Assembly there was not any necessity to have them at the late one: therefore, not having them to produce, the Presbytery was obliged to dismiss me, which they did by a minute to the following effect, signed by John Coulter, Presbytery Clerk—"Birch having applied to the Presbytery of Huntington, for admission agreeably to rules, &c. but not having his credentials, &c. and reports most injurious to his moral character, being in circulation in the bounds of the Presbytery of Ohio; his request cannot at present be granted."—Returning to Washington, I informed my hearers, that agreeably to the regulations of the Assembly, I would not officiate among them in a ministerial capacity; that any meeting we should have, was only to be considered as a private society; that I would not baptize children; and I challenge an impeachment of the honourable observance of my declaration. Being called abroad, I met with Messrs. Robert and Hamilton Bell's remonstrance to the Presbytery of Ohio, stating, that Birch had earnestly hoped and desired to have settled in the bounds with Mr. McMillan about, &c. in the church, but was prevented redress in the Assembly by unjust & oppressive methods; that with all that had taken place, he still in charity believed that the public faith of Presbytery would not have been violated, in detaining his papers; that as such would not appear honourable to the Church before a Supreme Court, they were afforded an opportunity of repairing injury and vindicating character;—requesting a copy of their minutes, and the names of the members at each meeting, during Birch's confinement;—and stating that though much injured, as Birch wants not Mr. McMillan's money, nor to hurt his person, character, or usefulness, if he will acknowledge he has wronged Birch, and promise to be a good neighbour, and this to be inserted in the minutes of the Presbytery of Ohio, and of the very Rev. General Assembly, he shall be forgiven:—Their injured, but willing to be reconciled friend, upon Gospel terms, T. L. BIRCH.

Washington County fs. Personally appeared before John Wilson, one of the justices in and for said county the within named Robert Bell, who being duly sworn as the law directs, deposes and saith, that the within mentioned Hamilton Bell did not attend with him upon the 29th day of June, 1802, when he delivered the foregoing complaint of the Rev. Thomas Leche Birch to the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio. Deponent saith that he did not receive any written answer from the Rev. Presbytery but the Rev. John McMillan declared that the whole of the fore mentioned complaint was a bundle of lies, and Mr. Marquis added, that he had delivered to the very Rev. General Assembly the whole of Birch's papers, and he wondered that any man in his senses would give in such a paper. Sworn to and subscribed before me this 8th day of April, 1803.

JOHN WILSON.

ROBERT BELL.

The Lord's day after Presbytery, by order, Mr. Lindly, occasional Missionary, preached in Washington Academy for the purpose of vindicating the Ohio Presbytery, and impeaching my veracity in the affair of the keeping back of my papers. The congregation were led to understand that there was the signature of the Rev. Dr. Green, stated Clerk, that all Birch's papers were delivered to the Assembly by the Rev. Messrs. Watson and Marquis, the Ohio delegates. I afterwards discovered, by Mr. John Hoge, of Washington, (who gave me a copy) that the Ohio delegates certificate was signed by Dr. Roe, as Moderator of the Assembly, and is as follows:

Philadelphia, May 27th, 1802.—It is hereby certified, that the Commissioners from the Ohio Presbytery, did lay upon the table the denunciation of T. McDaniel, which was taken at Strassburgh; of Mahon, taken before Presbytery; and that Mr. Birch handed a deposition, which he said was a copy of Bell's, to which the Commissioners agreed; and that they were read and considered by the Assembly in the decision. Signed by order,

AZEL ROE, Moderator.

It is hoped that Dr. Roe was deceived into this plan of a certificate, to shade the Ohio Presbytery from dreaded odium; he therefore will be pleased to answer the following queries:—As Birch heard the minutes of Assembly read, and requested a copy of the order, but did not hear of nor get any, by what order Dr. Roe signed the certificate of the Ohio delegates relative to Birch's papers? Where was the necessity for the revealed name of the Moderator of the Assembly to support claims, instead of each of the Strassburgh depositions being delivered to the Assembly, by the Ohio delegates, agreeably to contract under the signature of their Moderator? Would it not have been accounted under the British government, (for which Dr. Roe was such a zealous advocate,) for him, to have

feals and tear papers of consequence—and in Birch's case, was it not only a breach of the eighth, but ninth commandment? Let the publick judge from the following depositions, taken before Ebenezer Ferguson, Esq. Philadelphia, under a commission out of the Court of the county of Washington, Penn. present the Rev. John M^cMilian, &c.

Question to Mr. Wm. Smiley—Was you in the committee room of the General Assembly in Philadelphia, in May, 1802? Answ. I was.

Quest. Did you hear the Rev. T. L. Birch demand of the delegates of the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, certain papers of evidence, in support of his complaint against said Presbytery, and for which Birch produced the receipt of said Presbytery? Answ. I saw the Rev. T. L. Birch produce a paper which he said was the receipt of said Presbytery; but the papers it called for were not produced.——Quest. Did the Rev. Thomas Marquis, one of the delegates of the Ohio Presbytery, make any observations respecting said papers? Answ. I saw the Rev. Thomas Marquis put his hand on his pocket,—and said he *believed he had the papers* that would settle the business.

Sworn and subscribed this 30th day of May, 1803.

EBENEZER FERGUSON.

WILLIAM SMILEY.

Quest. to Capt. Samuel Young—Was you present in the General Assembly, in May 1802, when the Rev. T. L. Birch demanded some papers from the Rev. John Watson and the Rev. Thomas Marquis, delegates from the Ohio Presbytery, and produced a receipt for the same? Answ. I was present at the above time and place, and heard the Rev. T. L. Birch repeatedly call for the papers for which he had the receipt; and they were all produced, *except one or two*.——Quest. What was the purport of the above papers? Answ. As I was informed, they were papers in support of the character of the Rev. T. L. Birch against the Presbytery of Ohio, and stated by him to be of great consequence.——Sworn and subscribed this 30th day of May 1803

EBENEZER FERGUSON.

SAMUEL YOUNG.

Birch set off for the Rev. Presbytery of New-Castle, where he was most courteously received. Upon requesting admission, agreeably to the Assembly's minute, he was most obligingly informed, if he should remove his family, he should have a friendly residence amongst them, and be permitted to sojourn. At the same time, the learned and very judicious Rev. Nathaniel W. Sempie, a delegate to the foregoing Assembly, observed, and was acquiesced in by the other members, that there was *something dark, and which he could not fathom*, in Birch's being prohibited to preach in the bounds of the Presbytery of Ohio; that the Assembly perceiving Birch's feelings hurt by their decision, and not having it in their power to give him any relief, all authority being delegated to Presbyteries, (9) in order to quiet Birch's mind, passed the resolution to permit any Presbytery to receive him. Upon which Birch was dismissed, with a minute, signed by — Mitchel, stated Clerk, and dated August 4. 1802, importing that his request of an immediate admission into the Church could not be granted.

