



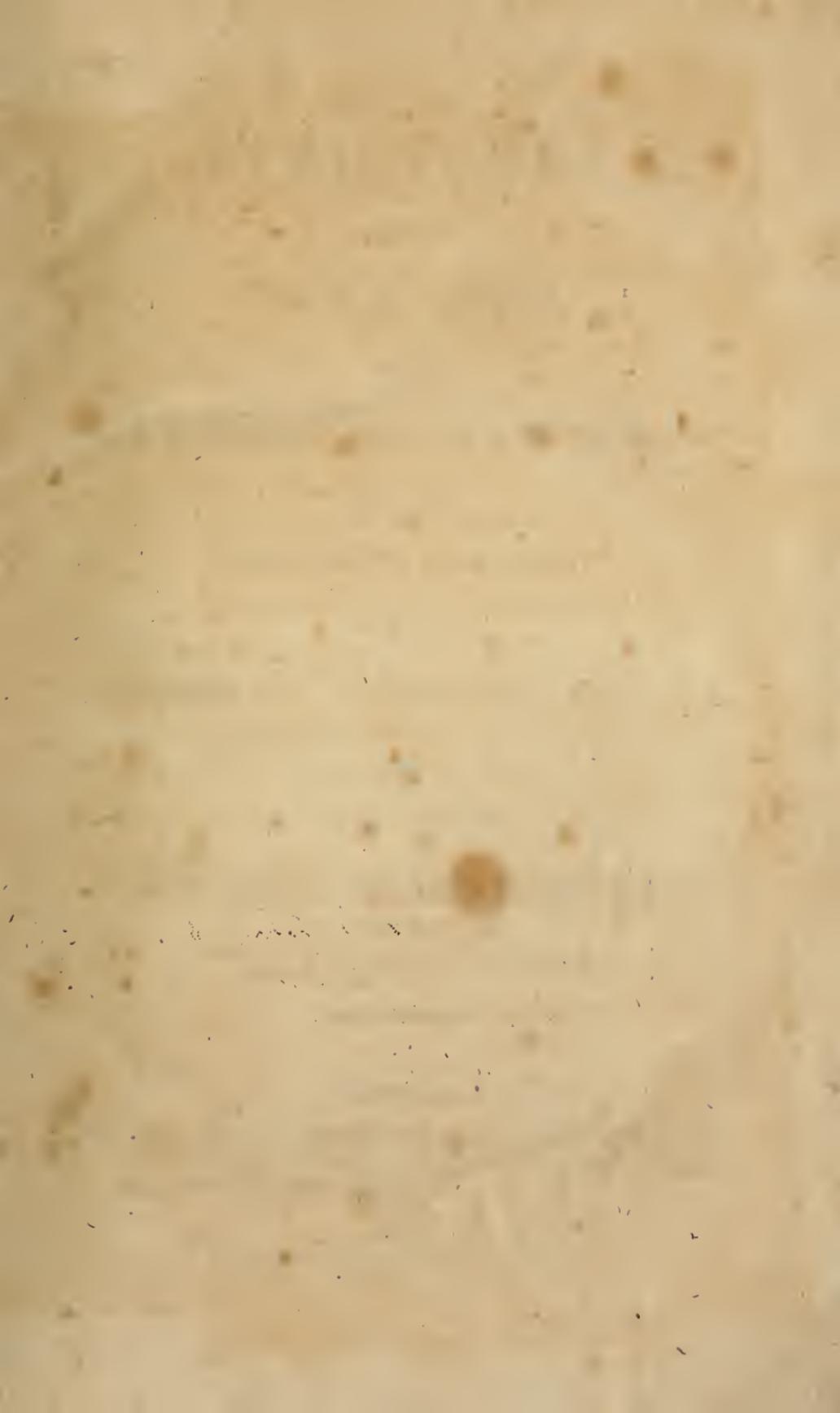
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# STRICTURES

ON SOME OF

THE PUBLICATIONS

OF THE

REV. HERBERT MARSH, D. D.

INTENDED AS

A REPLY TO HIS OBJECTIONS

AGAINST THE

*British and Foreign Bible Society.*

---

BY THE

REV. ISAAC MILNER, D. D. F. R. S.

DEAN OF CARLISLE, AND

PRESIDENT OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

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1813.

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

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IN the ensuing work, no notice is taken of Dr. Marsh's History of the Translations of the Scriptures. Lest, therefore, any of his friends should consider this omission as a proof that his arguments on this subject are unanswerable, it may be proper to observe, that the facts which he has stated, supposing them all true, are of no consequence in the present controversy. If, by the exertions of the Bible Society, copies of the Scriptures in various languages abound, where formerly they were not to be procured at all, or not without great difficulty and expense, I am not anxious to be informed, whether this inestimable improvement has been produced by printing new, or by reprinting old translations. More important objects have engaged my attention;—to vindicate a large and respectable body of the clergy and other churchmen, from the groundless imputation of indifference to the Liturgy—to remonstrate with Dr. Marsh

upon the tendency of his writings to check the distribution of the Scriptures, by exciting jealousies and animosities among Christians—to expose his misrepresentation of certain historical facts relative to the time of Charles the First—and to prove, from his fallacious and illogical arguments on a variety of interesting topics, how little he is entitled to the confidence of his readers on the subject of the Bible Society.

#### ERRATA.

The Reader is particularly requested to correct the following Errors before he reads the Work; viz.

Page 178, line 13, for *Establishment*, read *Bible*.

Page 231, line 3, for *in*, read *on*.

Page 362, line 21, for *not*, read *non*.

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## PART I.



### INTRODUCTION.

AT the meeting which took place in Cambridge, on the 12th Dec. 1811, for the purpose of forming an Auxiliary Bible Society, I observed, that I had almost “an instinctive aversion to vain and fruitless contentions concerning the *outsides* of questions; and that I loved to meet fairly the points in dispute, and to grapple with them.”

Under this bias of my natural disposition, I gave way to the first feelings which the perusal of Dr. Marsh’s Inquiry excited in my mind. “Here,” said I (with some surprise, but with no doubt or hesitation), “is a case where I look in vain for the *inside* of the question, for the nucleus of the argument, which I would gladly separate from all the extraneous materials with which it is involved.”

To try one’s strength, fairly and in good humour, with an ingenious disputant, on a deserving subject, may certainly prove both an interesting and a useful exercise of the faculties; but for this purpose it is

requisite there should be a tangible solidity; a substance that does not elude the grasp. No man can grapple with a shadow. I was therefore led to conclude that Dr. Marsh's performance might be safely dismissed without further consideration.

Some of my most judicious friends had anticipated these reflections, and even admitted their general justice: nevertheless they denied the inference I had drawn in this particular case.

They thought that several of Dr. Marsh's observations were made with so plausible *an appearance* of accuracy; were so often repeated; and were urged with such extraordinary confidence; as possibly to puzzle or mislead the judgment of certain well-meaning persons, who might not have leisure for a thorough examination of the question. Nor is it to be denied, that a mere display of words, arranged in the shape of argument, often proves sufficiently imposing.

The consideration, however, which has had by far the greatest weight in determining me to appear at all in the present controversy, is this: I distinctly perceive, that, to serve a very considerable part of Dr. Marsh's purpose, it is by no means necessary that he should absolutely establish his own side of the question. He succeeds in a great degree—as far, at least, as neutrals or undecided persons are concerned—if he do but create doubts and suspicions in their minds.

Probably very few, either of those characters who are sparing of their liberality, or even of those who are truly conscientious in the exercise of it, will begin to subscribe to a society, the tendency of

which they think equivocal or uncertain. They will naturally conclude it to be the safest course to abstain from doing that against which so much may be said, especially as in this way there is a saving both of their money and of the trouble of thinking.

Here, then, I allow Dr. Marsh to have an advantage in this controversy; and here I am persuaded he places his chief reliance. For with regard to those who are already members of the Bible Society, he can entertain little hope of inducing them to desert the cause in which they are embarked. He well knows, that it is much easier to insinuate a doubt into the mind of a neutral, than to produce a conviction of blameable conduct in the conscience of any one who has already taken his part, and may therefore be supposed to have well considered the subject; and who is probably as capable of judging what is right as Dr. Marsh himself, or any other opponent of the Bible Society.

For the purpose of securing the neutrals, and, if possible, of impressing their minds with sentiments of hostility to the Bible Society, our Inquirer has recourse to solemn declarations of conscientiousness.

Dr. Marsh, as a churchman, cannot “conscientiously” co-operate with the members of the Bible Society\*. For, besides that this Society, in its collective capacity, distributes Bibles only, it should seem that some of its members are influenced by a love of power, and some by a love of popularity, and that others look to political interests. At home,

\* Inquiry, p. 73.

says he, the Bible Society “ provides for temporal as well as spiritual wants: it gives power to the Dissenter, popularity to the Churchman, and interest to the Politician, which is useful at all times, and especially at the approach of a general election\*.”

Such is the concluding sentence of Dr. Marsh’s Inquiry; and, without insisting on the unseasonable and suspicious introduction of the term *spiritual*, I do not hesitate to express my persuasion, that, whatever declarations the Inquirer may be allowed to make, as to his conscientiousness † in not co-operating with the members of the Bible Society, there are but few of the best friends and admirers of Dr. Marsh who do not say, and still fewer who do not think, that such unworthy insinuations and surmises concerning the motives of others would much better have been spared.

Dr. Marsh has informed the public, that the consideration of the constitution of the Bible Society and its consequences, requires the most profound attention; that the arguments for the distribution of the *Bible alone* are specious and popular; and that those on the contrary side lie concealed from the public view, and are difficult to explain ‡. In particular, he claims an exclusive right to the invention of one argument to prove the pernicious tendency of the Bible Society; an argument which

\* Inquiry, p. 80.

† .....“ It is a co-operation in which I must declare for myself, that, as a churchman, I cannot conscientiously join.”—Inquiry, p. 73.

‡ Inquiry, p. 8.

has eluded the search of all, without a single exception, who have gone before him on the same side of the question.

I sincerely wish that either this author or his supporters had pointed out all the pages of the Inquiry, in which the principal force or stress of the argumentation is contained. Those pages I would have considered and re-considered with all possible care and attention; and thereby not only much time and labour would have been spared, but also the most respectful homage on my part, which the circumstances admitted, would have been paid to the labours of our Inquirer.

I certainly do not profess to deal much in complimentary acknowledgments of the ingenuity or learning which he has displayed in his endeavours to depreciate the constitution of the Bible Society. My object is rather to shew that he is weak, even where he conceives himself most strong.

In my heart I love a good argument: let Dr. Marsh produce one, and I will be among the first to shew my sensibility to its *weight*. I also love to see a man warm and zealous in a cause which he believes to be important; but we are never to forget, that zeal and warmth, however intense, afford no proof of soundness and solidity.

It is not many years since a class of eminent philosophers entertained a notion that warmth and heat, when combined with natural bodies from any heating cause, increased their weight. To settle this point, the most exquisite balances were constructed by the artists; and it was soon found, that *only* the addition of *real matter*, and not the mere communi-

cation of heat, was capable of increasing the actual weight of a body.

But, alas ! in the science of ethics we are possessed of no instrument whereby we may, with certainty, distinguish the substantial production of a sound intellect, from the plausible fancies and conjectures of a busy and misguided imagination.

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#### THE QUESTION STATED.

There is at present before the public a great question respecting the Bible Society and its probable effects, namely, Whether it has a tendency to alienate its members from the Church, and particularly to produce a neglect of the Prayer-book. Now, the very title of Dr. Marsh's Inquiry is calculated both to divert the attention of the reader from the real state of the question, and to mislead his judgment.

He calls it "An Inquiry into the Consequences of neglecting to give the Prayer-book along with the Bible." And as it is well understood that the Inquiry is levelled chiefly at those members of the Bible Society who are churchmen, the first impression must inevitably be, that those churchmen are charged—not with a mere *venial omission*—but with a *blameable neglect*: they neglect to distribute the Prayer-book among their parishioners.

Nor is the distinction unimportant. A man may omit to do a thing, and the omission may be even

laudable; whereas the term *neglect* implies an omission of something which ought to have been done; of something which could not be left undone without just cause of censure.

I would not, however, insist on a critical nicety in the use of words: only let the meaning be distinct and clear, and more especially in an accusation.

Does Dr. Marsh, then, mean no more than that many churchmen now belong to a society which distributes Bibles alone? The fact is notorious: the connection is avowed and defended.

Or does Dr. Marsh only intend to express an opinion, that a connection of this sort will *probably in future* induce the church-members of the Bible Society to neglect the distribution of Prayer-books among the poor of their congregation? The answer is, that scarcely does there exist a practical position of any sort, concerning which some doubts may not be started, and some plausible arguments advanced, by ingenious men, whose lively imaginations are not restrained by a sound judgment, well exercised in the search of truth and the detection of error. Dr. Marsh allows that no person but himself has discovered this ground of alarm and jealousy respecting the Prayer-book. Moreover, a fair trial of upward of eight years, which have elapsed since the formation of the Bible Society, has not yet furnished him with one particle of evidence in support of the apprehensions he entertains. I am therefore inclined to think, that men who are not very prone to indulge in theoretical fancies, will feel no great anxiety on account of his suspicions of conse-

quences, but will leave the discussion for the amusement of speculative minds, who will predict the future according to the strength and clearness of their understandings, the purity of their principles, their freedom from prejudice, and the influence of their private interests.

Or, lastly, does our Inquirer into the consequences of neglecting to give the Prayer-book with the Bible undertake to assert, that the churchmen who belong to the Bible Society do actually, in practice, neglect to furnish their poor parishioners with Prayer-books as well as Bibles ?

The attentive reader will be at no loss to see the reason which induces me to put the question in these three different ways. It is to shew, that, whatever were the objections of Dr. Marsh to the Bible Society, or to any of its constituent parts, nothing was easier than to have brought them forward in a manner that should have been perfectly distinct and free from ambiguity.

Thus, if, agreeably to the first question, he had maintained that the Bible Society was defective or mischievous in its very constitution, and that no churchman ought to have belonged to it, because it *could* not distribute Prayer-books as well as Bibles; or if, agreeably to the second question, he had gone further (as he really does in some parts of the sequel), and alarmed the Clergy and other friends of the Establishment, by telling them that their connection with the Bible Society would probably, if not infallibly, generate in their minds a dislike, neglect, or disparagement of the Liturgy;—all this, however unfounded or improbable in itself,

might nevertheless have been arranged under distinct and intelligible heads.

A luminous statement of this kind would have so simplified the points in controversy, that I am fully persuaded the Inquirer himself must have thought his time and labour greatly misplaced in supporting such vague and random conjectures. But when it is either asserted or insinuated, that the churchmen who belong to the Bible Society do actually neglect to distribute the Prayer-book among their poor brethren of the church; when from the acknowledged fact, that churchmen subscribe to the Bible Society, an intrepid inference is drawn, that such churchmen do in principle disparage the Prayer-book, and do in practice neglect to distribute it, the whole controversy assumes a very different aspect. We are instantly called to dismiss speculation, and to look at facts. The charge is so heavy as to fall little short of a libel on many worthy churchmen, who in their consciences think it a duty to subscribe to the Bible Society.

This accusation is not the less indecorous, or the less invidious, because it is not always strictly adhered to in the Inquiry, or because in the manner of preferring it there is frequently considerable ambiguity. In truth, it is precisely at this point that, as a member of the Bible Society, my complaint becomes loud and serious. I complain, in the first place, because the distribution of the Bible alone, by a society, is perpetually confounded with the distribution of Bibles alone by the individuals of that society. I complain, because an omission of giving Prayer-books by the society, which is absolutely

unavoidable, is construed, without evidence, and even contrary to the fact, into a neglect of giving Prayer-books by the individual churchmen who belong to it. I further complain, because the seeds of dislike, neglect, and disparagement of the Liturgy of our church, which Dr. Marsh pretends that he sees in the constitution of the Bible Society, are represented as having already produced such a plentiful harvest of indisposition towards the use of the Prayer-book, as fully justifies his prognostic of mischief to the Establishment. Lastly I complain, that the three distinct points specified above—namely, the bad policy in the constitution of the Bible Society, the mischievous consequences likely to ensue from it, and the diminution of love and esteem for the Liturgy of the church which is said already to appear in many of its members—are so confused and blended together, that it is often difficult to ascertain which of the three points, or what combination of them, the Inquirer has chiefly in view. All that we can with certainty pronounce is, that in every view of the subject he sees room for censure, and for charges of weakness and ignorance, or of something worse, as well as grounds for the apprehension of incalculable mischief to the pure religion of our Establishment.

The equivocal charge contained in the title-page, of neglecting to give the Prayer-book with the Bible, might have been passed over without notice, provided, on perusing the Inquiry itself, the ambiguity was found to have been done away by the necessary and obvious distinctions. On the contrary, a confusion and obscurity, arising from this very cause,

pervade almost the whole of Dr. Marsh's performance. The heavy accusation, of neglecting to give the Prayer-book along with the Bible, is indeed, on several occasions, expressed in terms which cannot be mistaken : but at other times, and that not unfrequently, in terms of very dubious import, for they may either mean the neglect of the Bible Society in its collective capacity, or the neglect of some of the individuals who compose it. If, however, such materials as Dr. Marsh has employed can, by any possible process, be converted into an argument, that argument must run thus : The Bible Society, as a collective body, neither distributes nor can distribute the Prayer-book of our church ; therefore the individual churchmen who belong to it must neglect to distribute it in their private capacity. In other words, the Bible Society as a body *cannot*, therefore the churchmen who are members of it *will not*, give the Prayer-book. The premises of this argument are perfectly sound, but the conclusion, by its entire want of connection with them, totters to its very fall.

The persuasion of a contagious influence from the Bible Society affecting its friends and advocates with disaffection to their Prayer-book, seems to have taken such firm possession of the mind of our Inquirer, that, under the influence of this sentiment, he would torture every expression they use, respecting the distribution of the Bible, to a meaning which was never intended. Thus, when an advocate of the Bible Society, merely in defending his connection with it from aspersion, says, " Is the distribution of the Bible alone detrimental to the interests of the

Establishment? Have we forgotten that we are Protestants?"—such interrogatories are instantly interpreted as amounting to a justification of the omission of the Liturgy, arising from indifference or dislike. For if the accuser means only that general omission which of necessity arises from the constitution of the Society, his accusation amounts to nothing.

These observations appear necessary as an introduction of the real question, that question which is the only object of rational inquiry; namely, whether a churchman, who belongs to a society which distributes Bibles alone, is likely to be as zealously attached to the Prayer-book of his own church, and as active in the distribution of it among the poor, as if he had never belonged to such a Bible Society.

In thus stating the question, however, I would by no means be understood to admit, that there can be so much as the shadow of a reasonable doubt respecting it. I can never admit, that, because a churchman has begun to promote the distribution of Bibles, he will therefore probably have less affection for his Prayer-book than he had before. I can never admit, that this activity in dispersing the Holy Scriptures will in any degree weaken a single article of his faith, or lessen his regard for that pure reformed religion which is so well delineated in the Prayer-book: or that it will either cramp the exercise of his benevolence in giving it to others, or indispose him to the use, in his own devotions, of the admirable prayers which it contains. I am fully convinced, that if Dr. Marsh had had any good reasons for believing that the clergy or other churchmen, who sub-

scribe to the Bible Society, do not furnish the poor of their parishes with Prayer-books as liberally as any other members whatever of our Establishment, he would have made those reasons public. The attempts he has made metaphysically to establish this point I shall consider hereafter, and shall content myself at present with expressing my entire agreement with other writers who have gone before me, that the Inquirer has in general kept the true state of the question almost completely out of sight.

Now, for the sake of illustration, let us suppose, what perhaps is not very unlikely to happen\*, that certain churchmen were to become members of a new institution, the object of which should be to *distribute to the poor only Prayer-books and the authorised Homilies of our Church*. Might not the Inquirer represent those churchmen, in that case, as unfriendly to the Bible itself, on just as good grounds as he now concludes, that the churchmen who are members of the Bible Society are deficient in attachment to the Prayer-book? Nay, would not a mode of argument precisely similar to that which he now uses lead him to infer, that even the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge is inimical to the Homilies of our Church, because that venerable body has hitherto never thought it expedient to print and distribute the Homilies?†

I put such questions as these, because it frequently happens that one of the best methods of detecting

\* The thing was in contemplation when I was writing these pages in the spring of 1812, and has since actually taken place.

† The Society for promoting Christian Knowledge has *recently* placed the *entire* volume of the Homilies on its list.

a fallacious piece of reasoning, is to point out the strange lengths to which it may sometimes lead.

There are few cases of controversy, where a distinct statement of the points in debate is not of considerable consequence; but in the present instance, the appropriate use of perspicuous expressions almost entirely removes every ground of contention. To the impartial inquirer, it must soon become manifest, that when Dr. Marsh's objections to the distribution of the Bible alone, by the Bible Society, are stripped of their ambiguities, the sum and aggregate of them amount to no more than a bare opinion\*, which he unfortunately entertains, that the churchmen who are concerned in this distribution, are now actually losing, or will hereafter lose, their regard for their Prayer-book, and will cease to distribute it to the poor of the Established Church.

I have already intimated, that had the Inquirer contented himself with this plain and simple view of the subject, he would probably have spared himself much trouble; and I can assure him, that his various surmises and conjectures should never have been disturbed by me.

\* We shall soon find, however, that this bare opinion has engendered in the Inquirer's mind a full persuasion that the churchmen of the Bible Society justify the practice of neglecting to give their Prayer-book with the Bible.

## BRIEF HISTORY OF THE PRECEDING QUESTION.

I know not whether others have been struck precisely in the same manner that I have been, with the extraordinary turn which Dr. Marsh has given to this controversy.

The history of the preceding question is briefly as follows :—

First, Dr. Marsh, in his Address to the Senate of the University, chose to represent the constitution of the Bible Society as being unfavourable to the distribution of the Prayer-book.—It was not a Church-of-England Society: it distributed Bibles only, and not the Liturgy: churchmen, indeed, might so far correct the evil, that they might associate Prayer-books with their Bibles.—He added, that churchmen were increasing the importance of dissenters by joining with them, and so might be contributing even to the dissolution of the Established Church.

The churchmen of the Bible Society, as might well be expected, repelled this invidious representation with an honest fervour. They resented the insinuation of want of attachment to the church, or of indisposition to its Book of Common Prayer. The Bible, they said, was the source of Protestant doctrine; and the extensive dispersion of it by the Bible Society was a blessing to this country, and to the world; adding, that the Scriptures, without the aid of human productions, were able to make men wise unto salvation. They further denied, that, under any circumstances, the Bible could prove hurt-

ful; and to suppose this to be possible, they maintained, savoured of Popish tenets\*.

Dr. Marsh, instead of understanding this language as it was really intended, affects, in his Inquiry, to congratulate himself on a discovery to which his Address, he supposes, had led; namely, that churchmen justified the *practice* of neglecting to give the Prayer-book with the Bible.

But here, instead of laying his short Address to the Senate of the University before the public, along with his Inquiry, which would have enabled them to judge who was the aggressor, and who the just complainant, Dr. Marsh prints an extract from his Sermon at St. Paul's, and informs us, that his Address "contains precisely the same sentiments†."

The fact is, that the Sermon, as far as it goes, contains the very same words; but it is not at all calculated to make the impression on the public mind, which the whole Address, taken in its connection, is likely to do. The very offensive part of it is almost entirely suppressed; and although, for the temporary purpose of stifling the growing zeal for an Auxiliary Bible Society at Cambridge, many copies of this Address may have been circulated some weeks before the publication of the Inquiry, it was by no means an easy matter to procure it at the time when the Inquiry made its appearance. Such little printed performances, of only two or three pages, are seldom preserved, unless it be foreseen, that they will probably be referred to hereafter.

\* See in the Appendix, Dr. Marsh's "Address;" also, Mr. Farish's Report of the Cambridge Meeting.

† See Inquiry, p. 43, the Note.

Even at Cambridge, I found it a very difficult matter to procure a copy after a few weeks had passed. Why, then, did Dr. Marsh think it unnecessary to supply the reader of his Inquiry with a preface, or an appendix, containing that very short Address, which he thought had been so efficacious in bringing the churchmen of the Bible Society to an eclaireissement on the important point of their justifying the practice of neglecting to give the Prayer-book with the Bible? Is it, that he conceived it would prove a much more effectual mode of proceeding, to pronounce at once a heavy censure on the friends of the Bible Society, than to trace and develop the proofs of their demerits with care and impartiality.

For, on the strictest examination, what is the practice which they *do* justify? They justify the extensive distribution of the Bible alone, by the Bible Society, in its collective capacity. They also justify the distribution of the Bible alone by individuals, so far as to consider it always safe, and in many cases expedient. But the idea of *neglecting* to distribute Prayer-books, when they are wanted, to their poor parishioners, they utterly reject; nor did they ever justify such a practice for a moment.

Our Inquirer, instead of attempting to prove by fair argumentation (what was indeed impossible to be proved\*), that the distribution of the Bible alone would most probably make bad churchmen, proceeds to crowd many pages of his book, in the first

\* There is a shew of reasoning in one single leaf of the Inquiry, which shall be considered in its proper place.—See Inquiry, p. 57.

place, with diffuse eulogies on the excellence and importance of the Liturgy, which no churchman denies; and in the next place, with charges or insinuations, more or less direct, against the churchmen of the Bible Society, of being disaffected to their Prayer-book; and with surmises and conjectures of the political dangers which, he thinks, may probably ensue from this assumed disaffection.

The reader will do well to keep in mind this brief summary of the beginning and progress of the controversy. It constitutes the history of the question before us; and will serve to throw much light on all that has gone before, as well as on all that follows.

Never, in his whole life, Dr. Marsh tells us, did he undertake to write on a subject which he found so "intricate and perplexed" as the present\*. I verily believe he found it so: he had the hardest task in the world to execute. He had to make out, that the liberal distribution of the genuine Bible alone, by a society of Christians of various denominations, was mischievous in the extreme; and might ultimately tend even to the dissolution of the Established Church. "*Difficile est satyram non scribere.*"

When a man has selected his own road, through by-ways, among fens and swamps and brambles, or has himself planted it with briars and thorns and thickets, he should not be the first to complain that he finds his way "intricate and perplexed," that he is goaded and punctured in his march, and that

\* Inquiry, page 53.

his progress is impeded, in spite of all his care and circumspection.

Never did Dr. Marsh meddle with a subject so “intricate and perplexed!!”

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THE QUESTION REPRESENTED BY DR. MARSH AS  
INTRICATE AND PERPLEXED.

I am not a little curious to know, whether it was *after* wading through all this intricacy and perplexity, that Dr. Marsh arrived at his present strong conviction of the mischievous tendency of the Bible Society; or whether, having previously, and as it were through the force of an instinctive penetration, become fully satisfied of such a tendency, he did not find it afterwards a difficult, that is, a perplexed and intricate, task, to support the prepossession which had already taken hold of his mind. Was the belief of the dangers, likely to result from the constitution of the Bible Society, antecedent or subsequent to the perception of all this intricacy and perplexity? I make no scruple to own, that the former appears to me by far the more probable supposition; and for this reason. If Dr. Marsh had arrived at his present opinion, of the intricacy and perplexity of the question, through the toilsome, circuitous process of an industrious and accurate research, the conviction, thus produced, of the evil tendency of the Bible Society, must, I think, have been much weaker, and much less satisfactory to

his own mind, than it is. There would have been symptoms, at least, of a degree of suspicion, that, in making his choice among so many intricate and perplexed paths through which he had travelled, he might possibly sometimes have gone astray. But on the other supposition, namely, That his conviction of the mischiefs inherent in the very constitution of the Bible Society, was an original conviction, and not the result of a toilsome investigation; it is easy to understand how it may have happened, that the acute perceptions of native genius and foresight should be attended, as they usually are, with a more resolute and determined confidence. To communicate, however, the same confidence to others is almost impossible, except by the influence of authority. I believe that Dr. Marsh, on trial, has found it to be so; and that it is in his attempt to produce this effect, in the way of reasoning, that we are to look for the explanation of all that intricacy and perplexity, which he describes as inseparable from the study of the constitution and operations of the Bible Society.

“Intricate and perplexed!!”—I have been very desirous to develop the mystery of this intricacy and perplexity, of which Dr. Marsh so much complains; but my utmost endeavours to that end, although repeatedly used, have hitherto been fruitless. With a view to assist the reader in forming a sound judgment on this point, I will lay before him a summary representation of our Inquirer’s sentiments, concerning the Bible Society and its advocates, under the four following heads.

1. From his Address to the Senate of the University of Cambridge, it appears, that he does not consider the British and Foreign Bible Society as meriting the character of a Church-of-England Society. On the contrary, he thinks it an institution fraught with danger to our Establishment.

Now, I find it impossible to treat this sentiment with any considerable attention, so long as I am persuaded that the most extensive and indiscriminate perusal of the Bible, far from weakening, will infallibly strengthen a true scriptural church, such as I believe the Church of England to be.

2. But it is in our uniting with dissenters, in this otherwise excellent work, that the danger is said to consist.—Still, I am utterly unable to discover, in the simple dispersion of the Sacred Volumes, any just ground of alarm. In the most extensive distribution of the Bible, I neither see an increase of the political importance of Dissenters, nor any prospect of the ruin of our Establishment.

3. We are further to believe, that the Bible Society will generate, in the minds of the churchmen who belong to it, disaffection to their Prayer-book.—This appears to me both an unwarrantable and invidious prognostic.

4. But the uncharitableness of such a conjecture almost disappears in the heavier accusation, that churchmen of the Bible Society are actually neglecting to distribute their Prayer-book, and are on the eve of denying its utility.

If the reader of Dr. Marsh's attacks on the Bible Society should admit, that these four positions comprise a fair summary of the writer's sentiments, re-

specting this institution and its advocates, I would then submit to his consideration, what good reason our Inquirer could have had to complain that his subject was so very perplexed and intricate.

It is very true, that his auguries and animadversions are delivered in a tone of bold and positive affirmation, and unaccompanied with any thing that merits the name of proof; but it is also true, that hardy assertions are far from implying an intricate subject. On the contrary, as I have already intimated, an intricate, perplexed, and difficult subject rather leads to modest, diffident, and cautious conclusions. Convinced, therefore, as I am, that a hasty and prejudiced view of the constitution of the Bible Society has involved Dr. Marsh in a labyrinth of real intricacy and perplexity, and that a very little perspicuous expression would almost annihilate every ground of contention respecting it, I have deemed it of some consequence carefully to sift this matter, and to ascertain to whom the just imputation of intricacy attaches.

For my own part, I believe that a more simple, a more admirable, a more unobjectionable institution than the Bible Society, can scarcely be imagined. Nevertheless, if Dr. Marsh can convince his readers, that he had to handle a subject of vast difficulty and intricacy, and also that he was justified in the conclusion at which he has arrived; then, however true it may be that a strongly riveted prejudice against the Bible Society is the real source of all the alleged intricacy, he may still sound *Io triumphe*, and leave an admiring public to appreciate the acuteness of that penetration which,

through the fair and specious disguise of the Bible Society, could discover its internal deformities, and expose them to general disapprobation and contempt.

Is, then, this inquiry in its nature intricate and perplexed; or has it been rendered so merely by the intrusion of groundless conjectures and alarms, and uncandid inuendos? In my belief of its extreme simplicity I am not a little strengthened, when I review with care all that I can find advanced by our Inquirer, in support of the several heads of objection which I have specified in the above summary. Inconclusive reasoning I detect in great abundance; but I perceive nothing in the subject itself, that merits the appellation of difficult, or intricate, or perplexed. On this point, I particularly desire to appeal to the understanding and judgment of every intelligent reader.

1. The first article of the summary insists on the danger to our Ecclesiastical Establishment, arising from the very constitution of the Bible Society.

To illustrate this, our Inquirer introduces a long detail concerning the conduct of the Puritans in the great Rebellion, not only full of misrepresentation and misapplication, (as I hope to be able to prove), but totally irrelevant to the purpose for which it is introduced. Yet, even here, there is no intricacy. The facts, by proper care, may be easily ascertained, and the difference of the circumstances as easily pointed out, with the most convincing accuracy.

2. But, then, the Bible gives power and influence to the dissenters.

Here, again, a warm and rambling fancy may possibly overpower the mind with the endless suggestion of vague predictions and surmises; and the author may have experienced some difficulty in selecting such as were best suited to support the intended objection, or to display the invention of the objector. But this can scarcely be called an intricacy, or perplexity, in the subject itself; much less can it be reasonably maintained, that there is any thing obscure or abstruse in that solid mass of facts, which, Dr. Marsh must be aware, can be produced from the eight years' experience of the proceedings of the Bible Society, and opposed to all the suspicions and conjectures that the most wild imagination can devise.

3. When our Inquirer into the consequences of neglecting to give the Prayer-book with the Bible, undertakes to prove, by abstract reasoning, that the Bible Society will *probably* generate in churchmen an indisposition or disaffection towards the Prayer-book, there is not, in his whole shew of logical exactness (as I also hope to prove), one tittle of intricacy or perplexity, properly so called, or even in that sense in which the writer himself uses those words; although I admit that there is puzzle enough, and even darkness that may be felt, in every step which he takes to illustrate the paradoxical proposition, that, because a Protestant churchman belongs to a society which distributes Bibles alone, he is likely to become indifferent to the distribution of the Liturgy of his own church.

4. Lastly. The fourth article in the above sum-

mary of Dr. Marsh's sentiments, respecting the Bible Society and its friends, calls for the reader's particular attention. Here, doubtless, there is neither ambiguity nor conjecture. The churchmen who are advocates of the Bible Society are represented, in plain terms, as already indisposed to their Prayer-book. They do not, indeed, *directly* deny its utility; but the reason given for this reserve is—it would not be popular to do so\*.

The three former positions chiefly respect the probability of future events; and of course there might be some place for the display of the inventive faculty, in discovering plausible arguments to support them; but in this instance, the most exuberant, and discursive fancy is effectually restrained by the stubborn, untractable nature of facts.

We are given to understand, that the churchmen, who advocate the cause of the Bible Society, do actually justify the practice of neglecting to give the Prayer-book with the Bible; that some of them would have no pain in parting with the Liturgy; and that, in general, the Prayer-book is held by them in little or no estimation.

This point, therefore, if proved at all, must be proved by an exhibition of facts. And as there is here no room for fancy and conjecture, so neither is there any to support a pretence of intricacy or perplexity. Profound thought, sagacity, penetration, are here also not called for. The thing is said to be so; and he who says it, is responsible for the assertion.

\* Inquiry, p. 18.

If Dr. Marsh, among his repeated intimations of extreme difficulty and intricacy, had but interspersed some paragraphs of conclusive or even probable argumentation, he should, as far as I am concerned, have enjoyed the crédit which attaches to a man who is supposed to have unravelled an obscure and important subject with peculiar acuteness and sagacity. But it is frequently found much more convenient to manage a contest of this sort, by passing over the more difficult points with an easy, confident air, of assurance; or by exciting invidious suspicions, through the medium of a dexterous reference to the circumstances of the times\*; than it is to look the adversary fairly in the face, and confound him by the production of solid objections.

Dr. Marsh, instead of proving how it is that, by the association of churchmen and dissenters, the Bible Society increases both the political and the religious importance of the latter, roundly tells us at once, that this is too obvious to require illustration †.

And again, instead of shewing the probability that this increase of influence will be applied to injure

\* Here I particularly allude to the repeated insinuations contained in the Inquiry, respecting the principles of many churchmen of the Bible Society, whom Dr. Marsh would represent not only as Calvinistic, but also as on that account disaffected to their Prayer-book. Their disaffection, he thinks, may be easily explained, if it be true that churchmen supply the place of the Liturgy with Calvinistic tracts.— See page 42, the note; page 48, 49, note; page 59, &c. *passim*.

† See his Address, p. 3.

the Church of England, he wishes us to take it for granted, that this is likewise \* a “ position that cannot be controverted.”

I allow, with Tully, that truth itself may sometimes be polished and rendered brighter by the file of disputation : “ Veritas ipsa limatur in disputatione.” But then the discussion must be conducted in a manner not to conceal and confuse, but to elicit and illustrate the truth.

Now when Dr. Marsh accuses us of endangering the church, by associating with dissenters, we reply, that we associate with them only where we agree ; and that we agree in the most unexceptionable of all objects, the dispersion of the Bible. Besides, we affirm, that the association of Christians, in things that are confessedly good, has a tendency to promote Christian charity.

But then the dissenters *may hereafter* injure the church.—Here our reply is, There are few things that *may not happen*. For example, I never expected to hear a divine of the Church of England object to a society that distributed no other book but the Bible. But I deny that the members of the church will be less watchful and active in defending themselves against attacks, than the dissenters in contriving and prosecuting them.

The scene, however, changes from politics, and we are told, that we do not distribute the Prayer-book of our church.—Now it is very true, that the Bible Society distributes no other book except the Bible, because no other book is used in common by all its

\* See Dr. Marsh’s Address, in the Appendix.

members; but then, I affirm, that such individual members of the society as are churchmen are not behind any other members of the church whatever in the distribution of Prayer-books.

Alas! all this will not satisfy a determined objector, who has already made up his mind. He predicts that our dissenting connections will *engender* an incurable habit of not distributing the Prayer-book. And when we withhold our assent to so rash an assertion, the objector proceeds to tell us, in the most positive terms, that the thing is now no longer a conjecture or surmise; that he has brought us to a full explanation; and that our justification of the practice of churchmen neglecting to give the Prayer-book with the Bible, is a *fact* established beyond contradiction\*.

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#### THE FACT.

“ Churchmen justify the *practice* of neglecting to give the Prayer-book with the Bible.”—This is the *fact* said to be established beyond contradiction. And our Inquirer, in his usual way, when he would impress a position of great magnitude, tells us, “ It would be a waste of time to quote every sentence †,” in which his “ objection to the distribution of the Bible alone, or without the Liturgy, has been publicly censured;” and he adds, that “ quo-

\* Inquiry, p. 60.

† See Inquiry, p. 59.

tations have been already given from the letter of Mr. Vansittart."

Now the truth is, he neither has produced, nor can produce, a single quotation, from any churchman of the Bible Society, which amounts to more than this, that the distribution of the Bible alone can never be dangerous to the church; and that the distribution of it alone by the Bible Society, in its collective capacity, is highly laudable;—not a single quotation, either from Mr. Vansittart or any other, where any churchman affirms, or even intimates, that the Prayer-book is not a proper companion for the Bible;—not a single sentence, from which a fair inference can be drawn, that any individual member of the Bible Society, being a churchman, denies, either directly or indirectly, the utility of the Prayer-book, or the importance of distributing it among the poor. I cannot, therefore, comprehend the advantage proposed by insisting on such imaginary facts, which vanish on the introduction of a plain, easy distinction. And no wonder they should: shadows owe their very existence to the interception of light.

