



A SERMON

OCCASIONED

BY THE DEATH

OF

MAJOR GEN. ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

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OCCASIONED

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OF

MAJOR GEN. ALEXANDER HAMILTON,

WHO WAS KILLED

BY AARON BURR, ESQ.

VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

IN A DUEL, JULY 11, 1804.

PREACHED, IN CHRIST-CHURCH AND ST. PETER'S, PHILADELPHIA,

ON SUNDAY, JULY 22d, 1804,

BY JAMES ABERCROMBIE, D. D.

ONE OF THE ASSISTANT MINISTERS OF CHRIST-CHURCH

AND ST. PETER'S.

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1804.

“AT a Meeting of the citizens of Philadelphia, on Monday July 16th, agreeably to public notice, for the purpose of adopting proper measures for the expression of their grief at the untimely fate of their deceased fellow citizen *Major Gen. Alexander Hamilton*, their admiration of his virtues and his talents, and their gratitude for the eminent services which as a *Soldier* and a *Statesman* he has rendered to his country ;” the following, among other resolutions, was passed.

“RESOLVED, that the clergymen of the several denominations, be requested to expatiate, on Sunday next, upon the irreligious and pernicious tendency of a custom, which has deprived our country of one of her best and most valuable citizens, and has proved so destructive to the happiness of his family.

“ THOMAS WILLING, Chairman.

“ WM. MEREDITH—Sec’ry.”

 THE publication of the following Sermon would have taken place immediately after it was delivered, had not the most imperious necessity obliged the author to be absent from the city, during the month of August.



TO

MRS. ELIZABETH HAMILTON.

MADAM,

The melancholy event which has deprived you of an affectionate husband—your children of a vigilant protector—and the United States of America of one of the most valuable and meritorious of her sons, has justly excited in the breasts of the wise, the virtuous, and the good, the most poignant sensations of sorrow, and raised the loud cry of lamentation and distress.

The death of General Hamilton, Madam, must ever be deplored, as a national calamity.

Among the various tributes of respect which have been offered to the memory of your illustrious husband, that of the citizens of Philadelphia has not been, I trust, the least acceptable to you. I am confident it was expressed with ardour and sincerity.

By their resolutions of 16th July, the clergy were requested to give their aid, on the following Sunday, towards the suppression of a fashion-

able yet destructive practice, which had so recently inflicted on our country an irreparable loss.

In compliance with this request, I composed, though in haste, the following Sermon: and being now called upon, by the partiality of my friends, to commit it to the press, a sense of propriety, combined with the most respectful esteem, induces me to dedicate it, Madam, in this public manner, to you; in testimony of the profound veneration with which I ever contemplated the pre-eminent talents and virtues of your departed companion and friend, as well as of my sincere and high estimation of that resplendent and acknowledged merit which constitutes your own character.

The trial you have been called upon to experience, though charged with an unusual degree of severity, has, I trust, been received by you with that rational fortitude, and exemplary Christian resignation, which shone so conspicuously in your conduct on a former similar occasion, when a beloved son fell a sacrifice to the delusive principles of modern honour.

May that Almighty Being who directeth the government of the Universe, and who "chasten-

eth those whom he loveth," enable you to derive such spiritual improvement from these dispensations of his providence, as may elevate you to the highest possible attainment of Christian excellence in this world, and of celestial felicity in the world which is to come.

With the sincerest sympathy in your affliction, and the most affectionate wishes for your present and future welfare,

I am,

Madam,

Your most obedient,

Humble Servant,

JAMES ABERCROMBIE.

Philadelphia,
October 10, 1804.

A SERMON, &c.

JOB, CH. XIV. VER. 10.

MAN GIVETH UP THE GHOST, AND WHERE IS HE?

A SOLEMN assertion, indeed! and an awful and important inquiry; the resolution of which most intimately concerns every one in this assembly!—not only on account of affection for our departed relatives and friends, but of our own condition, when the toils, the troubles, the pains, and deceitful pleasures, of this short and uncertain life are over.

IF there be another state of existence after this, a state of retribution for our conduct here—and that there is, we cannot doubt,—the inquiry is surely both rational and necessary.

WE know that death is the inevitable lot of man. We daily see our fellow creatures borne to the silent grave, where there can be no repentance nor device. We know that the body only is deposited there, that the ethereal principle which animated it is immortal, and that the operation of death is the separation of the one from the other. There lies the tabernacle of clay! but where's the soul—the spirit which inhabited it? “Gone to its great account!”—Gone to the invisible and spiritual world, whither *ours* must soon follow!—*how* soon, we know not.

THE passage of Holy Writ which I have selected for my text, and which I offer to your present contemplation, was chosen in reference to a late melancholy event, which derives unusual solemnity from its peculiar circumstances, and demands our most serious attention.

DISMISSING, therefore, for a few moments, all obtrusive, busy thoughts, and anxious, worldly cares,

“With inward stillness, and a bowed mind,”

let us pause, and meditate on death. Let us

attentively, and with religious awe, listen to the warning voice of our departed brother, who, “though dead, yet speaketh;”* and, who by the example which he hath exhibited of the brevity and uncertainty of human life, calls upon us to reflect, that “it is appointed unto all men once to die:”† and that “there may be but a step between us and death.”‡

ON such an occasion, we are naturally led to consider, what may be the condition of the soul in the world of spirits; the period of probation being terminated. “Man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?”

THE doctrine of a future state of existence after death, and that a state of retribution, has, we know, either from a principle inherent in man’s constitution, from tradition, or from the deductions of reason, been universally received

* HEB. 11. 4. in allusion to Gen. 4. 10. “And the Lord said unto Cain, what hast thou done? the voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto me from the ground.”

† Heb. 9. 27.

‡ 1 Sam. 20, 3.

and cherished by all nations.* The imperfect suggestions, however, of reason, in the early ages of the world, with respect to the soul's immortality, could gratify even the anxious re-

*IF we consult the records of historians, we shall find, that the doctrine of the soul's immortality has pervaded all nations, however remotely separated by distance of time or place; evincing almost an innate conviction of that important truth.

OF the various testimonies on this subject, the following may be considered as some of the most prominent.

1. "Πυθαγόρας ὁ Σαμῖος καὶ τινες ἕτεροι τῶν παλαιῶν Φυσικῶν ἀπέφηναντο τὰς Ψυχὰς τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὑπάρχειν ἀθάνατας."

Pythagoras the Samian, and some others of the ancient naturalists, have declared the souls of men to be immortal.

Diodorus Siculus. L. XVIII. S. 1.

2. XENOPHON, in his *Cyropædia*, thus expresses the sentiments of Cyrus in his last moments, when addressing his sons:

"Οὐ γὰρ δεῖτε τὸ γε σαφῶς δοκεῖτε εἶδεναι, ὡς εἶδεν ἐσομαι ἐγὼ εἰ ἐπειδὰν τὴ ἀνθρώπινον βίον τελευτήσω· κἄν γὰρ νῦν τοι τὴν γ' ἐμὴν Ψυχὴν ἰώρατε, ἀλλ' οἷς διεπραττετο, τῆτοις αὐτὴν ὡς ἔσαν κατεφώρατε.—Οὗτοι ἐγὼ γέ, ὦ παῖδες, εἶδεν τὸ ποτε ἐπεισθῆναι, ὡς ἡ Ψυχὴ, εἰς μὲν ἀνθρώπινῳ σωματι, ζῆ· ὅταν δὲ τῆτι ἀπαλλαγῆ, τεθνήσκῃ."

THINK not you know assuredly, that when I shall have finished my life amongst men, I shall thence be annihilated. In what is now past you saw not my soul, but, by the actions which it performed, you discovered its existence....By no means, my sons, was I ever persuaded, that the soul lives only whilst it remains in a mortal body, but is dead when it hath departed thence.

Xenophon's *Cyropædia*, B. VIII.

3. PLATO thus records the opinion of Socrates imparted to Simmias and Cebes:

"Εἰ μὲν μὴ ἐμὴν ἤξεῖν πρῶτον μὲν τὰ ἀθάνατος ἀλλὰς σοφῆς τε καὶ ἀγαθῆς, ἵππειτα καὶ παρ' ἀνθρώπων τετελευτηκότας ἀμείνας τῶν ἐνθάδε, ἠδικῆν αὐν,

searches of the most sagacious and contemplative philosopher no further, than to induce a degree of confidence, resting entirely upon the precarious foundation of *probability*: and many

ἐκ ἀγανακτῶν τῷ θανάτῳ. νυν δέ, εὐ ἰσὲ ὅτι. παρ' ἀνδράσ τε ἐλπίζω ἀφ' ἑσθαι ἀγαθῶν· καὶ τῆτο μὲν ἐκ ἀν πανυ δι' ἰσχυρισμῶν· ὅτι μὲντοι παρα θεῶν δεσποτῶν πανυ ἀγαθῶν ἤξειν, εὐ ἰσὲ ὅτι, εἴπερ τι ἄλλο τῶν τοιστῶν, δι' ἰσχυρισμῶν ἀν καὶ τῆτο· ὡς δια ταυτα οὐχ' ὁμοίως ἀγανακτῶ, ἀλλ' εὐελπίς εἰμι εἶναι τι τοῖς τετελευτήκοσι· καὶ, ὥσπερ γέ καὶ παλαι λέγεται, πολυ ἀμείνον τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς ἢ τοῖς κακοῖς."

