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STRICTURES

ON THE

REMARKS

OF

DR. SAMUEL LANGDON,

ON THE

LEADING SENTIMENTS

IN THE

REV. DR. HOPKINS'

SYSTEM OF DOCTRINES:

IN A

POSTSCRIPT of a LETTER to a *FRIEND*.

BY EBENEZER BRADFORD, A. M.

Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the Saints.—JUNE.

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1794

STRICTURES

ON THE

NATURE

OF

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON

BY

JOHN GARDNER

IN TWO

VOLUMES

THE SECOND EDITION

REVISED BY THE AUTHOR

AND

WITH ADDITIONAL NOTES

BY THE AUTHOR

AND

BY JOHN GARDNER

IN TWO VOLUMES

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STRICTURES, &c.

POSTSCRIPT.

S I R,

IN Dr. Langdon's introduction to his remarks on the leading sentiments of Dr. Hopkins' System of Doctrines, he seems to offer it as an apology for his undertaking this great work, that he "knew in general, what Dr. Hopkins' sentiments were, by reading formerly several of his sermons," though, at the same time, he acknowledges, that "it was more pleasing and satisfactory to view them collected into a system." In imitation of this great and good man, I beg leave to apologize, for my undertaking to make a few strictures upon his remarks. I have in very deed, a number of years since, heard several sermons from Dr. Langdon's own mouth, and likewise attentively read some of his publications, together with the *remarks*, the last public fruit of his genius and piety. But, after all, whether I have reason to say I know his sentiments, is a matter I would wave, till we have gotten to the other end of this postscript.

Dr. Langdon, in order to attack his brother doctor with more show of erudition, as well as success, first raises to our view a kind of Metaphysical Demon, with whom Aristotle, the ancient Schoolmen, the Papists, and the compilers of systems of divinity among Protestants, with a few exceptions, have dealt very familiarly; yea, he intimates, that those who are far gone in the art of Metaphysics, "can, by a skilful management of doubtful words and phrases, prove almost any thing, however false." Among this host of metaphysical jugglers, he fixes his eye on Dr. Hopkins, as one of the foremost in modern times; and solemnly affirms, that "he certainly reasons on several doctrinal articles in a metaphysical way." Yet he bitterly complains that "we are blinded with a dust of arguments," by this great Metaphysician.

Facts

Facts being thus, who would not tremble at the thought of looking into the System, lest his eyes should be put out by a dust of arguments ; and his understanding quite confounded, by the skilful management of doubtful words and phrases, proving black to be white, and white to be black. We pause ; we reflect ; the danger vanishes ! for after all, to use our Author's own words, " who knows but there has been much ado, about nothing."— Courage, then, let us attend to his first remark on Dr. Hopkins' System.

" The first thing, saith our author, which may be noticed, is his artful manner of summing up the *whole* character of the great God, in love." P. 8. Only to say, God is love, and lightly to pass over every other character, is to leave men in the dark, &c. page 9.

Reply 1. Is it not somewhat extraordinary, that so venerable, so great, and so good a man as our Author, should represent Dr. Hopkins as summing up the *whole* of the character of the great God, in love ; when he must have known, if he had carefully read and attentively examined that part of the System, in which the Doctor treats of the being and perfections of the Deity, that the Doctor had clearly distinguished the natural and moral attributes of God, from each other ; and considered each class of perfections, as characteristical of the great Jehovah. This being the case, what right had our Author to say, that Dr. Hopkins had, in an artful manner, summed up the *whole* character of the great God, in love ?

2. It is admitted, that in the view of Dr. Hopkins, love is the sum of the *moral* character of the blessed God : But how does this prove, that in his view, love is the sum of his *whole* character ? Has not the Doctor described the Deity, as possessing natural perfections, as well as moral, and both as characteristical of himself ?

3. If our Author had said, that Dr. Hopkins had summed up the *whole* moral character of God, in love, he would have done him justice ; for this sentiment is found not only in the System, but in the Bible. What is there in the moral character of God, which does not evidently imply love ? we can conceive of nothing.

thing, and the Bible mentions nothing; we must therefore conclude, that the sum of the moral character of God, is love.—“ God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him,” saith St. John. The moral law is a transcript of the moral character of God; now to be what the law requires, is to be like God; but the sum of what the law requires is love to God, and love to men, Christ being judge; therefore, the *moral character* of God, may be summed up in holy love.

4. Is it not shocking to find our Author representing Doctor Hopkins, as only saying, *God is love, and then lightly passing over every other character*; when he must have known, that the Doctor had taken up more than twenty pages of the System, in delineating the various moral perfections of the Deity, every one of which imply love? Can such a misrepresentation of any Author, pass before the public eye, without exciting wonder, to say nothing more? How “such a summary of the divine character, as Dr. Hopkins chuses to hold up in view, is much more likely to encourage the opinion, that all men, and all intellectual beings, will be finally happy; than to persuade men now to disinterested benevolence,” must remain a secret, till our Author has explained himself more fully.

The next thing in the System against which our Author objects, “is the manner in which Dr. Hopkins writes, concerning the decrees of God.” “Here he seems, saith our Author, to give full scope to his logic,” by which we are doubtless to understand, that he saw, or fancied he saw all the powers of the Doctor’s metaphysical Demon on the stretch; and distinctly observed him, by a skilful management of doubtful words and phrases, proving many things true, which were absolutely false.

Because Dr. Hopkins, in writing upon the decrees of God, made a distinction between God’s fore-knowledge of all things, and his decree which alone rendered their existence certain; our Author seems quite out of patience with him, and says, that Dr. Hopkins “is not satisfied with the general doctrine, that *he*, who is the Creator and Lord of all, the Eternal and Immortal King, must clearly know all his works from eternity, all beings, all events, all causes and effects, the whole order of the univer-

tal system from first to last, every thing wise, right, and necessary, in all its parts, even the most minute, for a consistent orderly whole; and that he saw every thing with *approbation*, and accordingly brought the universe into existence; but must needs pry into the mystery a little further," &c. P. 10, 11.

This general doctrine, as our Author terms it, may be comprised in the following propositions:

1. The blessed God from eternity, had a clear and unerring view of the best possible system of creatures and events.
2. By his approbation or decree, he fixed the future existence of those creatures and events only, which were contained in this system.
3. The existence of all creatures and events, is the effect of the divine agency, as their efficient cause. Our Author says, "God saw every thing with *approbation*, and accordingly brought the universe into existence." He moreover tells us, that "there is no difference in God's decrees, whether they have respect to our natural motions, and common affairs in life, or to our everlasting concerns." All things, then, are equally decreed. He likewise says, "we know, that the most high God *directs* and *governs* all things, that he exerts a continual energy through all nature, without which the system could not continue." Thus it seems, that the existence and continuation of the system, are both the effects of the divine agency.

This agrees with the assembly of divines at Westminster, who say, "the decrees of God are his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his own will, whereby, for his own glory, he hath fore ordained whatsoever comes to pass;" and to the Bible, which says, God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

Now, to illustrate these great and important truths, which all Calvinistic divines have held, and which our Author himself must hold, if he would be consistent with what has been quoted from his book, and answer some objections against them, was the design of Dr. Hopkins in what he has written on the Decrees of God.

But our Author considers the Doctor as meeting with some difficulty, in the prosecution of this scheme of sentiments, in
reconciling

reconciling divine and human agency. He says, "here seems to be a Gordian knot, and therefore the Doctor endeavours to cut it at one stroke, and he is at no further trouble than to give us in a very few words, a definition of liberty, which he imagines will make all clear, viz. that liberty consists in voluntary exercise, or in chusing and willing."

Here our Author saw the Doctor's metaphysical Demon, showing his cloven foot, and could not forbear crying out, "thus he gives us a specimen of his metaphysics," and appears greatly puzzled, to determine, precisely, the meaning of this definition, or whether it has any meaning at all. Must he not have had the old idea in his mind, that a metaphysician, "can, by a skilful management of doubtful words and phrases, prove almost any thing, however false?" Instead, therefore of examining the definition, as he had proposed, he seems to admit it, and apologizes for the Doctor, that he had been led into this way of thinking of liberty, by the very abstruse reasoning of President Edwards, on the freedom of the will.

Query, Would our Author have had any difficulty in understanding Dr. Hopkins, provided he had given the Arminian definition of liberty? viz. that it consists in a self determining power of the will; or, that all our exercises and actions are self-originated, independent of any influence *ab extra*. This idea of the subject did not correspond with the Doctor's way of thinking; nor with President Edwards'; nor indeed with any consistent Calvinist's; therefore, he adopted the opposite and only rational scheme of human agency and freedom, viz. divine agency is the efficient cause of human agency, in all that we do; and human liberty consists in voluntary exercise, or chusing and willing. If, in every action of the creature, divine agency is the efficient cause, and creature agency the effect, where is the difficulty in reconciling the divine and human agency with each other? If the creature under the divine agency acts voluntarily, in chusing and willing, why is he not free? And why does not liberty consist in voluntary exercise, or in chusing and willing?

I would ask our Author, whether, there be not a difference, between creatures originating their own exercises and actions,
and

and their coming into existence, as the effects of some influence without them? Our Author, speaking of motives set before the mind, in the view of which we act, and which we approve, or disapprove, chuse, or refuse, says, "thus we are made to be struck with objects, and cannot avoid it." If the power of objects set before the mind, is irresistible, and the effect unavoidable, why does not this destroy human liberty, as effectually, as the divine agency, which Dr. Hopkins supposes to be the efficient cause of all our exercises?