It must be deemed puerile to represent it as a *fact* established beyond contradiction, that the churchmen of the Bible Society justify the corporate distribution of Bibles alone by the society to which they belong. Every man must be supposed to approve the practice which he deliberately endeavours to promote. Dr. Marsh, therefore, assuredly means something beyond this. And without troubling my reader at present with any nice distinctions on this head, I at once appeal to his

plain and unprejudiced understanding ;—whether, after an attentive perusal of the Inquiry, he does not find what is called the established *fact* to be, in *substance* and *effect*, that these churchmen are indifferent and careless about the Prayer-book, and disposed to deny its utility\*, and to justify the neglect of distributing it ;—whether, with the exception of those pages which contain political discussions and allusions, and commendations of the Prayer-book, he does not perceive an almost uninterrupted thread of accusation, more or less direct, on the score of disaffection to the Book of Common Prayer.

Having no disposition to stifle inquiry, all that I further request is, that it may be fairly considered upon what foundation this heavy accusation is built. My deliberate opinion is, that it could not have been supported for a single page, were it not for the advantage that is taken of blending the circumstance of the non-distribution of the Prayer-book by the Bible Society in its corporate capacity, with the non-distribution of the same book by the individual component members. It is asserted, not proved †; it is presumed, not shewn to be probable, that the individual members of a society will not be disposed to distribute Prayer-books, when it is a principle with the society itself to distribute only Bibles.

I therefore repeat (and the manner in which the several parts of the Inquiry are put together will, I fear, compel me frequently to repeat it), that Dr. Marsh, in this performance, has confounded the non-

\* Inquiry, p. 18.

† Ibid. p. 60.

distribution of Prayer-books by the Society itself, with their non-distribution by the individuals who compose it. The Bible Society, by its very constitution, is restrained from dispersing any other books than Bibles. But the individual churchmen who are members of it are in no wise restrained: they are at liberty to distribute either Bibles or Prayer-books, or both together.—What then must be that spirit, which could lead to so harsh and injurious an inference against individuals as that of disaffection to their Prayer-book, merely because they belong to a society which distributes Bibles only, and which from its very constitution cannot distribute Prayer-books? Is it fair, is it candid, without any reference to facts, to infer, or to insinuate such a charge, on no better ground than such reasons as this,—that because the Bible Society does not distribute Prayer-books, therefore the subscribers to it will, in their individual capacity, neglect to distribute them, although they allow themselves to be under the strongest obligations to perform this duty?

*The very reverse* is, in my mind, the fair and candid inference; namely, that as both the Churchmen and Dissenters of the Society have agreed to dismiss all inferior considerations, and to unite for the common glorious object of disseminating the Bible; and since, by this mutual concession, they are debarred, as a society, from dispersing their peculiar tracts or formulas of doctrine and discipline; they will necessarily be drawn to discharge this part of what they conceive to be their respective duties, by some other means.

Nor is it possible to weaken this inference, otherwise than by shewing that it is never justifiable for Christians to unite, for the accomplishment of any one common and great religious purpose, unless they can also agree in matters of inferior moment.

I would most earnestly entreat every one, who thinks it worth his while to examine the real merits of this controversy, or whose curiosity excites him to attend to the subtilties which have been devised to discredit the constitution of the Bible Society, to peruse with care, or re-peruse, if he has already perused, Dr. Marsh's *Inquiry*, and see whether I do or do not over-state this matter.

The author tells us he never entered on a subject which required so much penetration as the present. My observation is, that I never read a book which required so much continual watching and caution as the *Inquiry* does. I do not say that any extraordinary degree of intellectual discernment is called for to discover its purport; but I not only assert, in general, that the author's several objections to the Bible Society are managed in so fugitive and fallacious a manner, and with so little precision of statement, as almost to elude the grasp of all serious and solid argumentation; but also, in particular, that these two very different things are perpetually confounded together,—namely, the distribution of Bibles alone by the Bible Society, and the distribution of them by the individual members of the same society; and that under the shelter of this confusion a very unfair and injurious inference is drawn,

to the disparagement of the church members of the Bible Society.

Further, it is my decided judgment, that the obscurity, which is created by this confusion, is, in truth, the chief circumstance that has made the subject appear to Dr. Marsh so intricate and perplexed. The clearest subject in the world may be rendered intricate and perplexed by injudicious arrangements; by mixing some truth with much error; and by involving the whole in obscure and doubtful expressions. Even the mathematical elements of Euclid, the most luminous chain of argument in existence, by the introduction of a few well-managed alterations in the definitions and in the arrangement and enunciation of the propositions, might easily be so much disfigured and disguised as to lose the greatest part of their perspicuity, beauty, and excellence. At the same time I do not mean to insinuate that Dr. Marsh has *designedly* introduced this confusion between the distribution of Bibles by a society, and the distribution of them by its individual members, which to me appears so manifestly to have perplexed him in his researches. It is sufficient for me to have pointed out, that this obscurity, this confusion, is constantly to be kept in mind by every careful reader of the *Inquiry*. It is this view which furnishes the key that unlocks all the dark and mysterious corners of it; and whatever may have been the true reason for admitting these repeated ambiguities—whether it was, that, in meditating an almost hopeless opposition to the churchmen of the Bible Society, the author was

driven by necessity, by convenience, or even by accident, to adopt this mode of attack—still I will not pay him so indifferent a compliment as to suppose, that he did not foresee, that, whenever he might be called on to support his equivocal and paradoxical positions, a shield, on one side of which was inscribed Bible Society in their collective capacity, and on the other side, The Individuals of the Bible Society, could not fail, by presenting sometimes one side and sometimes the other, to prove a most convenient instrument of defence.

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TEST OF THE MERITS OF DR. MARSH'S PUBLICATIONS AGAINST THE BIBLE SOCIETY.

Those who know me will easily believe me when I say, that I have used very sincere endeavours to comprehend the meaning of Dr. Marsh's late performances myself, in order to call the attention of the reader to the true touchstone of their merits.

This touchstone, however, cannot be the author's commendations of the Prayer-book:—No churchman controverts this. It cannot be his elaborate display of the incalculable mischiefs attendant on the disparagement of the Liturgy:—All churchmen unite in deprecating these evils. Nor, lastly, can it be his conjectures of the formidable increase of dissenting influence in electioneering contests, and other political struggles:—All moderate politicians forbear to exasperate animosities of this sort by unkind and unnecessary suspicions.

In my judgment, the true touchstone, or *Test of the Merits*, of Dr. Marsh's publications against the Bible Society, is, whether he has or has not succeeded in substantiating those heavy charges which he has ventured to bring against the churchmen of the Bible Society, and for which I have shewn him to be responsible;—namely, that they justify “the practice of neglecting to give the Prayer-book with the Bible\*,” that some of them would not experience much pain in parting with the Liturgy †; and that they are restrained from denying directly “the utility of the Prayer-book ‡,” because in that case “the objection” which they make to his representation of danger, from neglecting to give the Liturgy with the Bible, “would be less popular.”

I would here request the reader, not only to review and consider carefully the passages to which I refer, but also to keep in mind the general tone of Dr. Marsh's animadversions on the church-members of the Bible Society; and then to form his own conclusion, whether I do or do not overstate this matter. I affirm in explicit terms, that Dr. Marsh's accusation amounts to this, that many churchmen, nay, many of his brethren the Clergy (who yield to very few in general respectability), are actually become careless, indifferent, or unfriendly to the Liturgy of their own church. Nor are these charges thrown out in dark hints, or obscure insinuations: He that runs may read, and cannot well mistake them.

If these charges be true, then indeed has Dr. Marsh deserved well of the Church, of the public,

\* Inquiry, p. 60. † Ib. p. 48. ‡ Ib. p. 18.

of religion, and of truth in general. He merits the thanks of his brethren, for having discharged the ungrateful task of bringing forward and supporting a charge of such magnitude and importance. And having acted his part so well in this point, he may be excused for any warm and hasty predictions he may have vented, which otherwise might have appeared harsh and unwarranted, respecting the future degeneracy of churchmen through the contagious influence of the Bible Society.

But I must forbear to indulge myself in this delusive strain. The consideration that Dr. Marsh has utterly failed to substantiate his allegations, reverses the whole state of the case: and in proportion to the praises to which he would have been entitled, by having detected false brethren in the Church, and exposed their unsoundness, must be the just censure which recoils on himself, if his imputations prove unwarranted and calumnious.

Our Inquirer, then, must be told, that it was not a slight breach of Christian charity to harbour groundless suspicions of Clergymen, and to circulate rash predictions of their growing defect of attachment to the Church; but that it was utterly inexcusable, without full proof, to represent them as already become unworthy members of the Establishment. A more affronting insinuation could scarcely be devised against a Clergyman than that in his heart he denies the utility of his Prayer-book. And for this conduct of Dr. Marsh it will be difficult to invent a tolerable apology; for, in truth, there is nothing on which to ground his defence, except the simple fact of the constitution of the Bible Society,

and the dexterous management of certain equivocal expressions.

That the persons accused belong to such a society is a fact, which they can neither deny nor wish to conceal. But when they are charged with justifying the practice of neglecting to give the Prayer-book with the Bible, may they not inquire, whether only the practice of the society in its collective capacity is intended, or whether also the charge includes the private practice of the individual members of it?

Now, undoubtedly, by evading this question, and by continually blending in the argument the two species of distribution, much ambiguity, confusion, and suspicion may be occasioned, and the irksome controversy may be protracted. Only let our accuser explain his meaning distinctly, and all the objections which he has started, as they respect the Prayer-book, will almost instantly expire.

Let not our Inquirer be offended, but rather let him have patience with me, if I drive this nail with repeated blows. He compels me to do so. The churchmen, the Clergy, in particular, of the Bible Society, have great reason to complain of harsh and unfair treatment. For, had they actually assembled together with the express intention of devising measures to bring the Church and its Liturgy into disrepute, I should scarcely have expected that more severe assertions and insinuations could have been used, than those which have found their way into this Inquiry against the supporters of this prosperous and beneficent institution.

For some time I was slow to believe that Dr.

Marsh could possibly intend to inflict on the characters of his brethren so serious an injury.

I was disposed to hope that the extent of his meaning was no more than this, that the connection of churchmen with the Bible Society would gradually, through inadvertence, lead them to regard the Establishment with a degree of indifference, which might afford occasion to the disaffected more easily to promote their hostile intentions;—a suspicion, however, which I should still have regarded as both groundless and uncharitable. But a closer attention to the united evidence, contained in the Address and the Inquiry, has forced a reluctant conviction on my mind, that our Inquirer did not mean to stop here. And, certainly, if I could believe with him, that the advocates of the Bible Society refrained from directly denying the utility of their Prayer-book only lest they should become unpopular, I should allow that they can have but a slender attachment to the established religion.

Such I conceive to be the true touchstone of the merits of Dr. Marsh's adventurous excursions against the proceedings of the Bible Society.



#### REMARKS ON PARTICULAR PASSAGES.

The observations contained in the several preceding sections, will fully open to the reader my general views of Dr. Marsh's two publications;

and will also, I trust, preclude the necessity of any troublesome detail of instances to illustrate my meaning, or confirm my sentiments.

The reader will, nevertheless, permit me to lay before him two or three quotations, selected from many others of the same kind, by which I hope to induce him diligently to examine for himself, whether the Inquirer has not often confounded the practice of the Bible Society, in its collective capacity, with the practice of its individual members; and also whether he has not represented the individual members of it as disposed to deny the utility of the Prayer-book.

To point out *all* the instances where this is done, sometimes in a greater and sometimes in a less degree, sometimes plainly and sometimes obscurely, but always so as to afford an opening for an unfair inference or suspicion against the clerical and other church members of the Bible Society, would be to transcribe a large portion of the Inquiry.

In the very outset of it, the churchman who subscribes to the Bible Society, is asked "whether it is not necessary, when he gives Bibles to the poor" (of the Church), "to provide them at the same time with a Prayer-book?\*" "

Again: "Ought not" (the Prayer-book) "to be used by every churchman? Can he join in the service without it?" "

"Can it therefore be a matter of *indifference* whether the poor of our Establishment are provided with Prayer-books?" "

\* Inquiry, pp. 4, 5, .9

“Do we perform our duty, do we properly provide for their religious instruction, if we provide them only with the Bible, and leave them unprovided with the Prayer-book?”

I leave it to the impartial reader to consider, whether such questions, put under such circumstances, can be understood, as far as it concerns the individuals who are thus admonished, to imply any thing short of an indisposition in them to distribute the Prayer-book among their poor parishioners;—an indisposition produced altogether by their connection with a Society that distributes, and can distribute, Bibles only.

But it would seem that a Professor of Divinity has been reprehended by Clergymen, because he contended that the Prayer-book should be distributed with the Bible\*; and, in particular, that Dr. Milner censured this position †.

A more indefensible misrepresentation never issued from the press! That sentence, in which Dr. Marsh pretends that he finds my censure of his position, is this ‡: “I would not represent the distribution of the Bible alone as dangerous to the Establishment, (or as a thing that cannot be done with safety) unless accompanied with the corrective of a Prayer-book§ of the Church of England.”

The position, therefore, which I censured is, representing the distribution of the Bible alone as

\* Inquiry, p. 6. † lb. p. 22, note. ‡ See Appendix.

§ The words as given by Mr. Farish, in his Report, are, “as dangerous to the Establishment;”—but in the Cambridge newspaper they are, “as a thing that cannot be done with safety.”—The meaning is the same.

a dangerous thing; a thing that cannot be done with safety. Let the public, let Dr. Marsh himself, try again whether, from the preceding sentence, any censure of the distribution of the *Liturgy*, either alone or with the Bible, can be extracted.

I might have hoped that the preceding part of the very same sentence would have protected me from the suspicion of entertaining such a sentiment: "There is not," I said, "any one member of our Church Establishment, who entertains a more exalted idea of the excellence of our Prayer-book in general than I do, and I heartily wish that Christians of all denominations could be persuaded to use it."

Could I express myself thus, and yet be indifferent to the *Liturgy*? In fact, I most cordially allow the propriety, the expediency, the necessity of distributing the *Liturgy*, both alone and with the Bible; but not because I think the distribution of the Bible alone dangerous or unsafe, but for other reasons.

That a Doctor of Divinity and President of a College has, in violation of his most solemn engagements, censured\* the distribution of the *Liturgy* among the poor, is a charge which nothing can justify but the most convincing evidence of the fact. Yet Dr. Marsh has not scrupled to bring such a charge against the Dean of Carlisle, without even a shadow of proof. His only attempt is by a reference which has been shewn to be quite beside his purpose. If it should be said that this reference is at least an argument of his sincerity, since a writer guilty of deliberate deception will be careful not to furnish his readers with the means of detecting it, I

\* Inquiry, p. 22, note.

reply, that even this subterfuge fails him. He has not (in the note, p. 22 of his Inquiry) quoted the words upon which he has founded his charge, but has merely referred to the Cambridge newspaper, published several weeks before his pamphlet, and therefore not readily to be procured by the reader; while the generality would entertain no suspicion that a Clergyman could be induced to prefer so heavy a charge against a brother Clergyman, but upon the strongest grounds.

However, I am far from contending that Dr. Marsh has been guilty of deliberate misrepresentation. Perhaps he persuaded himself that the alleged charge was true. At the same time, it must be remarked, that to believe without evidence, is certainly not the mark of a strong mind; and in a case which deeply injures the reputation of another, it indicates also an unkind and censorious disposition.

Whoever condescends to read my speech at the Cambridge Meeting will be convinced, not only that this part but every part of it relates to the distribution of Bibles by a Society instituted for that express purpose, and by no means to the distribution of Bibles by individuals.

If the distribution by individuals had been meant, there would have been neither argument, nor connection, nor common sense, in my mentioning the non-adoption of the Prayer-book and Liturgy by dissenters as a reason for the distribution of Bibles alone. It was the corporate, not the individual distribution of the Bible of which I spoke, when I affirmed, that in such a distribution there could be no danger to the Establishment.

“ If I understand Dr. Milner rightly,” says Dr. Marsh, “ he considers the objection of the dissenter to the Liturgy as a reason why churchmen may with safety omit the Liturgy when they give the Bible\*.” Will our Inquirer here forgive me, if I insinuate, that those very words may possibly lead the reader to conceive, that he was not without some suspicion he might then be misrepresenting my meaning † ?

Let it not, however, be supposed, from any thing I may have said, that I consider the distribution of Bibles alone, even by individuals, as dangerous to the Establishment, provided the practice do not originate in a principle of indifference towards the Prayer-book, or of a designed exclusion of it. In such a case there would indeed be ground for apprehending hostility to the Church. But there may be many reasons to justify the donation of the Bible only ; and in the mean time, the harsh suspicions and unwarranted predictions of our Inquirer on this head, until they are supported by some indisputable facts, will neither create alarm, in the mind of any reasonable person, for the safety of the Church, nor lessen his esteem for the character of those who discover a zeal for the dispersion of the Holy Scriptures.

It well deserves the reader’s notice, that it is in vain to attempt to fix on the words, *distribution of the Bible alone*, any meaning which will suit the purpose of Dr. Marsh, unless that meaning imply a charge of indifference and want of affection towards the Liturgy, or of neglect and disparagement of it.

\* Inquiry, p. 61.

† See my speech, in the Appendix

Now such an unfounded charge every advocate of the Bible Society, who is a churchman, repels the very instant he hears it made. He praises God that he belongs to a society which has been so active in dispersing the Holy Scriptures. Much good must be the inevitable consequence of its efforts. He cannot conceive the possibility of harm in any case; no, not even in the case of a Bible given by a churchman without a Prayer-book. That churchman, he says, has done well; but he does not say, that, if in this instance a Prayer-book is really wanted, he may not do still better. For he allows that he is bound to distribute Prayer-books, when wanted, as well as Bibles; and that he is blameable for omitting it, if it be in his power to supply the want.

His contending, however, that the distribution of the Bible alone, at any time, is both a good thing, and a thing that may always be done without danger, be it distinctly noticed, is no proof of his omitting to give Prayer-books when wanted. If Dr. Marsh, with all his acuteness and penetration, does not see, that, while any pious churchman maintains that the simple distribution of the Bible is an excellent thing, he may consistently maintain that the distribution of the Prayer-book is an excellent thing also;— if he does not see that the simple distribution of the Bible may even, in many instances, indirectly enable the poor man to supply himself with a Prayer-book;— or, lastly, if he does not see that the good churchman may be in the habit of distributing sometimes one and sometimes the other, according to circumstance;— surely this peculiar dimness of perception, is not the fault of the friends of the Bible So-

ciety. But when Dr. Marsh represents any churchman as treating the Liturgy with disrespect, merely because that churchman is indignant towards those who, on the sole ground of his connection with the Bible Society, or perhaps on the ground of his having distributed some Bibles alone, accuse him of being ill disposed towards the Liturgy; this, I humbly conceive, is Dr. Marsh's fault, and a fault too of no trivial magnitude.

This is a point of so much importance; that the reader will do well to examine it thoroughly. The expressions, *distribution of the Bible alone, omission of the Liturgy*, like many others, are capable of different meanings, according to the circumstances in which they are used.

I suppose there are few members of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge who have not frequently distributed Bibles alone to their individual parishioners. Nor can it be necessary for me to specify the circumstances in which the Bible alone may be given, without affording any just ground for charging the giver with neglecting the Liturgy. Therefore, before I pronounce a judgment, and especially a judgment of censure, I must know whether the distributor proceeded on a principle of general exclusion, or were actuated merely by a view of particular circumstances. If such a principle of exclusion is made out satisfactorily, then, unquestionably, he that so excludes the Liturgy of our church is hostile to it. Yet even in that case it will not follow, that the Bible itself, though deprived of what Dr. Marsh calls its safeguard, can possibly prove injurious to the Establishment.

Here I leave it to Dr. Marsh to reflect, whether he has or has not overshot his mark in the accusations he has brought against the advocates of the Bible Society. He should know, that, in passing a sentence of blame, he ought to interpret all ambiguities in that way which is most favourable to the accused. And I think he ought to have remembered, that whether we belong or not to what he calls a Church-of-England Society\*, or whether we belong or not to any society that distributes Prayer-books, he has as little reason to question the sincerity of our affection to the Prayer-book as he has to question the sincerity of his own.

The moment these obvious distinctions are presented to the mind, the utter inconclusiveness of Dr. Marsh's observations on the distribution of the Bible, and the omission of the Liturgy, must be admitted. And I cannot but hope, that Dr. Marsh himself, when he has well considered these distinctions, will be sorry for having so injuriously and unwarrantably accused the churchmen of the Bible Society of justifying the omission of the Liturgy.

It certainly is to me a ground of great satisfaction, that our Inquirer, notwithstanding all his assertions and inuendos, and his industrious ransacking of the hasty publications in the daily prints for matter of censure, has not been able to produce (as far as I know) a single instance from which a fair inference can be drawn, that any one churchman of the Bible Society thinks lightly of the Liturgy in judgment, or disparages it in practice.

Dr. Marsh appears to triumph not a little in what

\* See Dr. Marsh's Address, in the Appendix.

he calls the discovery of a fact \* ; and he *desires* his reader to keep the FACT in remembrance, “ that churchmen justify the omission of the Liturgy in their distribution of the Bible.”

The request was certainly unnecessary. The pretended FACT, and the unwarranted censure founded upon it, will not easily be forgotten. And although I have expressed a *hope* that our Inquirer may, on reflection, be sorry for the part he has acted, I am constrained to acknowledge the existence of a *fear*, at least equivalent to any hope that I can entertain. A loaded die thrown ever so often, and even without art or subtilty, is sure to present the same side upwards,—because it is LOADED.

If the representations contained in the Inquiry can possibly have availed to make any impression on the public mind, it must be chiefly owing to those clouds of obscurity and confusion with which the Inquirer has enveloped the subject, through the ambiguous use of the expressions so often mentioned, namely, distribution of the Bible alone, omission of the Liturgy, neglect of the Liturgy, &c. &c.

Page after page I look in vain for positions that are clear, for argumentation that proceeds straight forward, and for inferences that are well connected.

One of the ablest controversialists that ever existed † always advised his friends, in their difficulties to raise but dust enough, and they might find a way to get off in the clouds.

That grand depredator of heathen antiquity, Cacus, is said to have concealed himself a long time in his secret fastnesses, by dragging backward, and in

\* Inquiry, p. 8.

† Bentley.

twisted directions, his stolen cattle; and it is further reported, that when he was on the point of being discovered, he had the art of defending himself by throwing out immense vollies of hot smoke and fume, till at length he was laid hold of and squeezed to death in the arms of Hercules.

I know not that I should have ventured to amuse the reader with the recollection of such an odd story as this, if Dr. Marsh had not set the example of relieving a tiresome controversy, by imagining a sort of comparison between some friends of the Bible Society, and Anacharsis Cloots and Peter the Hermit.

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#### REMARKS ON PARTICULAR PASSAGES CONTINUED.

Our Inquirer asks \*, whether it may not be said without reproach, that churchmen should not content themselves with the distribution of the Bible alone?

The answer is, churchmen think they have a right to complain, when any person in direct terms asserts, or in indirect terms insinuates, that in their individual capacity they content themselves with distributing the Bible alone; having no ground for making this invidious charge, except that they procure Bibles from a society which distributes Bibles only.

But scarcely does the author of this Inquiry pro-

\* Inquiry, p. 17.

ceed a single page, before he puts the friends of the Bible Society in mind, that their “objection would be less *popular*, if they *directly* denied the utility of the Prayer-book\*.” And this, be it noted, is the same Inquirer, who, only a few sentences before, had modestly asked, whether it might not be said without reproach, that churchmen should not content themselves with the distribution of the Bible alone!

Now, when I observe the words *popular* and *directly*, to be printed in italics; and when I compare this passage with numerous others, particularly with one in page 40, where the author admonishes every member of the Bible Society to read Bishop Beveridge’s Sermon on the Excellence and Usefulness of the Common Prayer;—also with another, in page 47, where he plainly tells the advocates of the Bible Society, that they soar into the regions of high Protestantism, till the Church of England entirely disappears;—and once more, with a most unwarranted assertion in page 48, that the advocates of the Bible Society think it unnecessary to distribute the Liturgy which our first reformers composed:—in one word, when I put together all the evidence before me, I should grossly dissemble did I not fairly confess my fear, that our Inquirer could not but have intended to make the public believe, that at least many of the advocates of the Bible Society do, in their hearts, deny the utility of the Prayer-book of the church to which they belong.

Silence, in many instances, is sufficiently expres-

\* Inquiry, p. 18.

sive! "Tacendo clamat," said an excellent judge of evidence\*. And if silence in the present instance be not a more severe rebuke, it is at least far more agreeable to me than any hard words which I might think it justifiable to use.

The best excuse which I can make for our accuser, is, that the charge he has brought against us seems to have been made in so much ill-humour, that possibly he might not be fully conscious of its extent and severity.

He says, his meaning has been grossly perverted; and it may be so; but I know not, that even grubbing into the corners of newspapers would prove this. However, Dr. Marsh must not expect me to follow him in such researches, or to be responsible for every representation that may be made in the public prints. It is sufficient for me, that I can affirm without scruple, that many of his observations on the distribution of the Bible and the omission of the Liturgy strike my mind as extremely exceptionable. Among other things, he appears to have forgotten that the Prayer-book itself is capable of perversion, and that the very Articles of religion contained in it do by no means secure a uniformity of sentiment, even among our most learned churchmen. As some proof of this, let any person compare the expositions of the very same Thirty-nine Articles, by those two shining ornaments of our church; the one a Calvinistic, the other an anti-Calvinistic prelate; Bishops Beveridge and Burnet.

After all, and notwithstanding Dr. Marsh's pre-

\* Tully.

sent zeal for the distribution of the Prayer-book, I am satisfied that that zeal would have continued to slumber, had it not been roused by the exuberant dissemination of the Bible by the Bible Society.

The Inquirer "rejoices that his Address to the Senate has been the means of bringing the advocates of the Bible Society to a full explanation on this subject\*," viz. the distribution of the Prayer-book.

Notwithstanding this expression of triumph, I do not believe the writer is now very fond of his own Address. If he were, he would doubtless have reprinted it with his Inquiry. My reasons for thinking so, will appear more fully in my remarks on the Personalities contained in the Inquiry. At present I shall content myself with observing, that without referring to the Address it is impossible to acquire just ideas of the origin of this controversy. In the perusal of that Address, the reader will find a full justification of the part which the Dean of Carlisle took at the formation of an Auxiliary Society at Cambridge, surrounded as he then was with academics in the bosom of the university, among whom we had been held forth as persons, who, blinded by an injudicious zeal for dispersing the Bible, were encouraging a society which, although it had no other object but that of disseminating the revealed Word of God, yet might contribute, it was alleged; to the dissolution of our own Ecclesiastical Establishment. Dr. Marsh, however, rejoices at the effects of his Address. And the cause of this joy is

\* Inquiry, p. 59.

pointed out by the Inquirer in capitals; namely, the FACT before mentioned, that churchmen justify "the practice of neglecting to give the Prayer-book with the Bible." p. 60.

I trust, I have already sufficiently brushed away these slanderous cobwebs; yet I cannot forbear to entreat the curious and impartial reader to re-peruse the whole of the sixtieth page of the Inquiry in its connection, were it but as affording a sample of the Inquirer's mode of reasoning. He will there find these words: "If churchmen, by becoming members of it (the Bible Society), learn to justify the omission of the Liturgy, it cannot be supposed that they will correct that omission, by supplying individually what the society in its corporate capacity withholds." And again: "If they learn to censure the position, that churchmen should not content themselves with giving the Bible alone, it would be very extraordinary if they afterwards conformed to that position."

Thus is the mystery at once divulged! Dr. Marsh had too much at stake not to perceive that the distribution of Prayer-books by churchmen of the Bible Society, in their individual capacity, must prove completely fatal to all his objections on the score of neglecting the Liturgy. Therefore, what was to be done in such an extremity? There was left but one solitary expedient; namely, to assert boldly that the Bible Society had already produced a neglect of the Liturgy. This assertion was then to be followed up by as sophistical an argument as I ever remember to have seen produced in a logical dress. Thus: It cannot be supposed that the individual

churchmen of the Bible Society, having once learnt to justify the omission of the Liturgy, will supply that which the Society itself withholds. Having learnt to censure the position that churchmen should not content themselves with giving the Bible alone, it would be very extraordinary if they afterwards conformed to that position.

Now, the real *fact* is, these churchmen never did justify that omission of the Liturgy with which Dr. Marsh charges them; they never did censure his position, that churchmen are bound to distribute it. The thing for which they censure Dr. Marsh is, that he represents them as indisposed to their Prayer-book, though in their consciences they feel themselves to be as sound in their attachment to it, and as active in its distribution, as the Inquirer himself, or any other member of the Establishment, can possibly be.

Having, however, already explained myself fully on the two important points, the distribution of the Bible alone, which can never be dangerous; and the distribution of the Prayer-book, which is always the duty of churchmen; and having also distinctly shewn what it is that the friends of the Bible Society censure in Dr. Marsh, as also what they do not censure; it cannot be necessary for me to go over the same ground again.

It will not escape the careful reader of this sixtieth page of the Inquiry, how extremely anxious the writer appears to efface every vestige of that which he well knew must be considered as an ample reply to all his accusations and suspicions; namely, the probability of at least a proportionate

distribution of Prayer-books by the individual churchmen of the Bible Society. It is true, that in this page we find that theoretical argument of our Inquirer, which was purposely contrived to shew how very extraordinary and improbable must be a distribution of Prayer-books with the Bible, by the individual churchmen of the Bible Society; yet, not perfectly satisfied perhaps with his own argument, it seems to have occurred to him, that if it should nevertheless appear that these persons were at least as exemplary as any other churchmen in the discharge of this important part of their duty, such a fact would present a giant-difficulty in the way to his conclusions, and that at least some expedient was therefore requisite to meet so awkward and embarrassing a circumstance.

The expedient which he has adopted is this. He takes it for granted, that the examples of a distribution of Prayer-books, by individuals who had withstood the infection of the Bible Society, would, *forsooth*, be few, and only exceptions to the general rule, and would, therefore, afford to his mind a poor consolation in the general neglect.

In all this, who does not perceive, along with infinite prejudice, symptoms of a lurking suspicion that the churchmen of the Bible Society may still be found in no wise deficient in the distribution of Prayer-books? Who does not perceive, that in this instance, dust is perpetually thrown into the eyes, by the repeated use of such expressions, as the distribution of Bibles without the Prayer-book, &c.?

The considerate reader will see, that no question whatever needs to be raised concerning the Bible

alone, or the Bible with the Prayer-book; neither concerning the Prayer-book alone, or the Prayer-book with the Bible.

The only inquiries of consequence are these: Are Bibles given to the poor when Bibles are wanted? Are Prayer-books given to them when Prayer-books are wanted?—Let the questions be proposed in this manner, and no dust can possibly be raised to obstruct the distinct issue of the Inquiry. If any churchman maintain that the possession of the Bible supersedes the use of the Prayer-book, he is not of the class which I defend.

What an opinion must Dr. Marsh have formed of the numerous clergy and lay churchmen of the Bible Society, to suppose that the single circumstance of their belonging to a society which distributes the Holy Scriptures all over the globe, should avail to lay a cold hand on their active benevolence towards their parishioners, in the important concern now before us; and this, in spite of the advantages which they see accruing to them every day, and particularly every Sunday, from the use of the Book of Common Prayer.

I must now revert to the complaint with which I set out. I find in the Address and Inquiry of Dr. Marsh, no substance, no nucleus of argument. The whole rests on the ground of ambiguities, or of harsh invidious conjectures: ground which instantly crumbles under the pressure of close investigation.

How rapid has been the progress of Dr. Marsh's hostility to the advocates of the Bible Society!—When he first published his Address, we were told

that we might\* *correct the evil* of distributing Bibles without the Prayer-book; and even that the *correction would be easy\**, in case we belonged to the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge.

But since we have been found so hardened, as not humbly to submit to his censures, but to defend our conduct, it should seem that he has given up all hope of our reformation. He will not admit the supposition, that we shall supply the poor with Prayer-books, now that our principles as churchmen have been corrupted by forming a connection with a society that withholds them.

Then, to complete the whole, we have seen that our Inquirer makes no scruple to avow, that he is prepared to resist any argument which we may attempt to found on examples of churchmen of the Bible Society who shall appear to distribute Prayer-books among their poor. So that the production of instances of churchmen doing the very thing which Dr. Marsh exhorts them to do, would still afford his mind only a "poor consolation."

If this does not amount to, "I neither *am* convinced, nor *will be* convinced," nothing *can* amount to such a declaration.

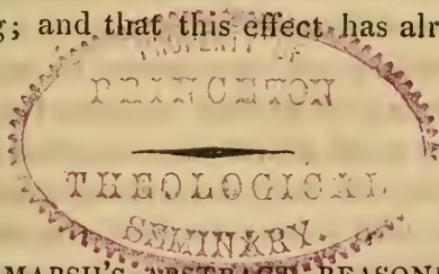
Not the slightest shade can be cast on this representation, except by the interposition of a most intrepid conjecture,—that, of those members of the Bible Society who distribute the Prayer-book, there will be only "single instances," and that the general practice will be on the other side †. A most ground-

\* These expressions will be more particularly considered in my observations on the Personalities.

† Inquiry, p. 60.

less supposition of the Inquirer! whose invention of predictions and conjectures, to suit his own purpose, seems inexhaustible.

It is now time that I should abandon this sixtieth page of the Inquiry to its fate. Assuredly it contains one of the most extraordinary paragraphs that ever was penned; and it may well serve as a striking example of the imbecility of every attempt at nice logical deduction, which is not founded in plain common sense. I find in that page not one particle of argument which does not entirely depend upon the rash, indecent, and affronting assumption, that the friends of a society having no other object but the extensive dissemination of the Bible, will, in consequence of being connected with it, have their religious principles corrupted, and their minds alienated from the Established Church to which they belong; and that this effect has already taken place.



DR. MARSH'S ABSTRACT REASONING.

We have had so little success in the discovery of what Dr. Marsh has denominated *κατ' ἐξοχην*, the FACT, that one might have hoped to find some refreshment in the review of his abstract reasoning.

At page 59 he tells us he has deduced "an inference by the sole aid of abstract reasoning."

He affirms that our connection with the Bible Society has a natural and necessary tendency to

diminish, in the opinion of churchmen, the importance of the Liturgy.

This bold assertion contains the proposition to be demonstrated. The "analysis," on which the proof is supposed to depend, is given in page 57 of the *Inquiry*, and is in substance as follows.

The first thing mentioned in the analysis is, "the *additional difficulty* to which men are exposed, when the Bibles and Prayer-books, which they distribute among the poor, must be sought in two repositories instead of one."

Here Mr. Otter has well observed, "that the same persons do not always purchase both sorts of books; and that even when they do, cold indeed must be that charity, and dead that faith, which could be diverted from the purpose of giving religious instruction to the poor, by the mere trouble of writing an additional letter."

Our Inquirer, however, seems to have entirely forgotten, what, if he had happened to recollect, surely his candour would have impelled him to own as by no means very improbable, namely, that churchmen, who belong to both the societies, and who certainly are not few in number, may, notwithstanding all he has said or supposed, be still in the habit of procuring, for their home-consumption, all their Bibles, as well as all their Prayer-books, from the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge. In doing this, and at the same time subscribing annually a guinea or two to so noble an institution as the Bible Society, is it possible to detect the smallest approach to inconsistency? \*

\* Since I wrote this, I have been informed by a Clergyman of

I place this among the many instances observable in the Inquiry, where the author has crowded sail without paying due attention to the proportionate ballast.

But, perhaps, I ought not to lay much stress on this objection of the *additional difficulty*, because the Inquirer himself, conscious of its infirmity and evanescence, tells us plainly "he would not insist on it."

Yet, in the very next step of his analysis, we find this mole-hill has become a mountain; and not only the same difficulty is said to increase, but the inclination to remove it to diminish. It seems we acquire a *habit of non-associating* the Prayer-book with the Bible. The next step is, "a *forgetfulness* of the Liturgy, with a consequent *indifference* to it." And this *indifference* is increased by our co-operating with *dissenters*. Then follows an *inclination* to justify the conduct of the Bible Society. Churchmen, in the first place, "excuse" the fundamental law of the Bible Society, and then it becomes "gradually a matter of approbation." And all this he represents as "the consequence of the boasted union between churchmen and dissenters."

Such is the specimen with which Dr. Marsh has favoured us of his abstract reasoning. The evanescent difficulty of procuring Prayer-books, with a nascent disinclination to remove it, is the foundation

distinction, who is a warm friend to the Bible Society, and who has been for years a subscriber to both the societies, that he has constantly had both his Bibles and his Prayer-books from the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge.

of the argument. Now I do sincerely declare, that, after having weighed every step in that argument with all the attention of which I am capable, and with the best endeavour I can make to divest myself of prejudice, I do not perceive any thing advanced to support any one of them, but what is either doubtful in the extreme, or absolutely untrue, or conclusive on the opposite side.

It is not true that any churchman, who supports the Bible Society, excuses or apologises for the conduct of that society: he defends it, he justifies it, he applauds it, from the first.

And as to the alleged danger of his acting in this instance in concert with dissenters, who differ from him in some other points, this circumstance appears to me both productive of *general harmony*, and also in no wise calculated to dispose churchmen to be indifferent to the interests of their own establishment.

By *general harmony*, I mean those dispositions of mutual esteem and benevolence between churchmen and dissenters, which cannot fail to be the natural offspring of friendly intercourse in a good cause. The dissenters, of almost all denominations, have offered to co-operate with churchmen in the truly Christian work of dispersing the Holy Scriptures; and, in my judgment, both the spirit of Christianity and sound policy forbid us to reject a co-operation so important in its effects, and so unexceptionable in the means employed to produce them. Benevolent associations always cherish and improve the best affections of the human heart; and there are good reasons to believe, that the meetings

of the friends of the Bible Society have, in fact, tended to promote genuine charity and religious union in a high degree. Similar observations have been made on the effects of those meetings of benevolent Christians of all persuasions, which, under Divine Providence, terminated at length in the abolition of that disgrace of human nature, the Slave Trade.

The late Bishop of London observed, that all the important works in which the Bible Society had been engaged, had been carried on with the utmost harmony and unanimity, without any difference of opinion, and without the slightest symptoms of any hostile or treacherous design against the church.—See Hodgson's Life of Bishop Porteus, p. 213.