IF, indeed, I were not expecting to go, first to other Gods both wise and good, and then to men, who have died, and are better than those in this state, I had acted wrong in not being concerned at the approach of death; but now, be assured, I hope to arrive amongst good men; though this I would not positively affirm; but that I shall go to Gods, who are rulers altogether good, this be assured, I would affirm, if I could affirm any thing of this nature. On these accounts, therefore, I am not so concerned as otherwise I should have been, but have earnest hope that there remains something for those who have died, and, as was long ago said, something much better for the good than for the wicked.

Plato's Phædo. Forster's Ed. P. 170.

4. " Πρῶτοι δὲ καὶ τούδε τον λόγον Αἰγυπτῖοι εἶπιν· οἱ εἰποντες, ὡς ἀνθρώπων ψυχή ἀθάνατος ἐστὶ τῷ σώματι δὲ καταφθίνοντος, ἐς ἄλλο ζῶον αἰεὶ γινομενον ἐσθύνεται· ἐπεὶ δὲ περιελθῆ, πάντα τὰ χερσῶν καὶ τὰ θαλάσσια καὶ τὰ πετεινά, αὐτὶς ἐς ἀνθρώπων σῶμα γινομενον ἐσθύνειν."

THE Egyptians are the first who have asserted that the soul of man is immortal: when the body is dead, the soul enters into some other living creature, as it is born in that succession which is continually coming into existence; but when it has gone through creatures of land and sea, and through birds, it enters into the body of man when born.

Herodotus, I. II. S. 123.

of their most refined opinions, when given to the world, became corrupted and deformed by a variety of superstitious fears and absurd misconceptions: so that death and the grave were

5. THE celebrated Dr. Middleton thus expresses the sentiments of Cicero :

“HE held likewise the immortality of the soul, and its separate existence after death in a state of happiness or misery. This he inferred from that ardent thirst of immortality, which was always the most conspicuous in the best and most exalted minds; from which the truest specimen of their nature must needs be drawn: from its unmixed and indivisible essence, which had nothing separable or perishable in it: from its wonderful powers and faculties; its principle of self-motion, its memory, invention, wit, comprehension, which were all incompatible with sluggish matter.”

“As to a future state of rewards and punishments, he considered it as a consequence of the soul’s immortality; deducible from the attributes of God, and the condition of man’s life on earth; and thought it so highly probable, that we could hardly doubt of it, he says, unless it should happen to our minds, when they look into themselves, as it does to our eyes, when they look too intensely at the sun, that finding their sight dazzled, they give over looking at all!”

Middleton’s Life of Cicero. Sect. XII. Vol. III. P. 341—343.

6. CÆSAR relates of the *Druids*, or the ministers of religion among the ancient Gauls and Britons:

“IN primis hoc volunt persuadere, non interire animas, sed ab aliis post mortem transire ad alios; atque hoc maximè ad virtutem excitari putant, metu mortis neglecto.”

ONE of their leading doctrines is, that the souls of men do not perish at their death, but pass from one body to another; thus

rendered objects of terror and dismay to the generality of the expiring sons of Adam. But, no sooner did the beams of Divine Revelation begin to illuminate a benighted world,—no

they think to inspire them with courage, by extinguishing the dread of annihilation.

Cæs. Com. de Bello Gallico, L. VI. 13.

7. THE Poet Lucan has these lines:

“ ET vos barbaricos ritus, moremque sinistrum
 Sacrorum, Druidæ, positis repetisis ab armis.
 Solis nôsse deos et cœli numina vobis,
 Aut solis nescire datum : nemora alta remotis
 Incolitis lucis. Vobis auctoribus, umbræ
 Non tacitas Erebi sedes, Ditisque profundi
 Pallida regna petunt : regit idem spiritus artus
 Orbe alio : longæ (canitis si cognita) vitæ.
 Mors media est. Certè populi, quos despicit Arctos
 Felices errore suo, quos ille timorum
 Maximus, haud urget leti metus : inde ruendi
 In ferrum mens prona viris, animæque capaces
 Mortis, et ignavum redituræ parcere vitæ.”

Lucan. Phar. L. 1. 450.

“ The Druids now, while arms are heard no more,
 Old mysteries and barb'rous rites restore :
 A tribe who singular religion love,
 And haunt the lonely coverts of the grove.
 To these, and these of all mankind alone,
 The Gods are sure reveal'd, or sure unknown.
 If dying mortals' dooms they sing aright,
 No ghosts descend to dwell in dreadful night :
 No parting souls to grisly *Pluto* go,
 Nor seek the dreary silent shades below :

sooner did the Sun of Righteousness arise— than the lowering clouds of doubt were speedily dissipated. The celestial Conqueror, by whom Death was disarmed of his sting, and the Grave

But forth they fly immortal in their kind,
 And other bodies in new worlds they find.
 Thus life forever runs its endless race,
 And, like a line, death but divides the space,
 A stop which can but for a moment last,
 A point between the future and the past.
 Thrice happy they beneath their northern skies,
 Who that worst fear, the fear of death, despise,
 Hence they no cares for this frail being feel,
 But rush undaunted on the pointed steel;
 Provoke approaching fate, and bravely scorn
 To spare that life which must so soon return.”

Rowe's Translation B. I. L 790.

8. SIR Wm. Temple, speaking of the religious tenets of the Goths, Vandals, Alans, Lombards, Huns, and other Northern nations, who, at different times, invaded the Roman Empire, says, “WHETHER they were deduced from that of Zamolxis among the Getes, styled of old, Immortals, or introduced by Odin among the Western Goths, it is certain that an opinion was fixed and general among them, that death was but the entrance into another life; that all men who lived lazy and inactive lives, and died natural deaths, by sickness or by age, went into vast caves underground, all dark and miry, full of noisome creatures, usual in such places, and there forever grovelled in endless stench and misery. On the contrary, all who gave themselves to warlike actions and enterprizes, to the conquest of their neighbours and slaughter of enemies, and died in battk, or of violent deaths upon bold adventures or resolutions, they went immediately to the vast hall or

disappointed of its victory, appeared; mercifully drew aside the veil between the earthly and spiritual world, and proclaimed our deliverance from their power: teaching us to consider the

palace of Odin, their god of war, who eternally kept open house for all such guests, where they were entertained at infinite tables, in perpetual feasts and mirth, carousing every man in skulls of their enemies they had slain, according to which numbers, every one in these mansions of pleasure was the most honoured and the best entertained."

Essay 3d of Heroic Virtue.

9. HYDE in his history of the religion of the *ancient Persians* asserts :

" ALIQUI credebant beatorum sedem fore in corpore solis, ut Manichæi et alii hæretici. Orthodoxi, post animæ ascensum ad Deum (ut apud sepulchreta cernitur) et requiem apud eum usque ad resurrectionem, credunt habitationem corporalem, reunitis animabus, rursus tandem fore in hoc mundo renovato et reficto: terram enim de novo refigendam, et talem ejusdem statum fore in ultimo judicio, ipsi Indo—Persæ produunt—Quòd hæc sit reverà eorum traditio, constat ex libro *Sad-der*, ubi inter Zoroastris præcepta et canones, traditur talem fore Paradisum terrestrem amœnitate, ad instar *horti gloriosissimi*, ad quem etiam per pontem transeundum sd statum renovatum. Dictus itaque *fons judicialis* a Camûsi autore describitur, *fons extensus super dorsum gehennæ*. Et quicumque per hunc pontem, a nemine angelorum præpeditus, pertransit, ad Paradisum pertingit: alias a ponte delapsus, in *Tartara* cadit, et in ea præcipitatur. In isto ponte constituti sunt duo angeli examinatores: quorum ille *bilancem* secum in manu habet, ut possit examinare hominum bona opera seu merita; ut si nimis levia sint, a ponte dejecti immergantur in gehennam; si vero graviora et ponderosa, tum per prædictum pontem transeant in Paradisum amœnissimum, &c. &c."

Hyde's *Veterum Persarum, Religionis Historia*, C. 33.

one, as a messenger of mercy, sent to break off the fetters of mortality; and the other, as the gate of admission into the paradise of God.

SOME of them believed that the souls of the blessed were translated to the Sun. This was the opinion held by the Manichæans and other heretics. While the orthodox asserted, (as appears by the inscriptions in their burial places), that after death, the soul ascended to God, where it enjoyed a state of quiet repose, until the resurrection: that it was then re-united to a body, and returned to this earth, which would at that time be renewed and purified. For, the Indo-Persians profess to believe, that the earth is to be formed anew, at the general judgment.—That this was really a tradition among them is evident from one of their books entitled *Sad-der*, where among the precepts and canons of Zoroaster, it is said that the terrestrial paradise would be similar in its splendour and happiness to that of the celestial regions, with which it would be connected by means of a bridge. This *judicial bridge*, according to Camusus, is extended over the gulph of Hell. And whoever passed over this bridge without being interrupted in the way by an angel, went forward into Paradise; but if thrown from the bridge was instantly precipitated into *Tartarus*: upon this bridge two angels were always stationed, one of whom had a pair of scales, in which the merits and demerits of men were carefully weighed, that if the latter preponderated, they were thrown down into the regions of misery; but if the former, they were permitted to pass over into Paradise.