Birch's character suffering much from the Assembly's decision in the Ohio business, and not being able to defend himself for want of the Strasburgh depositions kept back before that body, he called upon Squire Gilmor, and obtained a certified copy of the last depositions; and in October 1 waited upon the Rev. Presbytery of Huntingdon. Having produced a 1 my certificates, &c. and the minute of my rejection by the Presbytery of Ohio and a motion for my reception being made and seconded, the very judicious and pious Rev. Isaac Greer observed, and which was agreed to, that before any step relative to Birch's reception should be taken, he should for the honour of religion and the credit of the Presbytery, be obliged to exculpate himself from the charges alledged against him

(9) *Here is an hint to foreign Ministers, of what they may expect from complaints to the Assembly, under the Alien law. The Assembly has brought the well ordered Christian Church to an happy state—the highest wisdom and virtue to be governed—yea insulted by the lowest—to be indeed, in the language of Hudibras, the many-headed monster, like in certain mixtures, the sum and frith uponmost. There is Tom Paine instructed in the school of America, esteemed an excellent politician by all the true friends of Liberty in the old countries, but a very sorry divine. The Assembly have long railed against him; and if it is true, that he has been brought, through grace to repentance, which I most earnestly pray may be the case, he will rise in judgment against the Assembly and condemn them. for by not attending to his political maxims, even in the unhappy business before us, the Assembly have done more towards spreading Paine's divinity, (some of their most zealous advocates being judges) than all their preachings and missions, which have cost the States so many thousands of millions, are likely to do good for some years. Mr. Paine when speaking of a government where there are no hereditary King, or President, and Lords, with an Assembly elected by the people designed as checks upon each other, observes, that as any hereditary chief magistrate or Lord had no great a chance to be foolish as any equal number of the people there was some reason in appointing the wisest of the nation to regulate its policy; but there could be no propriety in setting up folly to check wisdom.*

by the Presbytery of Ohio. Birch observing that the Assembly had passed over all a leged crimes, and he wished the Rev. Presbytery of Huntingdon to try him. Mr. Green retorted, the Assembly was highly venerable; they had indeed granted Birch an *act of indulgence*, but they had not yet gotten the length of pardoning sin—If Birch was *worth* for the Presbytery of Ohio, he was *unqualified* for them—If Birch was *guilty of crimes*, *he should be punished*—If the Presbytery of Ohio was chargeable with intolerance and declination they should be censured—The Assembly had sent Birch throughout America with a rope about his neck, and the minute of the Presbytery of Ohio a *label upon his breast*, this man is charged with nameless crimes, *viz. a general report of, &c.* who will hang him!—The Presbytery of Huntingdon, having some name of justice and humanity, would not be engaged in dirty jobs; therefore as with the whippers and impositions of the Apostles, let those put in Birch bring him out; Acts xvi. 34—39. And accordingly Birch was dismissed by a minute of which the following is the substance:—“That the General Presbytery met at Fair-Kingsquodias, the 5th, 6th and 7th of October, 1802.—The Rev. F. L. Birch produced to Presbytery his credentials, &c. and requested to be received agreeably to rules, &c. also produced the minute of the Ohio Presbytery, signed Joseph Patterson, Moderator, and George Scott, Clerk, setting forth that they will have nothing farther to do with Birch as to his trials &c. not only from their not receiving satisfaction in experimental religion, but also from general reports which prevail with respect to his imprudent irregular conduct—Some of which reports, it appears to Presbytery from documents laid before them by Mr. Birch, signed John Gumor, Esq. were circulated by the Rev. John M. Millan—the Presbytery, after the most mature deliberation, were of opinion, that notwithstanding the recommendation of the General Assembly, his request cannot be granted. Attested by order of Presbytery, JOHN JOHNSTON, Stated Clerk.”

Birch personally called upon the Presbytery of Ohio for the Strasburgh depositions, to prevent quibbles at the next Assembly. Birch having convicted, in the civil court, Mr. Hugh Wylie, of Washington, of slander in connection with the Ohio business, and having informed them, however reluctant he was to expose them in their ecclesiastical capacity, he would be obliged to call them before the civil judicature; Presbytery agreed to give him a copy, which he received, attested John M. Millan, Stated Clerk.

A supplication to the Assembly, from Birch's hearers in the town and vicinity of Washington, was drawn up and signed in their name, (as will appear by the original now in my hands) John Hughes, John Hagan, Adam Weir, Alexander Lisle, Robert Hamilton, Robert Steen, James Leeper, Andrew Nickell, James Chambers, setting forth an high expression of sorrow, for troubling them the third time; that Birch had agreeably to order, declined in Washington the publick exercise of his ministry and went in search of admission into the Church, but instead of redress of injury, after nearly three years trouble and great loss, he was condemned and rejected the Church; that the honour of the Presbyterian cause had received a deep wound; praying that if Birch was worthy of being called a *Minister of the Devil*, he may be dismissed until he evidences repentance; otherwise the Presbytery of Ohio to be dealt with according to justice and mercy; requesting, as Birch had obtained the papers suppressed by the Ohio delegates at the late Assembly, a *revision* of their late decision; hoping that they would not be locked upon the worke for the scandalous manner in which they had been treated at the late Assembly, without their knowledge, by men forgetting their character as elders; not wishing to insult the Assembly with railing, the never failing attendant of a bad cause, they humbly presumed they could bear a comparison with their opponents; that with their Divine Master, they esteemed not honett indurity, or even poverty, a reproach;—if the *grossest infidelity constituted an objection*, Birch would be deprived of his *first rate opposition*; appointing Capt. Samuel Young and Mr. William Smiley, of Philadelphia, Commissioners.

Birch set off to Philadelphia by the Presbytery of Huntingdon, which met at Bellefonte the 2^d of April, 1803, for the purpose of lodging a friendly complaint (only) to the Assembly against their decision, to prevent exclusion from the Church under the Alien law; when the Rev. Mathew Brown, then of Millan, now of Washington, Presbytery Clerk, was ordered, as will appear by their records, to make out an attested copy of the minutes, to be sent with the complaint by the delegates to the Assembly. At the Assembly Birch applying to the Rev. Henry K. Wilson, of Bellefonte, the Huntingdon delegate, for the minutes of Presbytery, the complaint, and attested copy of the Strasburgh depositions, he told Birch there were no papers transmitted by him, and had not Birch taken care to be otherwise provided, he must have been as with the brethren of Ohio the former year. Birch had Mr. Brown subpoenaed to attend with the above papers at the Supreme Court, the October following, at Washington, Penn. on the trial between the