Now, the reverse of this is the tendency of all associations which are *unnecessarily* exclusive. They contract the heart, engender bigotry, and excite jealousy. Constantly, therefore, would I plead for the union of Christians of all denominations, whenever this may take place without violence done to the dictates of conscience. And surely, if a union of this sort be deemed inadmissible, when the object is merely the dissemination of the Bible, all hope of so desirable an event must be for ever abandoned.

That the interests of the Establishment will probably suffer on account of the Christian concord manifested by the members of the Bible Society, in their distribution of the Holy Scriptures, I can never admit. There is no inconsistency in maintaining a friendly intercourse with dissenters on such a point, and in exercising at the same time a jealous attention over them in the points where we separate from each other. For besides thinking, that dissent and its

dangers also are best encountered by conciliation, and that both are increased by irritation, opposition, and exclusion; I deny that those churchmen who think proper, even in the distribution of the Bible, to associate only with their brethren of the church, are, on that account, likely to prove better guardians of our Establishment than the churchmen who belong to the Bible Society. Giving them the most entire credit for the purity of their motives, I may be allowed to doubt, whether they will be so competent to watch the conduct of dissenters, and prevent their encroachments, as those who, by a degree of intercourse with them, have opportunities of observing the spirit by which they are influenced.

It is well known that most societies, the members of which are in the habit of acting in full concert with each other, not merely in carrying on the affairs of the society, but *on all other occasions*, are extremely apt to lose their energy on that very account, however lamentable it may be that such a consequence should be the effect of an *universal* harmony among their members.

Whether, indeed, if there had appeared long ago, among the members of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge\*, some well-meaning and spirited dissenters, who, by a laudable zeal and perseverance, might have provoked that Society to greater and more extensive exertions, I will not

\* My own experience has furnished instances of conscientious dissenters, who could honestly declare that they were well affected to our establishment in church and state; and I am not aware of any other impediment now existing to their admission into this society.

take upon me to say; but that the Bible Society, which is now so much the object of Dr. Marsh's opposition and hostility, and represented as so dangerous in its constitution, has by its unexampled efforts proved a beneficial stimulus to the former society, no one can attempt to deny.

Suppose, therefore, that Dr. Marsh, in his excessive zeal and circumspection for the security of the Church of England, could succeed in dismembering and even annihilating a society which disperses throughout the world innumerable copies of the Holy Scriptures; is it *quite* clear that the other society, delivered from the spur of competition, might not soon return to its former state of placidity and moderation?

I must be allowed to say one word more on the habit in churchmen of not associating the Prayer-book with the Bible; and on their consequent forgetfulness of the Liturgy, and indifference towards it.

To make these things hang together, it must be supposed that when a churchman opens a parcel of Bibles, received from the Bible Society, (which, besides his ordering and paying for them, will in *general* comprehend the whole of his practical connection with this dangerous institution), the circumstance of not finding Prayer-books in the parcel will either at once, or gradually by a repetition of the same thing, drive out of his mind all recollection of the Prayer-book, and so make him regardless of its merits, and indifferent to its use.

Is it possible to conceive reasoning more weak and futile than this? Is it possible, indeed, that any

good reason should be given, why the mere practice of ordering and receiving Bibles only, from *any repository*, is not full as likely to suggest, to the mind of a pious and considerate churchman, the *propriety* and *necessity of procuring Prayer-books*, as to induce that forgetfulness and indifference respecting them which the argument of Dr. Marsh affects to establish? But the truth is, it is most egregious trifling, and even bordering on the ridiculous, to put the issue of a matter where duty is so deeply concerned, on things of such acknowledged latitudinarian discretion, as the mere connection or non-connection with any societies whatsoever. For example: The Clergyman, and his more wealthy parishioners, see their poor at church every Sunday without Prayer-books: the Clergyman reads his part of the service, and scarcely hears the alternate verses of the Psalms, and but few responses in general; for neither the Psalter nor the Prayer-book is in the possession of a large portion of his congregation. May I not presume, that an expressive silence of this sort will prove more influential on the conscience, than the loudest accents of positive admonition could possibly be? To suppose the contrary, is to suppose that important realities like these will not over-balance any imaginary forgetfulness or indifference, produced by a connection with a society that distributes Bibles alone.

I might here repeat what Mr. Otter, with the greatest truth, and with admirable emphasis and simplicity, has advanced on this part of the subject\* :—

\* See Mr. Otter's pamphlet, p. 11.

“To imagine,” says he, “that the Liturgy, a book rendered dear to churchmen by every circumstance that can interest and affect us, by its own intrinsic excellence, by its connection with our valuable constitution in church and state, by the noble struggles of our ancestors for its establishment and support; the source to many of us of our daily prayers, the repository of our common devotions on the return of every Sabbath,—that such a book, so venerable, so hallowed, and from various causes more frequently in our hands than the Bible itself, should become a matter of indifference and be forgotten, through the single circumstance of its being procured from one society; while the Bible is procured from another; (to imagine all this) is to carry the doctrine of association to a much greater length than can be warranted by sound argument, or reconciled to the common understandings of men.”

This surely must be one of those obscure points of the subject alluded to by the Professor, which not only escape the superficial attention of “orators,” but elude even the discernment of the “sagacious and profound\*.”

Who would suppose, after reading the above extract, that Dr Marsh could find nothing in Mr. Otter’s pamphlet worthy of notice; or that, in his Letter to Mr. Vansittart, which professes to answer all the arguments of his opponents, he should not once allude to Mr. Otter’s Vindication of the Churchmen of the Bible Society.

The reader has now before him the abstract argument of Dr. Marsh, which, independent of facts,

\* Inquiry, p. 53.

and relying solely on its own intrinsic weight, threatened to demolish at one blow the whole fabric of the Bible Society.

So curious a specimen of abstract reasoning, I apprehend, is rarely to be met with.

Whatever reliance our Inquirer might place on his abstract reasoning, he has had the precaution, when opportunity served, not only to call in the aid of such facts as he conceived to be favourable to his side of the question, but also to keep out of sight, as much as was in his power, other facts which tended to disprove his representation of the effect of the Bible Society on the dispersion of the Liturgy. Of this I will now proceed to give an instance.

Subsequently to the publication of his Inquiry, Dr. Marsh has at length (as he imagines) discovered an argument from fact, to prove the tendency of the Bible Society to bring the Prayer-book into neglect. In his Letter to Mr. Vansittart, dated May 1812, p. 25, he affirms, that, in the eight years which have elapsed since the formation of the Bible Society, the number of Prayer-books printed at Cambridge is more than 20,000 less than in the eight preceding years. Now, in the Christian Observer for July 1812, appeared an answer to this statement, in which it was shewn that a still greater diminution of Prayer-books had happened at Oxford, viz. 100,000. How must Dr. Marsh have triumphed to find his argument so much strengthened!—Short, however, would be his triumph: for it appears, that the increase of Prayer-books printed by the King's Printer, in the same period, was 235,000.

The observations of the Christian Observer are as follows:

“ Before we quit the subject of the Bible Society, we think it proper to advert to a statement of Dr. Marsh, by which he endeavours to prove, in opposition to what had been asserted by Mr. Vansittart, Mr. Dealtry, and ourselves, that the sale of Prayer-books had diminished since the formation of the Bible Society. His statement is, that the number of Prayer-books printed at Cambridge during the eight years which preceded the formation of the Bible Society, was 161,750; while the number printed during the eight years which followed it, was only 140,900; being an absolute decrease of 20,850. We can inform Dr. Marsh, however, of a still more alarming FACT, namely, that the number of Prayer-books printed by the University of Oxford, during the eight years which preceded the formation of the Bible Society, was 100,000 more than the number printed in the eight years subsequent to that event. Here, then, we have a falling off, in the number of Prayer-books, to the enormous extent of 120,850, in the last eight years, as compared with the eight which preceded these. How powerfully would such a FACT, particularly if unexplained, strengthen Dr. Marsh’s reasoning on the injurious tendency of the Bible Society! But what explanation does it admit of? It seems to be a stubborn circumstance, which no ingenuity of reasoning can qualify, so as to prevent the obvious inference to be drawn from it to the disadvantage of the Bible Society. The necessity of taxing our ingenuity on the occasion, is, however, happily

obviated by an additional FACT, which we shall now take the liberty of mentioning. The number of Prayer-books printed by the King's Printer, during the first series of eight years already referred to, was only 5000 ; but during the last series, it has been 240,000, leaving an excess in the latter period, of 235,000. When from this amount the decrease in the number printed by the universities is deducted, there will still remain an absolute increase in the number printed in England, during the last eight years, as compared with the preceding eight years, of 114,150, or about 14,270 a year on the average : and this, without taking into the account that there has been of late an increased importation of Prayer-books from Scotland, into the northern counties of England. Before Dr. Marsh says one word more, on the injurious tendency of the Bible Society in diminishing the circulation of Prayer-books, he ought either to disprove the FACT, that upwards of 14,000 more Prayer-books have on the average been printed annually in England, since the formation of this society, than were printed before its formation ; or, if he cannot disprove it, he should at least shew how it can be made to coincide with the line of his argument."—*See Christian Observer for July 1812, p. 466.*

The Rev. Peter Gandolphy, a respectable champion of the Church of Rome, has, in a late publication, claimed Dr. Marsh, in spite of all his remonstrances and declarations to the contrary, as an associate and "charming" advocate in supporting the great Roman Catholic principle, that the Bible is by no means to be trusted to the people,

without some comment or "safeguard." Our Inquirer, in the course of his reply, has thought proper again to bring up the subject of the decrease of Prayer-books, during the last eight years, as confidently as if no answer had been made; carefully, however, avoiding all mention of the Christian Observer. I say this, on the supposition that he must have read the Christian Observer. If he has not, what shall we think of his candour, in thus shutting his eyes against conviction?

Of the same class appears to me his utter neglect of the instructive information given by the Rev. Mr. Otter, pp. 8, 9, of his Vindication.

"I can affirm it," says Mr. Otter, "upon the credit of my own experience; and such is the nature of that experience, that it must be common to many others, both clergy and laity, with myself. By the aid of two or three subscribers to the Bible Society in my parish, we have it in our power to supply every family in it with a Bible. The consequence is, that the sum originally destined from my own funds to the purchase of Bibles and Prayer-books conjointly, has been exclusively appropriated to the purchase of Prayer-books and Tracts from the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge; and at present, every child in the Sunday school, who can read tolerably, is enabled to make the proper responses from his own Prayer-book."

Thus does it appear, that the efforts of the Bible Society in distributing the Bible do actually tend to promote the distribution of the Prayer-book itself.

Now, surely it would have been natural, for a man

who professes to have so much zeal for the dispersion of the Prayer-book among the poor of the Church of England, to have expressed some satisfaction in this report, especially as no reason can be given why this is not to be looked on as a fair sample of what passes in other parishes; and surely there is here good ground for Dr. Marsh to suspect the soundness of his reasonings concerning the operation of causes, when he finds the consequences to be the reverse of his predictions.

What danger there may be in "soaring into the regions of high Protestantism," I pretend not to determine; but the numerous unsuccessful attempts which have been made, to soar into the regions of metaphysical fancy and conjecture, emphatically warn us to beware of imitating such dangerous excursions.

## PART II.

## INTRODUCTION.

HERE would I gladly have concluded my observations on Dr. Marsh's Inquiry. The task has been irksome, not from the abundance, but from the defect, of pertinent matter. Had this abounded, I might have derived some satisfaction from collecting it together, and faithfully placing to the Inquirer's credit all that appeared favourable to his side of the question; and, after grappling with the remainder according to my ability, I might have endeavoured to furnish the public with what I conceived to be the fair result of an impartial discussion.

But, as I observed before, there is no such thing as grappling with a shadow. His work is filled with accusations, more or less direct, of the secret indisposition of churchmen towards their Prayer-book, founded either merely on the known, avowed, laudable constitution of the Bible Society; or on an unwarrantable and invidious interpretation of certain expressions used by the advocates of that society in its defence.

If they do but ask, Is the distribution of the Bible alone detrimental to the interests of the Establishment? Have we forgotten that we are Protestants?

or, again, if they express their satisfaction in the prospect of the great good to be expected from the extensive distribution of Bibles by the Bible Society; they are instantly represented as persons indifferent to their Prayer-book, and as maintaining that the Bible supersedes its use, and that, if they only take care to distribute Bibles, they may safely neglect the distribution of the Prayer-book.

Sometimes, the advocates of the Bible Society are described as persons who are restrained from directly denying the utility of their Prayer-book, *only* by the unpopularity of such a declaration\*. On other occasions, there is only an intimation, but in the most offensive terms, of their want of attachment to the Prayer-book. If we are to believe our Inquirer, many of the advocates of the modern Bible Society differ from those ancient orators, who contributed to the abolition of the Liturgy and the subversion of the Church, in the reign of Charles the First, *only in this*, "that the ancient orators had the candour to declare their meaning †."

In some controversies, the expense of time and study is amply compensated by the good sense and solid information which remain, after a diligent separation of the chaff which envelopes and disguises the precious grain. In others, it happens, that, although the main object of the contest may not afford an adequate or satisfactory reward to industry, yet, during the display and exercise of the contending talents, there arise many useful intimations, many valuable and instructive discussions,

\* Inquiry, p. 18. † Ib. p. 49.

well deserving the notice and remembrance of the studious.

An analogical remark of a similar nature is sometimes furnished by the operations of chemistry on natural bodies. In certain cases, the volatile materials, which are separated by fire, are rejected as useless, while the fixed portion, which has stood the effect of long and continued heat, is found purified and enhanced in value. In other instances, the reverse takes place: the valuable part is volatile, and must be carefully preserved in proper reservoirs; while the fixed residuum, or *caput mortuum*, is thrown away.

But, alas! there is a third way, in which, to the excessive mortification of the philosophical experimenter, operations of this sort sometimes terminate. I mean, where neither the volatile nor the fixed part, neither that which is expelled by the heat nor that which survives the fiery trial, is found to possess any properties worthy of preservation.

I would that the analysis of the attempts of Dr. Marsh to disunite and annihilate so respectable an association as that of the Bible Society, did not suggest such observations as these!

I have already, perhaps, considered all that is important in this controversy:

The personal misrepresentations in the Inquiry relative to myself, I could easily have passed over. I may say the same of the irrelevant introduction of Mr. Lancaster's and Dr. Bell's schools, the garbled account of certain puritanical transactions, the invidious allusions to Calvinistic and sectarian questions, and the indecent admixture and impli-

cation of political interests with the religious views of the Bible Society. Whatever be their intrinsic importance, they have not in reality the remotest connection with the concerns of that Society. However, as they have been pressed into the service by Dr. Marsh, and as they have contributed not a little to raise those clouds of dust, which I have remarked that Bentley recommends as useful expédients in some cases of controversial difficulty, I fear I might be thought to have quitted my post too soon, were I to treat their intrusion with perfect silence.

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#### MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

##### 1. *Positiveness of the Inquirer.*

One of the first observations which occurred to me after the perusal of the Inquiry, was, that although the author (p. 53) represents this to be the most intricate and perplexed of all the subjects on which he ever entered, and one which required more penetration than any other; and owns that the difference of opinion entertained by men of distinguished abilities had excited a distrust of his own; yet, from the first to the last page of this performance, there is not one expression of serious doubt or hesitation respecting his conclusion.

This, I acknowledge, appeared to me a circumstance suspicious in itself, and strongly indicative of a mind prepossessed. I do not deny that an

acute man may come to a fair conclusion where numerous arguments are ranged on opposite sides; but, still, the strength of his conclusion will be only in proportion to the balance of the contradictory reasons, which his industry and penetration have enabled him to collect and appreciate.

Add to this, that if the reasons which favour his conclusions are in their nature abstruse and difficult to explain; and if, at the same time, those on the contrary side are obvious and easy to comprehend; this very consideration will greatly tend to promote a spirit of diffidence and hesitation, and to counteract a disposition to be confident and peremptory.

Now our Inquirer allows, that the objections to the Bible Society are, in fact, concealed and difficult to explain; and that the arguments in favour of it are specious and popular.

Can it then be necessary to observe, that a candid man, in the search of truth, especially when conscious that the subject which he has to examine is perplexed and intricate, must be anxious to balance impartially the opposite reasons? I am sure that if a spirit of this sort had appeared in our Inquirer's attacks on the Bible Society, he would have been abundantly more likely to produce conviction. Dr. Marsh overacts his part.

## 2. *Suppression of Dr. Marsh's Address.*

The tone of the whole *Inquiry* is calculated to produce an impression that the author had in

the *first* instance been very roughly handled, and even bitterly reproached, without having given any cause whatever for complaint or animadversion; that, on the contrary, *he* had been protecting the fabric which we ought to support—he had been defending the cause of churchmen; and that churchmen now joined in an unreasonable outcry against him. He owns, indeed, that he had published an Address to the Senate of the University of Cambridge; and he gives some extracts from it; suppressing, however, by far the most exceptionable parts. But still we are to believe that he merited thanks, rather than censure: he had merely defended the diffusion of the Liturgy of our own church.

Such conduct appears to me neither *generous* nor *impartial*. The Inquirer should have placed the facts *fairly* before the public: whereas the true origin of the controversy is in a great measure stifled; and the reader is left to conclude that the quiet, peaceable, studious Professor of Divinity was unwarrantably disturbed in his retirement.—Dr. Marsh is too well experienced in controversy not to know that such a prepossession is apt to be very much in favour of a defendant.

It is to no purpose here to reply, that he *has* stated the fact of his having previously published an Address to the members of the Senate, and that he has given some quotations from it. The questions recur, Where were the readers of the Inquiry to procure this Address? Who was to inform them that the contents of it were of material importance? And what readers were likely to give themselves much trouble to obtain it?

Neither is it any reply to say, that many copies of the Address were dispersed through the country. Be it so. To whatever extent this was done, it would go a very little way towards removing my objection. For it is not to be supposed that a publication of only three pages, issued from the press on the spur of a particular occasion, would be preserved at all, and still less that it would be at hand upon the appearance of an elaborate pamphlet some weeks after. If the reader of those three pages could have predicted, that, in the space of a few weeks, there would issue from the press a pamphlet closely connected with them, in all probability many copies of the Address might have been carefully preserved.

The Inquiry was to be had at the booksellers'; but not only was the Address, in many cases (I believe in most cases), not to be had, but the real importance of having it, for the purpose of forming a fair judgment in this controversy, is not to be inferred from any thing that is said of it in the Inquiry.

A similar objection arises from the use which Dr. Marsh has made of that Cambridge newspaper, which detailed the proceedings of the Auxiliary Bible Society. Nothing, however, here said, is to be considered as implying the smallest encroachment on Dr. Marsh's undoubted right to select from his own Address, and also from the newspaper account of the Cambridge speeches, whatever he might think best suited to his purpose; provided there be no difficulty in obtaining access to the materials from which his selections are made, in order that a reader may be enabled to judge how far the real meaning of the quotations, with which Dr. Marsh has indulged

him, is affected by their connection with what precedes or follows them.

Here, then, lies the main stress of my objection. The materials, from which the selections were made, were either not to be had at all, or not without considerable difficulty; and this difficulty might easily have been removed by Dr. Marsh, without swelling his pamphlet beyond a small number of additional pages. If Dr. Marsh's Address had been before the public, they could have entertained no doubt who was the aggressor. They would have seen that a numerous body of men, all well affected to the church, and some of them among its firmest supporters and its brightest ornaments, were there represented as encouraging dissenters; throwing their weight into the scale of dissenters; promoting the misapplication of the doctrines of the Bible in opposition to the Liturgy; injuring the church, and even contributing to what may terminate in its dissolution.

Further, if the replies which were made to these grievous accusations by the advocates of the Bible Society, at the Cambridge meeting in 1811, had been fairly laid before the public, they would have seen the principles on which we act briefly explained; and, as far as I am personally concerned, I know not whether I should have deemed it necessary to say a single word more.

I see so much weight in this statement, that I have no scruple in declaring it to be my conviction, that if Dr. Marsh had but thought it proper to place at the head of his Inquiry (what I think the unbending laws of equity and impartiality called upon him to

do) both his own Address and the fair substance of the speeches made at the Cambridge meeting; which he has honoured with so much notice, those important and decisive materials, staring him in the face, would have so disturbed any disposition to petty subterfuges and metaphysical evasions, that either he would have totally abstained from his Inquiry, or his labours must have assumed a completely different appearance.

That Dr. Marsh did not act in this fair manner; I greatly lament on my own account. For although both his Address and the Cambridge speeches are now made public in Mr. Farish's Report, and also his Address and my own Speech are re-printed in the Appendix to these Strictures, yet still, as Dr. Marsh's Inquiry has gained the precedence in point of time, I am made to understand, from such friendly authorities as I cannot treat lightly, that it is expected that some notice should be taken by me of the multifarious modes of misrepresentation, which crowd the pages of Dr. Marsh's publications.

### *3. Auxiliary Circumstances introduced by the Inquirer.*

However well satisfied Dr. Marsh may be with the ground on which he affects to rest his conclusions, he does not disdain to make use of those auxiliary circumstances, which have often been found to strengthen a cause, and increase the number of its adherents.

In the very outset of his Address to the Senate of

the University of Cambridge, he informs us, that there are at present two extensive Bible Societies, viz. the Society of 1699, for promoting Christian Knowledge; and the Bible Society of 1804.

The former society, he adds, is supported by the Prince Regent, our two Archbishops, all our Bishops, and about 7000 churchmen\*. Whereas, among the numerous members of the latter, there are “neither of the two Archbishops, and *only a small proportion of the Bishops* †.”

I know of no evidence that any member of the Bible Society ever harboured a thought of entering into a competition with any other society, much less of opposing the venerable Society for promoting Christian Knowledge. It is Dr. Marsh who has

\* This assertion was made in November 1811.

The Rev. Mr. Dealtry, in his Examination of Dr. Marsh's Inquiry, p. 117, has shewn that the members of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge only amounted to between four and five thousand. Dr. Marsh, however, has not thought proper to profit by this admonition.—I am glad to see that there has been a very considerable increase of the Society's numbers since that time.

† See the Address, in the Appendix.

“Only a small proportion of the bishops!” And yet, in page 8 of the Inquiry, the author would have us believe that it is become dangerous to propose the arguments on his side. With all the bishops on his own side, and only a small proportion of them on the side of the Bible Society, what danger can Dr. Marsh have to apprehend from a few “orators, whose wisdom never goes beyond the surface?” ‡ To speak plainly, however, I think he has more to fear from the friendship of the Roman Catholics, than from any hostility of the advocates of the Bible Society. It is a hard blow which the Rev. Peter Gandolphy has lately struck in claiming Dr. Marsh, if not altogether as a convert, yet as a defender of the Church of Rome.

‡ Inquiry, p. 53.

contributed to excite an offensive and mischievous comparison between these two institutions. Offensive, as it hurts the feelings of many valuable members of both the societies;—mischievous, as it proves destructive of that cordiality which might have subsisted between the respective members of each. The two societies might have proceeded, each in its own direction, with the most perfect harmony, and without interference, obstruction, or jealousy.

But then, numerous dignitaries, the Archbishops, and even Royalty itself, support the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge.

I sincerely rejoice that they do so; and I hope the time is not very distant, when the same august personages will honour the Bible Society with their support and protection.

Already there are six Royal Personages who allow themselves to be called the Patrons of the Auxiliary Societies in Westminster, in Kent, and in Cambridge.

The above-mentioned dignitaries, I conceive, are brought forward by Dr. Marsh with the design that they should operate on the public *ad verecundiam*. That society which they do not countenance is to be viewed with diffidence and jealousy. I submit it, however, to the good sense and consideration of every reader, whose mind has not been prejudiced by confident assertions or dexterous insinuations, whether the present neutrality of any of the elevated personages, now in our view, will justify an inference either that at present they are secretly hostile to the Bible Society, or that they will be

openly hostile in future. The whole number of the bishops of his Majesty's dominions are forty-eight; and twenty-two of these openly support the Bible Society. Upon what principle of computation is twenty-two to be called a small proportion of forty-eight; or upon what principle of equitable and decent discrimination are the bishops of Ireland to be excepted?

Were it not for the use that may be made of the unwarrantable intimations of Dr. Marsh, I should have deemed it unbecoming to hazard any conjectures respecting the motives of our ecclesiastical dignitaries; but as the subject has been introduced, I will now, with all due humility, venture to affirm—first *negatively*, that, judging merely from the fact that certain dignitaries have not yet placed themselves at the head of the Bible Society, no one has the least right to conclude that they are hostile to the institution; and, in the next place, *positively*, that, from any thing that has hitherto appeared, they may in general be really friendly to it, and yet not judge the present circumstances *favourable* for making their public appearance in its behalf. I do not know enough of the history of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge to relate the steps by which our two archbishops and all our bishops became its constant patrons and protectors: probably those steps kept pace with its increasing importance and the good conduct of its members. But I have no difficulty in comprehending how it may frequently consist with the wisdom and the exalted situation of these dignitaries, to avoid,

for a time, all connection with new institutions, and to watch their motions, principles, and progress, before they either countenance or oppose them.

I will not deny, that, among many worthy churchmen, a sentiment has prevailed that the members of the establishment should be very cautious of connecting themselves with dissenters in any religious concern. They have thought it better that the parties should proceed each in its own way, without any opposition or interference. There have been always some, however, who have judged differently ; and I greatly mistake if of late years the number of these has not much increased. It has been discovered, that, wherever there is a fair probability of agreement, a friendly intercourse and communication among Christians are rather to be aimed at than avoided. Such intercourse and communication have been found to lessen that spirit of jealousy and distrust, which is but too often increased and exasperated by what passes at select and exclusive assemblies. Moderate persons of all persuasions, after having been present at mixed meetings of good men, where general objects of Christian practice had been treated with candid and pious observations, and all delicate points, tending to distrust and separation, avoided, have been known to express surprise at the display of so much good temper and charity in instances where they had expected little but selfishness, suspicion, and irritation.

In this material alteration of the public sentiment I sincerely rejoice ; and I doubt not, if cultivated

with wisdom and perseverance, that it will lessen both the evils of dissent and dissent itself.

Considerations of this kind induce me to augur the very best consequences from the harmonious meetings of the members of the Bible Society, on a subject so universally acceptable to Christians as the dispersion of the holy Scriptures. Often have I wished that all members of our church, and especially its dignitaries, had been present at those meetings, where, as the late Bishop of London tells us, the Bishops of Durham and of Salisbury were delighted with the decorum, and calmness, and good temper with which the proceedings were conducted.

Now the pleasing inference I would draw from these remarks is strengthened by two important circumstances; 1st, The truly moderate and conciliatory sentiments delivered in the House of Lords by the Archbishop of Canterbury on the late measure of Lord Sidmouth; and, 2d, The gradual accession to the Bible Society of prelates eminent for learning and virtue, during the period of little more than *eight* years since that society was formed, and even subsequent to the commencement of this controversy.

It would be presumption in me to say more on a subject of so much delicacy; and I hope to be pardoned, by all the ecclesiastical dignitaries to whom I have alluded, for having said so much: My sole object is to prevent what I think an unfair inference being drawn, in consequence of the manner in which Dr. Marsh, in his Address to the Uni-

versity of Cambridge, has briefly described the two Bible Societies, and their connections.

#### 4. *The Puritans.*

There is, I think, no part of Dr. Marsh's Inquiry, in which he appears better satisfied with his own performance, than in his representation of what he calls the history of religion in the reign of Charles I.\* The penetrating eye of our Inquirer, in scrutinizing the events which preceded the abolition of the Liturgy in the year 1645, and comparing them with those of the present period, perceives so many points of resemblance as to afford to his mind matter for serious reflection.

The existing circumstances on which Dr. Marsh appears to found this resemblance, are, that the churchmen of the Bible Society are soaring into the regions of high Protestantism, till their own Church *entirely* disappears †;—that the Calvinistic clergy among them would not have much pain in *parting* with the Liturgy ‡;—and, in brief, that there is, in the principles and practice of the advocates of this Society, that neglect of Church-of-England Protestantism (as he would term it) which is now tending to the suppression of the Liturgy, and may terminate, as it did in the unhappy times of Charles I., in the subversion of the Establishment.

Could Dr. Marsh then find nothing in the zealous and active prosecution of the good work of dis-

\* Inquiry, p. 30.

† Ib. p. 47.

‡ Ib. p. 48.

persing so many Bibles, to mitigate such a harsh judgment as this?

History has been termed "philosophy teaching by examples:" and so it is, when the examples are duly applied to existing circumstances; — but not so, when historical facts, taken from the worst of times, are represented as corresponding with periods of a very different complexion; or, again, when due regard is not paid to the different species of danger which, at different times, may appear to threaten the good government and happiness of the people. Two periods may agree in the single circumstance of danger belonging to both; but if we neglect to keep in view the requisite distinction concerning its cause, we may easily become the dupes of injudicious, prejudiced, or interested alarmists.

The difference between our present circumstances and those which existed at the time of the great Rebellion have been pointed out by Mr. Vansittart, in his reply to Dr. Marsh, with so luminous and comprehensive a brevity, that it cannot be necessary to add another syllable on that head. There is an end of the argument\*.

\* "I think it altogether unnecessary to discuss the circumstances which attended the suppression of the Liturgy in the great Rebellion, because they seem to me totally irrelevant to the present question. Nothing can be more dissimilar to the state of government and the political constitution of the country in the reign of Charles I. than their actual situation. Nor have the ecclesiastical arrangements, and the public opinions on religious subjects, any greater resemblance. Compare the civil and military establishments, and all the means of influence possessed by the Government at that time, and at the present. Compare the violent exertions of un-

Still, however, there remain some circumstances in the Inquirer's account of this matter, which ought not to pass unnoticed.

I do not say that Dr. Marsh, in producing a portion of English history, was bound to put his readers in mind (as Mr. Vansittart has done) in how many essential points of view the present situation of this country differs from what it was in the reign of Charles I.; but I do say that candid and impartial inquirers after truth have very rarely exhibited a portion of historical narrative so entirely devoid of all relevant matter, and in a manner so extremely calculated to produce misconception.

In support of this observation, I may refer the reader to about nineteen pages of Dr. Marsh's Inquiry\*. It would detain me too long to go regularly through them all.

Those persons who are accurately versed in the history of the reign of Charles I. will at once perceive the several points which tend to prejudice

settled prerogative on the one hand, and the eager claim of undefined privileges and rights on the other, with the orderly and regular system which has been established since the Revolution. Compare the harsh exertions of ecclesiastical authority in the former period,—of authority often striving, by means unjustified by the forms of English law, and still more repugnant to its spirit, to repress the turbulence and ferment of a recent and unsettled reformation of religion, with the calm and mild exercise we have seen, for a century past, of the clerical jurisdiction, always directed by laws, and guided by moderation; and then say, whether there is now any reason to apprehend the renewal of that collision and conflict of passions and opinions in which the constitution of the Church and that of the State alike were overthrown."—See Three Letters of Mr. Vansittart to the Rev. Dr. Marsh, p. 33.

\* Inquiry, p. 30—49.

and mislead the judgment; and other persons, who have had less leisure for such inquiries, will, I think, be at least amused with the following examination of a portion of Dr. Marsh's narrative, and, perhaps, induced to investigate the whole more narrowly.

The Inquirer having informed us, in page 48, that a Calvinist may, in many respects, have a great regard for the English Liturgy, but that he cannot have much pain in parting with it, proceeds thus :

“Indeed we know that the English Liturgy was so offensive to the Calvinists in Scotland, that the very attempt to introduce it into that country produced an insurrection, which ended with the Solemn League and Covenant, to which the English Calvinists acceded. And this very Assembly of Divines declared, in the Preface to the Directory, that the Liturgy used in the Church of England . . . . . had proved an offence . . . . .”

My desire to prevent this work from swelling to an undue size, does not allow me to expose all the erroneous representations contained even in so small a part of the Inquiry as from page 47 to page 49.—The mention of certain dates,—the silence respecting others,—the expressions made use of,—the arrangement of those expressions,—the pretended resemblance between the sentiments of the advocates of the Bible Society and of the Puritans and the Assembly of Divines:—in these things united, there is an obscure jumble of materials, exhibited in such delusive colouring as can scarcely fail to produce a very unjust impression of the matter of fact, on the minds of those readers who have not leisure for a critical examination of historical questions.

On this account I solicit their candid attention to the following observations.

In the history of those times, and within the short space of about five years, we find two distinct public acts, each of which has been denominated a Covenant.

The first related exclusively to Scotland, and was subscribed in the early part of the year 1638, by the Nobles, Barons, &c. and Commons\* of that country, for the purpose of securing their religion.

If this be the Solemn League and Covenant to which Dr. Marsh alludes, it is true that it originated in an attempt of the Court to impose a Liturgy on Scotland †. It is also true that the attempt was followed by an insurrection. But it is not true that the English Calvinists, or that any Englishmen whatever, acceded to it.

This Covenant is by some historians called a Solemn League and Covenant ‡. It was sworn to at Edinburgh, Feb. 1638 §, and was among the first acts of the new order which took place there in consequence of the general tumults ||. "All the kingdom," says Lord Clarendon, "flocked to Edinburgh as in a general cause that concerned their salvation, and resolved themselves into a method of government ¶."

If Dr. Marsh had examined the dates of these transactions, and given them to the public, as he has given some other dates of those times, viz. in 1641,

\* Rushworth, p. 734. Nalson, p. 20. † July, 1637.

‡ Neale, II. 273. Macaulay, II. 268. § Rush. p. 741.

|| Hume, VI. 331. ¶ Clar. I. 89.

1643, 1645, there would have been less room for ambiguity.

The second covenant was subscribed in the latter part of 1643, and purported to be a covenant for the reform and defence of religion, and the peace and safety of the three kingdoms, England, Scotland, and Ireland. Of this latter covenant the proper title is a Solemn League and Covenant; and, if I mistake not, it is always called so by historians\*.

This is a very different instrument from the former covenant of 1638, and no further connected with it than as successive measures of violence are usually connected with each other in such turbulent seasons. It was a contrivance of the younger Vane, and has been considered as a political manœuvre of immense importance †. The fact was, that the English Parliament had at that time fallen into so great distress, from the success of the King's arms, that they were induced to send Commissioners to Edinburgh with ample powers to treat of a nearer union and confederacy with the Scottish nation ‡. By the address and management of Vane, the English and Scotch delegates were induced to agree upon this celebrated covenant. In Scotland, it was in one day approved and applauded both by their Assembly and Convention. It was then immediately dispatched to Westminster, where it also passed both the Assembly of Divines and the two Houses of Parliament. The members of the House of Commons subscribed their names to it in one roll of parch-

\* Rush. 478.

† Hume, VI. 542. Macaulay, IV. 60.

‡ Hume, VI. 542.

ment, and the Assembly of Divines in another. A few days after, the House of Lords did the same; and it appears that few of those episcopal divines, who made the greatest figure in the church after the Restoration, refused to subscribe it\*.

With these facts in view, let us now proceed to examine more particularly Dr. Marsh's representation of these transactions.

“The English Liturgy,” says he, “was so offensive to the Calvinists of Scotland, that the very attempt to introduce it into that country produced an insurrection, which ended with the Solemn League and Covenant, to which the English Calvinists acceded.”

I look on this passage as one of the most exceptionable in the whole Inquiry. A writer, in expressing his own opinions, be they ever so extraordinary, is not half so dangerous, as when he brings forward portions of history in such a way as to mislead his reader, either by the narrative itself or by the colouring in which it is exhibited. It is not every one that has leisure or opportunity to examine into the truth.

On the very first reading of this passage, I was convinced the statement was imperfect, and I suspected it to be unfair.

In regard to Dr. Marsh's objects, I knew that I could not be mistaken. Those objects were but too plain; namely, to disparage the church members of the Bible Society, and to assail Calvinism and Calvinists with incessant hostility.

\* Neale, III. 64.—See also, Burnet, I. 33.

These considerations certainly did not lessen my suspicions.

My objection, however, to this passage of Dr. Marsh's Inquiry, is not that his expressions do not, in my judgment, well accord either with the Covenant of 1638 or that of 1643, but because he has ventured roundly to affirm, that "the English Liturgy was so offensive to the Calvinists of Scotland, that the very attempt to introduce it into that country produced an insurrection." The truth is, *any* liturgy was incompatible with the principles of the Kirk of Scotland, independently of the subject-matter of such liturgy. It suited Dr. Marsh's purpose, however, to represent the defect of Calvinism in the English Liturgy as the principal point which offended the people of Scotland.

But what will the reader think, when he is informed, that, after all, it was not the English Liturgy, the attempt to introduce which proved so very offensive to the Scotch; but a liturgy differing from it, partly through the omission of some most important articles, and partly through the insertion of others?

It is well known that king James had designed to bring the Kirk of Scotland to a conformity with the Church of England; and for that purpose appointed some of the Scottish bishops to compile a Liturgy, or Book of Common Prayer, to be used there. A Liturgy having been accordingly prepared, was sent to him into England for his approbation.

King Charles the First, his son, in prosecution of his father's design, directed Archbishop Laud, the Bishop of Ely, and other bishops, to review and alter as they pleased this Service-book; which they did,

says Whitlocke, with some material alterations from that used in England\*.

I will mention several of those alterations, and my readers will judge of their tendency.

1. In the Communion Service of the Church of England, the prayer immediately following the Lord's Prayer, after all have communicated, runs thus: "We, thy humble servants, entirely desire thy Fatherly goodness to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving . . . . humbly beseeching thee, that all we, who are partakers of this holy communion, may be fulfilled with thy grace and heavenly benediction."

In the new Service-book this prayer is very considerably altered. It is called, The Memorial, or Prayer of Oblation; and it *precedes* the receiving of the communion. It runs thus: "We, thy humble servants, *do celebrate and make here, before thy Divine Majesty, with these holy gifts, the memorial which thy Son hath willed us to make; having in remembrance his blessed passion, mighty resurrection, and glorious ascension; rendering unto thee most hearty thanks for the innumerable benefits procured unto us by the same*" . . . . "humbly beseeching thee, that whosoever shall be *partakers of this holy communion, may worthily receive the most precious body and blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, and be fulfilled with thy grace and heavenly benediction, and made one body with him, that he may dwell in them and they in him.*"

Now, without undertaking to determine the full and precise effect of these alterations, it is impossible to deny, that every Papist would very much prefer this passage as it stands in the intended Scotch Ser-

\* Whitlocke, Mem. 25.

vice-book, to the corresponding one in our Communion Service. Not only new words are introduced, but the order of the communion is inverted. The Scotch Commissioners, when they charged Laud with being the author of Popish innovations, particularly objected to this inversion of the order of the Communion Service. They said, the spiritual praise and thanksgiving were here joined with the prayer of consecration before the Communion, under the name also of memorial, or oblation, for no other end, but that the memorial and sacrifice of praise, mentioned in it, might be understood according to the popish meaning, not of the spiritual sacrifice, but of the oblation of the body of the Lord \*. And they observe, what I think is well worthy of notice in our present view of this subject, that the spiritual praise and thanksgiving are placed pertinently, in the Prayer-book of England, *after* the communion.