HYDE'S History of the religion of the *ancient Persians*, C. 33.
P. 491.

10. SIR Wm. Jones, speaking of the *modern Persians*, tells us: "I will only detain you with a few remarks on that metaphysical theology, which has been professed immemorially by a numerous sect of *Persians* and *Indus*, was carried in part into *Greece*, and prevails even now among the learned *Maschmans*, who some-

THUS, amid the fears and sorrows which unavoidably embitter human life, as a state of probation, *we* are relieved from that most piercing and dejecting of all fears—the dread of anni-

times avow it without reserve. The modern philosophers of this persuasion are called *Sûfis*, either from the *Greek* word for a *sage*, or from the *woollen* mantle, which they used to wear in some provinces of Persia. Their fundamental tenets are, that nothing exists absolutely but God; that the human soul is an emanation from his essence, and, though divided for a time from its heavenly source, will be finally reunited with it; that the highest possible happiness will arise from its reunion, and that the chief good of mankind, in this transitory world, consists in as perfect an *union* with the Eternal Spirit, as the incumbrances of a mortal frame will allow.”

Asiatic Researches: Vol. 2. P. 62.

11. STRABO thus speaks of the *ancient* Brachmans:

“ Πλείστους δὲ αὐτοῖς εἶναι λόγους περὶ θανάτου· νομίζουσιν μὲν γὰρ ὅτι τὸν μὲν εὐταδε βίον, ὡς ἀν ἀκμήν κυομένων εἶναι· τὸν δὲ θάνατον γενέσθαι εἰς τὸν ὄντως βίον, καὶ εὐδαιμόνα τοῖς φιλοσοφησασί· διὸ τῆ ἀσκήσει πλείους χρῆσθαι πρὸς τὸ ετοιμοθάνατον· ἀγαθὸν δὲ ἢ κακὸν μὴδὲν εἶναι τῶν συμβαινόντων ἀνθρώποις.

(MEGASTHENES says) they discourse much on death; for they think the life here present to be as the state of creatures fully conceived, but death they consider as a birth to life really such, a life happy to those who have studied wisdom: for this reason they exercise themselves in preparing for death. Of the events which befall men, they hold that not one is either good or bad.

Strabo, I. XV. P 490. Ed .1587.

12. AND MR. Wilkins thus of the *modern* Brāhmiāns.

THEIR opinion concerning the nature of the soul, is thus delivered in the Bhāgvat-Gēeta:

hilation. God has herein given us the most sublime and animating consolation. In the Gospel of our salvation, there is abundant provision made for the wants, the weaknesses, and

„THOU grievest for those who are unworthy to be lamented, whilst thy sentiments are those of the wise men. The wise neither grieve for the dead nor for the living. I myself never *was not*, nor thou, nor all the princes of the earth; nor shall we ever hereafter cease *to be*. As the soul, in this mortal frame, findeth infancy, youth, and old age; so, in some future frame, will it find the like. One who is confirmed in this belief, is not disturbed by any thing which can come to pass. The sensibility of the faculties giveth heat and cold, pleasure and pain; which come and go, and are transient and inconstant. Bear them with patience, O Son of Bhūr-āt; for the wise man, whom these disturb not, and to whom pain and pleasure are the same, is formed for immortality. The man who believeth that it is the soul which killeth, and he who thinketh that the soul may be destroyed, are both alike deceived; for it neither killeth, nor is it killed. It is not a thing, of which a man may say, it hath been, it is about to be, or it is to be hereafter; for it is a thing without birth; it is ancient, constant, and eternal; and is not to be destroyed in this its mortal frame. How can a man who believeth that this thing is incorruptible, eternal, inexhaustible, and without birth, think that he can either kill or cause it to be killed? As a man throweth away old garments, and putteth on new, even so the soul, having quitted its old mortal frame, entereth into others which are new. The weapon divideth it not, the fire burneth it not, the water corrupteth it not, the wind drieth it not away; for it is indivisible, inconsumable, incorruptible, and is not to be dried away; it is eternal, universal, permanent, immoveable; it is invisible, inconceivable, and unalterable; therefore believing it to be thus, thou shouldest not grieve.”

Lecture 2. Bhāgāt-Gēta. Translated by Mr. Wilkins.

the guilt of man. If the world should fail us, we are to consider ourselves as strangers and sojourners here, whose treasures and whose home are in Heaven—If we suffer affliction in

13. **THAT** laborious researcher, Purchas, gives this account of the belief of the Africans, upon the coast of Guinea, with respect to a future existence.

“**WE** asked them of their beliefs, and what opinion they had of divers things; as first, when they died what became of their bodies and souls? they made us answer, that the body is dead, but they knew not what any resurrection at the latter day meant, as we do; but when they die, they know that they goe into another world, but they know not whither; and that therein they differ from brute beasts, but they cannot tell you to what place they goe, whether under the earth or up into heaven; but when they die, they use to give the dead bodie something to carrie with him; whereby it is to be marked that they believe that there is another life after this, and that there they have need of such things as they have here on earth.”

Part 2. Purchas's Pilgrims, L. VII. C. 2. § 4. p. 943. Ed. 1625.

14. **EDWARDS** in his History of the West Indies, says,

“**THEY** tell me likewise, that whenever a considerable man expires, several of his wives, and a great number of his slaves, are sacrificed at his funeral. This is done, say they, that he may be properly attended in the next world. This circumstance has been confirmed to me by every Gold Coast Negro that I have interrogated on the subject, and I have inquired of many.”

Edwards's Hist. of the West Indies B. IV. C. 3. P. 67. Ed. 1793.

15. **DR. ROBERTSON**, speaking of the Aboriginal Americans, observes:

“**WITH** respect to the other great doctrine of religion, concerning the immortality of the soul, the sentiments of the Americans were more united. The human mind, even when least improved

our own persons, it is to be considered as the chastisement of our heavenly father—If we lose our friends and dear connexions, who affectionately twine around our hearts, and constitute

and invigorated by culture, shrinks from the thought of dissolution, and looks forward, with hope and expectation, to a state of future existence. This sentiment, resulting from a secret consciousness of its own dignity, from an instinctive longing after immortality, is universal, and may be deemed natural. Upon this are founded the most exalted hopes of man in his highest state of improvement; nor has nature withheld from him this soothing consolation, in the most early and rude period of his progress. We can trace this opinion from one extremity of America to the other. In some regions more faint and obscure, in others more perfectly developed; but no where unknown. The most uncivilized of its savage tribes do not apprehend death as the extinction of being. All hope for a future and more happy state, where they shall be for ever exempt from the calamities which embitter human life in its present condition. As they imagine, that the dead begin anew their career in the world whither they are gone, that they may not enter upon it defenceless and unprovided, they bury with them their bow, their arrows, and other weapons used in hunting or war; they deposite in their tombs the skins or stuffs of which they may make garments. Indian corn, manioc, venison, domestic utensils, and whatever is reckoned among the necessaries in their simple mode of life”.

ROBERTSON'S Hist. of America, B. IV. C. 7. P. 387. Ed. 1776.

16. PETER MARTYR, discoursing upon the same subject, says:

“Dum in littore (Cubæ) rem divinam præfectus (Columbus) audiret, ecce primum quendam octogenarium, virum gravem, nec eo minus nudum, multis cum comitantibus. Hic, donec sacra peragerentur admiratus, ore oculisque intentus adsistit: dehinc præfecto canistrum, quem manu gerebat, plenum patriæ fructibus,

our principal happiness, we are not to “sorrow as those who have no hope”:* because, “the hour is coming, in which they who are in their graves, shall hear the voice of the Son of God,

dono dedit: sedensque apud eum per interpretem Didacum colonum, qui id idioma, cum propius accessissent, intelligebat, orationem habuit hujusmodi:

“TERRAS omnes istas hactenus tibi ignotas, manu potenti te percurrisse, renunciatum nobis fuit, populisque incolis metum non mediocrem intulisse. Quare te hortor moneoque, ut itinera duo, cum e corpore prosiliant, animas habere scias: tenebrosum unum ac tetrum, his paratum, qui generi humano molesti infensique sunt: jucundum aliud et delectabile, illis statutum, qui pacem et quietem gentium viventes amârunt. Si igitur te mortalem esse, et unicuique pro præsentibus operibus futura merita obsignata memineris, neminem infestabis.”

WHILST the Admiral (Columbus) was hearing divine service on the shore (of Cuba) to his astonishment, there came a chief about eighty years old, a man respectable, yet naked, and with him a large company of attendants. Struck with admiration, during the performance of the religious ceremonies, he stood silent and with his eyes fixed: but when they were concluded, he presented to the Admiral a basket filled with the fruits of his country, which he carried in his hand; and sitting down near him, by means of Didacus, an interpreter, who came from one of the colonies, and who, upon near approach, understood that dialect, he spake to this effect: “We have been told, that with your powerful army you have made a rapid progress through all those lands, with which heretofore you were unacquainted; and that you have greatly terrified the people who inhabit them. Know then, by my exhortation and admonition,

* 1 Thess. 4. 13.

and shall come forth;”* and, “them that sleep in Jesus shall he bring with him.”†—And, if we ourselves are parting with the world, and all that is dear to us here, provided we are the

that for the souls of men departed from their bodies, there are two different ways of destination; the one dark and horrible, prepared for those who disturb and annoy mankind; the other pleasant and delightful, appointed for those who, during life, have loved the peace and tranquillity of nations. If you will remember that you are mortal, and that future retributions are reserved for every person, proportioned to his present actions, you will make no one unhappy.