Rev. John McMillan, unless the papers were conveyed to the Rev. John Johnston, (then Postmaster) Huntingdon, by the first mail. The papers did not reach Mr. Johnston agreeably to order, neither did Mr. Brown attend the summons. Birch having expressed an intention of taking legal methods, Mr. Brown excused his non-attendance from indisposition. He will be pleased to satisfy the public, why the papers were not sent to the Assembly, and why they were detained a second time, for eight days, in Dr. Watson's, Postmaster, Missin. where Mr. Brown lodged, until Mr. Johnston was set off for Washington.——In the committee of overtures, consisting of a number of Birch's acquaintances of last year, particularly Col. John Bayard, of Jersey, Birch presented the Washington supplication and the Huntingdon complaint, and prayed them to be licensed to the Assembly. The Rev. John McMillan, who was a member, modestly came forward to the Clerk's table, unasked, and assumed the office of reading them. The Rev. Nathan Greer, (10) of the Rev. Presbytery of New-Castle, a delegate to the former Assembly, violently opposed the rehearing of the last year's decision, alledging they had determined upon the same evidence, (let the reader judge) and carried his point. Col. John Bayard, agreeably to custom, had Birch repeatedly engaged in writing statements of what was meant by the complaint against the Presbytery of Huntingdon for rejection—the Rev. Dr. Woodhul, Moderator, humanely leaving the chair, and speaking, carried the licensing of this paper. Birch presented the above complaint to the Assembly, and also produced the Strasburgh depositions and the Washington supplication, and complained that the committee refused to license a rehearing of last year's decision; the Assembly confirmed the decision of the committee. Being desired to speak to my complaint for rejection by the Huntingdon Presbytery, I observed, unless it was agreed that I should not be interrupted, I would not speak. It being fixed I should not, I proceeded to give a brief history of the business, which would have let the cat too much out of the bag; when I was repeatedly interrupted with speeches, and cries *I was hurting myself*; and finally stopped, and under pretence of saving time, confined to what took place before Huntingdon Presbytery, unintelligible to many without explanation, though five times the period necessary for Birch to have spoken, was taken up in useless cavils. The Assembly being about to proceed to a discussion, Birch, to shew the good disposition of the Presbytery of Huntingdon, presented the following certificate:—I do certify, as a member of Huntingdon Presbytery, that from the credentials and other collateral testimony laid before our Presbytery by Mr. Birch, which were highly approved of, and the long knowledge which some members have had of his person and character, there would have been no objection to his immediate and cordial reception, except the reports relative to his moral character, circulated by the Presbytery of Ohio, alluded to in our minutes.

Huntingdon, May 2d, 1803.

(Signed) JOHN JOHNSTON.

The above certificate was strongly confirmed by the Rev. Asa Dunham, a member of said Presbytery, who was called upon by the Assembly—(not a delegate.) Upon the supposition that no new charges would have been introduced, the Rev. Asa Dunham and Birch declined further speaking. The conduct of the Presbytery of Huntingdon being severely reprobated, Mr. Dunham rose to explain, but was ordered down. The Rev. James Hughes proceeded to insult the Assembly, by reading a paper setting forth, in opposition to the former examinations of that body, that Birch manifested great ignorance before the Presbytery of Ohio, viz. saying that an unregenerate person could have saving faith, (see before;) Birch denying the charge, there was a cry, dont let us be interrupted! After a long debate, it was moved and carried, "That as the last Assembly have declared that any Presbytery is at liberty to receive Mr. Birch on trials, the Presbytery of Huntingdon ought not to have rejected him on the ground mentioned in their records, but to have taken him up and dealt with him according to his merits." See printed minutes, 1803, page 14.—And why did not the General Assembly declare that the Presbytery of Ohio should have taken up and proceeded with Birch? Was it less censurable to raise lies, or to suspend judgment until the truth was discovered?—A general sense being now expressed in the Assembly, that Birch was at liberty to renew his peregrination in quest of Church admission, the humane and very judicious Rev. Dr. Timothy Dwight, a delegate from the Connecticut Association, observed, that this might prove an endless work to Birch; that in their societies, who were Independents, they were considered as

(10) This gentleman is esteemed by his Ohio brethren, the chief, if not only convert in his Presbytery—He is a faithful executor of the Alien law—He was wrote to from the Ohio Presbytery, to have the Rev. Colin M Farquar censured, for baptizing some children, (amongst whom was a child of one of his own learners who had not joined any society) when upon a visit at Westington. How unhappy this had not been in opposition to Birch! If so worthy a man could have been the tool of an unprincipled junta, Mr. M Farquar would have been censured.

obliged to proceed with and receive any Minister who applied to them, unless they could shew a reasonable objection. This sentiment being sanctioned by a number, Ohio Presbytery was named as a proper object for Birch's application, when the Rev. John M'Mullan cried aloud, *If the Assembly voted Birch to them, they would not receive him!* — It was moved and seconded, that the Presbytery of Huntington, or any other to whom Birch may apply, be directed to receive him upon trials agreeably to rules, &c. and shorten the time of his probation, if thought fit — which was violently opposed by all those of like sentiment with the Presbytery of Ohio, upon the principle that no Presbytery could be obliged to receive any member but such as they choose themselves — It was moved and seconded, to amend the above motion, by striking out the words, "or any other to which he may apply." which was partial and unjust, and the debate closed the evening. Birch the next morning called upon a pious, zealous Rev. member of the Assembly, of tried integrity, and told him he was determined to cut matters short, by telling the Assembly, that unless they will be pleased to take the necessary steps to vindicate his character, he must beg leave to decline accepting any more permissions to go in search of admittance into the Church. The clergyman observed, he had to tell me, that I must go and endeavour, under the Divine blessing, to do as much good as in my power, upon my own bottom, for it was fixed not to give me any redress; for he had observed me eyed, pointed at, and heard me talked of, since my appearance in the Assembly. Waiting upon the Assembly, and informing them as above, I was told there was no any imputation against my character. Birch thanked them for their good opinion, but observed, the honour of religion, the respect due to his numerous connections, the credit of his family, and his own feelings, led him to think otherwise. The Ohio delegates and their friends, by way of another *side-wipe*, cried out that Birch had, contrary to the Assembly's injunction, exercised his ministry in Washington. A charge was framed, and some members of the committee of overtures withdrawing to the corner of the church, licensed it (not like Birch's papers) in an instant; and the motion relative to any Presbytery being obliged to proceed with Birch, was postponed until this inquiry should be made, and Birch was called upon to answer the charge. He replied, he was ready to answer any charge, provided it was to be considered as taken in connection with the vindication of his character. There was a cry acquiesced in, they would first inquire about Birch's officiating in the Presbytery of Ohio. Birch rejoined, that he would not consent to any inquiry, except including character, and proceeded to withdraw, when he was called back by the Moderator, and returned in expectation of his terms being complied with. The Moderator said, it was their wish for Birch to inform them first of his officiating in the Presbytery of Ohio, and that only; the character would afterwards be enquired into — though it seems there was no such intention. It was carried, that Birch should be confined to that point, numbers shouting, "if convicted, they would spurn him about his business!" And durst not the General Assembly meet a stranger in a fair, open investigation? — Birch having been twice deceived by rumps of the two former Assemblies, and knowing that in leading questions, when the Presbytery of Ohio was excluded, he was rather in a minority, and now that their delegates and those of Erie, a *branch*, were allowed to vote, he must be decidedly cast, and through a quirk thrown out into the world, under an implied stigma; replied, he had not any doubt they wished to hear every thing which would serve their purpose in getting a catch upon him.