The reader's particular attention is here called to two distinct alterations. In our Prayer-book, 1st, the prayer of thanksgiving is placed *after* the communion; and, 2dly, it does not contain the words, "may worthily receive the most precious body and blood of thy Son Jesus Christ," but merely says, "humbly beseeching thee, that all we, who ARE partakers of this holy communion," &c. &c. Now those words, "may worthily receive the most precious body and blood of thy Son Jesus Christ," is a clause of one of the Romish missals, and, on account of its favouring the notion of a corporal presence, had been struck out of this prayer by our English reformers, but in the new Service-book it is not only restored, but placed immediately after the consecra-

\* Rush. p. 116. 1740.

tion, and before the communion, just where it had stood in the Ordinary of Sarum\*.

Whoever reflects that the Popish notion is, that the bread and wine are transubstantiated by the consecration of the priest, must think it strange that such alterations should be made by Protestants, after what our Reformers had done by way of precaution.

2. A Scotch author on this occasion acutely observes, that the prayer in the English Liturgy, viz. "We do not presume to come, &c." stands *before* the consecration of the elements, but that in the new Service-book it is placed after the consecration and the prayer of oblation, where it formerly stood in the Ordinary of Sarum, till it was removed by our Reformers. Now, says he, as it stands in the English Liturgy it cannot possibly be distorted, by the very Papists themselves, to a corporal presence; whereas being again transplanted to its old place in the mass, *after* the consecration, and of course after the supposed transubstantiation of the bread and wine, it undoubtedly countenances that Popish doctrine.

From this account, the impartial reader will have no difficulty in comprehending how it happened that the people of Scotland, ever alive to the slightest symptom of Popery, should have been so averse to receive the Service-book.

And I mistake very much, if he will easily forget Dr. Marsh's explanation of their dislike, viz. "The English Liturgy proved so offensive to the Calvinists of Scotland, that the very attempt to introduce it into that country produced an insurrection."

\* Bayly, 159. Fuller, 192.

Not one syllable do I find, among the numerous objections of the Scotch, on the score of a defect of Calvinism either in the Common Prayer-book of England or in the new Service-book of Scotland.

3. The following is another very material alteration:—

In the prayer before the Communion, the following passage, which had been expunged by the English reformers, is restored and inserted. “Sanctify these thy gifts and creatures of bread and wine, that *they may be unto us* \* *the* body and blood of thy most dearly beloved Son: so that we receiving them, according to thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ’s holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of *the same* his most precious body and blood.”

4. Besides these, and some other additions of the same tendency, there is in the Scotch Liturgy the following most remarkable omission of the words, “Take and eat this, in remembrance that Christ died for thee; and feed on him in thy heart by faith, with thanksgiving:”—a passage, says Fuller, “destructive of transubstantiation; and directing the soul to a *spiritual* repast on the Saviour.” And it will not escape the reader’s observation, that it is in the rejecting of such words as these, *after* they had been once inserted by our Reformers for the purpose of more effectually excluding the Popish ideas of tran-

\* See the Scotch Service-book: also Fuller, p. 162.

It seems the words, “that they may be unto us,” had been the form in one of the old Liturgies of Sarum. They were also retained in the first Liturgy of Edward VI. They are a translation of the Mass Book, “*ut fiant nobis.*”

substantiation, that we may perceive a decisive symptom of an inclination to Popery. Moreover, when this very omission was objected to Archbishop Laud on his trial, he said plainly, "I see no hurt in the omission—none at all;" and he even intimates some degree of dislike of the words, "Take and eat this, . . . . and feed on him in thy heart, with faith, with thanksgiving," as favouring the tenet of Zuingle the Swiss reformer. And with regard to the insertion of the words just mentioned, "that thy gifts and creatures may be unto us the body and blood of Christ," he spoke out, that he wished with all his heart they were in the English Service-book\*. These very words, however, had been expunged by the English reformers.

A few such facts as these, in my judgment, manifest more clearly what were the real opinions and wishes of Archbishop Laud, and the other leaders of the ecclesiastical government at that time, than whole volumes of controversial dispute and contradiction.

The *English* Liturgy, says Dr. Marsh, was so offensive to the Calvinists of Scotland, that the very attempt to introduce it produced an insurrection!!

We have just seen with how little propriety the Liturgy intended for Scotland could be called the *English* Liturgy. It will now be proper to inquire, how far Calvinism was concerned in the rejection of it by the people of Scotland. And for this purpose, the most satisfactory method must be, to consult the authentic documents respecting the feelings of the Scotch at the time when the King (advised

\* Laud, 121. Fuller 162.

by the bishops\*) commanded the Service-book to be received throughout Scotland.

The constant discourse, says Burnet †, of the discontented ministers and noblemen, was, that Popery was to be introduced, and liberties destroyed, and the bishops to blame for all. No sooner was the Liturgy begun to be read, but the people, with great outcries and clamours, cried out, "A Pope! a Pope! Antichrist!" and threw a stool at the bishop's head ‡. This took place July 23d, 1637. In the October following, we find the nobles, barons, ministers, burgesses, and commons of Scotland, petitioning the Lords of the Secret Council against the new Service-book, and also against a new book of canons and constitutions §. "In the Scotch Book of Common Prayer," they say, "are sown the seeds of divers superstitions, idolatry, and false doctrine, contrary to the true religion established in Scotland by divers Acts of Parliament;" and they even add, that "the *Service-book of England* is abused, especially in the matter of communion, by additions, subtractions . . . to the disadvantage of reformation, as the Roman Mass is, in the more substantial points" . . . In the Book of Canons, they complain of its being ordained, "that whosoever shall affirm that the form of worship inserted in the Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments, contains any thing repugnant to the Scriptures . . . shall be excommunicated." They complain also of a hundred canons more, tending

\* Burnet, p. 31.

† Ibid.

‡ Rushworth, p. 385.

§ Rushworth, pp. 406, 407. 1637.

to the reviving and fostering of abolished superstitions, &c.

In a few months after, viz. February 1638, a covenant and bond of union, hastened by the imprudence of the Court, was subscribed at Edinburgh by all ranks and orders, and was afterwards dispersed throughout the country.

In this public instrument, the Scotch declare their abhorrence of all kinds of Papistry in general; and they enumerate sundry particulars of Popish doctrine, discipline, and ceremonies. They recite acts of Parliament, by which the reformed religion was established among them; and engage to defend the king, their laws, and liberties, and to stand by one another at all adventures, and not to suffer themselves to be divided by any terror or allurements.

Further, in December of the year 1640, when the Scotch Commissioners exhibited charges against Laud, their principal complaint was, that his Grace had been the adviser of the new books of Canons and Common Prayer.—The Book of Common Prayer, they said, “was brought in without warrant from their Kirk, and contained many Popish errors and ceremonies, and the seeds of gross superstitions and idolatries\*.” “The Liturgy of England,” say they, “abolisheth all that may import the oblation of any unbloody sacrifice; but here we have, besides the preparatory oblation of the elements (which is neither to be found in the book of England, nor in King Edward’s book), the oblation of the body and blood of Christ †.”

\* Rushworth, p. 734.

† Ibid. p. 112. 1640.

They also say\*, that “the book itself, as it standeth interlined, margined, and patched up, is much more than all that is expressed in his (the Archbishop’s) letters; and the changes and supplements themselves, taken from the Mass-book and other Romish rituals, by which he maketh it to vary from the book of England, are more pregnant testimonies of his Popish spirit and wicked intentions, which he would have put in execution upon us, than can be denied.”

“The Scotch prelates petitioned, that somewhat might be abated of the English ceremonies, as the cross in baptism, the ring in marriage, and some other things. But the Archbishop of Canterbury would not only have these kept, but a great many more, and worse, superadded, which was nothing else but the adding of fuel to the fire. To express and discover all, would require a whole book. We shall only touch some few in the matter of communion,” &c.

This is what Dr. Marsh calls the English Liturgy!!!

The reader has now before him superabundant matter to determine the question, Whether a defect of Calvinistic sentiments in the new-modelled Service-book, which was imposed on Scotland by Charles I. (for we have seen it was not the English Liturgy), was the principal cause of its rejection, and of the ensuing tumults at Edinburgh.—All the original documents, which I have examined and referred to, are full of objections on the ground of

\* Rushworth, p. 113. 1640.

Popery, Popish ceremonies, and Popish corruptions; but not one word have I perceived, respecting Calvinism, as though the want of that doctrinal system, either in the English or the Scotch Liturgy, had given offence to the Presbyterians of Scotland. Yet Dr. Marsh chooses to say, "Indeed we know, that the English Liturgy was so offensive to the Calvinists of Scotland, &c."

I confess, I know not how to help our Inquirer out of the dilemma in which I perceive him to be involved. I am very unwilling to suppose that he was aware how materially, how substantially, in a great doctrinal point, the Scotch Service-book differed from the English Liturgy; for if indeed he was aware of the great difference, a difference of no less importance than the implication at least of a near approach towards transubstantiation itself, it must seem utterly unaccountable how he should have omitted to mention that, which was undoubtedly both a natural and a just explanation of the offence taken by the Scotch, and should have substituted in its place a mere creature of his own imagination.

But if I take a different view of the subject, and suppose he was not aware of the great difference that had been made in the two Services, I am compelled to conclude, that our Inquirer is a person by no means well qualified to pronounce judgment on a question of ecclesiastical research such as this.

I know not whether Dr. Marsh may here again reproach me for proclaiming my knowledge of history; but be that as it may, I cannot but think

that if he himself had taken a little more pains to look into the original documents, for the purpose of ascertaining the real contents of the Scotch Service-book, he would have better deserved the character of a diligent, fair, and candid Inquirer.— He was endeavouring to establish a parallel between the Scotch Calvinists and many of the friends of the Bible Society, in their common *disinclination* to our Liturgy; and surely there is no case, where greater exactness in the statement of facts is called for, than when they are to be made the ground of an accusation.

How treacherous are the human passions! Let Dr. Marsh, if he can, and be so disposed, grind the Calvinists to powder; but let not this be done by the operation of such engines as are prohibited by the immutable laws of equity.

I am anxious that this point should be thoroughly understood, and it may contribute to perspicuity to put the substance of the foregoing detail into a few words.

There is no part of English history more clear, than that it was the imprudent and arbitrary zeal of Charles I. and his advisers, in imposing on Scotland a liturgy and certain canons of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, which first lighted up the flame of disaffection in that country, and produced the tumultuous agitations which followed. These were soon succeeded by violent combinations throughout the whole kingdom, for the express purpose of resisting the attempted innovations in religion. The canons were promulgated in 1635; and the Liturgy,

called indeed the *English* Liturgy, but deeply tinged with Popish alterations, was appointed to be read on Easter-day 1637.

Burnet represents these innovations as the very circumstances which "heightened all to a crisis," especially as they were introduced without any previous consent either of church or state. "And as if all things had conspired to carry on their ruin, the bishops, not satisfied with the general high commission court, produced warrants from the king for setting up such commissions in their several dioceses, in which, with other assessors, ministers, and gentlemen, all of their own nomination, they might punish offenders\*." The king, by proclamation, exhorted the people to submit. The people, including many persons of rank and distinction, encountered the royal proclamation by a protest. The insurrection blazed out at once, and produced a new order of things in Scotland; which was soon followed by the famous Solemn League and Covenant, and by the abolition of the Canons and Liturgy, and of Episcopacy itself.

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#### ADDITIONAL FACTS AND OBSERVATIONS.

Some additional facts and observations may assist in throwing further light on this curious and important part of the history of Great Britain.

1. It is well known, and therefore it may seem

\* Hume, VI. 327. Clarendon, I. 106. Rushworth, 401.  
1637. Burnet, 30.

almost superfluous to mention, that the people of Scotland were in those times Calvinistic in their sentiments, as indeed they continue to be at this day.

2. It is also well known, that some years before, certain subtle questions concerning predestination and grace had been started; and that the opinions of Arminius were condemned in the Synod of Dort, and were also very much disapproved in Scotland.

3. The zealous religionists of Scotland looked upon the Liturgy and Ceremonies of the Church of England as Popish in a very high degree.

4. The Scotch in general had imbibed a deep prejudice against every thing that savoured of Popery.

5. The Scotch ministers and people had always entertained a great respect for the Lord's-day, inso-much that the religious observance of that day was considered by them as an essential article of faith.

Now it was towards a people of this character and of these habits that most of the Scotch bishops, together with their adherents, thought proper to conduct themselves in the following manner.

1. They endeavoured by all possible means, both in their sermons and conversation, to abate their prejudice against Popery; and not without some reflections on the Reformers.

2. They openly and zealously defended the tenets of Arminius.

3. They endeavoured to refute the notion which the Scotch entertained of the sanctity of the Lord's-day; and by their practices manifested a disregard of its obligations\*.

\* The spirit which prevailed in this matter among the ecclesiastical dignitaries does but too clearly appear by Laüd's publication of

4. Besides all this, they were avowed zealots for the Liturgy and Ceremonies of the Church of England.

Whoever looks carefully into the history of these transactions, will find the representation now given confirmed by the most authentic documents. Bishop Burnet, therefore, justly concludes, that it was on *these accounts* that the Scotch bishops lost all their esteem with the people.

Our Inquirer, on the contrary, would have us believe, that it was the want of Calvinism in the English Liturgy which was so offensive to the Scotch, and which proved the chief cause of the ill humour and mischief of that period. He is here, however, peculiarly unfortunate. We not only hear of no complaint from them respecting the want of Calvinism, but we have seen that it was not even the English Liturgy which gave the offence.

In fact, as has been observed, the Scotch disliked all liturgies; add to which, that, according to them, the English Liturgy had a strong leaning to Popery, and the new Service-book a much stronger.

Of the second Solemn League and Covenant, which did not take place till more than five years after the former, I have already given a short account. This covenant had quite as little to do with Calvinism as the former. It was contrived for the

a Book of Sports for the Lord's-day. (Rushworth for 1633, p. 194.) And when this was objected to the archbishop at his trial, he answered, that he had the king's warrant for printing the book: but the managers of the House of Commons rejoined, that it was his own practice to go to bowls in summer on that day.—Laud's Life and History, p. 342.

express purpose of gaining the Scotch to join the Parliament against the Royalists. The Westminster Divines told the Parliament, that it might be subscribed with a safe conscience\*; but Lord Clarendon says, the King's victory at Newbury cleared and removed more doubts than the Assembly had done †. "The principal contriver of it, and the man by whom the committee in Scotland was entirely and stupidly governed, Sir H. Vane the younger, was not afterwards more known to abhor the Covenant and the Presbyterians than he was at that very time known to do, and laughed at them as much as ever he did afterwards."—"He was chosen to cozen and deceive a whole nation, which was thought to excel in craft and cunning; which he did with notable pregnancy and dexterity; and prevailed with a people, that could not otherwise be prevailed on than by advancing their idol Presbytery, to sacrifice their peace, their interest, and their faith."

The truth is, a junction was formed of Scotch and English against the Royalists; and, to use my Lord Clarendon's term, the many in both countries were *cozened* by the few; but I trust the readers of Dr. Marsh's Inquiry will not be so cozened by the author's representation, as to fancy that Calvinism was the great engine in producing the distractions of those times.

The very next sentence of our Inquirer furnishes another curious instance of his invidious method of referring to Calvinism.

He tells us, p. 49, that the Assembly of Divines, in their Preface to the Directory, which was ex-

\* Clarendon, II. 285, 286.

† Ibid. II. 292.

changed for the Liturgy, declared that the English Liturgy had proved an offence not only to many of the godly at home, but also to the reformed churches abroad. Now, says our Inquirer, the foreign churches which go by the name of "reformed churches," are Calvinistic:—that is, The English Liturgy gave offence to the reformed churches: the reformed churches are Calvinistic: the offence, therefore, was a want of Calvinism.

Let us closely examine this argument. To me the reasoning appears as superficial, illogical, and inconclusive, as the insinuation intended to be conveyed by it is uncandid and censorious.

Suppose the English Liturgy to be Calvinistic in the highest degree; is it for that reason impossible there should be in it any thing that could give offence to other Calvinistic churches? In other words, is it impossible that two churches, perfectly agreeing on the tenet of Calvinism, should disagree on any other account? It is to me surprising that Dr. Marsh should have hazarded an argument of this kind, when he might have known that that very Preface to the Directory, which he was quoting, states several specific reasons why the Liturgy of England was discarded \*, but is perfectly silent as to Calvinism. Yet Dr. Marsh, with this Directory before his eyes, chooses to omit the reasons which are there given for the suppression of the Liturgy, and to substitute conjectural reasons of his own invention.

\* The Liturgy is said to be too long, and to have in it many unprofitable and burdensome ceremonies, to hinder preaching, to create idleness, and such like.

Nothing can stand before such liberties as these.

In our times, the Church of England is by many looked upon as Calvinistic; by more, perhaps, as Arminian; and by still more, as neither the one nor the other.

I pretend not, in this chapter, to give any opinion of my own on so nice a question. I rather refer the reader to what I shall say on this subject in the section on Personalities, and to the learned and impartial exposition of our 17th Article by Bishop Burnet, who was himself an anti-calvinist.

The point which I have undertaken to establish is, that the Inquirer has grievously misrepresented the fact. However Calvinistical the Scotch church and the reformed churches abroad may have been, it is an insinuation altogether unfounded, that either the people of Scotland, in 1638, took offence on account of a want of Calvinism in the Liturgy of the Church of England, or that the Westminster Assembly of Divines are to be understood as intimating in their Preface to the Directory, that a similar want was the great cause which had offended the reformed churches abroad.

The curious reader will not be displeased to see several facts brought together, not mentioned in general history, tending to shew how far the Calvinists of those days approved or disliked the doctrinal views of the Church of England, as they respect the Calvinistic controversy.

After the murder of the Duke of Buckingham by Felton, and the translation of Laud to the see of London, this active prelate appears to have had much of the King's confidence in the direction of state affairs.

One of his first acts, with a view to stifle the disputes between the Calvinists and Arminians, was to reprint the Thirty-nine Articles, with a Royal Declaration at the head of them to the following effect: His Majesty directs all further curious search into nice doctrinal points to be laid aside; and that such things be shut up in God's promises, as set forth in the Holy Scriptures\*.

The Calvinistic divines complained loudly of the King's declaration. They drew up an address, stating, that it restrained them from preaching the whole counsel of God; that it brought them under a most uncomfortable dilemma; that they must either be censured for opposing his majesty's authority, or incur the Divine displeasure for not executing uprightly their commission, by preaching those saving doctrines of God's free grace and predestination, which greatly confirm our faith of eternal salvation, and kindle our love to God, as the seventeenth Article expressly mentions; and that they ought not, for maintaining these constant doctrines of the church, and for confuting the opposite Pelagian and Arminian heresies, to be considered violators of his majesty's acts. This address was stopped in its passage, so that it never reached the King's ears. It was found in Laud's study, endorsed thus with his own hand, "Copy of the intended petition about liberty of preaching predestination," &c. &c.†

It is true this was the petition only of a certain number of individuals. It is, however, clear that a similar feeling pervaded the House of Commons at this time. It was in January 1529 that they made the

\* Wilkins Concil. IV. 475. † Prynne, 165. Collier, 746.

following vow, or protestation, on the subject of religion \*. “ We, the Commons in Parliament assembled, do claim, protest, and avow for truth the sense of the Articles of Religion which were established by Parliament in the 13th year of our late Queen Elizabeth, which, by the public act of the Church of England, and by the general and current expositions of the writers of our church, have been delivered unto us. And we reject the sense of the Jesuits and Arminians, and all others who differ from us.”

In less than a month after this, the Commons came to another resolution †, namely, that “ Whosoever shall bring in innovation of religion, or by favour or countenance seem to extend or introduce Popery or Arminianism, or other opinions disagreeing from the truth and orthodox church, shall be reputed a capital enemy to the kingdom and commonwealth.”

These facts must carry along with them a conviction that neither within nor without the House of Commons, at that period, did the party, usually denominated Calvinistical, conceive that there were any anticalvinistic tenets in the formularies of the Church of England which could give them offence.

After the episcopal divines had left the Westminster Assembly, and the second, or general, Solemn League and Covenant had been subscribed ‡, the resolutions of the remainder of this memorable body of men appear to have been directed more by cunning intrigues and virulent factions, than by upright and dispassionate principles.

To support the credit of the English Parliament

\* Jan. 1628-9, Rush. 650. † Id. 660; Feb. 25.

‡ Sept. 1643.

with the reformed Protestant churches abroad, the Commons ordered the Assembly to write letters to those churches, for the purpose of informing them what evidence they now had that his Majesty's agents intended to introduce Popery\*. They were also instructed to charge those agents with condemning other Protestant churches as unsound, because not prelatical, and with endeavouring to hinder reformation.

Agreeably to these directions, the main object of the Assembly's long letter upon this occasion is to complain of a growing disposition to encourage Popery in the three kingdoms, and to depress and even extirpate true reformed religion. It sets forth, that all the good laws against Papists are suspended; that Jesuits are set free; that notorious Papists come to court, and reside there; that agents from Rome are received, and the most zealous ministers of religion bitterly persecuted; that godly ministers, who refused to publish a Book of Sports for the Lord's-day, and conform to other superstitions, have had their mouths stopped; and that a new Popish book of Service, Rites, and Ceremonies, had been imposed on Scotland, to which the piety and zeal of that nation would not submit. In brief, the letter is full of bitter reproaches against Prelates and Prelacy, but there is not one word in it concerning Calvinistic sentiments †.

It may not be inexpedient to add a word concerning the Independents. We have, as yet, discovered no symptom of ill humour among the Presbyterian party, on account of a defect of Calvinism in the

\* Rush. 1643, p. 371.

† Ib. 1643, p. 371.

English church ; but we are not to forget, that both in the Westminster Assembly, and in the House of Commons itself, there arose, in those troublesome times, a sect of a very bold and determined character, called Independents, and sometimes Congregational Brethren. Oliver Cromwell was one of these ; and as they were then rapidly increasing both in number and importance, an impartial inquirer is naturally led to observe the sentiments, and the temper, with which this firm and compact body of men viewed the English church, in regard to the doctrinal point which is under our present consideration.

Their own account of our church is expressed in very few words\*.

“As to the Church of England,” say they, “we profess before God and the world that we do apprehend a great deal of defilement in their way of worship, and a great deal of unwarranted power exercised by their church governors ;” . . . . . but they also profess “their agreement in *doctrine* with the Articles of the Church of England and other reformed churches †.” Yet the Independents are well known to have been all, or nearly all, Calvinistic in sentiment.

I readily confess, that such clouds of evidence were not necessary in the examination of the point before us ; and therefore Tully’s observation may

\* These Dissenters, in an Apologetical Narration, petitioned Parliament most pathetically, calling it the most sacred refuge or asylum for mistaken and misjudged innocence.—Apol. Narrative, p. 2. Fuller, 212 ; 1643.

† Apolog. Narr. Indep. p. 29-

seem justly applicable to this case. “In re non dubiâ testibus utitur non necessariis.”

Dr. Marsh, however, appears to me to have had it much at heart to throw every slur he possibly could on Calvinism and Calvinists. I can easily understand how, in a controversy like the present, and during the prevailing disreputation of Calvinism, he might be tempted to do so. But that he should have ventured to intimate, that, from its want of Calvinism, the English Liturgy had proved offensive to the Scotch Calvinists, and to the churches abroad, and had also produced mischief in Scotland, is a proceeding for which I am at a loss to account.

Is it, that, when the mind is strongly prepossessed, we are sometimes apt to argue ourselves, in the face of the clearest evidence, into a groundless belief of the facts which we are anxious to establish? For example, it is allowed, on all hands, that both the Presbyterians and the Independents were Calvinistical in their sentiments. But Dr. Marsh thinks that the Church of England is decidedly anti-calvinistic: he would therefore conclude that it *must* have been the Anti-calvinism, or at least the want of Calvinism, in the English Liturgy, which gave offence both to the reformed churches abroad, and to the Presbyterians and other Calvinists of Scotland.

The drudgery of a laborious research into historical documents is apt to prove an ungrateful task to an impetuous controversialist; otherwise our Inquirer might, without any very great difficulty, have convinced himself of the two following particulars.

1. That in general the Puritans were not only themselves Calvinistical in sentiment, but also

maintained the doctrinal tenets of our church to be so\*.

2. That the grounds of their objection to the English Book of Common Prayer were of this sort: viz. †—That it was too much like the form of the Church of Rome:—That our mode of prayer was too easy, and our prayers too long:—That they disliked the minister's attire and his gestures:—That lessons and prayers were improperly mixed; and the Lord's Prayer too often repeated:—That time was wasted in music, and in the people's responses:—That the Athanasian Creed was now unnecessary; and that unseasonable things were to be found in the Litany. To all which may be added, the institution of godfathers and godmothers, the interrogatories and the cross in Baptism, the ring in Marriage, and a number of passages in the Catechism and in the Burial and Communion Service.

A careful examination into matters of fact will soon satisfy every impartial inquirer after truth, that when offence was really taken, these things and others of a similar class were the points which gave that offence to Protestants both at home and abroad.

I would here suggest another very material circumstance, which Dr. Marsh appears to have overlooked; namely, that although many, both of the English and foreign Calvinists of those times, may be supposed to have held the Calvinistic sentiments too strongly to be justified by an appeal to the Liturgy and 17th Article of our Church; and al-

\* Neale, I. 445; II. 473.

† Nichols, Supplement, p. 21.

though they might also, without breach of consistency, have been disposed at any time to avail themselves of a favourable opportunity for strengthening their own system by legal and peaceable amendments and alterations; nevertheless; if they cordially persuaded themselves (as many do in our own times), that the Church of England was by no means Anti-calvinistic, but Calvinistic (though in a lower degree than what accorded with their own tenets), they might still, without a murmur, acquiesce conscientiously in the existing establishment, well convinced of the imperfection of all human contrivances, and the almost certain evils attendant on innovation.

Or if, for the sake of further illustration, we view this matter on the Anti-calvinistic side; can there be the least doubt but that at present there exist many sincere members of the English church, who consider its doctrines as Anti-calvinistic, and who, though they can very honestly subscribe the 17th Article of our religion as it now stands, will not deny that they themselves, nevertheless, would not express the subject of that Article precisely in the same terms in which it is now expressed, were it left to them to new-model it, subject to the direction and approbation of legal authority.

Hitherto we have taken it for granted that the Liturgy of our church did actually give offence to foreign Protestants. But what shall we say, if this fact, on examination, shall be found to rest on very slender evidence?

It might be expected, that neither the Parliament, who discarded the Liturgy of our church and esta-

blished the Directory in its place, nor the Assembly of Divines, who framed that Directory, were likely to have much weight with our Inquirer, as narrators of general report, especially as he knew them to be influenced by so many partial affections and considerations. And therefore it was with surprise that I observed him not only holding forth, without due warrant, a deficiency of Calvinism, as the explanation of the Assembly's assertion that the Liturgy of the Church of England had given offence to the reformed churches abroad, but also taking it for granted that this assertion was true, and that such offence had been actually taken by those churches.

Surely our Inquirer ought to have been clear that such offence had been taken, before he ventured so boldly to intimate that a defect of Calvinism was its cause, or to point out a most invidious analogy between those times and the present, in regard to the sentiments entertained on that abstruse and intricate subject.

Now, is it possible that Dr. Marsh should not know that a most valuable and impartial historian of our church had stated both sides of the question in the most unexceptionable manner? Thus:

#### Against the Liturgy.

“Offence thereby hath been given to the reformed churches abroad.”

#### Answer for the Liturgy.

“No foreign church ever in print expressed any such offence; and if some particular men have disliked it, as many and as eminent have manifested their approbation thereof.”

## Against the Liturgy.

“ Mr. Calvin himself disliked the Liturgy: in his letter to the Lord Protector, charitably calling many things therein ‘*tolerabiles ineptias*\*.’ ”

## Answer for the Liturgy.

“ Mr. Calvin is but one. Besides, he spake against the first Liturgy in 1st Edward VI., which was afterwards reviewed in that king’s reign, and again in 1st Elizabeth.”

## Against the Liturgy.

“ It, being compliant with the Papists in a great part of their service, doth not a little confirm them in their superstition and idolatry.”

\* If our Inquirer be really persuaded that whenever a Calvinist takes offence at the English Liturgy, the leading cause of the offence must be a supposed defect of the peculiar doctrinal principles of Calvinism; I know no instance so well calculated to have the effect of opening his eyes on this point as the case of Calvin himself.

When the English Protestants, who, during Queen Mary’s persecution, had fled to Francfort, requested Calvin to give them his judgment on the English Liturgy, he answered, that he perceived in it many *tolerabiles ineptias*. By those two words, says he, I mean that this Liturgy is not so pure as one would have wished. But as there is no manifest impiety in it, it might well have been borne for a time. If pure religion had flourished in England, amendments ought to have been made. However, as there is now an end of the reformation that was begun in England, and you, here in exile, are desirous of forming a church afresh, you are at liberty to use your best judgment in this matter; and I must say, I cannot comprehend why any persons should be so fond of the leavings of Popish drags.—Epist. Calv. IX. 98.

Relicks of Popery still make the complaint; and not one word is said of a defect of those tenets which go by the name of the writer of this letter.

## Answer for the Liturgy.

“ It complieth with the Papists in what they have retained of antiquity; and not what they have superadded of idolatry \* . . . . .”

It appears therefore doubtful, to say the least, whether the Liturgy of the Church of England gave offence at all to the reformed churches abroad; and certainly not a whisper of any murmuring is heard from them on account of a want of Calvinism.

Dr. Marsh, I think, has given credit much too easily to the hasty charge, that our Liturgy did give such offence. He has also too hastily advanced the uncandid and unworthy conjecture, that there are now Calvinistic churchmen, members of the Bible Society, who would not have much pain in parting with it.

When our Inquirer has seriously reflected on these things, he may perhaps be led to conclude that it would have been better if he had suffered the case of the old Puritans to have remained at rest, and had not attempted to draw a parallel where materials for a parallel are not to be found. He should have remembered, that when a man determines to strike a heavy, merciless blow, at an object which is not very distinct and obvious, he should be sure to have accurately ascertained the direction of his blow; otherwise, when the stroke descends, it will infallibly jar the hand and disappoint the intention of the man who aims it.

\* Fuller, XI. 223.

## GENERAL REFLECTIONS.

The reader will recollect that the abolition of the Liturgy, in 1645, did not actually take place till after much blood had been spilt in the civil wars; till matters had been carried almost to the last extremity; till a few desperate fanatics had gained the ascendant in Parliament; and till all legal government, in its several branches, was on the eve of a dissolution.

The abolition of the Liturgy at such a season was not the cause of the general confusion, but a collateral effect of the extinction\* of almost every thing that was virtuous, and honourable, and praiseworthy among the leaders of the contending factions.

To affirm that a church, to which a liturgy is essential, will necessarily be endangered if its component members should learn to disparage that liturgy, is little more than an identical proposition. Who will deny, that whenever such a liturgy as that of the Church of England shall be disparaged by its own members, the welfare of the Establishment will be in the utmost danger? Yet even in that case, it will be more accurate to say, that the danger will arise, not so much from the actual disparagement of the liturgy, as from the want of religious principle

\* Very early in life I was led, by the acute Mr. David Hume, to take notice of the disposition in men to mistake collateral effects for causes. It is a thing that perpetually occurs.—See *Essays on Money and Interest*. Vol. I.

which has led to it. In other words, the tree must be first corrupt, and bad fruit will be inevitable.

What I have now advanced is confirmed by the private history of many of the principal members of our church in the reign of Charles I. Like the Jews of old, in our Saviour's time, they were zealous of the forms of the law, but had lost the spirit of it, and were become haughty and overbearing and unchristian in their general deportment. The throne was filled by a prince, who, although, I believe, sincerely attached to the liturgy and the general constitution of our ecclesiastical establishment, had nevertheless trampled on the just rights of his subjects in many instances; had almost entirely lost their confidence, and in its place had produced suspicion, indignation, and alarm. The great faults and greater imprudence, of Archbishop Laud \*, as long as he lived, exasperated these evils. Even the virtues of that unfortunate prelate did but ill qualify him to pilot the vessel of the state in so stormy a conjuncture. Who sees not, therefore, that this was the moment for the Presbyterian party who were attached to some species of ecclesiastical order, but averse to episcopacy, liturgies, and ceremonies, to unite with the Independents (who despised almost all order) for the common object of pulling down

\* Let the Archbishop's favourers, says Rapin, say what they please, he was one of the chief authors of the troubles that afflicted England; 1st, by supporting with all his might the principles of that arbitrary power, which the Court strove for several years to establish; 2dly, by using too much strictness and rigidness in the observance of trifles in Divine service, and compelling every body to conform themselves thereto.—Rapin, XII. 254.

the English ecclesiastical fabric, to which both these powerful sects fostered a systematic dislike? And when this common purpose was obtained, who is surprised to find, that as the Parliament grew every day more corrupt and unprincipled, that portion of it which was the most intemperate, and the most artful and hypocritical, being at the same time possessed of the greatest talents, and the least encumbered with moral restraints, should have succeeded in securing to themselves the principal share of the supreme authority?

These considerations have suggested to my mind the following conclusions.

1. The downfall of our constitution, both civil and ecclesiastical, was not owing to any single cause, but to a remarkable concurrence of causes. The conduct of Charles I. and of both the Houses of Parliament, and the decay of Christian practice and principles, both among churchmen and dissenters, notwithstanding some splendid exceptions, greatly contributed to the mischief.

2. One of the first and chief firebrands was the king's rash attempt to impose upon the Scotch, by his own authority, not the English Liturgy, but the English Liturgy mutilated, and very much modified in favour of Popery.

3. The profaneness and immoralities of the clergy injured their credit, and almost ruined their influence, and gave great advantage to sectarian enthusiasm and hypocrisy.

4. Due respect for the Liturgy, and a reverent attention to forms and ceremonies, must infallibly de-

cay when these are no longer supported by a suitable Christian practice of piety and virtue.

5. The Church of Rome brought destruction on itself more by the vices and corruptions of its clergy, than even by either its numerous theoretical errors, or the folly and impiety which contaminate its Missal amidst the excellent prayers contained in it, many of which have been very properly retained in the Service of the Church of England.

6. It is not true that the episcopalian party neglected and disparaged our Liturgy, in any other way than that which I have stated. They did not disparage it as a formulary essential to the ecclesiastical constitution of the country: nevertheless, it is a lamentable truth that their lives did not correspond with the principles they professed. *Here was a neglect and a disparagement* of the spiritual use of the Liturgy, which proved big with infinite mischief. Indeed too many of the clergy of those times appear to have had their minds intent only on the political advantages of the ecclesiastical establishment. Dr. Marsh, whose penetrating eye sees political interests, and the supply of temporal wants, even in the constitution of a society which has no other object except that of making Bibles plentiful and cheap, will not be at a loss to understand this observation.

I much deceive myself if the preceding reflections are not fully supported by the history of the events of the great Rebellion.

Dr. Marsh would have us believe that there is a striking resemblance between the events of that period and the proceedings of the present Bible So-

ciety; and one of the circumstances on which he appears to lay much stress is, that a Professor of Divinity at Cambridge is accused of Popery because he pleads for the Liturgy. Here again, “*Difficile est satyram non scribere;*” and certainly it would be difficult to forbear being satirical, if the extreme gravity and solemnity with which the parallel is supported did not rather awaken opposite sentiments and repress every disposition to severity. Alas! what must become of the church? Dr. Marsh, the defender, not only of Protestantism, but of Protestantism under the right form, the champion of the church, is ungratefully treated as a Papist! I hope, however, that when Dr. Marsh shall actually be accused of Popery, he will be able to defend himself better than Archbishop Laud did, when a similar accusation was made against him, for altering and new-modelling the English Prayer-book so as to make it come nearer to the Popish Mass-book\*.

Another charge, by which Dr. Marsh endeavours to establish a parallel between the present friends of the Bible Society, and the violent actors in the distracted times of Charles I. is so frivolous, and so unworthy of a serious refutation, that I shall content myself with barely mentioning it.

If we are to believe the Inquirer, the advocates of the Bible Society display an intolerant and persecuting spirit, which was never exceeded; and their

\* Since this was written, the Rev. P. Gandolphy has triumphantly claimed Dr. Marsh as a defender of Popish sentiments; and I cannot say that his reply to this Roman Catholic divine is by any means satisfactory.

language, he adds, p. 49, exactly corresponds with the language of the *Calvinists* in the reign of Charles the First.

I pretend not to predict to what a pitch of intolerance they may arrive in future, or what power for persecution they may possess, aided as they are by their connection with dissenters; but my entire belief is, that in every event Dr. Marsh may rest free from any apprehension of his being made to wear the crown of martyrdom.

“The language holden by the Calvinists in the reign of Charles I. exactly corresponds with the language of the advocates of the Bible Society,” p. 49.

It cannot escape the reader's notice, how the Inquirer's imagination is perpetually haunted with ideas of Calvinists and Calvinism. There may be an advantage in thus availing himself of existing prejudices; yet an experienced controversialist might have been aware, that there is such a thing as carrying a matter so far as to weaken the very effect intended to be produced.—In all that I have hitherto said on this abstruse theological subject, I am to be considered as a mere narrator. My own individual sentiments I reserve to a subsequent part of these *Strictures*.

On the superlative excellence of our Liturgy, and the incalculable mischief to the country implied in the supposed disparagement and abolition of it, I have not heard one discordant syllable from any quarter. Let these things be insisted on as often and as warmly as Dr. Marsh shall think fit; but not at the expense of the good fame of the churchmen who are advocates of the Bible Society; not with

slanderous assertions, that they “ think it *unnecessary* to distribute the work which the Reformers composed \*.”

In the passage to which I now refer, the terms of the accusation evidently comprehend every sort of distribution of the Prayer-book, whether individual or corporate. We are here told in general terms, and without any exception or discrimination, that we “ think it unnecessary to distribute the Prayer-book.”

In other places, the Inquirer says that it is the “ extensive omission of the Liturgy †,” of which he complains as injurious to the church; manifestly referring in such places, with more or less distinctness, to the extensive distribution of the Bible by the Bible Society without the Prayer-book; and hence arises that ambiguity respecting individual and corporate distribution on which I have so much insisted.