B. III. Dec. 1. P. 43. Ed. 1574.

17. CAPT. KING, in his account of the Sandwich Islands, thus states the sentiments of their inhabitants on this subject:

“WE were able to learn but little of their notions with regard to a future state. Whenever we asked them, whither the dead were gone? we were always answered, that the breath, which they appeared to consider as the soul, or immortal part, was gone to *Eatooa*; and on pushing our inquiries farther, they seemed to describe some particular place, where they imagined the abode of the deceased to be; but we could not perceive, that they thought, in this state, either rewards or punishments awaited them.”

CAPT. KING'S account of the Sandwich Islands, Vol. III. B. 5.

C. 7. P. 163. Voyage to the Pacific Ocean, Ed. 1785.

18. Capt. Cook's Account of the Friendly Islands contains this information:

“THE Inhabitants have very proper sentiments about the immateriality and immortality of the soul. They call it life, the living principle, or, what is more agreeable to their notions of it, an *Otooa*; that is, a divinity or invisible being. They say, that im-

* John 5. 25. † 1 Thess. 4. 14.

disciples of Christ, and our faith in him will authorize us confidently and sincerely to exclaim, with the expiring Stephen, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!"* his rod and his staff shall be

mediately upon death, the souls of their chiefs separate from their bodies, and go to a place called *Doobootoo*; the chief, or god of which is *Goolcho*—as to the souls of the lower sort of people, they undergo a sort of transmigration; or, as they say, are eaten by a bird called *Coata*, which walks upon their graves for that purpose."

CAPT. COOK'S Account of the Friendly Islands, Vol. 1. B. 2. C. 11. P. 405. Voyage to the Pacific Ocean, Ed. 1785.

19. MR. ANDERSON tells, us that "the inhabitants of Otaheite believe the soul to be immaterial and immortal. They say, that it keeps fluttering about the lips, during the pangs of death; and that then it ascends, and mixes with, or, as they express it, is eaten by the Deity. In this state, it remains for some time; after which, it departs to a certain place, destined for the reception of the souls of men, where it exists in eternal night; or, as they sometimes say, in twilight or dawn. They have no idea of any permanent punishment after death, for crimes which have been committed on earth; for the souls of good and of bad men are eaten indiscriminately by God. But they certainly consider this coalition with the Deity, as a kind of purification, necessary to be undergone, before they enter a state of bliss."

MR. ANDERSON'S account of Otaheite, B. III. C. 9. P. 164. Vol. II. Voyage to the Pacific Ocean, Ed. 1785.

FROM these testimonies, (to which many others might be added) it appears incontrovertibly, that a belief in a future state of existence after death has existed in all nations. The mode of that existence could not possibly be ascertained, but by *Divine Revelation*, which we have the inestimable privilege of enjoying.

* Acts 7. 59.

such support, as will frequently enable us to exult in that triumphant apostrophe....“O Death! where is thy sting? O Grave! where is thy victory?”*

YES, Brethren, the sighs of contrition, and the aspirations after holiness, which flow from the sincere heart, ascend before the throne of God; where, “trumpet-tongued” they plead for favour and forgiveness; while their plea is enforced, by the atoning merits of the divine mediator, and their testimony recorded, in the mighty, the awful Register of Heaven.

To such persons we are assured the Lord will not impute iniquity, “because in their *spirit* there was no guile:”† but that “their sins shall be blotted out,”‡ and “their iniquities remembered no more”.|| To the obdurate and impenitent, nothing, indeed, remains at the solemn hour of dissolution, but the consciousness of guilt, of neglected opportunities of repentance and salvation, of murdered, mispent time; and consequently, “a fearful looking for of judgment”,**

* 1 Cor. 15. 55. † Ps. 32. 2. ‡ Acts. 3. 19. || Heb. 8. 12.

** Heb. 10. 27.

and of banishment from the presence of God, into the regions of agony and despair.

IN instances of sudden dissolution, we see how awful is the power of that agent, who is permitted to extinguish our earthly existence, in a manner, sometimes, the most terrifying and alarming. But, that we may not sink under the painful apprehensions, which such dispensations might naturally occasion, let us turn our attention to the exhilarating assurance given, by divine revelation, to the beloved apostle St. John; who says, "I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, write, Blessed are the dead, who die in the Lord, from henceforth:"* i. e. immediately, or at the moment of their death.

*VARIOUS have been the opinions of Commentators, with respect to an apparent ambiguity, as to the period referred to by this expression "from henceforth:"—some referring it to the severe persecution, which, it was revealed to the evangelist, would be permitted to try the faith of the saints, the true servants of God, in the *latter days*, when Satan should exert his utmost power, and make his last and greatest effort against the kingdom of God amongst men; or, against the influence of the faith as it is in Jesus; when, as St. John expresses it, "the Devil shall come, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time:" and that, therefore, those sincere Christians who shall die in the full and true belief and profession of their faith, *before* that awful period, were to

By *dying in the Lord* is to be understood.

1. The dying in a state of union with him, as steadfast believers in his mediation and effec-

be accounted *blessed*, because exempted from the severe distresses and trials, which, in the infinitely wise economy of Providence, were preordained, as of necessary occurrence, and would then be permitted to exist.

OTHER expositors of this portion of the sacred Canon, consider the declaration, as altogether applicable to that particular period of Church History, when a reformation from the errors and corruptions of Popery, both in doctrine and discipline, was effected in the visible church of Christ, by Luther and his protestant adherents.

OTHERS are of opinion, that it should only be taken in immediate connection with the phrase, dying in or *for* the Lord; and would therefore confine it to those, who evinced the sincerity of their faith by suffering *martyrdom*, rather than relinquish their attachment to christianity.

OTHERS again assert, that the words "from henceforth" are of more general signification, and is an expression synonymous with *immediately*; that is, *from the moment* of their death, those who die in the Lord, or in the true faith of Christianity—shall be blessed, and enter into rest; this opinion appears to be strengthened, by considering the preceding verses; in which the power of antichrist is described, and the most dreadful punishment denounced against those "who worship the beast and his image." And as a belief in Purgatory or an intermediate state of purification between death and judgment, is one of the tenets held by some, this *solemn assurance* by a voice from Heaven (after the prophetic vision of Antichrist) appears to be particularly directed against that erroneous doctrine, and accordingly the Church from which we are descended expressly condemns it in her 22 article.

IN this sense also the compilers of our Liturgy certainly understood the passage, otherwise they would not have inserted it into the

tual intercession; after becoming members of his mystical body, the Church, by Baptism.

“NEITHER pray I.” said Christ himself, just before he suffered; “neither pray I for these,” my Apostles, “alone, but for them also, who shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe, that thou hast sent me: And the glory, which thou gavest me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one;—that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.” *

2. SUCH may be considered as living, and, by “enduring unto the end,” † as *dying in the Lord*,

Burial service, and have transposed the original construction of the sentence, so as clearly to render it of *general* application, and unequivocally to convey that meaning.

WITH deference, therefore, to such respectable authorities as support the *preceding* opinions, I am inclined to subscribe to the *latter* interpretation, as most consonant to reason, to the general tenor of Scripture, and to the evident scope of the passage in the original, when taken in connection with the verses, which it immediately follows.

* John. 17, 20. 21. 22. 23. † Math. 10. 22.

who have faithfully employed their time and talents, during their period of probation here, in endeavouring to know the will of the Lord, by searching the Holy Scriptures; in striving to regulate their sentiments and actions according to their dictates; and in uniform exertions to promote the public weal.

3. By *dying in the Lord*, is to be considered, the dying in a public profession of faith in Christ. “Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father who is in heaven.”* And, “Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father’s, and of the holy angels.”† Faith is the last grace acted upon by the dying Christian: it supports his hopes, because it shews him a faithful Saviour, and a merciful and reconciled God.

4. THEY may be said to *die in the Lord*, who imitate Christ’s dying example, in patience and resignation to the divine will, and in devoutly

* Mat. 10. 32.

† Luke 9. 25.

commending their spirits unto God. “And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.”*

Such are the blessed, who, by uniting these qualifications, “die in the Lord,” and happily “rest from their labours.” They enjoy a cessation from the toils and perplexities of human life, and a relief from its vexations and afflictions. They escape from the seductions of pleasure, and the insatiable cravings of ambition; from harrassing doubts and fears; from party contentions; from the treachery of pretended friends, and the envy, hatred, and malice, of open enemies; from, “disease and sorrow’s weeping train;” from the iron scourge of ingratitude, and the torturing pangs of disappointed hope. They rest in the enjoyment of the immediate presence of God, of a visible intercourse with their Saviour, and of an association with angels and archangels, and “with the spirits of just men made perfect.”† In a word:

* Mat. 23. 46. † Heb. 12. 23.

they rest, in the full fruition of the most refined and perfect felicity.

