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Evans, John, 1767-1827.  
A sketch of the  
denominations of the

1827







A  
SKETCH OF THE DENOMINATIONS  
OF THE  
**CHRISTIAN WORLD,**

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED AN  
OUTLINE OF  
ATHEISM, DEISM, THEOPHILANTHROPISM,  
MAHOMETANISM, JUDAISM, AND  
CHRISTIANITY.

WITH A  
PERSUASIVE TO RELIGIOUS MODERATION.

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✓  
BY JOHN EVANS, LL. D.

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*FROM THE FIFTEENTH LONDON EDITION.*

WITH  
AN ACCOUNT OF THE RANTERS, OR PRIMITIVE METHO-  
DISTS AND OF THE IRISH PRESBYTERIANS,  
AMOUNTING TO NEARLY A MILLION  
OF PEOPLE.

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Σπουδαζοντες τηρειν την εννοτητα του πνευματος εν τω  
συνδεσμω της ειρηνης.—Ephes. iii. 4.

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AMHERST:  
J. S. & C. ADAMS, PRINTERS.  
1832.

TO

WILLIAM SMITH, Esq., M. P.

*THE ENLIGHTENED CHAMPION  
OF THE RIGHTS AND LIBERTIES OF CONSCIENCE,*

THIS FIFTEENTH EDITION

*Of a Work consecrated to the Promotion of Religious Knowledge,*

IN CONJUNCTION WITH CHRISTIAN CHARITY,

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

*According to the expressed intention of its deceased Author,*

BY HIS SON,

JOHN EVANS.

*Gray's-Inn, June 1, 1827.*

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The name of Christian is become too general to express our Faith, there being a Geography of Religion as well as of Lands, and every clime is distinguished not only by their laws and limits, but circumscribed by their doctrines and rules of faith.—SIR THOMAS BROWN'S *Religio Medici*.

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## PREFACE

TO THE FIFTEENTH LONDON EDITION.

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The reader shall be detained only by the Author's grateful acknowledgement of the favourable reception given by the public to the "Sketch of the Denominations of the Christian World." Detailing the opinions of the various sects, it addresses the curiosity of Turk, Jew, Infidel, and Christian. This accounts for its unrivalled circulation. It enjoys the honour of a niche in the royal library, whilst it has descended down to the shelves of the cottage in the obscurest recesses of the country. Throughout the three kingdoms of the British empire it is well known, and has undergone several editions in the United States of America. By its translation into foreign languages, it has spread over the Continent: whilst it has found its way to Calcutta, to the Cape of Good Hope, and even to Rio Janeiro in South America. Thus the little volume, like a universal missionary, proceeding silently and unostentatiously on its errand of Christian love, may be said to have traversed the four quarters of the globe. Its professed purport is to enlighten and enlarge the understanding, by imparting accurate views of the tenets characterizing the several departments of Christendom. This, in many instances, it is known to have accomplished. One singular fact may be noticed. The Author entering a bookseller's shop in the country, the bookseller, taking him for a clergyman, presented him with a copy of the Sketch, and strongly recommended its circulation among his parishoners, for the promotion of candour, peace, and charity! He had he said, sold many among the clergy; and added, that it had never failed to produce some good effect. Nor ought the Author, in justice to himself, to omit noticing the Sequel of the Sketch, which completes the plan of his work. Arresting, indeed, the career of uncharitableness and bigotry, by inculcating the spirit of Christianity, it has had a more limited circulation. In every age men have been concerned more about faith than practice. The volume is denominated *The Golden Centenary!* for it consists of one hundred testimonies in behalf of candour and unanimity, by divines of the Church of England, of the Kirk of Scotland and from many Protestant Dissenters, with concentrated biographies of their characters and writings. The bringing together the declarations of so many good men of every denomination cost no small pains. It was not the labour of a day; and it was no mean encomium passed on it by a venerable living divine, that "one of these testimonies, at least, should be read from the pulpit, at the close of the service every Sabbath, in every place of worship throughout the kingdom." Its contents yield offence to no party;—it breathes kindness to all, and promotes, by anticipation, the harmony of all wise and good in heaven.

Should the Sketch and Sequel have taught one individual to think more justly on the awful topic of religion, and to feel more charitably towards an erring brother, the end will be accomplished. The writer can honestly declare, that having with much bodily infirmity, attained the sixtieth year of his age, and witnessed the issuing of *one hundred thousand copies* of his



little book from the press, the vanity of authorship natural to early life is absorbed in the sweet and heart-exhilarating consciousness of doing good to mankind.

Reader, "one labour more indulge." The Author having relinquished his employ of educating youth, in which he was engaged for thirty years, wishes usefully to fill up his retirement. It will be seen that all the Christians sects, delineated in the subsequent pages, appeal to the Bible as the only legitimate mode of bringing their disputes to an amicable termination. This is a truly Protestant principle, which should meet with due encouragement. Accordingly, the Author is now occupied in a work, entitled, "An Answer to the Question, What is the Bible? in Twelve Replies, illustrative of the Truth and Excellence of the Sacred Writings." It will be distributed into three parts: the first will consider it as a sacred, authentic, inspired, and translated book; the second, as an historical, devotional, moral, and prophetic book; and the third, as an evangelical, apostolic, epistolary, and prospective book. Thus it will embrace a survey of the truth and contents of the Old and New Testament. Biblical learning has, within the last few years, been much cultivated. The substance of many a learned treatise may be compressed in a small compass. He wishes to avoid making a large book, which the ancients justly pronounce a great evil. Such is the plan—simple and unaffected, nor altogether devoid of originality. Should Providence enable the Author to finish the volume in a manner agreeable to his own wishes, he is persuaded that the public will receive it candidly, and that it will shield the minds of the rising generation from the pernicious influence of the growing evil of the age—an overweening and clamorous infidelity.\*

The longer he lives, the more he is convinced that the belief and practice of the religion of the Holy Scriptures, the last and best gift of heaven to man, is the sum of human felicity.

With regard to the present edition of the Sketch, every article has been most carefully revised. The author has availed himself of the latest communications from some of the leading ministers or members of the sects. These were transmitted in reply to applications made on the subject. He has not, nor can he have, any interest in the misrepresentation of any body of Christians;—his sole object is truth and charity. The celebrated Charles Butler, Esq., of Lincoln's-Inn, (no mean authority) has, in a letter to the author, sanctioned the article on the almost endless disputed subject of Popery; and the interesting accounts of the Primitive Methodists, or Kanters, and of the Presbyterians in Ireland, who are highly patronised by government, whilst they are distinguished for talents, erudition, and piety, may be pronounced an essential improvement.

The Author, by compressing certain portions of the volume which were the least necessary and important, has made room for the additional matter, without increasing its size or price. It is thus more accessible to the generality of readers, and of course perpetuates that unexampled circulation with which it has been honoured almost beyond any other publication throughout the religious world

*Islington, June 1, 1827.*

\* The fulfilment of these pleasing anticipations was denied to Dr. Evans. He had made considerable progress in his projected work, when its completion was arrested by his death, Jan. 25, 1827. An Obituary Memoir of the deceased may be seen in the "Monthly Repository" for March, 1827.—EDITOR.

RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES  
FOR THE DIFFUSION OF  
CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE

BOTH AT HOME AND ABROAD ;

WITH THE  
DATES OF THEIR RESPECTIVE ESTABLISHMENT.

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There are institutions which bear the genuine stamp of Christianity, not originating in party, founded on disinterestedness : and comprehending the best interests of almost the whole habitable globe, without partiality and without hypocrisy.—HANNAH MORE.

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Previous to the delineation of the various sects, it is proper to remark that Christians, notwithstanding the discordancy of their opinions, are most cordially united in the diffusion of the Holy Scriptures, which constitutes the alone rule of faith and practice.

1. *The British and Foreign Bible Society*, established in 1804, disperses the Bible, both at home and abroad, without note or comment. It has distributed upwards of a million copies of the Scriptures. It is placed at the head of this list of religious Societies, because it is supported by every class of the religious community. The union of Christians in every good work must be conducive to love, to peace, and to charity. The broad Protestant principle of giving away the Bible, without note or comment, characterises the British and Foreign Bible Society. It is a memorable declaration of Richard Baxter's, in the "History of his Life and Times," "To every family that was poor and had not a Bible, I gave a Bible. And I had found myself the benefit of reading to be so great, that I could not but think it would be profitable to others." Thus it appears that upwards of a century ago the germ of this society lay concealed within the bosom of a man, whose liberal views, and whose devotional warmth of temper, allied him to the pious of all the de-



nominations of the Christian world. The income of this society has been 100,000*l.* per annum, but this last year it is diminished. This is partly owing to the times, and partly to a schism amongst them respecting the circulation of the Apocrypha along with the sacred writings. There has been a secession of the Scottish branch of the society, though it has resolved to make no future circulation of the obnoxious work. Mr. Haldane and Dr. Andrew Thomson have written against the parent society in a spirit utterly irreconcilable with Christianity. The "Eclectic Review" in England, and the "Pioneer" a small Unitarian periodical in Scotland, have administered merited chastisement. The pure Bible, for which these gentlemen contend, sanctions neither strife nor bigotry. Its spirit is perfect purity.

The professors of Christianity have instituted other societies of a miscellaneous description. An extended account of Missionary societies will be found in Dr. W. Brown's "History of the Propagation of Christianity among the Heathen since the Reformation." As unbelievers urge the contradictory opinions of Christians against all missions, it may be remarked, that there are central points which embrace the essence of religion in which all are agreed. These are: 1. That there is one Supreme Being of infinite perfection. 2. That the Supreme Being is the object of religious worship. 3. That Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah, or the Son of God. 4. That there will be a Resurrection of the dead; and 5. That Virtue and Piety will be rewarded, whilst Vice and Impiety shall be punished. Individuals admitting these five articles, believe every thing essential in the Christian religion. Keeping in view these central points, in which all Christians coincide, the subsequent list must exhibit a pleasing picture of the zeal and activity of the religious world. A mission is recommended even to Jerusalem!

2. *Dr. Bray's Charity*, instituted 1696, whose object is the diffusion of Christian knowledge by providing libraries for the parochial clergy, and lending libraries to the clergy in their neighbourhood, of which sixteen have

been established in the province of York, and forty-five in the province of Canterbury.

3. *The Society at Bartlett's Buildings*, Holborn, 1698, for promoting Christian knowledge, which erects charity schools in England and Wales, distributing Bibles, Common Prayer-Books, and religious tracts.

4. *Incorporated Society* for the propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts, 1701, providing the West India and American colonies with clergymen and schoolmasters. These two respectable Societies are conducted by members of the Church of England.

5. *Society in Scotland*, 1709, designed to banish ignorance and profaneness from the highlands and Western Islands. This society has a correspondent board in London, before whom an annual sermon is preached in favour of the institution.

6. *Missions of the Church of the United* (or Moravian) *Brethren*, established among the heathen 1732, and whose efforts have been particularly successful.

7. *Society for Promoting Religious Knowledge* among the poor, 1750, by giving away Bibles and religious tracts.

8. *Naval and Military Bible Society*, 1780, instituted for the sole use of the army and navy of Great Britain.

9. *Society for the Support and Encouragement of Sunday Schools* throughout the British dominions, 1785.

10. *Methodist* (or Wesleyan) *Missionary Society*, 1786, for the conversion of the Negroes in the West Indies.

11. *Unitarian Society*, 1791, for promoting Christian knowledge, and the practice of virtue, by the distribution of books.

12. *Baptist Missionary Society*, 1792, in India, under whose auspices the Scriptures have been translated into the Asiatic languages by means of Dr. W. Carey, now resident at Serampore. Besides preaching and translations, a College is in contemplation, for educating native youths, with a view to the Christian ministry. This must prove a measure of the greatest utility.

13. *Society for the Conversion of the Negroes*, 1739, instituted by the late Bishop Porteus in expectation of the abolition of slavery.

14. *American India Civilization Society*, 1795 founded and supported by the society of Friends.

15. *London Missionary Society*, 1795, for sending the Gospel to the heathen and other unenlightened nations. Their efforts were first directed to Otaheite and the South Sea Islands.

16. *Religious Tract Society*, 1799, which has distributed an immense number of tracts throughout almost every part of the world.

17. *Church (of England) Missionary Society*, 1801, for diffusing the Christian religion in Africa and the East.

18. *African Institution*, 1806, for the civilization of Africa and the education of native youth.

19. *Hibernian Society*, 1806, for encouraging Protestant Schools, and for distributing Bibles and Tracts in Ireland.

20. *Unitarian Fund*, 1806, for promoting Unitarianism by means of popular preaching. Out of this Society arose an association whose object is to promote the religious rights of the Unitarian community. This and the preceding Unitarian Book Society, together with the Fund, are now incorporated into one, under the title of the "British and Foreign Unitarian Association," Walbrook-Buldings, Walbrook.

21. *Christian Tract Society*, 1809, for diffusing knowledge among the poor, supported by Unitarians and other Christians of every description.

22. *London Society* for the conversion of the Jews, Spitalfields, 1809, with an Episcopal Chapel at Bethnal Green, patronized by the Church of England.

23. *Prayer-book and Homily Society*, 1811.

24. *Irish Evangelical Society* for preaching the Gospel, 1814.

24. *The Village Itinerant Society*, 1803, for propagating the Gospel in the dark villages of England. Attempts are now making to convert the sailors and also the gipsies, both very proper subjects of reformation in civilized society.

26. *The Village Itinerant Society*, 1796, for preaching the Gospel, and opening Sunday Schools in the villages within ten miles of London.

27. *Deputies* for the several congregations of Protestant Dissenters, of the three denominations, in and within twelve miles of London, appointed to protect their civil rights, 1730.

28. *Protestant Society* for the protection of Religious Liberty, 1811. This and the last society have erected a salutary barrier against the inroads of ecclesiastical tyranny.

29. *Society of Patrons of the Anniversary of the Charity Schools*, under the patronage of the King.

30. *Ladies Society for the Education and employment of the Female Poor at Chelsea*

31. *National Education Society*, 1812. Dr. A. Bell's system is adopted by this Society, which in the education of the children of the poor, uses the Church Catechism and Common Prayer-Book, along with the Bible, and insists on their attendance upon the Established religion.

32. *The British and Foreign School Society* (originally denominated the Royal System of Education, and commonly called the Lancasterian Institution,) for the education of the labouring and manufacturing classes of society of every religious persuasion. Providing for the education of necessitous children, whatever faith their parents may profess, it rears its majestic structure upon the basis of general utility, and ought to be supported by every well-wisher to the community. Its success constitutes the triumph of knowledge over ignorance—of virtue over vice—of happiness over misery! The British and Foreign School Society, or Schools for All—a title by which it has been impressively designated, must prove a blessing to dark, ignorant, uninstructed humanity—

Let not a form which bears your Maker's image  
 Defeat the end of being! Know 'tis yours  
 In heavenly tints to dip the infant soul—  
 To raise the new idea—lift it high  
 Ev'n to Jehovah's throne—the ductile mind,  
 Pliant as wax, shall wear the mould you give;  
 Sharp gratitude you've called to life, shall cut  
 In cyphers deep the now-expanded heart;  
 And e'en beyond the chambers of the grave  
 The joyous spirit shall your record bear  
 'To meet your eyes when trembling worlds expire!

Joseph Lancaster, having long left this country, is engaged by Bolivar in the institution of schools throughout South America.



Finally, A *Society* was established, June 14th, 1816—for the promotion of permanent and universal *peace*! This it accomplishes by the distribution of Tracts, exposing through all its ramifications the turpitude of offensive war, which, though decked in the trappings of military glory, is no other than an unprincipled violation of individual rights—an outrageous disruption of all the bonds of society. The distribution has extended to nearly all the United States and the British provinces in America—to Great Britain, France, and Russia in Europe—to India, and the Sandwich Islands. All communications may be forwarded to the respective officers of the Peace Society, No. 3, Great Knight-Rider-Street, Doctors Commons.

O! first of human blessings and supreme,  
 Fair Peace, how lovely—how delightful thou!  
 By whose wide tie the kindred sons of men  
 Like brothers live—in amity combined.

Ineffable are the blessings of peace, whilst the shedding of blood is the abhorrence of humanity. Nor can we refuse to bid God-speed to an institution, whose object is to secure to man “the legacy” of the Saviour of the world, as well as to accelerate the arrival of that halcyon period of universal tranquillity, which is the long and devoutly wished-for consummation of our common Christianity. The term peace is music in the ears of every rational being. It speaks volumes to the individual, and to every well-constituted community. It is the grand panacea suggested by Reason, and confirmed by Revelation, for assuaging the numerous, the complicated, and heart-rending maladies incident to the vast multitudinous family of mankind. Amidst the obstreperous dissonance of contending parties, Peace—Peace! will be the loud and reiterated aspiration of every true Christian throughout each successive age, ceasing only with the destruction of the world.

N.B. In the preceding catalogue, the names of the Officers of the several Religious Societies are suppressed. Being in a state of incessant fluctuation, their enumeration is better suited to annual publications—whence may be derived the requisite information, and of which there is no paucity in the Christian world.

## SKETCH OF ALL RELIGIONS.

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The great lesson which every sect, and every individual of every sect, ought to learn from the history of the church is *Moderation*. Want of genuine Moderation towards those who differ from us in religious opinions, seems to be the most unaccountable thing in the world.—WATSON, *Bishop of Llandaff*.

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THE CHRISTIAN WORLD is divided into denominations, each of which is discriminated by sentiments peculiar to itself. To delineate the nature, point out the foundation, and appreciate the tendency of every individual opinion, would be an endless task. My only design is briefly to enumerate the leading tenets of the several parties which attract our notice, and to make this variety of religious opinions a ground for the exercise of moderation, together with the improvement of other Christian graces. The moderation here recommended lies at an equal distance between an indifference to truth and the merciless spirit of uncharitableness. It is a virtue, alas! much talked of—little understood—and less practised.

But before we delineate the tenets of the several parties, the Atheists and Deists shall be mentioned; two descriptions of persons frequently confounded together; and also an outline given of Theophilanthropism and Mahometanism, of Judaism and Christianity. These topics will form an introduction to *An Account of the Sects and Denominations of the Religious World*.

## INTRODUCTION.

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### ATHEISTS.

The Atheist does not believe in the existence of a God. He attributes surrounding nature and all its astonishing phænomena to chance, or to a fortuitous concourse of Atoms! Plato distinguishes three sorts of Atheists; such as deny absolutely that there are any Gods; others who allow the existence of the Gods, but deny that they concern themselves with human affairs, and so disbelieve a Providence; and, lastly, such as believe in the Gods and a Providence, but think that they are easily appeased, remitting the greatest crimes for the smallest supplication. The first of these are the only Atheists, in the proper sense of the word. The name of *Atheist* is composed of two Greek terms,  $\alpha$  and  $\theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$ , signifying *without God*, and in this sense the appellation occurs in the New Testament, Ephes. ii. 12. "Without God (or *Atheists*) in the world." It is to be hoped that direct Atheists are few. Some persons question the reality of such a character, and others insist, that pretensions to atheism have their origin in pride, or are adopted as a cloak for licentiousness. In the seventeenth century, Spinoso, a foreigner, was its noted defender; and Lucilio Vanini, an Italian, of eccentric character, was burnt, 1619, at Toulouse, for his atheistical tenets. Being pressed to make public acknowledgment of his crime, and to ask pardon of God, the king, and justice, he replied, that he did not believe there was a God; that he never offended the king; and as for justice, he wished it at the devil! He confessed that he was one of the twelve who parted in company from Naples to spread their doctrines in all parts of Europe. The poor man, however, ought not to have been put to death; confinement is the remedy for insanity. Lord Bacon, in his *Essays*, remarks, that "A little phi-



losophy inclineth a man's mind to Atheism, but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion: for while the mind of man looketh upon second causes scattered, it may rest in them and go no farther; but when it beholdeth *the chain* of them confederated and linked together, it must needs fly to Providence and Deity." And Dean Sherlock remarks respecting the origin of Atheism, that "The universal Deluge and the confusion of languages, had so abundantly convinced mankind of a Divine power and Providence, that there was no such creature as an Atheist till their ridiculous idolatries had tempted some men of wit and thought rather to own *no God* than such as the Heathens worshipped."

The arguments for the being of a God are distributed by the learned into two kinds:—1st. Arguments *a priori*, or those taken from the necessity of the divine existence;—2d. Arguments *a posteriori*, or those taken from the works of nature. Of the latter species of proof a fine illustration may be found in the treatises of Dr. Balguy. On the former, see Dr. Clarke's "Essay on the being of a God," which has been deemed a masterpiece on the subject. The reader is also referred to Dr. Paley's work on "Natural Theology," which though it bears a resemblance to Derham's "Physico-theology," is by far more compact and impressive.

Newton, Boyle, Naclaurin, Ray, Derham, Locke, Wilkins, Cudworth, Abernethy, Fenelon, Van Mildert, and Chalmers in his eloquent Discourses on Astronomy, together with other philosophers distinguished for the profundity of their researches, and the extent of their erudition, are to be enrolled amongst the advocates for the existence and superintendence of a Deity. On this subject Lord Chesterfield made the following declaration; and no man can suppose *his* understanding to have been clouded with *religious* prejudices: "I have read some of Seed's sermons, and like them very well. But I have neither read, nor intend to read, those which are meant to prove the existence of God; because it seems to me too great a disparagement of that reason which he has given us, to require any other proofs of his existence,

than those which the whole and every part of the creation afford us. If I believe my own existence, I must believe his : it cannot be proved *a priori*, as some have idly attempted to do, and cannot be doubted of *a posteriori*." Cato says very justly—"And that he is, all nature cries aloud ;" Dr. Priestley's Letters to Hammon of Liverpool, in confutation of Atheistical tenets, deserve well to be consulted—The name *Hammon* was, it seems, fictitious—the Atheist wishing to conceal himself in obscurity.

Dr. Priestley (in one of his Fast Sermons) observes, that when he visited France in 1774,—“All her philosophers and men of letters were absolute infidels, and that he was represented by one of them (in a mixed strain of censure and compliment) as the *only* man of talent he had met with, who had any faith in the Scriptures. Nay, Voltaire himself (who was then living) was considered by them as a weak-minded man, because, though an unbeliever in revelation, he believed in a God.”

By some Christian writers, *Atheists* and *Deists* are used without discrimination. They are by no means synonymous terms. Even Thomas Paine, one of the most inveterate Deists, asserts the existence of a Supreme Being.

Finally, Dr. Bruce of Belfast has published a very masterly work on “The Existence and Perfections of the Deity,”—entitled to the utmost attention. He is a Presbyterian minister, of talent, learning, and respectability. He has been connected with the seminary or college at Belfast, and his son occupies the chair of one of the tutors in that seminary. It has produced many men of eminence for the Christian ministry.

Paley has, in his “Natural Theology,” demonstrated from the visible creation, the existence and the superintendence of One Supreme, all-powerful, all-knowing, and benevolent Author, whose natural attributes are—Omnipotence, omniscience omnipresence, eternity, self-existence, necessary existence, and spirituality! Dr. Gisborne also has published a kind of Appendix to this work, entitled “The Testimony of Natural Theology to Christianity.”

## DEISTS.

The Deists believe in a God, but reject a written revelation from him. They are extravagant in their encomiums on natural religion, though they differ much respecting its nature, extent, obligation, and importance. Dr. Clarke, in his treatise against Deism, divides them into four classes, according to the number of articles comprised in their creed.

“The first are such as pretend to believe the existence of an eternal, infinite, independent, intelligent Being; and who, to avoid the name of Epicurean Atheists, teach also that this Supreme Being made the world; though at the same time they agree with the Epicureans in this, that they fancy God does not at all concern himself in the government of the world, nor has any regard to, or care of, what is done therein, agreeably to the reasoning of Lucretius, the Epicurean poet—

For whatsoe'er 's divine must live at peace,  
 In undisturb'd and everlasting ease;  
 Nor care for us, from fears and dangers free,  
 Sufficient to his own felicity!  
 Nought here below, nought in our pow'r it needs,  
 Ne'er smiles at good, nor frowns at wicked deeds.

“The second sort of Deists are those who believe not only the being, but also the providence of God with respect to the *natural* world, but who, not allowing any difference between moral good and evil, deny that God takes any notice of the morally good or evil actions of men, these things depending, as they imagine, on the arbitrary constitution of human laws.

“A third sort of Deists there are, who, having right apprehensions concerning the natural attributes of God and his all-governing providence, and some notion of his moral perfections also, yet being prejudiced against the notion of the immortality of the soul, believe that men perish entirely at death, and that one generation shall perpetually succeed another without any further restoration or renovation of things.

“ A fourth, and the last sort of Deists, are such as believe the existence of a Supreme Being, together with his providence in the government of the world ; also all the obligations of natural religion, but so far only as these things are discoverable by the light of nature alone, without believing any divine revelation.”

These, the learned author observes, are the only true Deists ; but as their principles would naturally lead them to embrace the Christian revelation, he concludes there is now no consistent scheme of Deism, in the world. Dr. Clarke then adds these observations, mingled with a just severity : “ The Heathen philosophers, those few of them who taught and lived up to the obligations of natural religion, had indeed a consistent scheme of Deism, as far as it went. But the case is not so now ; the same scheme is not any longer consistent with its own principles, it does not now lead men to embrace revelation, as it then taught them to hope for it. Deists in our days, who reject revelation when offered to them, are not such men as Socrates and Cicero were ; but under pretence of Deism, it is plain they are generally ridiculers of all that is truly excellent in natural religion itself. Their trivial and vain cavils ; their mocking and ridiculing without and before examination ; their directing the whole stress of objections against particular customs, or particular and perhaps uncertain opinions or explications of opinions, without at all considering the main body of religion ; their loose, vain, and frothy discourses ; and, above all, their vicious and immoral lives show, plainly and undeniably, that they are not real Deists but mere Atheists, and consequently not capable to judge of the truth of Christianity. The present Deists are of two sorts only, those who believe and those who disbelieve in a future state.” If a *Theist* (from the Greek *θεος*, God) be different from a Deist, it is that he has not had revelation proposed to him, and follows therefore the pure light of nature.\*

\* *Paganism* is the corruption of natural religion, and is little else than the worship of idols and false gods. These were either men, as Jubiter, Hercules, Bacchus, &c. ; or fictitious persons, as Victory, Fame, Fever, &c. ; or beasts, as in Egypt crocodiles, cats, &c. ; or, finally in-



The term *Deist* comes from the Latin word *Deus*, a God, and is applied to the rejecters of revelation, because the existence of a God is the principal article of their belief. The name was first assumed by a number of gentlemen in France and Italy, who were willing to cover their opposition to the Christian revelation by a more honourable name than that of Atheist. Viret, a divine of eminence among the first reformers, appears to have been the first author who expressly mentions them; for in the Epistle Dedicatory, prefixed to the second volume of his "Instruction Chretienne," published in 1563, he speaks of some persons at that time who called themselves by a new name, that of *Deists*. Deists are also often called *Infidels* (from the Latin word *Infidelis*) on account of their want of faith or belief in the christian religion. Some indeed have censured the application of the term *infidelity* to unbelievers, contending that in our language it is used solely in a particular sense, implying the want of conjugal fidelity.

The advocates for Deism on the continent are Bayle, Voltaire, Fredrick II., king of Prussia, Helvetius, Diderot, Raynal, Rousseau, Condorcet, D'Alembert, &c., with other disciples of the new philosophy. In Great Britain the deistical writers are, Lord Herbert, Hobbes, Toland, Mandeville, Wollaston, Collins, Shaftesbury, Bolingbroke, Chubb, Tindal, Morgan, Blount, Hume, Gibbon, and Thomas Paine, of political celebrity. In the writings of these men it is evident that REASON is extolled at the expense of *revelation*; but, as it has been beautifully remarked, "The lights of reason and revelation fall upon our path in rays so blended, that we walk like the summer-evening traveller, who, enjoying at the same time the

animate things, as onions, fire, water, &c. Upon the propagation of Christianity, Paganism declined. Julian the apostate made an ineffectual attempt to revive it, and it is now degenerated into gross and disgusting idolatry. The cheif Sects of Paganism now existing are the Sabians, Magians, Hindoos, and Chinese, together with that of the Grand Lama of Tartary. Curious specimens of the Pagan idols may be seen in the British Museum and in the Museum at the Baptist Academy, Bristol.—See Young's "Historical Dissertation on Idolatrous Corruptions in Religion," 2 Vols.—Also Ellis's "Account of Owyhee, one of the Sandwich Islands," recently published.

moon and the sun's solstitial twilight, is unable to ascertain the proportion in which he is indebted to each of these heavenly luminaries; and some of us, alas! are such incompetent philosophers, as, because the greater is below the horizon, to attribute all to the less!" In the "Tracts and Sermons" of the author of this Sketch, published in a large octavo volume, 1825, will be found, "an Attempt to account for the infidelity of Edmund Gibbon, Esq." with "remarks on the scepticism of Lord Byron," so unhappily prominent in all his justly admired and widely spread poetical writings. Gibbon and Paine have been most ably and satisfactorily answered by Bishop Watson, in his Apologies for the Bible, and for Christianity."

Lord Herbert of Cherbury was the first Deist who excited public notice in the country, but was a man of real learning and piety. Dr. Brown's recent edition of Leland's "View of the Deistical Writers," (Tindal, Morgan, Chubb, Bollingbroke, &c. &c.) together with many other valuable treatises, afford information concerning their principles, and contain a refutation of their objections against revealed religion.

It is well observed by Paley,—“Of what a revelation discloses to mankind, one and only one question can be properly asked,—Was it of importance to mankind to know or to be better assured of? In this question, when we turn our thoughts to the great Christian doctrine of a resurrection from the dead and a future judgment, no doubt can be possibly entertained. He who gives me riches or honours does nothing; he who even gives me health does little in comparison with that which lays before me just grounds for expecting a restoration to life, and a day of account and retribution, which thing Christianity hath done for millions!"

The rejecters of revelation (before they thoughtlessly calumniate it) would do well to consider what they are able to give us in its stead, better calculated to alleviate the distresses, and bind up the bleeding heart of humanity.

## THEOPHILANTHROPISTS.

The *Theophilanthropists* are a kind of Deists arisen in France during the revolution. The name by which they stand distinguished, is a compound term derived from the Greek, and intimates that they profess to adore God and love their fellow-creatures. Their common principle is a belief in the existence, perfections, and providence of God, and in the doctrine of a future life; and their rule of morals is, love to God and good will to men. Dr. John Walker, a medical gentleman, author of the "Universal Gazetteer," published the Manual of the sect, from which a few particulars shall be extracted.

"The temple most worthy of the divinity, in the eyes of the Theophilanthropists, is the universe. Abandoned sometimes under the vault of heaven to the contemplation of the beauties of nature, they render its author the homage of adoration and gratitude. They nevertheless have temples erected by the hands of men, in which it is more commodious for them to assemble and listen to lessons concerning his wisdom. Certain moral inscriptions, a simple altar on which they deposit, as a sign of gratitude for the benefits of the Creator, such flowers or fruits as the season afford, and a tribune for the lectures and discourses, form the whole of the ornaments of their temples.

"The first inscription placed above the altar recalls to remembrance the two religious dogmas, which are the foundation of their moral.

*First Inscription.*

"We believe in the existence of a God, in the immortality of the soul.

*Second Inscription.*

"Worship God, cherish your kind, render yourselves useful to your country.

*Third Inscription.*

"Good is every thing which tends to the preservation or perfection of man.



“ Evil is every thing which tends to destroy or deteriorate him.

“ *Fourth Inscription.*

“ Children, honour your fathers and mothers. Obey them with affection. Comfort their old age.

“ Fathers and mothers, instruct your children.

“ *Fifth Inscription.*

“ Wives, regard in your husbands the chiefs of your houses.

“ Husbands, love your wives, and render yourselves reciprocally happy.

“ The assembly sits to hear lessons or discourses on morality, principles of religion, of benevolence, and of universal salvation, principles equally remote from the severity of Stoicism and Epicurean indolence. These lectures and discourses are diversified by hymns. Their assemblies are holden on the first day of the week, and on the decades.”

The Christian reader will admire the practical tendency of this new species of Deism, but lament the defects by which it stands characterized. It wants the broad basis of revelation, which would give permanency to its doctrines, and energy to its precepts, beside the glorious discoveries of immortality! It was hoped at one time that the profession of this system in France would have prepared the way for the reception of pure Christianity.

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## JUDAISM.

Judaism is the religious doctrines and rites of the Jews, who are the descendants of Abraham, a person of eminence, chosen by God, soon after the flood, to preserve the doctrine of the Divine Unity among the idolatrous nations of the earth. A complete system of Judaism is contained in the five books of Moses, their great lawgiver, who was raised up to deliver them from their bondage in Egypt, and to conduct them to the possession of Canaan, the prom-

ised land. The Jewish economy is so much directed to temporal rewards and punishments, that it has been questioned whether the Jews had any knowledge of a future state. This opinion has been defended with vast euidition by Warburton, in his "Divine Legation of Moses;" but it has been controverted by Dr. Sykes, and other authors of respectability. The principal sects among the Jews, in the time of our Saviour, were the Pharisees, who placed religion in external ceremony—the Sadducees, who were remarkable for their incredulity; and the Essenes, who were distinguished by an austere sanctity. Some accounts of these sects will be found in the last volume of Prideaux's "Connection," in Harwood's "Introduction to the Study of the New Testament," and in Marsh's improved edition of "Michaelis." See likewise two ingenious and learned volumes, entitled, "Ecclesiastical Researches," and also the "Sequel," to it by John Jones, LL. D. The author contends that Josephus and Philo were Christians, and introduces striking passages from their writings, tending to confirm the truth and illustrate the genius of primitive Christianity.

The Pharisees and Sadducees are frequently mentioned in the New Testament; and an acquaintance with their principles and practices serves to illustrate many passages in the sacred history. At present the Jews have two sects,—the Caraites, who admit no rule of religion but the law of Moses; and the Rabbinists, who add to the laws the tradition of the Talmud. The dispersion of the Jews took place upon the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, the Roman emperor, A.D. 70. The expectation of a Messiah is the distinguishing feature of their religious system. The word Messiah signifies one anointed, or installed into an office by an unction. The Jews used to anoint their kings, high-priests, and sometimes prophets, at their entering upon office. Thus Saul, David, Solomon, and Joash, kings of Judah, received the royal unction. Thus also Aaron and his sons received the sacerdotal, and Elisha, the disciple of Elijah the prophetic unction.

Christians believe that Jesus Christ is the Messiah, in

whom all the Jewish prophecies are accomplished. The Jews, infatuated with the idea of a temporal Messiah, who is to subdue the world, still wait for his appearance. According to Buxtorf, (a professor of Hebrew, and celebrated for rabbinical learning) some of the modern rabbins believe that the Messiah is already come, but that he will not manifest himself on account of the sins of the Jews. Others, however, have had recourse to the hypothesis of two Messiahs, who are to succeed each other—one in a state of humiliation and suffering—the other in a state of glory, magnificence, and power. Be it however remembered, that in the New Testament Jesus Christ assures us, in the most explicit terms, that he is the Messiah. In John iv. 25, the Samaritan woman says to Jesus, “I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ : when he is come he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak to thee am HE.” According to the prediction of Jesus Christ, several impostors would assume the title of Messiah, and accordingly such persons have appeared. A history of False Messiahs has been written by a Dutchman. Barcochab was the first, who appeared in the time of Adrian ; the second, in 1666, was Sabatai Sevi, who turned Mahometan ; and the last was Rabbi Mordecai, who was talked of in 1682.

The Talmud is a collection of the doctrines and morality of the Jews. They have two works that bear this name ; the first is called the Talmud of Jerusalem, and the other the Talmud of Babylon. The former is shorter and more obscure than that of Babylon, but is of an older date. The Talmud compiled at Babylon the Jews prefer to that of Jerusalem, as it is clearer and more extensive.

The Jewish economy was certainly typical of the Christian dispensation in many important respects ; but these types and antitypes have been wretchedly abused. A curious instance of this kind occurred about the time of the Reformation. Le Clerc has recorded it, and the perusal of it must create a smile. The story is this : Two eminent Protestants, a Lutheran and a Calvinist had been wrangling a considerable time about the precedence of their patri-

archs, without any seeming advantage ; when the one took it into his head to make Luther the *antitype* of Aaron, seeing he was the first who had set up and lighted the grand *candlestick* of the reformation in the tabernacle. The other, not being able to disprove the fact, had recourse to the same typical reasoning, and affirmed that if Luther was Aaron's antitype, upon that score Calvin was much more so, since it is manifest that, if he had not taken the *snuffers* in his hand and snuffed the lamps, the candlestick would have given so dim a light, that few people would have been the better for it.

The most remarkable periods in the history of the Jews are, the call of Abraham, the giving of the law by Moses, their establishment in Canaan under Joshua, the building of the Temple by Solomon, the division of the tribes, their captivity in Babylon, their return under Zerubbabel, and the destruction of their city and temple by the Emperor Titus. Their books of the Old Testament are the most ancient and authentic records extant. See the writings of Josephus, their famous historian, of which there are several translations, in our language—Dr. Jennings's two volumes of "Jewish Antiquities," Dr. Shaw's "Philosophy of Judaism," the late Mr. David Levi's "Ceremonies of the Jewish Religion," and Dr. Adam Clarke's "Fleury on the manners of the Ancient Jews," together with Jones's "Researches" and "Sequel," already mentioned.

Maimonides, an illustrious rabbi, drew up for the Jews, in the eleventh century, a confession of faith, which all Jews admit. It is curious, and the reader will be gratified by the insertion of it.

1. "I believe with a true and perfect faith that God is the Creator (whose name be blessed), governor and maker of all creatures, and that he hath wrought all things, worketh, and shall work for ever.

2. "I believe with a perfect faith that the Creator (whose name be blessed) is *one*, and that such an unity as in him can be found in none other, and that he alone hath been our God, is, and for ever shall be.

3. "I believe with a perfect faith that the Creator



(whose name be blessed) is not corporeal, nor to be comprehended with any bodily property, and that there is no bodily essence that can be likened unto him.

4. "I believe with a perfect faith the Creator (whose name be blessed) to be the first and the last, that nothing was before him, and that he shall abide the last for ever.

5. "I believe with a perfect faith that the Creator (whose name be blessed) is to be worshipped and none else.

6. "I believe with a perfect faith that all the words of the prophets are true.

7. "I believe with a perfect faith the prophecies of Moses, (our master, may he rest in peace,) that he was the father and chief of all wise men that lived before him, or ever shall live after him.

8. "I believe with a perfect faith that all the law which at this day is found in our hands was delivered by God himself to our master, Moses. God's peace be with him!

9. "I believe with a perfect faith that the same law is never to be changed, nor an other to be given us of God, whose name be blessed.

10. "I believe, &c. that God (whose name be blessed) understandeth all the works and thoughts of men, as it is written in the prophets—He fashioneth their hearts alike; he understandeth all their works.

11. "I believe, &c. that God will recompense good to them that keep his commandments, and will punish them who transgress them.

12. "I believe, &c. that the Messiah is yet to come, and although he retard his coming, yet I will wait for him till he come.

13. "I believe, &c. that the dead shall be restored to life, when it shall seem fit unto God the Creator, whose name be blessed and memory celebrated, world without end. Amen."

Doddridge, Gill, Edwards, Bicheno, Winchester, and Wrangham, are of opinion that the Jews shall be restored to the land of Palestine. Winchester suggests that the large rivers in America were placed by the Creator on the eastern side, that the Jews may waft themselves down

to the Atlantic, and then across that vast ocean to the Holy Land; and Archdeacon Wrangham has these spirited lines on the subject:—

And see they come! survey yon sweeping bands,  
 Countless as Persian bowmen, who beset  
 Freedom exulting on her attic rock,  
 When Asia rous'd her millions to the war,  
 And sunk in all her pomp before the foe.  
 ————— With ranks as full,  
 But with more prosp'rous fates and purer joys  
 Than swell the warrior's breast, their destin'd march  
 The Hebrews bend from where Hydasper rolls  
 His storied tide, or cleaves with holy prow  
 Th' Atlantic main, whose conscious surge reverts  
 Its buoyant load—————  
 Now call'd by God, or from the western stream  
 Of Plata, or where Ganges pours his urn,  
 In love-knit league they throng! With guardian hand  
 MESSIAH, erst their nation's deadliest fate,  
 Guide the returning host!\*

Lightfoot and Lardner are, however, of a contrary opinion, declaring that their call shall not cause them to change place, but condition. So various are the sentiments of divines on this subject.

A Jew's hospital, entitled the Charity Workhouse, has been erected at Mile End, "for the reception and support of aged men and women, as well as the education and industrious employment of youth of both sexes." This institution has been liberally and nobly supported by the very opulent family of the Goldsmids.

An asylum for converted Jews has been raised at Bethnal-green. The late truly-respectable Duke of Kent laid the foundation stone, and it is under the patronage of the church of England.†

It is a little remarkable with respect to the exhibition of the Jewish character on the stage, that Shakspeare's Jew is represented as cruel and rapacious, whilst Cumberland's Jew is, though characteristic in his manners, full of benevolence and humanity.

\* See a Map of Palesitne, or the Holy Land, just published by Leigh in the Strand, an elegant and accurate production, with vignettes beautifully illustrative of the events of Sacred History.

† See the publications of the Rev. Lewis Way, on the Conversion of the Jews to Christianity

“The history of this people,” says a modern writer, “certainly forms a striking evidence of the truth of divine revelation. They are a living and perpetual miracle, continuing to subsist as a distinct and peculiar race for upwards of three thousand years, and even in the midst of other nations, flowing forward in a full and continued stream, like the waters of the Rhone, without mixing with the waves of the expansive lake through which the passage lie to the ocean of eternity!”

In a Tract lately published at Paris, by M. Bail, the following calculation is given of the number of Jews in the different quarters of the globe.

Poland, before partition, 1772 . . . . .	1,000,000
Russia . . . . .	200,000
Germany . . . . .	500,000
United Netherlands . . . . .	80,000
Sweden and Denmark . . . . .	5,000
France . . . . .	50,000
England, London 12,000 . . . . .	50,000
Italy and States . . . . .	200,000
Spain and Portugal . . . . .	10,000
United States . . . . .	3,000
Mahomedan States, in Asia, Europe, and Africa . . . . .	} 4,000,000
Rest of Asia, China, and India . . . . .	
	500,000
Total . . . . .	6,598,000

This article shall be closed with the recommendation of “Modern Judaism, or a Brief Account of the Opinions, Traditions, Rites, and Ceremonies of the Jews in Modern Times, by John Allen,” who thus expresses himself on the subject:—“Whatever contempt or abhorrence the author feels for errors or frauds, which appear to him contemptible or detestable, he neither feels, nor ever felt such sentiments towards the Jewish people. He has the satisfaction of remembering that he has always disapproved and condemned the insults and injuries committed against them by multitudes wearing the Christian name!



Blest with a parent, whose prudence and piety raised him above this vulgar error, the author's earliest impressions respecting this people, were those of benevolence, pity, and veneration,—benevolence due to all the descendants of our common Father,—pity excited by their moral degradation,—veneration inspired by the miracles of their ancient history, and the prophetic visions of their future glory!"

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## MAHOMETANISM.

Mahometanism is the religion of Mahomet, who was born in 571, at Mecca, a city of Arabia, and died at Medina 631. Though Mahomet was descended from an honourable tribe and from the noblest family of that tribe, yet his original lot was poverty. Upon his father's death, five camels and an Ethiopian female constituted the entire property left for the support of the mother and her infant son. Under his uncle Abu-Taled he was employed in commercial pursuits, and became acquainted with Asia, Syria, Palestine, and Egypt. He afterwards married a rich widow, and became equal to the most opulent citizens of Mecca. Fifteen years of his life were passed in the obscurest retirement, in a lonely cave, where his scheme of a new religion was no doubt planned, and which he afterwards so ably executed. His system is a compound of Paganism, Judaism, and Christianity; and the Koran, which is their Bible, is held in great reverence. It is replete with absurd representations, and is supposed to have been written by a Jew. The most eloquent passage is allowed to be the following, where God is introduced, bidding the waters of the deluge to cease:—"Earth, swallow up the waters; heaven, draw up those thou hast poured out: immediately the waters retreated, the command of God was obeyed, the ark rested on the mountains, and these words were heard—"Woe to the wicked!"

Lust, ambition, and cruelty, are the most prominent

traits in Mahomet's conduct ; and Voltaire has written a fine tragedy on this subject. The great doctrine of the Koran is the unity of God, which, together with the mission of Christ, is strongly insisted upon by the prophet. "There is no God but he the living, the self-subsisting ; neither slumber nor sleep seizeth him ; to him belongeth whatsoever is in Heaven and on earth." Indeed he persuaded his followers that he was the Paraclete, or comforter which Christ had promised his disciples. In this respect the Mahometan religion constitutes a powerful collateral proof of the truth of Christianity. Nor has this circumstance, suggested to me by a worthy friend, been sufficiently considered by Christians. Thus we may extract good from evil, and it is our duty to avail ourselves of every thing which tends to augment the evidence of our holy religion. It is remarkable that the Koran, or Alcoran, was dealt out slowly and separately during the long period of twenty-three years ! It was communicated, says Mahomet, by the ministration of the angel Gabriel, who appears to have been liberal to him on these occasions. His *angel of death*, whose province it is at the hour of dissolution to free the departing spirit from its prison of flesh, and his vast ideal *balance*, in which at the last day the actions of all men shall be weighed, have in them a sort of romantic sublimity calculated to impress the fervid imagination of the eastern nations ; and his sensual paradise hereafter must, in their opinion, have imparted to it the highest degree of perfection. The meanest in paradise will have seventy-two wives, besides the wives he had in this world : he shall have a tent also assigned him "of pearls, hyacinths, and emeralds !" Dean Prideaux has proved, in his letter to Deists, that there are seven marks of an imposture ; that these all belong to Mahometanism, and that not one of them can be charged on Christianity. See Sale's "Koran," Prideaux's "Life of Mahomet," Dr. White's "Sermons at the Bampton Lecture," and Dr. Toulmin's "Dissertations on the Internal Evidence of Christianity," and on "The Character of Christ compared with that of other Founders of Religion or Philosophy." Mr. Gibbon, in his Roman

History, gives the following curious specimen of Mahometan divinity—for the prophet propagated his religion by force of arms:—"The sword," says Mahomet, "is the key of heaven and of hell; a drop of blood shed in the cause of God, or a night spent in arms, is of more avail than two months of fasting or prayer. Whosoever falls in battle, his sins are forgiven at the day of judgment; his wounds shall be resplendent as vermilion, and odoriferous as musk; the loss of his limbs shall be supplied by the wings of angels and cherubims!"

From a Catechism said to have been lately printed at Constantinople, I will present my readers with the young Mussulman's Creed:—"I believe in the books which have been delivered from Heaven and the prophets. In this manner was the Koran given to Mahomet, the Pentateuch to Moses, the Psalter to David, and the Gospel to Jesus. I believe in the prophets, and the miracles they have performed. Adam was the first prophet, and Mahomet was the last. I believe for the space of fifty thousand years the righteous shall repose under the shade of the terrestrial paradise, and the wicked shall be exposed naked to the burning rays of the sun. I believe in the bridge Sirat, which passes over the bottomless pit of hell! It is as fine as a hair, and as sharp as a sabre. All must pass over it, and the wicked shall be thrown off. I believe in the water pools of paradise. Each of the prophets has in paradise a bason for his own use; the water is whiter than milk, and sweeter than honey. On the ridges of the pools are vessels to drink out of, and they are bordered with stars. I believe in Heaven and in Hell. The inhabitants of the former know no want, and the houris who attend them are never afflicted with sickness. The floor of paradise is musk, the stones are silver, and the cement gold. The damned are, on the contrary tormented with fire and by voracious and poisonous animals!"

Mahometanism distributes itself into two general parts, Faith and Practice; the former containing six branches—belief in God, in his angels, in his scriptures, in his prophets, in the resurrection and final judgment, in the di-

vine decrees :—the latter relating to prayer, with washing, alms, fasting, pilgrimage to Mecca, and circumcision. Indeed the system of Mahomet has no symmetry or beauty of parts ; it is a heterogeneous compound of the various religions then existing, and artfully accommodated to the prejudices and passions of the Eastern regions of the world.

Dr. Joseph White thus concludes one of his discourses on Mahometanism :—“ What raises Christ and his religion far above all the fictions of Mahomet, is that awful alternative of hopes and fears—that looking-for of judgment, which our Christian faith sets before us. At that day, when time, the great arbiter of truth and falsehood, shall bring to pass the accomplishment of the ages, and the Son of God shall make his enemies his footstool—then shall the deluded followers of the great Impostor, disappointed of the expected intercession of their prophet, stand trembling and dismayed at the approach of the glorified Messiah. Then shall they say, ‘Yonder cometh in the clouds that Jesus whose religion we laboured to destroy—whose temples we profaned—whose servants and followers we cruelly oppressed! Behold, he cometh, but no longer the humble son of Mary—no longer a mere mortal prophet, the equal of Abraham and of Moses, as that deceiver taught us, but the everlasting Son of the everlasting Father—the Judge of mankind—the Sovereign of angels—the Lord of all things, both in earth and in heaven!’ ”

If we suppose, according to the usual estimate, that the inhabitants of the world amount to eight hundred millions, then the whole may be thus divided :—Jews, two millions and a half ; Pagans, four hundred and eighty-two millions ; Christians, one hundred and seventy-five millions and a half, and Mahometans one hundred and forty millions. The Christians again may be thus distributed, into Greek and Eastern churches, thirty millions ; Roman Catholics, eighty millions ; and Protestants, sixty-five millions and a half. Or thus, in round figures, which may make a more permanent impression on the mind of the rising generation :



Jews . . . . .	2,500,000
Pagans . . . . .	482,000,000
Christians . . . . .	175,000,000
Mahommedans . . . . .	140,000,000

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Inhabitants of the world 800,000,000

*Subdivisions of Christians.*

Greek and Eastern churches	30,000,000
Roman Catholics . . . . .	80,000,000
Protestants . . . . .	65,000,000

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Total number of Christians . 175,000,000

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CHRISTIANITY.

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A Christian is the highest style of man ;  
 And is there who the *cross* wipes off,  
 As a foul blot from his dishonoured brow ?  
 If angels tremble—'tis at such a sight.——YOUNG.

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Christianity, to which Judaism was introductory, is the last and most entire dispensation of revealed religion with which God has favoured the human race. It was instituted by Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who made his appearance in Judea near two thousand years ago. He was born at Bethlehem, brought up at Nazareth, and crucified at Jerusalem. His lineage, birth, life, death, and sufferings, were minutely predicted by a succession of the Jewish prophets, and his religion is now spread over a considerable portion of the globe. The evidences of the Christian religion are comprised under historical testimony, prophecies, miracles, the internal evidence of its doctrines and precepts, and the rapidity of its first propagation among the Jews and the Gentiles. Though thinking Christians have in every age differed widely respecting some of the doctrines of this religion, yet they are fully agreed in the divinity of its origin, and in the benevolence of its tendency.