If churchmen are indeed suspected of disparaging the Prayer-book and neglecting to distribute it, let that be the charge; let it be distinctly made; let it be thoroughly inquired into; and let the blame rest on the accused or the accuser, according to the result of an impartial examination. But let not the charge be equivocal; sometimes apparently clear and distinct; at others, confused and contradictory. In particular, let the charge never be complicated with the distribution of the Bible. This creates confusion, always in the charge, and frequently in the defence, without answering any one good end.

\* Inquiry, p. 48.

† Page 44, note.

Moreover, the perpetual repetition of such obscure and ambiguous expressions, as confound the distribution of the Bible with that of the Prayer-book, will infallibly create a suspicion that the author of them, whatever he may say to the contrary, is not in the very best humour with the liberal distribution of the Bible itself.

## PART III.

THE MISCHIEFS ARISING FROM THE PUBLICATIONS  
OF DR. MARSH.1. *Disunion of Churchmen.*

MY observations on Dr. Marsh's Address and Inquiry are by no means confined to the defence of those excellent churchmen who belong to the Bible Society. The prospect of great *mischief* ensuing from his two publications has deeply impressed my mind. The experience of all ages has proved, that it is much more within the compass of human ability and human exertion to do mischief than to do good.

1. I submit it to the consideration of every sensible and impartial student of English history, whether Dr. Marsh has not utterly failed, in his attempts to establish any sort of resemblance between the history of the Bible Society, and of those events which materially contributed to the dissolution of our ecclesiastical constitution at the time of the great Rebellion.

2. Is it then a light thing to have attempted to influence the public mind, by such a commentary on a portion of the British history as must tend to disguise the truth, and to mislead the conscientious

inquirer, who may not perhaps have leisure or opportunity to consult the original documents?

3. The churchmen of the Bible Society are represented as indifferent, or at best but weakly attached, to their Prayer-book; and, in many instances, the charge proceeds much beyond that of mere carelessness or venial neglect. Now, is it possible that such representations should tend to promote *union* among the clergy, or to conciliate that numerous body of churchmen who feel themselves implicated in the charge of deserting, neglecting, disparaging the Liturgy; and of whom it is insinuated that nothing but the unpopularity of the step deters them from directly denying the utility of the Prayer-book?\*

4. Can Dr. Marsh persuade himself that the evil is at all remedied by gravely insisting on such common-place topics as, "that the wisest and best of men are liable to error †;"—or, that they are never so much disposed to overlook "the danger of an object as when, in the pursuit of that object, they are animated by religious zeal?" ‡ Or can he expect that a body of churchmen, many of whom, for talents, attainments, and virtues, will not suffer by any comparison that may be instituted, should at once surrender their own understandings to his superior penetration; and from thinking that the object of the Bible Society is, of all things in the world, the simplest and least objectionable, should now own, that, so far from being a matter of plain common sense, there is "no subject, in which, from its extreme intricacy, men are so liable to err as in the

\* Inquiry, p. 18. † Ib. p. 54. ‡ Ib. p. 53.

present;” or that, going a step farther, they should unite in admiration of the man who scruples not to tell them, in express terms, that, among all the writers who have engaged in the controversy about the Bible Society, he does not perceive any one who has pointed out the danger arising to the Established Church from the *practice* of neglecting to give the Prayer-book with the Bible\*;—of the man who informs them, that, though at various times he has instituted inquiries †, which demanded close reasoning and profound thought, yet he “never entered on a subject which required *so much* penetration as the present;” and that “there are points in it which may elude the discernment of the most sagacious and profound ‡.”

I certainly am surprised, that, in an age like the present, when knowledge is so much diffused, and when men are so much more than formerly on a level with each other, both in regard to literary attainments and general information, and consequently more disposed to sift every question that comes before them, and less prepared to bow to any human authority whatever, Dr. Marsh, a person so anxious for the credit of the Church and the University, should hold such language;—language implying on his own part coolness, wisdom, foresight, penetration; on the part of so many of his clerical brethren, warmth, misguided zeal or fanaticism, temerity, want of thought and reflection.

\* Inquiry, p. 42.

† I shall have occasion to produce some instances of the success which Dr. Marsh has had in the prosecution of his Inquiries.

‡ Inquiry, p. 53.

Nor am I less surprised that it should not have occurred to his mind how very easy it would be to retort upon himself several reasons for suspecting the soundness of those positions which have called forth so much of his eager exertion on this occasion; —reasons, although perhaps not well calculated to establish the entire disinterestedness of his motives, yet surely as probable and as respectable as those just mentioned, on which he has chosen to insist, viz. “that the wisest and the best of men are liable to error; that they are especially liable in the great and important concerns of religion; and that there is *no subject* in which, from its extreme intricacy, we are so liable to error as in the present\*.”

Moreover, when Dr. Marsh tells us, that “there is nothing which so prevents men from seeing the danger of an object, as when in the pursuit of that object they are animated by religious zeal †;” does no other kind of zeal occur to his mind as equally apt to blind our eyes and impose on our hearts? Can Dr. Marsh, who apprehends, even from the operations of the Bible Society, so much danger to the Established Church, be quite sure that his own zeal is not excessive in this instance; and that by its excess it does not inject prejudice into his mind, and seduce his better judgment from attending to the great and unquestionable advantages of the extensive dissemination of the Bible? I will not deny that the religious zeal of which our Inquirer speaks, even when sound in its principle, may possibly be sometimes too impetuous in its operation; yet, granting this, it must also be al-

\* Inquiry, p. 54.

† Ib. p. 53.

lowed, that the zeal which solicits distinction by sounding imaginary alarms, and creating unnecessary contests, though sufficiently steady and persevering, is nevertheless, in its exertions, but too apt to shew itself both selfish and delusive.

## 2. *Irritation of Dissenters in general.*

If Dr. Marsh's treatment of the churchmen of the Bible Society tends to disunite the friends of our ecclesiastical establishment, many of his statements and observations are calculated to irritate the dissenters of all denominations.

The glorious Revolution of 1688, and the subsequent Acts of Toleration and of Union with Scotland, had long since adjusted all ecclesiastical rights respectively; and, consequently, had removed every fair ground of dissatisfaction and animosity.

Moreover, a bond of amicable connection between churchmen and dissenters had been lately formed, by the constitution of a society whose single object is the dissemination of the Holy Scriptures. This society has flourished for more than eight years, with unexampled vigour and increase, and with every symptom of Christian benevolence and affection.

Now will posterity believe, that a churchman and a Professor of Divinity could imagine that he perceived a parallel between the plain, simple, harmonious views of such a society, and the obscure, complicated, and jarring principles which influenced the contending parties during the unhappy times

of Charles I. ? We have seen, I trust, that, instead of this ; opposition, dissimilarity, and contrast meet the fair inquirer in every step of his researches into that period.

But, for the sake of argument, let it be admitted that an ingenious man, of a lively imagination, might suppose that he perceived some slight resemblance between the two cases ; yet is *this* the *proper season* for giving an unbounded licence to fanciful conceptions on such a subject ?

Surely, at a moment when not only the safety of our own country, but, in truth, the destiny of all the world appears to depend on the successful termination of the tremendous conflict in which we are engaged, a prudent man would have paused before he attempted to draw the attention of our several political parties to a disgusting picture of their old feuds and animosities. Surely nothing short of some imperious and absolute necessity should have induced him to rip open sores that had been long healed, to excite latent dislikes afresh, and to rouse the different sectaries from their present calm to new and mutual exasperations.

Every one knows, and every candid person will admit, that there were very great faults on all sides during the unhappy times to which Dr. Marsh has referred us ; and a free confession of this sort is perhaps the most healing of all applications ; unless indeed (which would be still better) we could bring ourselves to be silent concerning them in our intercourse with each other.

I heartily wish that our Inquirer into the neglect of distributing the Prayer-book with the Bible had

thought and acted on this principle, throughout the agitation of this business; instead of insisting on a fanciful parallel between the peaceable concerns of a truly Christian society, and the turbulent transactions of contending zealots and hypocrites at the time of the grand Rebellion;—instead of exhibiting such a hostile series of unkind, invidious, provoking assertions and insinuations as these that follow:—

“The Assembly of Divines, even when they set aside the Liturgy, declared they had no intention to disparage our first reformers, of whom they speak in terms of the greatest respect. In like manner, the advocates of the modern (Bible) Society, profess enthusiastic regard for our reformers, though they think it *unnecessary to distribute the work which those reformers composed* \*.”

“Were it certain, that as the power of this (Bible) Society increases, the present avowed object would still be retained, we can have no guarantee that *other* objects, inimical to the church, will not in time be associated with the *main* object †.”

“The experience of only seven years, under circumstances where circumspection has been peculiarly necessary, is a poor ground of consolation †.”

“The dissenters, however well affected in other respects, cannot be well affected to the church, or they would not be dissenters from it †.”

“Their interests in religion are different from ours, and therefore must lead them a different way †.”

\* Inquiry, p. 48. † See Address of Dr. Marsh in the Appendix.

“ We know from experience, that they can combine for the purpose of opposing the church\*, &c.”

“ The very constitution of the modern Bible Society, gives an importance to the dissenting interest which otherwise it would never have obtained, and consequently brings a fresh accession of danger to the established church\*.”

“ Churchmen, by their association with dissenters, in this modern Bible Society, increase both the political and the religious importance of the latter\*, &c.”

“ This increase of influence *may* hereafter be applied in a manner not contemplated by those who now inadvertently promote it\*.”

“ Our encouragement of the modern society, not only contributes nothing to it (the Established Church) in preference to other churches, but may contribute even to its dissolution\*.”

Again; The Inquirer, having, in page 60 of the Inquiry, affirmed it to be a FACT “ established beyond contradiction,” that churchmen now justify “ the practice of neglecting to give the Prayer-book with the Bible,” he does not scruple to tell us, in page 62, that when churchmen, who have a Liturgy, neglect to distribute it with the Bible, we neglect both duty and interest. We “ make approaches to the conventicle, while the conventicle makes no approaches to the church;” and “ thus,” continues he, “ the church is undermined while the conventicle remains entire.”

\* See Address of Dr. Marsh, in the Appendix.

Such are the harsh, and, in the present circumstances of the country, one would think, unnecessary, reflections of Dr. Marsh. My reader will observe, that, in general, I have transcribed the very words of the author; and by turning to the proper pages in the Inquiry, and to the Address in the Appendix, he will see the connection in which they stand.

The Address, which was a publication at first of only three quarto pages, contains, besides what I have quoted from it, an invidious comparison between the ancient Bible Society of 1699, and the modern one of 1804. Churchmen are told, that, if they support the former, they have ample security that "they are supporting, at the same time, the Established Church;" but that, in supporting the latter, "they have no such security, either in its constitution, or in the general friendship of its members."

Here every reader will do well to contrast Dr. Marsh's account of the Bible Society of 1804, and his predictions respecting its effects, with the mature and deliberate sentiments of an aged, wise, and truly Christian Prelate now no more.

"The Bible Society," says he, "is now firmly established, and has completely triumphed over all the attempts to destroy it. None of the secret dark designs, none of those plots and conspiracies to subvert the Establishment and devour both the shepherds and their flocks, which were so confidently predicted by a certain set of men, as the inevitable effect of this society, have yet been discovered in it. It is, in fact, much better employed.

It goes on quietly and steadily in the prosecution of its great object, and pays no sort of regard to the sneers and cavils of its intemperate opponents."

In another place, of later date, he says, "that he cannot but add, in justice to this society, which has been so much opposed, misrepresented, and traduced, that all the important works in which it has been engaged have been carried on with the utmost harmony and unanimity; without any difference of opinion; without the slightest symptom of any hostile or treacherous design against the church; and without any other idea upon their minds, but that of extending as widely as possible the knowledge of the Christian Scriptures."

"The Bishops of Durham and Salisbury attended several of their meetings, and were delighted with the decorum, calmness, and good temper, with which their proceedings were conducted. In short, all the apprehensions, to which this society has given rise, are now found to be but vain terrors; and all the prophecies of the mischief and evil that would result from it, are falsified by facts. It is rising uniformly in reputation and credit; gaining new accessions of strength and revenue; and attaching to itself more and more, the approbation and support of every real friend to the church and to religion\*."

If Dr. Marsh, on a dispassionate comparison of the liberal sentiments of this pious prelate, with his own statements and reflections, particularly those contained in his Address, can discover nothing in

\* Hodgson's Life of Bishop Porteus, p. 213.

the latter which may be a reasonable cause of irritation both to churchmen and dissenters, we shall still be left to wonder, that he should nevertheless be so perfectly awake to the least degree of irritation, which he supposes any other persons may have produced against himself in the minds of dissenters.

A remarkable example of this may be seen in the offence which he takes at the word *contagion*, as used both by myself and by Mr. Dealtry. The word, he says, could not fail to be applied to him; nor could it fail to excite the indignation of every dissenter who heard it, as if he regarded THEIR intercourse as contagious. p. 76.

Now, surely, Dr. Marsh may be perfectly easy on this head; for if the offensive word was *improperly applied*, then the indignation of the dissenters must necessarily have been turned from Dr. Marsh, and fixed on Mr. Dealtry and myself, who misapplied the term, and thereby misrepresented his conduct. Add to this, they have before them both Dr. Marsh's Address and my Speech; and, therefore, they are not left to the uncertainty of conjecture and report.

It is unquestionably clear, that every syllable which we uttered respecting the dissenters, related solely to religious concerns. "Dr. Marsh's principle," I observed, "seems to be, to have nothing to do with dissenters in any concern connected with religion. Now my principle is *toto cælo* different. . . I would go hand in hand with them as far as I can. . . I do not dread them, as if they were infected with a contagion; but I cordially rejoice to shake hands with them on all points where we do agree.

At the same time, I exercise a jealous attention over them in points where we separate from one another."

The reader is to recollect, that the Address was then in my hand; and as I have subjoined it in the Appendix, he will easily judge whether the spirit which pervades and gives the tone to every line of it, does or does not justify what was said. In brief, my observation was strictly confined to intercourse in religious concerns. Dr. Marsh chooses to understand it of *general* intercourse.

In page 76 of the Inquiry, Dr. Marsh says, "Were it necessary, I could appeal to dissenting families," in Cambridge, "who themselves would bear witness, that, so far from dreading a contagion from their intercourse, I freely communicate the contributions which I can spare, without the smallest regard to religious distinction."

The irrelevancy of such an appeal I leave to the consideration of better judges. If any person had rudely told Dr. Marsh that he believed he would suffer a dissenter to starve, I could easily have comprehended its propriety.

The petty differences between Dr. Marsh and myself, concerning a few *verba ardentia*, signify very little; but the irritation produced on large bodies of men, by a number of unjust accusations and inuendos, are of greater consequence; and will not, I fear, be done away by what he calls the respectful manner in which he spoke of the dissenters in his Sermon, and in his Address to the Senate.

I have just referred the reader to the Address, in the Appendix; and while the contents are fresh in

his memory, I would submit to his consideration this plain question; Whether Dr. Marsh's bare acknowledgment of the right of private judgment, and of the reasonableness of toleration, with his declarations of the absence of all wish and intention to restrain the conduct of dissenters, or to abridge or interfere with their privileges, will, in the present times, be considered as any thing more than a needless effusion of generosity, or, at best, as common-place concessions, which cannot affect the minds of dissenters with any considerable sense of obligation, on account of the extraordinary freedom from prejudice, and the manly, enlightened way of thinking which the writer may fancy are implied in them.

There were, indeed, times when liberal sentiments on toleration could not have been maintained without danger; but in the age in which we live, whatever parade, or even condescension and good-will, may attend their publication, they are not likely to inspire much either of admiration or gratitude.—The profession of any opinion will never be received with applause, when its opposite can scarcely be avowed without indignation or contempt.

These, and other considerations of the same kind, do not allow me to hope, that any respect, which Dr. Marsh may suppose he has shewn to the dissenters, will remove from their minds the impression which must have been made by that unmerited distrust and suspicion with which he has treated them.

When Martin Luther made an attempt to calm the resentment of Erasmus, whom he had provoked by aspersing his reputation; that great man answer-

ed, That he was not so much of a child as to be thus wheedled and cajoled into good humour\*.

To all these things, it should seem, the answer is, The Church is in danger, and Dr. Marsh is "labouring to defend it †."

I will not dissemble that I have serious fears on that head—and I, too, can venture to predict. I predict (what may, perhaps, surprise Dr. Marsh), that nothing will more endanger our Ecclesiastical Establishment, than the neglect of our invaluable Liturgy;—nothing so much contribute to its security, as the parochial labours of the clergy in explaining and enforcing its doctrines. Those of the clergy who meditate on these things, and give themselves wholly to them; those who thus take heed to themselves and to their doctrine, shall, in doing this, both save themselves and them that hear them ‡. This would be, indeed, that labour of love, which would infallibly promote the distribution of the Liturgy. It cannot be, that churchmen should not exert themselves to distribute the Prayer-book among the poor of their parishes, when they themselves have learnt to esteem and reverence its contents as they ought. In fine, this would be that good work, in the prosecution of which the general union and co-operation of churchmen would, doubtless, be attended with the blessing of Almighty God.

My apprehensions of danger to the church, are

\* Non sum usque adeo puerilis ingenii, ut tot vulneribus inflictis capitalibus, placer unâ aut alterâ facetiolâ palpoque deliniar.—V. p. 927. p. 1094, Lond Ed.

† Inquiry, p. 76.

‡ 1 Tim. iv. 15, 16.

relieved, however, by considering that many of the clergy are much better versed in the doctrines of our Prayer-book, and more industrious in propagating and enforcing them, than they were forty or fifty years ago.

I trust the same thing may be truly said of such teachers of dissenting congregations as are orthodox ; that is, of such as hold fast the profession of the same essential doctrines with ourselves. And if this be so, both sides will soon discover that “ their interests in respect to religion are” not (as Dr. Marsh represents them) “ different from ours,” but fundamentally the same ; that in reality they have the same objects in view—viz. the cultivation of brotherly love in this world, and the salvation of the soul in the next.

Happy had it been, if the contending parties in the days of Charles the First had in any degree acted up to their respective knowledge of Christian doctrine ! Happy, if the ecclesiastical dignitaries, instead of supporting the arbitrary extension of the King’s prerogative, and exercising a tyrannical jurisdiction over the people in trivial matters of form and ceremony, had convinced them, by precept and example, of the practical influence of the Book of Common Prayer, and had exhorted them to a constant and diligent use of it ! And still more happy, if the ministers and instructors of the several parties, instead of unfortunately suffering themselves to be deluded by the artifices of a few ambitious zealots, enthusiasts, and hypocrites, had listened to the maxims of the Gospel, which constantly inculcate

submission to authorities and mutual forbearance towards one another; had discovered less anxiety about temporal objects, and a greater concern respecting those that are spiritual; and, in a word, had refrained from attending to political discussions and interests, and displayed a diligent and conscientious regard to their professional duties in their respective congregations!

If a spirit of this sort had really actuated the great leaders on both sides, it is not to be believed that matters could have proceeded to such lamentable lengths as they did, on account of any differences concerning Calvinistic tenets which subsisted among the several denominations.

It may even be questioned, whether an ample infusion of this Christian spirit, cultivated by exercises of mutual kindness and charity, might not, even in those days, have produced a numerous society of sound Christians, of various persuasions, disinterestedly united, on friendly and liberal principles, for the glorious purpose of disseminating the word of God.

Such a Bible Society, patronised by Archbishops Laud and Usher, Bishops Juxon and Beveridge, &c. &c. by Wentworth, Hyde, Pym, Hampden, and Hollis, and the other leaders on all sides, by diffusing scriptural ideas of true benevolence among the people, might have abated the virulence of the contending factions, and given a different turn to the whole national proceedings. In such a happy event, Dr. Marsh would then have been justified in dilating with satisfaction on the parallel which

he had to exhibit between the last eight years, and a period of about the same length, now filled with the melancholy scenes of the great Rebellion.

But as it is, I consider it as one of the most extraordinary events of my academical life, now of more than forty years' standing, that I should have personally known a Doctor of Divinity, who supposed that he saw a strong and marked resemblance between the circumstances attendant on a society which has been constituted for the single and express purpose of making Bibles cheap, and those events which led, in the 17th century, to the complete dissolution of the British Government in church and state.

After much reflection on this phenomenon, the best account I can give of it, is that with which Dr. Marsh himself supplies me. He has found the subject intricate and perplexed\*: he has considered it in all its bearings: no subject he ever entered upon required so much thought and penetration. It may elude, he tells us, "the discernment of the most sagacious and profound." With these acknowledgments and declarations before me, I am led to suppose there may be some analogy between our intellectual perceptions and those which are produced by the organs of vision. Now we know, that when the optic nerves have been overstretched by long and forced exertions, there generally ensues some degree both of confusion and indistinctness. And I need not remind Dr. Marsh, that confusion and indistinctness rarely fail to magnify the objects which are seen under those circumstances.

\* Inquiry, p. 53.

### 3. *The Introduction of the Question of the Repeal of the Test Act.*

Our Inquirer's manner of connecting the question of the repeal of the Test Act with the concerns of the Bible Society, I consider not only as *unnecessary*, but as *mischievous* in its probable effects, and unsound in its principle.

I consider it as unnecessary,—because no subject can be less connected with the nice political question of the Test Act, than that of a society formed for the sole purpose of propagating the knowledge of the holy Scriptures;—because, also, I do not find that the dissenters are agitating the question; and if they were, I know not why we should feel any jealousy on account of their connection with the Bible Society—unless, indeed, some symptoms appeared on their part, of a disposition to make an improper use of that connection;—and lastly, because every question ought to rest on its own bottom. Let Dr. Marsh oppose the repeal of the Test Act in every fair and discreet way that he can devise, but why is that question to be connected with the distribution of the Bible?

I consider the Inquirer's introduction of the Test Act, not only as unnecessary, but as mischievous in its effects,—because it must prove irritating in a high degree;—because it is altogether contrary to a spirit of peace and good will;—and because Mr. Whitbread's speech at Bedford, alluded to by Dr. Marsh\*, appears, upon inquiry into the truth, to

\* Inquiry, p. 51.

have contained no more than a hopeful augury of mutual kindness and forbearance among religious persons of all denominations, and cannot without violence be interpreted of the Test Act. And even were we to admit the jealous interpretation of Dr. Marsh, we may be allowed to ask, whether the proceedings of large bodies of believers in Divine Revelation, united for the most rational and benevolent purposes, are to be disturbed by every occasional effusion of warm and zealous politicians. Dr. Marsh discovers an extreme sensibility to the indignation of dissenters as it respects *himself*: now, without the smallest disposition on my part to increase the stimulus, I must yet own it to be my earnest wish that their indignation may be confined to himself, and that they may not consider Dr. Marsh as the representative of churchmen in this business. It must be expected that they will look at facts, and not be content with mere professions of liberality and candour.

I have said that Dr. Marsh's manner of connecting the Test Act with the Bible Society, is unsound in principle.

“No man,” says he, “would designedly encourage what must tend to facilitate a measure which he disapproves\*” . . . .

This is a strange position to be urged by our learned Professor, without any explanation or restriction. For do not men every day, both in public and in private, designedly encourage measures on account of the great good which they think

\* Inquiry, p. 52.

likely to flow from them, although at the risk of facilitating other measures which they disapprove, and which they may nevertheless still hope to prevent? And is it not a sufficient defence of the soundness of their discretion if they can shew, that the good arising from what they encourage greatly overbalances the risk of that evil which, it is allowed, they may thereby eventually promote?

It were lost time to dwell on such a topic as this. The *great*, the *little* affairs of this world, wherever human volitions are concerned, are for the most part brought about by complex and mixed motives; and he is the *wisest* man who knows how to form the truest estimate of each respectively, as he is the *best* man who directs his conduct by the preponderancy of the balance in favour of good.

This remark is sufficient to shew how defective is that logic of our Inquirer, which has led him hastily to conclude, that no man can consistently belong to the Bible Society, who believes, or rather who entertains an indistinct apprehension, that by such a connection he may, in some way or other, promote the repeal of an Act of Parliament, which at the same time he does not wish to see repealed.

But I would not be understood as admitting, in the smallest degree, that the Bible Society, in its present state, can have any tendency to promote the repeal of the Test Act. Nor am I alarmed by the suggestions of Dr. Marsh, as to the changes which this society may possibly undergo in future.

If our society has any effect on this question of the Test Act, I believe it will prove the reverse of what he would lead us to suspect.—The Bible is our

bond of union ; and the Inquirer shall not persuade me, by any contemptuous slurs which he may choose to cast on our ideas of converting mankind \*, that such an astonishing glow of extensive and united zeal for the diffusion of the Divine Revelation could have burst forth into such a flame, without a considerable increase of regard for its contents, or without affording a good ground to hope for the blessing of HIM, who prepares and influences the hearts of men. Surely Dr. Marsh will be the last person to deny that an earnest zeal for the diffusion of a book, whether it be the Bible or the Prayer-book, is some proof of a sincere regard for its contents. Nor will he, I think, resist this further position,—that an increased regard for the word of God must have a beneficial effect on the general conduct of men, by contributing to allay the turbulence of their passions, and by drawing their attention from political questions, which engender strife and animosity, to the cultivation of true Christian tempers.

Whoever can discover, in considerations of this kind, the remotest connection with the repeal of the Test Act, beyond a better hope of harmony and peace, and Christian charity, in the discussion of that political question, if it must be discussed at all, possesses a degree of penetration to which I make no pretensions.

\* Inquiry, p. 69.

#### 4. *Protestantism represented as of many Sorts.*

It is with much regret that I have perused Dr. Marsh's observations on what he calls generalised Protestantism, and his account of the different sorts of Protestantism; because I question if, for a century past, there has been afforded to the Roman Catholics\* and to Deists, by any orthodox churchman, a more specious handle against the blessed Reformation.

In recounting the different sorts of Protestantism, Dr. Marsh not only reckons the great national churches of England, Scotland, Holland, Sweden, and Denmark, together with large bodies of respectable dissenters, comprehended under the Toleration Act; but, in proof (as I conceive) of his liberal way of thinking, he also gives a place in his catalogue to the Jumpers, Dunkers, and Swedenborgians. Far be it from me to deny, that even among these there may be many individuals who, in substance,

\* This apprehension, which I entertained and expressed many months ago, has been lately confirmed by fact. The Rev. Peter Gandolphy, a divine of the Roman Catholic persuasion, has lately, with great apparent sincerity (and I know of no reason for doubting his sincerity,) published a Congratulatory Letter to Dr. Marsh, on his liberal approach to Popish doctrine.

I am persuaded, that considerate churchmen will be sorry that any Doctor of Divinity of our church should have given occasion for the publication of such a letter. It may serve, however, to convince our Inquirer, much more than any accusation made by the advocates of the Bible Society can do, that the imputation of his leaning toward Popish sentiments is not altogether so void of foundation as he would represent it to be.

may hold the true Protestant faith; but it never can promote the credit, either of Protestantism in general, or of any Protestant churches in particular, to place the Reformed Churches on a level with the desultory and disorderly congregations of notorious enthusiasts and madmen. I have myself known some very pious characters, who have favoured the notions of Emanuel Swedenborg: nevertheless, I cannot read several of his writings, particularly his *Visions of Heaven and Hell*, without a strong suspicion that that extraordinary man was not in his right mind when he composed that book.

Different sorts of Protestantism is an expression to which I particularly object. I do not cavil at the term on account of its obscurity; for I think Dr. Marsh's meaning is, in this instance, sufficiently plain. My objection arises from the consideration of the mischief which must ensue from the prevalence of an opinion, that the Reformation from Popery produced a great variety of different sorts of religion in respect to essential doctrines.

Infidels take advantage of this circumstance, and pretend to ridicule a revelation which instructs men with so much obscurity and so little decision; and the most celebrated enemy of the Reformation that ever appeared among the Romanists\*, has expatiated at great length, and with much ability, on the innumerable variations of the Protestant churches.

Now my regret does not arise from any suspicion that all this does not admit of a most satisfactory answer; but I sincerely lament that a Professor of

\* Bossuet.

Divinity in one of our Universities, I will not say, should *tread on the heels* of our Popish adversaries; but rather (*ne sævi, magne sacerdos*) should go before them, and incautiously make prints and vestiges into which they may be tempted to step, and thereby pervert the minds of the unlearned and unstable\*.

To be plain; it is my decided opinion, that the differences among such Protestant churches as deserve the name of orthodox can never be insisted on to any good purpose, unless the representation of them be accompanied with the statement of other important collateral truths,—such as, that the differences, either entirely or nearly, respect subordinate matters; that there is an agreement among them in rejecting the grand errors and corruptions of the Church of Rome; and that there is a further agreement in the fundamental doctrines of Christian faith and practice.

In regard to such classes of Protestants as are not esteemed orthodox in their tenets, I judge it better to be silent. For although I am far from being disposed to speak of them either with animosity or disrespect, my knowledge of their several peculiarities in doctrine does not enable me to make the requisite distinctions without some danger of misrepresentation. The co-operation, however, of the Soci-nians with the other friends of the Bible Society, in the good work of disseminating Bibles, appears to me to be a notable instance of candour and moderation, worthy of the notice of believers of all denominations. They are supposed, in general, to prefer a

\* See note, page 148.

different version of the Scriptures ; but if they have given up the lesser consideration for the sake of disseminating Bibles with greater advantage, churchmen surely will both be glad of the event, and approve of the principle that led to it.

Let it be admitted that the Church of England is more free from error than any other church in Christendom : I verily believe it to be so ; and in consequence of this belief I think it my duty to promote its welfare, and to give energy to its institutions, to the utmost of my power ; yet this sense of duty does not carry me the length to which Dr. Marsh seems to go. I would use, even where the Church of England is established, every prudent endeavour to promote Christianity, not only under that particular form\* which, the Doctor observes, is alone the tenure of ecclesiastical and civil preferment, but under *any form* (pace illius), where Providence appeared to afford an opening for the probable extension of scriptural knowledge. For example, agreeably to the declaration I made at the Cambridge meeting, I would give a Bible either to a Roman Catholic or to a Dissenter : I would join with both, or with either, in dispersing the Bible : I would reason with both concerning the contents of the Bible : and so far from bringing the Prayer-book of the Church of England into the *fore* ground in the first instance ; so far from insisting on an indispensable attention to it as a preliminary in any religi-

\* See the Address of Dr. Marsh.

.....“ Especially where the Church of England is established, they consider it as their duty to promote Christianity not under any form, but under,” &c.....

ous negotiation; I would for a season rather keep it in the *back* ground, and steer clear of all tender and irritating questions. Such are the measures I would first adopt, in the good hope and expectation of subduing old and inveterate prejudices, rather than suffer my fellow-creatures to remain in ignorance or error, and rather than widen the breach between us, by an unseasonable introduction of the Prayer-book. After this, and not before, there might be a fair probability of fixing them, as rational converts, among the steady members of the Church of England.

It was neither the Saxon confessions of faith nor the Saxon liturgies,—it was the translation and dispersion of the Bible by Luther, which shook the pillars of Papal domination in Germany.

On the whole, although the members of the Bible Society may be invidiously represented as soaring into the regions of high Protestantism till they forget the Church of England \*, I shall continue to regard the expressions of different sorts of Protestantism as a dangerous and unwarrantable way of speaking. Our Roman Catholic adversaries delight in representations of this kind; and, with a triumphant tone of superiority, contrast the numerous variations among Protestants with the simplicity and harmony of their own church.

Now the reply of a true Protestant consists in denying that such trivial distinctions as bowing or not bowing, kneeling or not kneeling, and the like, in the several parts of the public service, at all constitute different sorts of Protestantism. The fundamental

\* Inquiry, p. 47.

principle of all the orthodox Protestant churches is, to renounce the errors of the Church of Rome, and to adhere to those grand articles of Christian faith which, in the primitive ages of the church, were constantly held to be the essential doctrines of the Gospel.

Too much stress, doubtless, has often been laid on trivial matters, both by churchmen and presbyterians, and especially by the latter; yet surely few have gone farther than our Cambridge Professor of Divinity has done in his distinctions of the different sorts of Protestantism.

Dr. Marsh appears to me to hold a language which implies an utter forgetfulness of what is stated, with admirable perspicuity of argument, by one of the wisest among the Calvinistic divines, the judicious Hooker,—namely, that the Holy Scriptures have left to the discretion of the church a great many things, which relate to ecclesiastical regulations\*. Whoever keeps this important observation in view, will constantly distinguish the Book of Common Prayer into two parts,—one, which is supported by the certain warrant of Scripture; another, for which there is no such express command, but which rests either on human reasoning and human authority, or on these assisted by those general rules and intimations of the word of God which never fail to influence the heads and hearts of men who sincerely reverence all that is of Divine revelation.

Nothing, therefore, can be more unreasonable, than to denominate different sorts of Protestantism from petty disagreements in trivial matters. Our Re-

\* Hooker, iii. 68.

formers, I am most ready to allow, judged so incomparably well in the main, as to make it difficult not to believe that a superintending Providence did often direct their pens. Yet, without meaning to object to any one regulation of the Rubric, I cannot but think that even the ingenuity of Dr. Marsh would be puzzled to prove, that they always judged in the very best manner possible respecting mere ritual and ceremonial observances.

5. *Irritation between the two Bible Societies.*

There cannot be a more decent, inoffensive, and in every light proper, description of the society of 1699, than to call it the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge.

Now Dr. Marsh has informed the public, that this society is a Church-of-England Society; and, not content with this, he adds, the modern society is *not* a Church-of-England Society.

I have said enough in other places to shew the impropriety of such language. At present I confine myself to its mischievous tendency.

It is true, the members of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge are chosen under a testimony that they are well affected to the Church of England as by law established; but could it be necessary for Dr. Marsh to proclaim such a sentiment, as that dissenters *cannot* be well affected to the Church of England\*.

On this hasty and imprudent effusion, I have to

\* Address, 3d page of the original edition.

observe, that experience furnishes me with instances of some of the most able and upright characters among the dissenters, — men whose solemn affirmation carried as much weight with it as that of Dr. Marsh himself or any one else, (and more, I trust, need not be said) who have most unequivocally avowed, that they not only approved of an establishment, but also thought there could not be a better general establishment than that of the Church of England. If asked, why they did not belong to it, they answered, that Providence, in ordering the circumstances of their education and family connections, had, in a great measure, fixed their present situation;—that, for large communities, they unfeignedly preferred formularies of public worship, and had not any ground of objection to the doctrine or discipline of the Established Church; — that, however, in small congregations, and on particular occasions, they thought there was some advantage in the use of extempore prayers. They have concluded with avowing themselves to be so perfectly content with the Toleration Act, and so thankful for the mild government under which they lived, that they would resist any attempt at innovation either in church or state\*.

\* Since I wrote this, I have the satisfaction to find my own experience confirmed in a paragraph contained in a very sensible pamphlet by a Clergyman of the Diocese of Peterborough. "I have heard" (says the anonymous author) "many dissenters acknowledge the necessity of an establishment, and admit the superiority of ours in many particulars; who, while they have felt in themselves a conscientious obligation to separate from communion with us, have yet esteemed our national church, and wished it well." p. 17.

There can be no necessity here to discuss the soundness or the accuracy of this reasoning: the fact is correctly stated; and the only questions that remain are, whether it can be wise publicly to tell such men as these, that *their* interests in religion are different from *ours*, and that they cannot be well affected to the church; and whether this is not, in effect, marking the dissenters, of all classes, as combined in hostility to our Establishment, and ready to do their utmost to produce its downfall?

Let Dr. Marsh think as ill as he pleases of the Bible Society, and let him use every precaution that true wisdom can suggest against the pernicious consequences of their collective dispersion of the Bible without its corrective, its safeguard, or its companion; but surely it never can be expedient or discreet to irritate large bodies of men against each other, at a perilous season, when good men, in general, think it incumbent upon them to prove their love of their country by forming a cordial and generous combination for its protection, and by laying aside all their partial affections and interests.

Although I cannot boast of having had the smallest concern in the formation of the Bible Society, I recognise, in the very name of the institution, a cautious spirit of discretion and conciliation, which, I am persuaded, was by no means accidental, but the genuine result of good sense, experience, and Christian principle. Such a name was given to it as could afford no pretence to any other society to suspect motives of rivalry and opposition.

I lament that Dr. Marsh has not been more influenced by this example. Discreet persons, even

when they believe they have ground to suspect some lurking principles of opposition or hostility, are ever unwilling to irritate the parties, and blow up the flame of dissension and contest.

Dr. Marsh's representation of the equality of the power and interest between the churchmen and the dissenters of the Bible Society, is so completely contradicted by the constitution of this society, in its presidents, vice-presidents, and committees, that I need not detain the reader with any comment upon it.

But to speak freely, I utterly reject and disapprove every species of contention, concerning power and interest, in an institution which ought to exhibit the Christian principles of meekness, humility, and charity, in every stage of its progress, in every branch of its ramifications.

Among Christians, whose avowed object is the dissemination of the word of God, I know not what contention can exist, unless it be who shall most exceed his neighbour in the liberality of distributing Bibles, and in zeal and activity for the investigation of proper objects to receive them.

#### 6. *Reputation of the Clergy injured.*

It is my deliberate opinion, that the several representations contained in Dr. Marsh's Inquiry and Address, if suffered to produce their full effect on the public mind, would be found most fertile in deep and extensive mischief.

I have already noticed their direct tendency to disunite the members of the Establishment, by injecting into their minds suspicions of each other, and by destroying the mutual friendship and affection of brethren of the same community.

But there is another mischief, distinct from that of the disunion of churchmen among themselves;—the mischief arising from the injury done to their reputation, and particularly to that of the clergy. The clerical members of the Bible Society are represented as careless or indifferent about the Liturgy, if not even inimical to it. This is the sweeping accusation of Dr. Marsh. It concerns, therefore, twenty-two bishops and a great number of respectable clergy to look well to themselves. For if these things are credited, what must become of the reputation of a large portion of the clerical order, who are in no wise inferior to the rest in learning, zeal, piety, and affection to the Establishment? I am persuaded that it is not Dr. Marsh's exception in favour of the "respectable bishops," which will shield them from the general censure.—At the same time, it is but fair to own, that, in regard to these dignitaries, who have honoured the Bible Society with their patronage and support, he allows that no man of common sense would ascribe dishonourable motives to them!!!\*

\* Inquiry, p. 54.

7. *The Introduction of the Question concerning Calvinism.*

It is notorious, that, in the present times, there have arisen very strong prejudices against Calvinistic tenets.

A skilful controversialist may suppose he sees some advantage in availing himself of this circumstance; but he is to be reminded, that good Christians and good churchmen will always be anxious to represent things truly, and very careful not to irritate their brethren of the same community, unless urged to strong measures by an imperious necessity.