It seems almost impossible that a gentleman of our Author's advantages to understand theology, not to say *ontology*, should be so ignorant of the divine influence upon moral agents, as to reason and talk as if there were no such thing; this he certainly does, with respect to moral evil; and might with equal propriety do the same with respect to moral good.

In p. 13. he says, "if the volitions of men are made absolutely inevitable, both by the divine decree, and an immediate efficacious agency of God on the will, it is as much impossible, that a man should will otherwise than he does, as it is to counteract the decrees of God, or resist the Almighty power, which impels him." Therefore, he concludes, "that though sin is a voluntary exercise of the sinner, or consists in willing and chusing evil, yet his choice is so *unavoidably* under the direction and control of a superior agent, that it cannot properly be said to be his own; but the choice of that being who acts upon him and by him."

According to this representation, no man can properly be said to act, if what he does be decreed: and if what he does be under the influence of God (or even motives, the effect of which, is unavoidable) we are so made, that we cannot counteract the decrees of God, nor resist the Almighty power which impels us. And our Author says, "thus we are made to be struck with objects and cannot avoid it;" so that in every case, in which a man does any thing decreed, or under the influence of God, (or even motives, the effect of which is unavoidable) the act is not the creature's, but the superior agent's, who acts upon him, and by him. For a moment we will admit this reasoning as just, and attend to our Author, whom we will suppose preaching upon the following

following words ; “ Work out your own falvation with fear and trembling ; for it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleafure.”

Must he not fay, according to the text, that the divine agency, agreeably to the divine purpofe, is implied in God’s working in his people both to will and to do, thofe things, which are connected with their falvation ?—And must he not, according to the text, likewise fay, that we act as moral agents, freely and voluntarily, under the divine influence, when we both will, and do, thofe things which God works in us, both to will and to do ?—And must he not, according to his own sentiments, fay, that all that willing and doing connected with our falvation, which is the effect of the divine influence, is fo unavoidably under the direction and control of a fuperior agent, that they cannot properly be faid to be our own, but the willing and doing of him who acts upon us and by us.

What a clafhing is here between the sentiments of the Bible and our Author ! The plain truth concerning this matter is, that creature agency is the effect of Divine agency : That the creature in all his internal and external actions, which God worketh in him both to will and to do, is as free and voluntary, as he poffibly could be, were he under no fuch influence from without himfelf : Or were he to originate all his own exercifes and actions.—For virtue and vice, confift not in the caufe of our exercifes and actions ; but in the exercifes and actions themfelves. Hence moral agents are blamed and punifhed for nothing, but what they do which is wrong ; and praifed and rewarded for nothing, but what they do which is right ; for every man fhall be judged according to the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or evil.

Therefore if it can be proved, by any *ftilful management of doubtful words and phrafes*, or in any other way, that God being the efficient caufe of our exercifes and actions, which are denominated evil, makes thofe exercifes and actions his own ; and leaves us, as innocent machines, as our Author intimates ; it can in the fame way, and with equal eafe be proved, that God’s being the efficient caufe of our exercifes and actions, which are

denominated holy, makes those exercises and actions his own; and leaves us as destitute of any just praise, as machines.

Thus you see, according to our Author's sentiments, there can be neither moral good or evil, virtue or vice, in creatures, unless their exercises and actions are self-originated independent of any influence from God. Upon this principle I would ask our Author, What propriety is there in prayer?—Why should we go to God and say, lead us not into temptation? Why should we plead with him for the enlightening, sanctifying, comforting, and sealing influences of the Holy Ghost? Upon his principles, prayer for these things, can mean nothing more than a vain and empty compliment;—asking for an influence which we do not need, and which God never did, and never will grant to creatures.

“Let common sense now judge, whether it cannot with propriety be affirmed that a man who is constantly directed and determined in his volitions, by another agent (as all saints are, in those things which they will and do connected with their salvation; even by the Holy Ghost) have not perfect freedom of choice and action as rational creatures?”

The next thing in the System, with which our Author finds fault, is the doctrine of particular election to salvation. He says “What Dr. Hopkins writes upon the Doctrine of election, is evidently connected with his reasonings upon the divine decrees, and therefore the objections against the one, equally affect the other; and by his blending the idea of election, as it is frequently mentioned in the New Testament, with predestination or the eternal decrees of God, determining the future salvation of a number of individuals of the human race, exclusively of the rest, he has involved the doctrine in all the perplexity of scholastic disputations.” p. 14, 15.

He moreover says, that the Apostles are “quite silent as to the election of individuals to eternal salvation by the absolute decrees of God.” p. 16.

And asks, “Why should christians be so often led into the labyrinth of the divine decrees, with respect to the moral and fu-

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ture state of mankind, when it is impossible for finite minds to comprehend the counsels of an infinite being." p. 16.

And to shew the absurdity of this conduct, he condescendingly observes, that, "there is no difference in God's decrees, whether they have respect to our natural motions, and our common affairs in life, or to our everlasting concerns."

He moreover affirms, that, "it could not be of the least benefit to men, who are called daily to take care of themselves and their families, to tell them that God has absolutely determined what they shall do, where they shall go, and what they shall have." p. 16, 17.

Reply, 1. When our Author says, what Dr. Hopkins has written upon the doctrine of election, is evidently connected with his reasonings upon the divine decrees, he does him justice, and ought to be credited for the same. For these are two doctrines, as plainly revealed, and as mutually implying each other, as any two doctrines in the sacred volume: And it may be farther observed, they are the ground, yea, the only rational ground, upon which we can build our hope for salvation. Did we know by revelation, that God had never decreed any event, that he had never chosen any individual to salvation, what ground should we have to conclude that any individual of the human race would ever be saved?

But, blessed be God, we are not left in a state of such uncertainty and darkness; for we are assured, that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: And that all who shall be saved were given to Christ in the covenant of redemption, and chosen in him before the foundations of the world were laid.

2. As our Author saw Dr. Hopkins availing himself of all the powers of his metaphysical assistant, in writing upon the decrees of God, so he considers him in writing upon the doctrine of election: For he says, that Dr. Hopkins "has involved the doctrine in all the perplexity of scholastic disputations." A dust of arguments now rises from the mutual exertions of Dr. Hopkins and his powerful Demon, and a torrent of doubtful words and phrases pour in, upon our Author; and what is the consequence?

quence? Why "the doctrine of election is involved in all the perplexity of scholastic disputations." And our venerable Author's eyes seem to be blinded, by the smoke, smother, and dust, of metaphysics. Otherwise, how can we account for his adopting, the old, and long since exploded Arminian notion of the New Testament doctrine of election, as part of his creed, viz. that it does not mean, that God according to his purpose, has chosen a particular number of the human race, to the exclusion of the rest, to salvation. But a decision of the great and mighty dispute between Jews and Gentiles concerning external privileges, &c. If this in fact were not the case with our Author, how could he affirm so roundly as he does, that the Apostles "are quite silent as to the election of individuals to eternal salvation, by the absolute decrees of God?" Was it not owing to blindness that he could not see the following declarations in the Apostles' writings?

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath *chosen us in him before the foundation of the world*, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love, having *predestinated us* unto the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." *Eph. i. 3, 4, 5.* "But we are bound to give thanks always to God, for you brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning, *chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth.*" *II. Theff. ii. 13.*

Again, "We know that all things work together for good, to them that love God, to them, who are the called, *according to his purpose.* For whom he did foreknow (that is whom he chose to salvation) he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified: Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." See *Rom. viii. 28, 29, 30, and 33.*

Again,

Again, "God hath not cast away his people which he *foreknew*, even so then at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the *election of grace*. What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." *Rom. xi. 2, 5, 7.* For the children not being yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the *purpose of God according to election*, might stand, not of works, but of him who calleth. For he saith, to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. Therefore he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth," *Rom. ix. 11, 15, 18.* So in *II. Tim. i. 9.* it is written, "Who hath saved us, and called us, with an holy calling, not according to our works; but according to his own *purpose of grace*, which was given to us in Christ Jesus, before the world began?" So in *Acts*, "As many as were ordained unto eternal life believed."

After our Author has attentively reflected upon these texts, and many more of the same tenor, let him read Toplady against Wesley, the Apostle to the Methodists, and see if he can lay his hand upon his breast and solemnly appeal to the searcher of hearts, that he verily thinks, the Apostles "are quite silent as to the election of individuals to eternal salvation by the absolute decrees of God." If he cannot do this, let him frankly confess, that he has abused the writings of the holy Apostles.

3. Our Author asks, "Why should christians be led into the labyrinth of the divine decrees, with respect to the moral and future state of mankind when it is impossible for finite minds to comprehend the counsels of an infinite being?"

This question is evidently designed to fault those, who preach the doctrine of the divine decree, as extending to every event, and the doctrine of particular election. And we will answer it, 1. By proposing another question: Why did Christ and his Apostles set us such an example?