The believers in this religion, who had been denominated by the Jews *Nazarenes*, or *Galileans*, and by each other, *disciples*, *brethren*, or *saints*, were first called CHRISTIANS at Antioch, A. D. 43. Witsius thinks it a circumstance of remarkable wisdom that this celebrated name should arise from Antioch, a church consisting of a mixture of Jews and Gentiles, rather than from Jerusalem, dignified in so many other respects; and that it was a kind of victory gained over Satan, who from Antioch had, some ages before, raised so many cruel persecutors of the church of God. And Doddridge remarks--“ With pleasure let us reflect upon this honourable name which the disciples of Jesus wore at Antioch, and would to God that no other, no dividing name, had ever prevailed among them: as for such distinguishing titles, though they were taken from Apollos or Cephas, or Paul, let us endeavour to exclude them out of the church as fast as we can, and while they continue in it let us take care that they do not make us forget our most ancient and most glorious title! Let us take heed that we do not so remember our difference from each other in smaller matters as to forget our mutual agreement in embracing the gospel of Christ.”

As to the progress of Christianity, it suffered during the first three centuries some greivous persecutions, under which, however, it flourished after a wonderful manner, till the conversion of Constantine, 314 A. D. when it became the established religion of the Roman empire. The principal persecutions were those under Nero, A. D. 64; Domitian, 93; Trajan, 104; Hadrian, 125; M. Aurelius, 151; Severus, 197; Maximin, 235; Decius, 250; Valerian, 257; Aurelian, 272; Numerian, 283; Dioclesian, and Maximian, and Licinius, 303—313. It was relative to these persecutions, that an ecclesiastical historian observes, that the blood of the martyrs became the seed of the church! From the 6th to the 16th century was little else than one black record of ignorance, superstition, and tyranny. The Roman pontiff, by his monstrous usurpations over conscience, disposed of the property and the lives of men. It cannot be expected that the reader should

be furnished with a detail of ecclesiastical history, but a subsequent article on the Reformation, to be found in this work, should be read with attention, because the reformed religion is indissolubly connected with the present happiness and eternal welfare of mankind.

It would be as useless as it is impossible, to refer the reader to all the principal treatises which have been written at different periods for the defence and illustration of the Christian religion. But a few ought to be mentioned, in justice to the subject, and those alone shall be specified which are easiest of access. The student may consult Lardner's "Credibility," Watson's "Theological Tracts," Priestley's "Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion," Butler's "Analogy," Chalmers's "Internal Evidence," and Paley's "View of the Evidences of Christianity." For the use of private Christians, read Doddridge's "Three Sermons on the evidences of the Christian Religion, and Plain Reasons for being a Christian." Nor must I omit mentioning two works of erudition, "An Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures," by Thomas Hartwell Horne, A. M., and "The Truth of the Christian Religion," by John Jones, LL. D. author of various publications illustrative of the genius and tendency of Christianity.

I shall present the young reader with my own "Epitome of the Evidences of Christianity," drawn up for my pupils for the ministry; possessing some little degree of novelty, it may generate an impression upon the minds of the rising generation.

#### EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

Upon the immoveable pillars of testimony borne by well accredited witnesses, rests the simple but divine fabric of Christianity. "We have not followed cunningly-devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, 'This is my beloved Son, in

whom I am well pleased ;' and this voice which came from heaven we heard when we were with him on the holy Mount."

Two qualifications attach to witnesses whose assertions are entitled to belief—competency and honesty.

By *competency* is understood the possession of common sense, exercised by individuals upon objects which have been brought before them. To have seen and heard what they relate are indispensably necessary on such occasions. Thus seeing and hearing the subjects of their testimony, they have it in their power to communicate it to others. Indeed, without this personal knowledge, no sufficient evidence could be yielded, at least to such a degree as to produce a rational and permanent conviction.

By *honesty* I would be understood to mean, character—on which due reliance might be placed. Hence I look for an individual whose motives are above suspicion ; who is under no temptation to employ his information for a sinister purpose. The human mind is capable of being impelled by considerations of a very various and even opposite description. Vanity, interest, and ambition, exercise a powerful sway in the production of human affairs. In receiving the truth from others, it behoves us to institute a rigorous scrutiny respecting the conduct of our fellow-creatures. Thus alone shall we avoid becoming a prey to imposition.

The qualifications of competency and honesty will be found to distinguish the original witnesses of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Hence this circumstance has been dwelt upon by the intelligent defenders of Christianity. The religion of the New Testament disdains the aid of implicit faith. It calls on individuals of every rank to "search the Scriptures ; to judge even of themselves what is right ;" and having made every proper inquiry into this most important of all subjects— to render unto others "a reason of the hope that is in them," neither rashly nor dogmatically, but "with meekness and fear."

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, were *competent* witnesses, because they were not only contemporaries, but

they were the associates and followers of Jesus Christ. Matthew was found "sitting at the receipt of customs," an office of respectability under the government of his country. Luke, "the beloved physician," must have possessed some degree of education, as he filled up one of the liberal professions. Mark and John may have possessed a certain portion of knowledge. All the original propagators of the Christian religion were men of plain sense, and of uncorrupted understanding. They saw and heard what they testified. They were competent to form an accurate judgment.

As Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were competent, so they were likewise *honest* witnesses of the Lord Jesus Christ. Viewing them in every possible situation, there is no reason to suspect their integrity. Jesus was the reputed son of a carpenter, and born in Nazareth, out of which obscure, as well as despised place, no good was expected. His followers were fisherman, men possessing neither rank nor consequence in society. In quitting their respective situations, they did not improve their circumstances: they were insulted and reviled—they were thrown into fetters—consigned to the darkness of a dungeon—whilst some of them perished upon the ensanguined scaffold.

The end also must be considered for which Jesus Christ came into the world. The Messiah employed himself in the dissemination of knowledge—in the inculcation of repentance—in the bestowment of forgiveness—in the exemplification of every good work—as well as in the disclosure of a future state, by his resurrection from the dead, and ascension up into heaven, accompanied by the solemn assurance of his "coming a second time without sin unto salvation!" Cunning and fraud would never have conspired to introduce such a system. The kingdom of Satan would be thus divided against itself. It is the cause of God and of truth. Righteousness alone can have suggested, sanctioned, and established the reign of Jesus Christ. "Him hath God exalted (Acts v. 31, 32,) with his right hand, to be a Prince and Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are



his witnesses of these things, and so is also the Holy Spirit whom God had given to them that obey him.”

Having offered these preliminary remarks concerning the nature of testimony, upon which rests the entire gospel of Jesus Christ, I present you with a brief summary of the leading facts of the New Testament. And here I shall confine myself to the four Gospels, and to the Acts of the Apostles, as explanatory of these gospels. Paley remarks—“It hath been my care to preserve the separation between the Evidences and Doctrines as inviolable as I could; to remove from the primary question all considerations which have been unnecessarily joined with it, and to offer a defence of Christianity which every Christian might read without seeing tenets in which he had been brought up attacked or denied. And it always afforded a satisfaction to my mind to observe that this was practicable—that few or none of our many controversies with one another affect or relate to the proofs of our religion—that the rent never descends to the foundation.”

#### FACTS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

These facts of the New Testament may be introduced by remarking, that, at the period of our Saviour's appearance, an expectation of the event prevailed throughout the Jewish nation. This arose from that long series of prophecies delivered by divine messengers at various times and on various occasions. The ægura of prophecy commenced immediately after the fall of our first parents, when, distracted by remorse, and covered with shame, an assurance was given them, (Gen. iii. 15,) that “the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head!” Then followed intimations of the person, character, death, and sufferings of the Messiah, in whom all “the nations of the earth shall be blessed.” Hence the expectation of such a personage prevailed. In him all the luminous prophecies of the Old Testament centred, and by his advent they met their consummation.

The Hebrew appellation *Messiah*, or anointed, alludes to a custom of the Jews, by which their kings, their high-



priests, and sometimes their prophets, were anointed and set apart to their several offices. The term is used twice respecting Jesus Christ in the New Testament. Both passages occur in the Gospel of John, and it is used also twice by Daniel in the Old Testament. They shall be here contrasted for the illustration of the subject. In Daniel ix. 25, 26, are these remarkable expressions : “ Know, therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the *Messiah* the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall *Messiah* be cut off, but not for himself ; and the people of the Prince that shall come, shall destroy the city and the sanctuary ; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war, desolations are determined.” And John i. 41 : “ We have found the *Messias*, which is, being interpreted, the Christ ;” as well as John iv. 25, 26 ; “ The woman (of Samaria) saith unto him, I know that *Messias* cometh, which is called Christ ; when he is come he will tell us all things—Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am He,”—are the corresponding passages of the New Testament.

### BIRTH OF CHRIST.

The first fact of the New Testament is the birth of Jesus Christ, which is thus circumstantially detailed : “ And it came to pass in those days, (Luke ii. 1—13,) that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem (because he was of the house and lineage of David,) to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be de-

livered. And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger ; because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo ! the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them ; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people ; for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you---ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men."

#### EARLY HISTORY OF CHRIST.

A curious fact respecting the circumcision of Christ is added by Luke : " And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon ; and the same was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel ; and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Spirit, that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the Temple ; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word : for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people ; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." And towards the middle of the chapter, we are told that " the child Jesus grew, and waxed strong in spirit filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him ;" and that his parents missing him, " they found him in the Temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understand-

ing and answers." The chapter closes with the pleasing attestation, that "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." Such is the account of the early history of the Saviour;—its inimitable simplicity will win its way to every heart.

### BAPTISM OF CHRIST BY JOHN.

The next fact is the baptism of Jesus Christ by John the Baptist, who, agreeably to ancient oriental custom, was the precursor or forerunner of Jesus Christ. "In those days came John the Baptist (Matt. iii. 1, 11, 12.) preaching in the Wilderness, saying, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.—I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am nor worthy to bear; he shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit, and with fire; whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." To this account is annexed the baptism of Jesus by John:—"Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized went up straightway out of the water: and, lo! the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending (or hovering, *ὡσεὶ περιστεραν*) like a dove, and lighting upon him; and lo! a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

### DIVINE MISSION OF CHRIST

Soon after the opening of the ministry of Jesus Christ, he thus explicitly states the nature of his Divine Mission, involving the blessedness of belief and the evil consequences of unbelief with respect to mankind. John (Chap. iii. 14—19.) has these passages, too remarkable to be omitted: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the Wilder-

ness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already; because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.”

#### SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

Jesus Christ having entered upon his ministry, the Sermon on the Mount is a fair sample of the instructions he gave his disciples. The commencement and conclusion shall be transcribed.—It begins in this strain, including what are usually denominated the *beatitudes*, fraught with wisdom and integrity: “And seeing the multitudes, (Matt. v. 1—12.) Jesus went up into a mountain, and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you, falsely, for my sake: rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.”

The conclusion of this Sermon on the Mount is equally impressive: “Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine

(Matt. vii. 24 to the end,) and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, who built his house upon a rock ; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, and it fell not ; for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man who built his house upon the sand ; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, and it fell ; and great was the fall of it. And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the Scribes.”

Concerning these very practical instructions contained in the Sermon on the Mount, it has been beautifully remarked—“Blessed Jesus ! either these are not thy words or we are not Christians. Oh ! season our hearts more effectually with thy grace ; pour out that divine oil on our lamps ! Then shall the flame brighten ; then shall the ancient honours of thy religion be revived, and multitudes be awakened and animated by the lustre of it to glorify our Father in heaven.”

#### SUMMARY OF DUTY.

The summary of our duty towards God and Man is thus explicitly portrayed by Jesus Christ in connexion with the unity and perfections of the deity : “And one of the Scribes came, (Mark xii. 28—34,) and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him which is the first commandment of all ? And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord ; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength ; this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely, this—Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself ; there is none other commandment greater than these. And the Scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth, for there is One God, and there is none other but he ; and to love him



with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole-burnt offerings and sacrifices. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, 'Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.'

#### THE FINAL JUDGMENT.

As a confirmation of the decisive mode of teaching, which Jesus adopted, take his account of the Last Judgment:—"When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd divideth his sheep from his goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."—But he shall say unto them on the left hand, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.—And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal."\*

These instructions of our Saviour, be it remembered, were accompanied by the performance of miracles, in an open and unreserved manner, before all the people. The lame, the halt, the blind, as well as the diseased of every description, were relieved by his divine operations. The energies of his supernatural power penetrated even to the regions of the dead. Those whose eyes were closed in darkness, those whose tongues were sealed in silence, those whose bodies were consigned over to the disgusting processes of putrefaction, sprang back to the abodes of cheerfulness and activity! Such was the nature

\* As with several unbelievers the doctrine of the eternal torments of the wicked is a serious objection to Christianity, it is but justice to remark, that many intelligent Christians contend that this doctrine makes no part of the religion of the New Testament. This was the opinion of Bishop Newton, who wrote on the Prophecies, and other eminent men among the different Denominations of the Christian World. See Dr. T. Southwood Smith's "Illustrations of the Divine Government."

of those miracles, that Nicodemus (John iii. 2.) said unto Jesus, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher sent from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him." And so numerous were those supernatural acts, that we are assured by John, chap. xxi. 25, speaking after the usual Eastern manner, "There are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written."

#### DEATH, BURIAL, AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

After a life of fervid and indefatigable benevolence, Jesus terminated his career by a public and ignominious crucifixion. His enemies seized him, dragged him before an unrighteous tribunal, and he expired suspended on a cross, a spectacle to an astonished universe! His death, and burial, and his resurrection, are thus recorded in the last chapters of Luke's Gospel: "And when they were come to the place which was called Calvary, there they crucified Jesus."---"And it was about the sixth hour; and there was darkness over all the earth (or land of Judea) until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened, and the vail of the temple was rent in the midst. 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 the ghost." Next follows his burial: "And, behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counsellor, and he was a good man, and just; (the same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) he was of Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who also himself waited for the kingdom of God. This man went unto Pilate and begged the body of Jesus; and he took it down and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein man never before was laid." His resurrection is detailed with equal simplicity: "Now, upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared and certain others with them. And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre; and they

entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments: and as they were afraid and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, saying, the Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified; and the third day rise again." We may well add on this branch of my subject:—

“How certain is the truth of the Christian religion, and particularly of the Resurrection of Christ, which is a matter of fact on which Christianity is built! We have almost all the concurrent evidences that can be derived from human testimony joining to confirm this glorious truth. The fact is not impossible; concurrent circumstances cast a favourable aspect upon it; it was foretold by one who wrought miracles, and, therefore, not unlikely nor unexpected; the apostles and first disciples were eye and ear witnesses, for they conversed with their risen Lord; they were the most plain, honest men in themselves; the temptations of worldly interests did rather discourage their belief and report of it; they all agreed in this matter, though they were men of different characters,—Pharisees, and Fishermen, and Publicans, men of Judea and Galilee, and perhaps Heathens, who were early converted; the thing might easily have been disproved if it were false; it hath been conveyed by constant tradition and writing down to our times; those who at first doubted were afterwards convinced by certain proofs, nor have any pretended to give any proof to the contrary; but merely denied the fact with impudence, in opposition to all these evidences. How weak is the faith which is due to a multitude of things in ancient human history! For, though many of these marks of credibility are found plainly in the more general and public facts, yet, as to a multitude of particular facts and circumstances, how deficient are they of such evidence as should demand our assent! Perhaps there is nothing that ever was

done in all past ages, and which was not a public fact, so well attested as the Resurrection of Christ !”\*

#### ASCENSION AND SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

Of the reality of Christ's appearance after his Resurrection, no doubt can be entertained, when it is recollected that he conversed with his disciples on various subjects and on divers occasions.—Thus we are informed, that “he opened their understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures ;” that is, the prophecies of the Old Testament, “And he said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day ; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you ; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be indued with power from on high. And he led them out as far as Bethany, and he lifted up his hands and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven !”

This latter passage, with which the Gospel of Luke concludes, is illustrated by the account which the same author gives of the ascension in the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, where an assurance is made that “this same Jesus, who is taken up into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” And the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles describes at large the effusion of the Spirit upon the Apostles on the day of Pentecost. Then it was that the missionaries of the Gospel began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance ; thus empowering them to waft the glad tidings of great joy to the ends of the earth ? They promptly obeyed the mandate of their ascended Lord : “Go ye and disciple all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of

\* “Watt's Logic,” part ii. chap. 5. sect. 6. Principles and Rules of Judgment in Matters of Human Testimony.



the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; for lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

The rapid diffusion of the Gospel among Jews and Gentiles, and the miraculous conversion of the Apostle Paul, with his subsequent labours and writings, only tend to corroborate the truth of Revealed Religion. Hence Paul nobly declared—"I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; (Rom. i. 16,) for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." And he has this passage, (Titus ii. 11—15,) which speaks volumes on the subject of its morality; "The Grace God which bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works."

Having stated these facts of the New Testament, accredited by competent and honest witnesses, I would ask—Can such a religion be pronounced a cunningly devised fable, intended to delude and impose upon mankind? We have nothing to do with what has been added to the Christian Religion, since the canon of Scripture hath closed with the sublime and mysterious Book of the Revelations. From the preceding statement we have deduced no system of theology, but enumerated facts common to all systems of theology. We are silent on the abuses, to purposes of ambition, of a religion whose Author hath declared, "my kingdom is not of this world!" We are silent on the bloody persecutions instituted in direct oppositions to the mild and tolerant precepts of Christ. We are silent on the uncharitableness and bigotry of the several denominations towards each other, for charity surpasseth faith and hope, inasmuch as an apostle declares, "the greatest of these is—Charity."

"What is clear in Christianity (says Dr Paley) we shall find to be sufficient and to be infinitely valuable. What



is dubious, unnecessary to be decided, or of very subordinate importance, and what is most obscure, will teach us to bear with the opinions which others may have formed upon the same subject. We shall say to those who the most widely dissent from us, what Augustine said to the worst heretics of his age—They rail against us, who know not with what labour Truth is found and Errors to be avoided !”

At the same time it has been pertinently remarked, that “to reject the gospel because bad men pervert it, and weak men deform it, and angry men quarrel about it and bigoted men look sour on others, and curse them because they do not agree in every title with themselves, displays the same folly as if a person should cut down a tree bearing abundance of delicious fruit, and furnishing a refreshing shade, because caterpillars disfigured the leaves, and spiders made their webs among the branches !”

Individuals who are conversant with the deistical controversy, must perceive that unbelievers are intent on attacking the corruptions and abuses of Revealed Religion. But *facts* cannot be denied. The Credibility of the Gospel, by the accurate and laborious Lardner, together with his Jewish and Heathen Testimonies, sets at nought the stormy blusterings and bitter revilings of modern infidelity. The vagaries of fanaticism, as well as the follies of superstition, ever have, and ever will excite the contempt of men of understanding. These are the aliment of unbelief. Christ and his Apostles are those whom the humble disciple will follow. The New Testament is the Magna Charta of our Christian profession. There and there alone we look for the doctrines we must believe, the precepts we must observe, and the institutions we must celebrate, imitating the consummately perfect example left us by the Author and Finisher of our faith, with a persevering and indefatigable fidelity :---

——— In his blest life  
I see the path, and in his death the price,

And in his great ascent the proof supreme  
Of Immortality !\*

One trait in the conduct of unbelievers is deserving of special reprehension. In assailing Revealed Religion they put forth their objections, as if they were perfectly new, and had never been urged on any former occasion. This is disingenuous in the extreme. The fact is that nothing fresh can be started on the subject. The same monotonous tone of complaint has been continued from Celsus and Porphyry down to the present times. And what is most unfair, no notice is taken of the reiterated replies which have been made to these objections. Each Deist has had his respective answerers. No labour has been spared, no erudition has been left unemployed, to set their querulous disposition at rest. Newton and Locke, Lardner and Priestley, Leland and Paley, Watson and Porteus, have done every thing necessary to elucidate the genius, and establish the truth of Christianity. †

Supposing, after all, that some difficulties remain which are inexplicable, ought this circumstance to shake your faith or excite astonishment? This, indeed, is nothing but what might be expected in this present state of being. The abstruse nature of certain theological topics, and the narrowness of our intellectual vision, will account for this phenomenon. Are the appearances of nature fully explained, or the intricacies of science altogether developed? We are encompassed with wonders. And why should religion be expected to be devoid of difficulties?

\* To the honour of the age, the works of Dr. Nathaniel Lardner have been recently published, in five volumes quarto, price ten guineas. Catholics and Churchmen and Dissenters, together with Unbelievers themselves, Morgan and Gibbon, have rendered "this prince of divines" the tribute of respect due to his industry, while they applaud his incorruptible integrity.

† See "Leland's View of the Deistical Writers," a work of research and consummate utility. "Bishop Eutler's Analogy" also is a volume characterised by the profoundest reasoning, and has never been noticed by the sons of infidelity. The style, indeed, is rugged; but the work contains a rich mine of sentiment, which will repay the closest attention that the young reader may bestow upon it.

The antiquity of the Sacred Writings, the diversity of their contents, the mutability of languages, ancient as well as modern, and the prejudices of education, will cause that motley variety of opinion that characterizes the professing world. But, blessed be God? "the rent has not reached the foundation;" whilst this dissonance is at once the ground, as well as motive, for the exercise of Christian charity.

Finally, Christian brethren—thus it is that a series of well-attested facts relative to the birth, death and sufferings of a crucified, but ultimately triumphant Messiah, generating devotion towards God and benevolence towards man, constitutes the soul of Revealed Religion. "We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty." In a word, the Christianity of the New Testament is impregnable and imperishable! It is indeed, a pyramid, whose base covers the earth—whose summit penetrates the skies, and upon whose sides stands enrolled, in illumined characters, legible to all the inhabitants of the globe—

**"THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH, BUT THE GIFT OF GOD IS ETERNAL LIFE THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST!"**

The following valuable works have been published in behalf of Revealed Religion, since the last edition of the "Sketch."

1. "*Vindiciæ Christianæ*," a comparative estimate of the genius and temper of the Greek, the Roman, the Hindu, the Mahometan, and the Christian Religions, by the Rev. Jeerome Alley, LL.B., M.R.I.A., an Irish Episcopalian.

2. "A Comparative View of Christianity, and of the other forms of religion which have existed and still exist in the world, particularly with regard to their moral tendency,"—by Wm. Laurence Brown, D.D., Principal of Marischal College, Aberdeen, a Presbyterian of the Kirk of Scotland,

3. "Comparison of Heathenism, Mahometanism and Hinduism, with Christianity," by W. B. Collyer, D. D.,

the last of a series of Lecturers delivered at Salters Hall.

Thus an *Episcopalian*, *Presbyterian*, and *Independent*, unite hand and hand to arrest the progress of infidelity.—Besides these productions, there are two admirable pamphlets.

1. “The Historical Evidences of Christianity unaassailable,” by J. R. Beard, Unitarian Minister Manchester.

2. “A Discourse on the Evidences of Revealed Religion,” delivered in the University of Cambridge, at the Dudleian Lecture, March 14, 1821; by William Ellery Channing, D. D., Minister of the Congregational Church. Boston, New England.—Sold by Hunter, St. Paul’s Churchyard, London.

From a survey of these publications, it appears that, dowered or undowered, there are not wanting able and impressive defences of Christianity,—and the Rev. William Jay, of Bath, has happily delineated in his Twelve Lectures, the obligations, duties, and prospects of the Christian in his progress from Earth towards Heaven.

SKETCH  
OF THE  
DENOMINATIONS,  
&c. &c.

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Having given this preliminary account of Atheism, Deism, Theophilanthropism, Judaism, Mahometanism, and Christianity, I proceed to the *denominations* of the Christian world. In the first ages of Christianity there were various sects, which have long ago sunk into oblivion, and whose names exist only in the pages of ecclesiastical history. It is not my purpose even to glance at these ancient sects, but only to notice those which in the present day attract our attention. The most distinguished may be included under the following three-fold arrangement: Opinions respecting the *person of Christ*; respecting the *means and measure of God's favour*; and respecting *Church government*, and the *administration of ceremonies*.

1.

OPINIONS RESPECTING THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

Jesus Christ being the medium by which the Deity hath imparted a knowledge of his will to mankind, the *person of Christ* has been investigated, and the *nature of God* rendered the subject of rude and unhallowed controversy. This has filled the religious world with contentions, nor are they likely to be brought to a termination. In the mean time, it would become us to discuss this topic with modesty and humility. It is, however, my present province to state the existing opinions respecting this abstruse subject; it shall be done in a few words, and I hope with accuracy.



## TRINITARIANS.

INCLUDING ATHANASIANS AND SABELLIANS.

The Trinitarians believe the doctrine of a Trinity, by which is generally understood, that there are THREE DISTINCT PERSONS IN ONE UNDIVIDED GODHEAD—the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost*. The word *Trinity* is not to be found in the Bible, but is a scholastic term, derived from the Latin word *Trinitas*, denoting a three-fold unity, and was (some say) introduced into the church during the second century. Calvin himself reprobates the term, as being *barbarous*, and of human invention! The learned entertain such various and contradictory sentiments respecting this mystery, that it is difficult to know to whom the term *Trinitarian* is justly applicable. Waterland, Howe, Sherlock, Pearson, Burnet, Beveridge, Wallis, and Watts, have each of them separate opinions on this subject. Some think Trinitarians reducible to two classes; those who believe that there is no proper divinity in Christ, besides that of the Father; and the class of Tritheists, who maintain that there are three equal and distinct Gods. This representation, however, has been called in question by the opposite party; but the truth is, that being professedly a *mystery*, there appear to be no definite ideas on the subject.

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 ATHANASIANS.

Nearly allied to this latter class are the Athanasians, a name derived from Athanasius, a father of the Christian church, who lived in the fourth century. The creed which bears his name in the Common Prayer-Book, is not of his composition; and so little attached was Archbishop Tillotson to it, that, in writing to Dr. Burnet, the historian, he says, "I wish we were well rid of it." The episcopal church in America has rejected it. As to the history of this creed, it is supposed to have been written originally in Latin for the use of some part of the west-

ern church. Common report attributes it to Virgilius the African; but Dr. Waterland gives it to Hilary, Bishop of Arles about the year 430, who composed it for the use of the Gallican clergy. It obtained in France about the year 850; was received at Rome about 1014; and it is said was used in the British churches in the 10th century. It does not appear to have received the sanction of any council, and, though admitted into the Greek church, is not read in public. The history of this singular confession of faith was written by Dr. Waterland, of orthodox memory. Were the account of the Trinity contained in this creed ever so just, yet its damnatory clauses are highly exceptionable, and have given just offence to some of the more sensible and worthy members of the established church. On this subject, Dr. Prettyman, (the present Bishop of Winchester, who has changed his name to that of Tomline,) in his "Elements of Theology," speaks with candour and moderation:—"Great objection has been made to the clauses of this creed, which denounce eternal damnation against those who do not believe the Catholic faith, as here stated; and it certainly is to be lamented, that assertions of so peremptory a nature, unexplained and unqualified, should have been used in any human composition." The prelate then endeavours to account for the introduction of such clauses into the creed; and adds,—“We know that different persons have deduced different and even opposite doctrines from the words of Scripture, and consequently there must be many errors among Christians; but since the Gospel no where informs us what degree of error will exclude from eternal happiness, I am ready to acknowledge that, in my judgment, notwithstanding the authority of former times, our church would have acted more wisely and more consistently with the general principles of mildness and toleration, if it had not adopted the damnatory clauses of the Athanasian creed! Though I firmly believe that the doctrines of this creed are all founded in Scripture, I cannot but conceive it to be both unnecessary and presumptuous to say, that ‘except every one do keep them whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.’”

This creed has been recently defended by the Rev. T. Hartwell Horne, in "The Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity, briefly stated and defended, and the Church of England vindicated from the charge of uncharitableness in retaining the Athanasian Creed," &c. Many clergymen, notwithstanding, deem it at variance with common sense and charity.

It is, however, singular that the author of this creed should, after all its strange mysteries, conclude with declaring, that when Christ shall appear to raise the dead, "all men shall give account of their works; they that have done good shall go into life everlasting, and they that have done evil into everlasting fire!" So that, even in the opinion of the author of this creed (whoever he was), it is not *Faith*, but PRACTICE, that will determine the happiness or misery of the eternal world.

Mr. Broughton, in his "Dictionary of all Religions," under the article *Trinity*, has the following paragraph, which may assist the reader on this most abstruse subject: "The doctrine of the Trinity, as professed in the Christian church, is briefly this: that there is *one* God in *three* distinct *persons*, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: *person* signifying here the same as *essence*, with a particular manner of subsistence, which the Greek fathers called *hypostasis*, taking it for the incommunicable property that makes a person. The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are believed to be three distinct persons in the Divine nature, because the Holy Scriptures, in speaking of these three, so distinguish them from one another, as we use in common speech to distinguish three several persons. There are many instances to this purpose, particularly the form of administering the sacrament of baptism, which runs, 'In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost;' and that solemn benediction with which St. Paul concludes his Second Epistle to the Corinthians: 'The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,' &c.; and the 'three witnesses in heaven,' mentioned by St. John." This passage has for some time been deemed an interpolation, and Dr. Tomline gives it up in his "Elements of Theology." The late Mr. Porson, a profound Greek scholar, has, it is

thought, in his controversy with Archdeacon Travis, settled the subject. Dr. John Jones, author of an excellent English and Greek Lexicon, has, however, written a pamphlet in behalf of the authenticity of the passage, and contends that it is the grand basis of *Unitarianism* in the New Testament. He challenges his opponents to come forward to confute him, but they observe a profound silence. The attempt is assuredly perfectly novel, but the erudite author declares that his position is "as clear as the sun at noonday in the firmament." Every lover of truth should read the pamphlet with attention.

"Each of these three persons is affirmed to be God, because the name, properties, and operations of God are, in the Holy Scriptures, attributed to each of them. The Divinity of the Father is out of the question. That of the Son is proved from the following texts, among many others: St. John says, 'The word was God;' St. Paul, that 'God was manifested in the flesh;' that 'Christ is over all, God blessed for ever.' Eternity is attributed to the Son: 'The Son hath life in himself.' Perfection and knowledge: 'As the Father knoweth me, so know I the Father.' The creation of all things: 'All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.' And we are commanded 'to honour the Son as we honour the Father.' The Divinity of the Holy Ghost rests upon the following proofs, among others: 'Lying to the Holy Ghost' is called Lying to God.' Because Christians are the 'temples of the Holy Ghost,' they are said to be the 'temples of God. His 'teaching all things,' his 'guiding into all truth,' his 'telling things to come,' his 'searching all things, even the deep things of God,' &c., are alleged as plain characters of his Divinity. Besides, he is joined with God the Father, as an object of faith and worship, in baptism, and the apostolical benediction. This doctrine is called a *mystery*, because we are not able to comprehend the particular manner of the existence of the three persons in the Divine Nature." Bishop Taylor remarks, with great piety, that "He who goes about to speak of the mystery of the Trinity, and does it by words and



names of man's invention, talking of essences and existences, hypostases and personalities, priorities in co-equalities, and unity in pluralities, may amuse himself and build a tabernacle in his head, and talks something he knows not what: but the good man who feels the power of the Father, and to whom the Son is become wisdom, sanctification, and redemption, and in whose heart the love of the Spirit of God is shed abroad—this man, though he understands nothing of what is unintelligible, yet he alone truly understands the *Christian* doctrine of the Trinity."

It were well if, before we made up our minds on this intricate article of faith, we were carefully to read Dr. Watts's "Essay on the importance of any Human Schemes to explain the Doctrines of the Trinity." This Essay shows, first, that no such scheme of explication is necessary to salvation; secondly, that it may yet be of great use to the Christian church; and, thirdly, that all such explications ought to be proposed with modesty to the world, and never imposed on the conscience. Dr. Pye Smith's "Scripture Testimony to the Messiah, or an Enquiry into the Person of Christ," in two octavo volumes, is among the recent publications in favour of the Trinity.

Bishop Burnet tells us, that before the Reformation it was usual in England to have pictures of the Trinity. God the Father was represented in the shape of an old man with a triple crown, and rays about his head! The Son, in another part of the picture, looked like a young man, with a single crown on his head, and a radiant countenance. The blessed Virgin was between them, in a sitting posture, and the Holy Ghost, under the appearance of a dove, spread his wings over her! This picture, he tells us, is still to be seen in a prayer-book printed in the year 1526, according to the ceremonial of Salisbury; Skippon also tells us, there is at Padua a representation of the Trinity, being the figure of an old man, with three faces and three beards! And, lately reading Thoresby's "History of Leicester," I met with a curious representation of the Trinity copied from an ancient painted window, the date of which was not ascertained. How contrary are these absurd representations of the Deity to the sub-



lime declaration of our Saviour, John iv. 24 : "God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

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## SABELLIANS.

The Sabellian reduces the three *persons* in the Trinity to three *characters* or *relations*. This has been called by some a *model* Trinity, and the persons who hold it, Modalists. Sabellius, the founder of the sect, espoused the doctrine in the third century. Of his tenets the accounts are various. Some say he taught that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were one subsistence, and one person with three names; and that in the Old Testament the Deity delivered the law as Father, in the New Testament dwelt among men as the Son, and descended on the apostles as the Holy Spirit. This opinion gains ground in the Principality of Wales. "The Sabellians (says Mr. Broughton) made the word and the Holy Spirit to be only virtues, emanations, or functions of the Deity. They held, that he who in heaven is the Father of all things, descended into the Virgin, became a child, and was born of her as a Son; and that having accomplished the mystery of our salvation, he diffused himself on the apostles in tongues of fire, and was then denominated the Holy Ghost. They resembled God to the sun, the illuminative virtue or quality whereof was the Word, and its warming virtue the Holy Spirit. The Word, they taught, was darted like a Divine ray, to accomplish the work of redemption; and that being re-ascended to heaven, as the ray returns to its source, the warmth of the Father was communicated after a like manner to the apostles. Such was the language of Sabellians."

Mosheim says likewise, that "Sabellius maintained that a certain *energy* only proceeded from the Supreme Parent, or a certain *portion* of the Divine nature was united to the Son of God, the man Jesus, and he (that is, Sabellius) considered, in the same manner, the Holy Ghost as a *portion* of the everlasting Father."

These various explications are given, that the reader may have a consistent view of the subject. It is a curious circumstance with respect to this system, that whilst one party pronounce Sabellianism to be no other than *Unitarianism in a fog*, another party charges it with confounding the *persons* of the ever blessed Trinity.

Between the system of Sabellianism, and what is termed the *indwelling* scheme, there appears to be a considerable resemblance, if it be not precisely the same, differently explained. The indwelling scheme is founded on that passage in the New Testament, where the apostle, speaking of Christ, says, "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." Dr. Watts, towards the close of his life, became a Sabellian, and wrote several pieces in defence of it. His sentiments on the Trinity appear to have been, that "the Godhead, the Deity itself, personally distinguished as the Father, was united to the man Christ Jesus, in consequence of which union or *indwelling* of the Godhead, he became properly God." The Rev. Mr. Palmer, in his edition of "Johnson's Life of Watts," observes that Dr. Watts conceived this union to have subsisted before the Saviour's appearance in the flesh, and that the human soul of Christ existed with the Father from before the foundation of the world; on which ground he maintains the real descent of Christ from heaven to earth, and the whole scene of his humiliation, which he thought incompatible with the common opinion concerning him. See Dr. Watts's "Last Thoughts on the Trinity," in a pamphlet republished by the Rev. Gabriel Watts. It was printed by the Doctor in the year 1745, three years only before his death. It is on this account valuable, and ought, in justice to that great and good man, to have been inserted in the last edition of his works. Indeed, the reader is referred to a piece published by the Rev. S. Palmer, entitled, "Dr. Watts no Socinian," in reply to the Rev. T. Belsham, who, in his "Life of the Rev. T. Lindsay," had intimated that Dr. Watts had become a modern Unitarian. There can be no doubt, however, that Dr. W. had discarded the common notion of the Trinity, though he was not an Unitarian, in the modern

sense of the word. Dr. Doddridge also is supposed to have been a Sabellian, and also Mr. Benjamin Fawcett, of Kidderminster, who published a valuable piece, entitled, "Candid Reflections concerning the Doctrine of the Trinity." It is a pity that this work is not republished, and circulated throughout the religious world. Robinson's "Plea for the Divinity of Christ" is a most ingenious tract on the subject.

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## UNITARIANS.

*INCLUDING ARIANS AND HUMANITARIANS.*

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### ARIANS.

The Arian derives his name from Arius, a presbyter of Alexandria, who flourished about the year 315, and the propagation of whose doctrine occasioned the famous council of Nice, assembled by Constantine, in the year 325. The origin of Arianism has been thus accounted for. Alexander, bishop of Alexandria, discoursing one day too curiously concerning the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity, in the presence of his presbyters and the rest of his clergy, Arius, one of the presbyters, supposed his bishop to advance the doctrine of Sabellius, and disliking that he went, into a directly opposite opinion. However, whatever may have been the opinion or conduct of Arius, the system spread, and efforts were made for its extinction. It was for a time in the east the reigning religion. After all, Arius fell a victim to the fury of his persecutors. Dr. Maclaine, in his Translation of Mosheim, remarks, "It appears to me extremely probable that this unhappy man was a victim to the resentment of his enemies, and was destroyed by poison, or some such violent method. A blind and fanatical zeal for certain systems of faith has in all ages produced such horrible acts of cruelty and injustice."

Arius owned Christ to be God in a subordinate sense, and considered his death to be a propitiation for sin.

The Arians acknowledge that the Son was the *Word*, though they deny its being eternal: contending, that it had only been created prior to all other beings. Christ, say they, had nothing of man in him, except the flesh, with which the Logos, or Word, spoken of by the apostle John, was united, which supplied the rest. The Arians, though they deny that Christ is the *eternal God*, yet they contend against others for his *pre-existence*. His pre-existence they found on the two following passages, among many others:—"Before Abraham was I am." And the prayer of Jesus—"Glorify me with that glory which I had with thee *before* the world began." These and other texts of a similar kind are, in their opinion, irrefragable proofs that Christ did actually exist in another state before he was born of the Virgin Mary, in the land of Judea. This matter has been argued by various writers, and names of the first character have distinguished themselves in the Arian controversy. It has also been urged by the advocates of Arianism, that the *pre-existent dignity* of Christ accounts for that splendid apparatus of prophecies and miracles, with which the mission of the Messiah was attended! In modern times, the term *Arian* is indiscriminately applied to those who consider Jesus simply subordinate to the Father. Some of them believe Christ to have been the creator of the world, but they all maintain that he existed previous to his incarnation, though in his pre-existent state they assign him different degrees of dignity. Hence the appellation *High* and *Low Arian*.

That valuable practical writer, Mr. Job Orton, though he never published any thing explicitly on the Trinity, is supposed, during the latter period of his life to have entertained these sentiments of the person of Christ. He used to recommend the two following tracts, as having given him the most satisfaction on that subject: "A Sober and Charitable Disquisition on the Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity," by Simon Brown; and "An Essay towards a Demonstration of the Scripture Trinity," by Dr. Scott, a new edition of which was published by Samuel Goadby, brother to the author of "Illustrations

of the Bible." Of the system of Arianism, Dr. Clarke, in his "Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity," Mr. Henry Taylor (for many years vicar of Portsmouth), in his learned work, entitled, "Ben Mordecai's Apology," Mr. Tomkins, in his "Mediator," and Mr. Hopkins, in his "Appeal to the Common Sense of all Christian People," have been deemed able advocates. Mr. Whiston, the astronomer and translator of Josephus, revived this controversy in the beginning of the last century. Soon after, Dr. Clarke published his celebrated treatise, entitled, "The Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity," which was disapproved of by the convocation, and answered by Dr. Waterland, who had been charged with verging towards Tritheism. "Erasmus (says the *Encyclopædia Britannica*) seemed to have aimed in some measure to restore Arianism at the beginning of the 16th century, in his Commentaries on the New Testament. Accordingly he was reproached by his adversaries with Arian interpretations and glosses, Arian tenets, &c., to which he made little answer, save that there was no heresy more thoroughly extinct than that of the Arians." But Erasmus is known to have been timid in his disposition, and confessed in one of his letters to a friend, that he possessed not the spirit of a martyr. Of the truth of this declaration there were many proofs.

The Rev. Dr. Bruce, of Belfast, has just published a second edition of his "Sermons" for the elucidation and confirmation of the truth of the system of Arianism, as taught in the New Testament. It first appeared in Ireland; and is now re-published in this country. The introductory discourses on the Scriptures are inimitable; and the latter, or more controversial portion of the volume is penned with liberality.

The history of the Arian controversy, in modern times, may be found in a pamphlet, entitled "An Account of all the considerable Books and Pamphlets that have been wrote on either side, in the controversy concerning the Trinity, from the year 1712: in which is also contained an Account of the Pamphlets written this last year on each side by the Dissenters, to the end of the year 1719:" published at London, 1720.



Thomas Emlyn, a pious and learned divine, should be mentioned here, since he has been rendered memorable for his sufferings in the cause of Arianism. He was a dissenting minister in Dublin, and there shamefully persecuted on account of his religious sentiments. He rejected the common notion of the Trinity, but firmly maintained the pre-existence of Christ. He died in London, 1741; and his works were published by his son, an eminent counsellor, in three volumes; to which are prefixed memoirs of the author.

Dr. Richard Price, in his incomparable Sermons on the Christian doctrine, has taken much pains in explaining and defending the principles of Arianism. He states at large the nature of the doctrine, and enumerates the advantages arising from it in the explication of the Scriptures. To these discourses the reader is referred: and whatever he may think of the arguments urged in favour of that system, he must admire the Christian spirit with which they are impregnated

The reader is also referred to the work of JOHN MILTON, lately found among the State Papers at Whitehall, after 150 years' concealment. Dr. Sumner, prebendary of Canterbury, has ably translated it from the Latin, and published it in a quarto volume, by the express order of his Majesty. It is intitled, "A Treatise on Christian Doctrine, compiled from the Holy Scriptures alone, by John Milton." This truly interesting work, divided into two books,—*on the knowledge of God, and on the service of God*—is expressly Arian respecting the person of Christ. Bishop Newton has pronounced, that Milton "was generally truly orthodox;" though Warton says, that, in "Paradise Lost," not a word is said there of the Son of God but what a Socinian, or at least an Arian, would allow. In this new work, according to its translator, it is asserted, that "the Son existed in the beginning, and was the first of the whole creation, by whose delegated power all things were made in heaven and earth; begotten, not by natural necessity, but by the decree of the Father, within the limits of time, endued with the divine nature and substance, but *distinct from and inferior to*

*the Father*—one with the Father in love and unanimity of will, and receiving every thing in his *filial* as well as in his *mediatorial* character—from the Father's gift. This summary will be sufficient to show that the opinions of Milton were nearly Arian, ascribing to the Son as high a share of divinity as was compatible with the denial of his self-existence and eternal generation, but not admitting his co-equality and co-essentiality with the Father. That he entertained different views at other periods of his life is evident from several expressions scattered through his works." The volume abounds with a constant reference to Scripture, even to profusion. And in an admirable prefatory address, alike indicative of his sincerity and piety, he declares, "It was a great solace to me to have compiled, by God's assistance, a *precious aid for my faith*, or rather to have laid up for myself a *treasure*, which would be a provision for my future life, and would remove from my mind all grounds for hesitation, as often as it behoved me to render an account of the principles of my belief." This work well repays its perusal, and has excited great and merited attention in the religious world. It is a precious theological relic, and its publication redounds highly to his Majesty's good sense and liberality.

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## HUMANITARIANS.

"*Unitarian* is not opposed to *Tritheist* or *Polytheist*, it does not denote a believer in one God, as contradistinguished from a believer in three Gods, or more Gods than one: it is opposed to *Trinitarian*, Tri-uni-tarian only, and signifies a believer in, and a worshipper of one God, in one Person, as contradistinguished from a believer in, and a worshipper of one God in three Persons." Bailey gives this explanation of the terms *Unitarian* and *Trinitarian* in his well-known Dictionary, and Dr, Berriman, a clergyman, in his "Historical Account of Controversies on the Trinity," in eight Sermons at Lady Moyer's Lecture, 1725, acknowledges this distinction when he remarks,

“Antitrinitarians, usually denominated Socinians, chose rather to distinguish themselves by the name of *Unitarians*, to import their assertion of the numerical unity in such a sense as excludes all plurality of *Persons* in the Godhead, as well as essences.” *Unitarian* has a general, *Socinian* a specific meaning; every Socinian is an Unitarian, but every Unitarian is not a Socinian. An Unitarian is a believer in the personal unity of God, a Socinian is a believer in the personal unity of God, who also holds Jesus Christ to be both a man and an object of religious worship. I know not a single Socinian in England, and to continue the term when the character is gone, is an impropriety of speech, if it imply nothing more.” See “A Plea for Unitarian Dissenters, in a Letter of Expostulation to the Rev. H. H. Norris, M. A., on that part of his work against the Hackney Bible Society, which relates to Unitarians. By Robert Aspland.”

The Socinian takes his name from Faustus Socinus, who died in Poland, 1604. There were two who bore the name Socinus, uncle and nephew, and both disseminated the same doctrine. The Socinian asserts that Christ had no existence until born of the Virgin Mary; and that being a man like ourselves, though endowed with a large portion of the Divine wisdom, the only objects of his mission were to teach the efficacy of repentance without an atonement, as a medium of the Divine favour—to exhibit an example for our imitation—to seal his doctrine with his blood—and, in his resurrection from the dead, to indicate the certainty of our resurrection at the last day. The simple humanity of Christ, which forms a principal article of their creed, is founded on the passages of Scripture, where the Messiah is spoken of as a man, particularly the following; Acts ii. 22. “Ye men of Israel, hear these words, Jesus of Nazareth, a *Man* approved of God among you,” &c.—Acts xvii. 31. “Because he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that *Man*, whom he hath ordained,” &c.—1 Tim. ii. 5. “There is one God and one mediator between God and men, the *Man* Christ Jesus.” At the same time it must be acknowledged that neither the Trinitarian, nor

Sabellian, or Arian, denies his humanity ; though they do not hold it in that exclusive and simple sense of the word, for which the Humanitarian contends. On this account it is, that the Socinians have received the appellation of *Humanitarians*.

Between ancient and modern Humanitarians, however, a difference obtains. The miraculous conception, and the worship of Christ, both allowed by Socinus, are rejected by most of the modern Humanitarians. Dr. Priestley distinguished himself in a controversy on this subject with Dr. Horsley, the late Bishop of St. Asaph. Dr. Priestley had published his two principal theological works ; the one to prove that the first Christians were Unitarians, entitled “The History of Early Opinions concerning Christ :” the other to account for the origin and spread of what is commonly called the orthodox doctrine, entitled “A History of the Corruptions of Christianity.” On one or both of these publications the Bishop animadverted ; and to these animadversions Dr. Priestley made several replies. The controversial pieces of Bishop Horsley with Dr. Priestley have lately been republished in one large volume by his son, the Rev. Heneage Horsley of Dundee in Scotland, who, in the preface, indulges himself in remarks on the issue of the controversy. On this preface the Rev. T. Belsham has animadverted—observing that Horsley retired with a mitre, and Priestley with the palm of victory !

It is difficult to trace the origin of the Socinian controversy. John Campanus is said to be the first of the Reformers who distinguished himself on this side of the question. Next Michael Servetus, a Spanish physician, whom Calvin persecuted even to death ; for in the year 1553 he was committed to the flames, by persons who had themselves just escaped the fangs of the Romish church, and who at least had nominally erected the standard of religious liberty : “It is impossible (says Dr. Mac-laine) to justify the conduct of Calvin in the case of Servetus, whose death will be an indelible reproach upon the character of that eminent Reformer. The only thing that can be alleged, not to deface, but to diminish his

crime, is, that it was no easy matter for him to divest himself at once of that persecuting spirit which had been so long nourished and strengthened by the Popish religion, in which he was educated. It was a remaining portion of the spirit of Popery in the breast of Calvin, that kindled this unchristian zeal against the wretched Servetus." See the "Life of Servetus," lately published by Mr. Richard Wright, of Wishbeach, where the tragedy is detailed with all its circumstances of brutality: also an "Account of Servetus," by the late Rev. W. Richards, of Lynn—where the conduct of Calvin is treated with a merited severity. It is inserted in his valuable "Welch Biography, or the Cambro-british Nonconformist's Memorial," given by the author of this "Sketch," to the world. It is a rich mine of religious Biography, illustrative of the ecclesiastical history of the Principality.

Having mentioned the persecution of Servetus by Calvin, truth, on the other hand requires it to be stated that Socinius has been accused of persecuting Francis David, who, on account of his rejecting the worship of Christ, was cast into prison, where he died. The persecuting spirit discoverable in some of the Reformers diminishes the respectability of their characters; and the only apology that can be made for them is what has been already mentioned, that the nature and foundation of religious liberty were not then fully understood.

The Socinians flourished greatly in Poland about the year 1551; and J. Siemienius, Palatine of Podolia, built purposely for their use the city of Racow. A catechism was published by them, called "The Racovian Catechism;" and their most able writers are known among the learned by the title of the *Polones Fratres*, or Polonian Brethren. "Their writings were (says Dr. Maclaine) republished together in the year 1656, in one great collection, consisting of six volumes of folio, under the title of 'Bibliotheca Fratrum.' There are, indeed, in this collection many pieces wanting, which were composed by the most eminent leaders of the sect; but what is there brought together is nevertheless sufficient to give the attentive reader a clear idea of the doctrine of the Socini-



ans, and of the nature of their institution as a religious community." An account of these several authors, as well as of the persecution of Francis David, will be found in "Dr. Toulmin's Life of Socinus." See "Lindsey's Historical view of Unitarianism," Dr. Jones's Ecclesiastical Researches," Hopton Hayne's "Scripture Account of the Attributes of God, and of the Character and Offices of Jesus Christ," and Mr. Belsham's "Calm Inquiry into the Scriptural Doctrine respecting the Person of Christ." Mr. Belsham has also published "The Bampton Lecturer reproved, being a reply to calumnious charges of the Rev. Dr. Moysey," with a Letter to Dr. Magee, on his work relative to the Atonement. Of this latter work, Dr. Lant Carpenter has given an elaborate examination. Dr. Carpenter, indeed, not only notices Dr. Magee, but also the Bishop of St. David's Dr. Hales, Dean Graves, Dr. Nares, Dr. Pye Smith, Mr. Rennel, &c. promising another volume by way of completion. There are Lectures on Unitarianism, the one series by the Rev. George Harris, of Glasgow; and the other by the Rev. W. J. Fox, London. See also the Rev. R. Apstrand's "Three Sermons on Blasphemy;" and Wright's Unitarian publications.

The Unitarians in London, besides having a Society for promoting Christian knowledge and the practice of virtue, by the distribution of books, have established a fund which sends forth Missionaries to preach in various parts of the kingdom. Both of these, together with the Society for the protection of their Civil Rights, are incorporated under the name of the **BRITISH AND FOREIGN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.**

The Unitarians have Annual Sermons on the Wednesday and Thursday in Whitsun week at South street Chapel, Finsbury-square, attended by numerous friends from the country. The Unitarians are sanguine in the expectation of the final triumph of their principles. The Rev. T. Lindsey, speaking of Unitarians, says, "Its deep and concealed root hath begun to put forth vigorous branches, which are extending themselves in all directions, and unquestionably will, in time, cover the earth." And the Rev. T. Belsham declares, "We do not despair of the

advent of a glorious period in the revolution of ages, when the Unitarian Church shall comprehend in its ample inclosure the whole christianised world!"