VARIOUS indeed are the modes, in which the king of terrors exercises his power over the human race; the most lamentable and distressing of which is that, whereby he renders men the agents of their own dissolution; either by the perpetration of wilful *Suicide*, or by the equally atrocious act of *DUELLING**—a practice which, notwithstanding the explicit and positive prohibition of divine and human laws, frequently prevails in the most civilized nations, and even amongst those who profess, and call themselves Christians.—A practice so deeply rooted, and so generally acquiesced in, so interwoven with the respect and esteem of our fellow men,

* THE criminality of both these practices must be evident to every reflecting mind, whether they are viewed through the medium of reason, or religion. The horror which is experienced, and the universal reprobation which is expressed, on hearing of an act of *suicide*, will ever render it an act of rare commission in civilized society. Whereas, to the practice of *duelling*, though not less criminal in its motive, subversive of the happiness of society in its operation, or fatal in its influence and effects, the potent and almost irresistible authority of custom, (and that originating in barbarism and superstition), has long given and still continues to give a sanction, which is universally received and implicitly submitted to.

as often not to be resisted, but under pain of forfeiting these, and the ability of future usefulness in life. A practice, moreover, which I am sorry to observe, is rapidly gaining ground, and its advocates daily increasing amongst us; though it is known to be an act, replete with *danger* and *distress*, *ferocious* in its nature, *savage* in its operation, and *impiously antichristian* in its principle.

I AM well aware, that even under the acknowledged consciousness of its enormity, *duelling* is defended, on the ground of unavoidable necessity; its supporters alleging, that there are some offences of so peculiar a nature, as, though in the highest degree irritating and injurious, do not come under the cognizance of the established laws, and which call for immediate redress.* But this is an argument, false, both

* FOR the suggestion of the following Law authority, and the arguments by which it is controverted, I am indebted to a learned and ingenious friend.

THE practice of duelling receives the following defence from *Mr. Vattel*, an author celebrated through the world for his accurate treatise on the law of nations. "This honour" says he "be it as false

in its origin and application, because founded upon assumed premises—an argument

and chimerical as you please, is a very real and necessary blessing ; since without it a man can neither live well with his equals, nor exercise a profession that is often his only resource. When therefore a man of a brutish disposition would unjustly ravish from him a chimera so esteemed, and so necessary, why may he not defend it as he would his life and treasure against a robber ? As the state does not permit an individual to pursue with arms in his hands the usurper of his fortune, only because he may obtain justice from the magistrate ; so if the sovereign will not allow him to draw his sword against him from whom he has received an insult, he ought necessarily to take such measures that the patience and obedience insulted be no prejudice to him. *The society cannot deprive man of his natural right of making war against an aggressor, without furnishing him with another means of securing himself from the evil his enemy would do him ; for on all these occasions, where the public authority cannot lend us assistance, we resume our primary right of natural defence.* Thus a traveller may kill, without difficulty, the robber who attacks him on the highway, because, at that instant he would in vain implore the protection of the laws, and the magistrate.”

Vattel. B. I. Ch. XIII. Sec. 176.

THIS I take to be the splendid sophism, by which alone will any man of sense suffer himself to be deluded : for, as to those puerile arguments which treat duelling as an anomalous mode of punishment, or a just revenge, they are at once too silly and too impious to ensnare one person of a strong understanding. But to this there is a conclusive answer ; one indeed to which a Christian will not condescend, because he looks with a single eye to the paramount ordinances of his religion,—the authority of his God ; and spurns the influence of a prejudice by which society would undermine the Gospel : but one which men of fashion, and of mere

too, which neither the Philanthropist nor the Deist—and much less the *Christian*—can possibly reconcile with his articles of faith, or mo-

worldly calculation may listen to, because it destroys the whole foundation of the sophism. It is this—a man cannot be reduced to the state of nature so as to justify a private war for any thing which in a state of nature is not an adequate offence : and for this reason ; if he be considered in a state of nature as to the war, he must be so as to the ground of the war ; and if that ground be not a good one, the right of war of course fails. To exemplify—I am in a state of nature to execute justice on the highway robber ; because, in a state of nature such an attack would be a good ground for such a resistance, and such an assault upon the person could only be defeated by the destruction of the assailant. But if a man calls me a *coward*, for which civil law will give me no redress, and I am restored, as Vattel supposes, to a state of nature, for what purpose is this ? Why surely for nothing but to get redress for an action, which, by reason alone of my union with society can do me any injury. This is plainly contrary to Vattel's reasoning, for he grounds his position on this maxim ; “*that society cannot deprive him of his natural right.*” Now what natural right has a man to take the life of one who calls him a *coward* ? of one who *insults* him ? surely none. And here lies the fallacy in Vattel's argument ; that he supposes this offence against courtesy, and politeness, which is so ruinous to a man in the present state of society, is actually an offence by the Law of Nature. It has not been deemed an offence of this magnitude in many states of society equally refined as the present ; it owes its consequence to the preposterous pride of cowards, who have formed a sufficient majority to impose the sentiment upon brave men ; and so far from being an offence in a state of nature, if we can conceive of such a state, bravery is a virtue which derives its *whole* consideration from *society*. In a state of nature no one could be reproached as a coward,

tives of action: for, can any occurrence ever justify a wilful violation of the divine laws, or of the immutable principles of justice and humanity? In such cases, however, as well indeed as in all, did the dictates of genuine benevolence, and *Christian* forbearance operate as they ought in the human breast, as no wilful offence would be given, of course, such fatal consequences would never exist. Let, therefore, the injunctions of Christianity and Philanthropy be-

because until men are somehow united, this weakness is pernicious to no one, but the individual of whom it is predicated. I speak as to what may be called the philosophical state of nature, where every man is independent of his fellow. As to our savages, with whom bravery is of great account, they are so far removed from the state of nature contemplated, as upon some points to be morally superior to the boasted *gentlemen* of cultivated cities; and they esteem courage more than any thing else, from the very circumstance that their social connection depends principally upon it. It may not be inapplicable perhaps to remark, that, among these truly brave people who idolize courage, single combat, by individuals of the same tribe, is not known. I am therefore justified in answering Vattel, that although "society cannot deprive man of his natural right of making war against an aggressor, without furnishing him with another means of securing himself from the evil his enemy would do him," yet, for the offences which stimulate men of honour to a duel, there is no *natural* right of defence: in the code of nature such offences cannot exist—they grow out of society; and therefore if there were a right of defence, it would want a correlative; which would be an absurdity.

gin their operation, by preventing offences of such a nature, and by conciliatory efforts to appease resentment against them when committed; thereby removing from the offender the imputation of all the consequent mischief and misery, of which he might otherwise be considered as the author.*

* **THOUGH** duelling cannot be justified, in any degree, under any provocation, yet let it be remembered, with respect to the **ILLUSTRIOUS VICTIM**, whose untimely death we now justly deplore, that the Rev. Dr. Mason, who attended him on his death bed, testifies, "he declared his abhorrence of the whole transaction, and repeated his disavowal of all intention to hurt Col. Burr." "It was always," added he, "against my principles. I used every expedient to avoid the interview: but I have found, for some time past, that my life *must* be exposed to that man. I went to the field determined not to take *his* life."

AND, in a paper written with his own hand, inclosed with his will, in a packet addressed to one of his executors, to be opened in case of his death, are the following singular and decisive assertions. "My religious and moral principles are strongly opposed to the practice of duelling, and it would ever give me pain, to be obliged to shed the blood of a fellow creature, in a private combat forbidden by the laws."

"**THE** disavowal required of me by Col. Burr, in a general and indefinite form, was out of my power, if it had really been proper for me to submit to be so questioned."

"**I AM** not sure whether, under all the circumstances, I did not go further in the attempt to accommodate, than a punctilious delicacy will justify. If so, I hope the motives I have stated will excuse me."

“ By this infamous vice of duelling,” says a celebrated modern jurist,* “ how is the name of Honour prostituted! Can honour be the savage resolution, the brutal fierceness of a revengeful spirit? True honour is manifested in a steady, uniform train of actions, attended by justice, and directed by prudence. Is this the conduct of the duellist? Will *justice* support him in robbing the community of an able and useful member, and in depriving the poor of a benefactor? Will it support him in preparing affliction for the widow’s heart—in filling the orphan’s eyes with tears? Will justice acquit him for enlarging the punishment beyond the offence? Will it permit him for, perhaps, a rash word that may admit of an apology, an unadvised, inconsiderate action that may be retrieved, or an injury that may be compensated, to cut off a man before his days be half numbered? and for a temporary fault inflict an

* MR. HORNE, in the Island of St. Christophers, as council for the prosecution of Mr. Barbot for the death of Mr. Mills, 1753. Vide. E. Jerningham’s Essay prefixed to his select Sermons of Bossuet—Cr. 8 vo. 1801. or, State Trials vol. 10, p. 139.

endless punishment?—On the other hand, will *prudence* bear him out in risking an infamous death” as a *murderer*, which would be the case if our laws were *properly* put in execution, * “if he succeeds in the duel? But, if he falls— will it plead his pardon at a more awful tribunal, for rushing into the presence of an offended God?” in defiance of his dispensations, and, “with all his imperfections on his head.”