2. Why hath Christ and his Apostles led us to contemplate the being and perfections of the great Jehovah, when it is so exceedingly evident, that it is impossible for finite minds to comprehend the attributes of an infinite being? for, "Canst thou

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by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is high as heaven, what canst thou know? Deeper than hell, what canst thou do? The measure thereof is longer than the earth and broader than the sea." When our Author can see the reason of the one, it is probable he will easily perceive the reason of the other; though the decrees of God, cannot be comprehended by finite minds, yet they are proper subjects of revelation, and objects of faith: And though the being and perfections of God can never be comprehended by finite minds, yet they are proper subjects of revelation, and objects of *contemplation, faith, and love.*

Therefore, though we cannot comprehend the divine counsels, and though we cannot comprehend the divine attributes, yet both may be an inexhaustible source of entertainment to our minds, and comfort to our hearts. This no doubt makes a part of heaven; and if so, then heaven, in a sense, is begun here, with all those, who have cordial views of the decrees and attributes of the blessed God. Therefore let not our Author, any more strive to snatch this boon, from the breast of the heirs of glory.

4. Our Author confesses, that, "there is no difference in God's decrees, whether they have respect to our natural motions and common affairs in life or to our everlasting concerns." This is a pretty full confession, for one who had written so much against christians being so often led into the labyrinth of the divine decrees, and would lead us to hope, he had recovered from that blindness occasioned by the dust of metaphysical arguments; for it is certain, that the blessed God did, by an eternal and unalterable decree, fix all natural and moral events, that ever have been, or will take place, within his extensive dominions. This is all Dr. Hopkins pleads for in what he has written upon the doctrines of the divine decrees, and particular election.

5. But after all, our Author affirms, that "it could not be of the least benefit to men, who are called daily to take care of themselves and families, to tell them that God has absolutely determined, what they shall do, where they shall go, and what they shall have." Preaching the decrees of God, then, can be of no benefit to us as they respect our natural motions and common affairs

affairs in life ; nor as they respect our everlasting concerns, for we are called daily to attend to both : And if it be of no service to preach up the decrees of God, of what service, to men, is the revelation of the decrees ? What a reproach is it, upon God, to give us a book for our instruction, a part of which, can be of no service to men ? And what a reproach to the inspired Apostles and their successors, the ministers of the gospel, to be so frequently *dinging* the ears of their hearers, with this doctrine, to use our Author's mode of expression ? Upon the whole, we will leave it to our Author himself, to reconcile this bold and daring reflection upon the Deity, with regard to his decrees, to that humble and meek spirit, which ought to reign in the hearts of those who undertake to expound the scriptures to their fellow men.

Again our Author says, p. 19, "It may be necessary to add a few more remarks on what the Doctor says of the liberty of moral agents, as wholly consisting in voluntary exercise, or choosing, because on this basis, the whole fabric of his peculiar system principally depends." And in the same page, he charges the Doctor, "Thus he very carefully distinguishes the *will*, from the intellectual faculty, and represents it as choosing or willing without any regard to light in the mind, or rather without any distinct views, of one thing or another." So his philosophy as to the nature of man, seems to be this ; that the *will* is most properly the soul itself, and not merely a particular power, and that it is not under the direction and government of the understanding in its volitions : But acts from an innate, total, invincible, depraved, inclination, without being in the least influenced, by any objects presented to the mind, p. 19, and 20. And says, "What a strange idea is this of the soul of man, as a rational and moral agent ? And asks, Can the Doctor mean any thing by the choice, which such a kind of soul makes, when it has no object of choice in view ? If it knows nothing, if it sees nothing, what can be meant by its willing this thing or that ?" He says, "if we receive the Doctor's theory of free agency, we must conceive of the human soul as a strange self-willed being, acting without knowledge or judgment, under an irresistible bias to evil, without seeing any difference betwixt evil and good." And to close

close the whole, in p. 23, says, "the learned questions, which have been managed with the utmost nicety of discussion, about the *liberty of the will*, and its virtuousness or viciousness, when considered separately from the present perceptions of the mind, are quite impertinent and useless, if not entirely absurd."

Reply 1. This train of pompous and heavy accusations brought against the Doctor, by our Author, would appear much more formidable and alarming, had he quoted one word from the System, for their support; but in as much as he has not done this, we presume he could not do it; and therefore feel justified in concluding that the whole is a man of *straw*, of his own making; and shall not grudge him the honour of demolishing this mighty giant, with his own hands.

2. Dr. Hopkins has said, that human liberty consists in voluntary exercises, or willing and chusing; and has uniformly held, that those exercises, which are morally good or holy, have for their ultimate objects God, and all intelligent creatures capable of happiness, together with the greatest good of the general system; that all exercises which are sinful, have self, or a partial private interest, which is inconsistent with the general good of the system, for their ultimate object. Hence he considers holiness, as consisting in disinterested benevolence; and sin, in nothing but selfishness.

Does not this representation correspond with the moral law, which, according to the interpretation of Christ, holds up *God*, and our fellow creatures, including ourselves, as the objects of that *love*, which is the fulfilling of the whole law? "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; this is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

The primary object of this love, is God; the secondary object is man; the ultimate end of the soul, in this love, must be the glory of God, and the welfare of man. All required in the law, and all required in the prophets, which must include the essence

of the gospel, is done, when our love corresponds with the demands of the moral law.

Now the ultimate object of those exercises, which are a deviation from the law of God, must be something directly opposite to the glory of God, and the general good of mankind: And what can this be, but a *partial, private interest*, which alone in its nature, is inconsistent with the glory of God and the general good? To seek such an interest is to violate every commandment in the law. Therefore Christ says, "Deny thyself and follow me;" that is, give up all your partial, private interests which are inconsistent with the glory of God and the greatest good of his creatures, and imitate me, who seek not my own; but the honour of him that sent me. For charity, or such love as is required in the law, seeketh not her own, but another's welfare.

We now pass to take notice of what our Author says of Dr. Hopkins' notion of human depravity.

In p. 19, our Author says, "In the *will*, he, (that is, Dr. Hopkins) places the total depravity of human nature." And in p. 21, acknowledges that the Doctor uses the words, *heart* and *will*, as synonymous terms. But in p. 23, he says, "Paul and the other Apostles, appear to have had a different view of the source of moral depravity, and *never say a word* of the corruption of the will." And in p. 24, he says, "there is no need of any kind of new creation of the will." By this representation, our Author thinks he has proved, that the depravity of human nature lies not in the will. His own words are, "If the depravation of human nature is not to be attributed to the will, as has been already showed, then what he (that is, Dr. Hopkins) says on this head comes to nothing." See p. 25.

Reply 1. It is cheerfully acknowledged that Dr. Hopkins, places the total depravity of human nature in the will, or heart. His own words are, "As the moral disorder and depravity of man lies wholly in his heart, the cure and renovation must begin and end there; and when the heart is perfectly right, the man will be wholly recovered to holiness." See *System*, vol. I. part II. chap. iv. p. 534. From this declaration of Dr. Hopkins, as well as

from many others found in the System, it is exceedingly evident, that he supposed human depravity lies wholly in that which is moral; and pray what is there found in man, which is moral, if those exercises of the soul, termed chusing and refusing, loving and hating objects presented to the mind are not? And if this be true, it should seem, that *will*, *heart*, and *affection*, signify the same thing. Therefore, when all our voluntary exercises are a deviation from the law of God, we must be considered as totally depraved.

2. Dr. Hopkins evidently considers, the absence of ideas, or darkness in the understanding, as having nothing moral in it.

3. Therefore, though he readily admits the absence of ideas, or darkness of the understanding, in adult persons, to be the unhappy consequence of our depravity, and though he acknowledges the misimprovement of our natural powers and faculties to be sin, yet he will not allow that human depravity lies in the least degree, in any real or imaginary destruction of these powers and faculties; and his reason is, because human depravity is a *moral*, and not a *natural*, disorder.

4. But our Author says, "Paul and the other Apostles appear to have had a different view of the source of moral depravity, and never say a word of the corruption of the will." - It is well he did not rank holy David; and God the Father and the Son, with Paul and the other Apostles, as saying not a word of the corruption of the will.

God the Father says, Why will ye die, O house of Israel? Surely here is a representation of a corrupted will, if words can represent any such thing.

Christ says unto the rebellious Jews, which is applicable to all men in the state of nature, "Ye will not come unto me that ye may have life." The stubborn and perverted *wills* of those rebels, alone, stood in the way of their salvation. For when Christ said, "Whosoever will, let him take of the waters of life freely; they refused, and perished."

David says, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power;" plainly intimating, that nothing short of Omnipotent power, can effectually correct, and heal the disorders of the will.

5. But

§. But let us examine, whether it be true, "That Paul and the other Apostles, never say a word of the corruption of the will."

Paul saith, II. *Tim.* iv. 3, "For the time will come, when they *will* not endure sound doctrine." Have not those corrupted *wills*, who, of choice, oppose and fight against sound doctrine? Who, after their own lusts, heap to themselves teachers having itching ears. Now as James and Jambres (those ancient wizards) withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth. And can they resist the truth without any emotion, or exercise of their hearts or wills? If not, then their *wills* are corrupted.

The Apostle James, chap. iv. 4, says, "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not, that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore, *will* be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God." Have not those corrupted *wills*, who of choice are friends to the world, when this choice constitutes them the enemies of the living God?