Antitrinitarians have also differed respecting the *personality* of the Holy Spirit. Much has been said on both sides of this intricate question. Dr. Lardner's "Letter on the Logos" may be consulted; and also Mr. Marson's little piece, entitled "The Impersonality of the Holy Ghost," published in 1787. In "Doddridge's Lectures," information is given respecting this and almost every other article of the Christian faith. Dr. Kippis published an edition of this valuable work, with additions and improvements, as did also the late Dr. Williams, of Rotheram. The private Christian, as well as the theological student, will derive much knowledge from the perusal of it.

A note added to this publication by Dr. Kippis, applicable to this first division of religious opinions is of so excellent a nature, that I am tempted to transcribe it:—"When it is considered, how extremely difficult many questions in themselves are, and what different conclusions have been drawn concerning them by men of the profoundest knowledge and deepest reflection, there is a modest scepticism which it will become young students to preserve, till time shall have given them the opportunity of wider inquiry and larger observation. This remark would not have been made, if instances had not occurred, of youth who have eagerly, and even arrogantly adopted an hypothesis on one side or the other, without sufficiently exercising that patience of thinking, and that slow progress of examinations, which are likely to be the most favourable to the acquisition of truth."

The account of Unitarians may be concluded, by a reference to "The Racovian Catechism," translated, with a valuable introduction and notes, by the the Rev. Thomas Rees, LL. D., F.A.S.—also to the new edition of Dr. Joseph Priestley's Theological Works, by John Towell Rutt, Esq. which he has superintended with a commendable industry. Momoirs of Dr. Priestley are prefixed, which incorporate every interesting particular which can illustrate his character and enbalm his memory. Infidels

and bigots have recently attempted to make the public believe that the terms *Deist* and *Unitarian* are synonymous; but there is an essential difference. The Deist rejects, and the Unitarian admits the Divine Mission of Christ! In other words the former pronounces him an impostor; the latter, with Lardner at their head, have written most ably in behalf of the evidences of Christianity. Unitarians of every description believe Jesus to be the Son of God, the accredited organ of heavenly communication—the Saviour of Mankind; For a confirmation of this statement, see a variety of papers in the “*Christian Reformer*,” and in the “*Monthly Repository*.” This latter journal is commencing a *New Series* from January 1, 1827; with the addition of a *Review*, which the editors promise to conduct with impartiality. It is to be no longer under the care of a single individual, who has superintended it since its commencement in 1805—but it will be brought out under the inspection of a committee appointed by the *British and Foreign Unitarian Association*, in Walbrook. This is deemed an improvement. Reviews and magazines in the religious world are too sectarian: enamoured of party, they are forgetful of the enlarged and generous spirit of our common Christianity.

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### NECESSARIANS.

Some few Arians, and most Anti-trinitarians, add to their creed the doctrines of Necessity, Materialism, and Universal Restoration, though these tenets are by no means peculiar to them. Towards the close of this Sketch will be found an explanation of Universal Restoration; some account shall be here given of Necessity and Materialism.

The doctrine of Necessity regards the origin of human actions, and the specific mode of the divine government. It teaches that all actions, both good and bad, are strictly necessary—thus every circumstance cannot be otherwise than it is throughout the creation of God. Much controversy has there been on this abstruse subject. Collins,

Priestley, Toplady, and Crombie; Palmer, Price, and Gregory, are authors most distinguished in the controversy, the four former being for, and the three latter against Necessity. The opponents of Necessity strenuously maintain that it destroys all virtue and vice, whilst its advocates declare it to be the most consistent mode of explaining the divine government. Dr. Crombie, in an able treatise on this subject, thus states the scheme of philosophical necessity: "that every thing is *predetermined* by the Divine Being—that whatever has been *must* have been—and that whatever will be *must* be; that all events are *preordained* by infinite wisdom and unlimited goodness—that the will in all its determinations is governed by the state of mind—that the state of mind is in every instance determined by the Deity—and that there is a continued chain of causes and effects, of motives and actions, inseparably connected, and originating from the condition in which we are brought into existence by the the author of our being." But Dr. Doddridge remarks, that "those who believe the being and perfections of God, and a state of retribution, in which he will reward and punish mankind, according to the diversity of their actions, will find it difficult to reconcile the *justice* of punishment with the *necessity* of crimes punished! And they that believe all that the Scripture says on the one hand, of the eternity of future punishments and on the other, of God's compassion to sinners, and his solemn assurance, that he desires not their death, will find the difficulty greatly increased." It should be remembered, however, that the Necessarians do not believe in the eternity of future punishments, but in the doctrine of universal restoration; and so far they are to be commended for their consistency. But it is not for us to determine, on so profound a topic, where the truth lies; and it is remarkable, that the perplexity of the theme harrassed *angelic* minds, according to the representation of Milton:—

Others apart, sat on a hill retir'd  
 In thoughts more elevate, and reason'd  
 Of providence, fore-knowledge, will, and fate;  
 Fix'd fate, free-will, fore-knowledge absolute;  
 And found no end—in wandering mazes lost!

## MATERIALISTS.

The doctrine of Materialism respects the nature of the human soul, and the mode of its existence. It teaches that the soul is not a principle independent of the body, but that it results from the organization of the brain, though in a manner which will not admit of explication. This doctrine is thought by its advocates to be not only more philosophical, but to point out more fully the necessity and value of a resurrection from the dead—which is a leading doctrine of Christianity; and they contend that on this alone the sacred writers (1 Cor. xv. 15, 16, 32, &c.) build all their hopes of a future life. Materialists deny any intermediate state of consciousness between death and the resurrection. Drs. Price and Priestley had a friendly correspondence on this article; and though Dr. Price was no materialist, yet he did not hold with an intermediate state. Those who deny the existence of an intermediate state, are sometimes called Soul-sleepers. Mr. Locke suggests the idea of a certain unknown substratum that may be capable of receiving the properties both of matter and of mind, viz. extension, solidity, and cogitation; for he supposes it possible for God to add cogitation to what is corporeal, and thus to cause matter to think. But, in spite of these philosophical speculations, the common man will exclaim with the singular Sterne, "I am positive I have a soul, nor can all the books with which Materialists have pestered the world ever convince me to the contrary!" See Archdeacon Blackburn's "Historical View" of this controversy, and Dr. Law's Appendix to his "Theory of Natural and Revealed Religion." "The Light of nature Pursued," by Edward Search, Esq. is a curious work relating to the subject, and has been republished, as well as an abridgment of it, by Mr. William Hazlitt. The author's real name was Tucker; he died in 1775, at his seat near Dorking, Surrey.

Had not Necessity and Materialism been more of a philosophical than of a theological nature, they should have received minuter explication.



## II.

OPINIONS RESPECTING THE MEANS AND MEASURE  
OF GOD'S FAVOUR.

Christians having ascertained whether Christ be *equal with God* or an *angel*, possessing an existence previous to being born of the Virgin Mary—or a *human being*, under the the guidance of inspiration---next proceed to consider the *extent* of the blessings of the Gospel, and the *manner* in which they have been conveyed to us. This circumstance also has been the source of endless contentions. Even the Methodists themselves split into two great parties concerning it, and the controversy between their respective leaders, conducted with acrimony, has scarcely subsided. We shall attempt the delineation of this class of opinions with brevity.

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 CALVINISTS.

The Calvinist adheres to the doctrines which Calvin taught at Geneva, about 1540, where he was professor of divinity. His real name was Cauvin, but, putting the term *Calvini* to his "Commentary on Seneca," published at Paris, 1532, he was thence denominated *Calvin*. And it appears, from Bishop Jewel's "Defence of his Apology for the Church of England," that the term *Calvinist* was, in the first instance, applied to the reformers and the English Protestants as a matter of reproach by the church of Rome. The tenets of Calvinism are, predestination, original sin, particular redemption, irresistible grace, and the perseverance of the saints. These, in the theological world, are termed *the Five Points*; and frequent have been the controversies agitated respecting them. As the Calvinists differ among themselves in the explication of these tenets, it would be difficult to give a specific account of them. Generally speaking, however, they comprehend the following propositions: 1st. That God has chosen a certain number in Christ to everlasting glory, before the foundation of the world, according to his

immutable purpose, and of his free grace and love, without the least foresight of faith, good works, or any conditions performed by the creature: and that the rest of mankind he was pleased to pass by, and ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sins, to the praise of his vindictive justice. 2dly. That Jesus Christ, by his death and sufferings, made an atonement only for the sins of the elect. 3dly. That mankind are totally depraved, in consequence of the fall; and, by virtue of Adam's being their public head, the guilt of his sin was imputed, and a corrupt nature conveyed, to all his posterity, from which proceed all actual transgression; and that by sin we are made subject to death, and all miseries, temporal, spiritual, and eternal. 4thly. That all whom God has predestined to life, he is pleased, in his appointed time, effectually to call by his word and spirit out of that state of sin and death, in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ. And 5thly. That those whom God has effectually called, and sanctified by his spirit, shall never finally fall from a state of grace. Some have supposed that the Trinity was one of the five points, but this is a mistake, since both the Calvinists and Arminians, who formed the synod of Dort (where this phrase, *five points*, originated) were on the article of the Trinity generally agreed. The prominent feature of this system is, the election of some, and reprobation of others, from all eternity.

The Calvinists found their sentiments of election on the expression of the Saviour, respecting his having *chosen* his disciples *out of the world*; and more particularly on certain terms used by the apostle Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans. To the epistolary writers, indeed, they more frequently refer than to any other part of the New Testament. The chief advantage of this system, in the opinion of its advocates, is, to produce in us a reverential awe when we look up to God, and a profound humility when we look down upon ourselves.

To the Calvinists also belong more particularly the doctrine of *atonement*, or that Christ, by his death, made satisfaction to the divine justice for the elect, appeasing

the anger of the Divine Being, and effecting on his part a reconciliation. Thus Jesus Christ had the sin of the elect laid upon him; and, in this sense; Luther said that Jesus Christ was the *greatest sinner* in the world! This doctrine, however, is reprobated by some of their divines, who consider the death of Christ as simply a medium through which God has been pleased to exercise mercy towards the penitent. Thus Dr. Magee, archbishop of Dublin, in his work on the Atonement, says, "The sacrifice of Christ was never deemed by any, who did not wish to calumniate the doctrine of atonement, to have *made* God placable, but merely viewed, as the *means* appointed by divine wisdom by which to bestow forgiveness. But still it is demanded, in what way can the death of Christ, considered as a sacrifice of expiation, be conceived to operate to the remission of sin, unless by the appeasing a Being who otherwise would not have forgiven us? To this the answer of the Christian is, I know not, nor does it concern me to know, *in what manner* the sacrifice of Christ is connected with the forgiveness of sins; it is enough that this is declared by God to be the *medium* through which my salvation is effected; I pretend not to dive into the councils of the Almighty. I submit to his wisdom, and I will not reject his grace, because his mode of vouchsafing it is not within my comprehension." It will be observed, that Dr. Magee thus disclaims the doctrine of *satisfaction*, commonly deemed the only true doctrine of the atonement. And the late Mr. Andrew Fuller observes, "If we say, a way was opened by the death of Christ for the free and consistent exercise of mercy, in all the methods which sovereign wisdom saw fit to adopt, perhaps we shall include every material idea which the Scriptures give us of that important event." Hence it has been remarked, that God is represented as reconciling, by the death of Christ, not himself to man, but man to himself. "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them," 2 Cor. v. 19. See Mr. Fuller's publication, entitled, "The Calvinistic and Socinian Systems Compared," which is admired by some Religionists,

but condemned by others, as not coming up to the full standard of orthodoxy. The late Dr. Toulmin and the Rev. J. Kentish replied to this work, whilst Dr. Priestley and Mr. Belsham, against whom it was written, did not think proper to notice it.

But to ascertain the real sentiments of this body of Christians, recourse should be had to the Assembly's Catechism, which is taught their children, and may be supposed to contain a just account of their religious opinions. The reader is here referred to two small volumes on the subject, the one by Dr. Pye Smith, in favour of Calvinism: the other by the Rev. T. Belsham, as a reply to it. Dr. W. B. Collyer, in a continued series of Lectures" at Salter's-hall, especially in his volume on "Doctrines," has vindicated the Calvinistic system with candour and ability.

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## SUBLAPSARIANS AND SUPRALAPSARIANS.

AMONG the refinements of Calvinism are to be ranked the distinctions of the Sublapsarians and Supralapsarians. The Sublapsarians assert, that God had only permitted the first man to fall into transgression, without absolutely pre-determining his fall: whereas the Supralapsarians maintain that God had from all eternity decreed the transgression of Adam, in such a manner that our first parents could not possibly avoid this fatal event. Dr. Doddridge, in his Lectures, has thus stated these abstruse distinctions:—"The Supralapsarian and Sublapsarian schemes agree in asserting the doctrine of predestination, but with this difference, that the former supposes that God intended to glorify his justice in the condemnation of some, as well as his mercy in the salvation of others; and for that purpose decreed that Adam should necessarily fall, and by that fall bring himself and all his offspring into a state of everlasting condemnation: the latter scheme supposes that the decree of predestination regards man as fallen by an abuse of that freedom which Adam had, into a state in which all were to be left to necessary and

unavoidable ruin, who were not exempted from it by predestination." Recent divines, who have gone to the height of Supralapsarianism, are Mr. Brine and Dr. Gill. were any thing more necessary to elucidate this subject, it might be added, that the term Supralapsarian is derived from two Latin words, *supra*, above, and *lapsus*, the fall; and the term Sublapsarian, from *sub*, below or after, and *lapsus*, the fall.

Calvin, in his "Institutes," states and defends at large the principles of the system. It is dedicated to Francis I. king of France, in a strain admired for its boldness and magnanimity. The work has been translated by Mr. Allen into English, comprising three octavo volumes, with a portrait. Calvin was educated for the church, but conceiving a dislike to popery, he applied himself to the law. He, however, afterwards resumed his original studies, was an eminent reformer, and died in 1564. He was a man of great talents and learning, writing both French and Latin with equal purity. His works amount to nine folio volumes! Bishop Horsley says, "The opinions of Austin, which are the basis of Calvinism, have had their strenuous assertors in the church of Rome itself; indeed, for a long time, they were the prevailing opinions of the Latin church.

For professed defences of Calvinism, see Edwards on the Will, Brine's Tracts, Dr. Gill's "Cause of God and Truth," and Toplady's "Historic Proof of the Calvinism of the Church of England," a new edition of which has been published. The works of Jonathan Edwards are reckoned a standard as to Calvinism; he was an American divine of extraordinary ability. "Essays on the Religion of Mankind," by the late Rev. Mr. Burnside, of recent appearance, espouse the same system of theology.

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## ARMINIANS

The Arminian favours the tenets of Arminius, the disciple of Beza, and latterly professor of divinity at Leyden,



who flourished about the year 1600. Thinking the doctrine of Calvin, with regard to free will, predestination, and grace, contrary to the mild and amiable perfections of the Deity, he began to express his doubts concerning them in the year 1591; and upon further inquiry, adopted sentiments more nearly resembling those of the Lutherans than of the Calvinists. After his appointment to the theological chair at Leyden, he thought it his duty to avow and vindicate the principles which he had embraced; and the freedom with which he published and defended them, exposed him to the resentment of those that adhered to the theological system of Geneva. The controversy, thus begun in the lifetime of Arminius, ended not with his death, and for a long time roused the violence of contending passions\*. His tenets include the five following propositions: 1st, That God has *not* fixed the future state of mankind by an absolute, unconditional decree, but determined, from all eternity, to bestow salvation on those whom he foresaw would persevere to the end in their faith in Jesus Christ, and to inflict punishment on those who should continue in their unbelief, and resist to the end his divine assistance. 2dly. That Jesus Christ, by his death and sufferings, made an atonement for the sins of all mankind in general, and of every individual in particular: that, however, none but those who believe in him can be partakers of this divine benefit. 3dly. That mankind are *not* totally depraved, and that depravity does not come upon them by virtue of Adam's being their public head, but that mortality and actual evil only are the direct consequences of his sin to posterity. 4thly. That there is no such thing as irresistible grace in the conversion of sinners. And, 5thly, That those who are united to Christ by faith may fall from their faith, and forfeit finally their state of grace. Thus the followers of Arminius believe that God, having an *equal* regard for all his creatures, sent his Son to die for the sins of the *whole world*; that men have the power of doing the will of God, otherwise they are not the proper subjects of approbation

\* Arminius's motto was a remarkable one—"A good conscience is a paradise."

and condemnation ; and that, in the present imperfect state, believers, if not particularly vigilant, *may*, through the force of temptation, fall from grace, and sink into final perdition. The Arminians found their sentiments on the expressions of our Saviour, respecting his willingness to save all that come unto him ; especially on his prayer over Jerusalem, his Sermon on the Mount, and, above all, on his delineation of the process of the last day, where the salvation of men is not said to have been procured by any decree, but because they had done “the will of their Father, who is in heaven.” This last argument they deem decisive, because it cannot be supposed that Jesus, in the account of the judgment day, would have deceived them. They also say, the terms in the Romans respecting election, are applicable only to the state of the Jews as a body, without reference to the religious condition of individuals, either in the present or future world. The reader is referred to “A Refutation of Calvinism,” in which the doctrines of original sin, grace, regeneration, justification, and universal redemption are explained, &c., by George Tomline, D. D., late Bishop of Lincoln, but now of Winchester. This work, however, has been animadverted upon by the late Dr. Williams, and other divines of the Calvinistic persuasion.

Dr. Whitby, the commentator, who was originally a Calvinist, has written an elaborate defence of Arminianism ; and the reader should consult Dr. Taylor’s “Key to the Epistle to the Romans,” which has been admired on this subject. Since the days of Laud, who was archbishop of Canterbury in the reign of Charles I., by far the majority of the English clergy have taken this side of the question. Bishop Burnet has given a full account of the opinions of this sect, in his Exposition of the Seventeenth Article.

In the 17th century, disputes ran very high in Holland between the Calvinists and the Arminians. On each side talents and learning were displayed ; but some called in the interference of the civil power ; and thus terminated a controversy, which for some years had agitated the religious world. For this purpose the famous synod of Dort

was held, 1618, where the Arminians were scandalously treated. Mosheim is of opinion, that even before the meeting of the synod, it was agreed upon, that, on account of their religious opinions, they should be deemed enemies of their country, and accordingly be exposed to every species of persecution. A curious narrative of its proceedings may be seen in the series of letters written by the ever-memorable John Hales, who was present on the occasion. This synod was succeeded by a severe persecution of the Arminians. The respectable Barnevelt lost his head on a scaffold, and the learned Grotius, condemned to perpetual imprisonment, escaped from his cell, and took refuge in France. The storm some time after abated; and Episcopius, an Arminian minister, opened a seminary in Amsterdam, which produced able divines and excellent scholars.

The Arminian writers are, Episcopius, Vorstius, Grotius, Limborch, Le Clerc, Wetstein; not to mention many others of modern times, particularly Mr. John Wesley, in his numerous works, and Dr. Fellowes, in his "Religion without Cant," and in his elegant work, entitled, "Christian Philosophy." The works of Arminius have been announced for publication in this country, in three volumes, with memoirs illustrative of his theology.

The Arminians are sometimes called the Remonstrants, because they, in 1611, presented a Remonstrance to the States-general, wherein they pathetically state their grievances, and pray for relief. See an interesting work, entitled, "An Abridgement of Gerard Brandt's History of the Reformation in the Low Countries," 2 vols. 8vo. Dr. Maclaine says "it is certain that the most eminent philosophers have been found, generally speaking, among the Arminians. If both Calvinists and Arminians claim a King, it is certain that the latter alone can boast of a Newton, a Locke, a Clarke, and a Boyle." Archbishop Usher is said to have lived a Calvinist and died an Arminian. The members of the Episcopal Church in Scotland, the Moravians, the General Baptists, the Wesleyan Methodists, the Quakers, or Friends, &c., are Arminians; and it is supposed that a large proportion of the

clergy of the kirk of Scotland teach the doctrines of Arminius, though they have a Calvinistic confession of faith. What a pity it is that opinions, either Calvinistic or Arminian, cannot, in the eye of some persons be held without a diminution of Christian charity.\*

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### BAXTERIANS.

The Baxterian strikes into a middle path between Arminianism and Calvinism, and thus endeavours to unite both schemes. With the Calvinist, he professes to believe that a certain number, determined upon in the divine councils, will be infallibly saved; and with the Arminian he joins in rejecting the doctrine of reprobation as absurd and impious; admits that Christ, in a certain sense, died for all, and supposes that such a portion of grace is allotted to *every* man, as renders it his own fault if he does not attain to eternal life. This conciliatory system was espoused by the famous nonconformist *Richard Baxter*, who died in the year 1691, and who was celebrated for the acuteness of his controversial talents, and the utility of his practical writings. Most of his pieces, excepting his "Saint's everlasting Rest," and "Call to the Unconverted," are now little read, or rather they are sunk into oblivion. Among Baxterians are ranked both Watts and Doddridge. Dr. Doddridge indeed has this striking remark—"That a Being who is said not to tempt any one, and even swears that he desires not the death of a sinner, should *irresistably* determine millions to the commission of every sinful action of their lives, and then with all the pomp and pageanty of an universal judgment condemn them to eternal misery, on account of these actions, that hereby he may promote the happiness of others who are, or shall be, irresistably determined to virtue, in the like manner, is of all incredible things to me the most incredible!" See Two Hundred and Twenty-third Lecture of

\*Dr. Hammond mentions a ludicrous instance of Bigotry, assuring us, that when a Dutchman's horse does not go as he would have him, he calls him in a great rage an Arminian.

Doddridge's "Lectures on Pneumatology, Ethics, and Divinity."

In the scale of religious sentiment, *Baxterianism* seems to be, with respect to the subject of divine favour, what *Arianism* is with respect to the person of Christ. It appears to have been considered by some pious persons as a safe middle way between two extremes. Baxter was an extraordinary character in the religious world. He wrote about one hundred and twenty books, and had above sixty written against him! Though he possessed a metaphysical genius, and sometimes made a distinction without a difference, yet the object of most of his productions was peace and amity. Accordingly, his system was formed, not to inflame the passions and widen the breaches, but to heal those wounds of the Christian church, under which she had long languished. As a proof of this assertion, take the following affecting declaration from the "Narrative of his own Life and Times:"—"I am deeper afflicted for the disagreements of Christians than I was when I was a *younger* Christian. Except the case of the infidel world, nothing is so sad and grievous to my thoughts as the case of the divided churches! And, therefore, I am the more deeply sensible of the sinfulness of those who are the principal cause of these divisions. O! how many millions of souls are kept by their ignorance and ungodliness, and deluded by *faction*, as if it were true religion. How is the conversion of infidels hindered, Christ and religion heinously dishonoured! The contentions between the Greek church and the Roman, the Papists and the Protestant, the Lutherans and the Calvinists, have woe-fully hindered the kingdom of Christ." For a detail given of the Calvinistic and Arminian sentiments, see a brief history of the Christian church, in two vols., by Dr Gregory.

The best ecclesiastical history is Mosheim's in six volumes, translated from the Latin into English by the late Dr. Maclaine, who has enriched it with valuable notes. The last edition of this work has a continuation to the end of the eighteenth century, by Dr. Charles Coote, and an additional Appendix to the first book, by the Right Rev.



Dr. George Gleig, of Stirling, Dr. Priestley also published, in six octavo volumes, "A History of the Christian Church," from the birth of the Messiah down to the present time. Milner's "Ecclesiastical History," a clergyman lately deceased, has been brought down to the Reformation by another clergyman, the Rev. Mr. Scott, son of the late Rev. Thomas Scott, of evangelical celebrity. The "History of the Church," by John Wesley, has much merit for its clearness and brevity.

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### ANTINOMIANS.

The *Antinomian* derives his name from two Greek words, *Αντι*, against, and *Νομος*, a law, his favourite tenet being, that the law is not a rule of life to believers. It is not easy to ascertain what he means by this position. But he seems to carry the doctrine of the imputed righteousness of Christ, and of salvation by faith without works, to such lengths as to injure, if not wholly destroy, the obligation to moral obedience. In controversial tracts they are sometimes denominated *Solifidians*, a term composed of two Latin words, *solus*, alone, and *fides*, faith, contending for faith alone without the necessity of good works. Antinomianism may be traced to the period of the Reformation, and its promulgator was John Agricola, originally a disciple of Luther. The Catholics, in their disputes with the Protestants of that day, carried the merit of good works to an extravagant length, and this induced some of their opponents to run into the opposite extreme. Justification by faith, not necessarily productive of good works, and righteousness imputed to such a faith, are the doctrines by which Antinomians are chiefly distinguished. This sect sprung up in England during the protectorate of Oliver Cromwell, and extended their system of libertinism much further than Agricola, the disciple of Luther. Some of their teachers expressly maintained, that, as the elect cannot fall from grace, nor forfeit the divine favour, the wicked actions they commit are not really sinful, nor are they to be considered as instances of

their violation of the divine law ; consequently, they have no occasion either to confess their sins, or to break them off by repentance. According to them, it is one of the essential and distinctive characters of the elect, that they cannot do any thing displeasing to God, or prohibited by the law. Luther, Rutherford, Sedgwick, Gataker, Witsius, Bull, &c., have written refutations, whilst Crisp, Richardson, and Saltmarsh, put forth defences of Antinomianism. The late Rev. Mr. Fletcher, vicar of Madeley, in Shropshire, published “Four Checks to Antinomianism,” which have been much admired. But Dr. Tobias Crisp, a clergyman of the established church who flourished during the reign of the Stuarts, was the champion of Antinomianism ;—his doctrines were confuted in the amplest manner by Dr. Daniel Williams, founder of the Dissenter’s Library, in Redcross-street. His defence of “Gospel Truth,” against Crisp, was received by those of his brethren who laid any claim to good sense and moderation with high satisfaction.

The term *Antinomian* has been frequently fixed on persons by way of reproach, and therefore many who have been branded with this name have repelled the charge. There are many Antinomians, indeed, of a singular cast in Germany, and other parts of the continent ; they condemn the moral law as a rule of life, and yet profess a strict regard for the interests of practical religion. Some persons, however, pronounce Antinomianism to be nothing more than Calvinism run to seed ; or, as Mosheim declares, that the Antinomians are a more rigid kind of Calvinists, who pervert Calvin’s doctrine of absolute decrees to the worst purposes, by drawing from it conclusions highly detrimental to the interests of true religion and virtue. The late singular and eccentric William Huntington was deemed an Antinomian of this description, but he himself disclaimed it. And it is curious that when the Rev. R. Adam made an application to him for an account of the *Antinomian sect* in England, he never replied to him on the subject. But speculative sentiments of any kind ought not to be carried to a degree which might endanger, even in appearance, the sacred cause of moral-

ity. See a Tract against Antinomianism, by the Rev. S. Chase, with a Prefatory Introduction, by the Rev. Robert Hall, highly creditable to his good sense and piety. See "An Account of Plymouth Antinomians," by Joseph Cottle, of Bristol. This is an interesting pamphlet, and should be read by all who want an insight into Antinomianism. The author took down from Dr. Hawker some of the choicest portions of his Pulpit Addresses, which savour of Hyper-Calvinism, and has accompanied them with remarks, counteracting their tendency. Mr. Cottle is well known as a poet, and is a respectable man. He would not willingly libel any one class of the professors of Christianity.

### III.

#### OPINIONS RESPECTING CHURCH GOVERNMENT, AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF CEREMONIES.

The Christian world, usually denominated Christendom, consists of religious societies, which are called *churches*. A Christian church is a society called out from the vicious world, by the preaching of the gospel, and regulated in all parts by the plain rules of the New Testament. The ministers of the Christian church, in its primitive state, were extraordinary or ordinary. The *Extraordinary* were chiefly three: 1. *Apostles*, who were delegated by Christ with a commission to preach the gospel, and a power to work miracles in its confirmation, among all nations. 2. *Prophets*, who were not such as simply foretold things, but those to whom God was pleased to reveal his more secret counsels and designs. 3. *Evangelists*, such as were assistants to the apostles in preaching the gospel, and were endued with many extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit, as of languages and interpretations, &c. But these extraordinary offices have ceased. The *Ordinary* ministers of the Christian church are principally three: 1. A *Bishop*, who had the oversight of the flock of Christ; to him pertained the preaching of the word, and regulation of the church; and this

precedence of the bishop is called *Episcopacy*. 2. *Presbyters*, or *Elders*, or *Priest*: these were such as preached the word, and administered the sacraments, under the inspection of the bishop. But it is a controversy, whether the scripture doth not intend the *same* person by the appellations *Bishop* and *Presbyter*. The power of the Presbyter is called Presbytery. 3. *Deacons*; whose business was to take the collections of money made in the church, and to distribute it to the poor; and their office, properly speaking, is called the Ministry, or Deaconship.

After this introductory explanation of the Christian church, I proceed to the Opinions respecting Church Government, and the Administration of Ceremonies.

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## ROMAN CATHOLICS.

This body of Christians have been usually denominated *Papists*. This is an appellation derived to them in consequence of their acknowledging the spiritual supremacy of the Bishop of Rome, who, for many centuries, was distinguished in the western church by the denomination of *Pope*, and, from their remaining in his communion, contradistinguishing themselves from *Protestants*, who are so called from protesting against his supremacy. In the act passed for their relief, 1791, an oath and declaration are proposed to them, in which the party is made to avow that he is *Roman Catholic*. This makes Roman Catholic their legal appellation. Catholics having complained of the erroneousness of the statements of their *tenets*, I have thought proper to state them from their own writers. The following account is extracted from a work written by a Priest of talents and learning, and which was sent to me by a very respectable lay gentleman of the Roman Catholic profession. The work is anonymous, but its title is, “The State and Behaviour of the English Catholics, from the Reformation to the year 1780, with a view of their present Number, Wealth, Character,” &c. It was written by the Rev. J. Berrington.

“ the following rule is the grand criterion by which each article of *our faith* may be distinctly ascertained.

“ This rule is—All that, and only that, belongs to Catholic belief, which is revealed in the word of God, and which is proposed by the Catholic Church to all its members, to be believed with divine faith.

“ Guided by this certain criterion, we profess to believe :—

“ 1. That Christ has established a church upon earth, and that this church is that which holds communion with the see of Rome, being one, holy, Catholic, and apostolical.

“ 2. That we are obliged to hear this Church ; and therefore that she is infallible, by the guidance of Almighty God, in her decisions regarding faith.

“ 3. That Saint Peter, by divine commission, was appointed the head of this church, under Christ its founder ; and that the Pope, or Bishop of Rome, as successor to Saint Peter, has always been, and is at present, by divine right, head of this church.

“ 4. That the canon of the Old and New Testament, as proposed to us by this church, is the word of God ; as also such traditions, belonging to faith and morals, which being originally delivered by Christ to his Apostles have been preserved by constant succession.

“ 5. That honour and veneration are due to the Angels of God and his saints ; that they offer up prayers to God for us ; that it is good and profitable to have recourse to their intercession ; and that the relics or earthly remains of God’s particular servants are to be held in respect.

“ 6. That no sins ever were, or can be remitted, unless by the mercy of God, through Jesus Christ ; and therefore that man’s justification is the work of divine Grace.

“ 7. That the good works, which we do, receive their whole value from the grace of God ; and that by such works we not only comply with the precepts of the divine law, but that we thereby likewise merit eternal life.

“ 8. That by works done in the spirit of penance we can make satisfaction to God for the temporal punishment, which often remains due, after our sins, by the divine goodness, have been forgiven us.



“9. That Christ has left to his church a power of granting indulgences, that is, a relaxation from such temporal chastisement only as remains due after the divine pardon of sin; and that the use of such indulgences is profitable to sinners.

“10. That there is a purgatory or middle state; and that the souls of imperfect Christians therein detained are helped by the prayers of the faithful.

“11. That there are seven sacraments, all instituted by Christ; baptism, confirmation, eucharist, penance, extreme unction, holy order, matrimony.

“12. That in the most holy sacrament of the eucharist, there is truly, really, and substantially, the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ.

“13. That in this sacrament there is, by the omnipotence of God, a conversion, or change, of the whole substance of the bread into the body of Christ, and of the whole substance of the wine into his blood, which change we call **TRANSUBSTANTIATION**.

“14. That under either kind Christ is received whole and entire.

“15. That in the mass or sacrifice of the altar, is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead.

“16. That in the sacrament of penance, the sins we fall into after baptism are, by the divine mercy, forgiven us.

“These are the great points of Catholic belief, by which we are distinguished from other Christian societies; and these only are the real and essential tenets of our religion. We admit also the other grand articles of revealed and natural religion, which the gospel and the light of reason have manifested to us. To these we submit as men and as Christians, and to the former as obedient children of the Catholic Church.”

The persecuting and domineering spirit of our forefathers must not be imputed to their reformed posterity. All churches, having power, are too apt to abuse it in matters of religion. Mr. Pitt, in the year 1788, ques-

ted to be furnished with the opinion of the Catholic clergy and foreign universities on certain important points. Three questions sent to the universities of Paris, Louvain, Alcalá, Douay, Salamanca, and Valladolid, were thus unanimously answered—1. That the Pope, or cardinals, or any body of men, or any individual of the church of Rome, has not any civil authority, power, jurisdiction, or pre-eminence whatsoever within the realm of England. 2. That the Pope or cardinals, &c. *cannot* absolve or dispense with his majesty's subjects from their oaths, allegiance, upon any pretext whatsoever. 3. That there is no principle in the tenets of the Catholic faith, by which Catholics are justified in not keeping *faith with heretics*, or other persons differing from them in religious opinions, in any transactions either of a public or private nature. To these replies must be added, that the declaration signed by the English as well as Scotch Catholics; in 1789, is to the same purpose, and most unequivocally expressed. The present Roman Catholics, also, disavow all manner of *persecution*; indeed, they profess to acknowledge the principles, and to admit, in its full extent, the claims of religious liberty. Some Roman Catholics, renouncing the supremacy of the Pope, distinguish themselves by the name of *Catholics*, and sometimes of *Catholic Dissenters*. Of this number was the ingenious and learned Dr. Alexander Geddes, who having translated a large part of the Old Testament, died, and lies buried in Paddington churchyard. His Patron was Lord Petre, and he wrote a curious tract, entitled "A modest Apology for the Roman Catholics of Great Britain, addressed to all moderate Protestants, particularly to the Members of both Houses of Parliament."

There have been seventeen general councils, and to these is attached, by Roman Catholics, infallibility. In the council of Trent, the last of them, held 1549, the tenets of their religion were embodied, and the summary exhibited in Pope Pius' Creed containing the substance of the decrees and canons of this council. Father Paul gave a curious history of this council, which was composed of 196 bishops. Bellarmine, an acute Jesuit, and Bos-

suet, the subtle Bishop of Meaux, are the two most popular defenders of the Catholic religion. Massillon, Bourdaloue, and Flechier, were deemed models of pulpit eloquence. A list of the Popes from St. Peter down to Pius the Seventh, will be found in the Rev. R. Adam's "Religious World displayed." Many of these spiritual fathers were men of learning and piety, whilst others, by their ambition and tyranny, proved themselves the pests of the world. Ganganelli was a most honourable exception; he was known to the public under the title of Clement the Fourteenth. It was his common saying, that "we too often lay aside *charity* to maintain *faith*, without reflecting, that if it be not allowed to tolerate men, it is forbidden to hate and persecute those who have unfortunately embraced *heresy*!" He died in 1775, not without suspicion of being poisoned. As to his far-famed Letters, there are doubts of their authenticity. Archbishop Fénélon was also distinguished for his benevolence and piety. His Life and that of Bossuet have lately appeared from the pen of Charles Butler, Esq., well known by his learned and liberal productions. An eloquent delineation of the Catholic religion in its glory will be found in Goodwin's Life of Chaucer, the Father of English Poetry; in which work are described the manners of our forefathers in the 14th century, a period not long antecedent to the reformation. Among the Roman Catholics are several monastic orders, the Augustines, Benedictines, the Carmelites, the Dominicans, the Franciscans, &c., and also a variety of sects, the Jesuites, the Jansenists, the Molinists, and others of celebrity. Pascal, in his "Provincial Letters," famed for their sarcastic severity, aimed an effective blow at the order of Jesuits, and it was abolished in France, 1762, being suspected of practices inimical to the country.

For further information the reader is referred to a little volume intitled, "A Papist misrepresented, and represented, or a twofold character of Popery," by John Gother; an edition of which has been recently published. The writings of Challoner, Milner, Hay, Troy, O'Leary, and Berrington, should be also consulted. See Bishop Mil-

ner's Work, singularly intituled, "An end to all controversy," with a ludicrous schedule, or an immense *Vine of the Popes* in apostolic succession, with *Heretics* as a rotten branch, Wickliffe, Luther, &c., falling off into perdition!! The Roman Catholics, though more than once relieved in the course of the late reign, complain of the penal statutes now in force against them; and their last application for their repeal was negatived by a small majority. A similar effort, in the year 1780, produced the *Protestant Association* headed by Lord George Gordon, whose followers, inflamed with unoutrageous zeal, burnt the houses of the Roman Catholics, and threatened the metropolis with extinction! Since that period the temper of the nation is ameliorated. Men of every description begin to perceive that whatever absurd tenets or ridiculous practices attach to any party, they are not on this account to be deprived of their religious freedom. Indeed, the time is at length come when Catholic and Protestant are agreed, that the spirit of persecution is not the spirit of Christianity. See "Historical Memoirs of the Catholics," by C. Butler, Esq., of Lincoln's Inn, a curious work, in four volumes—abounding with information. But it must not be omitted that a controversy has taken place between Robert Southey, Esq., Poet Laureat, and Charles Butler, Esq., which seems to have no termination. The former has published "A Book of the Church," and "A Defence of the Book of the Church," which the latter has replied to with avidity. Both contend for mastery, and each boasts of victory! Southey advocates the Reformed religion, and Butler is the advocate of Popery. Other writers have pressed forward, and the contest is still before the world. The Rev. Blanco White, a ci-devant Popish Priest, has written most earnestly for his new Faith, and reprobates every species of Popery. Dr. Milner, the Catholic Prelate, wielded his able pen in behalf of his religion in a variety of publications—but he is deceased and gone to his final account:—peace be to his memory!

## GREEK, OR RUSSIAN CHURCH.

The *Greek*, or *Russian Church*, which now spreads itself over the Eastern part of Europe, is ancient, and bears a resemblance to the church of Rome, though in communion with the patriarch of Constantinople. It agrees however with the reformed church, in disavowing the supremacy and infallibility of the *Pope*, and the church of Rome as the true Catholic church; also in rejecting purgatory by fire, *graven* images or statues, and the celibacy on the secular clergy, and administering the sacrament in both kinds; but it differs from it in the number of the sacraments, in using *pictures*, in admitting the invocation of saints, in transubstantiation, or rather consubstantiation, and of course the adoration of the host; and, though it rejects purgatory, it has something that may be said to resemble it; and it admits masses and services for the dead. But, as this church has no public or established articles of faith like those of the united church of England and Ireland, we can only collect what are its doctrines from the councils whose decrees it receives, from the different offices of its liturgies, and from the catechisms which it authorizes to be taught.

The Greek church equals the Romish church in the number of ceremonies and superstitious customs; some of which are thus described in Chantreau's Travels into Russia:—"At the beginning of the year, the king's day is a singular festival, which the Russians call *the Benediction of Waters*! On the Neva, then frozen, there is raised for the ceremony, a kind of temple of an octagonal figure, on the top of which is a St. John the Baptist, and the inside is decorated with pictures, representing the baptism of Jesus, his transfiguration, and some other parts of his life. There your attention is drawn to an enormous Holy Ghost, appearing to descend from heaven: a decoration common in the Greek church, which introduces the Holy Ghost every where! In the middle of the sanctuary is a square place, where the broken ice leaves a communication with the waters running below, and the rest is ornamented with rich tapestry. Around this temple there



is erected a kind of gallery which communicates with one of the windows of the imperial palace, at which the empress and her family come out to attend the ceremony, which begins as soon as the regiment of the guards have taken post on the river. Then the archbishop, at the sound of the bells, and of the artillery of the fortress, comes out of the palace, and walks in procession, with all his clergy, to the little temple we have just mentioned. When arrived at the place where the ice is broken, he descends, by means of a ladder, to the side of the water. There he dips his cross three or four times, afterwards says some prayers, an orison to the great St. Nicholas, and the waters are then thought blessed. The prelate sprinkles the water on the company around him and on the colours of all the regiments that happen to be at St. Petersburg. After this benediction the archbishop retires. Then the people crowd towards the hole by which this prelate has blessed the waters. They drink of them with holy avidity. Notwithstanding the cold, the mothers plunge their infants, and the old men their heads, into them. Every body makes it a duty to carry away some for the purification of their houses, and curing certain distempers, against which the good Russians pretend this holy water is a powerful specific. While every one proceeds to this useful provision, four popes who are at the four corners of the sanctuary, sing a kind of litany, in which they rehearse all the titles of the empress, and to which the people answer by these words, *Pameloi-Bog!* —“May God take pity on her!”

Efforts have been made to join the Greek to the Reformed church; but they have failed of success. The Rev. Dr. John King published an account of the doctrine, worship, and discipline of the Greek church in Russia. There are several particulars to be found in the “Russian Catechism,” composed by the Czar, and which was published in London, 1725, in Robinson’s “Ecclesiastical Researches;” and in a work entitled “Secret Memoirs of the Court of Petersburg.”

The administration of baptism by the Greek church is truly curious and worthy of attention. According to Dr.

King they baptize by *immersion*, and they use the *trine* immersion, or form of dipping the child in water *thrice*, which is the most ancient manner; but previous to baptism, the child, though not two months old, must be solemnly initiated into the church as a *Catechumen*, through the medium of its sponsors, when exorcism is used on the occasion. when the child is baptized, the priest immediately proceeds to anoint it with the *holy chrism*; for this, though reckoned a distinct mystery, is inseparable from baptism. Previous to baptism the child was anointed with oil, which was likewise used in the consecration of the baptismal water; but this *chrism* is very different from it, and consists of various oils and other precious ingredients, which, in different proportions, are all boiled together, and afterwards solemnly consecrated by a bishop. It can be prepared *only* by a bishop, and only on Maunday Thursday, *i. e.* Thursday in Passion week. This anointing, the Greeks call “the seal of the gift of the Holy Ghost,” which words the priest repeats while he applies the *chrism* or holy oil to the forehead, eyes, nostrils, mouth, ears, breast, hands, and feet of the child. Immediately after, or some days after, as ordered, the child is again brought to the church, when the priest, after praying for it, unties its girdle and linen clothes, and taking a new sponge, moistened with clear water, he washes its face breast, &c. saying, “Thou hast been baptized, *enlightened*, anointed, *sanctified*, and washed, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, now and for ever, even unto ages of ages, Amen!”

Dr. King assures us, that the more learned of the Russian clergy “would willingly allow no picture or representation of God the Father—for the figure of *the Ancient of days*, from Daniel, ‘whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool,’ is by them interpreted to be the second person in the Trinity, who so appeared to the prophet: yet it must be confessed that the common practice is so contrary to their opinions, that in a great number of churches, as well ancient as modern, this *figure* and *Jesus* and the *Dove* are painted

together to signify the Trinity ! Nay, there is now in the church of St. Nicholas at Petersburg, a picture of an *old man holding a globe*, and surrounded with angels, on which *God the Father* is inscribed !” It is however added, that during the reign of Peter the Great, the holy synod censured the use of such pictures, and Peter would have had them taken down, but was fearful of an insurrection of the people.

In Russia, *all* nations have the free exercise of their religion ; and it is worthy of remembrance, that Peter the Great did much for the *ecclesiastical*, as well as civil government of that partially civilized country. During the attack, and upon the repulse of the French Emperor, their strange and semi-barbarous superstitions appeared ; but their present connection with Great Britain will, it is to be hoped, conduce to their essential improvement.

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## PROTESTANTS

UNDER the appellation of Protestants, we include all who dissent from Popery, in whatever country they reside, or in whatever sects they have been since distributed. Abroad they are divided into two sorts—the *Lutherans*, who adhere to Luther’s tenets ; and the *Reformed*, who follow the discipline of Geneva. They were called Protestants, because, in 1529, they protested against a decree of the Emperor Charles the Fifth, and declared, that they appealed to a general council. At present this vast class comprehends those whom Papists used contemptuously to style *Hugonots* in France ; the *Refugees* in Holland, who fled thither upon the revocation of the edict of Nantz, 1685 ; the *Presbyterians* in Scotland ; the *Episcopalians* and *Nonconformists* in England ; together with a numerous body of Christians in America.

As the Protestants originated at the *Reformation*, it will be proper to give an account of this illustrious period of Ecclesiastical History.

## THE REFORMATION IN GERMANY.

FOR the three first centuries the Religion of Jesus Christ stood on its own basis, was rapidly propagated among Jews and Gentiles, and suffered severe persecutions from the Roman emperors. At the commencement of the fourth century *Constantine* became a convert to Christianity, and incorporated it with the state. "It was not till the fifth, or near the sixth century, that the Bishop of Rome arrogantly assumed an illegal supremacy over his fellow pastors, and in process of time aimed at a secular government of princes as well as subjects. Though several emperors embraced and defended Christianity, yet the gradual decay of the Roman empire was a serious impediment to the rising preachers of the newly-established religion. Those accomplishments which adorned the conquests of the Romans, and the perfection of science which had dignified their state to such an extent, were gradually swept away by the barbarous nations which defeated them, and the close of the sixth century could not trace a vestige of that exalted nation's government, or its laws. Between four and five hundred years was the glorious luminary of the gospel eclipsed by the dismal return of ignorance and of superstition."

The *Crusades*, commonly called the *Holy Wars*, were expeditions undertaken by the Catholics to drive the Turks from Palestine, or the land of Judea, and thus to rescue the holy sepulchre out of the hands of Infidels. There were eight of these crusades; the first in the year 1096, the last in 1270, assisted by prince Edward, afterwards Edward I., King of England. The number of lives lost is incredible, See "Mill's History of the Crusades," two volumes, "Robertson's Charles the Fifth," and Hume's "History of England." Tasso's "Jerusalem Delivered," diffusely translated by Hoole, is founded on the crusades, and affords considerable amusement. The reader is referred to "The Itinerary of Archbishop Baldwin through Wales, 1188," by Giraldus. The object the good Archbishop had in view when he traversed the Principality, was to enlist young persons for this under-

taking. According to this account miracles were worked : particularly when his Grace wanted a pulpit—the ground kindly rose underneath him, and gave him a commanding view of his audience, which he no doubt eloquently improved! The work affords an interesting picture of our Catholic ancestors, and should excite in *us*, their Protestants descendants, gratitude that we are freed from the yoke of Anti-Christian tyranny.

The Inquisition was a tribunal erected by the popes for the examination and punishment of heretics. It was founded in the twelfth century, by Father Dominic and his followers, who were sent by Pope Innocent the Third to *inquire* into the number and quality of heretics, and then to send an account to Rome. Hence they were termed *inquisitors*, and their court the *Inquisition*. Its cruelties were indescribable. See “Dr. Chandler’s History of the Inquisition,” which is full of information on the subject. Mr. Butler, the Catholic writer, announcing to his readers the recent abolition of the Inquisition in Spain, adds, in the true spirit of Christianity, “so perish *every* mode of *religious persecution*, by whom or against whomsoever raised!”

To the *dark ages*, (as they are by some justly termed, and by others, called *the night of time*,) are to be attributed the doctrine of indulgences, partial absolution, transubstantiation, the creation and worship of saints, purgatory, monastic seclusion, &c. So swift was the extinction of knowledge, and its revival so impeded, that persons of eminence in point of station could scarcely read or write. The clergy themselves, who engrossed what little science was remaining, could scarcely translate the liturgy; and when ordained, were obliged to affirm, that they could read the Gospels and Epistles, and explain them.

The corrupt state of the church prior to the Reformation, is acknowledged by an author who was both able to judge concerning this matter, and who was not over-forward to confess it. For some years (says Bellarmine) before the Lutheran and Calvinistic heresies were published, there was not, as contemporary authors testify,



any severity in ecclesiastical judicatories, any discipline with regard to morals, any knowledge of sacred literature, and reverence for divine things ; there was not almost any religion remaining." Such a confession, made by the avowed champion of popery, should not pass unnoticed by Protestants ; and before the enemies of Protestantism inveigh against the Reformation, let them consider its necessity, and contemplate the innumerable advantages with which it was attended.

A curious symbolical representation of the *Reformation* was exhibited before Charles V. and his brother Ferdinand, at Augsburg, in 1530, at the time when the Lutherans presented their confession of faith to that assembly. As the princes were at table, a company of persons offered to act a small comedy for the entertainment of the company. They were ordered to begin ; and first entered a man in the dress of a doctor, who brought a large quantity of small wood, of straight and crooked billets, and laid it on the middle of the hearth, and retired. On his back was written *Reuchlin*. When this actor went off, another entered, apparelled also like a doctor, who attempted to make fagots of the wood, and to fit the crooked to the straight ; but having laboured long to no purpose, he went away out of humour, and shaking his head. On his back appeared the name of *Erasmus*. A third, dressed like an Augustinian monk, came in with a chafing-dish full of fire, gathered up the crooked wood, clapped it on the fire, and blew it till he made it burn, and went away ; having upon his frock the name of *Luther*. A fourth entered dressed like an emperor, who seeing the crooked wood all on fire seemed much concerned, and to put it out, drew his sword and poked the fire with it, which only made it burn the brisker. On his back was written *Charles V.* Lastly, a fifth entered in his pontifical habit and triple crown, who seemed extremely surprised to see the crooked billets all on fire, and by his countenance and attitude betrayed excessive grief. Then looking about on every side to see if he could find any water to extinguish the flame, he cast his eyes on two bottles in a corner of the room, one of which

was full of oil and the other of water, and in his hurry he inadvertently seized the oil, and poured it on the fire, which unfortunately made it blaze so violently that he was forced to walk off!—on his back was written *Leo X.*

The reader who is acquainted with the history of the *Reformation*, will perceive the propriety of the representation here given of those several characters, who were instrumental in bringing about that memorable event.