Dr. Marsh roundly asserts, that the Calvinistic clergy of the Church of England are generally members of the Bible Society. Now, I believe our Inquirer would be very much puzzled to make out this: but whether the assertion be true or not, the injury done to the Calvinistic clergy is the same; because it is done to them, not as members of the Bible Society, but as Calvinists. Whether they belong to the Bible Society or not, they are represented by Dr. Marsh as persons who cannot be zealously attached to our Liturgy; as persons who cannot have much pain in parting with it\*. Nay; in one place, he insinuates that churchmen supply the place of the Liturgy with Calvinistic tracts †.

I beg the reader seriously to consider, what good he can possibly imagine to be placed in the balance, against the inevitable MISCHIEF which must

\* Inquiry, p. 48.

† Ibid. p. 50.

be the consequence of such slanderous imputations as these!

Mr. Dealtry observes, in page 58 of his Examination, that Dr. Marsh never can have entered on the subject of Calvinism; to which assertion I do not hesitate to subjoin, that if he has entered upon it, he has been most unsuccessful in the exercise of his "penetration."

Had our learned Professor been better acquainted with the system itself, with the tenets usually held in connection with it, and with the characters of the eminent individuals who have maintained these sentiments, he could scarcely have made those injurious representations of the dispositions of the persons whom he chooses to call Calvinists, which to every candid reader have appeared so exceptionable. At present, therefore, it is open to our Inquirer to plead, in the way of apology, the want of a more exact information.

In another section, where I shall have occasion to notice some personal allusions to myself, I purpose to state my own sentiments more explicitly on this abstruse and difficult branch of theology. At present I shall content myself with a few remarks, which, I hope, may tend to produce a spirit of moderation and mutual forbearance, and lead men to a patient study and investigation of sound doctrine.

The XVIIth of our Articles, which is the true place where we are to look for the decision of our Church on this point, is so penned that the most moderate and most learned of all our expositors \* has declared, that "it is not to be denied that the Article seems to be framed according to St. Austin's

\* Burnet.

doctrine. It supposes men to be under *a curse and damnation* antecedently to predestination, from which they are delivered by it; so it is directly against the Supralapsarian doctrine. Nor does the Article make any mention of reprobation; no, not in a hint: no definition is made concerning it. The Article does also seem to assert the efficacy of grace. That in which the knot of the whole difficulty lies, is not defined; that is, whether God's eternal purpose or decree was made according to what he fore-saw his creatures would do, or purely upon an absolute will, in order to his own glory. It is very probable that those who penned it meant that the decree was absolute; but yet, since they have not said it, those who subscribe the Articles do not seem to be bound to any thing that is not expressed in them. And therefore, since the *Remonstrants* do not deny but that God, having foreseen what all mankind would, according to all the different circumstances in which they should be put, do or not do, HE, upon that, did, by a firm and eternal decree, lay that whole design, in all its branches, which he executes in time, they may subscribe this Article without renouncing their opinion as to this matter."

The learned expositor immediately subjoins these words: "On the other hand, the Calvinists have less occasion for scruple, since the Article does seem more plainly to favour them\*."

Such was the deliberate opinion of this truly candid prelate; who fairly owns, that in England the first Reformers were generally in the Sublapsarian

\* The reader will presently have an opportunity of comparing these sentiments with those of the late Bishop Horsley.

hypothesis, but that, nevertheless, he himself followed the doctrine of the Greek Church, from which St. Austin departed.—The whole exposition of this Article is so replete with good sense and erudition, and, together with the Expositor's preface, is so well calculated both to inform and impress the mind with moderate and benevolent sentiments, and also with a Christian spirit of mutual forbearance, that it is, I think, much to be regretted that Dr. Marsh had not carefully perused and digested these exquisite pieces of theological disquisition before he poured forth such uncharitable intimations and censures against the Calvinists. How would good Bishop Burnet have been surprised, if he had heard the judgment of a Cambridge Doctor of Divinity; "that a Calvinist cannot have much pain in parting with the Liturgy!" Would he not have said—Surely, Sir, you could not be aware that the learned, and pious, and exemplary prelate, Bishop Beveridge, whose sermons on the Common Prayer you recommend to the attention of the Bible Society, is well known to have been a decided Calvinist in principle. And again; Surely you cannot have forgotten, that the judicious Hooker, although a strong Calvinist also, is ever had in grateful remembrance by all true churchmen, for his able and indefatigable zeal, as well as *accuracy and acuteness*, in defending our Liturgy against all the objections that have been made to it.

Similar instances, without number, crowd upon my mind. Even Melancthon, who is frequently represented as in direct opposition to Calvin, confesses, in one of his letters to Calvin himself, that

he knew there was no essential difference between them, but that his own mode of expressing himself on those difficult subjects was less refined than Calvin's, and better suited to practice\*.

I will trouble my readers with only another testimony. It is, however, that of one whose extensive reading, and masculine understanding, well qualified him to speak on this subject.

The late Bishop Horsley says; "I will persist in the assertion to my dying day, that, so far is it from the truth that the Church of England is decidedly Arminian, and hostile to Calvinism, that the truth is this, — that, upon the principal points in dispute between the Arminians and Calvinists, upon all the points of doctrine characteristic of the two sects, the Church of England maintains an absolute neutrality. Her Articles explicitly assert nothing but what is believed both by Arminians and by Calvinists."

My readers will please to keep in mind, that in this publication I forbear to enter into any elaborate discussion of the *merits* of the Calvinistic and Arminian controversy. If ever I should deem such a step expedient, I hope I shall prove, whatever may be my success on the question itself, that I neither rashly plunge into a subject which I have not most diligently considered for a great many years, nor handle it in such a manner as to sow dissension among my clerical brethren.

The same venerable Bishop Burnet, to whom I have so much alluded, will inform Dr. Marsh that

\* Et quidem scio hæc cum tuis congruere; sed sunt *παχυτερα* et ad usum accommodata.—Calv. ix. 175.

there is nothing less allowable than to take for granted that any person *must* hold an opinion which he disavows, because of a *supposed* necessary connection with some other opinion. "It is impossible," says Dr. Marsh, "to reconcile such, and similar expressions, with Calvin's doctrine of salvation\*." . . . But Dr. Marsh may be told, for his better information, that many wise, able, and learned divines have thought that they might be reconciled; and, further, that "the common fault of *both sides*, is to charge one another with the consequences of their opinions, as if they were truly *their* tenets; whereas they are apprehensive enough of those consequences, and have no mind to them." . . . And again, that "ingenious and learned men of all sides confess that they feel themselves very often pinched in these matters †."

My avowed object in all I have said on this subject, is, undoubtedly, to lessen the weight of Dr. Marsh's *authority* in pronouncing without warrant so precipitate and peremptory a sentence on the Calvinistic clergy, as that they "cannot have much pain in parting with the Liturgy;" because, if I succeed in lessening his authority, there can be little cause to apprehend harm from any reasons that he has alleged. Certainly, serious and extensive mischief would be the consequence of an abiding impression made on the public mind, that a considerable number of the clergy, or of other churchmen, are insincere brethren, and that their real sentiments are in opposition to the Articles,

\* Inquiry, p. 49.

† Burnet, p. 166.

and to those portions of the Prayer-book which are so often read in our public congregations. In effect, the mere insinuation of such things amounts at least to an indecent slur on men's reputation for sincerity. It tends to irritate quiet and peaceable characters; to disjoint the bonds of union among churchmen; to weaken their mutual regards; and thus, by exasperating differences, eventually to strengthen the common adversary, and to sow the seeds of permanent dissension.

#### 8. *Mischiefs at Cambridge.*

The mischiefs I have been describing affect the members of our Establishment in *general*. There are others, which are peculiar to the *University of Cambridge*.

Gladly would Dr. Marsh have it believed, that he was censured at Cambridge for having shewn an unnecessary anxiety respecting the distribution of the Prayer-book\*.

The reply must ever be, that not a syllable was there said of him, except what originated in self-defence. *He* was censured for having first represented *us* as neglecting the Prayer-book.

Then, in regard to Dr. Marsh's apprehensions, lest the sentiments which I expressed at the Cambridge meeting should have lowered men's notions of the University of Cambridge throughout the whole kingdom †, and also have had a bad effect on the

\* Inquiry, p. 23.

† Ibid.

minds of a numerous body of academical students, who were present at that meeting; I have to observe, that the true statement of the matter is as follows:—

If Dr. Marsh's conduct, in respect to the Bible Society, has been rash, intemperate, and unwarrantable, then *his* reputation must, doubtless, be proportionably lowered in the minds of the public, and of the academical students; but if, on the contrary, Dr. Milner, and the other advocates of the Bible Society, ought to have silently submitted to the just censure of having formed a dangerous connection with dissenters, of having neglected their Prayer-book, of being ill-affected towards it, and even of being ready to deny its utility, were it not for the unpopularity of such an avowal, then his and their credit ought to suffer, not only on account of their loose attachment to the church, but also for having taken so ill the well-timed admonitions of Dr. Marsh, and for having defended that which was in its nature indefensible.

“What a notion,” says Dr. Marsh, “will men form of the University of Cambridge!\*” Now, to speak frankly on this subject, I trust the reputation of our University is too firmly fixed to be at all injured in its general character, as a seat of true learning and sound principles, either by the Popery of Dr. Marsh or the heresy of Dr. Milner, or by any wrangling, concerning the distribution of Bibles and Prayer-books, between two of its Professors of Divinity.

\* Inquiry, p. 23.

Nevertheless, there are serious mischiefs, of a different kind, which I conceive likely to arise from Dr. Marsh's manner of opposing the Auxiliary and the Parent Bible Society;—mischiefs not so much affecting the reputation of the University, as the minds of many of both its younger and older members, and especially of the clerical advocates of the society.

As far as I am myself concerned in the business of the Cambridge meeting, I am satisfied with simply referring the reader to what I said upon that occasion\*.

But it is well known, that a large body of academical students, in this place, were the first movers of a plan for forming an Auxiliary Bible Society; and many members of the Senate rejoiced to observe their ingenuous exertions for the dissemination of the Scriptures, especially as these exertions were under the direction of a remarkable spirit of wisdom and moderation.

Now these excellent youths could never dream that any clergymen of the Church of England would oppose the dissemination of the Bible; much less that any reasonable objections to their purpose could be founded on mere suspicions and refined conjectures respecting the Prayer-book.

Dr. Marsh may therefore dwell on the distribution of the Prayer-book till he and his readers are exhausted, but he will never efface the impression produced on the minds of the young academics,—that, in the University of Cambridge, he did his

\* Appendix.

utmost to pull down a very numerous and thriving society, formed for the sole purpose of disseminating the word of God.

Besides this, let any thinking person seriously reflect, what must have been the effect of his Address to the Senate, followed by his Inquiry, on the minds of all the clerical advocates of the Bible Society. In that publication, there seems exerted every resource of controversial subtilty, which could contribute to disparage their characters, by representing them as careless at least and negligent, concerning our Ecclesiastical Establishment, and as weakly attached, if not in some instances inimical to it.

There is here also a circumstance to be noticed, which I am surprised should have been overlooked by a person so much alive, as Dr. Marsh appears to be, to the least deficiency of respect which he fancies he can perceive towards himself as a Professor of Divinity.

Our Inquirer could not but know, that a Right Reverend Prelate of this very University,—a head of a College,—and that College, perhaps, the largest and most wealthy, and most numerous in its members, was a Patron of the Parent Bible Society, had long been so, and had even instituted an Auxiliary Society in his own diocese. Therefore, on the supposition that Dr. Marsh's representations are credited, I ask, what are the students of Trinity College; especially those destined for the Church, to think of the principles of their Right Reverend Master and Governor?

I ask, on the same supposition, whether any

thing could be more likely to excite the jealousy and distrust and dissatisfaction of their parents and guardians, than the inference which, from Dr. Marsh's publications, they cannot do otherwise than draw, concerning the loose and dangerous notions in which the pupils of this great and thriving seminary of learning will probably be educated, under the influence and arrangements of one of those Bishops, who, according to him, have shewn themselves so inconsiderate and incautious as to have formed a connection which may end in the dissolution of our ecclesiastical establishment? The flourishing condition to which Trinity College has been brought by the incessant attentions of its Right Rev. and Learned Master, and the continuation of its prosperity, are but trivial considerations, it should seem, in Dr. Marsh's mind, compared with the demolition of a society which distributes *nothing but Bibles*. And although he will allow, that the Bishop of Bristol, as a Bishop, can have no dishonourable motives\*, yet does our Inquirer, under the sweeping insinuation, that the Calvinistic Clergy are generally members of the Bible Society, expose, as far as lies in his power, the clerical members of this society, to the heavy suspicion of Calvinism, with all the consequences which he would represent as connected with that doctrinal system. He does not indeed say, that *all* the clergy of the Bible Society are Calvinists, or that the Calvinistic Clergy are *universally* members of it, but only that they are *generally* so; and therefore it is possible, or even probable, that the Bishops, who can have no

\* Inquiry, p. 54.

dishonourable motives, are placed in his list of exceptions; that is, they may be among those who *would* have pain in parting with their Prayer-book, and who, though they belong to the society which furnishes Bibles only, do not supply the place of the Liturgy with Calvinistic tracts or verbal expositions of the Bible, tending to the neglect or exclusion of the Liturgy\*.

It is my firm belief, that the obvious and natural tendency of Dr. Marsh's late publications, is to engender these mischiefs in the University of Cambridge. If they do not do so in fact, it will be because his reasons are found light in the balance, and because his authority is much less than he may conceive it to be. If, however, any of our resident academics—be they friends or adversaries of the Bible Society, or merely neutrals—should think that I am more apprehensive of mischief than there is need to be, let them reflect whether the true explanation of their freedom from anxiety is not, that they are secretly conscious of a want of substantial ground to justify the outcry raised against the Bible Society; that, although slight and flimsy materials may support a blaze of considerable magnitude for a time, they are convinced a fire cannot long burn without fuel; and that the mere distribution of Bibles, in whatever view the thing is placed, must soon fail to supply combustible matter.

I lay the more stress on this consideration, because, in some measure, I feel the effect of it on my own mind. I am disposed to think, that it is absolutely impossible to keep up, for a length of time,

\* Inquiry, p. 48—59.

any considerable alarm among Christians, on account of the dissemination of the Bible.

There are, however, some collateral mischiefs which, I fear, may prove more durable.

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### COLLATERAL MISCHIEFS.

#### 1. *Presbyterians.*

Presbyterianism is the established religion of the northern part of Great Britain; and every well-wisher of this country had contemplated with great satisfaction the increase of harmony and good will, and the consequent decrease of jealousy and distrust, between the two countries, during the years which have elapsed since the Union of England and Scotland.

I have already noticed how little this harmony and good will are likely to be promoted by Dr. Marsh's attempt to establish a similarity between the proceedings of the Bible Society and those of the great Rebellion.

But mischief is a thriving plant, and not easily to be eradicated. The members of the Church of Scotland may inform Dr. Marsh, that that very Assembly of Divines\*, in the reign of Charles I. of which he speaks in a manner so little conciliatory, framed a Confession of Faith, and a Catechism, to which they

\* Inquiry, p. 36.

look, at this very day, with the most profound veneration, as containing the leading articles of their ecclesiastical constitution. And when he tells them, that in the constitution of the Bible Society, “the sacrifice is made on the part of the Church \*” of England; that dissenters (and these of course include the Church of Scotland) have no Liturgy to distribute †, and consequently omit nothing which either their duty or their interest requires; they might fairly ask him, whether he is really ignorant that they possess most elaborate summaries of the principles of their own church. And, if the omission of the Liturgy of the Church of England, by the Bible Society, be represented as so great a sacrifice on the part of England; they might further ask, whether the members of the Scottish communion have not also made a considerable, and perhaps equal, sacrifice in neglecting to secure the distribution of the Assembly’s Confession of Faith and Catechism and Directory, which constitute in a great measure the criterion, and in some sense the bulwark, of the Presbyterian Establishment ‡.

\* Inquiry, p. 30.

† Ibid. pp. 58, and 62.

‡ As Dr. Marsh appears not to have been aware of the existence of such important theological documents as the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of the Church of Scotland, it is not probable that he can immediately turn to the publications which characterise the doctrine and discipline of the several orthodox Independent congregations.

To those, however, who are versed in such subjects, they are well known; and therefore my observations on the members of the Church of Scotland, relative to any sacrifice supposed to be made by their connection with the Bible Society, are equally applicable to the orthodox Independents, who are by far the most numerous of that class in England.

Surely, if Dr. Marsh's mind had not been strangely prepossessed with the sorts of Protestantism formed by parcels of Swedenborgians, Dunkers, Jumpers, and the like, he could not have forgotten, that the great body of Presbyterians are a national church in Scotland, though they are dissenters in England; that they have a Confession of Faith, and a Larger and Shorter Catechism, for the important purposes of instruction and uniformity; and that such of them as are members of the Bible Society might well be justified in appealing to his candour and impartiality, with interrogatories like those which I have suggested, for the purpose of repelling the charge of inequality in the constitution of the Bible Society, on which Dr. Marsh insists so confidently\*.

In this way might any Presbyterian friend of the Bible Society expose the cavils of Dr. Marsh, on the score of an inequitable constitution of that society. But to any objecting brethren of his *own* communion, he would reply much in the same manner that we do to Dr. Marsh; that is, he would positively deny that on *any side* there had been the least compromise of principle, or the least sacrifice of the interests of his Church.

After what has happened in England, we must suppose it possible that the same thing may happen in Scotland, namely, that some individual may there arise, whose extraordinary penetration and industry shall enable him to see, what almost nobody else sees, the imminent danger with which the interests of the Church of Scotland are threatened by the Bible

\* See Address.

Society. Then, if that individual has but the zeal and affection which appear in Dr. Marsh for the communion to which he belongs, he would infallibly admonish his unthinking brethren no longer to sacrifice the specific principles of their own church\* ; to lose no time, to spare no labour, in applying a remedy to so dangerous a combination as that of a society of all religious denominations for the distribution of the Bible alone. “Why do you belong to a society that disperses the Bible without accompanying it with those inestimable bulwarks of our Church, viz. the Assembly’s Confession of Faith and Catechisms? It is your duty to promote Christianity, not under *any form*, but under the particular form of the Church of Scotland, which you are pledged to support.”

Now I am not aware how the poor defaulters in this case could defend themselves better than we do, who are represented as so little attached to the Liturgy of the Church of England: that is, they would peremptorily deny that they either disparaged, or neglected to distribute among their people, that Confession of Faith and Catechism which they so highly esteemed and revered. They would affirm, that their attachment to these compositions, and their zeal for their dissemination, were as warm and as efficient as the attachment and zeal of the most sanguine member of their own communion could possibly be.

These views of the constitution of the Bible Society are so obvious and conclusive, that they will

\* Inquiry, p. 55.

doubtless of themselves occur to the greater part of considerate persons of both churches; and will therefore, I trust, effectually intercept that mischief which might otherwise be produced by the representations of Dr. Marsh.

In truth, his distorted ideas of the amicable connection of religious parties in the grand object of dispersing the Bible, would lead, not only to a dissension among the respective members of the churches of England and Scotland, but also to an alienation of mind between those churches themselves; and although it may please Almighty God, "who alone can order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men," that good will and mutual forbearance should nevertheless continue to subsist among them, yet it certainly is not to the publications of Dr. Marsh that they will be indebted for that blessing: and the same observations will apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to every other class of dissenters.

Meanwhile what becomes of his specious argument, that the sacrifice is altogether on the side of the Church of England?

It is one of the excellent observations of the Rev. Mr. Otter, that the only real sacrifice is made by the Socinians, in commendation of whose candour and liberality I have already observed (p. 150 of this work) that many of them have not scrupled to contribute their money for the dissemination of the Bible, not according to their own version, but the authorised version of the Church of England.

I must own, that I expected that this circumstance would have had more effect with many members of our own church, who are constantly

expressing their grief to see what they deem spurious translations of the Bible in circulation.

To these considerations I would subjoin, from the best authority, a concise account of a fact, which may well deserve the serious attention of all the members of our ecclesiastical establishment.

There is in Scotland a Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, as particularly and intimately connected with the Church of Scotland as the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge can be supposed to be with the Church of England. This society possesses ample funds, which it employs in maintaining schools, and distributing Bibles, Catechisms, &c. But the circumstance which I am desirous of impressing on the minds of churchmen is, that the members of the society have very generally supported the Bible Society in their individual capacity; while they have, as a body, invariably maintained the most amicable communication with it; evincing, on every just occasion, a desire (to use their own language in 1806) “to fulfil the pledge of cordial co-operation which they have already given, and to afford every facility they can to the operations of a society *in which they take the liveliest interest, and whose success they wish to the utmost of their power to promote* \*.”

Now, surely, churchmen will do well to reflect seriously, whether they should afford an opening for an invidious comparison of their own zeal and candour and liberality, with the corresponding

\* See Letter from the Secretary of the Society in Scotland for propagating the Gospel. 2d Report of Bible Society, Appendix, No. 23.

laudable affections which appear in the conduct of the members of the Church of Scotland.

2. *Suspensions excited that many of the Clergy have not a due Esteem for the Bible.*

But there still remains another description of mischief, which may prove more injurious than any of the rest.

I allude to the pernicious effect which a conviction, or even a suspicion, of any degree of backwardness, on the part of the clergy, to the dissemination of the *word of God*, must produce on the minds of the people at large.

Here is indeed an *evil* which calls for a corrective; an evil, the latent seeds of which the clergy should unite, as one man, effectually to destroy; an evil which, should it once strike roots of any considerable depth and strength, it might be utterly impossible to eradicate.

It will be allowed that a notion has gained ground, far more generally than could be wished, that the Church of England in our days does not rest on the securest foundation. I trust, that neither the hopes of its adversaries nor the fears of its friends will ever be verified.

But when a Professor of Divinity thinks proper to sound an alarm of peril to the Established Church, merely on account of the institution of a society which distributes only Bibles, surely there is the utmost danger, lest an impression should be made on the minds of the multitude that the clergy of

the Establishment dislike and oppose the dissemination of the Holy Scriptures.

Now the question here is not concerning the *reasonableness* of such an impression. The multitude will never trouble themselves with nice inquiries, and nice distinctions, respecting the distribution of the Bible alone, or the Bible in connection with another book. If Dr. Marsh could, by his exhortations, break up the Bible Society, or merely bereave it of all the clergy who support it, still, in my mind, there would only the more inevitably follow a durable conviction that the clergy were not favourable to the Establishment itself.

But I am desirous that our Inquirer into the Consequences of neglecting to give the Prayer-book with the Bible, should be fairly represented in this matter. He appears to me to have divided the churchmen, who are in connection with the Bible Society, into three classes\*. 1. "Those respectable bishops, to whom no man of common sense would ascribe dishonorable motives." 2. Such churchmen as are swayed by religious motives. 3. The Calvinistic clergy, who cannot have much pain in parting with the Liturgy. Whether all are supposed to be swayed by religious motives except the Calvinists, or whether any of the Calvinists are allowed to be so swayed, does not distinctly appear.

Let us suppose, however, that every individual clergyman of the Bible Society, to whatever class Dr. Marsh may suppose him to belong, should be led by his reasons and exhortations to lament the

\* Inquiry, p. 54.

mischief he had done; and that, not content with quitting the Bible Society, he should contribute every shilling he could spare to the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, because that Society distributes Prayer-books and Tracts as well as Bibles; I am convinced that even this result would not correct the evil I have mentioned. "Your regard is not for the Bible," the people would say: "your concern and your esteem are for your Prayer-book; and probably for that *only*, because it is (as Dr. Marsh calls it) 'the tenure' of your 'ecclesiastical preferment\*.'" You have deserted the Bible Society, because you have been told that your church may be in danger by remaining a member of a society which makes the Bible, and the Bible only, the object of its distribution."

In venturing thus to predict consequences, I feel that I am encroaching on Dr. Marsh's province; but I must own, that the hope of impressing on the minds of the clergy the danger of losing the public opinion, in a case where respect and veneration for the Bible are involved, was to me one powerful inducement for entering into this controversy.

Dr. Marsh sees so much danger to our Establishment in the constitution of the Bible Society, that, without ceremony, he exhorts all churchmen to leave it, as the only remedy for the evil †. Now though, on account of the good which I think would ensue from a more general accession of the clergy and of the other members of the church, I should rejoice to find in the catalogue of subscribers the

\* Address.

† Inquiry, pp. 54, 62.

name of every churchman who can spare the money; yet far be it from me either to say, or to think, that the reputation of churchmen, and more especially of the clergy, depends on their belonging to the Bible Society. No. The point which at the present moment I am anxious to press on my reader is this, that an *opposition* on the part of clergymen to any society, however constituted, whose sole object is the dissemination of the pure word of God, cannot fail eventually to *prejudice* the people against them, and to produce suspicions of their unsoundness in the faith: it cannot fail to act negatively at least, or as a drawback on the success of their parochial labours. In such circumstances, even the distribution of the Prayer-book will do but little to correct the evil. Incessant catechisings and expositions of the contents of the Prayer-book, I grant, may do a great deal, especially if along with these laudable exertions vice is rebuked, and virtue supported, by the example of the resident clergyman; but still, a cold and heavy suspicion of the clergyman's unbelief, or scepticism, or want of sufficient respect for the Bible, will act as a pernicious counterpoise to his best instructions and his most affectionate addresses.

But surely the clergy, it may be said, are not called upon to humour all the unreasonable prejudices of their parishioners. Surely they may be allowed to procure their Bibles for distribution among their poor from that society to which, in their judgment, the preference is due.

Hard indeed were it not so! Nor can there be just cause for complaint, except when the prefer-

ence manifested to one society is accompanied with aspersions on the other, whose sole object is to distribute the authorised version of the Scriptures, and whose memorial among Christians, for its unparalleled dissemination of the word of God, will be "blessed for ever."

Who does not see that here may be the source of a prejudice among the people, which a benevolent clergyman, for the love he bears to his flock, may think it worth his while to extinguish by every upright endeavour which Christian prudence may suggest?

Can any subject be mentioned more fertile in the production of inveterate prejudices against the clergy, than contentions respecting their tithes? And yet, do not conscientious rectors and vicars endeavour to abate those prejudices, however groundless, often by waving their just rights, and always by exemplary acts of pastoral labours, and of general benevolence and humanity?

Since the outcry which has been raised against the Bible Society, I have found it no easy matter to divert my attention from the contemplation of the danger which is the subject of this section. It is, however, a species of danger so essentially different from that which Dr. Marsh supposes to threaten our Establishment, that it is even in contrast with it in almost every circumstance.

*He* represents the clergy of the Bible Society as neglecting their Prayer-book, and as on the eve of directly denying its utility. My apprehensions are, lest an ill-judged and intemperate opposition to the distribution of Bibles by the Bible Society, should be

the cause of plausible, however unjust, aspersions on the clergy, as if they were deficient in esteem for the Bible itself.

I myself make neither charges nor insinuations of this sort; because I believe there is no just ground for either. But I cannot shut my eyes to the probable effect of violent and bigoted attacks on the dispersion of the Bible alone.

Already those attacks are becoming a snare to the judgment of the unwary. Already they are engendering mischievous suspicions of the existence of unsound principles among the reverend and the learned. Already "the plague is begun."

In one of the Three Letters\* on the Subject of the British and Foreign Bible Society, addressed by Mr. Vansittart to the Rev. Dr. Marsh and John Coker, Esq. this danger, arising from a discordance of sentiment between the clergy and the laity, is intimated in the delicate and impressive manner peculiar to the Right Hon. author. He allows, that it is natural and proper that the clergy, and especially those in the most dignified situations, should watch with peculiar caution any thing which may be supposed to tend to religious innovation; and that it is no less natural that they should sometimes be suspected of pushing their caution to an excess; and that, in times when the public attention is strongly turned to reform, some collision of opinion should arise between them and the laity, which may lead to the most dangerous consequences. "But," continues he, "the clergy can never more justly merit, or more surely acquire, the confidence

\* P. 55.

of their flocks, than by keeping pace with, and even taking the lead of, them, in a plan of *general conciliation and extensive beneficence*;—a plan founded on the surrender of ancient prejudices, and leading to the establishment of universal concord.”

I need not here repeat my conviction that the spirit of conciliation displayed, by the Archbishop of Canterbury towards the dissenters, respecting the late Bill of Lord Sidmouth \*, has actually done more to strengthen the Church of England than any plan or plans of unnecessary exclusion could possibly effect. It should never be forgotten, that the principle of exclusion, from its very nature, proves, in general, to be the reverse of conciliatory; and that it is only to be justified by necessity. On this account it is, that I can never understand why the dissenters should not be allowed to join with churchmen in dispersing the Bible. I wish I could say the same of admitting the Roman Catholics to a common participation of power and influence in the state.

Having now, I believe, made myself understood, I hope I may be excused in most earnestly beseeching all my brethren of the Establishment to bestow their serious attention on this part of the question.

Dr. Marsh would persuade us that the subject is intricate and perplexed †, that the arguments, on his side, are difficult to explain ‡, and that the invention of a very material one is peculiarly his

\* I here confine myself entirely to the good effects of the conciliatory spirit displayed by the Archbishop of Canterbury; but I by no means pretend to decide on the merits of Lord Sidmouth's Bill.

† Inquiry, p. 53.

‡ Ibid. p. 8.

own\*. On the contrary, my observations are obvious to every one, and call for neither peculiar strength nor acuteness of intellect.

I affect not the wisdom requisite to foresee remote consequences; to pronounce what may tend, or not tend, to the dissolution of our Establishment; but of this I am fully convinced, that whenever the clergy shall sink in the estimation of the public, that dissolution can be at no great distance.

To comprehend and predict the consequences of such a symptom, implies but little foresight: it requires neither the mania of an ancient Pythoness, nor the enthusiasm of a modern visionary. For this, nothing is wanted but ordinary attention, and a fair portion of common sense.

I pray God to direct our hearts, and give us a right judgment in all things.

### 3. *Tracts, Calvinistic Tracts, &c.*

Our Inquirer is so sensible of the advantage afforded him by that load of prejudice under which the Calvinists labour at the present time, that there seems to be no liberty, respecting them and their communications, which he does not think himself authorised to take.

Several times he has put me in mind of the old proverb, "When a man is *down*, *down* with him."

1. What I have said, or may yet say, on this subject, both as it respects the personalities of Dr. Marsh, and the avowed declarations of several emi-

\* Inquiry, p. 42.

nent writers of our Establishment, Anti-calvinistic as well as Calvinistic, will have, I hope, the effect which I intended; namely, to moderate men's sentiments and passions, to induce them to examine impartially what has been advanced on both sides, and to dismiss animosities and exercise mutual good will towards each other.

To this end nothing contributes so much as a thorough understanding of each other's views; always taking care to form our judgments by *facts*, and not by our own fancies: that is, by what our opponents really hold, and not by what we suppose they must hold, as a consequence of some opinion which they are known to maintain.

A strict regard to the observance of this rule would have protected Dr. Marsh from making such an indecent assertion as that a "Calvinist cannot have much pain in parting with the Liturgy;" as also from throwing out the uncandid insinuation, that Calvinistic tracts probably supply the place of the Prayer-book.

Dr. Marsh, incautiously for himself, for Bishop Beveridge was a strong Calvinist, has quoted this Prelate as one who was zealous for the Book of Common Prayer. A cloud of witnesses, of the same sort, might be added. I cannot well account for this extreme want of information, respecting facts, which Dr. Marsh has betrayed.

2. Our Inquirer remarks, on a passage quoted from the Assembly's Directory, that "the persons to whom the term *godly* is applied, whether in ancient or in modern times, are easily understood\*."

\* Inquiry, p. 49.

Now the term *godly*, to which this sarcasm is applied, cannot well be supposed to have two meanings. Yet that very Liturgy, for the distribution of which Dr. Marsh professes so much zeal, teaches us every day to pray that we may hereafter lead a “*godly, righteous, and sober life.*” Now surely he would not expel from our excellent prayers such terms as in ancient times our Reformers thought fit to introduce, and as, even in modern times, I never heard treated by any pious churchman with a sarcastic or contemptuous levity.

It is possible that I may feel the more sensibly on this occasion, because I have for many years looked upon our *Confession*, in the Prayer-book, as a most admirable epitome of almost every article both of the faith and practice of the Church of England, expressed with a most beautiful and unexampled conciseness.

But perhaps Dr. Marsh’s objection to the term *godly* is confined to the cases where it is applied to **GODLY PERSONS.**

Here, though it may seem strange not to allow a person who leads a *godly* life to be a *godly* person, I shall not stop to split hairs, but rather refer Dr. Marsh, as I have done in the preceding instances, to an authority which he cannot well reject; I mean the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge; among whose tracts he will find one which is entitled, *An Account of the Lives and Sufferings of several godly Persons.* Now I suppose the Society thought these *godly* persons had led *godly* lives; and though the tract is said to be out of print at present, that circumstance, I hope, will not be

deemed to render these godly sufferers less the objects of our veneration.

3. Dr. Marsh's zeal to excite an invidious competition and rivalry between the two societies, has called forth many observations which otherwise would have been totally unnecessary. A man is driven to choose between two evils.

For the purpose of instituting a comparison between the two societies, to the disadvantage of the Bible Society, he tells us that the funds of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge\* "are employed partly on Bibles, partly on Prayer-books, and partly on religious tracts which are in unison with the doctrine and discipline of the Established Church."

Here I observe, that although no more than two or three of the numerous tracts published by the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge were in unison with the doctrine and discipline of the Established Church, Dr. Marsh's account of the employment of their funds would still be LITERALLY true. But when the circumstances, under which the comparison between the two societies is made, are considered, it will not be denied, that at least, in general, the tracts of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge must, from this description, be understood to be in unison with the doctrine and discipline of the Established Church. Indeed, as the funds of the society are said to be employed partly on Bibles, partly on Prayer-books, and partly on religious tracts which are in unison with the prin-

\* See Address.

ciples of the Establishment, and as no exception is mentioned of tracts not in such unison, I leave it to the reader to judge, whether it would be doing any violence to Dr. Marsh's representation to suppose that there are no tracts on the Society's list but those which are in the unison here alluded to.

The uncertainty of the extent of Dr. Marsh's assertion, has led several persons to examine its accuracy. And with that view, the tracts of this society have been carefully looked over by them. My own report of them is, that many of them are very excellent—and perhaps most of them liable to no material exception. But it was not to be expected that a fluctuating society, with a fluctuating committee, should at all times perfectly agree in sentiment, either with each other at any particular time, or with those who went before or those who came after them.

It is not my intention, for the purpose of weakening Dr. Marsh's position respecting the tracts of this society, to point out to the public any that contradict each other in their manner of explaining the leading doctrines of our Articles and Homilies, and therefore cannot be in unison with the Established Church; much less do I mean to specify any particular passages in some tracts which have lately found their way into the society's list, and have given great offence to some of the most sincere, intelligent, and zealous members of our church. But I would caution Dr. Marsh and others, not to repeat assertions of this sort with so much confidence and so little precision, as to leave the extent of their meaning ambiguous and unexplained.

The tracts are said to be in unison with the Establishment. I heartily wish that all the writings of the clergy upon religious subjects were much nearer to that unison than they often are. But experience proves, that not even the Prayer-book itself, although supported by the Homilies, can secure an absolute uniformity of sentiment. Besides, on several difficult points, an excessive precision appears to have been purposely avoided in our Articles; probably to leave room for a certain degree of latitude of interpretation.

Does not Dr. Marsh know that the Bishop of Lincoln has lately been engaged in a controversy with a clergyman of Calvinistic sentiments of his own diocese, whom his Lordship will not deny to be exemplary in his temper, respectful to his diocesan, and powerful in his knowledge of the Scriptures? Or, has Dr. Marsh never heard that this learned divine has, within the last year or two, published two volumes octavo, in answer to a work of his diocesan?

“Tracts in unison with the Established Church,” is certainly an expression of considerable ambiguity, and very capable of being used as a shield to several sorts of evasion. I suppose there are few clergymen who would not maintain that every sermon which they had preached in their lives, was in unison with the doctrines of the church; and yet I could point out several persons, who would assure Dr. Marsh that they did not think the four sermons preached a few years since by himself, in Cambridge, were at all in unison with the Liturgy, Articles, and Homilies of our church.

When the reflecting reader puts together these observations on Dr. Marsh's manner of mentioning *Tracts, Calvinistic Tracts, Tracts in unison with the Establishment, &c.*; and keeping in mind, also, the circumstances under which they are mentioned; he will then be in a condition to decide whether the invidious comparison of the two Bible Societies, in regard to tracts supposed to be in unison with the church, has really a tendency to promote good will and harmony among Christians in general, or to add one particle of security to our ecclesiastical Establishment; or whether our Inquirer's industry and zeal on this head would not better have been spared.

Nothing can be further from my mind, than to enter into a fruitless contention concerning nice points of agreement or disagreement with our Establishment. However, when a collection of tracts represented to be in unison with the doctrine and discipline of the church, is brought forward to the *disadvantage* of the Bible Society, it then becomes not only allowable, but even necessary, to observe, that no tract can be absolutely depended on, as in unison with the church, except the authorised Prayer-book, and the references contained in it.

Moreover, with respect to that uniformity of doctrine, of which Dr. Marsh speaks, experience has shewn, that not even the Bible and Prayer-book themselves can effectually exclude the entrance of unsound doctrines into the church. To talk, therefore, of the tracts of a numerous society being in unison with the doctrine of the Establishment for

a series of years, and of course in unison with themselves, is in my judgment a delusive idea. It cannot be, but that opposite sentiments will unavoidably creep into the collection of such societies.

I have too much regard for the reputation of the church to which I belong, to furnish its adversaries with a view of the contrary sentiments which have been maintained at different periods by our own members, men eminent in their day for learning and influence; although such a catalogue might, with very little trouble, be produced. At present, I will content myself with giving, in the next section, a single instance, in the memory of us all, which may serve to illustrate these observations.

4. *Tracts in Unison or not in Unison with the Doctrines of the Established Church.*

The public cannot have forgotten, that not many years ago, were published by an anonymous author, said to be a learned and eminent Prelate of our own church, “Remarks on Michaelis’s Introduction to the New Testament, translated by the Rev. Herbert Marsh, and augmented with Notes. By way of Caution to Students in Divinity.”

The learned Prelate, having quoted the following sentiment of Michaelis\*, namely, that “if we abandon the inspiration of his (St. Luke’s) writings, as well as those of St. Mark, we shall essentially serve the cause of our religion, and disarm our adver-

\* Page 17, note.

saries at once, by depriving them of that pretext to deny the truth of Christianity which they derive from contradictions not wholly to be removed;” and afterwards, in his observations on the origin of the three Gospels of St. Mathew, St. Mark, and St. Luke\*, having freely acknowledged the assiduity and diligence of research of Dr. Marsh, the commentator of Michaelis, tells him plainly that he wishes he could think that the conclusion to which his research had led him was equally to be commended; but that, as the hypothesis of Michaelis tended to degrade one or two of the Evangelists, this of Dr. Marsh tends to degrade all three.