The Apostle Peter, in his first Epistle, iv. 3, says, "For the time past of our life, may suffice, to have wrought the will of the Gentiles." Now the *will* of the Gentiles was corrupted, as was the *will* of those, to whom the Apostle wrote, otherwise there would be no propriety in his exhortation. Again, in II. *Peter*, ii. 10; the Apostle, speaking of the unjust, who are reserved unto the day of judgment to be punished, says, "Presumptuous are they, *self-willed*, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities." Is not voluntary *selfishness*, or *self-willedness*, a corruption of the will? But we need no more quotations from the Apostles, to prove, beyond all controversy, that our Author has unhappily charged Paul and the other Apostles foolishly, in affirming, they "never say a word of the corruption of the *will*."

6. Let us now attend to what he acknowledges they do say concerning the depravity of human nature. His own words are, "They most familiarly use the phrases of *being in the flesh; walking in the flesh*; fulfilling the desires and lusts of the flesh; having a carnal mind; minding earthly things; having the understanding darkened, and being alienated from the life of God, through ignorance and blindness." Instead of this last clause,
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“through ignorance and blindness,” our Author should have used the Apostle’s own words, which are, “through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.”

But what does the Apostle mean, by being in the flesh; walking in the flesh? &c. Surely he did not mean that the source of moral depravity consisted, in the soul’s being united to, and dwelling in, a body composed of flesh and bones; for there is nothing of a moral nature in these things. The Apostle’s language then must be figurative, signifying the totally corrupted state of the will, heart or affections of man. For he says, *Rom. vii. 5.* “When we were in the flesh, the motions of sin, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.” So then, they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

Because the undue gratification of our sensual appetites affords us some transient pleasure, we, contrary to the command of God, chuse to indulge them. The source of this abominable conduct consists in our choice to do that which God has strictly forbidden; that which is injurious to ourselves and our fellow creatures: and, if so, then the *will* or *heart*, out of which all manner of abominations do proceed, must be totally corrupted. Therefore when the Apostles and Saints were in such a situation, they were, in the language of revelation, *in the flesh*. They walked in the flesh, fulfilling the desires and lusts of the *flesh*; and while in this state, they could not please God: For the motions of sin, which were by the law, did work in their members to bring forth fruit unto death.

It may not be amiss to observe here, that notwithstanding our Author finds fault with Dr. Hopkins, as representing the *will* “not under the direction and government of the understanding, in its volitions;” yet, in his own description of human depravity, he says, “Reason is dethroned, and the flesh has assumed the government of the soul.” If reason is dethroned, the understanding no longer directs and governs. And if we understand *flesh* in the sense in which the Apostle uses the word, then, voluntary enmity against God, has assumed the government of the soul, and reigns triumphant there. And, to use our Author’s words; the soul, “must remain enslaved, un-
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til it is furnished with those heavenly truths which the gospel reveals." And he might have added also, until the *will*, *heart* or *affections*, be changed by that mighty power, which was displayed in the resurrection of Christ from the dead.

Having a carnal mind, and minding earthly things, seem to be the same with our Author. Now, it is exceedingly evident, there can be nothing evil, in the simple contemplation of earthly things: For Saints and Angels do this, in every instance in which they reflect upon the works of God in this lower world. What then is there, in the carnal mind, which argues human depravity? We answer, the loving the creature more than the Creator, or placing our happiness in the pursuit of a partial, private interest, instead of the glory of God and the good of mankind. This is something contrary to the moral law, and consequently morally evil, and implies an exercise of the will, heart or affections, which casts infinite contempt upon the majesty of all worlds.

7. We will now examine our Author's idea of human depravity, as consisting not at all in the corruption of the *will*, but in the darkness of the understanding. That this in fact is his sentiment, is obvious from his quoting those words of the Apostle, in *Eph.* iv. 18, "having the understanding darkened, and being alienated from the life of God," through their ignorance and blindness; and leaving out that part of the text, which is explanatory of the whole, viz. "through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts:" And likewise from his declaration in pages 24, 25, that, "there is no need of any kind of new creation of the *will*: For new and glorious objects, will have their energy immediately: And this wonderful alteration made in the mind, and the effects, which appear in the whole temper and manner of life, are very properly called by the Apostles, the *new man*."

Must it not appear exceedingly evident, to any person, who will carefully examine the above text; that the darkness of the understanding there mentioned, has nothing moral in it? That it is the effect of that alienation from the life of God, which is through the ignorance or blindness there is in the heart? Ali-
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enation from the life of God, and blindness of heart, are moral ideas : But darkness in the understanding is not ; although the latter is the consequence of the former.

1. If human depravity consists in the darkness of the understanding and not in the corruption of the will or heart, then men and Angels are not active in their becoming depraved creatures ; for it is impossible to conceive of any exercise of the soul or body in the mere want of ideas in the intellect, or darkness of the understanding.

2. If the depravity of human nature consists in the darkness of the understanding, and not in the corruption of the will ; then men are not to blame for their depravity ; for it consists in something they have never done, and consequently, is something, for which they never will be brought into judgment ; for men are to be judged according to the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or evil.

3. If the depravity of human nature consists in the darkness of the understanding, and not in the corruption of the will or heart, then men are not totally depraved ; For where shall we find a man who has not one idea ?

4. If human depravity consists, in the darkness of the understanding, and not in the corruption of the will or heart, then it is not a moral, but a natural disorder.

5. If human depravity consists in the darkness of the understanding, and not in the corruption of the will or heart, then the Arminians are right, who hold that regeneration is wrought by light ; and not by the spirit of God.

6. If human depravity consists in the darkness of the understanding, and not in the corruption of the will or heart, then men are regenerated in proportion as they increase in speculative knowledge : Which I take to be our Author's idea of regeneration ; being the next thing to which we will attend.

Whereas our Author has positively denied that human depravity consists in the corruption of the will, and whereas he hath made no mention of the will, heart or affections, in his description of it, we are constrained to conclude, that he places human depravity in the darkness of the understanding. If so, nothing more is necessary

cessary, for its removal, than light in the understanding: And this perfectly agrees with what he has written upon this subject. He says, when "they, (that is) the heavenly truths, which the gospel reveals, fix our attention, and by all the methods, which God takes to communicate them, are clearly seen and known, the darkness is past, and the light of truth shines." And what is the effect? Why "the soul is no longer under bondage to the flesh; for new and glorious objects will have their proper energy immediately, and this wonderful alteration made in the mind, (that is in the understanding) and the effects (that is, the effects of this change of the understanding) which appear in the whole temper and manner of life, are very properly called by the Apostle, the *new man*."

It is true he acknowledges an agency of God, "which introduces into the mind the glorious objects of faith, so that it is brought under the powerful influence of things unseen and eternal," p. 26." And it is as true, that he insists upon it, that "there is no need of any kind of new creation of the will"—for according to him, this is not corrupted at all.

By laying these observations together, does it not evidently appear, that in the opinion of our Author, regeneration consists, in the understanding being enlightened by the agency of God?

Regeneration, then, consists in enlightening the understanding; and the effects of this light is, the new man.

But what is the new man? Our Author says, "The Apostles may be easily understood, when they speak of the *new man*, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." And again, when they speak of the new man, "as, consisting of a new and spiritual mind, and all those moral characters, by which we bear the image of God." All this therefore is the effect of that wonderful alteration made in the mind, or understanding, by the introduction of gospel truths. But we still ask what is the new man? Our Author tells us that the new man is something created in righteousness and true holiness. Now, can there be any thing created in us, like righteousness and true holiness, without any kind of new creation of the will? Righteousness and true holiness are altogether moral,
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and can there be any thing moral, where there are no volitions of a rational being? If not, then righteousness and true holiness, in fallen man, imply, a new series of volitions or moral exercises in the soul. The production of these, by the Spirit of God, in scripture language, is called a new creation. Our Author farther observes, that "the new man which is created in Christ Jesus consists of a new and spiritual mind, and all those moral characters by which we bear the image of God."

But what is this new and spiritual mind? And what are all those moral characters, by which we bear the image of God? Surely, our Author, upon reflection, will not say, the whole are comprized, in the understanding's being enlightened. For we read of men, who, "When they knew God, glorified him not as God." But he must say this, if he would maintain his darling doctrine, viz. that "There is no need of any kind of new creation of the will." And if he would support what he says, concerning Paul and the other Apostles, viz. "That they never say a word of the corruption of the will."

After all, we must insist upon it, that a new and spiritual mind, means a new and spiritual heart, and all those moral characters by which we bear the image of God, mean nothing more than righteousness and true holiness, which are all comprized in holy exercises of the soul, which cannot exist without a new creation of the will, heart or affections.

But our Author seems to be aware, that the Apostles' description of the new man might be understood, in a sense quite different from his own, and therefore lays an anchor to the windward to guard himself from danger. He says "these are strong figures, but convey a very natural and easy meaning, if we do not work upon them too much, and strain them too far to serve a particular hypothesis." By which we are doubtless to understand him as benevolently cautioning all to be upon their guard, against Dr. Hopkins' metaphysical Demon, *who, by a skilful management of doubtful words and phrases, can prove almost any thing, however false.*

To close what he had to write upon this point, he says, "common christians may easily understand all this, (that is, all he had

had represented the Apostles, as saying, the new man consisted in) why then should they be entangled in cobweb schemes?"