Nothing more shall be added but the testimony of Moseheim respecting the happy consequences with which it was attended. Speaking of the *Reformation* (which a deceased friend, the Rev. H. Worthington, happily termed the *second redemption* of mankind), it is remarked, “the true nature, genius and design of *the Christian Religion*, which even the most learned and pious doctors of antiquity had but imperfectly comprehended, were now unfolded with evidence and drawn like truth from an abyss in which they had hitherto lain concealed. It is true the influence of error was far from being totally suppressed, and many false and absurd doctrines are still maintained and propagated in the Christian world. But it may nevertheless be affirmed, that the Christian societies, whose errors at this day are the most numerous and extravagant, have much less absurd and perverse notions of the nature and design of *the Gospel*, and the duties and obligations of its votaries, than were entertained by those doctors of antiquity, who ruled the church with an absolute authority, and were considered as the chief oracles of theology. The *Reformation* also contributed much to soften and civilize the manners of many nations, who, before that happy period, were sunk in the most savage stupidity, and carried the most rude and unsocial aspect. It must indeed be confessed, that a variety of circumstances not immediately connected with religion, combined to produce that lenity of character and that milder temperature of manners, maxims, and actions, that gradually appeared in the greatest part of the Europeans after that period, which was signalized by the reformative exertions of *Luther!* It is, nevertheless, evident, beyond all contradiction, that the disputes concerning religion, and the accurate and ra-

tional inquiries into the doctrines and duties of *Christianity*, to which those disputes gave rise, had a greater tendency to eradicate from the minds of men the ferocity that had been so long nourished by the barbarous suggestions of unmanly superstition. It is also certain that at the very dawn of this happy revolution in the state of *Christianity*, and even before its salutary effects were manifested in all their extent, pure religion had many sincere and fervent votaries, though they were concealed from public view by the multitudes of fanatics with which they were surrounded."

The Tricentennial Anniversary of *the Reformation* was in 1817, celebrated by Churchmen and Dissenters, when some excellent sermons were preached and published, illustrative of the blessings of Religious Liberty.

As we quit the subject of the *Reformation*, it may not be improper to add an account of the *Lutherans*. It has already been said, that the Protestants were at first divided into the *Lutherans*, who adhere to Luther's tenets, and the *Reformed*, who follow the doctrine and discipline of Geneva. In other words, Luther was at the head of one party; Calvin the chief of the other. The tenets of the latter have been specified; those of the former, therefore, are the present subject of inquiry.

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## LUTHERANS.

The *Lutherans*, of all Protestants, are those who differ least from the Romish church, as they affirm that the body and blood of Christ are materially present in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, though in an incomprehensible manner; they likewise represent some rites and institutions,—as the use of images in churches, the vestments of the clergy, the private confession of sins, the use of wafers in the administration of the Lord's Supper, the form of exorcism in the celebration of baptism, and other ceremonies of the like nature, as tolerable, and some of them useful. The *Lutherans* maintain, with regard to the Divine decrees, that they respect the salvation or mis-

ery of men in consequence of a previous knowledge of their sentiments and characters, and not as founded on the mere will of God, which is the tenet of the Calvinists. Towards the close of the last century, the Lutherans began to entertain a greater liberality of sentiment than they had before adopted, though in many places they persevered longer in despotic principles than other Protestant churches. Their public teachers now enjoy an unbounded liberty of dissenting from the decisions of those symbols of creeds, which were once deemed almost infallible rules of faith and practice, and of declaring their dissent in the manner they judged most expedient. Mosheim attributes this change in their sentiments to the maxim which they generally adopted, that *Christians were accountable to God alone for their religious opinions*; and that no individual could be justly punished by the magistrate for his erroneous notions, while he conducted himself like a virtuous subject, and made no attempts to disturb the peace of civil society. Luther's works, collected after his decease, were published at Wittenberg, in seven folio volumes.

It may be added, that Luther's opinion respecting the sacrament, is termed *Consubstantiation*; and he supposed that the partakers of the Lord's Supper received, along with the bread and wine, the real body and blood of Christ. This, says Dr. Mosheim (himself an eminent Lutheran divine), was, in their judgment, a mystery, which they did not pretend to explain. But his translator, Dr. Mac-laine, justly remarks, "That Luther was not so modest as Dr. Mosheim here represents him. He pretended to explain this doctrine of the *real presence*, absurd and contradictory as it is, and uttered much senseless jargon on the subject. 'As in a *red-hot iron*,' said he, 'two distinct substances, viz. *iron* and *fire*, are united, so is the body of Christ joined with the bread in the eucharist.' I mention this miserable comparison, to show into what absurdities the towering pride of system will often betray men of deep sense and true genius."

Such is the account given of the *Lutherans*, and it appears to be founded in truth. I shall only remark, that,



according to the above sketch, Luther differed considerably from Calvin respecting election and reprobation; and as to the principle, that *Christians are accountable to God alone for their religious opinions*, it is a sentiment worthy of a great and elevated mind. It is the corner-stone on which *the Reformatoin* has been raised. It is the true foundation of religious improvement, and wherever it is embraced, will check uncharitableness and persecution, and forward the blessed reign of love and charity amongst the professors of Christianity.

In Swift's well known "Tale of a Tub," he satirizes three distinct classes of religious professors—the Church of Rome, under the appellation of *Peter*, whose keys for an admission into heaven are supposed to be in their possession—the Church of England, under the name of *Martin*, because its reformation originated with Martin Luther—and the Dissenters under the name of *Jack*, on account of the principles of John Calvin being so prevalent amongst them. It is fraught with that sarcastic wit for which the writings of the Dean of St. Patrick's are distinguished.

A volume appeared some time ago in vindication of *Luther* and the *Reformation*, written with candour and ability. It is entitled "An Essay on the Spirit and Influence of the Reformation by Luther." The author of the work, C. Villers, obtained the prize for it from the National Institute of France. It closes with a note by Dr. Maclaîne, taken from the fourth volume of Mosheim's *Ecclesiastical History*, who shows that the reflections on the selfish and ignoble motives of *Luther*, made in Hume's "History of England," must be pronounced a calumny invented by the enemies of the Reformation.

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## HUGONOTS.

The appellation *Hugonots* was given to the French Potestants in 1561. The term is (by some) supposed to be derived from a gate in Tours, called *Hugon*, where they first assembled. According to others the name is



taken from the first words of their original protest, or confession of faith—*Hucnos venimus, &c.* During the reign of Charles IX., and on the 24th of August, 1572, happened the massacre of St. Bartholomew, when 70,000 Protestants throughout France were butchered, with circumstances of aggravated cruelty. It began at Paris in the night of the festival of St. Bartholomew, by secret orders from Charles IX., at the instigation of his mother, the Queen Dowager Catherine de Medicis. See Sully's Memoirs, and also a fine description of it in the second canto of Voltaire's "Henriade."

In 1598, Henry IV. passed the famous Edict of Nantz, which secured to his old friends the Protestants the free exercise of their religion. This edict was cruelly revoked by Louis XIV. Their churches were then razed to the ground; their persons insulted by the soldiery, and, after the loss of innumerable lives, 500,000 valuable members of society were driven into exile! In Holland they built several places of worship, and had amongst them some distinguished preachers. Among others were Superville, Dumont, Dubosc, and the eloquent Saurin—five volumes of whose select sermons were translated into our language by the late Mr. Robinson of Cambridge, a sixth by the late Dr. Hunter, and a seventh as well as eighth by Mr. Sutcliff, of the Wesleyan connexion. In one of these sermons Saurin makes the following fine apostrophe to the tyrant, Louis XIV., by whom they were driven into exile; it breathes the noble spirit of Christianity:—"And *thou*, dreadful Prince, whom I once honoured as my king, and whom I yet respect as a scourge in the hand of Almighty God, *thou* also shalt have a part in my good wishes! These provinces, which thou threatenest, but which the arm of the Lord protects; this country, which thou fillest with refugees, but fugitives animated with love; these walls, which contain a thousand martyrs of thy making, but whom religion renders victorious, all these yet resound benedictions in thy favour. God grant the fatal bandage that hides the truth from thy eyes may fall of! May God forget the rivers of blood with which thou hast deluged the earth, and which thy

reign hath caused to be shed! May God blot out of his book the injuries which thou hast done us, and while he rewards the sufferers, may he pardon those who exposed us to suffer! O may God, who hath made thee to us, and to the whole church, a minister of his judgments, make thee a dispenser of his favours, and an administrator of his mercy!"

See "An History of the late sufferings of the French Protestants in the South of France," by the Rev. Mark Wilks—and the "History of the Albigenses and Waldenses," with an account of the Christian Church in general, published by Mr. William Jones, written with neatness and accuracy.

About the time of the Revolution, 1688, there were many controversies between the Protestant and Catholic divines. Tillotson and Burnet, two clergymen of the church of England, rendered Protestantism great service by their writings; and were, on that account elevated to the bench by King William. There are also two excellent volumes of Sermons against Popery, preached in the early part of the last century, by Dissenting Ministers, at Salter's Hall. Dr. Chandler's Discourse on the Notes or marks of the Church of Rome, to be found in this collection, is deemed a masterly production. Burnet's "History of the reformation," and the "History of his Own Times," published after his death by his son, throw light on the state of religion in the last and preceding centuries among Catholics, Churchmen, and Dissenters. The merit of these publications, particularly the latter, is appreciated by Dr. Kippis, under the article *Burnet*, in the "Biographia Britannica." To these may be added a "Defence of Protestantism," by the late Dr. Sturges, in his answer to the late Dr. Milner, (a Catholic bishop,) who, in his History of Winchester, takes every opportunity of reprobating Protestantism, and of erecting on its ruins the edifice of his own religion. Dr. S. animadverts with a spirit on the calumnies by which his antagonist had endeavoured to blacken the characters of the Reformers; and proves the Protestant religion, by its honourable views of the Divine Being, and by its sacred regard for the rights

of mankind, to be the only true and primitive Christianity. Dr. Milner replied at length to Dr. Sturges, who only noticed it in the preface to the subsequent edition of his own work, content to share the obliquely cast upon him in conjunction with some of the most learned, and pious characters that ever adorned the Christian world.

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## EPISCOPALIANS; OR, CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

The Episcopalians, in the modern acceptance of the term, belong more especially to the Church of England, and derive this title from *Episcopus*, the Latin word for *bishop*; or, if it be referred to its Greek origin, from *Επι* over, and *σκοπεω* to look, implying, the care and diligence with which bishops are expected to preside over those committed to their guidance and direction. They insist on the divine origin of their bishops, and other church officers, and on the alliance between church and state. Respecting these subjects, however, Warburton and Hoadley, together with others of the learned amongst them, have different opinions, as they have also on their thirty-nine articles, which were established in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. They are to be found in most Common Prayer-Books; and the Episcopal church in America has reduced their number to twenty. By some these articles are made to speak the language of Calvinism, and by others have been interpreted in favour of Arminianism. Even lately the controversy was agitated—and the publications of Overton, Kipling, and Daubeny, together with the recent Charge of the Bishop of Winchester, may be consulted on the subject. The doctrines and discipline of the Church of England are nearly connected with the reformation of Luther in Germany, and also with the state of ecclesiastical affairs for a considerable time before that reformation commenced.

Eusebius positively asserts, that Christianity was first introduced into South Britain by the apostles and their disciples; and it is supposed that the Apostle Paul visited

this country, whose zeal, diligence, and fortitude, were abundant. It is also said, that numbers of persons professed the Christian faith here about the year 150; and, according to Usher, there was, in the year 182, a school of learning, to provide the British churches with proper teachers. On this subject of the first introduction of Christianity into this Island, the reader is referred to the first volume of Henry's "History of Great Britain," and to Dr. Richard's "Cambro-British Biography," where his curiosity will be gratified.

JOHN WICKLIFFE, educated at Oxford in the reign of Edward the Third, was the first person in this country who publicly questioned, and boldly refuted the doctrines of Popery. He left behind him many followers, who were called *Wickliffites* and *Lollards*; the latter being a term of reproach taken from the Flemish tongue. In the council of Constance, 1415, the memory and opinions of Wickliffe (who died peaceably at Lutterworth, 1384,) were condemned, and soon after his bones were dug up and burnt, and the ashes thrown into a brook. This impotent rage of his enemies served only to promote the cause of reform which Wickliffe had espoused. "Thus," says Fuller, "this brook conveyed his ashes into Avon, Avon into Severn, Severn into the narrow seas, they into the main ocean; and thus the ashes of Wickliffe are emblem of his doctrine, which now is dispersed all the world over." Some remains of his *old pulpit*, in which he first uttered his doctrine, are said to be still seen at Lutterworth, and are beheld by strangers with veneration.

Nor were the early efforts of this eminent Reformer, WICKLIFFE, usually denominated the morning star of the reformation, in vain.

The CHURCH OF ENGLAND broke off from the Romish church in the time of Henry the Eighth, when (as has been already related) Luther had begun the Reformation in Germany. During the earlier part of his reign, Henry was a bigoted Papist, burnt William Tyndal, (who made one of the first and best English Translations of the New Testament,) and wrote fiercely in defence of the seven sac-



raments against Luther, for which the Pope honoured him with the title of *Defender of the Faith!* This title is retained by the kings of England even to the present day, though they are the avowed enemies of that *Faith*, by contending for which he acquired that honourable distinction. Henry falling out with the Pope, took the government of ecclesiastical affairs into his own hands; and having reformed many enormous abuses entitled himself *Supreme Head* of the Church.

When the Reformation in England first took place, efforts were made to promote the reading of the Scriptures among the common people. Among other devices for the purpose, the following curious one was adopted: Bonner, Bishop of London, caused six Bibles to be chained to certain convenient places in St. Paul's church, for all that were so well inclined to resort there; together with a certain admonition to the readers, fastened upon the pillars to which the Bibles were chained, to this tenor:—"That whosoever came there to read, should prepare himself to be edified, and made the better thereby; that he bring with him discretion, honest intent, charity, reverence, and quiet behaviour; that there should no such number meet together there as to make a multitude; that no such exposition be made thereupon but what is declared in the book itself; that it be not read with noise in time of divine service, or that any disputation or contention be used about it; that in case they continued their former misbehaviour, and refused to comply with these directions, the king would be forced against his will to remove the occasion, and take the Bible out of the church."—See Johnson's "Historical Account of the several English Translations of the Bible," and the opposition they met with from the church of Rome.

The Church of England is governed by the King, who is supreme head; by two archbishops, and by twenty-four bishops. The benefices of the bishops were converted by William the Conqueror into temporal baronies; so that every prelate has a seat and a vote in the House of Peers. Dr. Benjamin Hoadley, however, in a sermon preached from this text, "My kingdom is not of this



world," insisted that the clergy had no pretensions to temporal jurisdictions; which gave rise to various publications, termed, by way of eminence, the *Bangorian* Controversy, for Hoadley was then bishop of Bangor. The memory of this eminent prelate has been abused by Dr. Milner, in his "History of Winchester," but Mr. Hoadley Ashe and Dr. Sturges have amply vindicated it. His writings, in three large folio volumes, constitute a vast mass of religious information, communicated in a strain that shows his ardent love both of civil and religious liberty.

There is a bishop of Sodor and Man who has no seat in the House of Peers; and a prelate of this see was the amiable and learned Dr. Wilson. Since the death of the intolerant Archbishop Laud, men of moderate principles have been raised to the see of Canterbury, and this hath tended not a little to the tranquillity of church and state. Such is the character of the present Archbishop Sutton, who, on the rejection of Lord Sidmouth's Bill, May 21, 1811, bore his testimony against intolerance, and in favour of the inalienable rights of conscience. His words were these, and spoken with a fervour that evinced his sincerity: "However he might lament what he conceived to be the errors of Protestant Dissenters, it was to be recollected that the Bible was the fountain of their religious belief, as well as that of the established church, and was, or might be, in the hands of every member of the empire; and it was to be recollected also, that the *best* of interpretations were but the interpretations of *men*, and that the best of men were liable to error!" Had his predecessor Laud uttered and practised this apostolic sentiment, he would not have lost his own head, nor brought his master after him to the scaffold. Kings find toleration the best safeguard of the throne; and the ministers of Jesus ought to know, that a meek and quiet spirit is the loveliest ornament of Christianity.

The established church of IRELAND is similar to the church of England, and at the union of England and Ireland the two became one united Church. It is governed by four archbishops and eighteen bishops. Since the union of Ireland with Great Britain, four only of these

spiritual lords sit in the House of Lords, assembled at Westminster. The Irish established church is far more liberally endowed than the church of England. Its abuses also are much greater, and call loudly for amendment.

In the course of the last century disputes arose among the English clergy respecting the propriety of *subscribing* to any human formulary of religious sentiments. An application for its removal was made to Parliament in 1772, by the petitioning clergy, and received, as it deserved, the most public discussion in the house of Commons. It was negatived by 219 against 73, a large majority. The third edition of Archdeacon Blackburn's "Confessional" was published in 1770, two years previous to the presentation of this clerical petition, when the long controversy, in consequence of the work, was closed, and indeed introductory to the application to Parliament pending, by which the controversy was renewed. Mr. Dyer's Treatise against Subscription appeared many years afterwards. Some respectable clergymen, impressed with the impropriety of subscription, resigned their livings, and published reasons for their conduct. Among these, the names of Robertson, Jebb, Matty, Lindsey, and Dinsey, will be long remembered. Several others, indeed, resigned preferments held by the same tenure for similar reasons, without giving such reasons to the public as Mr. Tyrwhitt, Mr. Wakefield, &c.; and it has been said that many more reluctantly continue in their conformity, under the contest between their convictions and their inability from various causes to extricate themselves, but who will never repeat their subscriptions. The late Rev. T. Lindsey, however, withdrew from the church, because he objected to the Trinity; professing to worship the *Father* only as the *one true God*, to the exclusion of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit, as objects of worship. See "The Book of Common Prayer Reformed," used at Essex-street chapel; and also at York-street chapel, Piccadilly, lately opened for Unitarian worship at the west end of the town.

The Articles of the church of England were originally 42 in number, drawn up by Cranmer, assisted by Bishop Ridley. Ten years after, 1562, they were revised and

reduced to 39, their present number. The articles omitted referred to the *resurrection of the dead, the unperishable nature of the soul, the Millenarian heretics, and universal salvation*. The articles were originally published in the Latin and English languages, and the original manuscript of them, it is said, may be seen in the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. It is a curious circumstance, that whilst the church requires subscription to these articles of all who are to be admitted members of any of the universities, and of all who are admitted into holy orders or to ecclesiastical benefices; yet in Ireland it is not necessary either at ordination, institution, or taking degrees, to subscribe the 39 articles, or any of them. Nor is it unworthy of remark, that the 20th article is deemed a forgery. Burnet allows, that “the words ‘the church hath power to decree rites and ceremonies,’ &c., are not in the original of the articles signed by both houses of convocation, that are yet extant.” And the celebrated Anthony Collins hath proved them an interpolation, in an “Historical and Critical Essay on the Articles, 1724.” A singular controversy hath been agitated of late years, whether these thirty-nine articles be Calvinistic or Arminian. For the Calvinistic sense Mr. Overton strenuously contends, in his “True Churchman ascertained;” whilst Dr. Kipling, Dean of Peterborough, in his “Articles of the Church of England proved not to be Calvinistic,” and Mr. Daubeny, in his “Vindiciæ Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ,” maintain their Arminian interpretation. The Bishop of Winchester appears to adopt a middle course, for he says, “Our church is not *Lutheran*, it is not *Calvinistic*, it is not *Arminian*, it is *SCRIPTURAL*, it is built upon the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone.” But Burnet, Waterland, &c., seem to have thought it more natural to believe, that as the reformers were inclined, some to Calvinism and others to Arminianism, so the articles are framed with comprehensive latitude; that neither Calvinism nor Arminianism was meant to be exclusively established. See Shepherd’s “Elucidation,” and Wheatley’s “Illustrations of the Liturgy and Prayers of the Church of England!”

Attempts have been made to amend the Articles, the Liturgy, and some things which related to the internal government of the Church of England. The late Dr. Watson wrote a "Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury," in the year 1781, in which he argues for the propriety of a more equal distribution of salary among the different orders of the clergy. But this plan projected by the worthy prelate, together with the preceding proposals for reform, by the authors of the "Free and Candid Disquisitions," and of the "Appeal to Reason and Candour," have been suffered to sink into oblivion.

The church of England has produced a succession of eminent men. Among its ornaments are to be reckoned Usher, Jewel, Hall, Taylor, Stillingfleet, Cudworth, Willkins, Tillotson, Cumberland, Barrow, Burnet, Pearson, Hammond, Whitby, Clarke, Hoadley, Jortin, Secker, Butler, Warburton, Horne, Lowth, Hurd and Porteus. In the appendix to Mosheim, will be found a circumstantial account of the correspondence carried on in the year 1718, between Dr. William Wake, Archbishop of Canterbury, and certain doctors of the Sorbonne of Paris, relative to a project of union between the English and Gallican churches. "Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity," "Pearson on the Creed," "Burnet on the Thirty-nine Articles," and the Bishop of Winchester's "Elements of Theology," are the best defences of Episcopacy.

In Scotland, and other parts, since the Revolution, there existed a species of Episcopalians called *Nonjurors*, because, being inflexibly attached to the Stuarts, who were driven from the throne, they refused to take the oath of allegiance to the Brunswick family. They are the remains of the ancient Episcopal church of Scotland, which was, after various fluctuations, abolished at the Revolution. "In consequence of this abolition, (says Bishop Skinner, in his 'Primitive Truth and Order,') which was followed the year after by the establishment of the *Presbyterian* form of church government, the bishops were deprived of every thing connected with their office which the civil power could take from them. They lost their revenues and temporal jurisdiction, but their spirit-



ual authority still remained, and that ‘gift of God,’ which they had received by the imposition of Episcopal hands, they considered themselves bound to exercise for promoting that Episcopal work in the church of God which had been committed to them.” On the decease of the Pretender, whom the Nonjurors styled Prince Charles, and who died at Rome, 1788, they complied with the requisition of government, and the distinction is abolished. Their tender of loyalty, it is said, was graciously received, and in 1792, those penal laws which had been enacted, against them at various periods, but especially after the rebellions of 1715 and 1745, were repealed. At Lawrence-kirk, in the county of Kincardine, 1804, their bishops and clergy swore to the Articles of the United Church of England and Ireland, and then became a branch of that church, being acknowledged as such by the English and Irish prelates, whilst some English clergy have joined their Communion. Mr. Adam says. “Her clergy subscribes the Articles, I believe to a man, in the *Anticalvinistic* sense; so that whatever weight their opinion may be allowed to have in the scale, it is added to that of the Anticalvinists in England.” The Scotch Episcopal church is governed by eight bishops, one of whom is always *Primate*, being a kind of Archbishop under the title of *Primus*, or *Maximus Scotiae Episcopus*. Their dioceses are those of Aberdeen, Ross, Glasgow, Moray, Edinburgh, Dunkeld, and Brechin. Their places of worship are generally well attended. See Skinner’s “Ecclesiastical History,” in two volumes, and his son the late Bishop Skinner’s “Primitive Truth and Order vindicated from modern Misinterpretation, with a Defence of Episcopacy, particularly that of Scotland. 1803.”

These Scotch Episcopalians complain, that *now* they have abjured the House of Stuart, the other Episcopalians in North Britain will not put themselves under their jurisdiction. See Archdeacon Daubeny’s “Letter to a Scotch Nobleman on the Subject of Ecclesiastical Unity,” subjoined to “a Layman’s Account of his Faith and Practice, as a Member of the Episcopal Church in Scotland.”



A fund has been formed to increase the income of their clergy by subscriptions in England and Scotland, which has been attended with success. They hope for a favourable introduction of their representations to the clergy and laity of Ireland. Bishops Horsley and Horne were attached to this branch of the Episcopal church; the latter even declaring, that "If the great Apostle of the Gentiles were upon earth, and it were put to his choice with what denomination of Christians he would communicate, the preference would probably be given to the Episcopalians of Scotland!" The good bishop must have forgotten the transactions of this pure and apostolical church from the restoration to the revolution. Its rulers were most bloody persecutors; and the truly pious Archbishop Leighton resigned his office rather than countenance such diabolical measures. (See article *kirk of Scotland*.) The Rev. R. Adam, who has given a flattering account of this church, has, with a deficiency of his usual regard to truth and candour, omitted this part of her history. The reader will perceive, by the perusal of the above article, that I am willing to do them justice. The same justice, however, requires that this church, with the foul blot of *persecution* upon her, should not be extolled at the expense of all the other denominations, both churchmen and Dissenters; though the sins of the fathers ought not to be imputed to their posterity.

The *Reformation* in England, began under the auspices of Henry the Eighth, was checked by Mary, who proceeded like a fury to re-establish Popery. In her sanguinary reign were burnt one archbishop, four bishops, twenty-one divines, eight gentlemen, one hundred and eighty-four artificers, and one hundred husbandmen, servants, and labourers; twenty-six wives, twenty widows, and nine virgins, two boys, and two infants! Bishop Burnet says, that two hundred and eighty-four perished in the flames; but Archbishop Grindal, who lived at the time, declares that eight hundred were burnt in this execrable reign, whilst many died amidst the horrors of incarceration. On the death of Mary, 1558, Elizabeth ascended the throne, repealed the laws which had been

established in favour of the Catholic religion, and restored her supremacy. In these matters she succeeded, since of 9,400 beneficed clergymen, about 120 only refused to comply with the Reformation. The establishment of Protestantism in England underwent fluctuations, till the glorious Revolution under William, in 1688, placed it on a permanent foundation.

With respect to the *dignitaries* of the church of England, the archbishop of Canterbury is metropolitan, or *primate of ALL England*, whilst the archbishop of York is simply styled *primate of England*. The bishops take precedence of all temporal barons, and the bishops of London, Durham, and Winchester, take the precedence of the other bishops, who rank after them according to their seniority of consecration. They visit their dioceses once in *three* years; but the Irish prelates every year—archidiaconal visitations being there unknown. Beside this visitation of their dioceses, the duties of bishops are to assist at the consecration of other prelates, for which *three* are required, to ordain priests and deacons, to consecrate churches and burying-grounds, and to administer the right of confirmation to the rising generation. A person must be twenty-three years of age before he is ordained *deacon*, the deacon twenty-four before he be ordained *priest*, which enables him to administer the Lord's Supper, and the priest must be *thirty* years of age before he can be raised to the mitre; and *priests* must be ordained by the bishop with the laying on of hands of other priests, though this is only a mark of assent not essential to due ordination. Magistracy is not deemed incompatible with the *Clerical* office; but, by a late act of parliament (made in the case of the famous Horne Tooke), persons in holy orders are ineligible to seats in parliament. The clergy are supported by tithes, which often occasion bitter altercations between them and their parishioners, so as to destroy the efficacy of their spiritual labours towards moral improvement. This wants greatly to be remedied. The *tithe*, or tenth part of certain property, is assigned for clerical maintenance. The rector enjoys the prædial or *great* tithes; if these be appropriated or converted into

secular hands, the priest is termed *vicar*, implying that he was *vicarius* or deputy of the rector. The vicar has only the *small* tithes of the parish; hence rectories generally surpass vicarages in point of emolument. Tithes are divided into *prædial*, as corn, grass, hops, and wood: *mixed*, as of wool, milk, pigs, natural productions matured by the care of man; and *personal*, as of manual occupations, fisheries, &c. A more usual distribution is into *great*, as corn, hay, and wood; and into *small*, consisting of all the rest. The clergy, however, in general do not take their tithes in kind, but accept a commutation, or sum of money.

The *Discipline* of the church of England may be seen in a work entitled "Constitutions and Canons Ecclesiastical treated upon by the Bishop of London, President of the Convocation, &c., and agreed upon, with the King's Majesty's licence, in their Synod begun at London, 1603." They are founded on the canons of ancient councils, and being authorized by the king's commission according to the form of the statute of the 25th of Henry VIII., they were warranted by act of parliament, and became part of the law of the land. The offences of fornication, adultery, incest, &c. are cognizable in the ecclesiastical court. We now seldom hear of its proceedings, but there are on record some odious instances of excessive severity. The revision of these canons is talked of; they are susceptible of great improvement.

The *Convocation* have met only formally since the reign of Queen Anne. They last met November 15, 1826, when they proceeded from the Chapter House to St. Paul's Cathedral, in grand procession. After prayers and an anthem, Dr. Monk, the Dean of Peterborough, delivered from 2 Tim. i. 6th and 7th verses, in classical Latin, a discourse against *Catholic Emancipation!* The archbishop pronounced the apostolic benediction, when the procession returning to the Chapter-house in the same order, the *Convocation* was opened and adjourned.

The inhabitants of England amount to 11,500,000; *one-fifth* or more are said to dissent from the Established church. The number of parishes is 10,000 and of all

ranks and orders 18,000 clergy.—Church livings of all descriptions about 11,755, viz. rectories 5,098; vicarages, 3,687; livings of other descriptions, 2,970. These are in the gift of the king, the bishops, the two universities, the cathedrals, the nobility and gentry. The revenues of the church, including the universities, amount to 3,000,000*l.* per annum. Of these livings 1,000 are in the gift of the king, to 780 of which, under the value of 20*l.* in the king's book, the lord chancellor presents, and ministers of state have the disposal of the rest 1,600 in the gift of bishops, 600 in the presentation of the universities, 1000 in the gift of cathedrals and clerical institutions, and 5,700 in the nomination of nobility and gentry. Livings of 10*l.* and 20*l.* in the king's book are since 1714, augmented by Queen Anne's bounty, which is about 13,000*l.* per annum, taken from the first-fruits and tenths of church livings above a certain value, which used to go to the Pope, before the Reformation.

The "Book of the Church," by Dr. Southey, Poet Laureat, has obtained great eclat, and enjoys a large circulation. It is an epitome of Ecclesiastical history, bearing hard alike on the Puritans and Papists. He has taken every opportunity of vilifying the former and reprobating the latter—witness his excessive panegyric of Laud, of cruel and persecuting memory. The book has been attacked in various ways, and vindicated by its author with his usual learning and ability. The controversy has not been conducted with temper or charity.

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## PROTESTANT DISSENTERS.

Dissenters from the church of England made their appearance in Queen Elizabeth's time, when, on account of the extraordinary purity which they proposed in religious worship and conduct, they were reproached with the name of *Puritans*. They were increased by the act of uniformity, which took place on Bartholomew-day, 1662, in the reign of Charles the Second. By this act 2000 ministers were obliged to quit the Established Church, refusing to



*conform* to certain conditions, whence they were called *Nonconformists*. Beside the penal laws made against them in Elizabeth's time, which were confirmed in the subsequent reigns, one of which was no less than *banishment*, and another inflicting a mulct or fine upon every one not coming to church, the following Acts were passed: 1. The Corporation Act, in 1661, incapacitated the Dissenters from serving their country in the lowest offices of trust. 2. The Act of Uniformity, in the year 1662, which silenced all the Nonconformist ministers throughout England, and deprived them of their maintenance. 3. The Conventicle Act, in 1663 and 1670, forbade all persons going to any separate places of religious worship, when more than *five* were present beside the family, under severe fines to be levied by seizure of goods, or so many months imprisonment, to be determined, not by a jury, but by a justice of the peace. 4. The Oxford Act, 1665, banished Nonconformist ministers five miles from every corporation that sends members to parliament. And, 5. The Test Act, this year, made them incapable of all places of profit or trust under government. The Puritans objected to the order of bishops, the liturgy, the clerical dress, the sign of the cross at baptism, &c. These things being arbitrarily imposed upon them, they as firmly resisted them. It is not a little remarkable that Dr. Edwards, a clergyman of the Established Church, should have confessed in his celebrated work, styled "The Preacher,"—"If we would but open our eyes, we should see that we are beholden to the Dissenters for the continuance of a great part of our theological principles; for if the high churchmen had no checks, they would have brought in popery before this time by their over-ruling pomp and ceremony in divine worship; so that, if there had been no Dissenters, the church of England had been long since ruined!" And it is no less singular that David Hume, the apologist for the tyranny of the Stuarts, should, speaking of the Puritans, acknowledge that it was by their firm and persevering conduct that "the precious spark of liberty was kindled and preserved." An account of their lives, literature, and piety is to be found in Brooks's "History



of the Puritans." Their descendants are known by the name of *Protestant Dissenters*, and rank under the three denominations *Presbyterians*, *Independents* and *Baptists*. An account of the *Welch Nonconformists* will be found in the "Cambro-British Biography," by the late Rev. William Richards of Lynn, with an introductory "Essay on Druidism," and smaller Tracts in an appendix published by the Author of this Work. It is a very interesting publication, and a most acceptable present to the Principality. The principal Life is that of *Vavasor Powell*, (the Cambrian *Whitefield*), to whom the inhabitants of Wales are under the greatest obligations for the revival of religion amongst them. The volume is indeed an Appendix to "Palmer's Nonconformists' Memorial," a work well known amongst the Dissenters.

Of the origin and progress of the *Dissenters*, a full account is contained in "Neal's History of the Puritans," an improved edition of which work, in five volumes, has been published by the late Dr. Toulmin, of Birmingham, who has accompanied it with notes, in which are obviated the objections which have been made to it by Grey, Maddox, Warburton, and others. Here the historian traces, step by step, the differences which occasioned the separation, and an affecting narrative is given of the sufferings which the Puritans underwent in the cause of religious liberty. The Rev. T. Parsons, of Leeds, made, in two octavo volumes, an abridgment of this work.

Dr. Toulmin published "An Historical View of the State of the Protestant Dissenters in England, and of the Progress of Free Inquiry and Religious Liberty, from the Revolution to the Accession of Queen Anne." Dr. Toulmin justly remarks, "The revolution under William III. introduced a new order of things in the ecclesiastical state of this country, and a new era in the history of the Dissenters from our establishment. The affairs of this large body of Protestants have since that time worn a new aspect. New questions in theology have been brought into discussion. New sects have sprung up. And under the different succeeding reigns new attempts have been made to extend the blessings of religious liberty and es-

establish it on a firmer basis. These events are interesting to Dissenters, and are also connected with the history of the human mind, of the change of opinions, of the progress of religious truth and national felicity." A brief history of the Puritans was also published in 1772, by the Rev. J. Cornish, of Culliton. The principles on which the Dissenters separate from the church of England are much the same with those on which she separates herself from the church of Rome. They may be comprehended in these three:—1. The right of private judgment. 2. Liberty of Conscience. And 3. The perfection of Scripture as a Christian's *only* rule of faith and practice. The Dissenter believes that these principles are violated by the church of England, and by the church of Rome.—It is remarkable, that the Rev. Mr. Wix, a minister of the former religious body, has proposed the *Union of both Churches*, which has exposed him to the animadversion of almost all parties in the Christian world.

The rights of Toleration (a term which might not have been used if, in fact, it had not been preceded by prohibition of religious acts interfering with the universality of the establishment) were not allowed till the Revolution of 1688, when the Act of Toleration passed. It enacted that the statutes of Queen Elizabeth and King James I. concerning the discipline of the church, should not extend to Protestant Dissenters, or that they should be exempted from suffering the penalties the law inflicted, and permitted (on certain conditions, to which they in general consented) to worship God according to their own consciences. The conditions by which the act was limited are, that all Dissenting ministers are required not only to take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, and to make the declaration against popery, but also to subscribe the doctrinal articles of the church of England. Beside, their places of worship must be registered, and their doors kept unlocked during the time of worship. But a fine of 20*l.* is incurred by any one who molests their devotions, by a statute of William and Mary, thus nobly securing the free exercise of their religion. Attempts, however, were made in the subsequent reign to abridge these liberties in

two instances. In the latter end of Queen Anne's reign, the Jacobite party had influence to get an act of parliament passed, called "The Occasional Conformity Bill," which forbade any person in any office under government to enter a meeting-house. Another bill also, denominated the *Schism Bill*, had obtained the royal assent, which suffered no Dissenters to educate their own children, but required them to be put into the hands of Conformists, and forbade all tutors and schoolmasters being present at any dissenting place of worship. But providentially the Queen died August 1, 1714, *the very day* this iniquitous act was to have taken place; and George the First being then elevated to the throne, a firm friend to civil and religious liberty, he, in the fifth year of his reign, got the *Schism Bill* repealed. In his illustrious race, the BRUNSWICK FAMILY, the sceptre has since continued under whom our legal rights have been preserved and augmented. May it continue to latest posterity!

The *Test Act* excludes Dissenters from filling public offices, unless they take the sacrament at the Established Church, which some think cannot be honestly done by any conscientious Dissenter. Hence loud complaints have been raised respecting this exclusion, since, as members of the civil community, they are entitled to all the common privileges of that community. The *Test Act* was originally levelled against the Roman Catholics. The Dissenters have made several unsuccessful applications for its repeal. The question was warmly agitated in the House of Commons, 1787, and on each side numerous publications issued from the press. The chief argument urged for the continuance of the *Test Act* is, *the safety of the Established Church*. The principal arguments alleged for its repeal are, that it is *a prostitution of the Lord's Supper*, and that *to withhold civil rights on account of religious opinions, is a species of persecution*. To the former circumstance Cowper the poet, a devout member of the church of England, alludes when he exclaims—

Hast thou by *statute* shov'd from its design  
The Saviour's feast, his own blest bread and wine,,

And made the symbols of atoning grace  
 An office-key, a picklock to a place,  
 That infidels may prove their title good,  
 By an oath dipt in sacramental blood?  
 A blot that will be still a blot, in spite  
 Of all that grave apologists may write;  
 And though a Bishop toil'd to cleanse the stain,  
 He wipes and scours the silver cup in vain.

An application to the Legislature for the repeal of the Test Act is still in agitation, and it will have the good wishes of every friend of religious liberty. Equal rights belong to the members of a well-constituted community.

Though the Dissenters made an unsuccessful application for relief in the year 1773, yet in 1779 an act of parliament was passed without any further application on their part, "whereby the benefits of the Toleration Act were granted to Protestant Dissenting ministers and schoolmasters, upon condition of their taking the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, making the declaration against popery, and declaring their belief of the Holy Scriptures as containing a divine revelation." Before this period all Dissenters who kept public schools or taught youth in any private house, were liable, beside the forfeiture of their schools, to a fine of 40*l.* and to suffer three months' imprisonment. Nor could any person be legally qualified to keep a school or instruct youth without a license from the bishop, and a declaration of absolute conformity to the church of England.

The Dissenters, as a body, have not been unfruitful of great and learned men. Among their ornaments are to be ranked Baxter, Bates, Howe, Owen, Williams, Neal, Henry, Stennet, Evans, Gale, Foster, Leland, Grosvenor, Watts, Lardner, Abernethy, Doddridge, Grove, Chandler, Gill, Orton, Furneaux, Farmer, Towgood, Robinson, Price, Kippis, Priestley, and Rees, &c. \*  
 Though among Dissenters sufficient encouragement is not

\* A neat edition of the works of Robert Robinson was published by Mr. Benjamin Flower, for which he deserves the thanks of the religious world. Robinson was the apostle of Christian liberty. His prefixed Memoirs by Mr. Flower, are an instructive piece of biography. Some of Mr. Robinson's MSS. have been just found, and will it is hoped, be given to the world. He died at Birmingham 1791, aged 54,—where a neat monument is erected to his memory.

given in certain cases to men of talents and integrity, yet among their more liberal denominations, it must be confessed, that a Dissenting minister may, unawed by a conclave of cardinals—a bench of bishops—or a board of ministers—exercise, in its fullest extent, the right of private judgment, which is the pride and pleasure of the human mind. In Pierce’s “Vindication of the Dissenters,” Towgood’s “Letters to White,” and Palmer’s “Protestant Dissenters’ Catechism,” (of which a much improved edition has been published by Dr. William Newman, of Bow,)—are stated the grounds on which their dissent from the Established Church is founded. This Catechism declares that there are *seven* principal things in the church of England on which the dissent from it is founded:—1. Its general frame and constitution as national and established. 2. The character and authority of certain officers appointed in it. 3. The imposition of a stated form of prayer called the Liturgy, and many exceptionable things contained therein. 4. The pretended right of enjoining unscriptural ceremonies. 5. The terms on which ministers are admitted into their office. 6. The want of liberty in the people to choose their own ministers; and, 7. The corrupt state of its discipline. The author of the Catechism (since deceased) says, in the preface of the last edition, that Bishop Horseley declared, that it inculcates “no one principle of the Christian Religion, or of any Religion under the sun;” but the author replies, that “it strongly inculcates, among other principles of Christianity, peaceableness, loyalty to the king, subjection to government, obedience to the laws, and charity.” It is with *things*, and not with persons, that Christians have to do in religious matters, and *dissent* may be consistent with an enlightened and diffusive liberality. See Worsley’s “Lectures on Nonconformity,” of which an improved edition has been recently published; also “Brookes’s History of Religious Liberty,” and Dr. Robert Winter’s “Letters to a Young Person on Nonconformity,” breathing the spirit of Christianity.

Nor should we omit to state, that the *Unitarian* Dis-



senters have been relieved from certain penalties attaching to those denying the doctrine of the Trinity. Some individuals have suffered grievously on account of their Unitarian sentiments. These statutes are abolished, and it is hoped, for the honour of religion, of human nature, and of the country, that *all* penal statutes in matters of religion, will soon be annihilated. See the statute of repeal at the close of "A Sketch of the History and Proceedings of the Deputies appointed to protect the Civil Rights of the Protestant Dissenters; to which is annexed a Summary of the Laws affecting Protestant Dissenters." The abolition of the above statute appears to have met the approbation, not only of the bench of bishops, but also of every churchman of good sense and piety. Protestant Dissenters, even of the most rigid description, rejoice in this instance of a progressive advance towards *entire Religious Liberty*.

## KIRK OF SCOTLAND

The word *Kirk*, signifying church is of Saxon original, though some consider it as a contraction of two Greek words, *Κυρίου οίκος*, the House of God, and is still used in Scotland. The members of the Kirk of Scotland were, strictly speaking, originally the only *Presbyterians* in Great Britain. Their mode of ecclesiastical government was brought thither from Geneva by John Knox, the celebrated Scotch Reformer, who has been styled the Apostle of Scotland, for the same reason that Luther was called the Apostle of Germany.

The Presbyterians maintain that the church should be governed by Presbyteries, Synods, and General Assemblies. The title *Presbyterian* comes from the Greek word *Πρεσβυτερος*, which signifies senior or elder. In the Kirk of Scotland there are fifteen synods and sixty-nine presbyteries. Their articles are Calvinistic, and their General Assembly is held annually in the Scotch metropolis. In 1581 the Presbytery of Edinburgh was erected—the first in Scotland; but those courts called Presbyteries were not generally agreed to by the king till 1586, nor ratified by act of parliament until 1592, when Presbyterianism became the establishment of Scotland. At the Revolution, 1688, the Westminster Confession of Faith was received as the standard of the national faith, ordaining that “no person be admitted or continue hereafter to be a minister or preacher within this church, unless that he subscribe to this confession of faith, declaring the same to be the confession of *his* faith.” And by the act of Union, 1707, the same is required of all “professors, principals, regents, masters, and others bearing office” in any of the four universities of Scotland. In the church of Scotland there are two parties, the one for confirming and extending the rights of patronage, the other for extending the influence and securing the consent of the people in the settlement of ministers. The former party had, for a long period, Dr. William Robertson, the celebrated

historian, at their head ; they designated themselves the moderate men, strenuously opposing what they called the *wildness of orthodoxy*, the *madness of fanaticism*, and *the frenzy of the people* ! Dr. Witherspoon was at that time the leader of the other party, which he keenly satirizes in his “*Ecclesiastical Characteristics, or the Arcana of Church Policy, being an humble attempt to open the Mystery of Moderation, wherein is shown a plain and easy Way of attaining to the Character of a Moderate Man, at present in repute in the Church of Scotland.*” The *Kirk* has no liturgy, no altar, no instrumental music ; and with respect to the latter, violent as well as effective was the opposition to a late proposal of its introduction at Glasgow. The sacrament, which, by law, should be administered *four* times, but is more generally administered only once or twice a-year is conducted with great solemnity. The people are prepared for the ordinance by a fast on some day the preceding week, and by a sermon on Saturday, whilst they meet again on Monday morning for public thanksgiving. Logan’s “*Sermons*” will furnish the reader with the form which accompanies the administration. It is a singular circumstance that this church has no kind of ceremony in the interment of the dead ; the friends accompany the corpse to the grave, where it is laid without uttering a single word ! The version of the Psalms which they sing in public worship, is wretched doggrel, but lately, under the title of “*Translations and Paraphrases,*” they use a better kind of poetical compositions, which, together with some Hymns, have been introduced by permission of the General Assembly. Dr. Beattie was anxious for the amendment of their psalmody. His fine taste would have produced great improvement. As to discipline, it is not particularly severe, excepting *the Stool of Repentance* on which *Fornicators* are obliged to sit for three successive Sundays in the presence of the whole church. This is disused in the towns, but still practised in many of the country parishes in Scotland. The gradation of ecclesiastical government is *Kirk Session*, which consists of the minister, and elders, who are respectable laymen, somewhat like to (though

having a spiritual jurisdiction) churchwardens in England. The next court is *Presbytery*, then *Provincial Synod*, and, lastly, the *General Assembly*, which consists of 361 members, in the following proportion: 200 ministers representing Presbyteries, 89 elders representing Presbyteries, 67 elders representing royal boroughs, and 5 ministers, or elders, representing universities. They are chosen annually, and meet in the month of May; it has a president to represent the king, in the person of a nobleman, who is denominated the Lord High Commissioner, with a salary of 1500*l.* per annum, but he has no voice in their deliberations. Their clergy (with near 900 parishes) amount to near 1000, and their salaries from 100*l.* up to 500*l.* free from taxes. They maintain a respectable character for talents, learning, and piety.

Dreadful scenes took place in Scotland previous to the establishment of Presbyterianism in its present form at the Revolution, and its confirmation in 1706, by the Act of Union between the two kingdoms. During the Commonwealth, Presbyterianism was the established religion, but, on the Restoration, Episcopacy was introduced in its room. So averse, however, were the Scotch to Episcopalians, and so harsh were the measures of the Episcopalian party, that the whole country was thrown into confusion. Leighton, the most pious and moderate prelate amongst them, disgusted with the proceedings of his brethren, resigned his archbishopric of Glasgow, and told the king "He would not have a hand in such oppressive measures, were he sure to plant *the Christian Religion* in an infidel country by them; much less when they tended only to alter the form of church government." On the other hand, Sharp, Archbishop of St. Andrew's (who had been an apostate from the Presbyterians), adopted violent measures, which terminated in his death: for in 1679, nine ruffians stopped his coach near St. Andrew's, assassinated him, and left his body covered with thirty-two wounds! On the monument of this unfortunate prelate, in one of the churches of St. Andrew's, I have seen an exact representation in sculpture of this tragical event. See Cruikshank's "History (in two volumes) of the State

and Sufferings of the Church of Scotland from the Reformation to the Revolution, with an Introduction, containing the most remarkable occurrences relating to that church from the Reformation." The ear tingles and the heart is agonised by the recital of the dreadful scenes which took place during this period of Scottish history, but reference has been already made to this horrible business in the article of the Episcopal Church of Scotland. Two poor women condemned to die for their religion were fastened down to a stake in the river when the tide was at its lowest ebb; the waves then gradually returned to suffocate their cries against this new species of the inhumanity of their prosecutors. They gravely determined (it is said), on this mode of capital punishment, because *burning at the stake* was adopted by the PAPISTS; for they abhorred the most distant approach towards the practices of Popery!

It was in these troubled times that the Presbyterians drew up their famous solemn League and Covenant, whereby they bound themselves to effect the extirpation of Episcopacy; and however useful they have found it, yet, assuredly it was not dictated by the spirit of true religion. The Scotch church, however, is now improved in sentiment and liberality, whilst some of their clergy stand foremost in the departments of literature. Robertson, Henry, Leechman, Blacklock, Gerard, Campbell, Blair, Macknight, Erskine, Hunter, and Ogilvie, are among its principal ornaments. In a selection of sermons, entitled "The Scotch Preacher," will be found a pleasing specimen of the pulpit compositions of the Scotch clergy, delivered on particular occasions, with an introductory Discourse by Mr. Bonar, which explains "the nature and tendency of the Ecclesiastical Constitution in Scotland." Dr. M'Cree's "Memoirs of John Knox," and of "Andrew Melville," as well as Dr. Cook's "Account of the Scotch Church," in three volumes, written with a free and liberal spirit, are works of sterling merit, illustrative of the history of the Kirk of Scotland.



## SECEDERS.

Dissenters from the Kirk or Church of Scotland, call themselves *Seceders*; for as the term *Dissenter* comes from the Latin word *dissentio*, to differ, so the appellation *Seceder* is derived from another Latin word, *secedo*, to separate or withdraw from any body of men with which we may have been united. The secession arose from circumstances which were conceived to be great defections from the established church of Scotland. The Seceders are rigid Calvinists, rather austere in their manners, and severe in their discipline. Through a difference as to civil matters, they are broken down into *Burghers* and *Anti-burghers*. Of these two classes the latter are the most confined in their sentiments, and associate therefore the least with any other body of Christians. The Seceders originated under two brothers, Ralph and Ebenezer Erskine, of Stirling, about the year 1730. The Rev. George Whitefield, in one of his visits, to Scotland, was solemnly reprobated by the Seceders, because he refused to confine his itinerant labours *wholly* to them. The reason assigned for this monopolization was, that they were *exclusively* God's People! Mr. Whitefield replied, that *they* had therefore the *less need* of his services, for *his* aim was to turn sinners from the error of their ways by preaching among *them* glad tidings of great joy!

The Burgess oath, concerning which the Seceders differed, is administered, in several of the royal boroughs of Scotland, and thus runs; "I protest before God and your lordships, that I profess and allow with my heart the true religion presently professed within this realm and authorised by the laws thereof; I shall abide thereat and defend the same to my life's end, renouncing the Roman religion called Papistry." The Messrs. Erskine and others maintained there was no inconsistency in Seceders taking this oath, because the established religion was still the true religion in spite of the faults attaching to it, and hence were called *Burghers*. Messrs. Moncrieff and others thought the swearing to the religion as professed and authorised was approving the corruptions; therefore the

oath was inconsistent and not to be taken—hence *Anti-burghers*. The kirk of Scotland, both parties say, still perseveres in a course of defection from her professed principles, and therefore the secession continues, and is increasing to the present day. See an “Historical Account of the Rise and Progress of the Secession,” by the late Rev. John Brown, of Haddington. The Seceders are strict Presbyterians, having their respective Associate Synods, and are to be found not only in Scotland, but also in Ireland and in the United States of America. Both classes have had amongst them ministers of learning and piety. Much to their honour, the Burghers and Anti-Burghers have recently dropped these invidious distinctions, and are united.

There is also a species of dissenters from the church of Scotland called *Relief*, whose only difference from the Kirk is, the choosing of their own pastors. They arose in 1752, and are respectable as to numbers and ability. See a “Compendious View of the Religious System maintained by the Synod of Relief,” by P. Hutchinson, and also “Historical Sketches of the Relief Church,” &c. by J. Smith. The *Relief* are Calvinists as well as Presbyterians, but liberal in their views, admitting to their communions pious Christians of every denomination.

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## REFORMATION IN SCOTLAND.