“DUELLING seems to be an unnatural graft upon genuine courage, and the growth of a barbarous age. The polite nations of Greece and Rome knew nothing of it: they reserved their bravery for the enemies of their country;

* It is a circumstance much to be lamented by us, that though laws which prohibit duels exist in many of the states under the severest penalties, yet, as the jurisdiction of an individual state extends no further than its own immediate territory, aggressors committing the offence beyond the boundary line, are also considered as beyond the operation of its laws. Hence, duels are fought by the citizens of New York and Pennsylvania, on the shores of New Jersey; and thus are necessary and well-meant laws evaded: nay, even when the issue of a duel proves fatal to one of the parties, the MURDERER is suffered to range at large, unpunished, unpursued.

and then were prodigal of their blood. These brave people set *Honour* up as the guardian genius of the public, to humanize their passions, to preserve their truth unblemished, and to teach them to value life only as useful to their country. The *modern heroes* dress it up like one of the demons of superstition, besmeared with blood, and delighting in human sacrifice.”

AGAINST this irreligious and inhuman practice, I have so recently expatiated in this place,* that I should not so soon again call your attention to it, were it not in compliance with the late public request of a large and truly respectable association of our fellow citizens; in consequence of a justly deplored occurrence, by which a virtuous and amiable family have suddenly been deprived of an affectionate friend, protector, and guide; and our country, of a wise, vigilant, active, and illustrious statesman. †

* In a sermon, preached March 18, 1804.

† AN attempt to delineate that uncommon assemblage of talents and virtues which formed his character, would be equally feeble and unnecessary, after those just, minute, and eloquent tributes of respect which have already been given to the world by so many

THAT so irrational and impious a custom, which originated in the early ages of ignorance, superstition, and Gothic barbarism, should prevail and be conformed to, by men eminent for wisdom and integrity, in the present enlightened day, is, indeed, truly astonishing.

THE decision of controversy by single combat, and the attestation of truth by what was called the Ordeal trial, were accommodated to the rude manners of an uncivilized and ferocious people. But, when reason assumed her empire, when arts, industry, science, philosophy, and religion, began gradually to expand and illuminate the human mind, to restrain the indulgence of the passions, to refine and elevate the affections, to polish the manners, and to purify the heart;—it might naturally be supposed that a practice so absurd, so contrary to the principles of social union, of morality, and of re-

of our most distinguished civilians and divines, particularly that which flowed from the benevolent heart, the sagacious head, and the fluent pen, of the Rev. Dr. J. Mason, who enjoyed the honourable distinction of being appointed by the Society of Cincinnati, in New York, to pronounce an Oration commemorative of their *revered* President, Major Gen. Alexander Hamilton.

ligion, would *certainly* have been suppressed and abhorred: and such, in all probability, would have been the case, had not the institution of Chivalry, originally benevolent and honourable in its principles, and expressly intended to restrain and abolish so pernicious and ferocious a custom, been carried to the opposite extreme of fantastic refinement and extravagant excess; which, though in some degree corrected through succeeding periods of time, still, in a qualified form, continues to produce occasionally the most fatal effects.*

* "HUMANITY sprung from the bosom of Violence, and Relief from the hand of Rapacity. Those licentious and tyrannic nobles, who had been guilty of every species of outrage, and every mode of oppression, touched, at last, by a sense of natural equity, and swayed by the conviction of a common interest, formed associations for the redress of private wrongs, and the preservation of public safety. So honourable was the origin of an institution generally represented as whimsical !

"THAT the spirit of Chivalry sometimes rose to an extravagant height, and had often a pernicious tendency, must however be allowed. In Spain, under the influence of a romantic gallantry, it gave birth to a series of wild adventures, which have been deservedly ridiculed: in the train of Norman ambition, it extinguished the liberties of England, and deluged Italy in blood; and at the call of Superstition, and as the engine of papal power, it desolated Asia under the banner of the Cross. But these ought not to be

FREQUENT, yet ineffectual, have been the efforts made by the edicts of Kings, the decisions of Councils, and the requisitions of Ecclesiastical Canons.* Neither the laws of God

considered as arguments against an institution laudable in itself, and necessary at the time of its institution: and those who pretend to despise it, the advocates of ancient barbarism and ancient rusticity, ought to remember, that chivalry not only first taught mankind to carry the civilities of peace into the operations of war, and to mingle politeness with the use of the sword, but roused the human soul from its lethargy, invigorated the human character, even while it softened it, and produced exploits which antiquity cannot parallel. It is therefore entitled to our gratitude, though the point of honour, and the refinements in gallantry, its more doubtful effects, should be excluded from the improvements in modern manners."

Russel's Hist. of Modern Europe, Let. XVIII.

* PHILIP the fair, king of France, in the thirteenth Century, appears to have been the first monarch who endeavoured to suppress this pernicious and fatal practice, which then existed under the appellation of *judicial combat*. The military spirit of the times, however, would not permit him to proceed further than a *regulation* of that mode of contest; by which it was declared, that nothing was to be brought to that bloody issue, which could be determined by any other means. Henry the II, who succeeded Francis I—in 1547, published an edict prohibiting, under the severest penalties, the decision of controversy by duelling. During the reign of Henry IV, of France, the illustrious Sully exerted all his influence with that monarch, totally to abolish so ferocious a practice: accordingly, an edict for the severe punishment of duelling, was published at Blois in the year 1602, and this edict was renewed, with additional severities, in 1609. The purport of it was as follows: "Both challenger and challenged, with their seconds, are made guilty of læse majesty, and are to be punished with death, and confiscation of goods.

nor man, have hitherto been able to extinguish that false and frantic principle of imaginary

All the great officers and magistrates of France, military and civil, are required to publish and execute this edict in their several jurisdictions, and are empowered to judge the differences, which occasion duels. If the complainer of any affront refuse to accept the satisfaction these officers appoint, or the offender refuse to comply with it, he is to be imprisoned."

VIDE, Cockburne on duelling, P. 344, and the authorities he quotes.

THE following extract is from Cockburne on duelling P. 343. "As modern duels began and were first indulged in France, so in no place have there been so many and so severe edicts against them, to which the government there has been forced by the continual mischiefs which happened from them, and the great disposition of the people towards them, which then was so great, that Mons. Montaigne says "he believes, if three Frenchmen were put into the Lybian desert, they would not be a month there without fighting;" and Mons. Hardouin de Perefrix, Bishop of Rhodes, observes, in his life of Henry IV, "that the madness of duels seized the spirits of the nobility and gentry so much, that they lost more blood by their own hands in times of peace, than had been shed by their enemies in battle."

IN the reign of Lewis XIII, no less than three edicts were issued declaratory against duels. "In the year 1679," says the Rev. Mr. Moore, in a Treatise on this subject, "Lewis XIV, issued that famous proclamation, which effected more than all his predecessors could obtain, and which contributed in so great a degree to the suppression of all regular and outrageous duels in France. Two points seem more especially to have contributed to give stability to this edict—viz. *the solemn agreement entered into by so many of the principal nobility and gentry of the kingdom "that they would never fight a duel under any pretence whatsoever;" and the firmness of the king, in refusing all solicitations in behalf of the offenders."*

honour, which hath so long pervaded, and still pervades the civilized world: nor will, I fear,

“THE challenger and challenged (if they accept) are, by this edict, declared liable to heavy fines, imprisonments, and confiscations, even if they proceed not to the combat; and also seconds the same. But if fighting follows, the combatants are both to be put to death without pardon; all their estates real and personal to be forfeited; and their bodies not to be allowed christian burial. If one fall in the combat, the process against his body and memory to be the same.”

AUGUSTUS, King of Poland, in 1712, published a severe edict against duelling consisting of sixty-two articles—for which, see Cockburne. In England, the great Sir Francis Bacon as strenuously exerted himself against duelling in the court of James I, as Sully did in that of Henry IV, and prohibitory proclamations were accordingly issued by that monarch.

IN the year 1654, Cromwell's parliament passed an ordinance “for preventing and punishing duels, and all provocations thereto;” in which it was declared “that if any person should challenge or cause to be challenged, or accept, or knowingly carry a challenge to fight a duel, he should be committed to prison without bail for six months, and give security for his good behaviour for one whole year after. Persons challenged, not discovering it in twenty-four hours, to be deemed acceptors. Fighting a duel, where death should ensue, to be adjudged murder. Fighting a duel upon preceding challenge, being a second, or assisting therein, though death should not ensue thereupon, to be banished for life within one month after conviction, and, in case of return, to suffer death. Persons using provoking words or gestures, to be indicted; and if convicted to be fined, bound to good behaviour, and to make reparation to the party injured, according to his quality and the nature of the offence.”

Parliamentary Hist. Vol. XX. P. 311.

THE high spirited cavaliers at the time of the Restoration, reviv-

its influence be destroyed, until reason shall assert and maintain her rights against the tyran-

ed that disposition for duelling which had in some degree become dormant. Charles II, therefore issued the following proclamation.

CHARLES R.