The Bishop objects, that, according to Dr. Marsh’s hypothesis, the Divine Evangelists are represented as “the mere copiers of copyists; the compilers from former compilations, from a farrago of gospels, or parts of gospels, of unknown authority—every one of them † . . . .”

. . . . . “The Holy Spirit is reduced to a very servile task, in superintending the labours of such copiers and compilers. It can scarcely be said, as our Saviour promised, to teach them all things, and bring all things to their remembrance, when all is copied and transcribed ‡.”

. . . . . “Any hypothesis” (continues his Lordship) “which affects the whole credit of the Gospels, established for ages on so firm a basis, ought to be received with extreme caution; and the present one draws after it so many improbabilities, and is so destitute of any positive testimony, and irreconcilable

\* Page 23.

† Ibid. p. 25.

‡ Ibid. p. 26.

with the evidence of history, that it ought not to stand for a moment against the received opinion\*.”

His Lordship, having noticed how the author of the hypothesis seemed to value himself upon it as new discovery, observes, that “from a minute analysis of any work, it is not difficult to frame a hypothesis which shall suit all the particulars. It is like framing a prophecy after the event †.”

He then gives a brief view of Dr. Marsh’s hypothesis ‡, in substance as follows.

1. There existed a common Hebrew document.
2. This original document, before it had received any additions, was translated into Greek.
3. The original afterwards received additions of two several kinds, so as to form two copies, each having additional circumstances, and additional transactions, differing from those of the other.
4. Farther additions were made, and involved with the former, so as to form three different copies; the originals of the three Gospels of St. Matthew, St. Luke, and St. Mark.
5. Another supplemental Hebrew document must be supposed, which was common to two of the Evangelists, but was first divided into two different copies.
6. The Gospel of St. Matthew, which we now have, was a translation from the original, with insertions from those of St. Mark and St. Luke; at the distance of six steps (if I reckon right, says his Lordship) from the original document;—six, at the

\* Pp. 34 & 35.

† Pp. 23 & 24.

‡ Pp. 24 & 25.

least, in the direct line. Five others are collaterally necessary, or on account of the other Gospels; eleven in all, at least\*.

The Bishop leaves it to the reader to judge of the simplicity of this whole hypothesis, only observing, that the assertion of Dr. Marsh, in maintaining it to be a very simple one, seems unaccountable, except from the fondness of the parent to the child.

His Lordship's own opinion of this hypothesis is thus expressed †: "It is not too much to say, that the hypothesis is contradictory to all history, as well as derogatory from the authority attributed to the Evangelists in all ages, as original writers."

On the contrary, Mr. Marsh's estimation of the value of his own hypothesis is easily collected from *his own words*. He tells us ‡, that certain phenomena in the phraseology of the Gospels are wholly a discovery of his own: and that they certainly are difficulties as long as we refuse to admit any solution of them. He then proceeds to say boldly, that he not only thinks his "solution is important, but likewise, that no man who entertains a proper respect for the Gospels, will be of a different opinion."

In this relation of the late controversy, I at present purposely omit the reasonings on both sides, and bring forward *merely* what may be sufficient to shew the decided contrariety of sentiment, in a most important religious inquiry, between two learned divines.

The one, believed to be a Bishop, maintains, that

\* P. 25, note. † P. 30. ‡ Illustration, p. 75, note.

Mr. Marsh's hypothesis degrades three of the Evangelists, and reduces the Holy Spirit to a servile task; —the other, now a Doctor and Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge, thinks that no man, who has a proper respect for the Gospels, will entertain a different opinion from himself on this subject.

The reflecting reader will now see at once, how this account is connected with the consideration of tracts dispersed by the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge. In other words, he will see how, without any violence to the rules of probability, it may easily happen, that, among the tracts of this society, there may be introduced a particular one which contains such new arguments for the authenticity of the Gospels, as Dr. Marsh thinks every man must receive who entertains a proper respect for those Gospels.

For can there be a doubt, but that; in an age when the press teems with plausible little treatises of a sceptical or infidel stamp, Dr. Marsh must imagine that his favourite hypothesis, so simple in its nature, and so powerful in its efficacy, as he believes it to be, might prove the best possible antidote against the poison of unbelief?

And, in the next place, does it seem so very improbable, that, under the protection of his authority and influence, and the recollection of the unprecedented honour which he himself PROCLAIMS\* to have been conferred on his sermon, by the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, this same favourite hypothesis, or the substance of it, might be

\* Inquiry, p. 27.

introduced among the tracts distributed by that society.

With great propriety, there is already placed among those tracts a very excellent Summary of the Evidences of the Truth of the Christian Revelation, by Bishop Porteus; and if I could believe, with Dr. Marsh, that no man who entertains a proper respect for the Gospels, can be of a different opinion from himself, in regard to the importance of his own hypothesis, I should think that the sooner it was added to the summary of the late venerable Bishop of London, as a tract for general circulation, the better.

It cannot, however, be doubted, that the learned Prelate, who, eight or nine years ago, judged it necessary to make public his Cautions to Students in Divinity, lest three of our Gospels should be degraded, and the agency of the Spirit reduced to servility, by the promulgation of this very hypothesis, will persevere in watching with the same laudable care and vigilance over the true interests of the Christian religion.

But still, this eminent Prelate, with all the weight which learning, and rank, and extensive jurisdiction can be supposed to give, may nevertheless be surprised to find himself out-voted at some particular meeting, when he did not expect either that the proposal now alluded to would be made, or, if made, that it would meet with such effectual support.

In all that I have hitherto said on the diversity of sentiment between the Right Rev. Remarker by way of Caution, and the Rev. Framer of the Hypo-

thesis which the Remarker thought, and, as I presume, still thinks, so dangerous, I am to be considered as a mere narrator, and as having expressed no opinion of my own concerning the intrinsic merits of the controversy.

In another section, I purpose to resume the subject.

## PART IV.

## DR. MARSH'S CHALLENGE.

SUCH advocates and supporters of the Bible Society, as have ventured to call in question the justness of Dr. Marsh's censure of their neglect of the Prayer-book, it should seem, are considered by him as his "opponents\*;" and after having rashly, as it appears to me, asserted, that "there were channels in abundance for the distribution of the Bible, long before the existence of the modern society" to which they belong, he challenges them to declare whether *they* have laboured harder than he has done to promote the study of the Scriptures.

Such an ostentatious challenge, together with the many illiberal insinuations which crowd the pages of this Inquiry, frequently and naturally leads to such questions as these:—Who is Dr. Marsh? Is Dr. Marsh an eminent divine? Has Dr. Marsh defended the leading doctrines of Christianity with peculiar ability? Has he succeeded in illustrating them with any considerable acuteness? Has he enforced the practice of them with extraordinary exertions?

\* Inquiry, p. 9.

But, besides this direct challenge, Dr. Marsh tells us, in another place, that although at various times he has instituted inquiries, which demanded close reasoning and profound thought, he never entered on a subject which required *so much* penetration as the present\*. “It is a subject,” says he, “of so extraordinary a nature, that while orators, whose wisdom never goes beyond the surface, feel competent to decide, there are points in it which may elude the discernment of the most sagacious and profound.”

The imposing air with which these things are said is, doubtless, intended to convey an idea of the profound thought, close reasoning, and vast penetration of the author of the Inquiry. We have not, it would seem, to do with a person, who, like the advocates of the Bible Society, prates at random, and never goes beyond the surface, but one who has given proof of his competency to investigate intricate and perplexed subjects, and to place them in their true light. Who then will question the decision of such a man? *We* may think the Bible Society to be an affair of great simplicity, but Dr. Marsh’s keener eye penetrates into depths which escape all our sagacity. Add to this, that he is a champion who comes forward already crowned with various victories.

It is not easy to say what effect may be produced on the public mind, by so much parade and ostentation. Certainly the man who uses them, will not, on that account, rise in the estimation of persons of

\* Inquiry, p. 53.

cool and dispassionate judgment: yet, I believe they may not prove altogether ineffective on the minds of others; and at any rate, it is become perfectly justifiable to examine the grounds of such high pretensions to profundity and penetration in the management of difficult subjects. Such challenges, menaces, and parade, not only justify, but invite scrutiny. They must be understood as breathing defiance, and therefore they absolutely provoke contest.

Without doubt, the general rule is, that the merits of every question should rest upon its own true foundation: and I have no objection that the merits of the Bible Society should be argued on those terms. But when recourse is had to other means of influencing the judgment; when, for instance, a leading adversary of the Bible Society would lay great stress on his own former achievements in the investigation of intricate subjects; thus substituting authority in the room of argument; it appears to me, that whoever can lower this authority, by producing considerable exceptions to the claim of sound reasoning and just inquiry, so far serves the cause of truth. Dr. Marsh proclaims himself to have instituted various inquiries\*, "which demanded close reasoning and profound thought." But if I can convince my reader, that he has in certain instances most grievously failed of success, a strong suspicion will, I think, be left on his mind, that the same confident Inquirer may have also failed in the present instance, and, in general, that he is not so much to be depended on in close reasonings, as he would wish

\* Inquiry, p. 53.

the public to believe. I judge it also by no means impossible that several persons, who, under the shelter of Dr. Marsh's authority, may have thought themselves justified in opposing the Bible Society, may be thus led to see that it will be quite as safe in future, to rely on their own plain good sense, and on simple statements of fact, and not to suffer themselves to be terrified by a frightful display of shadows and vain illusions.

In these considerations, the reader will, I trust, perceive some reasons for entering into a strict examination of the pretensions of Dr. Marsh to the character of an ecclesiastic who has laboured hard to promote the study of the Bible, and who is therefore justly entitled to appeal to an established reputation for profound and accurate investigation.

It is well known, that such questions are frequently put:—Who is Dr. Marsh? Is Dr. Marsh an eminent divine? To which another is sometimes added,—Who is this Cambridge Professor, that he should exalt himself above his clerical brethren, several of whom are counted worthy of double honour for their unwearied labours in word and doctrine?

I leave to Dr. Marsh's friends and admirers the task of answering all questions respecting his knowledge in divinity; for I know no proof either of his skill in what I should call the Science of Divinity, or of his labours to promote it. But it is my firm belief, that his Address and Inquiry respecting the Bible Society, taken together, are performances which contain more erroneous assertions, inconclusive reasoning, and injurious misrepresentation, than

any work of the same size with which I am acquainted, that has appeared before the public for many years.

The impartial reader of the preceding pages, will have had an opportunity of judging whether I say this on slight grounds; as also whether the mischiefs I have described are mere fanciful conjectures, or the natural offspring of the publications in question.

I do not wilfully mistake Dr. Marsh's meaning when I suppose that, in all probability, he considers his translations, notes, and criticisms, on the sacred MSS. as meriting the appellation of labours in divinity. Be it so; I shall not stop to controvert this point at present, having the utmost aversion to all verbal disputes. It shall be then from among Dr. Marsh's various researches of this sort, that I shall select such a portion of his labours, as to me appears extremely well adapted to the purpose of exemplifying his powers of profound thinking and accurate penetration.

His extraordinary hypothesis, respecting an unknown original document, which he supposes to have been the basis of three of our canonical Gospels, will furnish one example. We have already seen how great was the value attributed to this hypothesis by its inventor, and also how very different was the opinion of the anonymous Remarker on Michaelis and his Commentator, supposed to be a Right Reverend Prelate of the Church of England. Let us then proceed to examine the soundness of the principle on which Dr. Marsh rests his celebrated hypothesis respecting the origin of several of the Gospels.

For the prosecution of this subject, the reader is already in a measure prepared; and as the hypothesis is detached, and, as it were, insulated from all other inquiries, it will afford a fair opportunity of appreciating the skill of its inventor, as a divine of sound understanding and rational views, and as an able defender of Christianity and of our church, without wandering into a wide field of dubious and conjectural argumentation.

And, surely, the man who has shewn that he would annihilate a society, which, with a combination of zeal and prudence and liberality that are unexampled in the history of mankind, is actually dispersing the word of God through every corner of the globe, ought to be a person of *established* wisdom and authority. Surely, if he cannot give very substantial reasons for his hostility to the Bible Society, he should at least be a person whose intellectual credit has not been shaken by any notorious or fundamental mistakes in reasoning,—not a person against whose conclusions there are on record any great defects of well-connected argument or clear discrimination.

On the other hand, if the avowed hostility to the Bible Society should proceed from one whose judgment and impartiality are known to rest on a firm foundation;—if, for example, the hypothesis of Dr. Marsh should be found to stand the trial of a strict examination; if it should appear to be a brilliant and solid invention; if it should add new lustre to the evidences of the Gospel-narratives: in such an event, all that I have said must be transferred into

the opposite scale, as tending not a little to confirm the authority of its inventor.

Here, therefore, we are at issue, as far as this single subject reaches; and I trust, that, before I have done, I shall shew that it reaches a considerable way; at least quite far enough to weaken our confidence in the authority of any person, who can regard, with an abiding satisfaction, the conclusion which he has grounded on such objectionable premises.

In the former section, in alluding to the hypothesis of Dr. Marsh, I observed that I was a mere narrator; but it is now time for me to state distinctly, that, after conceding to Dr. Marsh the very best intentions that can be imagined, it is my deliberate judgment, that this famed hypothesis, viewed in all its bearings, is one of the most pernicious and dangerous contrivances which ever came from the pen of any churchman pretending to orthodoxy.

I thought so when the supposed learned Prelate before-mentioned gave his *Cautions* to the public; and I still think so, after multiplied reflections on the subject.

I do not pretend, indeed, to have waded through the minutiae of all the collateral circumstances which arise in this discussion. My opinion rests on the mischievous tendency of supporting bold and novel conjectures in matters of religion, when there is an incurable defect in their fundamental principle, and when thereby the grounds of the Christian faith are weakened.

As I entirely assent to the main drift and substance of the Remarks on Michaelis and his Com-

mentator, I cannot but lament that those cautionary Remarks are now not easily to be procured. The anonymous writer, whether a bishop or not, deserved well of Christianity in general, and of our Establishment in particular. And as the contagious distemper has gone forth, it will be my grief if the good antidote be not always at hand.

It will scarcely be necessary for me to add, as a collateral and secondary consideration, that if this reference of mine, to what I call Dr. Marsh's dangerous hypothesis, should have any effect in putting the clergy and other churchmen, who are members of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, on their guard, so as to induce them to ponder well on its real nature, and the obvious consequences connected with it, before they receive it among their collection of tracts for general circulation, I shall think my attention to the subject well bestowed.

Here, without any breach of propriety, I might subjoin, in addition to what has already been cited from the author of the cautionary Remarks, several other pertinent and weighty observations, on the dangerous tendency of the hypothesis of Dr. Marsh: but as my chief object, at present, is to exhibit the fallaciousness of the reasoning which supports it, I shall forbear to trouble the reader with any more quotations concerning its dangerous tendency.

However, before I proceed to lay open the grounds of my objections, it may be worth while to reprint two or three sentences, which express the feelings of the Right Reverend anonymous author, and the judgment he formed of his adversary in the course of his controversial conflict with Dr. Marsh.

His Lordship observes, that the Remarks which he had published on Michaelis and his Commentator, the Rev. Herbert Marsh, by way of Caution to Students in Divinity \*, “were occasioned by a strong impression which remained on (his) the author’s mind, after an attentive perusal of Michaelis’s work, as published by Mr. Marsh, of the tendency of the same, in several particulars, to lower the credit of the sacred writings, and consequently to weaken the foundation of our faith, by raising unnecessary doubts, and magnifying little difficulties.” “The Remarks,” he adds †, “have in a great measure answered their end, in drawing the attention of others to the subject.” “But he is sorry to say, if he may speak his opinion freely, that Mr. Marsh has, in his Reply, very much departed from the character of a liberal-minded scholar” . . . .

His Lordship complains, that, as author of the Remarks, he “is at once roundly accused ‡, in a very high tone of arrogance and illiberality, for having ventured to announce his pamphlet to have been written by way of Caution to Students in Divinity; and, by a strange confusion of ideas and perversion of language, a caution is at once turned into an anathema.”

In page 6 of the Preface, the Bishop says, that “Mr. Marsh is plainly impatient and angry that any exception should be taken against his favourite hypothesis.” And that, “accordingly, in the same spirit, he labours throughout to depreciate the learn-

\* Preface to Remarks, p. 3, second edition.

† Ibid. p. 4.

‡ Ibid. p. 5.

ing and character of his unknown antagonist, and affects to treat his pamphlet with the utmost contempt. His words are most captiously interpreted, in order to place them in an absurd or ridiculous light. He is accused of want of information, of either ignorance or dishonesty, of borrowing his learning from others, of suppressing part of the evidence, and misrepresenting those from whom he borrows."

In page 7, he says that Mr. Marsh could not know from what source he borrowed his materials, or, if he could, it would not affect the argument. "It is a pitiful insinuation, for the sake of lowering his antagonist." He proceeds: "I do not think them (the Remarks) in the least shaken by the Reply; but am the more convinced that my Cautions were necessary."

In page iii. of the Preface of the Supplement to the Remarks, his Lordship complains, that he "was now attacked in a still coarser strain of low abuse." "My words," says he, "are captiously interpreted, distorted from their true meaning and proper application; and if Mr. Marsh discovers any mistake or inadvertency, or supposes that he has found any, *id vero serio triumphat*. He has not even the grace to retract charges which he is unable to support, and of which he offers no proof\*."

The Right Reverend Prelate further informs us, that, among Mr. Marsh's charges, the foremost "is the garbling of quotations, which imputation," he says †, "the author attempts to fix upon me in several

\* Preface to Remarks, p. iv.

† Ibid. p. xiv.

repeated instances, with the *base* insinuation (such I call it, unless he can clearly make it good,) that such is my constant practice.”

In a note to the two preceding pages of the Preface to the Supplement\*, his Lordship gives a list of Mr. Marsh's charges against him, in the following words:—“ Want of information, ignorance or dishonesty, a disposition devoid of generosity, real malice, low revenge, folly, malevolence, (the four last of which are concentrated in one note, founded itself on misconstruction): are not these personal charges ? ”

The Bishop adverts also † to “ the magisterial air with which Mr. Marsh pronounces his opinion of men and things ;” and to the “ ostentation with which he sets forth himself and his performances ; as that the spirit which he has caught is ‘ that which animated the Waltons, the Ushers, &c.’ and that his work has met with the common fate with Mr. Locke's great work on the Human Understanding.”

On this report and complaint of the Right Reverend anonymous Author, I submit two short interrogatories to any person who has carefully perused Dr. Marsh's late Inquiry.

The first is, whether in that Inquiry he does not perceive abundant indications of the same habits and dispositions, of which his Lordship saw reason to complain in a former instance, — “ insinuations,” “ arrogance, and illiberality,” “ magisterial air,” self-sufficiency, vain “ ostentation ? ”

Secondly, whether any man in his senses would

\* Pp. xii. and xiii. note.

† Ibid. p. vi.

voluntarily embroil himself in a contest with such an adversary, or even accept a challenge from him, unless he thought material good in some shape or other would be the probable consequence?

I am aware, that if I pull down the fabric, I must expect to be pelted with its ruins.

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#### THE ERROR OF DR. MARSH'S HYPOTHESIS.

The error in Dr. Marsh's reasoning is simply this; he maintains, that when a particular hypothesis will account for certain phenomena, for which no other known hypothesis will account, it ought to be received as true. Agreeably to this, he tells us, in his Sixth Letter to the Anonymous Author of the Remarks, that his hypothesis, before it had been compared with the phenomena, and proved to be capable of solving them, was a conjecture; but that then it ceased to be conjecture.

Dr. Marsh's own account of his hypothesis is \*, that it is "a very simple and probable one, which will solve the phenomena of every description in a very satisfactory manner." And that we may more thoroughly understand his meaning, he says, in page 211, "We are at present concerned, not with a series of facts of which the truth or falsehood is to be determined by the testimony of ancient writers (since real history deserts us on this subject), but with a

\* Vol. III. Part II. p. 194.

*mere hypothesis*, assumed to explain certain appearances; of which hypothesis the only criterion is its harmony with the appearances themselves. If these are effects which would necessarily have been produced by the assigned causes, we may argue from the real existence of the effects to the probable existence of the causes. And if we can imagine no other causes which would have produced these effects, the probability rises to the highest degree." In page 243 he thus concludes: "It appears, then, that the phenomena of every description, observable in our first three Gospels, admit of an easy solution by the proposed hypothesis. And since no other hypothesis can solve them all, we may conclude that it is the true one."

These positions furnish a specimen of Dr. Marsh's reasoning, which appears to me absolutely inadmissible. An hypothesis is never to be depended on except when it fairly and clearly grows *out of the phenomena*, that is, out of the facts for which it is to account. A philosopher must never indulge in the fabrication of IMAGINARY FACTS, for the purpose of explaining such as really exist.

The "very simple and probable" hypothesis of Dr. Marsh is, in his own words, as follows: "St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke, all three used copies of the common Hebrew document  $\kappa$ : the materials of which St. Matthew, who wrote in Hebrew, retained in the language in which he found them; but St. Mark and St. Luke translated them into Greek. They had no knowledge of each other's Gospels: but St. Mark and St. Luke, beside their copies of the Hebrew document  $\kappa$ , used a Greek

translation of it, which had been made before any of the additions,  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ , &c. had been inserted. Lastly, as the Gospels of St. Mark and St. Luke contain Greek translations which were incorporated into St. Matthew's Hebrew Gospel, the person who translated St. Matthew's Hebrew Gospel into Greek, frequently derived assistance from the Gospel of St. Mark, where St. Mark had matter in common with St. Matthew: and in those places, but in those places only, where St. Mark had no matter in common with St. Matthew, he had frequently recourse to St. Luke's Gospel \*."

It would be to no purpose here to inquire whether this bold and complicated hypothesis does or does not explain the *phenomena* (as Dr. Marsh chooses to call them) of the Gospel history. I contend, that, if it did so, it would still have no claim to be received, unless some satisfactory evidence can be produced in support of its existence.

The celebrated Copernicus coined no new appearances to explain the old ones. He knew it was one important consequence of his system, that the planet Venus should undergo changes and phases like the Moon; but he made no such assumption, nor did he ransack antiquity in quest of obscure astronomical fragments to prove that an idea of that kind had once prevailed. On the contrary, when the objection was made to him, he modestly answered, that perhaps future astronomers would find that Venus does really undergo the changes in question. Afterwards, Galileo invented his power-

\* Part II. of Vol. III. p. 195.

ful telescope, pointed it at the planet, and fulfilled the prophecy of Copernicus\*.

Dr. Marsh's academical education ought to have effectually protected him from reasonings so palpably erroneous and inconclusive!! What a notion, indeed, will men form of our Cambridge academics, when they observe the use which they make of their attainments in mathematics and natural philosophy, subjects on which they are by many persons supposed to bestow too much time and attention;—when they observe that they transfer into religious inquiries of the greatest moment, not the safe, solid, and sound principles of the Newtonian philosophy, but rather principles which resemble the dangerous and fanciful levities of Des Cartes! It is the characteristic of the Cartesian philosophy, that, without the least warrant of fact and experience, its author fabricated wild hypotheses of vortices for the explanation of the phenomena of nature. Des Cartes was not without genius and invention, but was vain, bold, and precipitate; extremely injudicious, and fond of novelty. On the contrary, the vast fertility of Newton's inventive genius was con-

† “ Ante inventum telescopium, quando Copernicus systema antiquum Pythagoricum renovavit, et orbi literato proposuit, asseruitque planetas omnes, inter quas Terram locavit, circa Solem in centro immobilem moveri; ei objectum fuit, si talis esset planetarum motus, debere Veneris phases Lunæ phasibus esse similes. Respondit Copernicus, eas reverâ ita esse fortasse venientibus sæculis dignoscent astronomi. Hanc Copernici prædictionem primus implevit magnus Galilæus philosophus lynceus, qui telescopium ad Venerem dirigens, eam phasibus Lunam æmulari deprehendit; quod systema Pythagoricum mirifice confirmavit.”

K. Lec. XV.

stantly under the guidance of a cool discriminating judgment.

No one, who reflects how exceedingly important it is to form just ideas on such a subject as Dr. Marsh's hypothesis and his method of treating it, will think that I am digressing improperly, while I briefly communicate some instructive observations, precisely pertinent to our present purpose, from so great a master of reason as Sir Isaac Newton.

His very first rule of philosophising is expressed in these terms: "*Causas rerum naturalium non plures admitti debere, quam quæ et veræ sint et earum phænomenis explicandis sufficient \**."

Now this leading rule, this bright and elevated beacon of all sound and experimental philosophy, is laid down by that great man for the express purpose of excluding the reveries of merely hypothetical philosophers. Dr. Marsh had probably forgotten the very important words, *quæ et veræ sint*, while those that follow, *earum phænomenis explicandis sufficient*, seem thoroughly to have engrossed his attention.

On a deliberate review of this matter, I trust Dr. Marsh cannot but see, that, besides *accounting* for the appearances, there ought to be either some positive evidence of the existence of his pretended document; or, at the very least, some good reasons should be supplied by the phænomena themselves on which the belief of such a document may be founded.

This defect is so fundamental and so incurable, that it can be of no use to examine minutely the

\* Newton. Princ.

application of the hypothesis. It is lost labour to repair a broken window or a mouldering stone in a building, when the pillars that support it are giving way, and the ground sinking under it.

Sir Isaac Newton was satisfied with his own explanation of the system of the world by gravity, not merely because the supposition of such a principle would account for the phænomena which he was about to explain, but because he had first proved, from several leading phænomena, the existence of such a principle. He knew, for example, that a stone fell to the earth, not only in England and in Europe in general, but in America, and in every known part of the world: that is, he knew there were facts to proceed upon; that there was a *vera causa*, which was capable of explaining the phænomena. Lastly, he collected from the phænomena some of the most remarkable properties of gravity; but he pretended not to have collected from any known facts the REASON of those properties; and he tells us pretty bluntly, that he was not given to frame hypotheses. “*Rationem vero harum gravitatis proprietatum ex phænomenis nondum potui deducere, et hypotheses non fingo* \*.”

It was not sufficient, in Newton's mind, that gravity accounted for the phænomena; he would be satisfied of its real existence, and of the laws by which it acted, as well as of its extensive application in explaining the motions of the heavenly bodies and of the sea. “*Satis est quod gravitas reverâ existat, et agat secundum leges a nobis expositas,*

\* Scholium generale. Newton.

et ad corporum cœlestium et maris nostri motus omnes sufficiat \*.”

With the same views, this great man in another place observes, that “the investigation of difficult things by the method of analysis ought ever to precede the method of composition. This analysis consists in making experiments and observations, and in drawing general conclusions from them by induction; and admitting of no objections against the conclusions but such as are taken from experiments or other certain truths †.” So also Mr. Cotes, speaking of the true philosophers: “Nihil autem principii loco assumunt, quod nondum ex phænomenis comprobatum fuerit. Hypotheses non commiscuntur, neque in physicam recipiunt.”

Not only that eminent mathematician Mr. Cotes, but almost every other mathematician and natural philosopher of note, has for many years past maintained the doctrine of Sir Isaac Newton concerning the rejection of hypotheses in philosophy, and the propriety of founding systems upon causes which *reverâ existant*.

To the same purport are the sentiments of the Savilian Professor of Astronomy at Oxford ‡: “In nostrâ astronomiâ nihil omnino fingitur, quod non habet naturam ducem et comitem observationem: quicquid in eâ asseritur, ex rationibus physicis et demonstrationibus geometricis certissime pendet. Veterum astronomia sicut et Tyconica rectè *hypotheses et fragmenta* dicuntur, cum ultra suppo-

\* Schol. Newt. † Optics, 380. ‡ Keil. p. 30.

sitionem nudam nihil habent, quo nitantur sed deformem mundi fabricam exhibeant."

Now Dr. Marsh's ideas concerning the reception of an hypothesis may be collected from the several passages of his writings already quoted, and also particularly from a passage in the Defence of his Illustration\*. He there informs us, that, "when Copernicus proposed his hypothesis relative to the *real* position and motion of the bodies of the Solar system, in order to account for their *apparent* positions and motions, the proper test of the hypothesis was its power of accounting for those apparent positions and motions." And presently he adds, "I readily grant that an hypothesis should be able to solve every one of those phænomena or appearances, for the solution of which it was proposed; otherwise it cannot be true. But we must not require from it a solution of what lies without the sphere of its operation, or try it by a test which does not apply to it. No man, for instance, would reject the hypothesis which makes the Earth move round the Sun, merely because that same hypothesis does not explain likewise the manifold phænomena in the internal structure of the Earth."

I do not stop to dilate on every objection which I have to this representation. It is the fundamental error on which I would insist. I contend that the notion that an hypothesis ought to be received as true, merely because it solves the phænomena, involves a principle which is dangerous even in natural

\* Pp. 23 and 24.

philosophy, and which, in the particular instance of Dr. Marsh's hypothesis concerning three of the Gospels, greatly tends to weaken the credibility of those sacred compositions.

This is not the place to enter into a full discussion of this subject ; but if Dr. Marsh will take the trouble to read carefully the *Astronomia Instaurata* of Nicolas Copernicus himself, he will find that that sagacious astronomer by no means inferred the truth of his explanation of the system of the world, *merely* because his hypothesis accounted for the apparent positions and motions of the heavenly bodies. And on further examination, he will be convinced, that, if nothing else were required to justify the reception of an hypothesis but that it should account for the phenomena, other astronomical systems, besides that of Copernicus, have been allowed, by the best judges, to be capable of accounting for the celestial appearances. "On ne peut disconvenir" (says Montucla) "que le systeme de Tycho Brahe ne satisfasse mathematiquement à tous les phénomènes célestes. A le considérer uniquement de ce cotè-là, il est equivalent à celui de Copernic. Mais cela ne doit pas nous suffire pour le mettre de niveau avec ce dernier. *Le système de Tycho n'est qu'une ingénieuse fiction.*"

On such grounds as these, therefore, I must continue to think, that, however accurately Dr. Marsh may suppose that his hypothesis accounts for all the phænomena, still it is, like the system of Tycho Brahe, no more than an ingenious fiction,—a fiction, too, which ought never to have place in the concerns of religion.

From these things it will appear upon what good grounds the Right Reverend Author of the Remarks objected to the hypothesis of Dr. Marsh; for though he was told, in language not the most civil and decorous, that he was a stranger to natural philosophy, and was no mathematician, I will venture to assert that his Lordship (whether a mathematician or not, I know not), under the guidance of plain good sense, saw the fundamental error of the whole hypothetical system, and pointed it out with sufficient distinctness. “It is,” he says, “like framing a prophecy after the event. But this is not sufficient. It is also necessary, that the hypothesis should be probable and unexceptionable in itself; that it should be consistent throughout; and, if it lead to the calling to light any written work unknown before, that *there be some evidence in fact of the work's having once existed* \*.”

His Lordship, with great propriety, might here have introduced the sentiment of Newton, already quoted. “It is sufficient for me that gravity really exists, and acts according to the laws which I have explained, and accounts for all the motions of the heavenly bodies and of the tides †.”

\* Remarks, p. 24.

† Schol. Newt.

## A LAW OF NATURE.

The anonymous author of the Cautionary Remarks has the following passage:—"If I were to take an ancient author, as Herodotus, and feign so many documents as would furnish an origin for every part of his history, I advance not one step till I have proved their actual existence, or at least the necessity of supposing them to have existed, together with the probability of their having existed in the manner proposed. Much more, then, ought we to be cautious of feigning hypotheses to account for the origin of that which the Spirit of God superintended. Our author seems to be misled with the word *phænomenon*, which he has borrowed from physics; a term, I believe, hardly ever used in theology before. But not even in physics is Mr. Marsh's deduction just and logical. Even there an hypothesis, which claims to be received as a law of nature, must be capable of being applied to every thing which past experience and present experiment can teach us on the same\*."

The plain meaning of these observations, to my mind, appears to be this; that if we make a supposition concerning *a law of nature*, our hypothesis must not lay claim to be received as such a law, unless we find it, on examination, to be *supported by fact*.

Now the manner in which Dr. Marsh treats this sentence, is as follows†:—He quotes only these

\* P. 58, 2d edition.

† Illustration, p. 76, the note.

words: "Even *there* any hypothesis which claims to be received as a law of nature," &c.; and then proceeds to tell the Author of the Cautionary Remarks, that "he is here getting on a subject to which he is an utter stranger; for no man, conversant with natural philosophy, would talk about an hypothesis being received as a law of nature. An hypothesis is a mere assumption made to explain certain appearances."

In the next place, Dr. Marsh gives us the description of what he considers as laws of nature, contrasted with hypotheses, such as the Ptolemaic, the Tychonic, and the Copernican systems; and concludes his note in a manner sufficiently authoritative\*. "I wish," he says, "that my adversary had known all these things; I wish that he were a mathematician; for he then would have displayed a little more clearness in his manner of reasoning, and saved me a great deal of trouble." Here, though I own that such insulting language as this ought to admonish any person, who ventures to contradict Dr. Marsh, as to the treatment he is to expect, yet I must take the liberty of introducing some brief remarks on the nature of *hypotheses*, which I hope will tend very much to illustrate the important subject immediately before us,—namely, Dr. Marsh's hypothesis respecting three of the Gospels.

It is very true, that a hypothesis and a law of nature are two different things. But it is also true, that a man may be allowed to make a hypothesis concerning a law of nature, as well as concerning

\* See note, Illustration, p. 76.

any other thing. So far there is nothing to discommend. His hypothesis may even prove useful, by suggesting such experiments and inquiries to establish its validity, as would otherwise never have occurred. The absurdity, the bad philosophy, the mischief of the hypothesis, commences, when a person, merely because it accounts for the phænomena, claims its reception, without sufficient proof of the existence of the facts which should establish its credibility. Or, what amounts to nearly the same thing, when a person insists on that to be a law of nature, which he has not proved to be so.

Such a philosopher, if his suppositions happen to explain the phænomena, is apt to fancy he has done great things. Just so did Des Cartes and his followers; just so do modern visionaries;—but wise men will suspend their judgment, and, though they may allow their curiosity to be amused, and even gratified, with the extensive application of an imaginary principle which appears to tally with so many phænomena, they will continue to contemplate the supposed connection between the facts, and the inferences deduced from them, with a determined and impregnable scepticism, until that which was only an hypothesis of a law of nature is proved to be really so by conclusive experiments, or by such experiments with the assistance of accurate analytical reasoning.

Lecturers in natural philosophy should ever be careful to impress, on the minds of their pupils, just notions of the meaning of laws of nature, and of the methods of arriving at a knowledge of them. A law of nature cannot always be clearly inferred from

simple, easy experiments; nor, on the other hand, is it ever to be considered as “merely a deduction of reason. It must be proved, either at once and directly, by some simple and decisive experiments; or, if that cannot be done, by such experiments as enable us to collect its existence by the assistance of geometry\*.”

Thus, the experiments made on what are called the mechanical powers, by consequence, imply proofs of the second law of motion †.

It was in this way, namely, from experiments and observations, and analytical conclusions from them, that Sir Isaac Newton demonstrated gravity to be really a law of nature. Others, before him, had conjectured it might be so; that is, they had harboured in their minds such a suspicion or hypothesis.

“*Gravitatis virtutem, universis corporibus inesse suspicati sunt vel finxerunt alii, primus Newtonus et solus ex apparentiis demonstrare potuit ‡.*”

Nor can there be a doubt but that there was a time when, in the comprehensive mind of Newton himself, the idea of gravity being a universal law of nature was little more than a hypothesis.

The celebrated Copernicus, however, was far from being a mere fabricator of hypotheses. Among many other reasons that might be given, in support of this assertion, let the reader reflect on his sagacious answer to the argument of the followers of

\* Milner on the Communication of Motion by Impact and Gravity. Philos. Trans. 1778; p. 352.

† Ludlam.

‡ Cotesius.

Aristotle. The chief reason which induced them and their master to consider the earth as the centre of the universe, was, that all bodies have a tendency towards the centre of the earth. Copernicus, in reply, observed, that there was nothing peculiar to the earth in this principle of gravity; that the parts of the sun, moon, and stars, tended likewise to each other, and that their spherical figure was preserved in their various motions by this power . . . . "de centro quoque mundi," says he, "non temere quis dubitabit, an videlicet fuerit istud gravitatis terrena an aliud. Equidem existimo *gravitatem non aliud esse quam appetentiam quandam naturalem partibus inditam à divina providentiâ Opificis universorum, ut in unitatem integritatemque sese conferant in formam globi coeuntes. Quam affectionem credible est etiam Soli, Lunæ, cæterisque fulgoribus inesse, ut ejus efficaciam in eâ qua se repræsentant rotunditate permaneant, quæ nihilominus multis modis suos efficiunt circuitus. Si igitur et terra faciat alios, ut puta secundum centrum, necesse erit eos esse qui similiter extrinsecus in multis apparent, in quibus invenimus annum circuitum\*."*

Without meaning to encroach in the smallest degree on the superlative merits of Newton, every one must own that we have here no very obscure intimations of gravity as a universal law of nature.

These considerations respecting laws of nature and hypotheses in natural philosophy, bear directly on the case in point, namely, on Dr. Marsh's supposition of an original document, invented to explain the various phænomena of the three Gospels.

\* Nicol. Copern. Revol. p. 17.

I inquire not whether it actually satisfies the phænomena: the objection of its having no foundation in fact, is insurmountable.

In truth, hypotheses are cheap commodities, and become dangerous from the moment any strong attachment is formed to them. It is almost their only use, that they enable us to convey instruction upon system, and to devise new experiments for some definite purpose.

Many years ago, both in my public and private lectures, and especially in those on chemistry and natural philosophy, I constantly laboured to impress on the minds of my pupils true and distinct notions concerning the laws of nature and hypotheses; and with great care used to confirm the doctrines I inculcated, by appropriate experiments and numerous quotations from the most approved authors. In so doing, I conceived myself to be attending to a very important part of a judicious education. In natural philosophy, I had Sir Isaac Newton and his disciples for sure guides; and in chemistry I reckoned myself peculiarly fortunate in having obtained an excellent MS. of the lectures of the late Dr. Black; to whom, as my preceptor in that branch of knowledge, I ever looked up with admiration and reverence—though I am well known to have always controverted his favourite explanation of the doctrine of latent heat.