The Reformation in Scotland, like that of England and Germany, struggled with a long series of opposition, and was at length triumphant. Dr. Thomas M'Cree, (a Scotch Seceder of Edinburgh,) in his able and interesting “Life of John Knox,” in two volumes, has illustrated the character of this eminent reformer, and thrown much light on the rise and progress of the Reformation in Scotland. “Knox,” says Dr. M., “bore a striking resemblance to Luther in personal intrepidity and in popular eloquence. He approached nearest to Calvin in his religious sentiments, in the severity of his manner, and in a certain impressive air of melancholy which pervaded his character. And he

resembled Zuinglius in his ardent attachment to the principles of civil liberty and in combining his exertions for the *reformation of the church* with uniform endeavour to improve the *political* state of the people. Not that I would place our reformer on a level with this illustrious triumvirate. There is a splendour which surrounds the great German reformer, partly arising from the intrinsic heroism of his character, and partly reflected from the interesting situation in which his long and doubtful struggle with the court of Rome placed him in the eyes of Europe, which removes him at a distance from all who started in the same glorious career. The Genevan reformer surpassed Knox in the extent of his theological learning, and in the unrivalled solidity and clearness of his judgment. And the reformer of Switzerland, though inferior to him in masculine elocution and in daring courage, excelled him in self-command, in prudence, and in that species of eloquence which steals into the heart, which persuades without imitating, and governs without assuming the tone of authority. But, though he attained not to 'the first three,' I know not among all the eminent men who appeared at that period any name which is so well entitled to be placed next to theirs as that of Knox, whether we consider the talents with which he was endowed, or the important services which he performed."

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### ENGLISH PRESBYTERIANS.

The appellation *Presbyterian* is in England appropriated to a large denomination of dissenters, who have no attachment to the Scotch mode of church government, any more than to episcopacy amongst us, and therefore to this body of Christians the term *Presbyterian* in its original sense is improperly applied. This misapplication has occasioned many wrong notions, and should be rectified. English Presbyterians, as they are called adopt nearly the same mode of church government with the Independents. Their chief difference from the Independents is, that they are less attached to Calvinism, and consequently admit a

greater latitude of religious sentiment. It may be added, that their mode of admitting members into communion differs from that commonly practised among the Presbyterians.

Dr. Doddridge in his "Lectures" has this paragraph on the subject: "Those who hold every pastor to be as a bishop or overseer of his own congregation, so that no other person or body of men have by divine institution a power to exercise any superior or pastoral office in it, may, properly speaking, be called (so far at least) *congregational*; and it is by a vulgar mistake that any such are called Presbyterians, for the Presbyterian discipline is exercised by synods and assemblies, subordinate to each other, and all of them subject to the authority of what is commonly called a *General Assembly*."

Kippis, Price, Priestley, and Rees, names well known in the literary and scientific world, belonged to this portion of the religious community.

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## IRISH PRESBYTERIANS.

This denomination of Christians is strictly *Presbyterian*,—their worship, discipline, and government being similar to those of the Church of Scotland already detailed. They are indeed a portion of that church, separated by emigration, and planted in the north of Ireland so early as the reign of James the First. This monarch, when he ascended the throne of England, found Ireland in a wretched state of confusion and distraction. The province of Ulster, in particular, had been nearly depopulated by the repeated rebellions of its rival chieftains, and had almost entirely reverted by forfeiture to the crown. Here King James wisely determined to plant Protestant colonies from Britain, who might not only strengthen his authority, but also extend the reformed faith through that unsettled and unenlightened country. From the proximity of Scotland to Ulster most of the colonists were of that nation, to whom every encouragement was afforded to remove thither. The ministers who accompanied the emi-



grants, though Presbyterians, were received on the same terms with the Prelatical clergy: they enjoyed the tithes and glebes of their respective parishes, met the bishop at his visitations, and occasionally sat in convocation at Dublin. They lived within the bosom of the Establishment in mutual peace and security, presenting a rare exemplification of Christian charity, and a happy proof how practicable it is for churches actuated by that divine spirit to live in undisturbed harmony.

This comprehension, however, was broken up so soon as the spirit of forbearance deserted the hierarchy. On the appointment of the intolerent but unfortunate Strafford to the government of Ireland, incited by Laud, he urged the northern prelates to bring their clergy into exact and unsparing conformity to the ceremonies of the church. For this purpose, the English articles and canons were adopted by the Irish convocation, in 1634, though contrary to the wishes of the mild and tolerent Primate Usher. Armed with these canons, and supported by the tremendous powers of a High Commission court at Dublin, the Presbyterian ministers were quickly deposed, and vigorously persecuted by the bishops. Some died in their troubles, a few fled to Scotland, and others embarked for New England, at that time the asylum for all persecuted Protestants. Nor were the severities of Strafford and his partisans confined to the ministers. The nonconforming laity also suffered by fines, imprisonments, and confiscations. They were especially urged to take an oath, which went to bind them to pay unlimited obedience to all the royal commands; and on refusing this, which the vast majority of the people did, they were subjected to heavy penalties. These intolerent measures, however, which were inconsistent equally with Christian charity as with sound policy, contributed to the ultimate safety and security of the Presbyterians in the Ulster. They were the means of sending them in great numbers to Scotland during the year immediately preceding the rebellion of 1641; and thus were they saved from its horrors, and preserved to return after it had spent its force, and to re-



establish their church on still firmer foundations than before.

In 1642, many of the ministers returned to Ireland with the Scotch army which was at that time sent over to quell the rebellion. These ministers established the regular discipline of *Presbytery* both in the army and country, and diligently plied every effort to advance the interests of religion in the province, now deserted by the its bishops, and with few of their clergy remaining. Their efforts were crowned with success; and from this period we may date the commencement of that system of religious instruction which has elevated Ulster so far above the other provinces of the kingdom; which has made it the strong-hold of the reformed religion, the seat of manufactories, the abode of peace, industry, and civilisation. During the civil war which so long distracted Britain, and through all the fluctuation of parties that characterized that period, the Presbyterians of Ireland preserved the steady and consistent course of their brethren in England—hostile to the abuses, but firmly attached to the interests of a limited monarchy. They were opposed and persecuted both by the royalist and republican parties that for some time successfully bore the sway in Ulster. With the one they could not join because they proclaimed Charles without any restrictions as to religion: to the other they were obnoxious, because they condemned the murder of the king, reprobated the abolition of the House of Lords. During the sway of the parliamentary party in the north, which continued from 1650 till the Restoration, they suffered many privations. They lost their benefices and legal maintenance, the tithes and glebes having been appropriated by commissioners appointed by parliament; they were frequently imprisoned, and many banished to Scotland on account of the firmness and intrepidity with which they maintained the cause of the exiled king.

The restoration of Charles, however, which they contributed to promote, and to which they had anxiously looked forward as to the period of their deliverance, brought them no relief. On the contrary, a sharper per-

secution than any they had hitherto experienced arose. They were again deposed from the ministry by the bishops, though the king himself, on whom two of their number waited in person at Whitehall, had promised they should be protected. In one day, Jeremy Taylor declared nearly forty churches vacant in his diocese of Down and Connor. About one hundred ministers refused the terms of conformity, and once more took their lot amidst poverty, reproach, and persecution. Some of the bishops were unusually severe. Leslie, bishop of Raphoe, kept some ministers in confinement for nearly six years, on no other charge than that of Nonconformity. They were now obliged to lurk privately in the country, to hold their meetings either in private houses or in woods and glens; and though they often petitioned government, and stated their undisputed claims to its protection, yet for some time they were unable to procure any mitigation of these severities. Through the interposition of their friends, particularly Sir Arthur Forbes, Earl of Granard, and Sir John Clotworthy, Lord Massareene, they at length succeeded in drawing the attention of government to their situation. In consequence of this application, the severity of the bishops and their courts were repressed; they were permitted to erect places of worship, and received from government an annual salary in consideration of their former losses and sufferings. Under the short and unhappy reign of James the Second, this support and protection were withdrawn, so that when the prospect of deliverance from his tyrannical sway presented itself in the person of the Prince of Orange, they hailed it with ardent joy, and supported his cause in Ireland with intrepid zeal.

By William the Third, accordingly, they were amply favoured and protected. He doubled the sum they had formerly received from Charles, and secured to them the fullest toleration. His successor, Queen Ann, was by no means so favourable to the Presbyterian interest. In the beginning of her reign the Test Act, though long in force in England, was first imposed in Ireland, and the Presbyterians in the north suffered much by its enactment. The operation of this intolerent act in the city of London-

derry was peculiarly severe, and it may be quoted as an instance of its effects throughout the country. By it ten Presbyterian aldermen and twelve burgesses were forced to resign their corporation honours and emolument; though many of these men had signalized themselves in the noble stand that city made against the despotic arms of James and had borne innumerable privations for the establishment of that government which thus so ungratefully repaid them. During the whole of this reign they were subjected to many harassing and vexatious annoyances from the ecclesiastical courts; notwithstanding which, however, they continued to prosper as a church, and their congregations to increase in number and respectability.

They early declared for the Hanoverian succession, anticipating from that event the extension and permanent establishment of their religious liberty; and the result has equalled their most sanguine expectations. By the first of that family their religious privileges were secured and fixed on the broadest foundation. By George the Second, the right of solemnizing marriage—a right which had been exercised by their ministers from their first settlement in the kingdom—was solemnly recognized and established by the legislature. Under the long and truly paternal sway of George the Third, They continued to receive additional favours and privileges, among which we may especially notice the total repeal of the Test Act, and the liberal endowment of their congregations with an annual grant of nearly 15,000*l.*, secured on these terms, that it cannot be withheld from one while it is continued to the rest, and that government shall not in any way interfere with the discipline or constitution of the church. By his present Majesty, when in Dublin, a deputation from their body was received with marked attention; and to an address then presented they received an answer worthy of the Sovereign of these realms, and no less auspicious to them than to their dissenting brethren in other parts of the empire. The concluding paragraph is worthy of preservation:—“I have the fullest confidence in your faithful and firm attachment to my person and throne and you, may be assured of my con-

stant protection of those civil and religious liberties which are the birthright of my people.”

The Presbyterian church has now existed in Ulster above two centuries, and throughout all its vicissitudes has preserved the worship, discipline, and government peculiar to this denomination of Christians. Its accredited standards of doctrine are the same with those established in the church of Scotland.\* Its candidates for the sacred office are subjected to the same routine of examination and trial. Its church courts are constituted in a similar manner, with this exception, that in place of a general assembly of delegates, its supreme court is a synod which meets annually in June, and consists of all the ministers, with an elder from each congregation. Its ministers, being above two hundred in number, are chosen by the people, not presented to their charges by patrons, as in Scotland, and are associated in fifteen Presbyteries, which meet quarterly; and its congregations have their respective elderships or sessions, and are situated principally in Ulster, though a few be in some parts of Leinster and Connaught. On a moderate computation there is considerably above half a million of people in connexion with this church, consisting of the various classes of society, and including in it a large portion of the agricultural, commercial, and manufacturing wealth of the country. The Presbyterians of Ulster have long been proverbial for their probity, and industry, intelligence, enterprize, and independence; and, in point of general religious knowledge and moral conduct, may vie with any other denomination of Christians. Though they have been sometimes taunted by ignorant and prejudiced persons with loyalty and republicanism, yet their whole history evinces an unshaken attachment to the principles of the constitution, even in the worst of times. Both ministers and people are the staunch friends of civil and religious liberty, and on the great question of Catholic emancipation they have very generally given it their support.

Till within these few years candidates for the sacred

\* See the letter of the Rev. D. Davinson, subjoined to this article—  
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office among them were almost exclusively educated in Scotland, and were required to take the degree of master of arts at some of the universities there, before they could be admitted as students of divinity. But they are now generally educated at Belfast, where a college has been erected by the inhabitants of that enterprising town, and which has been adopted by the Presbyterian church for the education of its young men. Here lectures are delivered in the usual branches of a collegiate education, and the same discipline maintained as in the Scotch colleges. Its chairs are filled by learned and able professors, and the number of its students is annually increasing. It possesses strong claims to national support, and there is every reason to hope that this valuable seminary will shortly be endowed by government; and thus the Presbyterian clergy of Ireland, like those of the Roman Catholic church, be provided with a permanent place of home education.

Besides the general synod of Ulster, there are two other small bodies of Presbyterians in Ireland enjoying the same privileges with it. One is the Presbytery of Antrim, consisting of eight congregations lying in Belfast and its vicinity. It once formed a part of the synod, but is now a distinct body. It separated about a century ago, on the principle of non-subscription to the Westminster Confession of Faith, and its ministers are now considered as holding Arian sentiments. The other body is the Synod, or rather Presbytery, of Munster, consisting of ten congregations situated in Dublin and the principle towns of the south. They coincide more nearly with the Presbytery of Antrim than the general Synod of Ulster in their views of doctrine and discipline.

All these bodies, however, though thus differing in religious sentiments, cordially co-operate with one another in every thing that concerns the general interests of the Presbyterian church. They have produced several ministers who, notwithstanding the disadvantages of a provincial situation, and constant labours of parochial duty, have distinguished themselves as eminent writers in the reli-



gious world. Abernethy, who wrote on the attributes of God; Boyse, the author of many valuable sermons and controversial pieces; Duchal, who wrote on the presumptive evidences of Christianity; Leland, the famed antagonist of the Deistical writers of the last century; and Neilson, the author of several valuable works connected with the Greek and Irish languages, are more celebrated of their authors. Dr. Daniel Williams, founder of the Red Cross Street Library, &c., London, was for many years a minister of this church, as was also Mr. Emlyn, till his unjust persecution for Arianism in the Court of King's Bench in Dublin, drove him to England. They number among them many other able writers; but through the remoteness of their situation, and the difficulty and expense of publication, their works have never been adequately known in the world of letters.

It may be necessary to add further, that a branch of the Seceding, or Associate church of Scotland, is established in Ulster, who also maintain the Presbyterian worship and government. They were formerly divided into Burghers and Anti-burghers, but like their brethren in Scotland, they have lately united; and since their union have assumed, notwithstanding its manifest inappropriateness, the title of the Presbyterian Synod of Ireland. Its ministers are also educated at the Belfast College, and its congregations are endowed by government.

The whole number of Presbyterians in Ireland may be taken at near a million of people.

Those who are desirous of further information with respect to the Irish Presbyterians are referred to a new edition of "Palmer's Protestants Dissenters' Catechism," lately published at Belfast, containing an outline of their history drawn up by the Rev. James Smeaton Reid, Presbyterian minister at Carrickfergus. This gentleman, we understand, is at present engaged in collecting materials for publishing a full and enlarged history of this body, the only portion of the reformed church in these islands that has not been illustrated by the labours of the historian. It is now proposed to supply this obvious chasm in her ecclesiastical history, and to trace with minuteness

the several vicissitudes that have befallen this body from the accession of James the First till the present time.

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The foregoing interesting article was communicated by a very respectable Presbyterian clergyman of Ulster, with full liberty to diminish or add by way of improvement ; but nothing of the kind seemed necessary. The author of the "Sketch" will only subjoin a letter received by him from his intelligent and liberal friend, the Rev. David Davison, A. M., successor of the late Dr. Abraham Rees in his church, Jewin-street, London. Mr. Davison was formerly of Dundalk in Ireland, and is a competent judge of the preceding statement. His obliging letter, on the return of the communication, shall be inserted.

"18, *King's-square*, Nov. 4, 1826.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I have read the abstract of the history of the Irish Presbyterians with great care. It seems to me to embrace the chief facts connected with their establishment and present condition, and to be drawn up in a spirit of great candour. There is, however, one circumstance overlooked by the writer, which I consider of great importance, and which I take the liberty of supplying. The circumstance to which I allude ought to be introduced near the beginning of the first paragraph in the third page of the manuscript (page 149.) The writer, speaking of the doctrine and discipline of the Irish Presbyterian Church, states, that 'its accredited standards are the same with those established in the Church of Scotland.' This sentence is ambiguous, and is likely to mislead those who are unacquainted with the subject. The conformity between the two churches is rather apparent than real. The Westminster Confession of Faith is the real standard of the Church of Scotland, because every intrant into the ministry is obliged to subscribe it. Such was formerly the case in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, but the prac-

tice of subscription to the Westminster or to any other Confession has long fallen into disuse among the great majority of the Presbyteries of which the General Synod of Ulster is composed. The only ground on which it can be said that the accredited standards of the two churches are the same, is this, that the rule of Synod, which requires subscription, has never been formally repealed; and even this ground is removed by the adoption of a late code of discipline by the Synod, in which the question of subscription is left to the discretion of the several Presbyteries.

“It is also worthy of observation, with respect to this point, that some of the few Presbyteries which still insist upon subscription, receive it in a very modified form, and I have known instances where even *they* have altogether dispensed with it.

“I apprehend you will agree with me, that this is a circumstance by no means unworthy of notice, as it contributes to show the gradual increase of more enlarged and liberal views. This question was early agitated among the Irish Presbyterians. The Presbytery of Antrim separated from the general body, as the respectable writer of the abstract mentions, about a century ago, on the principle of Nonsubscription. Since that period the cause has continued to gain ground, till the non-subscribers are now become, as I have already stated, the great majority of the body.

“You may make what use you please of these observations, and hold me responsible for their accuracy.

“Believe me, my dear sir,

“Yours, very truly,

“DAVID DAVISON.”

“*Rev. Dr. Evans, &c. &c.*”

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Such is the original document received respecting the Presbyterians of Ireland—amounting to near a million of people. Their history is little known on this side of the water; but the intended publication of the *Rev. J. S. Reid* will prove a most acceptable present to the Christ-

ian world. His talents, industry, and liberality qualify him for the task he has undertaken, and there is every reason to suppose it will be executed in a manner which will yield general satisfaction.

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## INDEPENDENTS.

The *Independents*, or *Congregationalists*, who, as well as the Baptists, are an increasing body in this country, deny not only the subordination of the clergy, but also all *dependency* on other assemblies. Every congregation (say they) has in itself what is necessary for its own government, and is not subject to other churches, or to their deputies. Thus this *independency* of one church with respect to another has given rise to the appellation *Independents*; though this mode of church government is adopted by the Dissenters in general. The Independents, who are uniformly Calvinists, have been improperly confounded with the *Brownists*; for, notwithstanding they may have originally sprung from them, they excel them in the moderation of their sentiments, and in the order of their discipline. The first Independent or Congregational Church in England was established by a Mr. Jacob, in the year 1616; though a Mr. Robinson appears to have been the founder of this sect. "Those who first maintained" (says the late Rev. S. Palmer, who was an Independent) "this opinion were called *Congregationalists*, or Independents. This is the grand principle by which the Protestant Dissenters are distinguished, and in which they are all united. And this, indeed, is the only principle upon which their liberties can be maintained in their full extent; for, if every Christian society have not the right above mentioned, a door will be opened to human governors in affairs of religion. And it is no great matter whether they be members of the legislature, of a convocation, or an assembly, the authority of each being void of foundation in Scripture, and inconsistent with the natural rights of mankind." To this Independent or Congregational Denomination, belonged Dr.

John Owen, Dr. Isaac Watts, Dr. Philip Doddridge, and Job Orton, those ornaments of the Christian world. The *Brownists*, which have been just mentioned, were the followers of *Robert Brown*, a clergyman of the church of England, who lived about 1600. He inveighed against the ceremonies and discipline of the church, separated himself from her communion, and afterwards returned into her bosom. He appears to have been a persecuted man, of violent passions. He died in Northampton gaol, 1630, after boasting that he had been committed to thirty-two prisons, in some of which he could not see his hand at noon day! Such persecutions are disgraceful to humanity.

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### PÆDOBAPTISTS.

Before we proceed to the Baptists, it will be necessary just to remark, that *all* persons who *baptize infants*, are denominated *Pædobaptists*, from the Greek word *Παις*, which signifies *child* or *infant*, and *βαπτω*, to baptize. Of course the Established Church, the Presbyterians both in Scotland and England, together with the Independents, are all *Pædobaptists*; that is, baptizers of infants or children. Their reasons for this practice are to be found in Wall, Towgood, Addington, Williams, Horsey, Edwards, and others. They rest their arguments on the following circumstances:—That baptism has succeeded instead of the rite of circumcision; that *households*, probably (say they) including children, were baptized; that Jesus showed an affectionate regard for children; and finally, that it is the means of impressing the minds of parents with a sense of the duties which they owe their offspring, upon the right discharge of which depend the welfare and happiness of the rising generation. Persons engage themselves as sponsors in the Established Church, who promise that they will take care of the morals of the children; among other sects the parents are made answerable, who indeed are the most proper persons to undertake the arduous task, and to see it duly accomplished.



It is however remarkable, that Dr. Priestley, speaking of himself and followers, should declare, that they “baptize children more from the influence of settled custom, and through a desire of avoiding all disturbance, than from any fixed persuasion that they are under an *obligation* to baptized them !” — “History of the Corruptions of Christianity.”

The Rev. T. Belsham is the latest writer on Infant Baptism, defending it, not by the declarations of the New Testament, but from its prevalence in the early ages of Christian antiquity.

He has been replied to at some length by the Rev. Edwin Chapman of Deptford, in the “Four Lectures on Christian Baptism,” delivered during the month of March 1826, at Worship-street.

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## BAPTISTS,

### GENERAL AND PARTICULAR.

The *Baptists* are distinguished from other denominations respecting the mode and *subject* of Baptism. They contend that this ordinance should be administered by immersion only, which is enjoined, though not practised, by the Church of England. They also assert, that it should be administered to those alone who profess their belief in the Christian religion, and avow their determination of regulating their lives by its precepts. Some of the learned, however, suppose that the controversy is not so properly whether infants or adults should be baptized, as whether the rite should be administered on the profession of our *own* faith, or on that of *another's* faith. See New Edition of a valuable “Practical Discourse concerning Baptism,” by the late William Foot, a General Baptist minister at Bristol, with “A Fragment on Christian Communion,” with a liberal Preface, by the Rev. W. H. Murch of Frome. “An Answer to the Question, Why are you a Baptist?” is a neat manual on the subject.

The Baptists are divided into the *General*, who are

Arminians, and into the *Particular* who are Calvinists. Some of both classes allow *mixed communion*, by which is understood, that those who have not been baptized by immersion on the profession of their faith (but in their infancy, which they themselves deem valid) may sit down at the Lord's table along with those who have been thus baptized. This has given rise to much controversy on the subject. Mr. Killingworth and Mr. Abraham Booth wrote against free communion; but John Bunyan, Dr. James Foster, Mr. Charles Bulkely, Mr. John Wiche, for many years a respectable General Baptist minister at Maidstone, and Robert Robinson of Cambridge, contended for it. The Rev. Robert Hall and the Rev. Joseph Kinghorne have lately distinguished themselves in this controversy. The former has written in favour, and the latter against Free Communion. The Rev. R. Hall has epitomized his arguments in a pamphlet, entitled "Reasons for Christian, not Party, Communion," written with his usual talent and liberality; whilst the Rev. Mr. Ivimey has lost no time in replying to it. An "Address to the opposers of Free Communion," written by Micajah Towgood, will be found at the end of his excellent Biography, by the Rev. James Manning, of Exeter. It is a circumstance worthy of being recorded, and the truth of which was confirmed to me by the late Rev. Thomas Dunscombe, of Broughton in Hampshire, that a gentleman of Clapham left a sum to be distributed among several Baptist churches, who should not forbid a Pædobaptist from sitting down with them at the Lord's table! This legacy displays the liberality of the deceased, and reflects honour on his memory. Free communion is gaining ground among the Baptists in Rhode Island and other parts of the United States of America.

The most complete volume on *Adult Baptism*, is "Four Lectures, delivered at Worship-street Meeting-house, near Finsbury-square, London, during the month of March, 1826, on the History, the Subjects and Mode, the Perpetuity and the practical Uses of Christian Baptism; by John Evans, LL. D., Edwin Chapman, James Gilchrist, and David Eaton." This work enters fully into the sub-

ject, and has excited much attention. Replies to the Lectures on the Perpetuity, and Answers to those Replies, have appeared in the old series of the Monthly Repository. Dr. John Jones has broached a new mode of setting aside its perpetuity, by insisting on a metaphorical baptism, without water—intended by our Saviour in his command to the apostles, Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them—not in water—but as into three sacred streams,—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, &c. This perfectly novel mode of administering Christian baptism is elaborately disproved in a paper of some length appended to the November No., 1826, of the “Monthly Repository.” There has been also a spirited controversy on baptism between Dr. Cox of Hackney, and Dr. Wardlaw of Glasgow. Would that the baptismal contest were never disunited from Christian charity!

The *General Baptists* have, in some of their churches, three distinct orders separately ordained—Messengers, Elders, and Deacons; and their General Assembly (when a minister preaches, and the affairs of the churches are taken into consideration) is held annually in Worship street, London, on the Tuesday in the Whitsum week, and they afterwards dine together with cordiality. They have thus met for upwards of a century. Dr. John Gale, a learned General Baptist, had a famous controversy, in the beginning of the last century, with Dr. Wall, vicar of Shoreham, who defended the practice of baptizing infants by immersion. But there has been a more recent controversy on the subject, between the late Abraham Booth and Dr. Williams. For an account of “The New Connexion of General Baptists,” in the middle counties, the reader is referred to Adam Taylor’s “History of the General Baptists,” in two volumes. Robert Robinson published an elaborate work, entitled “The History of Baptism,” illustrated with plates of the ancient fonts, &c., which he characterises at the close of his preface in these modest and appropriate words: “I feel happy, on reflection, that I did not set about this work on any motives below the dignity of a Christian, nor am I aware that I have prostituted my pen to serve a party, or once dipped

it in gall. Errors, undoutedly, there are many ; but when did any individual of my species produce a work of absolute perfection ? Such as it is I commend it to the candid perusal of my brethren.”

To the class of *Anti-trinitarian General Baptists*, it has been no small gratification to find the immortal John Milton amongst them. In his recently-discovered theological work, he avows himself to be a Baptist, in these memorable words : “Under the Gospel, the first of the sacraments, commonly so called, is Baptism, wherein the bodies of believers who engage themselves to pureness of life are immersed in *running* water, to signify their regeneration by the Holy Spirit, and their union with Christ in death, burial, and resurrection.” Dr. Sumner, the translator, has this note on the passage : “*In profluentem aquam.*—By the admission of this word into the definition, it is evident that Milton attributed some importance to this circumstance ; probably considering that the superior purity of *running* water was peculiarly typical of the thing signified. Hence it appears that the same epithet, employed in ‘Paradise Lost,’ in a passage very similar to the present, is not merely a poetical ornament :

—————Them who shall believe,  
Baptizing in the *profluent* stream—the sign  
Of washing them from guilt of sin to life,  
Pure and in mind prepared,—if so befall,—  
For death, like that which the Redeemer died.

Book xii. 441.

Tertullian concludes differently, arguing that *any* water which can be conveniently procured is sufficient for the spirit of the ordinance.” Many ministers in Wales prefer, with Milton, the *running* water, and therefore baptize, as I have often seen them, in the rivers of the Principality. This great man was decidedly in favour of the *perpetuity* of baptism ; using, however, these remarkable words : “Indeed I should be disposed to consider baptism as necessary for proselytes, and not for those born in the church, had not the apostle taught that baptism is not merely an initiatory rite, but a figurative representation of our death, burial, and resurrection with Christ.” Mil-



ton examines the passages adduced in behalf of infant baptism, showing their irrelevancy in this long, and often not over-chritable controversy.

The propriety of the exclusive appellation of the term Baptists to those who baptize *adults by immersion*, has been questioned. Hence they are by many styled *Anti-pædobaptists*, merely as opposing the validity of infant baptism. But the term *Anabaptist* ought never to be applied to them. It is a term of reproach. The use of it is an indication of a want both of information and liberality.

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#### DISSENTING ACADEMIES.

The *Three* denominations of *Protestant Dissenters* possess their own *Seminaries*, where young men designed for the Christian ministry are educated. Among the *Presbyterians* are to be reckoned the academies at York, under the Rev. Mr. Wellbeloved, and at Caermarthen, in South Wales, under the Rev. Mr. Peters; besides six exhibitions granted by Dr. Daniel Williams, to English Presbyterian students to be educated at Glasgow. Among the *Independants* are to be mentioned the academies at Wymondley-house, near Hitchin; at Homerton, under Dr. Pye Smith; and at Highbury, Islington, under Dr. Harris. The latter is a recently-built edifice, beautifully situated, and does credit to their taste and liberality. The academy at Wymondley-house, conducted by the Rev. Mr. Morell, was originally under the care of Dr. Philip Doddridge, of Northampton; upon his decease it was assigned to Dr. Ashworth, of Daventry; but afterwards removed to Northampton, where the Rev. John Horsey superintended it for many years in a manner which did credit to his talents and piety. There is also an academy of *Lady Huntingdon's*, formerly at Trevecka, South Wales, now at Cheshunt. The *Baptists* have two exhibitions for students to be educated for four years, at one of the universities in Scotland (formerly Aberdeen, now



Edinburgh), given them by Dr. Ward, of Gresham College, the erudite author of "The System of Oratory."

There is likewise an academy at Bristol, belonging to the Particular Baptists, known by the name of The Bristol Education Society, over which the late Dr. Caleb Evans, together with his venerable father, the Rev. Hugh Evans, aided by the Rev. James Newton and the Rev. Robert Hall, presided for years with respectability. It is now under the care of the Rev. Messrs, Crisp, and Anderson, and a large structure, which cost nearly 10,000*l.* has been built, with accomodations for the thirty students. Here is an excellent library, part of which was a legacy from the late Drs. Llewellyn and Gifford; also a Museum, containing a well-executed medallion of their former active and liberal president, Dr. Caleb Evans; a painted window, representing scriptural scenes; a collection of idols from the East Indies, and a specimen of the translation of the sacred writings into the Eastern languages, by Dr. Carey, of Serampore, one of their own Baptist missionaries. The Particular Baptists have another academy, under the Rev. W. Steadman, at Bradford, Yorkshire; and a third has been established by them at Mile-End, having, during many years, for its president the Rev. William Newman, D. D., now retired. A similar institution among the General Baptists has met with encouragement. It was under the superintendance of the author of "The Sketch of the Denominations." upwards of twenty years, but it has lately been transferred to the Rev. James Gilchrist, Newington-green. The General Baptists of the New Connexion have an academy for the education of young ministers, under the Rev. Mr. Jerrom, of Wisbeach. A liberal education, both among Churchmen and Dissenters, lays the foundation for a respectable Christian ministry.

The Protestant Dissenting Ministers obtain their literary degrees either from Scotland or the United States of America, for they are excluded from the national universities of Oxford and Cambridge, by the imposition of oaths, which no conscientious Nonconformist can take on his admission. The term *university* is a misnomer, when it

throws not open its gates to all classes of the community! An Alma Mater should be bountiful, without invidious discrimination.

Every enlightened and liberal mind must hail the approaching erection of the *London University*, where no invidious distinctions will exist, being thrown open for the admission of all who are friendly to the intellectual and moral improvement of mankind.

Dr. Daniel Williams, in 1711, "gave the bulk of his estate to charitable uses, as excellent in their nature as they were various in their kinds, and as much calculated for the glory of God, and the good of mankind, as any that have ever been known. He left his library for public use, and ordered a convenient place to be purchased or erected, in which the books might be properly disposed of, and left an annuity for a librarian. A commodious house was accordingly erected in Red-Cross-street, Cripple-gate, where his collection of books is not only properly preserved, but has been gradually receiving large additions. This is also the place in which the body of the Dissenting Ministers meet to transact their business, and is a kind of repository for paintings of Non-conformist ministers, for MSS., and other matters of curiosity and utility." The building itself belongs to the Presbyterians, but it is by the trustees (23 in number, viz., 14 ministers, and nine lay gentlemen) handsomely devoted to the use of the Dissenters. Hence it is that the general body of Dissenting ministers of the three denominations meet here to transact public business, when called together, while at the annual meeting the secretary reports the changes that have taken place during the last year. The Library, since its original endowment, has been augmented by the donations of liberal-minded persons, and, lately, part of the founder's estate is appropriated for the purpose. Were every dissenting author, however, to send thither a copy of his publications (a measure that has been recommended, and ought to be adopted,) the collection would soon receive a considerable augmentation. A second edition of the catalogue, in one volume octavo, has been published,

with the rules respecting the use of it prefixed. Here, at a small expense, the births of the children of Dissenters are registered by the librarian, a circumstance which has been much neglected, but is deserving of special attention. The Rev. John Coates is the present librarian, and the library is open till three o'clock in the afternoon, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday excepted. A mummy, very old, but in high preservation, and a large skeleton of the first person executed on the Black Act, together with many valuable manuscripts, are among the curiosities of the institution.

Near to this spot stands *Sion College*, in London Wall, where the London Clergy meet to transact business, founded by Dr. Thomas White, formerly vicar of St. Dunstan in the West, who, among other charities, left 3000*l.* to purchase and build a college for the use of the London Clergy, with alms-houses for ten men and ten women. He also gave 160*l.* a-year for ever to the college and alms-houses, being 120*l.* for the support of alms-people, and 40*l.* per annum for the expenses of the foundation. A charter was procured in the reign of Charles I., for incorporating the clergy of London, by which all the rectors, vicars lecturers, and curates are constituted fellows of the college. The Rev. J. Simpson, rector of St. Olave's Hart-street, one of Dr. White's executors, enlarged the institution, by building, at his own expense, a library over the alms-houses, in which there is an extensive collection of books. The edifice was destroyed by the great fire of London. The present building, of plain brick, with a Latin inscription over its entrance, having been repaired, has the appearance of respectability.

Intelligent and liberal, zealous and faithful Ministers of the Gospel of every denomination under heaven, are blessings to the community. By their labours they build up the goodly fabric of sound morals, so essentially requisite to the well-being of individuals and of society, reared upon its only permanent basis, a rational and unaffected piety—

Thus fired by Virtue's animating flame,  
 The preacher's task persuasive sages claim—  
 To mould religion to the moral mind,  
 In bands of peace to harmonise mankind;  
 To life and light, and promised joys above,  
 The softened soul with ardent hope to move!  
 Though different creeds their priestly robes denote,  
 Their orders various, and their rites remote,  
 Yet one their voice—their labours all combined,  
 Lights of the world, and friends of human kind;—  
 So the bright galaxy o'er heaven displays  
 Of various stars the same unbounded blaze,  
 Where great and small their mingling rays unite,  
 And earth and skies exchange their friendly light.  
*Columbiad.*

Learning is the handmaid of Piety, nor are its energies  
 ever more honourably employed than in upholding the  
 interests, as well as in promoting the spirit of true religion,  
 throughout the world.

## TWENTY-FOUR

### MISCELLANEOUS SECTS.

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To the preceding systematical distribution of the several denominations of the Christian world, shall be added a few sects, which cannot fall under the three general divisions which have been adopted.

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### QUAKERS, OR THE FRIENDS.

The *Quakers* appeared in England about the year 1550. See "A Summary of the History, Doctrines, and Discipline of Friends, written at the desire of the Meeting for Sufferings in London." This pamphlet was published at the end of the work, entitled "A refutation of some of the more modern Misrepresentations of the Society of Friends, commonly called Quakers, with a Life of James Nayler," by Joseph Gurney Bevan.

It is difficult to give a specific statement of their tenets; but they may be found in a well-written "Apology," by Robert Barclay, a learned Quaker, who died in Scotland, 1690. George Fox, the founder of this sect, was born 1624. He exhibited few articles of faith, and insisted mostly on morality, mutual charity, and the love of God. The religion and worship he recommended was simple and without ceremonies. To wait in profound silence for *the influence of the Spirit*, was one of the chief points he inculcated.

The Quakers have places of worship, where they regularly assemble on the first and other days of the week, though sometimes without vocal prayer, or any religious



exhortation. They reject the celebration of of water-baptism and the Lord's Supper as outward ordinances ; have no distinct order of ministers, though their speakers are under certain regulations ; and being firm opposers of the Calvinistic doctrines of Election and Reprobation, are advocates of the Arminian system of doctrine, so far at least as respects the universal love of God to man, in order to his salvation.

Their internal government is much admired : their own poor are supported without parochial aid, and their industry and sobriety are deserving of imitation. They also reprobate the destructive practice of war, the infamous traffic in slaves, and profess their abhorrence of religious persecution. Refusing to pay tithes as an *antichristian* imposition, they suffer the loss of their goods and of their liberty, rather than comply with the demand, and their losses are emphatically termed by them *sufferings*. Many have endured long imprisonments on that account. The Quakers object to all oaths, as having been prohibited by Christ, when he said, "swear not at all ;" and their affirmation is permitted in all civil, but not in criminal cases. In the tyrannical reign of the Stuarts, the Friends suffered, in common with the Puritans, the severest persecution. Even the famous William Penn was tried at the Old Bailey ; and his defence on the trial, an account of which is to be found in his works, is honourable to his legal knowledge, fortitude, and integrity. A cheap edition of this trial has been printed for general circulation. It presents a sad picture of the times, and is an eloquent comment on the wretched consequences of religious bigotry.

With regard to *the resurrection of the body*, they have deemed it more safe not to determine how or when we shall be raised ; yet they have a firm belief in a resurrection of the dead, and in a future state of retribution.

Sewell, in his "History of the Society," expresses himself in behalf of a resurrection, but without determining the mode in which infinite wisdom may preserve a consciousness of identity in another stage of our existence ; and Barclay, in his confession and catechism, used only

the words of Scripture on the subject, without expressing the manner in which he understood them. The same remark applies to his account of the divinity of Christ, though it appears, by the whole tenor of the tenth chapter of his "Catechism," and the seventeenth article of his "Confession of Faith," concerning worship,\* that he held worship, strictly speaking, to be due to the Father only; nor does he quote in either of the selections any of the texts which are supposed also to authorize offering up prayers to Christ; and he is wholly silent respecting the doctrine of the Trinity in his "Apology." But it seems that William Penn was more explicit on the subject; and no writer of acknowledged reputation among them has admitted any distinction of persons in the Deity, or in the mode of his existence, which in some form or other is maintained by all who can be properly termed Trinitarians. In Penn's "Sandy Foundation Shaken," he speaks with freedom against many doctrines which are held in general estimation. The title of the book speaks for itself, and shall be transcribed: "The Sandy Foundation Shaken, or those so generally believed and applauded doctrines, of one God subsisting in three distinct and separate persons: the impossibility of God's pardoning sin without a plenary satisfaction: the qualification of impure persons by an imputative righteousness, refuted from the authority of Scripture testimonies and right reason." See a learned defence of this work by Richard Clarridge, published in his posthumous works in 1726.

It appears that Penn, having in his work reprobated the leading doctrines of Calvinism, a violent outcry was raised against him. He therefore vindicated himself in a pamphlet, called "Innocency with her open Face," in which he says—"As for my being a Socinian, I must confess I have read of one Socinus, of (what they call) a noble family in Sene, Italy, who, about the year 1574, being a young man, voluntarily did abandon the glories, pleasures, and honours of the Great Duke of Tuscany's court at Florence, that noted place for all worldly delicacies, and

\* Barclay's Works, vol. i. pp. 258 to 261, and 300, 8vo.

became a perpetual exile for his conscience, whose parts, wisdom, gravity, and just behaviour made him the most famous with the Polonian and Transylvanian churches; but I was never baptized into *his* name, and therefore deny that reproachful epithet; and if in any thing I acknowledge the verity of his doctrine, it is for the truth's sake, of which in many things he had a clearer prospect than most of his contemporaries: but not therefore a Socinian any more than a son of the English church, whilst esteemed a Quaker, because I justify many of *her* principles since the Reformation against the Romish church." But we will add another paragraph, where Penn's principles are epitomised. "And to shut up my apology for religious matters, that all may see the simplicity, scripture doctrine, and phrase of my faith, in the most important matters of eternal life, I shall here subjoin a short *confession*:—

"I sincerely own and unfeignedly believe (by virtue of the sound knowledge and experience received from the gift of that holy unction and divine grace inspired from on high) in one holy, just, merciful, almighty, and eternal God, who is the father of all things; that appeared to the holy patriarchs and prophets of old, at sundry times and in divers manners; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the everlasting Wisdom, divine power, true light, only saviour, and preserver of all; the same one, holy, just, merciful, almighty, and eternal God, who, in the fullness of time, took and was manifest in the flesh, at which time he preached, and his disciples after him, the everlasting gospel of repentance, and promise of remission of sins, and eternal life to all that heard and obeyed; who said, he that is with you (in the flesh) shall be in you (by the spirit); and though he left them (as to the flesh,) yet not comfortless, for he would come to them again (in the spirit;) for a little while, and they should not see him (as to the flesh); again, a little while, and they should see him (in the spirit;) for the Lord (Jesus Christ) is that spirit, a manifestation whereof is given to every one, to profit withal;—in which Holy Spirit I believe, as the same almighty and eternal God, who, as in those times he ended

all shadows, and became the infallible guide to them that walked therein, by which they were adopted heirs and co-heirs of glory ; so am I a living witness that the same holy, just, merciful, almighty, and eternal God, is now, as then, after this tedious night of idolatry, superstition, and human inventions, that hath overspread the world gloriously manifested to discover and save from all iniquity, and to conduct unto the holy land of pure and endless peace ; in a word, to tabernacle in men. And I also firmly believe, that without repenting and forsaking of past sins, and walking in obedience to the heavenly voice, which would guide into all truth, and establish there, remission and eternal life can never be obtained ; but unto them that fear his name and keep his comandments, they, and they only, shall have a right to the tree of life ; for whose name's sake I have been made willing to relinquish and forsake all the vain fashion, enticing pleasures, alluring honours, and glittering glories of this transitory world, and readily to accept the portion of a fool from this deriding generation, and become a man of sorrow, and a perpetual reproach to my familiars ; yea and with the greatest cheerfulness can obsignate and confirm (with no less zeal, than the loss of whatsoever this doating world accounts dear) this faithful confession ; having my eye fixed upon a more enduring substance and lasting inheritance, and being most infallibly assured that, when time shall be no more, I shall, if faithful hereunto, possess the mansions of eternal life, and be received into his everlasting habitation of rest and glory !”

This is an explicit declaration of the principles of Quakerism, taken from the works of William Penn ; because, of all their writers, he is, in general, the most perspicuous, and, as to his character, possesses a high respectability. See Clarkson's " Life of Penn," where his principles and history will be found detailed.

Indeed, there seems to be a much greater uniformity in their dress than in their opinions, though it is probable that the generality of them adhere to the fundamental doctrines of the gospel. As a proof of the diversity of opinion amongst them, we may refer to the proceedings



of the Society against Hannah Barnard, a celebrated speaker from Hudson, New York, in North America, lately deceased. For her opinions respecting the Jewish wars, and the miraculous conception and miracles of Christ, she was first silenced, and afterwards in America disowned.

There are seven *Yearly Meetings* among them, by each of which all rules and advices are formed for the general government of the society in the countries where they are respectively established. And no member of the society is precluded from attending, or partaking in the deliberations of these assemblies, which are nevertheless, strictly speaking, constituted of representatives, by regular appointment from each quarterly meeting. The following are the seven yearly meetings: 1. London, to which come representatives from Ireland; 2. New England; 3. New York; 4. Pennsylvania and New Jersey; 5. Maryland; 6. Virginia; 7. The Carolinas and Georgia. The form and colour of their clothes, together with their modes of salutation, though they themselves consider them as most consistent with that simplicity and gravity which the Gospel inculcates, have been thought to savour of affectation; they certainly exhibit a striking contrast to the frippery and courtesy of modern times. At Ackworth they have a respectable school, to which Dr. Fothergill left legacies, and where about one hundred and eighty boys, and one hundred and twenty girls are educated. Towards the close of the sixteenth century, William Penn, who founded Pennsylvania, introduced and established a colony of them in America. His treaty with the Indians on that occasion has formed a subject for the pencil, and reflects immortal honour on his philanthropy.

In addition to the treatises mentioned as written by the Friends, the reader is referred to the following works: "The Faith of the People called Quakers in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," &c., by Henry Tuke; "The Principles of Religion, as professed by the Society of Christians called Quakers," &c., by the same author; "Thoughts on Reason and Revelation, &c., by Joseph Gurney Bevan. But the work which has most excited



the public attention, and perhaps because the author is not one of the Society, is Clarkson's "Portraiture of Quakerism," in three volumes 8vo. It contains much information respecting them. Some are inclined to think that the Society is here described rather as they ought to be, than as they are; but the reader is recommended to the perusal of the work itself, when he will have it in his power to form his own judgment respecting its justness and fidelity. Mr. Clarkson calls the sentiments of the Friends respecting Government, Oaths, War, and the Maintenance of a Gospel Ministry, the *Four* great Tenets of the Society. See also "Devotional and Doctrinal Extracts from Epistles of the Yearly Meetings in London of the People called Quakers, from the year 1678 to 1810, dedicated to the Friends, and especially to the Rising Generation among them."

Mr. Gurney, of Norwich, has published an elegant and copious statement of "The Principles of the Friends," and also "A View of the Evidences of Christianity."

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## METHODISTS,

BOTH CALVINISTIC AND ARMINIAN,

Including the Followers of JOHN WESLEY, of GEORGE WHITEFIELD, and the Countess of HUNTINGDON.

The Methodists in this country form a large part of the community. In the year 1729, they sprang up at Oxford, under Mr. Morgan, who soon after died, and under Mr. John Wesley. In the month of November of that year, the latter being then fellow of Lincoln College, began to spend some evenings in reading the Greek New Testament, along with Charles Wesley, student, Mr. Morgan, commoner, of Christ Church, and Mr. Kirkman, of Merton College. Next year two or three of the pupils of Mr. John Wesley, and one pupil of Mr. Charles Wesley, obtained leave to attend these meetings. Two years after they were joined by Mr. Ingham, of Queen's

College, Mr. Broughton, of Exeter, and Mr. James Herve, and in 1735 they were joined by the celebrated Mr. Whitefield, then in his 18th year. They soon obtained the name of *Methodists*, from the exact regularity of their lives, which gave occasion to a young gentleman of Christ Church to say, "Here is a new sect of Methodists sprung up!" alluding to a sect of ancient physicians, who practiced medicine by *method*, or regular rules, in opposition to quackery or empiricism. Thus was the term *Methodists* originally applied to this body of Christians, on account of the *methodical* strictness of their lives; but it is now by some indiscriminately appropriated to every individual who manifests a more than ordinary concern for the salvation of mankind.

These heads differing soon afterwards in religious sentiments, their followers distributed themselves into two parties, the one under the late Rev. Geo. Whitefield, the other under Messrs. John and Chas. Wesley. Educated at Oxford, these leaders still continued to profess an attachment to the articles and liturgy of the established church, though they more commonly adopted the mode of worship which prevails among the Dissenters. Upon their being excluded from the pulpits in many churches, they took to preaching in the fields; and from the novelty of the thing, in conjunction with the fervour of their exertions, they were attended by some thousands of people! In their public labours, Mr. Whitefield having a most sonorous voice, was remarkable for an engaging and powerful eloquence: whilst Mr. John Wesley, being less under the influence of his passions, possessed, both in writing and preaching, a perspicuous and commanding simplicity.

Even their enemies confess that the Methodists have contributed to reform the lower classes of the community. The Colliers at Kingswood, near Bristol, and the tanners in Cornwall, were greatly benefitted by their exertions. In consequence of their attention to the religion of Jesus, by the instrumentality of these preachers, many of them rose to a degree of respectability, and became valuable members of society. The followers of Mr. Wesley are

Arminians, though some of his preachers incline to Baxterianism. The followers of Mr. Whitefield are Calvinists, and were patronized by the late Countess Dowager of Huntingdon, to whom Mr. Whitefield was chaplain, and who was a lady of great benevolence and piety. The late Lady Erskine, a relation of the celebrated Erskine, took her situation, and was said to be equally attentive to the concerns of this part of the religious community. With respect to the splitting of the Methodists into Calvinists and Arminians, it happened so far back as the year 1741, the former being for *Particular*, and the latter for *Universal* redemption.

The late Lord Erskine reading the above paragraph, sent me the following communication, which I insert with pleasure : “The person you allude to was Lady Ann Agnes Erskine ; and I consider it to be the highest illustration of my name and family that she was my sister, because I am confident that since the beginning of the Christian era, there never was a human being (I can except no saint or martyr) more evangelical, more rationally devout, or more fervently zealous, or distinguished by a more exalted and, as men too vainly describe it in their favour, a more masculine understanding !”

The distinguishing principles of Methodism are, salvation by faith in Jesus Christ ; perceptible and, in some cases, instantaneous conversion, and an assurance of reconciliation to God, with which, they say, the new birth, or being born again, is inseparably attended. On these doctrines they lay the utmost stress ; and much curious information respecting these topics will be found in the late Dr. Haweis’s “History of the Church of Christ.” This work, however, is deficient in references to authorities, the soul and substance of history. Several persons have written the Life of Mr. Wesley ; there is one by Mr. Hampson, another by Dr. Whitehead, and a third by Dr. Coke and Mr. More. Whitefield’s Life was drawn up by the late Dr. Gillies, of Glasgow. Mr. Wesley and Mr. Whitefield both published accounts of their itinerant labours in this kingdom and in America. These sketches are entitled “Journals,” and though containing many

strange things, serve to illustrate the progress of Methodism. Mr. Hampson, in his "Memoirs of Mr. Wesley," a well-written work, says, "If they possess not much knowledge, which, however, we do not know to be the case, it is at least certain they are not deficient in zeal; and, without any passionate desire to imitate their example, we may, at least, commend their endeavours for the general good. Every good man will contemplate with pleasure the operation of the spirit of reformation, whether foreign or domestic, and will rejoice in every attempt to propogate Christianity in the barbarous parts of the world, an attempt which, if in any tolerable degree successful, will do infinitely more for their civilization and happiness, than all the united energies of the philosophical infidels, those boasted benefactors of mankind."

The Eighty-eighth Annual Conference of the Methodist Preachers was held at Liverpool, July 26, 1826. It was there reported, that the number of members in Great Britain is 231,045, being an increase of 1378 during the past year; in Ireland, 22,514, being an increase of 437; in foreign stations, 32,960, being an increase of 626. Total, 286,519; increase during the past year, 2,441 members. The grand total of Wesleyan Methodists through the world is 630,081, of whom 2418 are preachers in the Connexion. In their Address to the American Methodist Bishops, the Conference acknowledge that the times have injured them, adding, "We cannot this year report a very large increase of numbers, but we trust that we are still favoured with a considerable degree of religious prosperity."

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## NEW METHODISTS.

The *New Methodist Connexion*, among the followers of Mr. Wesley, separated from the original Methodists in 1797. The grounds of this separation they declare to be *church-government*, and not doctrines, as affirmed by some of their opponents. They object to the old Methodists for having formed a hierarchy, or priestly corporation, and

say that, in so doing, they have robbed the people of those privileges which, as members of a Christian church, they are entitled to by reason and scripture. The New Methodists have established every part of their church-government on popular principles, and profess to have united, as much as possible, the ministers and the people in every department of it. This is quite contrary to the original government of the Methodists, which, in the most important cases, is confined only to the ministers. This, indeed, appears most plainly, when the Conference, or Yearly Meeting, is considered; for in this meeting no person who is not a travelling preacher, has ever been suffered to enter as a member of it; and, indeed, this is the point to which the preachers have always steadfastly adhered with the utmost firmness and resolution, and on which the division at present entirely rests. They are also upbraided by the New Methodists, for having abused the power they have assumed; a great many of these abuses the New Methodists have formally protested against which are enumerated in various publications, and particularly in the Preface to the Life of one of their deceased friends, Mr. Alexander Kilham. Hence these New Methodists have been sometimes denominated *Kilhamites*.