Could our Author have treated the creed of a common necromancer, with more contempt, than he has treated the sentiments and reasonings of Dr. Hopkins on this subject? But the impartial public, after examining what the Doctor has written upon the subject, together with the above remarks, will judge which of the two schemes most deserve to be called a cobweb; which you know is spun out of the bowels of the spider; and is a proper emblem of a selfish scheme of religion, which flows from a selfish heart; which is as full of moral, as the spider's bowels are of natural, poison.

Propriety will not admit of my dismissing this subject, without stating and illustrating the scripture doctrine of regeneration.

By regeneration, we are to understand that moral change, which it is necessary for sinners to experience, to enter into the kingdom of glory.

I. This change is altogether moral. It of course implies, an alteration in the *inclination, temper, heart* or *affections* of a totally depraved soul; and may be properly denominated, by calling it, a change of moral exercises. In scripture language it consists, in taking away the heart of stone, and giving an heart of flesh.

By the heart of stone we are, doubtless, to understand, the voluntary enmity of the soul against God and his creatures, or a selfish heart. By the heart of flesh we are to understand the directly opposite moral affection, the sum of which is holy love to God and his creatures; or in other words, disinterested benevolence. Dr. Hopkins says, "As the moral disorder and depravity of man lies wholly in the heart, the cure and renovation must begin and end there."

II. This change implies, the exertion of two different agents.

1. It implies the supernatural, the *gracious*, influence of the Holy Ghost upon the soul, as its efficient cause: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, (saith God, a figurative expression, meaning the gracious influence of the spirit,) and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness; and from all your idols

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will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you; and a new spirit will I put within you: And I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes; and ye shall keep my judgments and do them." Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27.

"Jesus answered, verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." John. iii. 5. These texts, as well as many others, scattered up and down in the sacred volume, plainly prove the absolute necessity of the divine agency, for the accomplishment of that change which, in scripture language, is stiled regeneration.

2. This change, implies the agency of the person, who is the subject of the change itself. For if it be a moral change, as I trust none will deny, it must consist in a change of moral exercises; and the person who is the subject of this change, must be active in the existence of those new exercises which alone denominate him a new creature: This human agency is implied, in the *new temper, inclination, heart, will or affection* of the soul; and is the effect of the divine agency: It never takes place without it, in any soul whatever. That this is agreeable to those representations given of it, in scripture; will appear from the following injunctions and declarations of God himself: In Ezek. xviii. 31, God says, "Cast away from you, all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed, and *make you a new heart*, and a new spirit, for why will ye die O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God, wherefore turn yourselves and live ye." So in Eph. ii. 1. the Apostle speaking of this change, says unto the regenerate Ephesians, "And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." Plainly intimating, that spiritual death, or human depravity, wholly consists in those voluntary exercises of the soul, which are a deviation from the law of God. And when he comes more particularly to speak of the new man, Chap. iv. 24. he affirms, that the new man is created in righteousness and true holiness. Now does not righteousness and true holiness entirely consist, in the

the moral exercises of the soul? If so, then man is active in their existence, and human agency is as necessarily implied in regeneration, or our return to God, as in our apostacy from him.

3. It is exceedingly evident from scripture, that the objects of those moral exercises which constitute the *new man*, are revealed truths. "Seeing ye have purified your souls, in obeying the *truth*, (that is, through the gracious influence of the spirit, ye have obeyed the *truth*) being born again, not of corruptible seed; but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever," I. *Peter* i. 22, 23. It is in the view of truth, that holy exercises come into existence. Paul, speaking of the regenerate Corinthians, says, "I have begotten you, through the gospel," that is, through the influence of the *spirit* and *word* of God, which I have preached unto you, ye have become new creatures; ye have made yourselves new hearts and spirits.

To be more particular, with respect to the moral exercises, which constitute the new man, let it be observed, that they are all holy, and consequently partake of the nature of that peculiar kind of charity, or love, *which seeketh not her own, but another's welfare*. For there is no other moral affection, but what is, in its nature, sin. Therefore, love of this kind, must be the essence of that repentance which needeth not to be repented of: And of that union to Christ, which, in scripture language, is styled *faith*. True repentance consists in a cordial disapprobation of those moral exercises of the soul, which are a deviation from the law of God: And true faith consists in a cordial approbation of Christ, in his real character: And both have for their essence, love. This is equally the case with all other moral exercises and actions belonging to the new man, and distinguish him from the old man, who is the subject of no moral exercises, but such as are of a selfish or sinful nature.

The beginning of this series of holy exercises, denominates us new creatures, and when we shall become the subjects of no other, we shall be perfect: Fit for the society of the blessed inhabitants of the upper world, the world of bliss and glory.

We should now make a few observations on what our Author says Dr. Hopkins writes on the effects of regeneration; but in

as much as what he has written upon this subject, is little more than telling us, that Dr. Hopkins had prepared a balloon, which mounts him very high into the ethereal regions, till he almost loses sight of the earth; and that after his soaring flight, he is fallen to the ground; and that he has reversed the progress and sphere of love, by beginning it at the utmost verge of perfect ether, and bringing it down to the central point of gross matter, we shall pass by this part of his book, with only observing, that after all our Author's labour, to use his own words, "it seems there has been much ado about nothing." For what has ballooning, the utmost verge of perfect ether, and gross matter, to do with the effects of regeneration? "It is not very probable that christians of common capacities, will receive much edification from such a jargon of words," to use his own compliment upon what Dr. Hopkins had written upon the personality, or the human and divine nature of Christ.

The next thing in the System, with which our Author finds fault, is what Dr. Hopkins says of the penalty of the law, particularly that which was given to Adam, and the death consequent on his transgression.

After our Author had selected a number of sentences, from the System, to shew that Dr. Hopkins actually holds, that the penalty of the law, under which Adam was first placed, means eternal death, or the complete and endless misery of the whole man, soul and body, he makes a pause; and casts himself upon the use, which Dr. Hopkins makes of the word infinite: He says, "the Doctor finds the word *infinite*, infinitely useful to his argument." Thus the good man seems disposed to be merry, but alas! by a more critical view of the Doctor's use of this and other words, all his sport is spoiled. The Doctor's metaphysical Demon, in all his dreadful forms, now appears to his frightened imagination. For he cries out, "but it is too much like the reasoning of Aristotle's school." It would seem, that by this powerful argument of our Author, he would give us to understand, that all Dr. Hopkins had written upon the above subject, was little more, than a *skilful management of doubtful words and phrases, proving almost any thing, however false.*

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However, after our Author had collected his thoughts, he grows serious, and undertakes to give it, as his opinion, that the reward of perfect obedience to the law, is not eternal life; and the punishment of disobedience, is not eternal death; these being ideas, not contained in the covenant made with Adam, ideas which he never had, in a state of innocency. His own words are, "It is by the new covenant under Jesus Christ, the second Adam, that a future world is revealed, and eternal life given, by promise, to the righteous; and whatever is implied in eternal death, threatened to the wicked; eternal life in heaven is the great promise of God, in his Son, to all believers: And the threatening of everlasting destruction in another world, which is the opposite, is the sorer punishment which they deserve, who trample under foot the Son of God, and despise and reject the wonderful methods of mercy. The law under which Adam was made, did not give him this promise (that is, the promise of eternal life) so did not contain the same threatening," (that is, the threatening of eternal death.) p. 37.

Reply 1. What a wonderful argument is here! what a surprisingly skilful management of words and phrases, do we behold in this short quotation! are we not tempted almost to conclude, that our Author, had, all of a sudden, commenced metaphysician, according to his own description of this awful art; and obtained full fellowship with *Aristotle* and his followers?

2. It is acknowledged, that since the fall, *eternal life* is the gift of a sovereign God, through Christ, to the righteous; and that eternal death is the punishment, which all those who know not God, and obey not the gospel, must according to this dispensation endure.

3. But how does this prove, that the law under which Adam was made, did not give him the promise of eternal life, upon condition of his perfect obedience? Or that it did not contain a threatening of eternal death upon his disobedience?

It is presumed that this mode of reasoning, ought to be treated with as much contempt, as our Author treats Dr. Hopkins, when he says, "he certainly reasons on several doctrinal articles in a metaphysical way."

4. But

4. But what was the death, threatened in the penalty of the law, under which Adam was made? We answer according to our Author, it was annihilation. His own words are, "all the notion he (that is Adam) could naturally form of death, was this, that it would be a privation of his happiness and existence together. To suppose any thing farther, is to take for granted, what can never be proved, but by a revelation from heaven." Annihilation, then, must be all that the threatening contained. But we would ask our Author how this is proved? We are sure there is no special revelation from Heaven that leads us to form any such idea of Adam: And we are as sure, that if this was his notion of the threatened penalty of the law, he was under a delusion: And we are as sure that Adam could not be under a delusion in a state of innocence; therefore we are sure that our Author's idea of Adam's notion of death is wrong.

5. What will become of those, who in this life, never hear of a Saviour? Surely, they cannot with justice be punished for not believing on the Redeemer. Must they not then, according to this strange and unscriptural sentiment, be annihilated? And were the consummation of all things now to take place, would not more of the human race be found in the state of annihilation, than in heaven and hell?