“WHEREAS it is become too frequent, especially with persons of quality, under a vain pretence of honour, to take upon them to be the revengers of their private quarrels, by duel and single combat, which ought not be upon any pretence or provocation whatsoever; we, considering that the sin of murder is detestable before God, and this way of prosecuting satisfaction scandalous to the Christian religion, and a manifest violation of our laws and authority—out of our pious care to prevent unchristian and rash effusion of blood, do, by this our royal proclamation, strictly charge and command all our loving subjects of what quality soever, that they do not, either by themselves or by others, by message, word, writing, or other ways or means, challenge, or cause to be challenged, any person or persons to fight in combat, or single duel, nor carry, accept, or conceal any such challenge or appointment, nor actually fight any such duel, with any of our subjects or others, or as a second, or otherwise accompany or become assistant therein. And we do hereby—to the intent that all persons may take care to prevent the dangers they may incur, by acting or assisting in any such duel—declare our royal pleasure, that we will not grant our pardon to any person or persons that shall fight, or be any way aiding or concerned in any duel, where any person shall be slain, or die of his wounds received therein; but will leave all such persons to the utmost rigour and severity of the laws: and further, that we will not suffer or endure any persons to be or remain in our court, who shall presume to intercede in the behalf of any person or persons that shall offend contrary to this our proclamation. And for the better avoiding all such duels, we do hereby straightly charge and command all persons whatsoever, who shall receive or know of any challenge sent or delivered as aforesaid, that they do forthwith

ny of fashion, and the dogmas of superstition; and so modify and enlarge the commonly received

give notice thereof to some of our privy council, or otherwise, to some justice of peace near the place, where such offence shall be committed; upon pain of our highest displeasure, and being left to be proceeded against according to the strictest rigour and severity of our laws.

GIVEN at our Court at Whitehall the 9th day of March, 1679. In the two and thirtieth year of our reign.

London Gazette, March 11, 1679.

A BILL against duelling was brought into the House of Commons in the year 1713, on the recommendation of Queen Anne, who, in her speech from the throne, told the parliament "the impious practice of duelling requires some speedy and effectual remedy."

SUCH were some of the efforts made by the civil power, in different countries and at different times, to suppress this barbarous and bloody practice; but their inefficiency generally arose from the elevated station of the combatants, (duelling being chiefly practiced by the higher and most polished orders in society), and their consequent influence in obtaining pardons, which were so frequently and easily procured, as to render the laws on that head nugatory.

NOR was ecclesiastical authority wanting, to discountenance and abolish so shameful an outrage against the most essential principles of civilization and religion.

THE Church, at various periods, issued her Canons, and fulminated her decrees, against an act so diametrically opposed to the dictates of Reason and the precepts of Christianity.—The Council of Trent passed a very strict Canon against all manner of duelling, declaring it to be "a detestable custom, introduced by the Devil for the destruction both of body and soul; inhibiting the duel throughout the Christian world, as most unbecoming Christians, excommunicating not only all those who fought themselves, but all their associates, and even the spectators of the battle; confiscating all

principles of Honour, as to render a participation in a duel, either as a principal or secondary agent, disgraceful and ignominious:* and until

their goods, and denying Christian burial to those who were killed in a duel, as being self murderers in fact. All advisers, supporters, witnesses, or those in any shape concerned, are likewise to be excommunicated. Princes also, who connive at duels, are to be deprived of all temporal power, jurisdiction, and dominion over the places, where they have permitted a duel to be fought."

"*DETESTABILIS duellorum usus fabricante diabolo introductus, ut cruentâ corporum morte, animarum etiam perniciem lucretur, ex christiano orbe penitùs exterminetur: imperator, duces, principes, marchiones, comites, et quocunque alio nomine domini temporales, qui locum ad monomachiam in terris suis inter christianos concesserint, eo ipso sint excommunicati, ac jurisdictione et dominio civitatis, castri aut loci, in quo vel apud quem, duellum fieri premiserint, quod ab eclesiâ obtinent, privati intelligantur: etsi feudalia sint, directis dominis statim acquirantur. Qui vero pugnam commiserint, et qui eorum "patrini" vocantur excommunicationis, ac omnium bonorum suorum proscriptionis ac perpetuæ infamiæ pœnam incurrant; et ut homicide juxta sacros canones puniri debeant. Et si in ipso conflictu decesserint, perpetuo careant ecclesiasticâ sepulturâ:—illi etiam, qui concilium in causâ duelli tam in jure quam facto dederint, aut aliâ quâcunque ratione ad id quemquam suaserint, necnon spectatores, excommunicationis ac perpetuæ maledictionis vinculo teneantur; non obstante quocunque privilegio seu pravâ consuetudine, etiam immemorabili."*

Council of Trent, Session 25. Chap. 19.

* SINCE the death of Gen. Hamilton, an idea has been suggested by Major General Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, Vice President General of the Society of Cincinnati, in a letter to the standing committee of the State Society of Cincinnati in New York, which, if adopted, would prove as probable a means of suppressing the shock-

religion shall be permitted so to purify the heart, as to restrain and finally extinguish those ferocious passions and vicious propensities, which are equally opposed to our happiness in this world, and in that to which we are all rapidly hastening.

SHOULD, however, so happy a revolution in sentiment and manners ever be effected, with what wonder, regret, and astonishment will the

ing practice of duelling as any which could be devised. Such a plan, originating in a *military* association, would most assuredly have much influence in the community, and powerfully aid the operation of any laws or resolutions which might be framed by civil authority.

“Is there no way” says the General, “of abolishing throughout the union this absurd and barbarous custom, to the observance of which he* fell a victim? Duelling is no criterion of bravery; for I have seen cowards fight duels; and I am convinced real courage may often be better shewn in the refusal than in the acceptance of a challenge. If the society of Cincinnati were to declare their abhorrence of this practice, and the determination of all its members to discourage it as far as they had influence, and on no account either to accept or send a challenge, it might tend to annul this odious custom, and would be a tribute of respect to the sentiments and memory of our late illustrious Chief.”

THESE are the correct and judicious sentiments of a gentleman whose courage, liberality, honour, and patriotism are acknowledged and unquestionable.

* Maj. General Alexander Hamilton, President of the Society of Cincinnati.

adoption of so savage and murderous a medium of redress for insults and injuries be viewed? by which, an insinuation, an unguarded word, or even a look, compels a man, under the penalty of public reprobation, ridicule, and contempt, to rush into the field; and there, either embroe his hand in a brother's blood, or impiously shed his own.*

* BRYDONE, in his *Tour through Sicily and Malta*, Vol. 1. Let. XVI. says "Perhaps Malta is the only country in the world, where duelling is permitted by law. As their whole establishment is originally founded on the wild and romantic principles of Chivalry, they have ever found it too inconsistent with these principles to abolish duelling. He relates an instance of a young man, who, for refusing to accept a challenge, was condemned to make *amende honourable*, in the great church of St. John, for forty-five days successively; then to be confined in a dungeon without light for five years, after which he was to remain prisoner in the castle for life. The unfortunate young man, who received the offence, was likewise in disgrace, as he had not an opportunity of wiping it out by the blood of his adversary. If the legislature," continues Mr. Brydone, "in other countries punished with equal rigour those who *do* fight, as it does in this, those who *do not*, I believe we should soon have an end of duelling. But I should imagine the punishment for fighting ought never to be a capital one, but rather something ignominious; and the punishment for not fighting should always be capital, or at least some severe corporal punishment, for ignominy will have as little effect on the person who is willing to submit to the appellation of a coward, as the fear of death on one who makes it his glory to despise it."

WHAT gross infatuation, it will be said, what blind deference for a custom to be expected only in savage life, must have influenced a people, in other respects polished and refined, to resort to so unjust and shocking a mode of deciding controversies! by which truth could not be ascertained, the offended and not the offender might suffer, and, if the latter be punished, it might be in a degree far beyond the nature of the offence, inadequate to its enormity, or, perhaps, in no degree at all. Nay, by which an *envious, revengeful, or malicious* character, might force a man, *amiable in his disposition, eminent for his talents, and in the highest degree useful to the community*—at the same time *opposed in principle* to the barbarous custom, to risk his life, rather than bear the imputation of cowardice, or encounter

.....“ The world’s dread laugh,
Which scarce the firm Philosopher can scorn.”