Though these are the points on which the division seems principally to have rested, yet there are several other things that have contributed to it. It is frequently easy to foresee and to calculate the future changes in society that the lapse of time will produce; and in no instance is this observation better warranted than in this division, which most persons have long expected. The old attachment of the Methodists to the Established Church, which originated in Mr. Wesley, and was cherished by him and many of the preachers by all possible means, and also the dislike to these sentiments in many others of the preachers, and of the societies, were never-failing subjects of contention. As all parties are distinguished in their contests by some badge or discriminating circumstance, so here the receiving, or not receiving, the Lord's Supper in the established Church, was long



considered as the criterion of Methodistical zeal or disaffection. Thus the rupture that had been long foreseen by intelligent persons, and for which the minds of the Methodists had been undesignedly prepared, became inevitable, when Mr. Wesley's influence no longer interfered. Soon after Mr. Wesley's death, many things had a tendency to displease the societies, and bring forward the division. Many petitions having been sent by the societies to the preachers, requesting to have the Lord's Supper administered to them in their own chapels, the people had the mortification to find that this question was decided by lot, and not by the use of reason and serious discussion !

The New Methodists profess to proceed upon liberal, open, and ingenuous principles in the construction of their plan of church-government ; and their ultimate decision, in all disputed matters, is in their popular annual assembly, chosen, by certain rules, from among the preachers and societies. These professions are at least generous and liberal ; but as this sect has yet continued for only a short season, little can be said of it for the present. It becomes matter of curious conjecture and speculation, how far the leading persons among them will act agreeably to their present liberal professions. If they should become firmly established in power and influence, and have the opportunity of acting otherwise, they have at least the advantage of the example of their late brethren, and of Dr. Priestley's remarks upon them. Speaking of the leading men among the Methodists, the Doctor says —“ Finding themselves by degrees at the head of a large body of people, and in considerable power and influence they must not have been men, if they had not felt the love of power gratified in such a situation ; and they must have been more than men, if their subsequent conduct had not been influenced by it.” A shrewd hint, that Dr. P. thought the Methodists had been too remiss in their attention to their liberties, which they ought to convey down entire and unmutillated to posterity.\*

\* This article was sent to the Editor by a correspondent at Nottingham, and is inserted with a few alterations and additions.

## PRIMITIVE METHODISTS, OR RANTERS.

*With their Camp Meetings.*

These are a *disowned* branch of the Wesleyan Methodists, originating in Staffordshire, under Hugh Bourne, who wrote their history. This is a small pamphlet, entitled, "History of the Primitive Methodists, giving an Account of their Rise and Progress, up to the year 1823," by Hugh Bourne, Bemersley, near Tunstall, printed for the author, at the office of the Primitive Methodist Connexion, by J. Bourne. This J. Bourne, printer, is a preacher, together with his brother, Hugh Bourne, under both of whose labours has arisen the Primitive Connexion. It commenced at Harreshead, and on Mow\* the first Camp-meetings being disapproved of by the old Connexion, a separation took place, when H. and J. Bourne enlarged their views, and the cause spread in every direction. Societies were established at Boylstone, Todeley, and Hallington, in Derbyshire. A general meeting was held at Tunstall, Feb. 13, 1812, and a preparatory meeting at Nottingham, Aug. 18, 1819, when arrangements were made for annual meetings, quarterly meetings having been held in March, June, September, and December, under which "the work mightily enlarged." Missionary exertions, which had been declining, were revived at Belper "very powerfully," while "the praying people, in returning home, were accustomed to sing through the streets of Belper!" It is added, that "this circumstance procured them the name of *Ranters*, and the name of *Ranter*, which first arose on this occasion, afterwards spread very extensively." The work, we are told, then spread to Derby and Nottingham, whence circuits were established, one circuit having been hitherto sufficient for the Connexion. The camp-meetings also had declined, but were thus revived.

"The declining state of the camp-meetings was severely felt in the circuit, and caused considerable anxiety ;

\* Mow, a large mountain between Staffordshire and Cheshire, five Miles from the Potteries.

but as much prayer and supplication was made to Almighty God, he, in the year 1816, pointed out both the evil and the remedy by the following means: H. Bourne had put into his hand, 'The Narrative of a Mission to Nova Scotia, New Brunswick,' &c., by J. Marsden, Methodist Missionary." The author, during his mission, visited New York, and attended several of the American camp-meetings. These meetings continue day and night, for several days together. He shows that they have sometimes four, and sometimes five preachings, in the course of twenty-four hours; and the intermediate time is filled up with services carried on by praying companies. He says, "During my continuance in this city, I had an opportunity of attending several camp-meetings, and as the nature of these stupendous means of grace is not distinctly known, I will spend a few moments in making my readers acquainted with them.

"The tents are generally pitched in the form of a crescent, in the centre of which is an elevated stand for the preachers, round which, in all directions, are placed rows of planks for the people to sit upon, while they hear the word. Among the trees, which spread their tops over this forest-church, are hung the lamps, which burn all night, and give light to the various exercises of religion which occupy the solemn midnight hours. As it was nearly eleven o'clock at night when I first arrived on the borders of a camp, I left the boat at the edge of the wood, one mile from the scene, though the sound of praise from such a multitude, and at such an hour, in the midst of a solitary wilderness, is difficult to describe; but when I opened upon the camp-ground, my curiosity was converted into astonishment, to behold the pendant lamps among the trees—the tents half encircling a large space—four thousand people in the centre of this, listening with profound attention to a preacher, whose stentorian voice and animated manner carried the vibration of each word to a great distance through the now deeply-umbrageous wood; where, save the twinkling lamps of the camp, brooding darkness spread a tenfold gloom;—all excited my astonishment, and forcibly brought before my view the Hebrews in the wilderness.

“The meetings generally begin on Monday morning, and on the Friday morning following break up. The daily exercises are carried forward in the following manner: In the morning at five o’clock, the horn sounds through the camp, either for public preaching or prayer; this, with smaller exercises, or a little intermission, brings on the breakfast hour, eight o’clock. At ten, the horn sounds for public preaching; after, which, until noon, the interval is filled up with little groups of praying persons, who scatter themselves up and down the camp, both in the tents and under the trees. As these smaller exercises are productive of much good, a powerful spirit of prayer and exhortation is often poured forth I have not unfrequently seen three or four persons lying on the ground, crying for mercy, or motionless, without any apparent signs of life except pulsation. After dinner, the horn sounds at two o’clock; this is for preaching. I should have observed, that a female or two is generally left in each tent, to prepare the proper materials for dinner, which is always cold meats, or pies, tarts, tea &c. (the use of ardent spirits being forbidden,) and a fire is kept burning in different parts of the camp, where the water is boiled. After the afternoon preaching, things take nearly the same course as in the morning, only the praying groups are upon a larger scale, and more scope is given to animated exhortations and loud prayers. Some who exercise on these occasions soon lose their voices, and, at the end of a camp-meeting, many, both preachers and people, can only speak in a whisper. At six o’clock in the evening the horn summons to preaching, after which, though in no regulated form, all the above means continue until morning: so that, go to whatever part of the camp you please, some are engaged in them; yea, and during whatever part of the night you awake, the wilderness is vocal with praise!

“At this camp-meeting, perhaps, not less than one hundred persons were awaked and converted to God. I have heard many say, that they never heard such praying, exhorting, and preaching anywhere else; and those who engage feel such a divine afflatus, that they are carried

along as by the force of a delightful torrent; indeed, this has been so much the case with myself, the several times I preached and exhorted at these meetings, that I was sensible of nothing but a constraining influence, transporting me beyond myself, carrying me along with a freedom and fulness, both of emotion and language, quite unusual, and yet I had no very friendly views of camp-meetings until I attended them; however, I am now satisfied that they are the right-hand of Methodism in the United States, and one main cause why the societies have doubled and trebled there within these few years."

The camp-meetings of the Ranters were first suggested, and then revived by the camp-meetings held throughout several parts of the United States of America.

The religious opinions of the Ranters assimilate to those of the original Connexion whence they separated. As singing forms a chief religious exercise, take the following hymn, which they shout forth with a tremendous vociferation: it is transcribed from a Collection of Hymns for Camp-meetings, Revivals," &c., by Hugh Bourne, Nottingham, 1821.

### HYMN 33.

#### *Methodist Hymn.*

The Saviour's name I'll gladly sing;  
He is my Saviour and my King,  
Where'er I go his name I'll bless,  
And shout among the Methodists!

To the Devil's-camp I'll bid adieu,  
And Zion's peaceful ways pursue.  
Ye sons of men come turn and list,  
And fight like valiant Methodists.

It is religion makes the man,  
The world may try to prove it vain;  
But I will give the world for this,  
To be in heart—a Methodist!

Come, sinners, turn unto the Lord,  
And closely search his precious word;  
And when you do his truth possess,  
You may become—a Methodist!



Come now with me, and you shall know  
 What a great Saviour can bestow.  
 His love to me I can't express,  
 Altho' I am call'd a Methodist!

I am a soldier of the Cross;  
 All earthly things I count but loss:  
 My soul is bound for endless bliss,  
 To praise thee with the Methodists!

They preach and pray, and sing their best,  
 They labour much for endless rest;  
 I hope the Lord will them increase,  
 And turn the world to Methodists!

We shout too loud for sinners here,  
 But when in Heaven we shall appear,  
 So faithful then our souls will rest,  
 And shout among the Methodists!

And when that happy day is come,  
 When all the Christians are brought home,  
 We'll shout in high-enraptur'd bliss,  
 With all the blood-wash'd Methodists!

The prose composition of this pamphlet is equalled only by the elegance of its poetry.

### THE BRYANITES,

Also are a discarded portion of the Wesleyan Connexion, having for their head, or leader, *William O'Bryan*, who has put forth a pamphlet, dated Launceston, Cornwall, August 12, 1818. Its title is, "The Rules of Society, or a Guide to Conduct for those who desire to be Arminian Bible Christians, with a Preface, stating the Causes of the Separation between William O'Bryan and the People called Methodists." Second Edition. The offence of W. O'Bryan was a non-compliance with the rules of the Methodists, especially as to the mode of preaching, and the manner of supporting the ministers. the conclusion of his address runs thus:—"I have given the outlines of my separation (to the best of my knowledge,) and I leave any, or all, of the people of God to judge whether it was possible, according to a good conscience, to continue in that community any longer. I was forced away for persisting in doing that which I knew

to be my duty, and God has since proved it (I believe to the satisfaction of many) to be my duty. I ventured all on Christ, and he did not suffer me to be confounded. Some may say, why did not you appeal to those who might have undertaken to do you justice? I answer, a friend of mine had stated something of my case to one, and I had written to another of the principal persons of the Conference, from whom I received no answer. I resigned it into the hands of Him who judgeth righteously, and who is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother,—*the Lord of Hosts is his name.*”

The pamphlet closes with some advices, in the true spirit of practical Christianity.

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### JUMPERS.

Originally this singular practice of *jumping* during the time allotted for religious worship and instruction, was confined to the people called Methodists in Wales, the followers of Harris, Rowland, Williams, and others, known in England by the appellation of the *Evangelical Clergy*. The practice began in the western part of the country, about the year 1760. It was soon after defended by Mr. William Williams (the Welch poet, as he is sometimes styled) in a pamphlet, which was patronized by the abettors of jumping in religious assemblies, but viewed by the seniors and the grave with disapprobation. However, in the course of a few years, the advocates of groaning and loud talking, as well as of loud singing, repeating the same line or stanza over and over thirty or forty times, became more numerous, and were found among some of the other denominations in the Principality, and continue to this day. Several of the more zealous itinerant preachers in Wales recommended the people to cry out *Gogoniant* (the Welsh word for *glory*), *Amen*, &c., to put themselves in violent agitations; and finally, to *jump* until they were quite exhausted, so as often to be obliged to fall down on the floor, or on the field where this kind

of worship was held. If any thing in the profession of religion, that is absurd and unreasonable, were to surprise us, it would be the censure that was cast upon those who gently attempted to stem this tide, which threatened the destruction of true religion as a reasonable service. Where the essence of true religion is placed in customs and usages, which have no tendency to sanctify the several powers through the medium of the understanding, we ought not to be surprised, when we contemplate instances of extravagance and apostacy. Human nature, in general, is not capable of such exertions for any length of time, and when the spirits become exhausted, and the heat kindled by sympathy is subsided, the unhappy persons sink into themselves, and seek for support in intoxication. It is not to be doubted but there are many sincere and pious persons to be found among this class of people—men who think they are doing God service, whilst they are the victims of fanaticism. These are the objects of compassion, and doubtless will find it in God. But it is certain, from incontestable facts, that a number of persons have attached themselves to those religious societies, who place a very disproportionate stress on the practice of jumping, from suspicious motives. The theory and practice of such a religion are easily understood; for the man who possesses an unblushing confidence, and the greatest degree of muscular energy, is likely to excel in bodily exercise. Upon the whole, it is probable, as such an exercise has no countenance in reason or revelation, that it has been, and is still, productive of more evil than good. Many of the ministers who have been foremost in encouraging jumping seemed to have nothing in view but the gratification of their vanity, inflaming the passions of the multitude by extravagant representations of the character of the Deity, the condition of man, and design of the Saviour's mission. The minister that wishes *not to study* to shew himself approved of God, has only to favour jumping, with its appendages: for as reason is out of the question in such a religion, he can be under no fear of shocking it. It is some consolation to real religion to add, that this practice is on the decline, as the

more sober or conscientious, who were at first at a loss to judge where this practice might carry them, have seen its pernicious tendency.

Such is the account of the Jumpers, which, with a few alterations, was transmitted to me by a respectable minister, (the Rev. Job David, once of Frome and Taunton, latterly of Swansea, where he died in 1812, much beloved and respected.) It is to be hoped, that the exercise of common sense will in time recover them from these extravagant ecstasies, which pain the rational friends of revelation, and yield matter of exultation to the advocates of infidelity.

About the year 1785, I myself happened, very accidentally, to be present at a meeting which terminated in jumping. It was held in the open air, on a Sunday evening, near Newport, in Monmouthshire. The preacher was one of Lady Huntingdon's students, who concluded his sermon with the recommendation of jumping; and to allow him the praise of consistency, he got down from the chair on which he stood, and jumped along with them. The arguments he adduced for this purpose were, that David danced before the ark, that the babe leaped in the womb of Elizabeth, and that the man whose lameness was removed, leaped and praised God for the mercy which he had received! He expatiated on these topics with uncommon fervency, and then drew the inference, that they ought to shew similar expressions of joy, for the blessings which Jesus Christ had put into their possession. He then gave an impassioned sketch of the sufferings of the Saviour, and hereby roused the passions of a few around him into a state of violent agitation. About nine men and seven women, for some little time, rocked to and fro, groaned aloud, and then jumped with a kind of frantic fury. Some of the audience flew in all directions, others gazed on in silent amazement! They all gradually dispersed, except the jumpers, who continued their exertions from eight in the evening to near eleven at night. I saw the conclusion of it; they at last kneeled down in a circle, holding each other by the hand, while one of them prayed with great fervour, and then all rising up

from off their knees departed. But previous to their dispersion, they wildly pointed up towards the sky, and reminded one another that they should soon meet there, and be never again separated! I quitted the spot with astonishment. Such disorderly scenes cannot be of any service to the deluded individuals, nor can they prove beneficial to society. The late William Richards, of Lynn, had great merit in putting down this tumultuous spirit among his countrymen, a circumstance honourable to his memory. See his "Memoirs," by the author of "The Sketch," where will be found a very curious letter on the subject. Whatever credit we may and ought to allow this class of Christians for good intentions, it is impossible to speak of the practice itself, without adopting terms of unqualified disapprobation. The reader is referred to Bingley's and Evans's "Tour through Wales," (the latter author was a clergyman at Bristol, now deceased,) where, as many particulars are detailed respecting the Jumpers, his curiosity will receive a still further gratification. It pains the author of the present work, that he has not in his power to give a more favourable account of them. The decline of so unbecoming a practice will, it is to be hoped, be followed by its utter extinction.

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### UNIVERSALISTS.

The *Universalists*, properly so called, are those who believe that, as Christ died for all, so, before he shall have delivered up his mediatorial kingdom to the Father, *all* shall be brought to a participation of the benefits of his death, in their restoration to holiness and happiness. Their scheme includes a reconciliation of the tenets of Calvinism and Arminianism, by uniting the leading doctrines of both, as far as they are found in the scriptures, from which union they think the sentiment of *universal restoration* naturally flows, in opposition to the common and almost universally-believed doctrine, of the *eternity of hell torments*.

Thus they reason:—"The Arminian proves from



scripture, that God is love : that he is good to all ; that his tender mercy is over all his works ; that he gave his Son for the world ; that Christ died for the world—even for the whole world ; and that God will have all men to be saved.

“ The Calvinist proves also from scripture, that God is without variableness or shadow of turning ; that his love, like himself, alters not ; that the death of Christ will be efficacious towards all for whom it was intended ; that God will perform all his pleasure, and that his counsel shall stand. The union of these scriptural principles is the final restoration of all men.

“ Taking the principles of the Calvinists and Arminians separately, we find the former teaching, or at least inferring, that God doth not love all ; but that he made the greater part of men to be endless monuments of his wrath :—the latter declaring the love of God to all, but admitting his final failure of restoring the greater part. The God of the former is great in power and wisdom, but deficient in goodness, and capricious in his conduct—who that views the character can sincerely love it ? The God of the latter is exceeding good, but deficient in power and wisdom—who can trust such a being ? If, therefore both Calvinists and Arminians love and trust the Deity, it is not under the character which their several systems ascribe to him, but they are constrained to hide the imperfections which their views cast upon him, and boast of a God whose highest glory their several schemes will not admit.

The Universalists teach the doctrine of *election*, but not in the exclusive Calvinistic sense of it : they suppose that God has chosen some for the good of all ; and that his final purpose towards all is intimated by his calling his elect the *first* born and the *first* fruits of his creatures, which, say, they, implies other branches of his family, and a future in-gathering of the harvest of mankind.

They teach also that the righteous shall have part in the first resurrection, shall be blessed and happy, and be made priests and kings to God and to Christ in the millennial kingdom, and that over them the second death

shall have no power; that the wicked will receive a punishment apportioned to their crimes; that punishment itself is a mediatorial work, and founded upon mercy; consequently, that it is a means of humbling, subduing, and, finally, reconciling the sinner to God.

They add, that the words rendered *everlasting*, *eternal*, *for ever* and *for ever*, in the scriptures, are frequently used to express the duration of things that have ended, or must end; and if, it is contended, that these words are sometimes used to express *proper eternity*, they answer, that then the *subject* with which the words are connected, must determine the sense of them; and as there is nothing in the nature of future punishment which can be rendered as a reason why it should be endless, they infer that the above words ought always to be taken in a limited sense, when connected with the infliction of misery.

The Universalists have to contend, on the one hand, with such as hold the eternity of future misery, and on the other, with those who teach that destruction or extinction of being will be the final state of the wicked. In answer to the latter, they say, “that before we admit that God is under the necessity of striking any of his rational creatures out of being, we ought to pause and inquire—

“Whether such an act is consistent with the scriptural character of the Deity, as possessed of all possible wisdom, goodness, and power?

“Whether it would not contradict many parts of scripture; such, for instance, as speak of the restitution of all things—the gathering together of all things in Christ—the reconciliation of all things to the Father, by the blood of the cross—the destruction of death,” &c. These texts, they think, are opposed equally to endless misery, and to final destruction. Be it recollected also,

“Whether those who will be finally destroyed, are not in a worse state, through the mediation of Christ, than they would be without it? This question is founded on a position of the friends of destruction, viz., that extinction of being, without a resurrection, would have been the only punishment of sin, if Christ had not become the resur-

rection and the life to men. Consequently, the resurrection and future punishment spring from the system of mediation: but, they ask, is the justification to life, which came upon all men in Christ Jesus, nothing more than a resurrection to endless death to millions?

“Whether the word *destruction* will warrant such a conclusion? It is evident that destruction is often used in scripture to signify a cessation of present existence only, without any contradiction of the promises that relate to a future universal resurrection. They think, therefore that they ought to admit an universal restoration of men, notwithstanding the future destruction which is threatened to sinners:\* because, say they, the scripture teaches both.”

They also think the doctrine of destruction, in the above acceptation of it, includes two considerable difficulties. The scriptures uniformly teach degrees of punishment, according to transgression; but does extinction of being admit of this? Can the greatest of sinners be more effectually destroyed than the least? Again, we are taught that, however dark any part of the divine conduct may appear in the present state, yet justice will be clear and decisive in its operations hereafter; but the doctrine of destruction, in their judgment, does not admit of this—for what is the surprising difference betwixt the moral character of the *worst* good man, and the *best* bad man, that the portion of the one should be endless life, and that of the other endless death?

“They suppose the universal doctrine to be most consonant to the perfections of the Deity—most worthy of the character of Christ, as the mediator; and that the scriptures cannot be made consistent with themselves upon any other plan. They teach that ardent love to God, peace, meekness, candour, and universal love to men, are the natural result of their views.”

This doctrine is not new. Origen, a christian father, who lived in the third century, wrote in favour of it. St. Augustine, of Hippo, mentions some divines in his day,

\* See Vilder's "Notes on Winchester's Dialogues on the Restoration," 4th edition, p. 176.

whom he calls the merciful doctors, who held it. The German Baptists, many of them even before the Reformation, propagated it. The people called Tunkers, in America, descended from the German Baptists, mostly hold it. The Mennonites, in Holland, have long held it. In England, about the latter end of the seventeenth century, Dr. Rust, Bishop of Dromore, in Ireland, published "A Letter of Resolutions concerning Origen, and the chief of his opinion," in which it has been thought he favoured the universal doctrine, which Origen held; and Mr. Jeremiah White wrote his book in favour of the same sentiments soon afterwards. The Chevalier Ramsay, in his elaborate work of the "Philosophical Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion," espouses it. Archbishop Tillotson, in one of his sermons, supposes future punishment to be of limited duration, as does Dr. Burnet, Master of the Charter-house, in his book on the state of the dead.

But the writers of late years, who have defended the subject most fully, are Dr. Newton, Bishop of Bristol, in his "Dissertations;" Mr. Stonehouse, Rector of Islington; Dr. Chauncy, of Boston, in America; Dr. Hartley, in his profound work on man; Mr. Purves, of Edinburgh; Mr. Elhanan Winchester, in his "Dialogues on Universal Restoration," a new edition of which, with explanatory notes, has been published by the late Mr. William Vilder. See the "Universalists's Miscellany," now entitled the "Monthly Repository of Theology and General Literature," containing many valuable papers for and against Universal Restoration, where the controversy on the subject between Mr. Vilder and Mr. Fuller will be found.

For further information, the reader is referred to a critical work, entitled, "An Essay on the Duration of a Future State of Punishment and Rewards," by the late John Simpson, who wrote several practical pieces for the illustration of Christianity. The late Dr. Estlin, of Bristol, published some "Discourses on Universal Restoration," founded on the Apostle's declaration, *God is love.*

In Dr. Williams's Notes to Dr. Doddridge's Lectures,

particularly in that on Future Punishment, it is remarkable that, although he is an advocate for the doctrine of eternal punishment, he gives up all the texts, which have usually been brought in support of it, having the terms eternal, everlasting, for ever, &c., because, on account of their various meaning, they are not to be considered as proving the doctrine! And Dr. Watts, with his usual candour and excellent spirit, thus expresses himself on the subject,—“ If the blessed God should at any time, in consistence with his glorious and incomprehensible perfections, release those wretched creatures suffering future punishment, from their acute pains and long imprisonment, I think I ought cheerfully to accept this appointment of God for the good of millions of my fellow-creatures, and add my joys and praises to all the songs and triumph of the heavenly world, in the day of such a divine and glorious release of these prisoners. This will indeed be such a new, such an astonishing and universal jubilee, both for evil spirits and wicked men, as must fill heaven, earth, and even hell, with joy and hallelujahs !”

But the last and best work on Universal Restoration is entitled, “ Illustrations of the Divine Government, tending to show that every thing is under the direction of Infinite Wisdom and Goodness, and will terminate in the production of Universal Purity and happiness.” By T. Southwood Smith, M. D. A cheap edition has been lately published, with improvements.

More need not be advanced on the subject. It has engaged the pens of the heterodox and the orthodox ; both have written on the doctrine of Universal Restoration. Every benevolent heart must wish the doctrine to be true, for the consumation of Christian benevolence, is, that happiness shall embrace the creation of God.

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### DESTRUCTIONIST.

Between the system of *restoration*, and the system of *endless misery*, a middle hypothesis of the Final Destruction of the wicked (after having suffered the punish-



ment due to their crimes) has been adopted, more particularly by the Rev. Mr. Bourne, of Norwich, and by Mr. John Marsom, in two small volumes, of which there has been a second edition with additions. They say that the scripture positively asserts this doctrine of *destruction*; that the nature of future punishment, which the scripture terms death, determines the meaning of words everlasting, eternal, for ever, &c., as denoting endless duration, because no law ever did or can inflict the punishment of death for a limited period; that the punishment cannot be corrective, because no man was ever put to death, either to convince his judgment or to reform his conduct; that if the wicked receive a punishment apportioned to their crimes, their deliverance is neither to be attributed to the mercy of God, nor the mediation of Jesus Christ, but is an act of absolute justice; and finally, that the mediatorial kingdom of Jesus Christ will never be delivered up, since the scripture asserts, that of his *kingdom there shall be no end*. Those who maintain these sentiments respecting the destruction of the wicked, are accused of espousing the doctrine of annihilation; but this accusation they repel, alleging that, philosophically speaking, there can be no annihilation, and that destruction is the express phrase used in the New Testament. Of this sentiment there have been many advocates distinguished for their erudition and piety.\* See a refutation of the doctrine of Destruction, in Dr. Smith's "Illustrations of the Divine Government," a work already mentioned.

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### SABBATARIANS.

The *Sabbatarians* are a body of Christians who keep the *seventh* day as the *Sabbath*, and are to be found principally, if not wholly, amongst the Baptists. The common reason why Christians observe the first day of the week as the Sabbath, are, that on this day Christ rose from the dead; that the apostles assembled, preached, and

\* This account of the Destructionists was sent the author of the "Sketch" for insertion.

administered the Lord's Supper; and that it has been kept by the church for several ages, if not from the time when Christianity was originally promulgated. The Sabbatharians, however, think these reasons unsatisfactory, and assert that the change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week, was effected by Constantine, upon his conversion to the Christian religion. The three following propositions contain a summary of their principles as to this article of the Sabbath, by which they stand distinguished: 1st, That God hath required the observation of the seventh, or last day in every week, to be observed by mankind universally for the weekly sabbath: 2ndly, That this command of God is perpetually binding on man till time shall be no more; 3rdly, That this sacred rest of the seventh-day Sabbath is not, by divine authority, changed from the seventh and last to the first day of the week, or that the scripture doth nowhere require the observation of any other day of the week for the weekly sabbath, but the seventh day only. There are two congregations of the Sabbatharians in London, one General Baptists' meeting in Mill-yard, Goodman's-Fields, now supplied by the Rev. Thomas Russel, a respectable minister of the Independent persuasion; the other, Particular Baptists' meeting in Eldon-street, Finsbury, under the care of the Rev. Mr. Shenstone, who succeeded the Rev. Robert Burnside, author of a "Defence of Sabbatarianism," and of "Essays on the Religion of Mankind."

Mr. Morse informs us that there are many Sabbatharians in America. "Some (says he) in Rhode Island observe the Jewish, or Saturday Sabbath, from a persuasion that it was one of the ten commandments, which they plead are all in their nature moral, and were never abrogated in the New Testament. Though, on the contrary, others of them believe it originated at the time of the creation, in the command given to Adam by the Creator himself," See Genesis, chap. ii. 3. "At New Jersey there are three congregations of the Seventh Day Baptists; and at Ephrata, in Pennsylvania, there is one congregation of them called Tunkers. There are likewise

a few Baptists who keep the seventh day as holy time, who are the remains of the Keithean, or Quaker Baptists."

This tenet has given rise to controversies, and writers of ability have appeared on both sides of the question. Mr. Cornthwaite, a minister among them, about the year 1740, published several tracts in support of it, which ought to be consulted by those who wish to obtain satisfaction on the subject.

The reader should also have recourse to Dr. Chandler's two "Discourses on the Sabbath," Mr. Amner's "Dissertation on the Weekly Festival of the Christian Church," Dr. Kennicott's "Sermon and Dialogue on the Sabbath," the late S. Palmer's publication on the "Nature and Obligation of the Christian Sabbath," and Estlin's "Apology for the Sabbath,"—all of which are worthy of attention. But whatever controversy may have been agitated on this subject, certain it is, that were there no particular day set apart for the purpose of devotion, for which some in the present day contend, our knowledge of human nature authorizes us to say, that virtue and religion would be either greatly debilitated or finally lost from among mankind.

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## MORAVIANS

The *Moravians* are supposed to have arisen under Nicholas Lewis, Count of Zinzendorf, a German nobleman, who died 1760. They were also called *Hernhuters* from *Hernhuth*, the name of the village where they first settled. The followers of Count Zinzendorf are called Moravians, because the first converts to his system were some Moravian families; the society themselves, however, assert that they are descended from the old Moravian and Bohemian Brethren, who existed as a distinct sect sixty years prior to the Reformation. They also style themselves *Unitas Fratrum*, or the *United Brethren*; and, in general, profess to adhere to the Augsburg

confession of faith. When the first Reformers were assembled at Augsburg, in Germany, the Protestant princes employed Melancthon, a divine of learning and moderation, to draw a confession of their faith, expressed in terms as little offensive to the Roman Catholics as a regard for the truth would permit. And this creed, from the place where it was presented, is called the *Confession of Augsburg*. It is not easy to unravel the leading tenets of the Moravians. Opinions and practices have been attributed to them of an exceptionable nature, which the more sensible of them disavow. They on all occasions, make great professions of reverence to Jesus Christ—are much attached to instrumental, as well as vocal music, in their religious services—and discover a predilection for forming themselves into classes, according to sex, age, and character. Their founder not only discovered his zeal in travelling in person over Europe, but has taken special care to send missionaries into almost every part of the known world. They revive their devotion by celebrating agapæ, or love-feasts, and the casting of lots is used amongst them, to know the will of the Lord. The sole right of contracting marriage lies with the elders. In Mr. Latrobe's edition of "Spangenberg's Exposition of Christian Doctrine," their principles are detailed at length. There is a large community of them at a village near Leeds, which excites the curiosity of the traveller, and they have places of worship in various parts of the kingdom. Mr. Rinius published his candid Narrative of this people, and Bishop Lavington (who wrote also against the Methodists) replied, in 1755, in his "Moravians Compared and Detected." Mr. Weld, in his "Travels through the United States," gives a curious account of a settlement of Moravians at Bethlehm, honourable to their virtue and piety. See also an "Essay on Fanaticism," addressed to the people of his own persuasion, by John Stinstra, translated by Isaac Subremont, of Dublin, 1774. The Moravians have been distinguished for their Missionary efforts—and have succeeded better than most of the other sects who have employed themselves in such undertakings. See a "History of

the Mission of the United Brethren among the Indians in North America," in three parts, by George Henry Laskiel, translated from the German, by Christian Ignatius Latrobe, 1794. Periodical accounts of their missions are published by the Brethren's Society for the furtherance of the Gospel, at No. 10, Nevil's-court, Fetter-lane, Holborn.

Dr. Paley, in his "Evidences of Christianity," pays the following compliment to the religious practices of the Moravians and Methodists; speaking of the first Christians, he says:—"After men became Christians, much of their time was spent in prayer and devotion, in religious meetings, in celebrating the eucharist, in conferences, in exhortations, in preaching, in an affectionate intercourse with one another, and correspondence with other societies, Perhaps their mode of life, in its form and habit, was not very unlike that of the *Unitas Fratrum*, or modern Methodists." Be it, however, the desire of every body of Christians not only thus to imitate the primitive disciples in their outward conduct, but to aspire after the liberality of their dispositions, the peaceableness of their tempers, and the purity of their lives! The Rev. Mr. Latrobe's "Tour to the Cape of Good Hope and its Vicinity," furnishes the reader with an interesting account of the Moravian mission in that distant part of the world.

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### SANDEMANIANS.

Sandemanians,\* a modern sect that originated in Scotland, about the year 1728, where it is, at this time, distinguished by the name of Glassites, after its founder, Mr. John Glass, who was a minister of the established church in that kingdom, but being charged with a design of subverting the national covenant, and sapping the

\* The author has been favoured with this account of the Sandemanians by the late Dr. Sandman, recently deceased, who belonged to that body of Christians.



foundation of all national establishments by maintaining that *the kingdom of Christ is not of this world*, was expelled by the synod from the church of Scotland. His sentiments are fully explained in a tract published at that time, entitled, "The Testimony of the King of Martyrs," and preserved in the first volume of his works. In consequence of Mr. Glass's expulsion, his adherents formed themselves into churches, conformable, in their institution and discipline, to what they apprehend to be the plan of the first churches recorded in the New Testament. Soon after the year 1755, Mr. Robert Sandeman, an elder in one of these churches in Scotland, published "A Series of Letters," addressed to Mr. Harvey, occasioned by his "Theron and Aspasia," in which he endeavours to show, that his notion of faith is contradictory to the scripture account of it, and could only serve to lead men, professedly holding the doctrines called Calvinistic, to establish their own righteousness upon their frames, feelings, and acts of faith. In these letters Mr. Sandeman attempts to prove, that faith is neither more nor less than a simple assent to the divine testimony concerning Jesus Christ, delivered for the offences of men, and raised again for their justification, as recorded in the New Testament. He also maintains that the word faith, or belief, is constantly used by the apostles to signify what is denoted by it in common discourse, viz., a persuasion of the truth of any proposition, and that there is no difference between believing any common testimony and believing the apostolic testimony, except that which results from the testimony itself, and the divine authority on which it rests. This led the way to a controversy among those who are called Calvinists, concerning the nature of justifying faith, and those who adopted Mr. Sandeman's notion of it; and they who are denominated Sandemans, formed themselves into church order, in strict fellowship with the churches of Scotland, but holding no kind of communion with other churches. Mr. Sandeman died in 1772, in America. He was a writer of ability, but a caustic spirit pervades his writings.

The chief opinions and practices in which this sect dif-

fers from other Christians, are their weekly administration of the Lord's Supper; their lovefeasts, of which every member is not only allowed, but required to partake, and which consist of their dining together at each other's houses in the interval between the morning and afternoon service; their kiss of charity used on this occasion, at the admission of a new member, and at other times when they deem it necessary and proper; their weekly collection before the Lord's Supper, for the support, of the poor, and defraying other expenses; mutual exhortation; abstinence from blood and things strangled; washing each other's feet, when, as a deed of mercy, it might be an expression of love; the precept concerning which, as well as other precepts, they understand literally—community of goods, so far as that every one is to consider all that he has in his possession and power liable to the calls of the poor and the church; and the unlawfulness of laying up treasures upon earth, by setting them apart for any distant, future, or uncertain use. They allow of public and private diversions, so far as they are not connected with circumstances really sinful; but apprehending a lot to be sacred, disapprove of lotteries, playing at cards, dice, &c.

They maintain a plurality of elders, pastors, or bishops, in each church, and the necessity of the presence of two elders in every act of discipline, and at the administration of the Lord's Supper.

In the choice of these elders, want of learning and engagement in trade are no sufficient objections, if qualified according to the instructions given to Timothy and Titus; but second marriages disqualify for the office; and they are ordained by prayer and fasting, imposition of hands, and giving the right hand of fellowship.

In their discipline they are strict and severe, and think themselves obliged to separate from communion and worship of all such religious societies as appear to them not to profess the simple truth for their only ground of hope, and who do not walk in obedience to it. We shall only add, that in every transaction they esteem unanimity to be absolutely necessary. See "Letters on Sandeman-

ianism," by the late Andrew Fuller, the conclusion of which is deserving the attention of that sect.

The Scotch Baptists, in many respects, bear a resemblance to the Sandemanians; but the difference between them is accurately drawn by Mr. William Jones, in his "Memoirs of Archibald M'Clean," prefixed to his Sermons. His biographer has paid a merited tribute of respect to his memory.

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### HUTCHINSONIANS.

Hutchinsonians, the followers of John Hutchinson, born in Yorkshire, 1674, and who, in the early part of his life, served the Duke of Somerset in the capacity of steward. The Hebrew scriptures, he says, comprise a perfect system of natural philosophy, theology, and religion. In opposition to Dr. Woodward's "Natural History of the Earth," Mr. Hutchinson, in 1724, published the first part of his curious book, called "Moses principia." Its second part was presented to the public in 1727, which contains, as he apprehends, the principles of the scripture philosophy, which are a plenum and the air. So high an opinion did he entertain of the Hebrew language, that he thought the Almighty must have employed it to communicate every species of knowledge, and that accordingly every species of knowledge is to be found in the Old Testament. Of his mode of philosophising, the following specimen is brought forward to the reader's attention: "The air (he supposes) exists in three conditions, fire, light, and spirit: the two latter are the finer and grosser parts of the air in motion; from the earth to the sun, the air is finer and finer till it becomes pure light near the confines of the sun, and fire in the orb of the sun, or solar focus. From the earth towards the circumference of this system, in which he includes the fixed stars, the air becomes grosser and grosser till it becomes stagnant, in which condition it is at the utmost verge of this system, from whence (in his opinion) the expression of *outer darkness*, and *black-*

*ness of darkness*, used in the New Testament, seems to be taken.”

The followers of Mr. Hutchinson are numerous, and among others the Rev. Mr. Romaine, Lord Duncan Forbes, of Culloden, and the late amiable Dr. Horne, Bishop of Norwich, who published an Abstract of Mr. Hutchinson's writings. See also the Preface to Bishop Horne's *Life*, second edition, by William Jones. They have never formed themselves into any distinct church or society.

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### SHAKERS.

An American gentleman (into whose hands the Sketch was put by a worthy relative of mine) presented me with a volume, whence I have obtained certain interesting particulars respecting the *Shakers*. In the United States it is denominated the *Shaker's Bible*, because it contains a full account of their faith and practice. Their is reason to believe that it is the only copy that has reached this country. The accounts of the Shakers hitherto published on this side the water are very defective. The statement given in the Sketch is the only accurate delineation of this eccentric class of the Christian world.

The volume is closely printed, containing six hundred and sixty-six pages! It is entitled, “The Testimony of Christ's Second Appearing, containing a general statement of all Things pertaining to the Faith and Practice of the Church of God in this latter Day. Published by order of the Ministry in union with the Church. Second edition, corrected and improved. Printed at Albany, 1810.” The Preface is dated, “Lebanon, Miami Country, State of Ohio.” The work is neatly written, but fraught with a spirit of mystical obscurity. The characteristic opinions of the sect are wrapt up in a kind of technical phrasology, incomprehensible to plain understandings. It is remarked in the Preface, “As the unlearned cannot comprehend the learning of the learned, unless they are taught

by those that are learned, so neither can the learned or unlearned comprehend the work of God, unless they are taught by those who are in it." After an avowal of this sentiment, I expected to find some things hard to be understood, and there was no disappointment. Their history of Anti-christ is intellible enough, drawn from Moheim, Lardner, and Robinson's "Ecclesiastical Researches," which they pronounce "a very valuable production." I am happy to say, that their volume breathes and abhorrence of every kind of persecution. They reject *marriage*, alleging, that "in the resurrection there is neither marriage nor giving in marriage;" that is, on their conversion, or spiritual resurrection, they observe the strictest celibacy! Their *shaking* is founded on the Prophecies of Ezekiel and Isaiah, where the coming of the Desire of the Messiah is to be accompanied by the *shaking* of the nations! Hence the appellation by which they are distinguished.

It is pleasing to observe, that there is in these Shakers a love of good works, and a strain of fervent, though misguided piety. It is an unfortunate circumstance that a sect rejecting marriage should take up its abode in the United States of America—a large outline which wants filling up, and where population is one of its greatest blessings!

The Shakers are a compound of almost all the other sects. They are a kind of religious *Eclectics*—with this commendable trait, that they are enemies to every sort of coercion in matters of religion. They have chosen what appeared to them to be good out of every denomination, but there may be reason to question the soundness of their judgment. Never before was there a people so singularly characterized—so unnaturally embodied. Warmth of feeling has been known to ascend in devotion, and sink into sensuality; but here are a people who profess such a height of spiritual-mindedness, that they renounce the common passions of our nature. They sanction the entire separation of the sexes, a practice which, were it universally followed, would convert the world into a desert! Their religion is a kind of Upas tree, which suffers noth-



ing to vegetate within its circumference. But I must check my pen—it is my province to state “things as they are,” not to reason upon them.

Be it remembered, that the Shakers unite with the Quakers in an entire submission to the spirit, and in the rejection of baptism and the Lord’s Supper: with the Calvinists and Methodists in laying great stress on conversion; with the Arminians in rejecting election and reprobation, as well as the imputation of Adam’s guilt to his posterity; with the Unitarians in exploding a Trinity of three persons in one God, together with the satisfaction of Christ; with the Roman Catholics in contending for the continuation of miracles in the church; with the Sandemanians in practising a sort of community of goods, and having no persons regularly educated for the ministry; with the followers of Joanna Southcott in believing that a woman is the instrument to bring on the glory of the latter day; with the Moravians and Methodists in encouraging missionary undertakings; with the Swedenborgians in denying the resurrection of the body, and asserting that the day of judgment is past; with the Jumpers in dancing and shouting during divine worship; and lastly, with the Universalists, in renouncing the eternity of hell torments! Such a mysterious compound the skill of the moral chemist cannot easily analyse. But to this heterogeneous mass they have added a tenet hitherto unthought of, unacknowledged by any body of Christians. The Catholics, indeed, led the way in enjoining the celibacy of the clergy, and in the institution of monachism. It was left to the Shakers to perfect this unnatural scheme, by altogether rejecting *marriage*, and thus expose it to the derision of the world!

The account I have given of this most singular of all sects is replete with instruction, for it teaches the professors of Christianity this most important lesson, that in no instance they should give up the use of reason in matters of religion, and on no occasion, conceiving themselves to be the favourites of heaven, should they be found deficient in the exercise of universal gospel charity.

## DUNKERS, OR TUNKERS.

So called from a German term, implying, their *baptizing by immersion*, a practice prevalent amongst them.

Conrad Peysal, a German Baptist, was the founder of the *Dunkers* about 1724, who, weary of the world, retired to an agreeable solitude, within fifty miles of Philadelphia, that he might give himself up to contemplation. Curiosity brought several of his countrymen to visit his retreat, and by degrees his pious, simple, and peaceable manners induced others to settle near him. They formed a little colony of German Baptists, which they call *Euphrata*, or *Euprates*, in allusion to the Hebrews, who used to sing psalms on the border of that river. This little city forms a triangle, the outsides of which are bordered with mulberry and apple trees, planted with great regularity. In the middle is a very large orchard, and between the orchard and these ranges of trees are houses built of wood, three stories high, where every Dunker is left to enjoy the pleasures of his meditations without disturbance. Their number in 1777 did not exceed five hundred, but since that period they have increased. They do not foolishly renounce marriage, but when married they detach themselves from the rest, and retire into another part of the country. The Dunkers lament the fall of Adam, but deny the imputation of his sin to posterity. They use *trine* immersion (dipping three times) in baptism, and use laying on of hands when the baptized are received into the church. They dress like Dominican friars, shaving neither head nor beard; have different apartments for the sexes, and live chiefly on roots and vegetables, except at their love-feast, when they eat mutton. It is said no bed is allowed them, except in case of sickness, having in their separate cells a bench to lie upon, and a block of wood for their pillow! They deny the eternity of future punishment—believe that the dead have the gospel preached to them by our Saviour, and that the souls of the just are employed to preach the gospel to those who have had no revelation in this life.

But their chief tenet is, that future happiness is only to be obtained by penance and outward mortification, so as that Jesus Christ, by his meritorious sufferings, became the Redeemer of mankind in general, so each individual of the human race, by a life of abstinence and restraint, may "work out his own salvation." Nay, it is said, they admit of works of supererogation. They use the same form of government, and the same discipline, as the English Baptists do, except that every person is allowed to speak in the congregation, and their best speaker is usually ordained the minister. They have also deacons, and deaconesses from among their ancient widows, who may all use their gifts, and exhort at stated times.

Mr. Winchester, in his "Dialogues on Restoration," draws a high character of them. His friend, the Rev. Morgan Edwards, formerly minister of the Baptist church at Philadelphia, once said to him respecting the Dunkers, and he knew them well, "God always will have a visible people on earth, and these are his people at present above any other in the world!" And in his history of the "Pennsylvanian Baptists," Mr. M. says of them,—General redemption they certainly hold, and withal general salvation, which tenets, though wrong, are consistent." On account of their meekness and hatred of war and slavery together with a renunciation of all sorts of violence, they are denominated the *harmless* Dunkers. Pity it is, that this epithet cannot be applied to all the professors of Christianity!

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### NEW AMERICAN SECT.

The American editor of this work has added the following article, worthy of preservation:—

"Many of those who lately migrated from Wales to America, have adopted the following articles as their religious constitution:

"1. The convention shall be called the *Christian Church*.

"2. It shall never be called by any other name, or be

distinguished by the particular tenets of any man, or sects of men.

“3. Jesus Christ is the only head—believers in him the only members—and the New Testament the only rule of the fraternity.

“4. In mental matters, each member shall enjoy his own sentiments, and freely discuss every subject; but in discipline, a strict conformity with the precepts of Christ is required.

“5. Every distinct society belonging to this association shall have the same power of admitting its members, electing its officers, and in case of malconduct, of impeaching them.

“6. Delegates from the different congregations shall meet from time to time, at an appointed place, to consult the welfare and advancement of the general interest.

“7. At every meeting for religious worship, collections shall be made for the poor, and the promulgation of the gospel among the Heathen.”

This liberal plan originated chiefly with the late Rev. M. J. Rhees, (an old friend and fellow-pupil,) who, a few years ago, emigrated from Wales, and distinguished himself in America by his unceasing activity. He died in the prime of life, December, 1804, at Somerset, in Pennsylvania, deeply regretted by his numerous friends and connexions. He lies interred at Philadelphia, beneath a tomb, on which is seen a handsome inscription to his memory, that may be found in that valuable work, Richads’s “Welsh Biography.” But it was not in religion only, but also in civil affairs, that this good man meditated improvement. On the 4th of July, 1795, the year subsequent to his arrival in the United States, the Rev. M. J. Rhees delivered an Oration, at Greenville, Head-quarters of the Western Army, north-west of the Ohio, with the following animated and truly philanthropic conclusion:—  
 “The little stone which Nebuchadnezzar saw, smote the image on its feet, ground it to powder, became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. So be it speedily! May the perfect law of liberty sway its sceptre of love from the rising to the setting sun—from the centre of the

globe, to the extremities of the Poles! Citizens and soldiers of America, sons of liberty, it is *you* I address! Banish from your land the remains of slavery. Be consistent with your congressional declaration of rights, and you will be happy. Remember, there never was, nor will be, a period when justice should not be done. Do what is just, and leave the event with God. Justice is the pillar that upholds the whole fabric of human society, and Mercy is the genial ray which cheers and warms the habitations of men. The perfection of our social character consists in properly tempering the two with one another—in holding that middle course which admits of our being just, without being rigid, and allows us to be generous, without being unjust. May all the citizens of America be found in the performance of such social duties, as will secure them peace and happiness in this world, and in the world to come life everlasting, through Jesus Christ our Lord!"

The Rev. M. J. Rhees, on his arrival in America, was patronized by my worthy friend, the late Dr. William Rogers, of Philadelphia, with his usual benevolence and amenity. He was also noticed by the President Jefferson, who discerned his talents and approved of his activity. He was connected with a people at Beulah, in the vicinity of the Alleghany mountains, but he travelled through the United States. Some account of him is given in Benedict's "History of the American Baptists," and in my "Memoirs of Dr. Richards." Had he lived he would have distinguished himself among his Transatlantic brethren, and rendered signal service to his newly adopted country. But providence determined otherwise, by his sudden and early removal to a better world.

As Roger Williams, a native of the Principality, established entire religious liberty in Rhode Island, so here we have the bold and intrepid testimony of an honest Welshman in behalf of perfect civil freedom, in the U. States of America. Slavery is a foul stain upon their emblazoned escutcheon, which neither their mighty rivers, nor their widespreading lakes, nor even the lofty and astounding falls of Niagara can obliterate. It is, however, the lamen-



tation of every enlightened citizen—the abhorrence of every good Christian, and, as long as the enormous evil continues, must render American patriotism contemptible in the eyes of all the civilized nations of the earth. Shame, shame upon this far-famed land of liberty! But why should the rights of man, on account of “the colour of the skin,” be thus unblushingly violated? The clanking chain and the corroding fetter attach only to outrageous transgression or indurated depravity. And even here chastisement, under every well constituted government, by producing personal amendment, terminates in the restoration of liberty.

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### MYSTICS.

Of this description there have been many singular characters, especially Madame Guyon, a French lady, who made a great noise in the religious world. Fenelon, the amiable archbishop of Cambray, favoured the sentiments of this female devotee, for which he was reprimanded by the Pope, and to whose animadversions he most dutifully assented, contrary to the convictions of his own mind. It is not uncommon for the Mystics to allegorise certain passages of scripture, at the same time not denying the literal sense, as having an allusion to the inward experience of believers. Thus, according to them, the word *Jerusalem*, which is the name of the capital of Judea, signifies allegorically the church militant; morally, a believer; mysteriously, heaven! That fine passage, also, in Genesis, “Let there be light, and there was light,” which is, according to the letter, corporeal light, signifies, allegorically, beatitude, or the light of glory. Mysticism is not confined to any particular profession of Christianity, but is to be understood as generally applied to those who dwell upon the *inward operations* of the mind (such as the Quakers, &c.) laying little or no stress on the outward ceremonies of religion.

## SWEDENBORGIANS.

THE *Swedenborgians* are the followers of Emanuel Swedenborg, a Swedish nobleman, who died in London, 1772. He professed himself to be the founder (under the Lord) of the New Jerusalem Church, alluding to the New Jerusalem spoken of in the Book of the Revelation of St. John. His tenets, although peculiarly distinct from every other system of divinity in Christendom, are nevertheless drawn from the holy scriptures, and supported by quotations from them. He asserts that, in the year 1743, the Lord manifested himself to him in a personal appearance, and at the same time opened his spiritual eyes, so that he was enabled constantly to see and converse with spirits and angels.