6. According to this sentiment Christ came into this world to save men not from eternal death, which was due to them previous to the consideration of the gospel dispensation, but from annihilation. How contrary this idea is to common sense, and the general strain of the word of God, will appear from the following considerations: 1. May we not rationally suppose, that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and the tree of life, were both sacramental trees: That the former was laden with fruit exceedingly agreeable to the taste and pleasant to the eye at Adam's first existence; and that the latter at that time had no fruit on it. Now it is evident that God forbade Adam to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil upon pain of death, and not annihilation. And is it not probable, that the time of his probation, was limited by the circumstance of the tree of life's bringing forth ripe fruit, and his eating thereof? Were not this
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the case, who can account for the neglect of Adam; to eat of this tree? He was holy. He desired to be confirmed in this state of holiness, and might at any moment eat of this tree, if there had been fruit thereon; but before fruit appeared thereon and he had taken thereof, it seems, that he had taken of the forbidden fruit: And now, lest he should put forth his hand and pollute this sacred tree by eating thereof, and flatter himself that he should live forever, God placed "at the east of the garden of Eden, cherubims, and a flaming sword, which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." Poor, inexcusable, fallen Adam, is driven from his paradise!

As eating of the tree of life seems to have been the appointed seal of eternal life, so eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, was the appointed seal of eternal death. Life and death are opposite ideas: For as temporal life consists in the union of soul and body; so temporal death consists in the disunion of soul and body. And as spiritual life consists in moral exercises and actions of an holy kind; so spiritual death consists in moral exercises and actions of an unholy kind. And as eternal life consists not in the bare existence of soul and body, but in the complete and everlasting happiness of the whole man; so eternal death consists not in the annihilation of soul and body, but in the complete and everlasting misery of the whole man.

As eternal life, would have been the reward of Adam's perfect and persevering obedience to the law; so eternal death is the threatened punishment of his disobedience. That the covenant or law, under which Adam was, in his innocence, did contain a promise of eternal life, and a threatening of eternal death, will farther appear from what Paul says upon this subject.

In Rom. vii. 10, the Apostle says, and the commandment, which was ordained unto life, I found to be unto death; that is, I found the commandment under which Adam, our head and representative, was made, which promised life to him and his posterity on condition of his obedience through his probationary state, now binds over to eternal death all the impenitent and unbelieving.

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For Moses describeth the righteousness of the law, that the man that doth those things shall live by them, see Rom. x. 5. As many as are of the works of the law, that is, who are striving after justification by the deeds of the law, are under the curse; that is, the original curse pronounced on fallen Adam and his posterity. For it is written, cursed is every one, that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them. For James saith, "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all." Thus it is evident that the law given to man in his primitive state, promised eternal life to the obedient, and threatened eternal death to the disobedient.

2. It is no rational objection against the foregoing arguments, that the Apostle hath said, "For if there had been a law given, which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law;" for, according to the law, eternal life is the fruit of perfect and persevering obedience; and eternal death is the fruit of disobedience, both to Adam and his posterity. So that the wages of sin is death, not to those only, who are under the law; but to those who are under the gospel.

We are therefore not to understand the Apostle as denying, there ever was a law given to man, by the obedience of which, he, in a state of innocence, might have obtained eternal life: But we are to understand him as denying, there is any law given to man, in a state of depravity, by the obedience of which, he can obtain eternal life. If the contrary was the case, then our salvation would not be of grace, but of works; which is diametrically opposite to the whole strain of the Apostle's reasoning upon this subject.

3. Nor can it reasonably be objected, against the foregoing sentiments, that the gospel assures us, that eternal life, since the fall of Adam, is the great gift of God through Christ; and that eternal death is held up to view in the gospel, as the sure consequence of impenitence and unbelief; For both law and gospel bind the sinner over to eternal death; the law first, and the gospel last. This objection our Author thinks of great force, and concludes that the law under which Adam was made, did not
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give him the promise of eternal life upon any condition whatever, and so did not contain a threatening of eternal death, in case of his disobedience. But the consideration that eternal life, under the former dispensation, was promised to Adam and his posterity as the reward of his personal obedience; and eternal life, under the gospel dispensation, is promised to all the penitent and believing, as the reward of the personal obedience of Christ; and the former punishment, which in the gospel is threatened to the already condemned sinner, who despises the gospel, means nothing more, than that he shall be judged and punished according to the deeds done in the body. I say, a consideration of these things, will sufficiently expose the fallacy of all our Author has written upon these points.

However, it may not be amiss just to observe, that our Author represents Dr. Hopkins' idea of the penalty of the law, as entirely inconsistent with the idea of Adam's being the federal head, and representative of his posterity; but can it be more so, than his own? Let us compare the two ideas for a moment, and see what conclusion is just. The penalty of the law, according to Dr. Hopkins is eternal death. The penalty of the same law, according to our Author, is annihilation.

Now if it be inconsistent with the penalty of the law, as it is understood by Dr. Hopkins, that the sentence of eternal death should not be executed on Adam, till he had time to propagate his race. Why is it not equally inconsistent with the penalty of the law, as it is understood by our Author, to suppose the sentence of annihilation, should not be executed on Adam, till he had propagated his race? But our Author represents the sentiments of Dr. Hopkins, on the penalty of the law, as inconsistent with a moment's delay in the execution of the sentence of eternal death, after man had sinned; because this would be a favour, the rebel by no means deserves. And is not this equally the case upon our Author's scheme? Would it not be a favour, which Adam by no means deserved, to have suffered him to have existed after his apostacy, a single moment? If so, then our Author's scheme is as inconsistent, with the idea of Adam's being the

federal head and representative of his posterity, as Dr. Hopkins' is, with which he finds so much fault.

Therefore, to use our Author's own words, "How could he, that is Adam; upon his principles, have had any posterity?" Or if we could suppose this possible, it would give us the most absurd and shocking idea of a constant whirl of souls and bodies, into annihilation.

Therefore, when our Author can clear his own scheme, of that inconsistency, with which he charges Dr. Hopkins, it is probable he may see how the Doctor can clear his.

If God could, through the immediate interposition of his Son, consistently with the honour of his law, bestow *eternal life* on one, under sentence of eternal death, or under sentence of annihilation, then he could, consistently with the honour of the law, bestow upon all a secondary probationary state, and so give them an opportunity to propagate their kind; and if so, then the penalty of the law's being considered as eternal death, will by no means destroy the doctrine, of Adam's being the federal head and representative of his posterity.

But to proceed; in p. 42, our Author says, "what Dr. Hopkins writes in his general observations, on redemption, is in the main rational and scriptural. But he has too much intermixed his own peculiar notions of the curse of the law, and the effects of the apostacy, with great and important truths, which all christians will gladly acknowledge." &c.

He further says, "A like observation may be made on what he writes concerning the person and character of the Redeemer. He clearly proves from the holy scriptures, as many other good divines have done, that Jesus Christ, the glorious redeemer of men, is truly God with us, or a divine person; and that he is also really man; so that in his person he is both God and man united. Now if he had been contented with this general description of the Mediator's person according to the plain and express language of the scriptures, he might have done good service to the Church: But he could not forbear exercising his metaphysical genius." p. 43.

These

These two last quotations from our Author, give us a clearer idea of his notion of Metaphysics, than any thing yet noticed in his book. It seems that if Dr. Hopkins had written in such a vague and general way, upon the various subjects to which he has attended, in his System, as to have left equal room for Socinians, Arians, Trinitarians, Arminians, Calvinists, Universalists, and particular Redemptionists, to have said, he is evidently of our opinion, he never would have been censured, by our Author, as a Metaphysician. For whenever the Doctor enters upon any particular point, and distinguishes it, from the things which differ, agreeably to the dictates of common sense, reason and scripture, he is represented as exercising his metaphysical genius. The effect of which, according to our Author is, *the proving of almost any thing, however false.*

Thus, had he said nothing upon the character and person of the Redeemer, more than a few general things, to which, the grossest Socinians and Arians, could cheerfully subscribe, all would have been well, scriptural, and serviceable to the church.

“ But he could not forbear exercising his metaphysical genius.”

Let us now attend to this awful genius combined with the dreadful art of metaphysics. Our Author says, that “ he begins, by saying that Jesus Christ, by being made really man, had a real body and *soul*, that is, a proper soul like other men; but that the human nature of Christ is not a distinct person separate from the divine nature, or his godhead; because the human nature exists, and began to exist in union with the sacred person in the Trinity, the *Word*; so that both natures are but one person.”

P. 43, 44.

Reply. 1. What is there so shocking, that it should be branded with the odious epithet *Metaphysics*, in Dr. Hopkins' saying, that Jesus Christ by being made *really* man, had a real body and soul? Who ever saw or heard of a *real* man, without a real soul and body? What is there so dreadful, in the idea that the human nature of Christ never existed as a distinct person from the Divine nature? That the human nature of Christ, his human soul
and

and body, began to exist in union with the sacred person in the Trinity, the *Word*: That the divine and human nature of Christ make but one person? Are not these ideas all familiar and plain to any one whose mind is not poisoned with the Socinian and Arian heresies. But this language, according to our Author, is a jargon of words; from which, "it is not very probable that Christians of common capacities will receive much edification."