without vindicating his character, *hang him first and try him afterwards*; that he would appeal to the good people of America, and no doubt they would adopt the most proper method to defend themselves.—Birch having left the house, the Assembly resolved, that he had been heard already in every thing which could affect the question of his having officiated in the bounds of the Presbytery of Ohio; and they might have added, which could have affected their decision to censure the Presbytery of Huntington, and let the Presbytery of Ohio creep out: “therefore resolved, that in consequence of Birch’s having withdrawn in a contemptuous manner, and having never been in regular ministerial communion with their body, the Assembly decline all further intercourse with Birch, and declare to the people, &c. that he is possessed of no authority from said Church, to exercise any part of the ministerial functions.” See printed minutes, 1803.—But why did not the Assembly first hear Birch’s charges against the Presbytery of Ohio, instead of insisting upon hearing the subsequent one relative to his officiating within the bounds of that Presbytery, and scouting him out of the house if guilty? What criminal would ever be convicted, if he could stop prosecution by bringing against his accuser a subsequent charge? Even supposing Birch had been guilty, a Gospel Assembly would have replied to his Ohio accusers, “we will try you first for a breach of the eighth and ninth commandments, breaking contracts, seals, forging and telling lies, and will afterwards teach Birch submission to authority.” But this is not the first Assembly of Elders which made the law of God void by their traditions, Math. xv. 3. The honourable State Assembly of Pennsylvania, from whom the General Assembly hold their money charter, dismissed Alexander Addison, Esq. a Judge of first note, from office, for preventing Mr. Lucas, his Associate Judge, to speak. What must the State Assembly think of the conduct of the very Rev. Papa’s, and particularly their sons of Ohio, who modestly petitioned for a State law, licensing the Church for a school of scandal! —The Assembly excuse themselves by saying, Birch was already fully heard: but was it not, with the Prophet, hear ye, indeed, but understand not, &c. Isai. vi. 9. 10. They so fully heard Birch, as to be convinced that Mr. McMillan, the Presbytery of Ohio, and the late Assembly, would be launced over *head and ears in the mud*—and therefore the Assembly thought it better that Birch, an *Irishman*, betimed as he was, should be turned forth to shift for himself, than *an hundred converts, just bedecked with their revivals, should be defiled*. Let us hear! The Ohio Presbytery represented Birch a qualified imp of Hell; Birch charged them with the most heinous crimes, (see before) yet the Assembly declare both *white as snow*. Must not the religious people of America think this an admirable Revival of Religion, and that the tree must be excellent which bears such fruit?

* Extraordinary Revivals are indeed expected, and earnestly prayed for—but are they such as have been from the westward trumpeted through the organ of the Assembly, for some years? Formerly the Revivals were Lord’s night and week, &c. &c. societies; very proper in their season, and when they do not interfere with other duties. But what was the effect of this night work? David returned after publick worship, to bless his household, 2 Sam. vi. 20. Even society prayers have been known not to bless their household—their family in their absence upon the Lord’s night, like Beldam. That youth would have a zeal in attending such, may be supposed, when we are told by married men, they sparked their wives there; and so great were the love enjoyments, that five daughters in one family were all with child at the same time—thereby verifying the sarcasm of a scoffer,

How gracefully must the Assembly censure their people, and how submissive must the people be! Thou that preachest a man should not, &c. dost thou, &c. Rom. ii. 19-24. Tho' the views of the people in their bounty are most laudable, how eminently are such qualified for reformatting Indians, who, or even wild Arabs, abominate such vices and never betray their guest under their roof; and therefore, those they have appointed chiefs, (men of abilities, unlike those

that societies took the lead of dancings in getting children. There have been lately *fallings and sacramental camp meetings*, with increasing zeal for former institutions; and the Apostle Paul's being struck down upon the road to Damascus, before his conversion, has been produced as a scripture example for falling. We will not say, with some, that it is a work of the Devil, or even a delusion; but with every respect for the opinion of some, we hope truly religious people, who think favourably of the work, we ask, where is the Divine proof? Who, like the Apostle, has been miraculously gifted, and changed from the *wolf to the lamb*? A few may have become more reserved, as might have been expected in the ordinary progress of the Gospel. But with their hundred fallings, it is challenged to produce one Preacher, or faller, to be esteemed as having obtained more truth, honesty, or mercy, whilst the latter end of thousands is worse than the beginning. How did the tumult in the Church agree with the Apostle Paul's directions, 2 Cor. xiii.—Young ladies equipping themselves, lest their fine clothes should suffer—young gentlemen planted behind, to catch the favoured object—a Minister's daughter, beginning to bloom, eluding a certain one who wished to catch her—old Elders pressing screaming, distracted young damsels in their arms—young women fondling about an old converted Doctor—worship over, all well (with few exceptions) get up, refit dress, mount their horses, out with their cakes, begin eating and laughing, set off at the gallop. A young woman, the only one who fell in Pittsburgh at the Synodical sacrament, and held forth as an example, being with child, a Squire's lady, for the sake of her children, having submitted to her living in the house with her husband, the adulterer having sold the estate, decamped with her. Ladies in the act of falling have communicated the foul disease. The debauching of young women, esteemed virtuous, in various quarters, has been made self evident. If to this would be added the number that may be supposed without fruit, and married women, instances of which are notorious, and which have made some gentlemen a little scrupulous in allowing their wives to go to such places, unless in their company; whereby there has been too much ground for the reflection of serious people, who have withdrawn, that these night revels were calculated to debauch the country. Instances could be given of an angel, and even the Holy Spirit, being charged with being fathers;—though I was told by a gentleman, if a certain angel, in whose arms a fallen lady had recovered, had been heard at his spring, upon the sacrament day, with a bottle of whiskey in his hand among his companions, it might have been easily guessed that he was not from above. There might be mentioned an old father, students at an academy, visitors at sacraments, letting their private devotions be heard over the neighbourhood—lawyers, to obtain business, going over the falling manœuvres, the fund of jest over their cups—jerkings, dancing, barkings at the Devil, &c.—yea, the marriage bond dissolved, but not neglecting to propagate their species—fully equaling the follies of the ancient Heathen. But we forbear, as we learn by the late pastoral letter, that the most hot-headed in the Assembly find they have overdone the business.

usually sent to them) where they choose to disclose their minds, reply to those termed Christian Missionaries, and others, in words similar to those of our blessed Lord. (I have it from those to whom addresses have been made) "Physician heal thyself—you compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and make him two fold more the child of Hell," Luke iv. 23. Math. xxiii. 15. And they may now add, those who have no mercy for their Christian brethren, who sacrificed their all in the same cause with themselves, can have no mercy for them!

The Assembly needed not to have proclaimed to the people of America, that Birch did not belong to their society, when he had withdrawn from their meeting, and declined every connection: but perhaps they thereby designed to give him a third *side-wipe*, by insinuating, as has been re-echoed by their very judicious Synod of Kentucky and their hopeful brood, hatched in folly, (see their debates published) that Birch, not being under the Assembly's jurisdiction, is not a regular Presbyterian Minister. The Assembly might have known, that Birch needed not authority from them to exercise his ministerial office. They had ample testimony, that he derived it from a sister Church, equal to themselves. Birch only requested of them brotherhood, which if they did not choose to grant him, they had no right to take away what was his own, and of which no Church power upon earth had a right to deprive him, unless forfeited by crimes, which they should have mentioned. And let the impartial judge, whether there is credit in being connected with such a body, and the call of inspiration should not be obeyed, "come out of her my people." &c Rev. xviii. 4. 5. and whether, agreeably to the *decision of the infallible Head of the Church*, the Assembly (to use their own words) or Birch, possessed the right to exercise any part of the ministerial functions, Psal. l. 18—21. Rev. xxi. 27. xxii. 15.