He now began to print and publish various wonderful things, which, he says, were revealed to him, relating to heaven and hell, the state of men after death, the worship of God, the spiritual sense of the scriptures, the various earths in the universe, and their inhabitants, with many other extraordinary particulars, the knowledge of which was, perhaps, never pretended to by any other writer before or since his time. Baron Swedenborg, in his treatise concerning heaven and hell, and of the wonderful things therein, as heard and seen by him, makes the following declaration: "As often as I conversed with angels face to face, it was in their habitations, which are like to our houses on earth, but far more beautiful and magnificent, having rooms, chambers, and apartments in great variety, as also spacious courts belonging to them, together with gardens, parterres of flowers, fields, &c. where the angels are formed into societies. They dwell in contiguous habitations, disposed after the manner of our cities; in streets, walks, and squares. I have had the privilege to walk through them, to examine all around about me, and to enter their houses, and this when I was fully awake, having my inward eyes opened!" A similar description is given of heaven itself, but the reader is referred to the treatise whence this curious extract is taken. He denies a trinity of persons in the godhead, but con-

tends for a divine trinity, in the single person of Jesus Christ alone, consisting of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, just like the human trinity in every individual man, of soul, body, and proceeding operation; and he asserts, that, as the latter trinity constitutes one man, so the former trinity constitutes one Jehovah God, who is at once the Creator, Redeemer, and Regenerator. On this and other subjects, Dr. Priestley addressed letters to the members of the New Jerusalem church, to which several replies were made, and particularly one by Mr. R. Hindmarsh a printer.

Baron Swedenborg further maintains, that the sacred scripture contains three distinct senses, called *celestial*, *spiritual*, and *natural*, which are united by correspondencies; and that in each sense it is divine truth, accommodated respectively to the angels of the three heavens, and also to men on earth. This science of correspondencies, it is said, had been lost for some thousands of years, viz., ever since the time of Job, but is now revived by Emanuel Swedenborg, who uses it as a key to the spiritual or internal sense of the sacred scripture, every page of which, he says, is, written by correspondencies, that is, by such things in the natural world as correspond unto and signify things in the spiritual world. He denies the doctrine of vicarious sacrifice, together with the doctrines of predestination, unconditional election, justification by faith alone, the resurrection of the material body, &c. ? and, in opposition thereto, maintains, that man is possessed of free-will in spiritual things, that salvation is not attainable without repentance; that is, abstaining from evils, because they are sins against God, and living a life of charity and faith, according to the commandments; that man, immediately on his decease, rises again in a spiritual body; which was inclosed in his material body; and that in this spiritual body he lives as a man to eternity, either in heaven or hell, according to the quality of his past life.

It is further maintained by Baron Swedenborg and his followers that all those passages in the sacred scripture, generally supposed to signify the destruction of the world

by fire, &c., commonly called the last judgment, must be understood according to the above-mentioned science of correspondencies, which teaches that, by the end of the world, or consummation of the age, is not signified the destruction of the world, but the destruction, or end, of the present Christian church, both among Roman Catholics and Protestants of every description or denomination; and that the last judgment actually took place in the spiritual world in the year 1757, from which era is dated the second advent of the Lord, and the commencement of a new Christian church, which, they say, is meant by the new heaven and new earth in the Revelation, and the New Jerusalem thence descending!

Such are the outlines of Baron Swedenborg's principal doctrines, collected from his voluminous writings. His followers are numerous in England, Germany, Sweden, &c., and also in America. They use a liturgy in their worship, which, except being much shorter, is as near to that of the church of England as the difference of doctrines will admit. They likewise introduce a great deal of vocal music, accompanied by the organ, and the minister's dress is exactly similar to that of the Established church. Three places of worship are now opened in London, agreeable to this form, viz., Fryar's-street chapel, Blackfriars; the New Jerusalem church in Dudley-court, Crown-street, Soho, of which the late Mr. Hodson was minister; and Hanover-street chapel, Long Acre. Chapels are likewise established at Birmingham, Hull, Manchester, and several other places in the country\*.

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### THE HALDANITES.

New sects in religion have been always and every where spoken against, and the name of their leader has been contemptuously fixed upon them. What was at first reproachful, often continues after reproach has ceased, and

\* Almost the whole of the above account was sent to the author for insertion, by a gentleman of that denomination.

is found convenient as a term of distinction, though perhaps no man was ever so averse to such names as the person to whom the term *Haldanite* refers. We know not of any proper distinctive appellation for those we mean to give some account of, else it would have been substituted for that which is so objectionable to themselves.

In giving some account of those called Haldanites it is necessary to take notice of the gentleman whose name has been applied to them. About fifteen years ago, Robert Haldane, Esq., then of Aithrie, near Stirling, and his brother, Mr. James Haldane, both received serious impressions of the importance of religion, and soon after resolved upon going to the East Indies to plant a Christian colony. With this view Mr. Robert Haldane, the elder brother, sold his beautiful family estate of Aithrie, and procured the consent of the Rev. Greville Ewing, then one of the ministers of Lady Glenorchy's chapel, Edinburgh; of the Rev. William Innes, then one of the ministers of Stirling; and of the Rev. David Bogue, of Gosport, to accompany him. Mr. Ewing and Mr. Innes had both resigned their office in the establishment, and all necessary arrangements were made for their departure, but the East India Company refused their permission. Prevented from carrying his first design into execution, Mr. Haldane now turned his attention towards home, erected a large building for religious worship in Edinburgh, called *the Tabernacle*, capable of containing three thousand people, purchased a place built for a circus in Glasgow, of nearly the same size, which he converted to the same purpose, and erected a Tabernacle in Dundee, of nearly the same dimensions. Both he and his brother had already become preachers, but himself was obliged to desist on account of bursting a blood-vessel. Mr. James Haldane was stationed at Edinburgh, Mr. Ewing at Glasgow, and Mr. Innes at Dundee. Hitherto they considered themselves on terms of communion with the Established church, but all connexion of this kind was soon broken off. Churches were formed at Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, &c., after the model of the English Independents, and a number of young men were collected and placed under the tuition of Messieurs Ewing and Innes for the ministry.



These were educated and sent out—places of worship were built in many towns and villages of Scotland—and missionaries were employed from England, at the sole expense of Mr. Haldane. The new sect (we speak it not reproachfully) had already made a progress similar to that of the Methodists in England, but it was more rapid than lasting. All the new-formed churches soon began to approximate to the faith and discipline of the Scotch Independents, commonly called David Dale's people—to the Scotch Baptists, commonly called Maclean's people, and to the Glassites. These three denominations are, in faith and discipline, very similar. Their creed is Calvinism, somewhat refined indeed, for they have long been accused of heresy by their Calvinistic brethren on both sides of the Tweed. They deny that scripture is a dead letter; that Jesus is the eternal Son of God; that there are any mysteries, in the popular acceptation of the word, or mystical senses, or diverse meanings, in the text of scripture; they assert that faith is merely credence, which is produced by evidence, and that the Holy Spirit never operates, but according to and by the written word. They pay much attention to the scriptures, but little regard to human theological compositions. They believe that the New Testament contains a perfect plan of church government; that every church ought to have a plurality of elders, chosen out of itself; that the Lord's Supper is to be observed every day of the week; that the brethren ought to sit down together on the same day to the love-feast, and salute one another with a holy kiss, according to the apostolic commandment; that contribution is to be made for the poor brethren, all of whom are to be liberally provided for; that none shall be admitted into their fellowship but by the consent of the whole body; and that offenders, whether against a brother, or against the faith, or against morality, shall be dealt with first privately, and then publicly, that they may come to repentance, but being obstinate must be put away.

This scheme of church order has never been popular in Scotland, though it rather gains ground. The Haldanes soon fell in with it, especially with respect to a

plurality of elders, and the duty of the brethren to exhort one another. Every thing clerical was considered objectionable; as the term *reverend*, or even minister; the wearing of black in preference to any other colour; a connected, well-composed sermon in preference to a plain exhortation to duty, or exposition of scripture, by comparing spiritual things with spiritual. All this rendered them abundantly unpopular; besides which, they became Baptists, and it is well known that many people have great aversion to baptism in the form of immersion. Those called Haldanites having passed through many changes, cannot now be distinguished from the old Scotch Baptists, the faith and worship of whom may be seen in a book, entitled "The Commission of Jesus Christ," &c. by Archibald M'Lean. Most of the buildings erected by Mr. Haldane are now appropriated to different purposes, or occupied by other worshippers.

Mr. Ewing, Mr. Wardlaw of Glasgow, Mr. Aikin of Edinburgh, continue on the plan of the English Independents, and are attended by numerous congregations.

This account has been communicated to the author of the Sketch by a respectable minister, who was formerly among the Haldanites: the reader may rely on the correctness of the representation.

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### FREETHINKING CHRISTIANS.\*

However singular the principles and practices of any body of men may be, however calculated to alarm the prejudiced, or even to astonish the dispassionate, it becomes the imperious duty of the author of the Sketch to represent men and opinions as they are.

The title of *Freethinking Christians* is one applied about six years ago to a society which has regularly assembled together in the heart of the city of London, since the year 1799, as a church of God, and as the disciples of

\*The article has been sent the author by a gentleman belonging to the Freethinking Christians, who was appointed by their society to draw it up for this work.

Jesus, acknowledging no other laws for their government as a church, and no other doctrines as matters of the Christian faith, than those which they apprehend to have been promulgated and taught by Jesus and his apostle, of which they consider the writings of the New Testament the only authentic records.

The first members of this church had been previously members of the church meeting at Parliament-court Chapel, Bishopgate-street at that time Universalists, and holding the doctrine of the Trinity—now Unitatians. It happened that an individual of that church became convinced of the truth of the doctrine of the divine unity—this conviction extended to others. These men having embraced what appeared to them an important truth, felt it their duty to submit it to their brethren, and to press its evidences on every suitable occasion on their attention. It will easily be imagined that, as the church was Trinitarian—as the congregation was Trinitarian, and consequently the pastor Trinitarian, that he, the pastor, would be first to oppose the growing heresy among his flock, and to designate its teachers as the enemies of the Son of God.

With pain and reluctance, therefore, they felt it their duty to separate from a church in which, on account of the radical nature of its constitution, as fixing the opinions to be believed by its members, and maintaining a distinct and individual teacher of these opinions, it appeared to them impossible for the strong and growing limbs of free inquiry to walk unfettered and uncontrolled; for when they found themselves in error on a point of so much importance as that of the unity of God, it occurred to them that there might still be many truths which they had yet to learn, many errors which they had yet to abandon.

Accordingly, on November 18, 1798, the members dissenting from the church of Parliament Court, assembled together at the house of one of the Friends, and drew up the declaration, setting forth the grounds and reasons of their separation from that church. This declaration, though important, is too long to be submitted to the readers of the Sketch; it contains, generally, the motives and

reasons of their conduct, and concludes in these words: "Thus having, in the integrity of our souls, set forth our reasons, we trust we can appeal to the Searcher of hearts, that we separate from our brethren in Parliament-court in love; and we earnestly pray, that the Father of all goodness, and the God of all grace, will be pleased to lead both them and us into the perfect knowledge of his will, and enable us cheerfully to do it, that we may at last meet joyfully and acceptably in the kingdom of Jesus, and have part therein."

The first business of the separatists was to examine the writings of the New Testament, and to trace out the directions given by the servants of Jesus to the primitive associations of his followers, in order to ascertain the nature, the constitution, and the laws of the Christian church, that they might assimilate themselves thereto. This work formed the labour of the first year of their existence as a distinct body, and was published in a small pamphlet in 1800.\* It contains the then views of the society on church discipline and organization; and though their opinions, as we shall see, on many doctrinal and ceremonial parts of Christianity, are now by no means the same as at that period, yet on this subject they seem rather to be strengthened and confirmed, than altered by time and subsequent research.

They consider the church of God to be an assembly of men, believing the truth of Christianity, and united in the bonds of fellowship, under the authority of Jesus as their sovereign and their head, by the appointment of God.

They consider that Christians are not called upon to legislate for themselves, but that Jesus gave laws, and laid down principles, either himself or by his apostles, for the government of his kingdom; that the apostles were fully instructed in all things pertaining thereto, and that their directions to the first assemblies should be the rule of their discipline, as a body, in all cases where they were not manifestly local and limited by circumstances.

\* "The True Design of the Church of God, and the Government thereof." Printed for the Church meeting at No. 38, Old Change.

They consider the unity of the church one of its principal characteristics, and that the design of Jesus was to unite his followers in one vast family; so that however scattered its members might be over the earth—however separated by worldly pursuits—however divided by mountains and seas, they should be all one in him, by acknowledging the same authority, by being subjects of the same laws, and by a mutual connexion and reciprocal communication with each other.

They consider the equality of the members of the Christian church to be the distinguishing feature of the kingdom of Jesus, from all the kingdoms of the earth, and as the true ground and security of their Christian liberty. As a consequence of this principle, all power and dominion rests in the church; all who bear sway and hold particular offices therein exist by its appointment, and are subject to its control.

Their officers are, first, an elder, whose business is to preside at their public assemblies, to regulate their private meetings, to preserve order, to attend especially to the wants and spiritual concerns of the church. The elder is elected by ballot, and the better to secure the liberties of the church, and to guard against the effects of power, he is elected only for three months, and remains ineligible to office till after the expiration of another three months.

Secondly, Two deacons, to assist the elder in the execution of the laws, in the despatch of business, in providing for the convenience, and attending to the civil concerns of the church: the deacons are subject to the same laws of appointment to office with the elder. With the right of electing to office, the liberty and privilege of teaching belongs alike to all, and is considered to flow from the equality of all! In this church, then, there is no hired, no especial teacher; every man, if he feels he has the ability, knows he has the right of giving a word of exhortation to his brethren, as in the primitive assemblies when all might teach one by one, that all might learn, and all might be comforted.\*

\* 1 Cor. xiv. 31.



The ground of fellowship with this church is the admission of the authority of Jesus as a divine teacher, and of his resurrection, as establishing the truth of his mission ;—this admitted, virtue, and not opinion, is the bond of union. No other sentiment is required to be acknowledged by persons proposing themselves for membership, than that which gives them the name and the character of Christians.

Since the first meeting of this society as a distinct body, their sentiments have undergone a considerable alteration on many matters of vital importance, connected with the doctrines of Christianity—and they make this their pride and their boast. They contend, that it was the natural consequence of free inquiry, and that men who had been heretofore the slaves of error, could not but advance in the attainment of truth, when united in a system, which left thought unrestrained, and conscience free. All their opinions have been the result of examination, of investigation, and unfettered discussion : they say, they owe what they esteem to be their enlightened views of Christianity, to the free spirit of their constitution, without which they would still have been but children in the knowledge of Christ Jesus their Lord. Not that they would declare themselves, in the language of bigotted confidence, totally free from error : they only assert, that their wish is to be so ; that their principle of union is calculated to make them so ; and that they will readily renounce any opinion they may call their own, whenever it shall appear to them false and untenable. They have long since rejected the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the last and most important practice which they have given up, is public social worship. In their assemblies they have neither singing nor prayer ; they consider the worship of the Christian should be the worship of the heart, and his prayers the prayers of the closet, agreeable to the express directions of Jesus to his disciples, and to the pure and retiring spirit of his religion. The effect of their inquiries has been to make them decided advocates for the unity of the Deity, and the simple humanity of Jesus ; but the doctrines of the atonement, of original sin, of

election, and reprobation, of the eternal punishment of the wicked, of the existence of bad or good angels, of the immateriality and immortality of the soul, they generally reject; the supposed inspiration of the Bible, as a book, they likewise reject, though the origin of revelation, as attested by miracles, and the genuineness and authenticity of the several writings composing the bible, and developing the history of the communication of God with his creature man, they believe to be established beyond the reach of rational doubt, or enlightened scepticism. Their view of the Christian religion is briefly this: that it consists in the worship and reverence of one God, eternal, just, and good, and in an obedience to the commands of Jesus, his messenger on earth, who taught the wicked to repent of the error of their ways, and that God was ever ready to receive them: that forms and ordinances, parade and show, were no parts of his system; but that virtue and purity of heart can alone prepare man for a blissful existence beyond the grave, the evidence and the hope of which was furnished by the resurrection of the teacher of their faith, a member of earth, and an heir of mortality!

For some years this society existed almost unnoticed and unknown; they corresponded with several churches whom they considered the most enlightened, but, happily as they esteem it, for their own improvement, they united with none. They had now examined, as they apprehended, every important subject connected with Christianity; they admired the beauty and simplicity of the Christian religion; they felt grateful to the Father of mercies, that they had come to the perfect knowledge of the Son of God, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, and they were anxious to extend their advantages to others. Accordingly they advertised in one of the Sunday papers, their intention of publicly inquiring into the existence of a being called *the Devil*, and by way of drawing attention to their advertisement, designated themselves *Free-thinking Christians*. Numbers flocked to their meeting. The landlord of the place was alarmed, at what he had reason to fear might be the consequences to himself;

they were obliged to quit the room in which they had assembled for eight years. They engaged another at No. 5, Cateaton-street, late the Paul's-Head Tavern. They were still followed by the multitude; and now they appear to have excited ecclesiastical alarm. The then Bishop of London (Porteus), not much to his credit, is accused of having excited the magistracy of the city against them. The account of this shameful affair, and all the contemptible arts that were taken to suppress the meetings of the Freethinking Christians, have long since been before the public; they resisted, and expressed boldly before the Lord Mayor at the Mansion-house, and in every court in which they had occasion to appear before the business was ended, their determination to resist what they considered an unwarrantable interference with the liberty of Protestant Dissenters, and the rights of conscience,—and in the end they triumphed over power and bigotry. They met again at the same place; the multitude that thronged their meeting was immense—several of the agents of the civil power were present—a short-hand writer from the Lord Mayor (Alderman Ainsley) attended and took down the discourses of the speakers; but the spirit of persecution dared no more, and from that time to the present they have regularly addressed crowded and attentive assemblies.

At their meetings, doctrinal, moral, and scriptural subjects are chosen for public instruction; there is the utmost simplicity and familiarity in their form and manner. The elder opens the business by stating the subject, and at his call several speakers, the one after the other, address the church and the audience assembled. It is no unusual thing to hear among them a difference of opinion, which they express without the least hesitation, considering that truth is engendered by the comparison of sentiment, and that no sensible mind can be otherwise than pleased at every attempt to correct what another may esteem its error. This exercise generally occupies about an hour and a half, and the business is concluded by the elder. The speakers in their discourses take frequent occasions to controvert the current opinions of the Christian world

in general, and to shew their ground of dissent from all sects and parties ; nor are they at all sparing with their censures on the priesthood, which, under all its modifications and refinements, they consider as opposed, both in theory and application, to the best principles of the Christian church, inimical to the purity of the gospel, inconsistent with the advancement of mind, and unfriendly to the interests of truth.

The number of the Freethinking Christians is fast increasing ; in 1810, they were enabled to build a respectable meeting-house in the Crescent, Jewin-street, Aldersgate-street, where they regularly address an assembly consisting of between four and five hundred persons : their present meetings are on the Sunday mornings only.

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### JOANNA SOUTHCOTT.

THE author having been frequently applied to respecting the opinions of Joanna Southcott, procured from a literary gentleman who is attached to her cause, the following communication. It is the most intelligible account of her opinions, as well as of her religious views, ever submitted to the public attention.

“The mission of this prophetess commenced in the year 1792, and the number of people who have joined with her from that period to the present time, as believing her to be divinely inspired, is considerable. It is asserted that she is the instrument, under the direction of Christ, to announce the establishment of his kingdom on earth, as a fulfilment of all the promises in the scriptures, and of that prayer which he himself gave to his followers ; and more particularly of the promise made to the woman in the fall, through which the human race is to be redeemed from all the effects of it in the end. We are taught by the communication of the spirit of Truth to her, that the seven days of the creation were types of the two periods in which the reign of Satan and of Christ are to be proved and contrasted. Satan was conditionally to have his reign tried for six thousand years,

shadowed by the six days in which the Lord worked, as his spirit has striven with man while under the powers of darkness ; but Satan's reign is to be shortened, for the sake of the elect, as declared in the gospel ; and Satan is to have a further trial at the expiration of the thousand years, for a time equal to the number of the days shortened. At the close of the seven thousand years the judgment is to take place, and the the whole human race will collectively bring forward the testimony of the evil they suffered under the reign of Satan, and of the good they enjoyed under the spiritual reign of Christ ! These two testimonies will be evidence before the whole creation of God, that the pride of Satan was the cause of his rebellion in heaven, and that he was the root of evil upon earth ; and consequently when those two great proofs have been brought forward, that part of the human race that has fallen under his power, to be tormented by being in the society of Satan and his angels, will revolt from him in that great day—will mourn that they have been deluded—will repent—and the Saviour of all will hold out his hand to them in mercy—and will then prepare a new earth for them to work righteousness, and prepare them ultimately to join his saints, who have fought the good fight in this world, while under the reign of Satan.

“The mission of Joanna is to be accomplished by a perfect obedience to the spirit that directs her, and so to be made to claim the promise of “bruising the head of the serpent ;” and which promise was made to the woman on her casting the blame upon Satan, whom she unwittingly obeyed, and thus man became dead to the knowledge of the good ; and so he blamed his Creator for giving him the woman, who was pronounced his helpmate for good. To fulfil the attribute of justice, Christ took upon himself that blame, and assumed his humanity to suffer on the cross for it, that he might justly bring the cross upon Satan, and rid him from the earth, and then complete the creation of man, so as to be after his own image. It is declared, that “the seed of the woman” are those who in faith shall join with her in claiming the prom-



ise made in the fall ; and they are to subscribe with their hands unto the Lord that they do thus join with her, praying for the destruction of the powers of darkness, and for the establishment of the kingdom of Christ ! Those who thus come forward in this spiritual war, are to have the seal of the Lord's protection ; and if they remain faithful soldiers, death and hell shall not have power over them : and these are to make up the sealed number of one hundred and forty-four thousand to stand with the Lamb on Mount Sion ! The fall of Satan's kingdom will be a second deluge over the earth ; so that from his having brought the human race under his power, a great part of them will fall with him, for the Lord will pluck out of his kingdom all that offend and do wickedly. The voice which announces the coming of the Messiah is accompanied with judgments, and the nations must be shaken and brought low before they will lay these things to heart. When all these things are accomplished, then the Desire of nations will come in glory, so that "every eye shall see him," and he will give his kingdom to his saints !

"It is represented, that in the Bible is recorded every event by which the Deity will work the ultimate happiness of the human race ; but that the great plan is for the most part represented by types and shadows, and otherwise so wrapt up in mysteries, as to be inscrutable to human wisdom. As the Lord pronounced that man should become dead to knowledge if he ate the forbidden fruit, so the Lord must prove his words true. He therefore selected a peculiar people as depositaries of the records of that knowledge ; and he appeared among them, and they proved themselves dead to every knowledge of him, by crucifying him. He will, in like manner, put the wild-olive to the same test ; and the result will be, that he will be now crucified in the spirit !

"The mission of Joanna began in 1792, at which time she had prophecies given her, showing how the whole was to be accomplished. Among other things, the Lord said he should visit the surrounding nations with various calamities for fifteen years, as a warning to *this* land ; and that then he should bring about events here which should

more clearly manifest the truth of her mission, by judgment and otherwise: so that this should be the happy nation to be the first redeemed from its troubles, and be the instrument for awakening the rest of the world to a sense of what is coming upon all, and for destroying *the Beast*, and those who worship his image!"

Since the insertion of the above article in the last edition, Joanna Southcott died of a protracted illness. It was given out that she was to be the mother of a *Second Shiloh*. Presents were accordingly made her for the *Babe*, especially a superb cradle, with an Hebrew inscription in poetry! But she expired, and no child appeared on the occasion. A stone placed over her remains in the New Burial-ground, Mary-le-bone, has this mystic inscription:—

In Memory of  
JOANNA SOUTHCOTT,  
who departed this life December 27th, 1814,  
Aged 60 Years.

While through all thy wond'rous days  
Heaven and earth enraptured gaze,  
While vain sages think they know  
Secrets thou alone canst show,  
Time alone will tell what hour  
Thou'lt appear in greater power!

Similar in extravagance were the lines put on the stone of Ludovick Muggleton, a journeyman taylor, who set up for a prophet in the time of Cromwell. He and his companion Reeves absolved and condemned whom they pleased, saying, they were the *two last witnesses* spoken of in the Revelations, who were to appear previous to the destruction of the word! He was buried in spinning-wheel-Alley, Moorfields, dying March 14, 1697, in the 88th year of his age. The inscription ran thus:—

Whilst mausoleums and large inscriptions give  
Might, splendour, and past death make potents live,  
It is enough briefly to write thy name—  
Succeeding times by that will read thy fame:  
Thy deeds—thy acts—around the world resound,  
No foreign soil where Muggleton's not found!

I have been down to the burial-ground, and no memorial remains ; the raven plume of oblivion hath long ago waved over the prophet's grave !

Equally evanescent were the *Fifth Monarchy Men* in the days of Cromwell. The Assyrian, the Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman were the four great monarchies ; and these men, believing that the spiritual kingdom of Chirst made the *fifth*, came to bear the name by which they are distinguished. They aimed at the subversion of all human government. The Muggletonians and Fifth Monarchy Men are now only casually mentioned in the History of England.

It is remarkable that, within a few yards of Joanna Southcott's grave, will be found the grave of Richard Brothers, the political prophet, who made much noise in the beginning of the French revolutionary war, and whose cause was maintained by Mr. Halhed, the Oriental scholar, in the House of Commons. On a large plain stone is the following inscription :

This ground was bought by Mr. John Finlayson, of Upper Baker-street, to deposit under this stone the mortal remains of Mr. RICHARD BROTHERS, who resided and died in Mr Finlayson's house, on the 25th Jan., 1824.

A writer in the *Times* newspaper, signed TRUTH, says, "I saw Mr. Brothers a few days before his death ; he was respectably dressed, very pale, very thin—a mere skeleton, very weak, could hardly walk, and died of a consumption. It was singular that the minister died of a broken heart, and that the doctor, under whose care he was confined for eleven years in a private madhouse at Islington, laid violent hands on himself." Lord Chancellor Erskine, much to his honour, liberated the poor maniac, and restored him to society.

THE  
RECENT SECEDERS FROM THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND.

DRAWN UP BY ONE OF THEIR OWN BODY.

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In the year 1815, several clergymen, who had been personally acquainted with each other, and had occasionally laboured together in the work of religious instruction (without any communication on the particular subject of the services of the Church of England) were much pained by a conviction that some of those services in which they were engaged were contradictory to the injunctions and the character of the religion of Jesus Christ. The Baptismal service particularly appeared to them, as substituting a ritual observance in the place of a spiritual and divine operation, and to be peculiarly objectionable. The Catechism, as connected with the Baptismal service, and the Burial service as continuing on a delusion, by still denominating every individual a Christian, on the ground of a merely external association, were likewise objected against. The Athanasian Creed also, with some, though not with all, was considered, especially in its damnatory clause, as contradictory to the simple declaration, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved;" as well as too assuming by far in its judgment.

The constitution of the church of England had also appeared to some of them as radically bad, from the circumstance of its connection with the state, and its consequent obligation to have its teachers in spiritual things appointed by persons who might be themselves wholly under the influence of carnal principles.

The daily use, however, of services which they considered as denying the declarations of God's word, was so oppressive, and, in their esteem, so guilty, that their obliga-

tion to it may be considered as the direct cause of their secession: and when, at length, they communicated their feelings to each other, it is more than probable that the objections in the mind of each were increased in number as well as weight.

In the autumn of 1815 they agreed to meet together, to inquire more fully into the nature of each other's difficulties, and into the nature of their own obligations, by virtue of their subscription, at the time of ordination and induction. After some consideration, they agreed that it was not consistent with Christian integrity to continue the use of religious services which appeared to them to be in contradiction to the word of God, and that they were bound to rescind their own declaration, 'that they could, *ex animo*, assent to the whole of the contents of the thirty-nine articles, and the book of homilies, and the contents of the book of common prayer, as containing nothing contrary to the word of God.' After this they waited not many weeks before they tendered the resignation of their livings or cures to their respective Bishops, which they did, as became them, in the most respectful manner in their power; and it must be allowed by all fair witnesses, that very little expression of disrespect, much less of bitterness, can be proved upon any of these persons in their observations on the establishment.

After the Seceders had left their original connexions and their preferments, which common sense must teach us they had not done without many a severe struggle, they went into the neighbourhood of Taunton, and exercised their ministry in that town and in the adjacent villages for nearly a year; during which time they constantly met together, and endeavoured to come to some conclusion as to the course which they ought to adopt. They were not desirous of uniting hastily with any of the various religious denominations; and the charge of Antinomianism which was pretty generally made against their doctrinal statements, made most of the various religious denominations as willing to avoid them.

They were at this time in a very peculiar situation: their sacrifices and their general conduct seemed to de-



mand respect ; but on the other hand, it was feared that their views were crude and dangerous, being formed upon a partial consideration of the sacred volume ; and their apparent opposition to all parties made them liable to much obloquy from various quarters.

It is certain that their principal subject, in all their discourses, was that of a sinner's justification before God, which they affirmed in the strongest manner, and sometimes in rather uncouth terms, that this was by *faith only* through the propitiation which was by Christ Jesus ! If they did not, on their first leaving the church, sufficiently enlarge on the effects of faith, those who continue to preach acknowledge themselves most sincerely to have been in error in this respect ; and it was because they considered that, if the principle of obedience were implanted, there was little necessity for enlarging upon the nature of the obedience itself. But in their private intercourse with those who seemed to receive their doctrines, they are said to have been less defective in practical admonitions than in their sermons. They themselves, in the strongest terms, expressed at all times their abhorrence of practical Antinomianism ; and if a reply by Mr. Snow, of Cheltenham, to a pamphlet written by a Mr. Simons, may be considered as a representation of the sentiments of the rest of the Seceders, Antinomianism is certainly no more chargeable on them than on the Calvinistic bodies in general, who hold *justification by faith only* with a very strong hand.

The Seceders have by this time, we suspect, learned to moderate their statements. Some have gone abroad, some continue to preach, having large chapels at London, Bristol, Brighton, Exeter, Taunton, Cheltenham, and some smaller ones in various parts of Wiltshire, Hampshire, and Devonshire. They have never appeared to have any rules for uniting them together, and for advancing their interests as a body. Whether certain peculiarities of opinion, in which they are now said to be more agreed amongst themselves than formerly, may ever occasion them to augment the number of their followers, and assume a more prominent position in the ranks of the

various religious bodies, time must determine. There are still some differences in their forms of worship, some contending for communion on the terms of the strict Baptists, and for the visible separation of members of the Church from others at the time of worship; others adopting the more general plan of admitting *all* that profess faith to their communion, and agreeing in the common mode of public worship. All are in some degree tainted with what is termed Sandemanianism, as they break bread and have a collection for the saints on the first day of the week. Their views on many doctrines differ from those which are called orthodox. They do not hold the doctrine of the Trinity as it is commonly maintained, neither do they confound the persons of the Father and Son, as the Sabellians. Mr. Bevan's treatise of "God in Christ," and Mr. Evans's "Dialogues on the Trinity," are the only two publications which have yet appeared expressing their views on this solemn subject. As these are not published with the intention of expressing the creed of a body, but of individuals, it would be unfair to affix all the contents of those works on any others than the authors themselves. It is plain that they believe Christ to have existed with God before all things; that the appellations ascribed to the Supreme are given to him,—that he is the object of religious worship,—that by *his blood* all believers are *justified* from all things,—that he is the Lord and Governor of all things in heaven and in earth, the prophet, priest, and king of the Church!

They hold the doctrine of the Atonement in the strongest manner, but do not distinguish between the active and passive obedience of Christ, considering justification to consist only in the entire remission of all sin. They believe faith to be the giving of credit to the divine testimony, and in this respect are like the Sandemanians. They maintain the absolute necessity of the influence of the holy spirit of God, but suppose its operation to be by the means of the revealed truth of God reaching the heart through the medium of the understanding.

They differ from the High Calvinists altogether in their mode of preaching, which is principally intended for the instruction and conversion of those whom they consider to be still of the world.

They maintain the doctrine of personal and individual sanctification, contrary to what has been charged on them, as will particularly appear by Mr. Snow's "Reply" to Mr. Simons, (sold at Ogle's) together with his "Sermons on the Death of the Princess Charlotte," and by a sermon of Mr. Evans's,

The seceders believe in the doctrine of election, but do not make it a very prominent subject in their discourses, and appear to the high Calvinists to contradict themselves on this subject, by the general invitations which they make to all men!

It must be here added that Mr. Snow of Cheltenham, once an actor, has confessed his errors, and returned to the church of England; whilst Mr. Evans of Gray's-inn lane, has, though still a dissenter, reverted back to the belief of the trinity. He has published a "Series of Letters" on the subject, bitterly lamenting his temporary heterodoxy; and by way of reparation, endeavouring to set right the various erring classes of the religious world.

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## SAUDS.

### *A newly-discovered Indian Sect, resembling the Quakers.*

"In March, 1816, (says the reporter of the Calcutta committee of the Church Missionary Society) I went with two gentlemen from Futtehgurh, on the invitation of the Principal persons of the Saud sect, to witness an assemblage of them for the purpose of religious worship, in the city of Farrukhabad, the general meeting of the sect being that year in that city. The assembly took place in the court-yard of a large house: the number of men, women, and children were considerable. We were received with great attention, and chairs were placed for us in the front of the hall. After some time, when the place was quite full of people, the worship commenced. It consisted solely in the chaunting of a hymn, this being

the only mode of public worship used by the Sauds! At subsequent periods I made particular inquiries relative to the religious opinions and practices of this sect, and was frequently visited by Bhuwaneé Dos, the principal person of the sect in the city of Furrukhabad. The following is the substance of the account given by Bhuwaneé Dos, of the origin of this sect:—

“About the Sumbat year 1600, or 177 years ago, a person named Beerbhan, an inhabitant of Beejbasur near Narraul, in the province of Delhi, received a miraculous communication from Ooda Dos, teaching him the particulars of the religion now professed by the Sauds. Ooda Dos at the same time gave to Beerbhan marks by which he might know him on his re-appearance. 1. That whatever he foretold should happen: 2. That no shadow should be cast from his figure: 3. That he would tell him his thoughts: 4. That he would be suspended between heaven and earth: 5. That he would bring the dead to life! Bhuwaneé Dos presented me with a copy of the Pot-hee, or religious books of the Sauds, written in a kind of verse, in the tenth Hindée dialect; and he fully explained to me the leading points of their religion. The Sauds utterly reject and abhor all kinds of idolatry, and the Ganges is considered by them with no greater veneration than by Christians, although the converts are made chiefly, if not entirely, from among the Hindoos, whom they resemble in outward appearance. Their name for God is *Stutgur*; and Saud, the appellation of the sect, means *Servant of God!* They are pure deists, and their form of worship is most simple, as I have already stated. They resemble the Quakers in their customs in a remarkable degree. Ornaments and gay apparel of every kind are strictly prohibited. Their dress is always white. They never make any obeisance or salam. They will not take an oath, and they are exempted in a court of justice: their asseveration, as that of the Quakers, being considered equivalent. The Sauds profess to abstain from all luxuries, such as tobacco, paun, opium, and wine. They never have nauches or dancing! All attack on man or beast is forbidden, but in self-de-

fence resistance is allowable. Industry is strongly enjoined. The Sauds, like the Quakers, take great care of their poor and infirm people. To receive assistance out of the Puntar Tribe would be reckoned disgraceful, and render the offender liable to excommunication! All parade of worship is forbidden; secret prayer is recommended; alms should be unostentatious; they are not to be done that they should be seen of men. The due regulation of the tongue is a principal duty. The chief seats of the Saud sect are Delhi, Agra, Jypoor, and Furrukhabad; but there are several of the sect scattered over the country. An annual meeting takes place at one or other of the cities above-mentioned, at which the concerns of the sect are settled.

The magistrate of Furrukhabad informed me that he found the Sauds an orderly and well-conducted people. They are chiefly engaged in trade. Bluwanee Dos was anxious to become acquainted with the Christian religion, and I gave him some copies of the New Testament in Persian and Hindoostanee, which he said he had read and shown to his people, and much approved. I had no copy of the Old Testament in any language which he understood well; but as he expressed a strong desire to know the account of the creation, as given in it, I explained it to him from an Arabic version, of which he knew a little. I promised to procure him a Persian or Hindoostanee Old Testament, if possible. I am of opinion that the Sauds are a very interesting people, and that an intelligent and zealous missionary would find great facility in communicating with them!"

This is indeed a Heathen sect, but its members so surpass some Christians in the mildness of their tempers and in the purity of their lives, that a place could not be refused it in this work.

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### JERKERS AND BARKERS.

The following account is taken from an interesting American work, in two large octavo volumes, entitled "A



General History of the Baptist Denomination in America and other parts of the World," by David Benedict, A. M., Pastor of the Baptist Church in Pawtucket, Rhode Island.

The author is a minister of the Particular Baptist persuasion, respected for his talents, learning, and piety. He indeed records these religious excesses for the admonition of weaker brethren, who are intent on severing *reason* from religion, a sure mode of augmenting the triumphs of infidelity! The subsequent narrative may appear strange and incredible, but the utmost reliance may be placed upon the author's integrity. Equally does it become us to shun the extremes of enthusiasm and superstition, thus rendering homage to the rational and unostentatious genius of our common Christianity. To promote "a spirit of wisdom and a sound mind" in the important affairs of religion, is the sole reason for inserting an account of the Jerkers and Barkers in this work. The Jumpers were not much inferior to them in absurdity, as well as some other sects prevalent in the nineteenth century, and dispersed throughout our own enlightened and civilized country. Religion ceases to be respectable in the eyes of men, when it cherishes visionary notions, and by its tumultuary practices destroys the repose of the community.

"From 1799 to 1803, there were, in most parts of the United States, remarkable out-pourings of the divine Spirit, among different denominations; multitudes became the subjects of religious concern, and were made to rejoice in the salvation of God. The revival among the Baptists in the southern and western States, has already been frequently referred to, and accounts of the astonishing additions to their churches have been given. This great revival in Kentucky began in Boone county on the Ohio river, and in its progress extended up the Ohio, Licking, and Kentucky rivers, branching out into the settlements adjoining them. It spread fast in different directions, and in a short time almost every part of the state was affected by its influence. It was computed that about ten thousand were baptized and added to the Bap-

tist churches in the course of two or three years. This great work progressed among the Baptists in a much more regular manner than people abroad have generally supposed. They were indeed zealously affected and much engaged. Many of their ministers baptize in a number of neighbouring churches, from two to four hundred each. And two of them baptized about five hundred a-piece in the course of the work. But throughout the whole, they preserved a good degree of decorum and order. Those camp-meetings, those great parades, and sacramental seasons, those extraordinary exercises of falling down, rolling shouting, jerking, dancing, barking, &c., were but little known among the Baptists in Kentucky, nor encouraged by them. They, it is true, prevailed among some of them in the Green River country; but, generally speaking, they were among the Presbyterians and Methodists, and in the end by a seceding party from them both, which denominated themselves Christians, but which were generally distinguished by their opposers by the name of New-Lights and Schismatics! These strange expressions of zeal, which have made so much noise abroad, came in at the close of the revival, and were, in the judgment of many, the chaff of the work. There was a precious ingathering of souls among the Presbyterians and Methodists, at which they rejoiced; but when the work arose to an enthusiastic height, many different opinions were expressed respecting it. The Methodists had no scruples of its being genuine; but among the Presbyterians, some doubted—some opposed—but a considerable number overleaped all the bounds of formality, fanned the flame as fire from heaven, bid up camp-meetings, and sacramental seasons, and finally run religious frenzy into its wildest shapes. Soon a number of these ministers separated from the rest, formed a new Presbytery, called the Springfield, upon New-Light principles, soon dissolved that, and five or six of them in a few years became Shaking Quakers.”

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I shall close the list of Denominations with an account of that discriminating article of belief which refers to the

*final triumphs of Christianity.* Its advocates are not a sect distinct from others, but their tenet prevails in a less or greater degree throughout almost every department of the religious world.

### MILLENARIANS.

THE Millenarians are those who believe that Christ will reign personally on earth for a thousand years; and their name, taken from the Latin, *mille*, a thousand, has a direct allusion to the duration of the spiritual empire. "The doctrine of the Millennium, or a future paradisaical state of the earth, (says a monthly reviewer,) is not of Christian, but of Jewish origin. The tradition is attributed to Elijah, which fixes the duration of the world, in its present imperfect condition, to six thousand years, and announces the approach of a sabbath of a thousand years of universal peace and plenty, to be ushered in by the glorious advent of the Messiah! This idea may be traced in the epistle of Barnabas, and in the opinions of Papias, who knew of no written testimony in its behalf. It was adopted by the Author of the Revelation, by Justin Martyr, by Irenæus, and by a long succession of the Fathers. As the theory is animating and consolatory, and, when divested of cabalistic numbers and allegorical decorations, *probable even in the eye of philosophy*, it will no doubt always retain a number of adherents." It is remarkable, that Druidism, the religion of the first inhabitants of this island, had a reference to the progressive melioration of the human species, as is amply shown in an incomparable "Essay on Druidism," prefixed to Richard's "Welsh Nonconformist Memorial, or Cambro-British Biography."

But as the Millennium has, for these few years past, attracted the attention of the public, we shall enter into a short detail of it.

Mr. Joseph Mede, Dr. Gill, Bishop Newton, and Mr. Winchester, contend for the *personal reign* of Christ on earth. To use that prelate's own words, in his "Dissertations on the Prophecies:—" "When these great events

shall come to pass, of which we collect from the prophecies, this is to be the proper order:—the Protestant witnesses shall be greatly exalted, and the 1260 years of their prophesying in sackcloth, and of the tyranny of the beast, shall end together; the conversion and restoration of the Jews succeed; then follows the ruin of the Ottoman empire; and then the total destruction of Rome and of Antichrist:—when these great events, I say, shall come to pass, then shall the kingdom of Christ commence or the reign of the saints upon earth. So Daniel expressly informs us, that the kingdom of Christ and the saints will be raised upon the ruins of the kingdom of Antichrist, vii. 26, 27. ‘But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end: and the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and all dominions shall serve and obey him.’ So likewise St. John saith, that, upon the final destruction of the beast and the false prophet, Rev. xx., ‘Satan is bound for a thousand years; and I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus Christ and for the word of God; which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image; neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands, and they lived and reigned with Christ a *thousand* years. But the rest of the dead lived not again, until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection., It is, I conceive, to these great events, the fall of Antichrist, the re-establishment of the Jews, and the beginning of the glorious Millennium, that the three different dates in Daniel of 1260 years, 1290 years and 1335 years are to be referred.—And as Daniel saith, xii. 12, ‘Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the 1335 years;’ so St. John saith, xx. 6, ‘Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection.’ Blessed and happy indeed will be this period; and it is very observable, that the martyrs and confessors of Jesus, in Papist



as well as Pagan times, will be raised to partake of this felicity. Then shall all those gracious promises in the Old Testament be fulfilled—of the the amplitude and extent, of the peace and prosperity, of the glory and happiness of the church in the latter days. ‘Then,’ in the full sense of the words, Rev. xi. 15, ‘Shall the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.’ According to tradition,\* these thousand years of the reign of Christ and the saints, will be the *seventh Millenary* of the world: for as God created the world in six days, and rested on the *seventh*; so the world, it is argued, will continue *six* thousand years, and the *seventh thousand* will be the great *Sabbatism*, or holy rest to the people of God. ‘One day (2 Pet. iii. 8.) being with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.’ According to tradition too, these thousand years of the reign of Christ and the saints, are the *great day of judgment*, in the morning or beginning whereof, shall be the coming of Christ in a flaming fire, and the particular judgment of Antichrist and the first resurrection; and in the evening or conclusion whereof shall be the *general resurrection* of the dead, *small and great*; ‘and they shall be judged, every man, according to their works!’”

This is a just representation of the Millennium, according to the common opinion entertained of it, that Christ will reign personally on earth during the period of one thousand years! But Dr. Whitby, in a dissertation on the subject, Dr. Priestley, in his “*Institutes of Religion*,” and the author of the “*Illustrations of Prophecy*,” contend against the literal interpretation of the Millennium, both as to its nature and its duration. On such a topic, however, we cannot suggest our opinions with too great a degree of modesty.

Mr. Winchester, in his “*Lectures on the prophecies*,” freely indulges his imagination on this curious subject. He suggests, (as has been already mentioned) that the large rivers in America are all on the eastern side, that

\* See Burnet's Theory.



the Jews may waft themselves the more easily down to the Atlantic, and then across that vast ocean to the Holy Land; that Christ will appear at the equinoxes (either March or September) when the days and nights are equal all over the globe; and finally, that the body of Christ will be luminous, and being suspended in the air over the equator for twenty-four hours, will be seen with circumstances of peculiar glory, from pole to pole, by all the inhabitants of the world!

Dr. Priestley (entertaining an exalted idea of the advantages to which our nature may be destined treats the limitation of the duration of the world to seven thousand years as a Rabbinical fable; and intimates that the thousand years may be interpreted prophetically: then every day would signify a year, and the Millennium would last for three hundred and sixty-five thousand years! Again he supposes that there will be no resurrection of any individuals till the general resurrection; and that the Millennium implies only the revival of religion. This opinion is indeed to be found in his "Institutes," published many years ago; but latterly he has inclined to the personal reign of Christ. See his "Farewell Sermon," preached at Hackney, previous to his emigration to America. The Author of the "Illustrations of Prophecy" contends, that in the period commonly called the Millennium, a melioration of the human race will take place, by natural means, throughout the world. For his reasons, we refer to the work itself, where will be found an animated sketch of that period, when an end shall be put to many of the calamities now prevalent on the globe!

The late Dr. Bogue published a "Series of Discourses" on the Millennium, well worth attention.

The Reverend Edward Irving, the celebrated Caledonian orator, has also published two small volumes on prophecy, in which he contends for a Millennium involving the personal reign of Christ on earth. Its commencement he dates in 1866—that is, thirty-nine years hence. The Younger portion of the present generation may witness the arrival of this august era—which it has been hitherto thought would be reserved to bless the eyes and

gratify the longing expectations of the saints, down to the latest posterity.

However the Millenarians may differ among themselves respecting the nature of this great event, it is agreed on all hands, that such a revolution will be affected in the latter days, by which vice and its attendant misery shall be banished from the earth; thus completely forgetting all those dissensions and animosities by which the religious world hath been agitated, and terminating the grand drama of Providence with universal felicity. We are not unmindful of the prophetic language of Isaiah, chap. xlix. 22, 23,—together with a sublime passage from the Book of the Revelations, chap. xi. 15, with which the canon of Scripture concludes—“Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people. And Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their Queens thy nursing mothers, (they shall become good themselves, and be the protectors of religion and liberty,) and thou shalt know that I am the Lord, for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.—And the seventh Angel sounded, and there were great voices in Heaven, saying,—The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.”

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These are the divisions of human opinions, which characterize the more popular departments of the religious world. I have endeavoured to delineate them with accuracy and brevity. Each system boasts of admirers, and professes to have its peculiar arguments and tendencies. To a thoughtful mind they exhibit a melancholy picture of the human understanding, misguided through passion, and warped with prejudice. In drawing out the motley catalogue, several cursory reflections arose in my mind. A few only, such as may operate as a persuasive to religious moderation, shall be submitted to the reader's attention.

The execrable spirit of bigotry is indeed abating among all parties, and the professors of Jesus are becoming more intent on the great essentials of Christian-

ty. The probationary condition in which we are placed, powerfully inculcates such a conduct. It was a saying of the pious Richard Baxter, recorded by himself in the "History of his own Times"—"While we wrangle here in the dark, we are dying and passing to that world which will decide *all* our controversies, and the safest passage thither is by peaceable holiness."

Hence jarring sectaries may learn  
 Their real interest to discern,  
 That brother should not war with brother,  
 And worry and devour each other;  
 Shunning division here below,  
 That each in charity may grow,  
 Till, joined in Christian fellowship and love,  
 The Church on earth shall meet the Church above!

COWPER.

It is an animating consideration, that notwithstanding the jarring and contentions of parties for their opinions and modes of worship, which the preceding pages attempt to pourtray, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, undebased by the prejudices, and uncontrolled by the passions of frail humanity, continues to operate, like the great laws of nature, with a silent but irresistible energy for the renovation of mankind. Pure religion, it has been remarked, disdains the aid of sophistry, however splendid, and misrepresentation however ingenious. Her temple admits none but the graceful decorations of Christian charity, and can only be supported by the pillars of truth—

No meretricious graces to beguile,  
 No clustering ornaments to clog the pile;  
 From ostentation as from weakness free,  
 It stands like the cerulean arch you see,  
 Majestic in its own simplicity!

May the God of peace allay the animosities and meliorate the temper of the Christian world! Thus will the wretched remains of bigotry, still to be found in some unhappy individuals of every party, be lessened and finally destroyed. The glorious Gospel of the blessed God wants not any adventitious aid to extend its empire over the human heart. It is of itself sufficient (under the blessing of heaven) to purify our affections, and prepare us for our certain and speedy removal into eternity.

But it is time that I now enter on those reflections, suggested by the perusal of this volume, detailing the opinions which characterize the Christian world.

These reflections are obvious to every capacity, that is not darkened with prejudice or beclouded by bigotry. Where they have been read, and considered, they prove useful; enlarging the mind, disposing it to free inquiry, and promoting the generous affections. A religion that abandons the use of reason, and inspires hatred towards all that are not enclosed within the petty circle of party, cannot be divine. Such is not the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, who, supremely happy in himself, will, by means of the Gospel, render happy the whole race of mankind.

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## REFLECTIONS.

OR

A PERSUASIVE TO CHRISTIAN MODERATION.

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“There is nothing in the world, more wholesome or more necessary for us to learn than this gracious lesson of moderation, without which, in very truth, a man is so far from being a Christian, that he is not himself! This is the centre wherein all both divine and moral philosophy meet—the rule of life—the governess of manners—the silken string that runs through the pearl chain of all virtues—the very ecliptic line under which reason and religion move without any deviation, and therefore most worthy our best thoughts—of our most careful observance.”—*Bishop Hall*.

1. Since the best and wisest of mankind thus differ on the speculative tenets of religion, let us modestly estimate the extent of the human faculties.

A modest estimate of the human faculties is an inducement to moderation. After laborious investigations, probably with equal degrees of knowledge and integrity, men arrive at opposite conclusions. Human reason, weak and fallible, soars with feeble, and often with ineffectual wing, into the regions of speculation. Let none affirm that this mode of argument begets an indifference to the acquisi-

tion of religious truth. To declare that all tenets are alike, is an affront to the understanding. The chilling hesitation of scepticism, the forbidding sternness of bigotry, and the delirious fever of enthusiasm, are equally abhorrent from the genius of true Christianity. Truth being the conformity of our conceptions to the nature of things, we should be careful lest our conceptions be tinged with error. Philosophers suppose that the senses convey the most determinate species of information ; yet these senses are not endued with an instinctive infallibility. How much greater cause have we to mistrust the exercise of our rational powers, which from early infancy are beset with prejudices !