Let us carefully and impartially examine his objections against it. We have already seen, by the last quotation from his book, that our Author acknowledges that Dr. Hopkins "has clearly proved from the holy scriptures, that Jesus Christ is truly God with us: And that he is also really man; so that in his person he is both God and man united." But a little lower in the same page, where he considers the Doctor as exercising his metaphysical genius, he is greatly alarmed at Dr. Hopkins' saying, "That Jesus Christ by being made *really* man, had a *real* body and soul, that is, a proper soul like other men." &c.

Query, is not he, who is truly God with us, *absolute Deity*? Or are we to understand no more by this phrase, than Socinians and Arians do, who use it to signify a created being of great eminence and dignity? Is not a *real man* composed of a *real soul and body*? Or are we to understand, by a real man, nothing more than *flesh and blood*, as it respects Christ; as all those do, who make the *Word*, which in the beginning was, and was with God, and was God, the soul of Christ. If Christ is really God, and really man, has he not two distinct natures? Or shall we suppose as some have done, that his *divinity* and *humanity* are so blended together, that it is impious to talk of any distinction in these natures! And if Christ is really God and really man, is it not rational to suppose, that his humanity was brought into existence, in union with his deity? And if this be a fact, is it not rational to conclude with the Assembly of Divines, and all others, except those tainted with the Socinian and Arian heresies, that he has two distinct natures and one person forever? If these things be true, where is the mighty jargon of words our Author so bitterly complains of?

Reply.

Reply. It is plain, our Author denies that Jesus Christ has a real, proper, created soul, in any sense like other men, and likewise holds, that the whole of his humanity consisted in mere flesh and blood. For, in p. 46, complaining of Dr. Hopkins, for having represented the human soul of Christ, by reason of its union with his divinity, as becoming greater than Angels, he says, "But if it is so necessary (that is, as the Doctor hath represented it) to believe, that Christ took a real soul like that of other men, as well as a human body, and was made in both these respects like his brethren, it may be feared," &c. And in p. 48, he asks, "How is it inconsistent with Christ's real humanity, to suppose, that his soul, was the *Logos*, or that divine person who made the worlds, emphatically named the *Word*?" And he says, p. 49, "It is very remarkable, that whenever the sacred writings speak of the incarnation of the Son of God, not a single word is mentioned of taking to himself a soul."

From these quotations, is it not obvious to every discerning mind, that our Author holds that Jesus Christ has no human created soul, like that of other men?

1. I would reply, by proving that the Son of God in becoming incarnate, took to himself a real created soul as well as body.

2. That this soul was not the *Logos*, emphatically named the *Word*.

3. That it is not true, "that when the sacred writings speak of the incarnation of the Son of God, not a *single word* is mentioned of taking to himself a soul." And lest I should make some disagreeable impressions upon the minds of common people, as being singular in my sentiments upon this subject, I would just remind them, that the Assembly of Divines in their Shorter Catechism, say, "Christ the Son of God, became man, by taking to himself a true body and a reasonable soul," &c.

1. In scripture language Christ is styled a *man*; *the son of man*; *the man whom God ordained*; *the man Christ Jesus*. Now if we can form any proper idea of a *man*, we may easily determine whether Christ has a human created soul or not. For he is a *man*! "Is not this the most familiar idea we can form of a man,"

man," that he consists of a created body, inhabited by a created spirit? Or in other words, that man consists of a soul and body in union with each other.

If the Son of God had taken to himself a created spirit like that of the soul of Abraham, and not a body like Abraham's, could he have been properly called a man? He might be said to be like a man, in one respect; but not in all things. So, if Christ should have taken to himself a created body like that of Abraham's, and not a created soul like that of his, he might be said to be like a man, in one respect, but not in all; and so could not with propriety be called a *man, the seed of Abraham*. But Christ is called a *man, the seed of Abraham*, made in the likeness of his brethren. "For verily, he took not on himself the nature of Angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham: Wherefore, in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren." In all things, not in one single thing only, which must be the case, if he had not a created soul, as well as a created body; therefore, Christ must have a *human created soul*.

2. It is testified in *Luke*, ii. 52, that "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and favour with God and man." Now to say that his flesh and blood increased in wisdom, is *nonsense*; and to say that his divinity increased in wisdom and stature, is *down-right blasphemy*. The unavoidable consequence is, that Jesus Christ had a created *soul*, capable of increasing in wisdom, as well as a created body, capable of increasing in stature. In *Isaiab*, liii. 3, Christ is said to be "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." And in *Matt*. xxvi. 38, Christ says, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." By a man of sorrows, and by a soul exceeding sorrowful, cannot be meant mere flesh and blood, nor the divinity: The consequence must be, that Christ had a created soul, capable of these things.

When Christ prayed on the cross, it cannot be meant that his flesh and blood prayed, nor yet his divinity; so when he bowed his head, in the dust of death, it was his human soul, spirit or ghost, that he gave into the hands of his father, and not his divinity. And speaking of the destruction of Jerusalem, which was a picture of the day of judgment, he says, "But of that day and that

that hour knoweth no man, no not the Angels which are in Heaven, neither the Son, but the Father," *Mark*, xiii. 32. To affirm that the mere flesh and blood of Christ, knew not the day and hour referred to here, would be saying nothing to any valuable purpose; and to suppose that the divinity of Christ was ignorant of this day and hour, would be inconsistent with all our ideas of Deity: Therefore, this want of knowledge, can be predicated only of the human soul of Christ: But this could not be done with propriety, unless he had such a soul; therefore, we may rationally conclude, that Christ has a created soul.

3. That the human soul of Christ, was not the *Logos*, emphatically named the *Word*, is evident from following considerations, viz. the human soul of Christ, was a created intelligent spirit, as has been proved: But the *Logos* or *Word*, is the uncreated *Jehovah*. For it is affirmed in *John's* gospel, that *in the beginning was the Word*, and the *Word* was with God, and the *Word* was God; all things were made by him, and without him, was not any thing made, which was made. So that even the human soul and body of Christ, himself, was made by the *Word*; who is stiled God, and is the Creator of all things. So that the uncreated *Word*, cannot be the created human soul of Christ. To get rid of this argument for the divinity of the *Word*, Dr. Priestley endeavours to prove that the introduction of *John's* gospel, is a real forgery.

4. It is not true, that whenever the sacred writings, speak of the incarnation of the son of God, not a single word is mentioned of taking to himself a soul.

Now if it be true that a created soul is an essential part of the compound being *man, servant, son of man, seed of Abraham, &c.* then it must be true that when the sacred writings, speak of the incarnation of the Son of God, they must say something of his taking to himself a soul, as well as body. For though the word soul, is not made use of in those texts, which speak of the incarnation; yet other words which signify the soul are. *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.* Flesh, here, is not mere matter; but man; composed of a created soul and body.

Christ,

Christ, speaking of the troubles which were to issue in the destruction of Jerusalem, says, "Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved." *Flesh*, here is used in the same sense, as it is, in all those texts, which speak of the incarnation of the Son of God; and signifies the soul, as well as the body of man. "God was manifest in the flesh." *Flesh*, here, must mean the human soul of Christ; which was exceeding sorrowful, under his suffering in the garden of Gethsemane; as well as body, which was torn and mangled on the cross. "For we have not an high priest, which cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. See *Heb. iv. 15.* Christ, our high priest, had a body, capable of pain, agonies and death; and a soul, capable of sore temptations: Neither of which, can, with truth, be affirmed of his divinity. Therefore, those texts which speak of the incarnation of the Son of God, must always mean an union of the second person in the Trinity, with a real *man*, even the *man* Christ.

It may not be amiss here, just to observe, that although our Author, would lead us to believe, that the soul of Christ, is the *Logos*, the *Word*, the *Creator* of the worlds, and that divine person who was made *flesh*, and dwelt among us: Yet he seems very careful, to admonish us, against fixing any distinguishing ideas of souls, lest we involve ourselves in the clouds; that is, in the depths of metaphysics. His own words are, "How is it inconsistent with Christ's real humanity, to suppose that his soul was the *Logos*, or that divine person who made the worlds, emphatically named the *Word*?"

We answer, that we have proved;

1. That Jesus Christ has a created human soul.
2. That this soul; was not the *Logos*, which is stiled God, the Creator of all things. Therefore,
3. It must be inconsistent; to suppose that the soul of Christ is the *Logos*, &c.

But our Author says, "Is not this the most familiar idea we can form of man, that he consists of a body inhabited or animated by an intelligent spirit?"

We answer, yes; if by the intelligent spirit be meant a created spirit, and not the *Logos*, who is styled God.

In close connection with the above questions, our Author says, "We know nothing of the difference between one soul and another, and cannot refine our ideas very far, without being involved in the clouds"; that is, we know no difference, between the soul of Christ, which he supposes to be the *Logos*, the *Word*, the Creator of the worlds, and any other soul. Notwithstanding this affectionate caution, against metaphysical refinements about souls, we will venture to inquire, whether we cannot perceive a difference between the soul of Christ, according to his description of it, and the soul of Dr. Langdon, and whether there be no perceivable difference between one created soul, and another?

1. If the soul of Christ be the *Logos*, the *Word*, the *Divine person*, who made the worlds, as our Author supposes, and Dr. Langdon's soul be a created spirit, must there not be a perceivable difference between them? Yea such a difference, as might be perceived without being involved in the clouds. In this instance, is not the difference as great, as that between *Creator* and *creature*? The plain truth is, our Author is mistaken about the soul of Christ. The *Logos* was not the soul of Christ, but his divinity; which was united to the seed of Abraham—as *man*, composed of a created soul and body; as has been proved:

2. But let us inquire whether there be not a perceivable difference between the souls of common men?

Is there no perceivable difference between the enlarged powers and piercing genius of Dr. Langdon, and the unlearned and weak brother, who can form no rational idea of metaphysics?