The Assembly justify their proceedings against Birch, from his withdrawing in a contemptuous manner. Birch, in order to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace with the Christian Presbyterian Church. (which, according to its genuine principles, he believes to be as agreeable to Scripture as any upon earth) in attempting admission agreeably to the Assembly's unfriendly Alien law, spent three years, travelled nearly four thousand miles amidst the hoots and scuffs of partisans,—*Is not this the man charged by the pious John M Millan, silenced by the Presbytery of Ohio, &c. &c.? Will ye hear him preach? Let go to society, &c.* with the expenditure of more than half of the estate destined for the support of a numerous family. Did the Assembly require, as respect, that the remainder should be devoured, and Birch's fatigued, insulted body burned? 1 Cor. xiii. 3. The judicious Dr. Nesbit declared to Birch the year before, that the Assembly ought to be spurned with contempt; and the pious Rev. John M Millan and the Presbytery of Ohio told the Assembly to their teeth, they would not obey their order, and used language (see before.) What has been done to their contempt? Just what was done in an Assembly of old, Math. xxiii. 4. which laid grievous burdens upon men's shoulders, but themselves would not move them with one of their fingers.

Birch having in vain used every Gospel method with the Assembly and the Presbytery of Ohio, and in return received insult added to injury, by being published by them, in their printed minutes, as a marked object; he confi-

ders it as a duty he owes to the American republican character, (11) to a number of the Assembly, (12) and of the Presbytery of Ohio, (13) to the western people, most of whom are believed to be intentionally religious,—to the oppressed of the old countries, wishing for an asylum, now much discouraged,—to his Church, nation, family, character and usefulness, thus most respectfully to publish to the good people of America, that though Birch in many things must plead guilty before his God, and cry out, with the Psalmist, Psal. li. 4. against thee only have I sinned, and need much indulgence for many imperfections from the candid and discerning amongst mankind, yet he most humbly asserts that the very Rev. General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of America, or the Rev. Presbytery of Ohio, cannot prove any offence against him, meriting transportation from the bounds of the Presbytery of Ohio, or any other part of America; and in the face of their nation, he most respectfully challenges them to stand forth in open day, (which they never did yet) and support a tittle against him: whilst Birch charges, and most humbly presumes he can convict the Presbytery of Ohio, in the case of the Rev. John M. Millan and Birch, of defamation, cloaking falsehood, corrupt, inquisitorial judgment, want of candour and brotherly affection, and the breach of a solemn contract, under the signature of their Moderator, by suppressing publick records—the Assembly in the business deciding contrary to Scripture and evidence—a minute, relative to Birch's suppressed papers, purporting to be signed by Dr. A. Roe, their Moderator, by their order, being in circulation, asserting an untruth—and the Assembly and Presbytery of Ohio are hereby most respectfully noticed, to stand forth and vindicate themselves, at the next Assembly's meeting, May 1806, Birch (God willing) desirg to be in Philadelphia at the time, and a note left at the Post office, to fix preliminaries, will be duly honoured; otherwise, let them consider themselves as standing convicted before the publick.

(11) *A late letter from a member of the General Synod of Ulster, which may be called the General Assembly of Ireland, in answer to Birch's letter of thanks to that very Rev. body for late testimonials, and a desire that some brethren would come to America concludes: "Your friends here rejoice that they have a brother who had the spirit to chafise a Rev. John M. Millan, but they wish not to go to your land of liberty"*

(12) *Birch with gratitude acknowledges, that during his conflict he experienced a brotherly love, candour and justice from a large body of the Assembly, (always including the Connecticut delegates) which would grace any Church—He received by the hands of the Rev. Dr. M^r Knight and Mr. Ebenezer Hazard a present of forty dollars, from persons unknown for which he returns his most hearty thanks. It is most respectfully hinted to these worthies, that they need not be afraid of maintaining their stand for truth; the reception their late most seasonable pastoral letter has met with from the friends of vital religion upon the west side of the mountains, must shew them the vanity of the threats of some self-sufficient hot-heads, to form another Assembly—as it is indeed these worthies good sense and piety, that keeps the people in humour with such, yet indeed retains them the Presbyterian name. The venerable, very learned Dr. Cooper declared he could not have peace in his mind, without quieting his conscience by bearing testimony against the Assembly's Alien law, as a breach of the bond of union between the sister Churches. If the Assembly should receive a letter by a foreign Minister, from a foreign Church, relating a revival how shall they be certain that it is not false, until the bearer rides quarantine a year? Perhaps they will conclude, that an heretical epistle will not cut the children's bread, and the people must be kept in temper; they will receive it, and write back, like the lawyer employed by one of two rich men about to be engaged in a suit, to another lawyer, with the opponent who came also to employ him, "Brother, here are two fat geese, pluck you the one, and I'll pluck the other."*

(13) *A number of the younger members of the Presbytery of Ohio, for whom Birch still bears high respect expressed a desire in Presbytery, (as they told him themselves) that he, as a Minister of some standing, might be permitted to officiate amongst them until they got better acquainted, but were urged by a power at that time not safe to be resisted, to vote against Birch's rejection, with the emphatick words, "If we let him in once we will never get him out!" Two members never voted; and it can be proved that a member declared he durst not support Birch,—for as soon as they had gotten Birch out, they would put him out next!*

No doubt the reader's curiosity is excited, to know why such discordant interests should unite in opposing Birch. He is respectfully informed, that the chief reason was, Birch was looked upon as a steady, tried democratic republican. For this he was refused by the Presbytery of New York, with two virtuous exceptions, to supply in the congregation of Elizabeth Town, (the worthy nephew of Gen. Dayton, the ruling Elder, having told me that he would write and introduce me to his uncle) which would have been one of the most desirable settlements in America for Birch's family—members of Presbytery crying out, that one who had rose against the British government should never supply in their bounds—and Birch has the best authority for saying, if he had been in the Church at the time, he would have been personally insulted. Birch upon his landing in New-York with his family, (the yellow fever raging—Drs. Rodgers and M'Knight being out of town for a time, and Mr. Miller indisposed) preached a month to a crowded audience, but was not presented with a cent, though one of the richest societies in the union, and the city famed for its hospitality.—For a like reason, Birch has been deprived of three settlements, and unfavourably heard in numerous places. The Rev. Samuel Ralston told Birch, that Mr. M'Millan observed to him, (and in which they were agreed) that Birch's politicks were not suited to Washington. Upon Birch's first visit to Washington, the Academy doors were shut against him by Messrs. John Hoge and Samuel Clarke, (the latter sore with the wounds of Governor M'Kean's turning him out of office) with oaths, (Mr. Wherry Birch's author) that any one who opposed the British government, should be kicked out of the town; Mr. Hoge observed, that he had marked Birch, from his hearing in the newspapers of his arrival at New-York. There may be added a late dishonourable and ungrateful deception of said Hoge having become penitent, highly injurious to Birch in his ministerial capacity.