Our reason proves of essential use to us in ascertaining the nature of truths, and the degrees of evidence with which they are attended. This induces a modesty of temper, the ground-work of charity. Richard Baxter, revered for his good sense as well as fervent piety, has these remarkable expressions on the subject :—“ I am not so foolish as to pretend my certainty to be greater than it is, merely because it is a dishonour to be less certain: nor will I by shame be kept from confessing those infirmities which those have as much as I, who hypocritically reproach me with them. My certainty that I am a man, is before my certainty that there is a God ; my certainty that there is a God, is greater than my certainty that he requireth love and holiness of his creatures : my certainty of this is greater than my certainty of the life of reward and punishment hereafter ; my certainty of that is greater than my certainty of the endless duration of it, and the immortality of individual souls ; my certainty of the Deity is greater than my certainty of the Christian faith ; my certainty of the Christian faith in its essentials, is greater than my certainty of the perfection and infallibility of all the Holy Scriptures ; my certainty of that is greater than my certainty of the meaning of many particular texts, and so of the truth of many particular doctrines, or of the canonicalness of some certain books. So that you see by what gradations my understanding doth proceed, as also that my certainty differeth as the



evidence differs! And they that have attained to a greater perfection and a higher degree of certainty than I, should pity me, and produce their evidence to help me." This paragraph should be written in letters of gold. Like the Roman laws of old, it ought to be hung up in public, and every means taken of directing towards it the attention of the professors of Christianity. This accurate statement of the nature and degrees of belief duly impressed on the mind, would prevent besotted bigotry.

Reason, though imperfect, is the noblest gift of God, and upon no pretence must it be decried. It distinguishes man from the beasts of the field, constitutes his resemblance to the Deity, and elevates him to the superiority he possesses over this lower creation. By Deists it is extolled, to the prejudice of revelation; and by Enthusiasts depreciated, that they may impose on their votaries the absurdities of their systems. Yet, strange inconsistency! even these enthusiasts condescend to employ this calumniated faculty in pointing out the conformity of their tenets to scripture, and in fabricating evidence for their support. But beware of speaking lightly of reason, which is denominated the eye of the soul! Every opprobrious epithet with which the thoughtless or the designing dare to stigmatize it, vilifies the Creator.

From the preceding pages it will be seen how prone men are to extremes in the important affairs of religion. The evil arises from the neglect of reason, termed by an inspired writer the 'candle of the Lord,' and which must be the best guide in the interpretation of the New Testament. The epithet *carnal*, with which professors are too apt to stigmatize it, is never once applied to it in the Holy Scriptures. It is there attached not to reason but to the ceremonial commandments and ordinances of the former dispensation. Mr. Locke remarks, "Very few make any other use of their half employed and undervalued reason but to bandy against it. For when, by the influence of some prevailing head, they all lean one way, truth is sure to be borne down, and there is nothing so dangerous as to make any inquiry after her; and to own her for her own sake is a most unpardonable crime." Thus is

appears that the neglect of reason in matters of religion is a long standing evil, and will never be altogether eradicated in the present imperfect condition of humanity. But, far from fettering the human mind, Christianity allows it free and vigorous exercise. By coming in contact with sacred subjects it is refined and invigorated. It will be sublimed and perfected in a better world.

Circumscribed, indeed, are the operations of reason, and fallible are its decisions. That it is incompetent to investigate certain subjects which our curiosity may essay to penetrate, is acknowledged. Its extension, beyond its assigned boundaries, has proved an ample source of error. Thus Mr. Colliber, an ingenious writer, (often referred to by Dr. Doddridge in his Lectures) imagines in his treatise, entitled "The Knowledge of God," that the Deity must have some form, and intimates it may probably be spherical! Indeed the abuse of reason has generated an endless list of paradoxes, and given birth to those monstrous systems of metaphysical theology, which are "the plague of wise men, and the idol of fools." Upon many religious topics, which have tortured our understandings, the sacred writers are respectfully silent. Where they cease to inform us we should drop our inquiries; unless we claim superior degrees of information, and deem ourselves more competent to decide on these intricate subjects. "The modesty of Christians (says Archbishop Tillotson) is contented in divine mysteries, to know what God has thought fit to reveal concerning them, and hath no curiosity to be wise above that which is written. It is enough to believe what God says concerning these matters, and if any man will venture to say more—every other man surely is at liberty to believe as he sees reason."

The primitive Christians, in some of their councils, elevated the New Testament on a throne: thus intimating their concern, that by that volume alone their disputes should be determined. The president De Thou remarks, "that the sword of the word of God ought to be the sole weapon—and those who are no longer to be compelled, should be quietly attracted by moderate con-

siderations and amicable discussions." And Burke, who knew well human nature, remarks that, "In all persuasions, the bigots are persecutors; the men of a cool and reasonable piety are favourers of toleration, because bigots, not taking the pains to be acquainted with the grounds of their adversaries, tenets, conceive them to be so absurd and monstrous, that no man of sense can give into them in good earnest. For which reason, they are convinced that some oblique bad motive induces them to pretend to the belief of such doctrines, and to the maintaining them with obstinacy. This is a very general principle in all religious differences, and it is the corner-stone of all persecution."

2. The diversity of religious opinions implies no reflection upon the sufficiency of Scripture to instruct us in matters of faith and practice, and should not be made a pretence for uncharitableness.

Controversies are agitated concerning words rather than things. This is to be ascribed to the ambiguity of language, which has been a source of ecclesiastical animosities. But there is not in the world such a multitude of opinions as superficial observers may imagine. A common gazer at the starry firmament conceives the stars to be innumerable; but the astronomer knows their number to be limited—nay, to be much smaller than a vulgar eye would apprehend. On the subjects of religion, many men dream rather than think—imagine rather than believe. Were the intellect of every individual awake, and preserved in exercise, similarity of sentiment would be much more prevalent. But mankind will not think, and hence thinking has been deemed "one of the least exerted privileges of cultivated humanity." It happens that the idle flights indulged by enthusiasts, the burdensome rites revered by the superstitious, and the corrupt maxims adopted by worldly-minded professors, are charged on the Scriptures of truth. Whereas the inspired volume is fraught with rational doctrines, equitable precepts, and immaculate rules of conduct. Fanciful accommodations, distorted passages, false translations, and forced analogies, have been the means employed to debase the

Christian doctrine. An impartial investigation of the word of God raises in our minds conceptions worthy the perfections of Deity, suitable to the circumstances of mankind, and adapted to purify our nature—

Religion's lustre is, by native innocence,  
Divinely pure and simple from all arts ;  
You daub and dress her like a common mistress—  
The harlot of your fancies ! and by adding  
False beauties, which she wants not, make the world  
Suspect her angel face is foul beneath,  
And will not bear all lights.

The Catholics deprive their laity of the Scripture by restraining its use, and denying its sufficiency. The same reason also was assigned to vindicate the necessity of an infallible head to dictate in religious matters. Notwithstanding these devices to produce unanimity of sentiment, they were not more in possession of it than the Protestants. The sects which at different periods sprang up in the bosom, and disturbed the tranquility of the Catholic church, are proofs that they failed to attain the desired object. Pretences, however specious, should be rejected, if they tend to invalidate the sufficiency, or disparage the excellence of holy writ. Least of all should diversity of sentiment be alleged ; for it does not originate in the Scriptures themselves, but in the imbecility of the understanding, in the freedom of the will, in the pride of passion, and in the inveteracy of prejudice. Deists nevertheless, who are expert in observing what may be construed into an objection against revealed religion, declaim loudly on this topic. On account of the diversity of sentiment which obtains, they charge the Bible with being defective in a species of intelligence it never pretended to communicate. Unencumbered with human additions, and uncontaminated with foreign mixtures, it furnishes the believer with that information which illuminates the understanding, meliorates the temper, invigorates the moral feelings, and improves the heart. “All Scripture given by inspiration, is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” “Heaven and Hell are not more distant (says Lord Lyttleton) than the benevolent spirit of the



Gospel and the magignant spirit of party. The most impious wars ever made were called *holy* wars. He who hates another man for not being a Christian, is himself not a Christian! Christianity breathes love, and peace, and good will to men." And the Emperor Charles V., also, we are told, retired at the close of life to a monastery, and there, says Dr. Robertson, "he was particularly curious with regard to the construction of clocks and watches, and having found, after repeated trials, that he could not bring any two of them to go exactly alike, he reflected, it is said, with a mixture of surprise as well as regret, on his own folly, in having bestowed so much time and labour, in the more vain attempt of bringing mankind to a precise uniformity of sentiment concerning the intricate and mysterious doctrines of religion!"

3. Let not any one presume to exempt himself from an attention to religion, because some of its tenets seem involved in difficulties.

Upon articles which promote the felicity, and secure the salvation of mankind, the Scripture is decisive. The curiosity of the inquisitive, and the restlessness of the ingenious, have involved subjects of theological disquisition in obscurity. Dr. Paley speaking of the disputes which distract the religious world, happily remarks, "that the rent has not reached the foundation." Incontrovertible are the facts upon which the fabric of natural and revealed religion is reared; and "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it!" He who searches the scriptures, must confess that they teach, in explicit terms, that God rules over all—that Man is fallen from his primeval rectitude—that the Messiah shed his blood for his restoration—and that in a future state rewards await the righteous, and punishments will be inflicted on the wicked.

From the preceding sketch of the different opinions of Christians, it appears that controversies have been agitated concerning the person of Christ, the subject of the Divine favour, and the article of Church government. But what was the specific matter of disputation? Not whether Christ has actually appeared on earth to introduce a new dispensation; nor whether God is disposed to show



grace or favour towards fallen man ; nor whether the professors of religion ought to submit themselves to certain regulations, or Church government, for mutual benefit. These are truths revered by every denomination, and the only point of contention has been, what particular views are to be entertained of these interesting facts. The Trinitarian, the Arian, and the Humanitarian, equally acknowledge the divinity of Christ's mission, or that he was the Messiah predicted by the ancient prophets ; and the chief point of dispute is, whether this Messiah be a man highly inspired, or one of the angelic order, or a being possessed of the attributes of Deity. The Calvinist, the Arminian, and the Baxterian also, each of them firmly believes that the grace of God hath appeared, and differ only respecting the wideness of its extent, and the mode of its communication. Similar observations might be transferred to the subject of church government, and the administration of ceremonies. But sufficient has been said to show that the differences subsisting between Christians do not affect the truth of Christianity, nor hazard the salvation of mankind.

Some well-meaning Christians have been offended at this position, but in our contention with Deists and with Catholics, to this we must come or come to nothing !

Faint, indeed, is the light thrown by revelation on certain subjects. Yet no lover of righteousness need distress himself, whether he be mistaken in leading a life of virtue and piety. Practical religion lies within a narrow compass. The sayings of Christ embrace almost every part of human conduct, though his disciples have been lamentably deficient in paying them a proper attention. Jesus Christ assures us, that "to love the Lord our God with all the heart, is the first and great commandment ;" and that "the second is like unto it—to love our neighbour as ourselves." They entertain mistaken views of the glorious gospel, who consider it inimical to the prosperity of the human race. Descending from a God of love, and presented to us by his only begotten son—every mind should have opened for its reception. Wrangling should have been prevented by the clearness of its fundamental doctrines, hesitation about

obedience precluded by the justice of its precepts, and the beauty of its examples should have captivated the most indifferent hearts.

The perplexity in which some religious tenets are involved, instead of alienating us from the practice of righteousness, should quicken our inquiries after truth. Indeed, upon a serious and intelligent individual, it produces this effect. Having in his eye the Scripture as the only standard, he is the more alive to free inquiry, when he contemplates the diversity of religious systems; and more accurately scrutinizes their nature, examines their foundations, and ascertains their tendencies. This mode of arriving at truth is attended with advantages. Our knowledge is enlarged, our candour exercised, and our belief founded on the basis of conviction. Such a believer reflects an honour upon the denomination with which he connects himself. For, feeling the difficulties of religious investigation, he presumes not to charge with heresy those of his fellow Christians who differ from him; nor is he such a stranger to the perfections of the Deity, and to the benign spirit of his religion, as to consign them over to the regions of future misery! Of Mr. Gouge, an eminent Nonconformist minister, it is thus honourably recorded by Archbishop Tillotson:—"He allowed others to differ from him even in opinions that were very dear to him, and provided men did but fear God, and work righteousness, he loved them heartily, how distant soever from him in judgment about things less necessary; in all which he is very worthy to be a pattern to men of all persuasions."

"Were one religion only to exist in a country, (says the late Dr. Lettson) probably the people would soon become either indifferent about its tenets, or superstitious in supporting them, and from the history of mankind, were two systems only of religion to prevail, zeal would be perpetually exercised to the destruction of each other, but variety, which divides attention, tends to lessen bigotry and arrest persecution—and hence seems best calculated to promote zeal without intolerance, virtue void of hypocrisy, and the general happiness of the community."

4. Let us reflect with pleasure in how many important articles of belief *all* Christians are agreed.

Respecting the origin of evil, the nature of the human soul, the existence of an intermediate state, and the duration of future punishment, together with points of a similar kind, opinions have been, and in this imperfect state will ever continue to be, different. But on articles of faith, far more interesting in themselves, and far more conducive to our welfare, are not *all* Christians united? We *all* believe in the perfections and government of one God, in the degradation of human nature through transgression, in the unspeakable efficacy of the life, death and sufferings of Jesus Christ, in the assurance of the divine aid, in the necessity of exercising repentance and of cultivating holiness; in a resurrection from the dead, and in a future state of rewards and punishment. Cheerfully would I enter into a minute illustration of this part of the subject; but the devout and intelligent Dr. Price has discussed it, in his first sermon on the Christian doctrine, to which discourse I refer the reader, and recommend it to his repeated perusal. Many Christians are more anxious to know wherein their brethren differ from them, than wherein they are agreed. This betrays a propensity to division, and bears an unfavourable aspect on mutual forbearance, one of the highest embellishments of the Christian character. An enlightened zeal is compatible with the religious moderation, which is opposed to the furious spirit of uncharitableness, the gangrene of genuine Christianity! From the shy and distant deportment of men of different persuasions towards each other, a stranger to them all would with difficulty be brought to believe that they looked up to the same God, confided in the same Saviour, and were bending their steps towards the same state of future happiness. The Christian world has the appearance of a subdued country, cantoned out into innumerable districts, through the pride and ambition of its conquerors, and each district occupied in retarding each other's prosperity. Alas! what would the Prince of Peace say, were he to descend and sojourn among us? Would he not reprove our unhallowed warmth, upbraid us with our divisions,

chide our unsocial tempers, and exhort to amity and concord? "This antipathy to your fellow Christians," he would say, "is not the *effect* of my religion, but proceeds from the *want* of it. My doctrines, precepts, and example, have an opposite tendency. Had you learned of Me, you would have never uttered against your brethren terms of reproach, nor lifted up the arm of persecution. The new commandment that I gave unto you was—*That you love one another.*"

Were the professors of the Gospel once fully sensible how they coincide on the fundamental facts of natural and revealed religion, they would cherish with each other a more friendly intercourse, unite more cordially to propagate religion, both at home and abroad, and a superior degree of success would crown their combined exertions for the purpose. Much it is regretted that disputes have been agitated concerning unessential points, and with an acrimony opposite to the gospel of Jesus Christ. That controversy is in itself injurious to truth, no intelligent individual will insinuate. When conducted with ability and candour, light has been struck out, errors have been rectified, and information on interesting subjects has been communicated to the public. But alas! controversy has been perverted. To many who have engaged in theological discussion, *victory*, not *truth*, has been the object of pursuit. Seduced by unworthy motives, they swerved from the line of conduct prescribed by an apostle, and contended boisterously, rather than earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Fiery controversialists, hurried away by the impetuosity of temper, or exasperated by the opposition of an acute adversary, have disgraced the polemic page by ungenerous insinuations. Thus are infidels furnished with additional objection to revealed religion—the investigation of interesting truth terminates in mutual reproaches; and Christians of different sentiments, driven still farther from each other, are the less fitted to associate together in the common mansions of the blest! To this pernicious mode of agitating disputes, there are, however, exceptions; and instances of this kind might be adduced. In the defence of Christianity, and in the

support of its particular doctrines, writers have stood forth; whose temper and liberality breathe the genuine spirit of the Christian Religion. Doddridge's "Letters to the Author of Christianity not founded in argument," Bishop Watson's "Apoligies," and Campbell's "Answer to Hume on Miracles," are examples of the candour with which religious controversies should be conducted. In an enlightened age like the present, this conciliating spirit was to be expected; and we indulge the pleasing hope; that times still more auspicious to truth are approaching; when the amicable discussion of *every* doctrine shall obtain an universal prevalence:

Seize upon the truth where'er 'tis found,  
Among your friends—among your foes,  
On Christian or on Heathen ground;  
The flower's divine where'er it grows;  
Neglect the prickles and assume the rose.

WATTS.

"No way whatsoever," says the immortal Locke, "that I shall walk in against the dictates of my conscience, will ever bring me to the mansions of the blessed. I may grow rich by an art that I take no delight in—I may be cured of some disease by remedies I have no faith in; but I cannot be saved by a religion I distrust, and a worship that I abhor. It is in vain for an unbeliever to take up the outward shadow of another man's profession; faith only and sincerity are the things that procure acceptance with God."

Truth, indeed, moral and divine, flourishes only in the soil of freedom. There it shoots up and sheds its fruit for the healing of the nation! Civil and religious liberty are two of the greatest earthly blessings which Heaven can bestow on man. Thrice happy are the people who experience the benefits of good government, unburthened by oppression, and who enjoy the sweets of liberty unembittered by licentiousness! William Penn has, in a letter to Archbishop Tillotson, these memorable words—"I abhor two principles in religion, and pity them that own them—The first is obedience upon authority, without conviction; and the other, destroying them that differ from me, for God's sake. Such a religion is without



judgment though not without teeth—*union* is best, if right—else *charity*.”

5. We should allow to others the same right of private judgment in religious matters, which we claim and exercise ourselves.

It is replied—“We forbid not the sober use of this privilege.” But who can estimate the sobriety of another man’s speculations? And by reprobating the opinions which a brother may happen to entertain in consequence of free investigation, we tacitly condemn that operation of his mind which induced him to take up such tenets. This is the spirit of popery in disguise. Cautiously exercising his reason, and devoutly examining the sacred records, *let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind*. This was the advice of Paul to the primitive Christians, and no substantial reason has been, or ever will be, given for its being abandoned. For a Protestant, who demands and exercises the right of private judgment, to deny it to his brother is an unpardonable inconsistency. It is also an act of injustice, contrary to reason, condemned by revelation, and prejudicial to the best interests of mankind. He who insults your person, steals your property, or injures your reputation, subjects himself to the punishment which the law denounces. What, then, can we think of the man who attempts to rob you of the right of *private judgment*—a jewel of inestimable price—a blessing of the first magnitude! Were we once to relinquish thinking for ourselves, and indolently to acquiesce in the representations of others, our understandings might soon groan beneath the absurdities of other men’s creeds, and our attention be distracted by the perplexed nature of our religious services. Hitherto, persons have never been wanting unreasonable enough to impose on their brethren articles of faith. The late Mr. Robinson, of Cambridge, an avowed foe to ecclesiastical tyranny, has traced its sources with his usual acuteness, and pronounces them to be power, law, patronage, office, the abuse of learning, and mistaken piety! These pretences for domination over conscience are plausible, and by their speciousness millions have been deceived. But explain

to a man of common sense, the foundation of religious liberty, and the infatuation ceases. He must perceive that the Father of spirits hath authorised no man to dictate to another what he is to believe, much less to impose his dogmas under pain of eternal punishment.

Dr. Prideaux, (a learned clergyman of the church of England,) in his "Life of Mahomet," speaking of the dissensions of the sixth century, remarks—"Christians, having drawn the abstrusest niceties into controversy, did thereby so destroy peace, love, and charity among themselves, that they lost the whole substance of religion, and in a manner drove Christianity quite out of the world; so that the Saracens, taking advantage of the weakness of power and distractions of councils, which those divisions had caused, soon overran with terrible devastation all the Eastern provinces of the Roman empire; turned every where their churches into mosques, and forced on them the abominable imposture of Mahometanism!"

"Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right," was the language in which Christ reproached the Pharisees; and, "Prove all things," was Paul's exhortation to the church at Thessalonica. These passages alone show beyond the possibility of dispute, that both Christ and Paul were patrons of free inquiry. Free inquiry, in its fullest extent, has been found serviceable to the interests of religion. Hereby error ceases to be perpetuated, and truth emerges from those shades of darkness with which she had been enveloped. Survey the page of ecclesiastical history—mark the intervals of languor when the right of private judgment lay dormant—then was the church of Christ debilitated and pestered with an heterogeneous mass of errors. Excellently is it remarked in a periodical publication:—"No man can write down truth. Inquiry is to truth what friction is to the diamond. It proves its hardness, adds to its lustre, and excites new admiration." The ablest advocates for Christianity confess, that by the attacks of its enemies provoking examination, it has been benefitted. To infidel writers we are indebted for Butler's profound "Analogy," Law's "Theory of Natural and Revealed Religion," Campbell's "Dis-

sertation on Miracles," Newton's Work on the Prophecies, Watson's admirable Apologies and other performances, which reflect as much honour on the names of their respective authors, as they have rendered service to the cause they espoused. "Every species of intolerance," says Archdeacon Paley, "which enjoins suppression and silence, and every species of persecution which enforces such injunctions, is averse to the progress of truth, forasmuch as it causes that to be fixed by one set of men at one time, which is much better, and with much more probability of success, left to the independent and progressive inquiries of separate individuals. Truth results from discussion and from controversy, is investigated by the labour and researches of private persons; whatever therefore prohibits these, obstructs that industry and that liberty, which it is the common interest of mankind to promote."

6. Let us be careful to treat those who differ from us with kindness.

Believing those who differ from us to be the disciples of error, they have a claim on our compassion. And as a further incentive to a lenient conduct, it should be remembered, that *we differ from them just as much as they do from us*. By either party, no anathema should be hurled, and a proneness to persecution should be eradicated. The Quakers, in their address to James the Second, on his accession, told him, that they understood he was no more of the established religion than themselves: "We therefore hope (say they) that thou wilt allow us that liberty which thou takest thyself." The terms *schism* and *heresy* are in the mouths of many, and it is no unfrequent case to find that those who use them most, least understand their real import. My old tutor, Dr. Campbell (author of an excellent translation of the Four Gospels,) thus concludes a learned dissertation on the subject: "No person (says he) who in the spirit of candour and charity adheres to that which, to the best of his judgment, is right, though in this opinion he should be mistaken, is in the scriptural sense, either schismatic or heretic: and he, on the contrary, whatever sect he be-

longs to, is most entitled to those odious appellations who is most apt to throw the imputation upon others." Would to God, that this observation were inscribed on the front of every place of worship, and engraven on the memory of every individual in Christendom!

Upon the advantages arising from Christian moderation we might expatiate; and to detail the evils which have flowed from an unenlightened zeal, would be to stain my page with blood. Bishop Hall, in the last century, wrote a treatise on *Moderation*, and has discussed the subject with that ability which is peculiar to his writings. But this great and good man, towards the close of the same treatise, forgetting the principles which he had been inculcating, devotes one solitary page to the cause of intolerance. This page concludes with these remarkable expressions:—"Master Calvin did well approve himself to God's church, in bringing Servetus to the stake at Geneva!" Blessed Jesus! how art thou wounded in the house of thy friends! After this deplorable instance of human inconsistency, should not the most eminent of the followers of Christ beware lest, by indulging, even in the slightest degree, a spirit of intolerance, they be insensibly led either to adopt or applaud practices which, under the specious mask of a holy zeal, outrage the first principle of humanity? To love our own party only, is (to use the words of Dr. Doddridge) nothing else than *self love reflected*. The most zealous partisans are revelling in self-gratification.

And Mr. Jay of Bath, in his Sermons, remarks, that "the readiest way in the world to thin heaven and replenish the regions of hell, is to call in the spirit of bigotry. This will immediately arraign, and condemn, and execute, all that do not bow down and worship the image of our idolatry. Possessing exclusive prerogatives, it rejects every other claim—'Stand by, I am sounder than thou. The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we!' How many of the dead has this intolerance sentenced to eternal misery, who will shine like stars in the kingdom of our Father!—how many living characters does it not reprobate as enemies to the



cross of Christ, who are placing in it all their glory! No wonder if, under the influence of this consuming zeal, we form lessening views of the number of the saved. 'I only am left'—yes, they are few indeed, if none belong to them, who do not belong to your party—that do not see with your eyes—that do not believe election with you, or universal redemption with you—that do not worship under a steeple with you, or in a meeting with you—that are not dipped with you, or sprinkled with you! But hereafter we shall find that the righteous were not so circumscribed; when we shall see 'Many coming from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven!'" Were these truly evangelical sentiments more prevalent among professors of every description, the ravages of infidelity would cease—Christians themselves become more united, and rapid advances would be thus making towards the improvement of the world.

Christians, indeed, of almost every denomination, appear at times to have forgotten, that harshness widens rather than closes the breaches which diversity of sentiment may have occasioned. Coercive measures reach not the mind, and the issuing of edicts to extort assent to speculative tenets, is the bombast of civil authority. Truth rests on evidence. But what has evidence to do with exertions of power, implements of torture, and scenes of devastation? From the commencement of the fourth century, down to that illustrious era of the Reformation, unmolested was the empire of ignorance over the human mind. At Rome, for a series of ages, the chair of infallibility was filled by a succession of intolerant and domineering pontiffs. Systems of cruelty were practised, for the support of their most holy faith. Out of that once respectable capital of the world, the demon of persecution rushed forth, brandishing his torch, and deluged the church of Christ with the blood of her martyrs! Impatient for the destruction of the human race, he flew into different regions of the earth, framed racks, fixed stakes, erected gibbets, and, like a pestilence, scattered



around him consternation and death! Shall the evangelical genius of Protestantism countenance a temper which incites to such execrable deeds, and enrols the names of the perpetrators in the calendar of the saints? In this twilight state of being, to expostulate is our province—to inveigh and persecute is forbidden. The glorious gospel of the blessed God prohibits rash accusations, cruel surmises, and malignant anathemas. Had a regard been paid to the golden rule, “Do unto others as ye would they should do unto you,” intolerance would never have reared its ensanguined crest to affright the children of men. “Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of,” was our Saviour’s reprimand to the disciples, who, in the plenitude of their zeal, would have called down fire from heaven to consume the deluded Samaritans. Too often does a portion of this accursed spirit reign in the breasts of Protestants. Hence censures are poured forth, hatreds are engendered, and a preparation for heaven is retarded. Instead of usurping the seat of judgment, which the Almighty has reserved to himself, and of aiming to become the dispensers of the divine vengeance, let us wait the issue of all things in reverential silence. A wise and a good God will solemnly decide the business, when “he judges the world in righteousness!” The “History of Persecution,” by Mr. Anthony Robinson, a work of singular merit and unquestionable utility, is an epitome of almost everything that has been advanced on that tragical subject.

7. Let us not complain because perfect unanimity of religious sentiment is unattainable in this present state.

A repining spirit is the source of ill temper towards those who dissent from us; but it seems to be the intention of the Divine Being, that we should think differently concerning certain points of Faith and practice. Variety marks the works of God. It is impressed throughout the circumference of the natural, the animal, and the intellectual world. Above us, we behold the dazzling brightness of the sun, the pale splendour of the moon, the mild twinkling of the stars, and the variegated colours which adorn the firmament of heaven! Around us, the

surface of the earth is diversified into a thousand beautiful forms ; and in the animal, the vegetable, and the fossil kingdoms, no two individual productions are perfectly alike ! Within us, upon the slightest examination, we discern our minds stamped with peculiarity. From senseless idiotism, up to the sagacity of Newton, how numerous are the gradations of intellect ! Minds are of various sizes. Their capacities, habits, and views are never in strict conformity with each other. In some degree diversity of opinions flow from the structure of our understanding. To fall out with this branch of the dispensations of God is to arraign his wisdom. Doubtless he might have shed upon us such a degree of light, that we should have seen as with one eye, and have been altogether of one mind. But the supreme Being has otherwise ordered it, and with becoming resignation let us acquiesce in the appointment. Lord Mansfield, that ornament of the law, declares that “ There is nothing certainly more unreasonable, more inconsistent with the rights of human nature, more contrary to the spirit and precepts of the Christian religion, more iniquitous and unjust, more impolitic, than *Persecution* ! It is against natural and revealed religion, and sound policy ! ” The biographer of Bishop Burnet tells us, that, when making his tour on the Continent, this great and good prelate “ there became acquainted with the leading men of the different persuasions tolerated in that country, particularly Calvinists, Arminians, Lutherans, Baptists, Brownists, Papists, and Unitarians, amongst each of which, he used frequently to declare, he met with men of such unfeigned piety and virtue, that he became fixed in a strong principle of universal charity.”

Unavailable have been the attempts made in the successive ages of the church, to produce unanimity of sentiment. For this purpose legislatures have decreed acts, poured forth torrents of blood, and perpetrated deeds at which humanity sickens, shudders, and turns away with disgust. Francis I., king of France, used to declare, “ that if he thought the blood in his arm was tainted with the Lutheran heresy, he would have it cut off, and that

he would not spare even his own children, if they entertained sentiments contrary to the Catholic church." Pride in one person, passion in a second, prejudice in a third, and in a fourth, investigation, generates difference of opinion. Should diversity be deemed an evil, it is incumbent on rational beings, and congenial with the dignity of the Christian profession, to improve it to valuable purposes. It is a fact, that different denominations have, in every age of the church, kept a jealous eye over each other; and hereby the Scriptures, the common standard to which they appealed for the truth of their respective tenets, have been preserved in greater purity. It may also be added, that diversity of opinion quickens our inquiries after truth, and gives scope for the exercise of our charity, which in one passage of the sacred writings is pronounced "superior to faith and hope," and in another passage termed "the bond of perfectness." Much improvement have good men extracted from the common evils of life, by these evils giving rise to graces and virtues which otherwise would have no existence; or, at least, would have been faintly called forth into action. To perceive the justice of this observation, it is not necessary that we be profound contemplators of human affairs.

Under the accumulated difficulties of faith and practice, by which we are embarrassed in this sublinary state of imperfection, we should meditate on the doctrine of Providence, which administers the richest consolation. The dominion exercised by the Supreme Being over the works of his hands, is neither partial as to its objects, narrow in its extent, nor transitory in its duration. Unlike earthly monarchs, who expire in their turn, and who are successively borne into the tombs of their ancestors, "The King of Saints liveth and reigneth for ever and ever!" Evils, indeed, have entered the world, and still continue to distress it. But these evils have not crept into the system unknown to its great author, and the attributes of Deity ensure their extirpation. Our rejoicing is, "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth!" Glorious must be the termination of the divine dispensations. The august period is predicted in sacred writ, and lies concealed in the womb

of time. Distant may be its arrival, but its blessings once realised will compensate the exercise of your faith, and the trial of your patience.

One part, one little part, we dimly scan,  
 Through the dark medium of life's feverish dream,  
 Yet dare arraign the whole stupendous plan,  
 If but that little part incongruous seem :  
 Nor is that part, perhaps, what mortals deem :  
 Oft from apparent ills our blessings rise—  
 O ! then renounce that impious self esteem,  
 That aims to trace the secrets of the skies,  
 For thou art but of dust—be humble and be wise.

*Beattie.*

Finally—penetrated with a sense of the imperfection of this present life, let us be cautious how we form our religious sentiments, watch unremittingly over our tempers and conduct, and aspire to that better world, where pure and unadulterated truth shall be disclosed to our view !

Of all the subjects presented to the human mind, religion claims the first and the greatest attention. *A God, a Providence, a Saviour, and a future State of Retribution*, ought to be pressing upon our minds, and presiding over our conduct. To familiarize ourselves with their evidences, to lay open our souls to their energy, and promote, by every honourable method, their spread among mankind, should be our ambition. Zeal is an elevated passion. It is repeatedly enjoined in the sacred writings. It forms the leading trait of excellence in the most enlightened characters. Indeed, an individual can scarcely be pronounced truly good, except he possesses a portion of this celestial fire. Zeal, confined within the limits prescribed by reason and scripture, is attended with blessed consequences. Loosened from these restraints, like the devouring conflagration, it involves in one undistinguished ruin the victims of its fury, and triumphs in the desolation it has effected. How different is the Christian influenced by a zeal purely evangelical, from the monster who is either swollen with the venom of uncharitableness, or is pregnant with persecution for conscience sake ! “ Mistake me not (says good Richard Baxter) I do not slight orthodoxy, nor jeer at



the name: but only disclose the pretences of devilish zeal in pious or seemingly pious men. The slanders of some of these, and the bitter opprobrious speeches of others, have more effectually done the devil's service, under the name of orthodoxy and zeal for truth, than the malignant scorners of godliness." Thus also the pious Matthew Henry declares, that of all the Christian graces, zeal is most apt to turn sour! Dr. Doddridge, in his *Family Expositor*, has this remark:—"Wisely did Christ silence the suspicious praises of an unclean spirit! and vain is all the hope which men build merely on those orthodox professions of the most important truths, in which Satan himself could vie with them." To use the words of Gilbert West, a most worthy member of the church of England—"Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God"—An appellation infinitely more honourable than that of pastor, bishop, archbishop, patriarch, cardinal, or pope; and attended with a recompense infinitely surpassing the richest revenues of the highest ecclesiastical dignity!"

Indeed, the light and darkness now blended together, instead of generating a spirit of scepticism, or precipitating us into acts of violence, should impel us to look for the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. "What ye know not now, ye shall know hereafter"—was our Saviour's declaration to his disciples, respecting an event which occurred whilst he continued to sojourn amongst them. It is reasonable to believe that we shall not remain ignorant of matters of superior importance, when the period of communicating higher degrees of information arrives. We may be assured, that the Spirit of God guides all good men into necessary truth. This is a sentiment in which the wisest of mankind concur; and upon which the learned divines, after their most penetrative researches, are obliged to rest. A Christian father pronounced the greatest heresy to be, a *wicked life*? This was also the sentiment of Wickliffe. Devoutly is it wished that those who are clamorous about speculative tenets, would level their artillery more against the violation of the perceptive part of our religion.



The eloquent Saurin exclaims—“ Why are not ecclesiastical bodies as rigid and severe against heresies of practice as they are against heresies of speculation ? Certainly there are heresies in morality as well as in theology. Councils and synods reduce the doctrines of faith to certain propositional points, and thunder anathemas against all who refuse to subscribe them. They say, cursed be he who doth not believe the hypostatical union, and the mystery of the cross ; cursed be he who denies the inward operations of grace, and the irresistible efficacy of the Spirit. I wish they would make a few canons against moral heresies. How many are there of this kind among our people !” These observations made by the intelligent Saurin, respecting the refugee Protestants in Holland, are applicable to the Protestants in our times. Their anathemas are directed more against error than against unrighteousness. Whereas vice is the more formidable enemy to the welfare of mankind. To the word of God, therefore let us have recourse, and thence derive the doctrine which is according to godliness, pure as the light of heaven, and refreshing as the dew of the morning ! The Gospel of Jesus Christ, justly understood and cordially believed, enlightens the mind, calms the troubled conscience, rectifies depraved propensities, and introduces us into the habitation of the spirits of just men made perfect. “ Men who profess themselves (says Mr. Cowper) adepts in mathematical knowledge, in astronomy, or jurisprudence, are generally as well qualified as they would appear. The reason may be, that they are always liable to detection, should they attempt to impose on mankind—and therefore take care to be what they pretend. In religion alone a profession is often slightly taken up and slovenly carried on, because forsooth candour and charity require us to hope the best and to judge favourably of our neighbour ; and because it is easy to deceive the ignorant, who are a great majority, upon this subject. Let a man attach himself to a particular party, contend furiously for what are properly called evangelical doctrines, and enlist himself under the banner of some popular preacher, and the buisness is done : Behold a *Christian*,

*a Saint, a Phœnix!* In the mean time, perhaps his heart and his temper, and even his conduct, are unsanctified—possibly less exemplary than some avowed Infidels!! No matter—he can talk—he has the shibboleth of the true church—the Bible in his pocket, and a head well stored with notions. But the quiet, humble, modest, and peaceable person, who is in his practice what the other is only in his profession; who hates noise, and therefore makes none; who, knowing the snares that are in the world, keeps himself as much out of it as he can, and never enters it but when duty call, and even then with fear and trembling, is the Christian that will stand highest in the estimation of those who bring all characters to the test of true wisdom, and judge of the tree by its fruit.”

But alas! mankind, instead of ascertaining what is truth, and how it can best exert its influence over the several departments of conduct, are occupied in schemes of interested ambition, or sunk into criminal indifference. Upon death they seldom bestow a thought. Though awful in its nature, frequent in its recurrence, and alarming in its consequences, it leaves no impression. Without emotion they behold their fellow-creatures snatched from off the busy theatre of action, and driven one after another, either by disease or accident, into the house appointed for all living! Upon the disease, indeed, of relatives and friends, they heave a sigh, utter an exclamation, shed a tear, but clothing themselves in the garments of sorrow, the tragedy is quickly over. Reassuming their former views, and laying their minds open afresh to the dominion of their passions, they return with avidity to the occupations and amusements of life. Thus proceeds the tenor of their existence on earth, till they also are swept away into the receptacles of the dead.

Pilgrims and sojourners on earth, we are hastening to an eternal world, and a few more fleeting years will place even the youngest of us before the tribunal of Heaven. Whether we can abide the scrutiny which shall be instituted at the last great day, “for which all other days were made,” is a question of infinite importance, and concerns rational and accountable creatures. Amidst the din of

controversy, and the jarrings of adverse parties, the opinions of the head are often substituted for the virtues of the heart, and thus is practical religion neglected. Fleeing those disputes which damp our devotion, and contract our benevolence, let us cultivate the means by which our faith may be invigorated, our hope enlivened, our charity confirmed, and our affections elevated to the things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right-hand of God! The veil now thrown over this preliminary state, and concealing from our view celestial objects, shall be removed. Then bidding an adieu to prejudices which darken the understanding, irritate the temper, and deform the spirit, we shall embrace each other with perfect love, and shall be astonished at ourselves for having been on earth so addicted to unprofitable disputation, and so backward to the exercise of brotherly kindness, and of Christian charity.

Almighty God! look down on thine erring creatures. Pity their darkness and imperfection. Direct them into the truth as it is in Jesus. Banish from their hearts the bitterness of censure. Cherish in their minds a spirit of love and moderation towards their fellow Christians. To their zeal add knowledge, and to their knowledge charity. Make them humble under the difficulties which adhere to their faith, and patient under the perplexities which accompany their practice. Guide them by thy counsel; and through the mediation of thy Son Jesus Christ, receive them into thy kingdom and glory!—AMEN.

And behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.—Rev. xxii. 12, 13, 14.

## RECAPITULATORY SCHEDULE,

SHEWING THE ORIGIN OF THE NAMES BY WHICH THE CHIEF SECTS ARE DISTINGUISHED.

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*CHRISTIANITY is a Revelation from God by his son Jesus Christ—consist of Doctrines, Precepts, Positive Institutions, Rewards, and Punishment; and its Evidences are, Prophecy, Miracles, Internal Character, together with its rapid Propagation, both among Jews and Gentiles. Its Professors hold various opinions, and are thus denominated:—*

- I. According to their opinions respecting the *Person of Christ*.  
TRINITARIANS, from the Latin word *Trinitas*, which denotes a three-fold unity in the Godhead.  
SABELLIANS, from *Sabellius*, who lived in the third century, and held a *modal*, or nominal Trinity.  
UNITARIANS, from the Latin word *unitas*, as holding the strict personal unity of God; comprehending the following subdivisions:—  
ARIANS, from *Arius*, a popular divine of Alexandria, who flourished about the year 315.  
SOCINIANS, from *Faustus Socinus*, who died near Cracow, in Poland, about the year 1604. Few, if any Socinians now exist; those who hold the simple humanity of Christ being designated  
HUMANITARIANS, from the Latin word *humanitas*.
- II. According to their opinions respecting the *Means and Measure of God's Favour*.  
CALVINISTS, from *John Calvin*, a Reformer, who flourished at Geneva, about 1540.  
ARMINIANS, from *James Arminius*; the disciple of Beza, who flourished about 1600.  
BAXTERIANS, from *Richard Baxter*, and eminent Puritan, who died in the year 1691.  
ANTINOMIANS, compounded of two Greek terms, *anti* against, and *νομος* the moral law.
- III. According to their opinions respecting *Church Government and the Administration of Ceremonies*.  
PAPISTS, from the Latin word for Pope, *Papa*, signifying a Father, who usually resided at Rome.  
GREEK CHURCH (chiefly Russian,) from their native language, which is the *Greek* tongue.  
PROTESTANTS, from their solemnly *protesting* against a decree of Charles V. 1529.  
EPISCOPALIANS, from *Episcopus*, the Latin term for Bishop, Inspector or *Overseer* of a Diocese.  
DISSENTERS, from the Latin word *dissentio*, to disagree with, or dissent from, any person or body.  
PRESBYTERIANS, from the Greek *Πρεσβυτερος*, a word signifying Elder, Senior, or Presbyter.

INDEPENDENTS, from the *independency* of each Church in its discipline or government.

BAPTISTS, from the Greek verb *βαπτω*, signifying to baptize, dip, or immerse the body in water.

PÆDOBAPTISTS, from the Greek words, *Παις* and *βαπτω*, a baptizer of infants, by sprinkling or immersion.

SCOTCH CHURCH, or KIRK more usually called, established in Scotland, by means of John KNOX, died 1572.

SECEDERS, Scotch Dissenters, from the Latin *secedo*, signifying to withdraw from any body.

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### MISCELLANEOUS SECTS, CALLED

QUAKERS, from the agitation, or quaking, with which their first preachers addressed their auditors.

METHODISTS, from the *methodical* strictness of their religious conduct, begun at Oxford.

RANTERS, from their loud manner of preaching, praying, singing, &c.

JUMPERS, from the act of *jumping* used in their religious services, chiefly in their Principality.

MORAVIANS, from *Moravia*, the country whence they first arose, a part of Germany.

UNIVERSALISTS, from the belief that all men will in a future state be ultimately *universally* happy.

SANDEMANIANS, from *Robert Sandeman*, a popular writer among them in Scotland.

SABBATARIANS, from their observance of the *Jewish Sabbath*, or seventh day; much reduced.

HUTCHINSONIANS, from *John Hutchinson*, born in Yorkshire, in the year 1674, nearly extinct.

MYSTICS, from *μυστικός*, a Greek word importing a *secret*, mysterious meaning, found in most sects.

SHAKERS, from the act of *shaking* used in their public worship, and are found in North America.

JERKERS, from jerking the head; and BARKERS, from barking like a dog; also in America.

SWEDENBORGIANS, from *Emanuel Swedenborg*, a foreigner, who lived in London during the year 1772.

HALDANITES, from the name of two Brothers of fortune and respectability now living in Scotland.

FREETHINKING CHRISTIANS, from their *free manner* of thinking in matters of religion.

MILLENARIANS, from the Latin *millē*, a thousand, the years of Christ's future reign upon earth.

*A new commandment give I unto you—that ye love one another.*

JESUS CHRIST.



## BRIEF TABLE

*Of Events of ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY, from the Birth of Christ down to the present Times, the importance of which can only be ascertained by studying the history of the Christian Church.*

---

A. D.

- 1 JESUS CHRIST born in Judea, now called the Holy Land, the world being four thousand years old.
- 26 John the Baptist enters on his ministry.
- 29 Christ is baptized, or immersed, by John the Baptist, in the river Jordan, preparatory to his entering on his ministry.
- 33 He is crucified under Pontius Pilate, rises from the dead on the third day, and six weeks after ascends up into heaven, with the solemn assurance of his appearing a second time at the end of the world.
- 35 The miraculous conversion of the apostle Paul.
- 39 St. Matthew writes his gospel.
- 44 St. Mark writes his gospel.
- 52 Council of the apostles at Jerusalem.
- 62 St. Paul sent in bonds to Rome.
- 64 The first persecution against the Christians.
- 66 The Jewish war begins.
- 67 St. Peter and St. Paul put to death.
- 70 Jerusalem utterly destroyed by the Romans.
- 95 The second persecution against the Christians.
- 99 St. John dies in the 102d year of his age.
- 102 Pliny the Younger sends Trajan his celebrated account of the Christians.
- 107 The third persecution against the Christians.
- 118 The fourth persecution against the Christians.
- 130 Adrian rebuilds Jerusalem.
- 135 Conclusion of the Jewish war.
- 202 The fifth persecution against the Christians.
- 235 The sixth persecution against the Christians.
- 250 The seventh persecution against the Christians.
- 257 The eighth persecution against the Christians.
- 272 The ninth persecution against the Christians.
- 303 The tenth persecution against the Christians.
- After this series of persecutions, Christianity becomes the established religion of the Roman empire, for
- 311 Constantine was converted to the religion of Christ, and Heathenism is every where abolished.
- 325 The first general council at Nice.
- 343 Persecution of the Christians in Persia.
- 449 The Saxons arrive in Britain.
- 476 The Western Empire finishes.
- 480 Ten horns, or kingdoms, founded out of the Romish empire, and subject to the Pope.
- 496 Clovis baptized, and Christianity embraced in France.

- A. D.
- 516 The computing of time by the Christian era introduced by Dionysius.
- 597 Augustine the monk arrives in England.
- 606 Bishop of Rome constituted universal head of the Church.
- 622 Mahomet establishes his religion.
- 637 Jerusalem taken by the Saracens.
- 698 The Picts in England embrace Christianity.
- 748 Middle Ages, or the Night of Time.
- 756 The Popes become civil lords in Italy, whence they gradually claimed dominion over all the earth.
- 800 The German empire founded by Charlemagne.
- 878 Alfred founds the University of Oxford.
- 915 The University of Cambridge founded.
- 1065 Jerusalem taken by the Turks from the Saracens.
- 1066 The conquest of England under William, Duke of Normandy.
- 1096 The first crusade to Palestine begun under several Christian princes, to drive the infidels or unbelievers from the Holy Land.
- 1110 Learning revived at the University of Cambridge.
- 1147 The second crusade.
- 1177 Saladin repulsed before Jerusalem.
- 1178 The Albigenses and Waldenses take their rise.
- 1189 The kings of England and France go to the Holy Land.
- 1192 Richard Cœur de Lion defeats Saladin at Ascalon.
- 1215 Magna Charta signed by King John.
- 1233 The inquisition trusted to the Dominicans.
- 1283 Wales conquered by Edward I.
- 1369 John Wickliffe began to teach in England.
- 1414 The council of Constance.
- 1415 John Huss and Jerome of Prague seized, tried, and burnt for their opinions.
- 1509 John Calvin born.
- 1517 Martin Luther writes against indulgences in Germany, which was the origin of the Reformation.
- 1519 Zuinglius began the Reformation in Switzerland.
- 1529 A diet at Spire, in Germany; the protesting against which gave rise to the appellation of *Protestant*.
- 1533 Henry VIII. withdraws his allegiance from the Pope and proclaims himself supreme head of the Church of England.
- 1545 The council of Trent begins.
- 1553 Michael Servetus burnt by the instigation of Calvin, at Geneva, for the denial of the Trinity.
- 1572 The massacre of Bartholomew at Paris, when upwards of 70,000 Protestants perished.
- 1582 Pope Gregory introduces the new style.
- 1588 The destruction of the Spanish armada, whose object was to re-establish Popery throughout England.
- 1598 Henry IV. passes the edict of Nantz in favour of the Protestants.
- 1618 The synod of Dort begins.
- 1621 The civil war with the Hugonots in France.
- 1649 King Charles beheaded.
- 1659 Oliver Cromwell died.
- 1660 The restoration of Charles II.
- 1662 Bartholomew Act, or Act of Uniformity, passed, by which 2000 ministers were ejected from the Church of England.
- 1685 The revocation of the Edict of Nantz, by which the exercise of the Protestant religion was prohibited in France.

A. D.

- 1688 The revolution of King William, when the family of the Stuarts were banished, for attempting to introduce Popery and arbitrary power into England.
- 1691 The battle of the Boyne in Ireland, when King William defeated James II., and established the Protestant religion.
- 1709 Dr. Sacheverel tried and suspended for High Churchism.
- 1715 Suppression of a rebellion in Scotland, when the Pretender attempted to recover the throne of these kingdoms.
- 1722 Bishob Atterbury banished for supporting the Pretender.
- Yong Tching, Emperor of China, banished the Jesuits and other Popish missionaries, and imprisoned those of his subjects that refused to renounce Christianity.
- 1733 The Jesuits expelled from Paragua, in South America.
- 1746 Suppression of the rebellion in Scotland, the object of which was by the return of the Stuart family, to restore arbitrary power and Papacy in these kingdoms.
- 1757 Damien, a religious fanatic, attempts to assassinate the French king.
- 1763 The Jesuits expelled France, for their intrigues against the state.
- 1766 The Jesuits expelled from Bohemia and Denmark.
- 1767 The Jesuits expelled from Spain, Venice, and Genoa.
- 1768 The Jesuits expelled Naples, Malta, and Parma.
- 1773 The society of the Jesuits suppressed by the Pope.
- 1775 American war commences with Great Britian.
- 1779 The Protestant Dissenters in England relieved from certain grievances under which they laboured.
- 1780 Riots in London, occasioned by the extension of civil rights to the Papists.
- 1783 The termination of the American war, by which the United States became independent of Great Britian.
- 1789 French Revolution commences, by which both church and state were overturned and annihilated.
- 1791 Riots at Birmingham, in which the houses and property of many Dissenters were destroyed.
- 1793 Lewis XVI., king of France, beheaded.
- 1794 Missions established by the Calvinists, both of the Church of England and amongst the Dissenters, with the veiw of converting the inhabitants of the South Sea Islands, and other remote parts of the earth.
- 1798 Pope Pious VI. dethroned by the French at Rome.
- 1806 Bonaparte assembles the Jews at Paris for civil purposes, though at that time it was thought by some that he meant to restore them to the Promised Land.
- 1813 Statue against Unitarians for denying the Trinity repealed, by means of William Smith's (M. P. for Norwich) Bill for that purpose.
- 1814 March 31. The allied armies, with the Emperors of Russia and Aastria, together with the King of Prussia at their head, enter Paris, dethrone Bonaparte, liberate the Pope, proclaim the restoration of the Bourbons, in unison with the French people, avow civil and religious freedom, and announce peace and harmony to the whole world.
- June 20. Peace proclaimed at London with its usual formalities, amidst the acclamations of an immense multitude.

- 1820 Jan. 29. George III. died in the 82d year of his age, and in the 60th year of his reign—a reign distinguished for the abolition of African slavery, the education of the poor, and the extension of religious liberty.
- Jan. 31. George IV. proclaimed. May his reign prove conducive to the interests of knowledge, virtue, and piety! These form the only adamant basis of national prosperity.

There is a shape, upon whose wrinkled brow  
 Deeds dark and good in many a line of light  
 Are charactered; and they who read aright  
 Hence learn to live uprightly :—you may know  
 Him by his murderous scythe and beard of snow,  
 And glittering eye, for piercing is his sight  
 As still in early youth—the blakest night,  
 Past, present, and to come, he looketh through!  
 He is immortal—yet shall he be swept  
 Away and die, when from its lap the world  
 Shall cast its victims that have soundly slept  
 For ages—then the judgment-flag unfurl'd,  
 Shall wave o'er man, and all his worth and crime  
 Be copied from that brow—the shape is *Time!*

GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, AND ON EARTH PEACE—GOOD  
 WILL TOWARDS MEN.—LUKE II. 14.

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