Is there no difference between the improved souls of a Newton, a Locke, an Edwards, and an Hopkins, and the untutored soul of an Hortentot? If there be, then our Author must confess, that his zeal to guard his readers against the fascinating charms of metaphysics, has led him beyond the bounds of common sense, in saying, that "we know nothing of the difference between one soul and another."

Again, our Author says, "Nevertheless, Dr. Hopkins disputes largely, and with great zeal, against a posthumous work of Dr. Watts, on the Glory of Christ, &c." This must appear exceedingly wicked to zealous and good people, who generally esteem Dr. Watts, as one whose praises are in all the churches, and consequently must reflect great odium on Dr. Hopkins. But how astonished will all those be, who have never seen the System, when they are told, that Dr. Hopkins has never so much as mentioned Dr. Watts, nor his posthumous work on the Glory of Christ, in his whole System?

This seems to be almost equal to a *skilful management of doubtful words and phrases, proving almost any thing, however false*. It certainly will have the same influence upon many minds, as our Author attributes to metaphysics.

We now pass to take notice of what our Author says upon Dr. Hopkins' idea of the Trinity: He says, "It is very evident that Dr. Hopkins thinks of Christ in his divine nature, simply considered, as a distinct person in the Deity, and so divides the divine essence itself into distinct persons, each having distinct characters, and to be believed entirely distinct from each other: Which seems to come very near making three Gods instead of one."

Does this remark look like the language of a Trinitarian? Does it not look like the sneers of those men, who love to be called Unitarians? If the personalities in the Deity, come very near to the making of three Gods, instead of one; the scriptures do this, when they say, there are *three*, that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, and these *three* are *one*: Therefore there must be one God, in three persons.

We pass to the next particular, noticed in the System, by our Author; which is Dr. Hopkins' supposition, "that there are no other rational creatures besides Angels and men." Our Author says, "Though it is granted, that the scriptures make mention only of Angels and men, there is but little force in this argument. For it looks too much like the argument of vulgar minds, against the Newtonian philosophy, that the earth cannot

cannot move round the sun, because the scriptures constantly represent the sun as moving round the earth."

The scripture argument then, according to our Author, must fall. Let us hear the mighty one, which is opposed to it. "For how do we know," saith our Author "how many different orders of beings superior to man, are included in the term Angels? They are spoken of as innumerable, and of various ranks, capacities and employments; Archangels, thrones, dominions, principalities, powers: And who can be sure that endless orders of beings, rising in gradation above man, are not intended by the general name Angels?"

Ah sure enough, and what has Dr. Hopkins said against all this? Why nothing at all. Why then did our Author find fault with the Doctor's supposition, "that there are no other rational beings than Angels and men?" We can form no opinion of this matter more rational, than that our Author had gotten into such an habit of finding fault with Dr. Hopkins, that he exercised no reason in what he wrote against him, on this particular; for the world must allow, that whatever aid he received from his rational powers, on other points, his reason wholly failed him on this: Unless we can suppose him possessed of a new kind of metaphysics, by means of which, he can prove a proposition false, by the bare repetition of that identical proposition. But this looks too much like jugglery for so good a man as our Author: Therefore we pass it by, to take notice of what he says concerning Dr. Hopkins' notion of the Millennium.

"That I may not be thought deficient in the *great duty of disinterested benevolence*," saith our Author, "I will leave Dr. Hopkins in the full enjoyment of his happiness, in the prospect of that *millennium*, which he has so particularly described; yet, as he is so very confident, that such a happy state is drawing nigh, as to write a dedication of his work to the inhabitants of the world, in that glorious *era*, I will say nothing which will have a tendency to prevent its reaching to their time."

Reply 1. In our Author's last remark on Dr. Hopkins, his reason seemed to have left him. In this, his prudence treats him in the same manner; otherwise, how could he have laugh-
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ed at the duty of disinterested benevolence? "That I may not be thought *deficient in the great duty of disinterested benevolence*"—(evidently by way of ridicule.) What must our Author be, provided he is destitute of that charity, which seeketh not her own, but another's welfare? And is not this disinterested benevolence? How then could he, in the exercise of prudence, cast such a sneer upon it?

2. Must not the friends of Dr. Hopkins' idea of the millennium, be greatly obliged to our Author, for his great forbearance, in not saying any thing which may have a tendency to destroy what the Doctor had written upon this important subject?

It seems that our Author would lead us to think, that a touch or two of his masterly pen, would have blasted the labours of many years; and so prevented the world, in the days of the millennium, from ever seeing what Dr. Hopkins has written upon that glorious *æra*.

What a melancholy instance of human weakness and vanity is this!

In our Author's concluding remarks on the System, he says, "I see all the subtilties of artful reasoning made use of, instead of a plain manifestation of the truth." p. 53. And comparing Dr. Hopkins with the Apostles, he says, "They carefully avoid matters of doubtful disputation."

Reply 1. As our Author begins his remarks on the System, with branding it, as a metaphysical performance, in part at least; so he ends them.

The beginning, middle, and end of his book, contain one most earnest and faithful warning, against the awful influence of metaphysics, which according to him consist in a *skillful management of doubtful words and phrases, proving almost any thing, however false*.

Thus, instead of reasoning closely, philosophically, and scripturally, against any supposed error in the System; our Author has endeavoured to fright the world from looking into it, by assuring us, that he "sees all the subtilties of artful reasoning made use of, instead of a plain manifestation of the truth." Yea, he solemnly

solemnly affirms, that Dr. Hopkins, "certainly reasons on several doctrinal articles in a metaphysical way."

What could have been said, more effectually to ruin the System, in the view of all those, who believe our Author's description of metaphysical reasoning? Must not such solemn declarations as these, by a man of his *age, experience, learning, and piety*, shock their minds beyond measure? And forever guard them from looking into the System again. However, as an *antidote*, calculated to expel the poison of such frightened imaginations, I would recommend the careful perusal of Dr. Watts on Ontology; Mr. Locke on the Human Understanding, Bailey and Sheridan, on the signification of the word Metaphysics.

By this mean, they may learn, that writing in a metaphysical way, is so far from a skilful management of doubtful words and phrases, *proving* almost any thing, however false, that it consists in the art of explaining *words, phrases, and things*, in such a manner as to establish the truth.

Metaphysics, or ontology, is a science, which treats of immaterial beings, such as *God, Angels, the souls* of men, their properties and affections. Its great object, is to display the truth, concerning these invisible beings, their properties and affections; consequently, the moral character of God, the virtue and vice of men and Angels, their rewards and punishments, are subjects of metaphysical disquisition.

Upon these subjects Paul reasoned in a metaphysical way, availing himself of all those helps, derived from ancient *revelation*, and immediate *inspiration*, as is evident from his epistles, his speeches, and orations, left on sacred *record*.

2. Our Author says, the Apostles "carefully avoided matters of doubtful disputation." By which he would lead us to understand, that they did not meddle with such subjects as those are, on which Dr. Hopkins has written and he remarked.

But is it possible for any man, with the Apostle's writings before his eyes, seriously to conclude, that they constantly avoided all talking, preaching and writing, on the great doctrines of the divine *decrees; particular election; the promise of eternal life made to Adam and his posterity, on condition of his perfect obedience*

dience to the law, under which he was made, through his probationary state; and the threatening of eternal death, upon his disobedience; human depravity; regeneration; *sin* and *holiness*; *human liberty*; *divine agency*; that Christ has a proper, *created soul*, as well as body; together with the *latter day glory*? About which, our Author has not seen fit to avoid all disputation. For had this been the case, his book never would have seen the light.

The Apostles, in conversation, preaching, and writing, did contend earnestly for the truth, once delivered unto the saints, and in doing this, have set us an example; why then should we be frightened from the performance of this great duty, by one, whose words and example clash with each other?

C O N C L U S I O N.

IN writing the preceding pages, I have endeavoured to set that use which our Author makes of metaphysics, in that light, in which it ought to appear. For nothing can be more ridiculous, than the use, which he and many others make of this word, in their polemical writings; his book would read every whit as well, were the word *metaphysics* expunged, and *witchcraft* placed in its stead.

But our Author cannot seriously consider the Doctor as in league with the Devil; why then has he treated him in this indecent manner? Is not this the plain reason, that he thought this mode of reasoning would answer for a thousand arguments; and consequently cut the work of confuting his antagonist exceedingly short, and so gain a triumph without the labour of close thinking, and clear and scriptural reasoning?

What has been written upon the several points, which our Author disputes, has been little more than stating a few arguments for their support, principally designed for the benefit of those who have never seen the System, in which they are amply displayed and scripturally proved.

My original design in these sheets, was to militate against the pernicious effects of our Author's book, upon the minds of some of my less informed friends.

That

That the great and precious doctrines, which this Postscript avouches and advocates, may with rapid course, spread through the world of mankind, is the humble prayer of

Dear Sir,

Your unfeigned friend,

And most humble servant,

EBENEZER BRADFORD.