In the Washington Telegraphe of the 3d February, 1800, Birch was honoured with the names of "Dog to eat children's bread, renegado, fugitive from justice, traitor to his country"—titles once bestowed by the British government upon the illustrious Washington and the American people; and in August the 4th, the united Irishman—the Editor excused himself, from being abroad. The British Lion, by hunting Presbyterians upon Roman Cathonicks, and so in turn the other, so divided, that mercenary cut-throats were unnecessary, so that during the abhorred American war, volunteers recruited for the British navy—to his great anguish, the good sense of a few (under the Divine blessing) has brought the people to see their folly. Montgomery, an united Irishman, deposited his body before Quebeck, an earnest of liberty being carried to the most hopeless regions; M'Arav, of New-Jersey, Truxton his lieutenant, took the first British ship, an earnest of the destruction of tyrannical navies—the people of America have expressed their gratitude to Montgomery, the other will receive his tribute in due time. The great Washington honoured such Irishmen, (see his letter) If Birch, an united Irishman, and a Minister of Peace, (under the Divine blessing) shall be the means of exciting clergy and people (seemingly the destined reformers of the world) from proper gospel motives, to become Israelites indeed in whom there is no guile, progressing from personal to national justice, mercy and charity, and thereby introduce that glorious universal empire of GOOD WILL, when wars will cease and the nations shall not learn war any more—he will not want his reward—nations will call him blessed.

Birch, under D vine grace, being about to attempt to be as useful as possible to the Gospel cause in his ministerial capacity, to remove the scruples of some serious christians in the mysterious doctrine of the decrees, would humbly

observe, that he believes that Almighty God not only foreknew all things, but that he has framed an all wise, unalterably-fixed plan, (otherwise there could be no prophecy) and that agreeably to this, a number will go to heaven alone through the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, and others go to misery totally inexcusable for sin, impenitency, and the rejection of mercy. Birch's desire is to cultivate peace and good will with the truly religious of all professions, and a connection with old-side Christian Presbyterians, and to form a Presbytery of such, (without change of name, which has proved a stumbling-block to the simple) supporting covenanting reformation and a perpetual testimony for truth; or, (not being fond of divisions) union with a body maintaining these principles: but if these cannot be obtained, he, in connection with his Irish brethren, will continue to exercise his Ministry until the Lord shall be pleased to open a door. Birch can plead as a precedent, the Apostles and Reformers, the first American settlers, Messrs. Marshall and Clarkson, read out by the Union and formed the Associate body in America—the Rev. John Mc Millan, &c. The faithful little flock who have stood by Birch, shall claim his particular attention. He will be happy to preach, &c. occasionally where asked.

Birch, a stranger, did not wish to concern himself much with the political concerns of America, and especially as they were in hands much better qualified for the task; neither indeed does he care about any politics, or what party rules, unless so far as connected with the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom, and the happiness of mankind: yet for such being held up as a publick spectacle, and considering a certain form of government as most conducive to accomplish his wishes, he is not ashamed to declare himself a democrattick republican, bearing the most hearty allegiance to the United States of America, (of which he has the honour of being a citizen) with the union of all its members—the government most virtuously administered by Thomas Jefferson, President, who first taught nations the true way to become respectable, by disbanding mercenary armies and navies, (equally terrible at home as abroad) and resorting to national justice, an earnest, it is hoped, of the universal empire of peace.

Birch, under Providence, will not despair. There are American republicans sufficiently numerous, who have convinced a world they have persevering virtue and true religion. Birch in a partial appeal has received ample redress. A virtuous jury of laymen has taught at least the rules of decorum to an unworthy Church-and-State Faction, whose principle has been to overturn all who stood in the way of their selfish purposes. Birch is the last of five, now a driving from the town of Washington; and several others, of the most promising talents, (including Alexander Addison, Esq.) have been driven from the Presbytery of Ohio, and reduced nearly to desperation. Birch, in this general appeal, which has not for its object the engraving of publick attention with the trifling concerns of an humble individual, but the progress of religion and the happiness of a world, respectfully doubts not, but that the attention will be proportionable to the magnitude of the object — It is respectfully hoped, that American republicans will rouse from their slumber of abused charity, and convince their opponents that they have some religion and act from Gospel principles, and that with this view they will support their system of government, as best calculated to second the designs of the Gospel, in reforming mankind and uniting them into a brotherhood, and thereby set up the universal empire of peace. And as republican Ministers are the only qualified artists to erect this building, it is hoped that republicans will protect the workmen, and will not permit

blind worldly devotees, professing a regard for the salvation of souls whilst they are unconcerned for the happiness of nations, or crafty men who make religion a stalking-horse, to overturn the American constitution, the only manum upon earth in which they can exercise their labour. O yes, they will attend! Tremble ye whose glory has been the ruin of others! ye will not get mankind kept in ignorance; God's light is gone forth. The American Hercules, an infant in his cradle, who crushed the serpent of civil tyranny, will destroy the source from which he would derive redoubled vigour, viz. mental tyranny.——It is not Birch's wish, neither will he insult your good sense by asking you, to persecute anti-republican Ministers, and particularly virtuous men. But they should be told there is a record, written with American blood, proving them mistaken. Where republican Ministers are equally virtuous, let them be preferred. Restrain persecutors; the fabrick is human; it will be easily overturned. Only keep your hands in your pockets, you will find, with the poet, as gold makes soldiers fight the fiercer, so without it preaching will be scarcer.——Birch, begging pardon for defects and imperfections, which he is sure are many, begs leave most respectfully to conclude in the words of the Ministers who, with the Bible in one hand and the sword in the other, (which it is hoped is now sheathed for ever) marched in the front of your armies, and fled them with courage. (I had them from an officer of the British Lion, when boastingly he justified himself for having put the faggot to some of your churches) to which we add the words of united Irishmen at their outset, whose success will be no less certain,—“Yonder are the enemies of, &c. come on—Heaven's on your side—the cause of truth is the cause of Heaven—and to doubt of success, would be to doubt of a Providence.”

A P P E N D I X.

BIRCH intending to publish a full account of the actions instituted in vindication of his character, with the speeches of the Lawyers; a number of the suits still pending in the Supreme Court, and not wishing to infringe upon the prerogative of any Court of Justice; only a brief sketch is here given. *T. L. BIRCH, vs. MR. HUGH WYLIE—For reporting that Birch was charged with Adultery—Tried in the Washington Supreme Court, Oct. 1802.*

Alexander Little swore, that at Birch's desire, he had gone to the store of Hugh Wylie, (who was strongly prejudiced against Birch in favour of Mr. M'Millan, and opposed Birch's settlement in Washington) in order to shew the depositions of M'Connel, &c. of Strasburgh; that upon reading these, Wylie exclaimed, “Mr. M'Millan is attacked—we must bring forward every thing upon oath—Birch is charged with adultery”—That after this, Birch, for purposes of peace, requested said deponent and a James Stevenson to go with him to said Wylie's, who said Andrew Swearingen, Esq. was his author; that Birch having told said Wylie, if he would acknowledge offence he should be forgiven, Wylie replied, he would not deceive Birch, for he would do every thing in his power to put him out of the country.—James Stevenson confirmed so far as his name is mentioned.