Reason indignantly revolts at the institution; and *Religion* shrinks back with horror, and trembles at its impious and infuriated decrees. She, heavenly messenger of peace,

good will, and love, in directing our steps to the realms of bliss, breathes nought but mildness, benevolence, and truth; endeavouring by her precepts to purify our spirits, and thereby to qualify us to associate with the beatified inhabitants of Heaven. Her still, small, soothing voice, charms the agitated bosom into silence and repose; and calms the boisterous billows of passion, with the irresistible authority of the celestial mandate, "Peace! be still.*" She instructs us to "give no offence in any thing;†" to "love as brethren," to "be courteous;"‡ to "seek peace and pursue it;"|| to "follow peace with all men;"§ "not to sow discord among brethren;"** that "it is an honour for a man to cease from strife;"†† that "the discretion of a man defereth his anger, and, it is his glory to pass over a transgression;"‡‡ that "it is good and pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity;"||| and she pronounces a "blessing upon peace makers, who shall be called the

* MARK 4. 39. † 2 Cor. 6. 3. ‡ 1 Pet. 3. 8. || Ps. 34. 14. § Heb. 12. 14. ** Prov. 6. 19. †† Prov. 20. 3. ‡‡ Prov. 19. 11. ||| Ps. 133. 1.

children of God.”* She teaches us to “re-compense to no man evil for evil;”† to “be kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another,” (if any man have a quarrel, or offendeth so as to give cause for a quarrel,) “even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven us;”‡ “being reviled to bless, being persecuted to suffer, being defamed to entreat;|| to love our enemies, to bless those who curse us, to do good to those who hate us, and to pray for those who despitefully use us, and persecute us;”§ that “if we forgive men their trespasses, our heavenly father will also forgive us; but if we forgive not men their trespasses, neither will our Father forgive our trespasses.”** “Let your moderation be known unto all men;”†† and, “say not thou I will recompense evil, but wait thou on the Lord and he shall save thee.”‡‡ “He who revengeth, shall find vengeance from the Lord, and he will surely keep his sins in remembrance. Forgive thy neighbour the hurt which he hath done unto

* MAT. 5. 9. † Rom. 12. 17. ‡ Eph. 4. 32. || 1 Cor. 4. 12. 13. § Mat. 5. 44. ** Mat. 6. 14. 15. †† Phil. 4. 5. ‡‡ PROV. 20. 22.

thee, so shall thy sins also be forgiven when thou prayest. One man beareth hatred against another, and doth he seek pardon from the Lord? He sheweth no mercy to a man who is like himself; and doth he ask forgiveness of his own sins? Remember thy end, and let enmity cease; remember corruption and death, and abide in the commandments. Remember the commandments, and bear no malice to thy neighbour; remember the covenant of the Highest.* “Thou shalt not kill.”† “Your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every man’s brother will I require the life of man.”

Such are the heavenly precepts of RELIGION; while the imperious dictates of that frenzied phantom, MODERN HONOUR, instigates to conduct diametrically opposite: she teaches, *not* to bear injuries with patience, *not* to forgive, but to resent them; *not* to leave vengeance to the justice of God, but, to execute vengeance ourselves, to

“Snatch from *his* hand the balance and the rod;”
to endeavour to murder and destroy our fellow creatures, if they offend us, even for

“trifles, light as air”—otherwise, that we must be despised by all men, and contemptuously excluded from the respect and esteem of our fellow mortals.

JUDGE now, Brethren, which of these instructors is most likely to give true dignity to the human character, and to promote your temporal and eternal interests.

AND, if neither the dictates of REASON, the persuasions of RELIGION, nor the absurdity of those impious principles of FALSE HONOUR, which involve men in the guilt both of voluntary and intended *Suicide and Murder*,* (unquestionably incurred by the du-

* “Whenever two persons in cool blood meet and fight on a precedent quarrel, and one of them is killed, the other is guilty of *murder*; and cannot help himself by alleging that he was first struck by the deceased, or that he had often declined to meet him, and was prevailed on to do it by his importunity; that it was his only intent to vindicate his reputation; or that he meant not to kill, but only to disarm his adversary. For since he deliberately engaged in an act highly unlawful, in defiance of the laws, he must at his peril abide the consequences thereof. And from hence it clearly follows, that if two persons quarrel over night, and appoint to fight the next day, or quarrel in the morning, and agree to fight in the afternoon; or such a considerable time after, by which, in common intendment, it must be presumed that the blood was cool-

ellist,)—If none of these powerful motives can restrain him, let him listen to the voice of HUMANITY—let him consider the duty which he owes to society; and the unmerited misery into which he may suddenly plunge the innocent and virtuous relatives and dependants of his unfortunate antagonist. Having satiated his Revenge for a *supposed injury*; his Jealousy of his *superior success*; or his Envy of his *unrivalled and acknowledged talents*;—let him view him as the victim of his resentment, prostrate on the earth, weltering in his blood, and writhing under the excruciating agony of a mortal wound. Let him follow him from “the field of blood,” to the chamber of death—see him in the last agonizing moments of dissolution, surrounded by his friends—his distracted wife bending over his almost lifeless frame—and, perhaps, a group of helpless children swelling the tide of woe with the most heart-rending sobs and lamentations.

ed, and then they meet and fight, and one kill the other, he is guilty of *murder*.

JUST AND OMNIPOTENT CREATOR, AND GOVERNOR OF THE UNIVERSE! Is there no chosen vengeance——But I forbear——CHRISTIANITY seals my lips, and constrains me to leave the vindictive, blood-thirsty perpetrator of the horrid deed, to the pangs of an awakening conscience, and to the mercy of his God!

ALMIGHTY FATHER! Protect the bereaved, disconsolate Widow!—protect her helpless, fatherless Children!

ALAS! The affectionate Husband, the tender, protecting Father, the invaluable Member of the Community, groans out his spirit; leaving them to bewail the sacrifice of his life, at the idolatrous altar of False Honour and Imaginary Rectitude!

SUCH, Brethren, are the irrational and irreligious principles; and such are often the fatal consequences of A DUEL.

ITS recent occurrence among us, which hath thrown a gloom over our unfortunate country, from a just consciousness of her irreparable loss, is thus eloquently commented upon by a

learned and amiable Prelate of our church,* who attended THE DISTINGUISHED SUFFERER in his last moments, and administered to him, the most sacred consolation of our Holy Religion. †

* THE Right Rev. Dr. Benjamin Moore, Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the State of New York.

† “ I PROCEEDED to converse with him on the subject of his receiving the Communion, and told him, that with respect to the qualifications of those who wished to become partakers of that Holy Ordinance, inquiries could not be made in language more expressive than that which was used by our Church. “ Do you sincerely repent of your past sins? Have you a lively faith in God’s mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of the death of Christ? And are you disposed to live in love and charity with all men ?” He lifted up his hands and said, “ With the utmost sincerity of heart, I can answer those questions in the affirmative.— I have no ill will against Col. Burr. I met him with a fixed resolution to do him no harm—I forgive all that has happened.” “ I then observed to him, that the terrors of the divine law were to be announced to the obdurate and impenitent ; but that the consolations of the Gospel were to be offered to the humble and contrite heart ; that I had no reason to doubt his sincerity, and would proceed immediately to gratify his wishes. The Communion was then administered, which he received with great devotion, and his heart afterwards appeared to be perfectly at rest. I saw him again this morning, when, with his last faltering words, he expressed a strong confidence in the mercy of God, through the intercession of the Redeemer. I remained with him until 2 o’clock this afternoon, when death closed the awful scene—he expired without a struggle, and almost without a groan.”

Bishop Moore’s Letter to the Editor of the *Evening Post*.

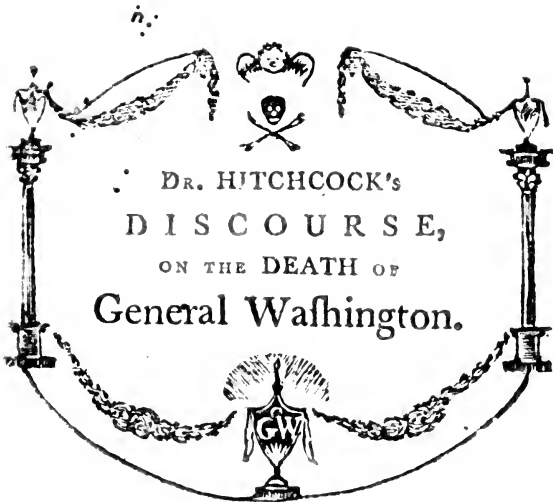
“By reflecting,” says the good Bishop, “on this melancholy event, let the humble Believer be encouraged ever to hold fast that precious faith, which is the only source of true consolation in the last extremity of nature. Let the Infidel be persuaded to abandon his opposition to that Gospel, which the strong, inquisitive, and comprehensive mind of a HAMILTON embraced, in his last moments, as the truth from Heaven. Let those who are disposed to justify the practice of duelling, be induced, by this simple narrative, to view with abhorrence, that custom which has occasioned an irreparable loss to a worthy and most afflicted family; which has deprived his friends of a beloved companion, his profession of one its brightest ornaments, and his country of a great statesman and a real patriot.”

Now to God the Father, &c.

POSTSCRIPT.

THE circular Letter and Memorial of the State Society of Cincinnati, and of the American Revolution Society, in South Carolina, on the subject of duelling, having appeared during the printing of this Discourse, and after the note in page 42 was put to the press, the author, though sensible of the apparent irregularity of arrangement, cannot resist the desire of thus publicly expressing the high degree of pleasure he experienced on perusing those documents; and of declaring his ardent hope, that the truly laudable and exemplary exertion thus made in South Carolina, will be imitated by the other States in the Union. He trusts their citizens will cordially unite in opposing so increasing, so destructive an evil; and resolutely determine, by a joint and vigorous effort, to abolish a practice, the absurdity of which is a just reproach to us as men, and its impiety a daring violation of our principles as Christians.

It is indeed “devoutly to be wished,” (and the proceedings in South Carolina inspire the hope,) that those who exercise the legislative and executive authorities will now become duly sensible of the weight and importance of the subject, and enact such laws as will convince us they are in earnest in their opposition—laws which will operate on the *cause* as well as the effect, and thereby “protect the fame and feelings of the innocent and insulted person.”—Laws which cannot possibly be evaded by any man, let his station in society be what it may; and which, by the severity of their penalties, will compel universal obedience.



DR. HITCHCOCK'S
DISCOURSE,
ON THE DEATH OF
General Washington.