Mrs. Fox swore, that Hugh Wylie, at the instance of the Presbytery of Ohio, called at her house, in Washington, to go to their meeting in April 1802, to give testimony against Birch; that she told him she need not, for Birch would not deny any thing he had said; that Wylie insisting, she wished to know what they wanted her to prove, Wylie said, Birch's telling before her, of Swearingen having told him of Birch's being charged with adultery, and the story of going to bed to Stockton's wife; that said Fox

asked Wylie if he, or Swearingen, or any of them, believed Birch to be chargeable with adultery, when Wylie said they did not, but wanted to build other facts upon it; Mrs. Fox replied, what facts would they build upon a lie! — The Hon. Judge Smith, who presided alone, said the Plaintiff must have damages, and if contented with small ones, the business might rest. Birch's counsel and himself declared they wanted character, not money. The Jury returned a verdict, 150 dollars damages, with costs. Birch in this suit and its consequences, is without something out of pocket; and indeed in all the suits, however they may issue, cannot be compensated for one fifth part of his loss. However, the victory is very great, and honorable to the county of Washington. One of Mr. Wylie's Lawyers, a gentleman of the first eminence in his profession, who aspired to the Governor's chair, told James Mountain, Esq. Birch's Lawyer, that there would not be found a Jury in the county of Washington, to convict a friend of Mr. M^r. Millan's.

T. L. BIRCH, vs. THE REV. JOHN M^r. MILLAN—*Charges same as before Presbytery—Tried in the Washington Supreme Court, October 1804*

Birch produced the same evidence as before the General Assembly, (see before) — Mr. Robert Irwin swore, that in Ohio Presbytery, at Bethel, October 1801, he heard the Rev. John M^r. Millan deny, that he ever said that James Mahon told him Birch was drunk, but M^r. Connel only; and that said M^r. Millan holding in his hand said M^r. Connel's deposition, observed, that M^r. Connel had cautiously avoided swearing that he did not tell him Birch was drunk, and if he would swear he did not tell him, he (M^r. Millan) must lie under it. — Mr. George Anderson swore, that the Rev. John M^r. Millan, in the Presbytery of Ohio, at Buffalo, in April 1802, having closed evidence against Birch, got up, and holding out his hands towards Birch, repeatedly exclaimed, "are you not now a Minister of the Devil?" Col. Wm. M^r. Kennan swore that he came into the meeting-house where Mr. M^r. Millan was engaged in the act sworn to by Mr. Anderson, and that the behaviour of some members of Presbytery was much out of character.

Mr. Andrew Hunter swore, that a few days before the Supreme Court in October 1803, the Rev. John M^r. Millan called at his store, in Washington, and told him he heard he would be a good witness for him, for he had seen Birch drunk; that Hunter replied, he had said so, but being now acquainted with Birch, he found himself mistaken, (Birch's manners being free and open) and that Birch was not intoxicated; that Hunter remonstrating with M^r. Millan upon his conduct towards Birch, and the hurt that would be done to religion by such disputes, said M^r. Millan replied, that though he had propagated that Birch was drunk at Strasburgh, he did not believe he was drunk; but he had been told it by men at that place, and what he had done was for the good of religion, and he would do it again let him suffer as he would. — Mr. John Stockton swore, that Judge Addison and Squire Wilkins, of Pittsburgh, came to his tavern to inquire about Birch's behaviour there; and that said Addison taking his wife by the hand, asked her, was it true Birch was going to force to bed with her? That Birch's conduct the only night he was over in his house, having his wife and family with him, was proper. — Grace Mailley swore, that she heard the Rev. John M^r. Millan, in a conversation with a Mrs. Caldwell, in Mr. Robert Herrett's house, in Washington, say that he had dug a deep pit for Birch; that Mrs. Caldwell replied, take care of digging pits! and named some man who erected a high gallows for his neighbour and was hanged upon it himself. — Mr. Wm. Bennet swore, that he was a Secede.

and lived in the bounds of Birch's congregation in Ireland—that Birch's labours and charity were extended to all professions.—The following certificates were produced, with Birch's degree.

We the Synod of Ulster, at our annual meeting, at Cookstown, June 29, 1803, moved by a sense of justice, think ourselves in duty bound to give our attestation and testimony, as we hereby do, to the character of our esteemed brother, the Rev. Thomas Ledlie Birch, of Washington, in America. He was a sober, respectable member of this body for above twenty years, particularly remarkable for piety, charity, and inflexible integrity; for a warm zeal for the interest and prosperity of the Church of Christ, and for an assiduous and faithful discharge of the duties of the ministerial office.

THOMAS HENRY, Moderator.

Cookstown, County Londonderry, Ireland, June 29th, 1803.

Whereas a report was raised to the prejudice of the character of the Rev. Thomas Ledlie Birch, of Washington, in America, We, the Presbytery of Dromore, at our meeting in Cookstown, moved by a sense of justice, resolve to give our testimony to the character of the above Rev. Brother, and do certify, that he was born, liberally and piously educated in our bounds, was sent to the University of Glasgow for four seasons, took his degree of Master of Arts there, produced his testimonials to us, was examined and approved, with credit to himself and satisfaction to the Presbytery, was licensed, and for some short time was a useful and popular Preacher and Probationer under our care, and always maintained a distinguished character for integrity, benevolence, zeal for liberty, reformation of abuses, and regularly sober. Signed by the unanimous order of the Presbytery,

Cookstown, 29th June, 1803.

WILLIAM FLETCHER, Mod'r.

Whereas a report was raised to the prejudice of the character of the Rev. Thomas Ledlie Birch, of Washington, in America; We, the Presbyterian Congregation of Tullylich, moved by a sense of justice, resolve to give our testimony to the character of the above Rev. Gentleman, and do certify, that he was born, liberally and piously educated, in this Parish; his family respectable, and his conduct exemplary, becoming and irreproachable. The above paper having been read in a full meeting of this Congregation, and approved of without one dissenting voice, is attested this 27th of June, 1803, by

JOHN SHERRARD, Minister of said Congregation.

Henry Dickson, S. C. Samuel M'Kee, William Copland, Joshua Chambers, John Lockhart, William Dickson, Elders.

Saintfield, 27th June, 1803—Whereas a report was raised to the prejudice of the character of the Rev. Thomas Ledlie Birch, of Washington, in America; We, the Parishioners of the Presbyterian Congregation of Saintfield, moved by a sense of justice, resolve to give our testimony to the character of the above Rev. Gentleman. He came among us with a fair good character, laboured incessantly to promote our temporal and eternal interests, to which purpose he spent his property and exerted his abilities. Our prayers are for his prosperity—our hearts are with him, until we hope to meet him at the right hand of Christ, whom he faithfully preached to us. That this paper was read, and approved of by the Congregation of Saintfield, is certified by

H. SIMSON, Minister

Robert Skelly, John Magee, Richard M'Cobry, Robert M'Bride, Members of Session—in the name of the Congregation.

The Rev. John M'Millan, in defence, produced—Mrs. Mary M'Comb, wife of Wm. M'Comb, who swore that she thought the last time Birch was at their house he had drunk too much, but being busy through the house,

she did not take notice of the quantity. Mr. Wm. M^cComb swore, that he thought Birch had drunk too much the last evening at his house, but did not name any quantity there or at Mr. Stockton's—Questioned—took always the first drink himself; was in the stable when Birch drank after the return from Stockton's; no candle in the hall where Birch staggered; was laid on his bed, and did not take much notice.——Mr. Joseph Stevfenson swore as before Presbytery—Questioned—Birch sung a long tune to a short psalm; prayed in a becoming manner; was sleeping the time of prayers, (Math. 28. 13.) which was his custom; Birch shaved himself in the bed-chamber without cutting himself, Stevfenson having gone to bed; that Stevfenson introduced the politics, bewailing that the clergy were aristocrats and opposed reformation, and particularly mentioned the Rev. Messrs. M^cParran and Porter; that Stevfenson was determined to watch Birch, and was hunted up as an evidence by the Rev. Andrew Gwinn——Mrs. Mary Clark swore, that upon an evening in the winter of 1800, she made near two bottle of whiskey into apple toddy, which Birch and her husband drank; Birch not intoxicated.*

Mr. M^cMillan had served notices up on Birch, for intoxication in the street of Washington, and in the house of Mr. James M^cBurney, and excessive drinking in the late Gen. Taylor's, none of which were brought forward. Mr. M^cBurney attended Court, and has since passed his oath, declaring that he told the Rev. Mr. Gwinn, the agent in hunting up the story, in his house, that it was a fabrication. Mr. Hugh Cotton was not produced, though Mrs. Taylor, &c. and the bottle were there all week, and Mr. Jas. Taylor, who drank after Birch and left a dram.

The trial lasted nearly four days. James Mountain, Esq first counsel for the Plaintiff, in his address to the Court and Jury, introduced the moving passage, Psalm lv. 12, 13, 14. "For it was not an enemy that reproached me, then I could have borne it, &c. I would have hid myself; but it was thou, mine equal, &c." This was followed by the observation, that Pope, a Roman Catholic, was a better Christian than John M^cMillan, and repetition from that Poet's Universal Prayer, "Teach me to feel another's woe, to hide the fault I see; that mercy I to other shew, do thou shew unto me." Mr. Mountain also gave a text to Mr. Wm. M^cComb, which he told him he would long remember; Prov. xiii. 6, 7, 8. "Eat not the bread of him that hath an evil eye; eat and drink saith he, but his heart is not with thee: the morsel which thou hast eaten shall thou vomit up."

The Jury returned a verdict for Birch, 300 dollars damages with costs—The Judges (Yeates and Smith) confirmed the verdict, but signed a bill of exceptions to the Defendant's counsel, on points to be argued before the Supreme Court, in Bank, (where the business now rests) viz. 1st. That Birch is not a Presbyterian Minister. 2d. That Mr. M^cMillan cannot be called to an account in a civil Court, for slanders uttered in a Presbytery.

During the time of the removing of this suit, Messrs. M^cMillan, M^cCurdy, and other Ministers of the Ohio Presbytery, were employed in procuring signatures to a petition to the State Assembly, (giving a late decision as their reason) praying that a law might be passed preventing what shall pass in a Church Judicature from being cognizable in a civil Court. Senator Vance can inform the public of the fate of the petition.—At their next meeting, Presbytery read out M^cMillan not censurable, Birch an excommunicate.

* Birch has in hand the deposition of Elenor Keady, of Washington, declaring that she wanted upon Mrs. Clark at this time, lately discovered of a cellar that she made the apple toddy for Birch, &c. that Mr. and Mrs. Clark, certainly did sell partook; and the quantity of liquor used did not exceed a pint. Mr. Robert Anderson a. j. has deposed that he read these and drank a part.

T. L. BIRCH, vs. A. SWEARINGEN—*For reporting that Birch was seen in bed with a woman, having his leg over her, and that he was charged with Adultery—Tried in the Washington Court of Common Pleas, 1805.*

Mr. Alexander Little swore that he went in company with Birch, and a John Taylor, to Andrew Swearingen, Esq. to inquire if he told Hugh Wylie that Birch was charged with adultery; that Swearingen said he never believed such of Birch, but that Joseph Wherry took the matter as very serious, for he had told him that Birch was seen in bed with a woman, and his leg over her; that Swearingen had charged Birch with adultery in similar terms in the Presbytery of Ohio, at Buffalo, in April 1802. Mr. John Taylor confirmed Mr. Lytle's testimony. Mr. Joseph Wherry swore, that he never charged Birch with Adultery, nor told A. Swearingen so.

Alexander Mardock swore, that being employed as a Magistrate, under a commission, in the case of Birch and Swearingen, to take the deposition of a Mr. Hazlett, who being incapable of passing an oath, Mr. Swearingen said he supposed he would acknowledge all Mr. Hazlett could prove—when Birch mentioning Swearingen's concurrence with his party, in Birch's coming to Washington, and his declaration, that they would pay him 800 dollars the second year, easier than 600 the first, Swearingen assented, and that he had told his party that Birch had been very ill used.—Major Arthur Chamberlain swore, that shortly after Birch set off for his family, Andrew Swearingen, Esq. called at his house, taking subscriptions to bring the Rev. Mr. Anderson, now of Buffalo, to Washington.

Verdict for Plaintiff. 70 dolls. 25 cents. Appeal as in M'Millan's case.

A. SWEARINGEN, Esq. brought an action in the Supreme Court against Birch, containing two counts, viz. for saying in the Presbytery at Buffalo, April 1802, he could prove that what Swearingen there declared was false; and for asserting within the bar of the Supreme Court, at Birch and Wylie's trial, that he could prove the testimony Swearingen was then giving, false. The Rev. Messrs. Anderson and M'Millan proved the former, and Mr. John Porter, student of law, the latter.—Birch's Lawyers having entered only the plea, not guilty, without special right to plead, Birch was debarred from giving the truth in justification, but only to shew that he had sufficient provocation to make use of the expressions.—Mr. Alexander Little swore, that A. Swearingen's declaration before the Presbytery and his oath before the Court in Washington, were very different from what he told Birch, Taylor and him.—James Mountain, Esq. swore, that he was Birch's counsel in Wylie's trial; that Birch sat next him, and he heard Birch speak the words about Swearingen, and considered them as spoken to him; that Birch mentioned a John Taylor as his proof; that the Court adjourning, he went with Birch to said Taylor, and they would have produced him only Wylie gave up his suit.—Verdict, 120 dolls. on each count. Mr. Mountain moved the Court for an arrest of judgment; the business of the Presbytery to be quashed, as not being a Court where the penalty of legal perjury could be incurred; the Court to grant a new trial in the second count; that vulgar listeners should not be within the bar; produced legal authorities justifying Birch, if, when Swearingen swore him a liar and adulterer, he had told the Court and Jury, that was a lie, and he would prove it one. Mr. Addison replied, he hoped if law did not protect M'Millan in Presbytery, it should not protect Birch; unhappily indeed, M'Millan had not proved what he said. Mr. Mountain said his client only wanted equal law, and protection in truth.—The Presbytery count referred, as in M'Millan's case; the new trial under consideration. *F I N I S.*