From Dr. Black's introductory lecture \*, the Right Reverend Adversary of Dr. Marsh has quoted a few

\* Published by Professor Robinson, in 1803, with the other lectures, and with many valuable additions, notes, and observations.

sentences\* which appear to have forcibly struck his Lordship's mind, on account of the sound sense and solid argument contained in them, as also their remarkable pertinency to the subject in question. My numerous pupils, who will remember, when the late revolution in the science of chemistry took place, how I used, for successive years, to address them on the nature of a discreet analysis and induction in chemical inquiries, will not be displeased if I transcribe on this occasion the whole of the fine instructive passage in which Dr. Black delivered his sentiments on these same subjects.

Dr. Robison was telling Dr. Black how highly he was pleased with Lavoisier's scientific arrangement of chemical objects, on account of that happy train of synthetic deduction which it enabled its author to carry through the whole of the chemical history of bodies.

“ This,” said Dr. Black, “ is the very thing I dislike it for. Chemistry is not yet a science. We are very far from the knowledge of first principles. We should avoid every thing that has the pretensions of a full system. The whole of chemical science should as yet be analytical, like Newton's Optics; and we should obtain the connecting principle in the form of a general law, at the very end of our induction, as the reward of our labour. You blamed, and in my opinion very justly, De La Grange's *Mechanique Analytique*, for being very opposite to a real analytical process; for adopting, as the fundamental proposition,—as the first princi-

\* Supp. p. 6.

ple,—a theorem which, in fact, is nothing more than a sagacious observation of a universal fact, discoverable indeed in every mechanical phænomenon; but still not a principle, but the mathematical and not the physical result of all our inductions. This is not a fundamental theorem fit for instructing a novice in the science, but for adepts alone. The case is the same in chemistry.

“ But this is not the greatest fault in the arrangement\*, which sets out from the constitution of the atmosphere. In order to get the proofs on which the validity of this first principle must entirely rest, we must fall to work with a number of complex, very complex substances, of which we know nothing, and whose modes of action are among the most mysterious things in chemistry; and the conclusions which we must draw require a steadiness and contention of thought which very few possess, and which a beginner in philosophical investigation cannot possibly possess. It is by no means fair to appeal to a Lavoisier, a Cavendish, or a Berthollet, or other great chemist, for the clearness of the evidence. They are not the proper judges. Lay it before a sensible metallurgist, ignorant of chemistry. Ask this man whether he sees the incontrovertible force of the proof. When I take the matter in this light, I affirm, that even to a philosopher the proofs of the fundamental propositions which have been acquiesced in by the authors of this arrangement, are very scanty, very slight, and very refined. This is a fault in a system published for the instruc-

\* Viz. Lavoisier's arrangement.

tion of the ignorant; and in *the present day it is a very great fault.*

“ There is just now a rage for system, for complete system: we have got such a high conceit of our knowledge, that we cannot be pleased with a system which acknowledges any imperfection. It must not leave one open link, it must not leave any thing unexplained. And I see it always happen, that, if the application of a system to the explanation of the phænomena be very comprehensive, leaving no blanks; and if the explanation have some feasibility; *this catches the fancy, it dazzles the understanding.* Nay, we think it impossible that a principle that is false, can tally with so many phænomena. This seeming coincidence is considered as a proof of its validity, and we are no longer solicitous about the *direct proofs* adduced in the beginning. I have often heard such arguments for what I knew to be *great nonsense.* This kind of authority, accruing to a theory from its specious and extensive application to phænomena, is always bad; and with mere beginners in philosophy, it is doing them an irreparable mischief. It nourishes that itch for theory; and it makes them unsolicitous about the first foundations of it. Thus it forms in their minds the worst of all philosophical habits.

“ I am resolved to go on in a very different way. I subscribe to almost all Mr. Lavoisier’s doctrines; and I will teach them all. And I affirm that I shall teach them with an impression of their truth, which his method can never make. My students shall get all these doctrines piece-meal: every one of them by steps which shall be quite easy and confident; because they shall be acquainted with every

substance before I employ its phænomena as proofs. Each of Mr. Lavosier's doctrines shall arise in course, as a small addition to the properties of some substance already known. Then I shall carry the student back, and shew him that the influence of our new discovery extends also to those substances which we had been considering before. Thus all the doctrines will be had easily, familiarly, and with confidence in their truth\*."

In these reflections of the very sound and sagacious philosopher of Edinburgh, the reader will perceive some of my reasons for thinking that Dr. Marsh's hypothesis, even distinct from all religious considerations, is a most hurtful publication; tending to infuse, into the minds of young students of natural philosophy, false and dangerous notions of science, and of the way to ensure a proficiency in it. But in a religious point of view, I agree most perfectly with the Author of the Cautionary Remarks, that it implies a degradation of all the three Evangelists, St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke; and that it cannot be shewn, in a satisfactory manner, as is pretended, to be consistent with Divine inspiration. I am therefore compelled to conclude that it affords a great handle to sceptics and unbelievers, in various ways.

The reader will also be naturally led to contrast the modesty implied in the instructions of Dr. Black, with the confidence with which Dr. Marsh calls for our acquiescence in his hypothesis, merely because he supposes that it accounts for the phænomena.

"Indeed," says Dr. Marsh, "I not only think that the solution is important, but I likewise think,

\* Black, vol. i. p. 547.

that no man who entertains a proper respect for the Gospels, will be of a different opinion\*.”

I have been induced to give the admirable extract from Dr. Black so much at length, because I do not remember any book in which the same great truths are stated so fully and forcibly; and also because I am convinced, from Dr. Marsh's manner of reasoning in several instances, that the doctrines it inculcates need to be enforced on men's minds much more than I had conceived could be necessary, at least among such as have had the advantage of an academical education.

Further: whoever reflects on the wisdom contained in the observations of Dr. Black, as also on the analogy between the study of experimental philosophy and the study of the evidences of Revelation, must be convinced of the bad effect which the recommendation and study of such a mere hypothesis will probably produce on the minds of the serious and well-disposed young students of divinity. It tends to corrupt their taste for sound reasoning, and makes them less solicitous to understand and remember the well-tried established arguments for the authority of the Sacred Writings; disposes them to give too great weight to minute and trivial objections and difficulties; and, lastly, when an improved judgment and discretion have laid open the vanity and fallaciousness of novel systems of scriptural evidence, the mind is in danger of being disgusted and disappointed, and, perhaps, but little

\* Illustration, p. 75, note.

inclined to resume the same kind of study in a more slow, sober, and patient method of investigation\*.

It goes very little way towards removing these objections, to find Dr. Marsh declaring that *he* does not require a solution of certain difficulties before he will subscribe to the authenticity of the Gospels †. The question here, I apprehend, is not what *he will subscribe* to, but what will be the probable effect, on the minds of students in Divinity, of his promulgating a mere hypothesis, and valuing “himself upon it as a new discovery ‡,” and representing it as the only expedient ever yet invented for accounting for all the phænomena, that is, all the difficulties and objections, and other circumstances, which respect the Gospels.

Besides, Dr. Marsh knows perfectly well, that, with many persons, the most positive declarations of churchmen meet with very little respect, and that

\* I have often contended, that the best answer we could give to persons who sometimes accuse the resident members of the University of Cambridge of employing their time too much in mathematics and natural philosophy, was to inform them, that our lectures on these subjects were, indirectly at least, subservient to the cause of religion; for that we endeavoured, not only to fix in the minds of young students the most important truths, but also to habituate them to reason justly on all questions; and particularly to be on their guard against the delusions of fanciful hypotheses in every species of philosophy. No tutor or lecturer, who succeeds in such attempts, will have reason afterwards to think that his time has been mispent. He will be convinced that a judicious prosecution of the science of mathematics and natural philosophy, is among the very best preparatives to the study of theology in general, and of Christianity in particular.

† *Illust.* p. 76, note.

‡ *Remarks*, p. 23.

we are sometimes told that “our fortunes in the Church depend not on seeking out what is true, but on defending what is established.” Surely, therefore, we ought to be exceedingly cautious how we give any sort of advantage to our common enemies.

Even the declaration of a belief in the plenary inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, accompanying such a hypothesis as that of Dr. Marsh respecting a common Hebrew document; and also allowing the words, plenary inspiration, to be taken in as unrestricted a sense as any Christian ever used them; would by no means do away the mischievous tendency of the hypothesis.

It was not without meaning that I represented a hypothesis of this sort as a *distemper*, the *contagion* of which required a permanent antidote. But Dr. Black, of Edinburgh, states my sentiments more concisely and more directly to the purpose than I myself could have done, when he tells us, that the system of relying on what satisfies the phænomena does *irreparable* hurt; that it catches *the fancy*, and dazzles the understanding, and forms the worst of all philosophical habits.

This is precisely the contagion to which I allude. It is easy *to say*, that such hypotheses do not interfere with any other plan or species of evidence. But experience shews the contrary. One student imitates another; especially in a season when there is a rage for systematic novelties, and a decay of relish for the good old way of our Christian forefathers.

When these several considerations are kept in view, I can safely leave it to my reader’s judgment,

whether I have not substantial reasons to support me in bringing forward Dr. Marsh's hypothesis, and the circumstances connected with it.

Defence is my primary motive—nevertheless, in defence it is always allowable to disarm and disable one's adversary.

Now I cannot entertain the smallest doubt, but that the very inconclusive reasoning of the *Inventor* of the hypothesis of the common document will prevent the authority of the Inquirer, in his charge of our neglecting the distribution of the Prayer-book, from having so much weight attached to it, as otherwise it might have. Mere authority may generally be assailed with effect, but good argument is always impregnable.

The danger incident to the introduction of arbitrary hypotheses into the serious concerns of religion, is by no means confined to the individual instances in which they are introduced. Perhaps a greater mischief arises from that kind of critical spirit which such hypotheses are apt to infuse into the minds of those who become fond of these random conjectures.

Assuredly persons of this stamp are not likely to be the best qualified to heal divisions in the country, or to promote unanimity, or to suggest wise maxims for the regulation of the Established Church in perilous seasons.

And thus (if I do not greatly mistake) the inquiries, — Who is Dr. Marsh? — is Dr. Marsh an eminent divine? which I have observed have been frequently made since the publication of his challenge to his brethren of the Church of England, are now, in part at least, answered. And I shall be much

surprised if men's confidence in our Inquirer, as a safe and judicious adviser in religious questions, either of doctrine or of discipline, should be increased by these considerations.

But further: I know not whether it may have escaped the reader, that there exists a peculiar circumstance, which connects this whole account of Dr. Marsh's hypothesis with every part of his attack on the Bible Society, in his late publications; and that is, the entire *deficiency of facts*. Not a single fact is there to justify the hypothesis of the original document: not a single fact, throughout the whole Inquiry, to justify the injurious charge of an indisposition to the Prayer-book. The hypothesis of a common document is supposed to solve the phænomena of various difficulties and objections that occur in examining the Gospels:—the hypothesis that a dislike to the Prayer-book exists in the minds of certain churchmen, together with a disposition to deny its utility were it not for the unpopularity of such a step, solves the phænomena of the distribution of the Bible alone, and of a dangerous connection made with dissenters for this purpose: to which may be added, that it is also supposed to solve a number of additional phænomena, which at present, however, scarcely deserve the name, as they exist only in the mind of the Inquirer, whose warm imagination is apt to give almost a reality to whatever his penetrating eye enables him to prognosticate. I allude to the alarms he would excite concerning the importance which, he conceives, the Bible Society gives to dissenters; their disaffection to the Established Church; and the probability of their

effecting a change in the constitution of the Bible Society, or at least of their introducing objects which may prove inimical to the Church, and even tend to its dissolution. These evils, it should seem, although they have not yet actually acquired the character of phænomena, are ripening towards it apace, and are to be accounted for by the same hypothesis of a lamentable neglect of the Prayer-book, and by no other.

The similarity in the manner of supporting the hypothesis of an existing dislike of the Prayer-book (for I must ever call it a mere hypothesis), and the hypothesis of a common Hebrew document, is sufficiently amusing.

Should any person tell me I invert the order of things; that there *is not* a deficiency of facts; that the *proceedings* of the Bible Society are *the facts*; and that they are the ground of the charge of an indisposition in the hearts of the individuals towards the Prayer-book;—I should answer, The case is still precisely the same, and cannot be altered by any variation in the mere manner of expressing it. The very same variations may be made in describing the hypothesis of the Gospel document. There also, it may be said, the phænomena of several difficulties were in that instance the facts; and that they suggested the conjecture of an original document.

This similarity is not only observable in the management of the great and essential points, which belong to the two cases, but it holds also, no less remarkably, even in the minuter circumstances.

It is not easy to conceive a subject more simple and free from perplexity and embarrassment, than

the distribution of the Holy Scriptures alone. Yet, what a quantity of heterogeneous matter has our Inquirer introduced into his publication of 1812!—Popery, Bell, Lancaster, Puritans, Sorts of Protestantism, Test Act, Elections, Sectaries, Calvinists, &c. &c.!

Now his Right Reverend Anonymous Adversary, in 1804, complains\*, that Dr. Marsh's mode of answering was such "as if he sought to carry his cause by much writing;" and "to cover a plain question with perplexities, and to hide from the reader the true points on which it turns." And, again, that "Mr. Marsh has contrived to embarrass the question by dwelling on *collateral* circumstances, by introducing matter foreign to the purpose, and turning the argument into a personal dispute†."

Another most striking example of similarity I perceive in those numerous passages of the Inquiry which mark the *self-complacency* of the Inquirer; his *ostentation* and *disposition* to appeal to his own penetration; his great success, and the singularity of his achievements, in literary concerns.

Agreeably to this, we have seen that the Right Reverend Author of the Cautionary Remarks observes, that he would not say much of Mr. Marsh's magisterial air ‡ or his ostentation. That "the superciliousness of a Bentley is not a thing to be imitated, though we may allow that his great talents and extraordinary compass of learning make some compensation for it." . . . "What title," says his Lordship §, "Mr. Marsh makes out to such dictatorship,

\* Supp. VII. † Ibid. VIII. ‡ Ibid. VI. § Ibid. VII.

I had rather leave to others than make myself the judge. None certainly seems to me, in the present instance, to accrue from the strength of his reasoning or clearness of his argument."

These things shew that much the same judgment was formed, in 1804, of the arguments of Mr. Marsh, and of the spirit with which he produced them in support of his *hypothesis*, as there now is, in 1813, of his vain attempt to convince the world that churchmen neglect their Prayer-book, because they belong to a society that distributes only the Bible.

I shall conclude this section with an observation on another passage from Dr. Marsh, which I think very material. He says, "If my hypothesis will not account for the phænomena, it falls of itself to the ground; if another hypothesis will solve the phænomena as well, it will become a matter of doubt whether my hypothesis should be received; but if another hypothesis gives a better solution, then mine must be rejected, and that must be adopted\*."

Now this is far from being sound reasoning. Even that hypothesis which appears to solve the phænomena better than another, is not *always* the most probable. For when a hypothesis has some probable pretensions to be founded in fact, although it may fail to account for many of the smaller circumstances of the case, it will still be a better hypothesis than another, which, although it may seem to solve all the appearances, nevertheless in other respects rests entirely on conjecture.

Many hundreds of academical students, who for-

\* Letters to Anon. Auth. p. 19.

merly attended my public lectures in chemistry and other branches of natural philosophy, will remember, that, more than thirty years ago, I controverted the hypothesis at that time prevalent respecting the existence of a matter of heat; yet that hypothesis explained all the phænomena quite as well, or rather better, than my own did, which, like that of Boyle and Newton, attributed heat not to a specific *matter*, but to a particular species of intestine motion of the parts of bodies.

The reason of the preference which I gave to my own hypothesis was this; The hypothesis of a *matter* of heat was an assumption purely gratuitous; having nothing to recommend it, except that it *tallied* admirably with a multitude of phænomena: whereas, in support of my hypothesis of an intestine motion, though it did not perhaps untie every knot that might be presented, I was able to produce some degree of probable reasoning to shew that it was founded in fact.

Like a disciple of Newton, I therefore rejected that hypothesis which merely accounted for the phænomena, and adopted the other, in which I perceived some approaches to what that great analyst (as we have seen) calls a *vera causa*. Not that it amounted to a law of nature: I considered it still as a hypothesis — a hypothesis, however, that had something more to recommend it than that it merely explained the phænomena.

I almost stood alone at the time of which I speak, but being deeply convinced of the soundness of the Newtonian doctrine, that there ought to be a “*vera causa*,” as well as “*causa quæ explicandis phæno-*

menis sufficiat," I continued for many years to inculcate the same ideas of the nature of heat; and I have lived to see a very great revolution in the sentiments of philosophers on this subject.

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THEOREM.

Doubtless the questions continue to be asked,—Who is Dr. Marsh, that gives this challenge? Is Dr. Marsh an eminent divine? Also his Lordship's question, implied in the words above quoted, namely, "What title Mr. Marsh makes out to such dictatorship, I had rather leave to others than make myself the judge\*."

Far from undertaking to satisfy these interrogatories, all I can hope is, that my observations may assist others to answer them.

Nobody denies that Dr. Marsh has spent much time in translating Michaelis's Introduction to the New Testament, and in endeavouring to appreciate the credit due to various readings, and to determine, in one case, the identity of two manuscripts.

Whoever, therefore, ventures to call in question his judgment and penetration on any of these subjects, must be considered as coming to close engagement with our Professor.

Whatever I may do *in future*, I shall not *at present* enter into the discussion of nice points re-

\* Supp. VII.

specting the different readings of manuscripts. Such discussion would carry me away from the object I have in view. My present object is to inquire into Dr. Marsh's title to so great authority, to so large a portion of credit for sagacity and penetration, as to me, judging from many expressions in the Inquiry, the Inquirer appears to claim. And here, therefore, I would confine myself to substantial points, as opposed to trivial circumstances; and, if solid judgment and intellectual acumen have actually appeared on these occasions, we may with the greater confidence suppose them to have been exercised in his late attempts to disparage the constitution of the Bible Society. It was with this view that I examined his hypothesis of an original Gospel document.

Dr. Marsh, in his controversy with Mr. Travis, has laid down a general mathematical theorem, for the purpose of determining the identity of manuscripts from a coincidence in their readings\*. It will be unnecessary to quote passages to prove the high value which he places on this theorem. But I willingly admit two things concerning it:

1. That Dr. Marsh has an exclusive right to the discovery or invention of it. Mathematical principles have often been applied, by eminent mathematicians, to estimate the degrees of probability in various circumstances; but there is no instance, that I remember, in the history of the mathematics, which resembles either the reasoning or the conclusion of Dr. Marsh in this instance.

\* Letter IV. Travis, p. 70.

2. That it is, however, a theorem which, if true, is of immense importance.

I pretend not to appreciate Dr. Marsh's general merits in this branch of criticism, but I can easily understand how highly serviceable it must be, to have at hand a rule which may be depended on for forming a due estimate of the proportionate probability of the identity of the sacred manuscripts, founded on the different readings, as they occur in a just and accurate examination and comparison of their contents.

The confidence with which the Inventor looked upon his theorem, appears from the *manner* in which he speaks of it to his adversary, Mr. Travis. "If you are a mathematician as well as a critic," (says he, in his usual style of complacent superiority) "you will instantly perceive its truth; and if you are unable to judge for yourself, you have certainly mathematical friends who will inform you that the demonstration is founded on just principles."

Let the reader pause a moment to consult his own feelings, — whether he does not think that a man who uses such language as this, ought, at least, to have very good grounds for concluding that he is right?

The Inventor of the theorem then proceeds to give an instance of its application to a particular case, by which he is led to conclude that there is a very high degree of probability that a certain MS., in the library of the University of Cambridge, is one of those which were employed by R. Stephens, for his edition of the Greek Testament.

The long algebraical process used by Dr. Marsh, determines the chance in favour of the identity of these two MSS. to be as the number 93132 quintillions + 257461 + quadrillions + 542601 trillions + 562499 billions + 999999 millions + 999999, to unity; or, in round numbers, as 93132 quintillions, that is, millions of millions of millions of millions, to unity.

Now there is no denying that a probability which is expressed by the proportion of such an enormous number as this to unity, amounts, for all practical purposes, to an absolute certainty.

Yet I have no hesitation in affirming, that, whatever weight a judicious person might be disposed to give to that evidence, which is grounded by Dr. Marsh on the examination of a certain number of MSS. and their particular readings (fifty is, I think, in this case, the number of MSS., and twenty-two the number of readings), he could never bring himself to conclude that such an argument, allowing even the very most to be made of all the circumstances, established that species of moral certainty which excludes all doubt.

Dr. Marsh observes\*, truly enough, that when the chance in favour of any event is *only* that of a million to one, still most men rely on the certainty of its happening; but that a single million is nothing in comparison of the large sum just mentioned, for that a million of millions, multiplied by a million of millions, is hardly the hundred thousandth part of the number which determines the probability of the identity in question.

\* Letter to Travis, p. 76.

“ I have often heard,” says Dr. Black, “ in the passage already quoted, such arguments for *what I knew to be nonsense.*”

In repeating this, and expressing my entire agreement with that great philosopher, I solemnly protest against any intention of giving offence to Dr. Marsh. But such is the fact:—the moment I heard of so prodigiously high a degree of probability being inferred from such a coincidence of readings, I was sure there must be nonsense *somewhere.*

The theorem on which the argument rests, has, to my knowledge, been greatly extolled by the friends of its inventor; and yet I undertake to say, that a more notable instance of erroneous argumentation is scarcely to be found in the whole history of Algebra.

I do not mean to trouble the reader with the tedious and intricate algebraical processes of Dr. Marsh. Probably these may be all correct. I have not so much as examined the detail with any degree of attention. Besides, I trust I should be ashamed to cavil at such mistakes in the management of complex computations as any man may fall into, and which “ *aut incuria fudit, aut humana parum cavit natura.*”

My objection is to the principle upon which the whole computation proceeds;—a point very easily understood; and, what is still more to my present purpose, a point which bears a considerable relation to the principle of the *hypothesis* of an original Gospel document, which we have been considering; and also to the principle which pervades Dr. Marsh’s late publications concerning the Bible So-

ciety. In these three cases, there is a deficiency of *facts*. In all of them, the inference stands for nothing, unless there be a *considerable number* of facts to support it. In two of these cases, viz. the Bible Society and the Hypothesis, there is an entire absence of facts; and in the third case, viz. the Theorem, instead of a considerable number, there is but a single one.

There will be no necessity on this occasion to display any parade of mathematical learning. The principle of Dr. Marsh's theorem may be rendered perfectly intelligible to common readers, by an easy and familiar illustration.

Let us suppose that there are five chances against the happening of any event, and only one in favour of its happening; it is then five to one, upon any single trial, that that event will not happen. So, in the case of a common die, with six equal sides; if five of them are black, and only one of them white, it is five to one, upon casting the die, that the white side will not come up.

But the number of chances in favour of any event's taking place in future, is not the same thing as the number of times which any event may have actually happened. For example; Suppose that I have a die, not of six, but of an unknown number of sides, and that I cast this die six times successively, and that in those six trials a white face comes up *only* once; it is not in this case, as it was in the former, five to one against the coming up of a white face upon making another trial. To justify such a conclusion, one ought to have made the experiment a vast number of times; that is, one ought to have

cast this same unknown die a round of six times each *exceedingly often*: and then, if we always found that, in every round of six casts, it invariably turned out that we had a white face once, and only once, in each of the six trials; or if, on comparing the whole of the number of the casts put together, with the whole number of white faces that had turned up in all those casts, there should be found a near approach to the ratio of five to one; then we might fairly conclude with great probability, that it was five to one that a white face would not come up upon any single trial. However, it must be observed, that nothing short of an infinity of trials (to use the common language of the mathematicians) could authorise us to pronounce that probability to be certainly and precisely as five to one.

This observation, the instant it is clearly apprehended, lays open the fallacy of Dr. Marsh's demonstration, as he calls it, of his theorem, whatever applause it may have procured to the inventor; and in doing this, it also lays open the reason of that most erroneous conclusion, which, by the application of mathematical principles, he has built upon an unsound basis.

Dr. Marsh's reasoning is of this sort: When ten MSS. for example, have been collated, and a particular reading is found in only one of the ten; there will (he says) on coming to an eleventh manuscript, be only one chance in favour of finding the said reading, and nine against it.

There is no occasion to pursue this reasoning further: here is quite enough to expose the mystery. The reader will see at once, how this case of the

MSS. tallies with that of the die just mentioned of an unknown number of sides. Only ten MSS. are supposed to have been collated, and the particular reading is found only in one of them; yet from this single instance, a general conclusion is drawn by Dr. Marsh, viz. that it is nine to one against finding the said reading in any other MS. that we shall next examine. I call it a single instance, because it really is so in Dr. Marsh's view of it: that is, it is an experiment made only on one set of ten MSS.; and if this same conclusion of nine to one had been fortified by a multitude of experiments made distinctly, upon a multitude of sets of MSS. consisting of ten each, then the conclusion of nine to one would have approached to accuracy, in proportion to the greatness of the number of the experiments now described.

The reasoning, in this instance, ought to be analogous to that of the die with an unknown number of sides. By casting this die a great number of rounds, each round consisting of six casts, the constitution of the die was so far determined, that there were five chances to one against the coming up of a white face upon any single trial. In like manner the constitution of a number of MSS. in regard to a particular reading is supposed to be unknown; and if upon examining a great number of sets of these MSS. each set consisting of ten MSS. it should turn out that this reading is almost always found in some one of the ten, and in no other; or, if upon comparing the number of all the MSS. taken together, in which the reading is not found, with the number of all those in which it appears, there should be a

near approach to the ratio of nine to one, the legitimate conclusion, doubtless is, that on examining any other of these MSS. there is one chance in ten of finding the said reading.

Dr. Marsh arrives at the same conclusion after having examined only a single set of the MSS.

Our Inquirer, who has set me the example of expressing anxiety for the honour of our University, ("what a notion," says he, "will men form of the University of Cambridge!\*"") will allow me, in my turn, and in my capacity of Professor of Mathematics, to exclaim, What a notion will men form of the mathematical learning of our University, when they shall hear of the Margaret Professor of Divinity, educated in the centre of mathematical and philosophical instruction, appealing to his mathematical knowledge, resting his conclusions upon algebraical processes, and yet reasoning precisely as a person would do, who, being supposed entirely without experience of the influence which climate, and season, and many other causes have upon the weather, and yet, desirous of forming some rules for judging of it from his own future observations, should, with this view, commence a course of careful attention to the variations of the weather, and record the facts for ten days successively, and upon finding those ten days to have been all rainy days, except one, should conclude that it was nine to one that the next day would also prove rainy.

Seriously, I would rather undertake to explain and defend the description of the geometrical and

\* Inquiry, p. 23.

algebraical operations ascribed to Hudibras, than the principles by which our Inquirer establishes his theorem.

“ For he, by geometric scale,  
 Could take the size of pots of ale;  
 Resolve by sines and tangents straight,  
 If bread and butter wanted weight;  
 And wisely tell what time of the day  
 The clock doth strike by algebra.”

The fallacy, as I have already intimated, which pervades this whole species of reasoning, consists in deducing, from only a few experiments,—those, for example, made on the fifty MSS. in Dr. Marsh's theorem,—a conclusion which cannot be legitimate, unless it were the result of a great many such fifties.

In fact, the substance of the doctrine of probabilities, deducible from experiments, is in little space, but is difficult in practice. What is usually called chance, does not much disturb those events which appear to have been designed to happen or fail, according to some determinate law. It may be demonstrated, that when experiments or observations are multiplied, the proportion of the events will continually approach to that law. And therefore, conversely, when we find, from almost numberless observations, that this proportion does actually converge to some determinate quantity, we justly conclude, that this quantity points out the law which is to govern the events in question\*.

The reader may see how judiciously this subject

\* De Moivre.

is managed, in an admirable *argument for Divine Providence*, drawn from the constant regularity observed in the births of both sexes, by Dr. Arbuthnot\*.

This acute mathematician is not content with producing a *small number* of instances, upon which he well knew that no reliance could be placed. He gives the annual number of births in London, for eighty-two years successively, each year, at the medium, furnishing about 14,000 births. And as he distinguishes, all along, the males from the females, one easily sees that there is here a good foundation laid for determining the average ratio of the births of males and females respectively. From these data, the learned Nicholas Bernoulli concluded this ratio to be nearly that of 18 to 17.

It must be observed, that Dr. Arbuthnot's reasoning is grounded on more than a million of instances. If he had reasoned on this subject as Dr. Marsh has done on the readings of a few MSS., he would have arrived at some very extraordinary conclusions respecting the probability of the number of the births of males and females compared with each other, and his argument for a Divine Providence would have vanished.

The error into which Dr. Marsh has fallen on this subject is to me so utterly unaccountable, that I shall make *no conjectures* respecting it; no attempt to explain it. I know of no similar instance; I never heard of such a one.

There is, however, one important inference, which

\* Philosophical Transactions, 1710,

I trust I may safely make, and it is this, that any person, who, in his attempts to establish rules for judging of the identity of MSS. is liable to commit so grievous a mistake, not in calculation, but in the very principles of the doctrine of probabilities, cannot possibly be well qualified, whatever may be his endowments and acquisitions in other things, to form a good judgment of the probabilities of future events; and this consideration effectually relieves my mind from the melancholy consequences which might otherwise be produced by Dr. Marsh's portentous auguries, that the secret hostility of the dissenters, and the sad neglect of the church members of the Bible Society to distribute the Prayer-book, have a tendency to bring about the dissolution of our ecclesiastical fabric.

Let it here be remembered, that a single insulated mistake in reasoning is limited in its effects, when compared with the extensive operation of a general theorem, erroneous in principle, and hurtful in its application. The former evil seldom survives the immediate circumstances that gave rise to it, whereas the latter conceals in itself seeds of danger, which for successive ages may be productive of harvests of mischief\*.

\* I am convinced that even incidental observations, when they seem to imply *general principles* of reasoning or conduct, and are delivered in an unguarded manner by Teachers or Lecturers, whose situation entitles them to respect, are sometimes apt to leave hurtful impressions, especially on the minds of a juvenile audience. Dr. Marsh's reply to those who may happen to say, that "INVESTIGATION frequently leads to doubts, where there were none before," appears to me to be an instance of this sort. "So much the better,"

It is remarkable, in what different lights the same objects are viewed by Dr. Marsh and myself.

In my mind, the simplicity of the question, respecting the constitution of the Bible Society, can hardly be exceeded in any imaginable instance whatever: yet Dr. Marsh never entered on a subject which demanded so much penetration. Again:—I entirely accord with the most eminent mathematicians that ever lived in their sentiment, that, to estimate the probability of future events, from numerous experiments or observations which have already been made; as also to determine, from precise data respecting the probability of any one trial, what is likely to be the result of a multitude of similar trials; are among the hardest, if they are not the very hardest, problems that can be proposed on the subject of chance. Yet Dr. Marsh, we have seen, in such investigations, makes short and easy work,

says Dr. Marsh: "If a thing is false, it ought not to be received. If a thing is true, it can never lose IN THE END, by inquiry\*."

Very true—in *the end* this may be so; but who can tell what mischief may happen in the *mean time*, by an injudicious system of investigation. Who, for example, can tell what mischief may have been done by the publication of Dr. Marsh's hypothesis of an original document? The Right Reverend author of the Cautionary Remarks says, that his Remarks have, in a great measure, answered their end: and I believe they have; but still, *Litera scripta manet*—still mischief may be going forward.

Who can enumerate the various evils produced by the bold political investigations of Thomas Paine, so extremely well adapted *ad captandum* were his popular addresses and argumentations? Several admirable replies, no doubt, have been made to them; but the rank seeds struck deep root; and even at the present moment, I believe, are by no means altogether eradicated.

\* Lecture i. p. 15.

laying down his principle of nine to one, or six to one, or forty-nine to one, or in general of  $p-1$  to one, with as much ease and indifference as he would perform the most trivial operations in the first rules of arithmetic; and then, without the least hesitation or ceremony, in the full confidence both of the truth of his mathematical theorem, and its just application, he tells his adversary, Mr. Travis, that he has given "so complete a demonstration of the identity of the MSS. in question, that additional proof must appear wholly superfluous\*."

Moreover, in Dr. Marsh's hypothesis of a common document, there are no facts to establish its basis. The same defect runs through the Inquiry: no facts are produced of any one churchman of the Bible Society neglecting to distribute Prayer-books, where Prayer-books were wanted, and when there existed an ability for their distribution.

In the mathematical theorem an immense conclusion is drawn from only *a few coincidences*; no wonder, therefore, that the probability of the identity of the MSS. should turn out so extravagantly high, and that the number expressive of that probability should be so prodigiously great as to exceed the bounds of credibility.

In all these different sentences, the strong resemblance among the offspring, sufficiently marks the identity of the parent†.

\* Letter V. to Mr. Travis.

† After all, I pretend not to decide, at present, *either on one side or the other*, respecting the identity of the MSS. in the proving of which Dr. Marsh has applied his mathematical theorem. A conclusion may be just, though some of the reasonings in its support

The author calls his pamphlet, *An Inquiry into the Consequences of neglecting to distribute the Prayer-book with the Bible*. In such an Inquiry, one might have supposed that facts would have engrossed the Inquirer's attention beyond every other consideration. Yet it appears very distinctly, that even the most positive instances of facts have little or no weight on his mind, when they thwart his favourite prejudices. He tells us plainly\*, that it would be a poor consolation to produce examples of churchmen of the Bible Society who, individually, exert themselves to distribute the Liturgy among the people, because, forsooth, such examples *are only exceptions* to the general rule. So that, supposing we were actually to produce twenty instances of churchmen of the Bible Society, and nineteen of them should be found to have distributed the Liturgy among their poor parishioners, and only

be fallacious. I have heard, that, sometimes, even the decision of a Judge has been well founded, when the reasons assigned for it were far from satisfactory.

Mr. Porson, our late eminent Greek Professor, it is well known, was engaged in a controversy with Mr. Travis, respecting the authenticity of 1 John v. 7; and as, about that time, I was in habits of long and frequent communication with him, I once took occasion to request his opinion, both on the main question respecting the identity of those two MSS. and also on the propriety of applying such a theorem as that of Dr. Marsh to such a purpose. The Professor's answer was, that he had not, at that time, examined the point relative to the identity of the MSS.; but the mathematical theorem, he signified, was totally inapplicable to the subject. A multitude of considerations, he said, were necessary to form a correct judgment on MSS. which could not possibly be reduced to any theoretical computation of that kind.

\* Inquiry, p. 60.

one of the twenty who had neglected to do so, it would not, in this case, be nineteen to one, as formerly in the principle of the theorem, that the next person, viz. the twenty-first person, would be found also to have distributed the Liturgy. No, no; "we must now argue, not from single instances, but from the general character of the Society\*." In other words, the downright, positive evidence of facts must bend to the mere imagination of Dr. Marsh, who has ventured to presume, that the connection of a churchman with a society which distributes Bibles only, implies a neglect of the Prayer-book, implies an indifference towards it, and a denial of its utility.

Alas! how necessary it is to watch this curious agitation of the brain, which we call thought and reasoning!

The public may judge how little I have been disposed to make known my sentiments on Dr. Marsh's algebraical theorem†, when I inform them, that immediately upon hearing it extolled by some of Dr. Marsh's friends, soon after its publication, I examined both the principle and its consequences; and, for many years, kept my objections to them almost entirely to myself. I do not remember that I ever mentioned the subject to more than two persons in all; and one of them, contrary to my express request and injunction, printed it, as I have been told, in one of the monthly publications, fourteen or fifteen years ago, explained, however, in a manner which produced, I believe, little or no attention.

\* Inquiry, p. 60.

† It was first published in 1795.

I am far from intending to intimate, that if I had published my opinion of Dr. Marsh's theorem, soon after the appearance of his Letters to Mr. Travis, in which that theorem is contained, any apology on my part would have been necessary. I simply state the fact, that the error was observed by me about seventeen years ago, and scarcely ever mentioned for many years. I leave the reader to judge of my motives.

I certainly consider the time as now come, when the questions, Who is Dr. Marsh? and, What is his title to so much authority? loudly call for answers. Those who know me at all, know, that it would have been more grateful to my temper, and more according to my habits, to have had some good reasoning to encounter, some difficult knots to untie; but it was in vain to expect this in the discussion of such a plain subject as the distribution of the Scriptures.

Yet it is impossible I should quarrel with those who think that Dr. Marsh's Inquiry had better have been treated with neglect and indifference, because for a long time I thought so myself.

Undoubtedly, in a case of this sort, where there is a deficiency of real and intrinsic matter and substantial argument, the alternative lay between total silence, and a strict examination of the author's claims to authority, foresight, and penetration; and, in undertaking this examination, I was determined that no one should accuse me of nibbling at slight or trivial instances of erroneous statements and argumentation. Those which I have brought forward are devoid of ambiguity; they are extensive

in their application, and momentous in their consequences.

If the Delphic oracle itself had made many such palpable mistakes, I am convinced it could not long have upheld its reputation. The impression which they have had on my own mind is this, that, if I had leisure and inclination (some curiosity, I confess, I now have) to look further into those Inquiries of Dr. Marsh, which, he tells us, have demanded such close reasoning and profound thought \*, I should find, whatever may be the cause which has produced the extraordinary instances of defective reasoning we have been reviewing, that that cause had most probably not been dormant in other parts of the works of our author. Dr. Lowth, in the course of his controversies with Bishop Warburton, hinted to his opponent, that if “ he, who had demolished the appendix, should take it into his head to examine into the book itself, he might possibly make some havock in the Divine Legation of Moses demonstrated †.”

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#### GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE SPIRIT OF THE ADDRESS AND THE INQUIRY.

Dr. Marsh, at the bottom of p. 26, observes, that “ men scruple not to insinuate what they dare

\* Inquiry, p. 53.

† Dr. Lowth's Letter, p. 102.

not assert.”—Some of my friends, it seems, have supposed, that I am one of the persons here alluded to; and on re-perusing the passage, with its connections, I am disposed to think so. But be this as it may, I apprehend that Dr. Marsh, whatever he might think before, will now be convinced that I am not a person likely to be overawed by menaces. I hope my motto will ever be, “ne quid falsi dicere audeat; ne quid veri non audeat.”

In fact, an unjust insinuation may be quite as mischievous as an unjust assertion, and sometimes even more so. Open injustice is instantly repelled, whereas injustice concealed or mollified by insinuation more surely attains its end, by gradually poisoning the unguarded mind. For example, when Dr. Marsh tells us\*, that our objections would be *less popular*, if we directly denied the utility of the Prayer-book, will any man say, that this insinuation is less calculated to blast the honest reputation of the churchmen that support the Bible Society, than it would be, were the charge conveyed in the most plain and explicit terms which the most determined accuser could invent?

In effect, is not such language as this, on the motives and principles of churchmen, quite as intelligible, and therefore quite as pregnant with irritation and mischief, as our author’s more pointed declarations of the motives and principles of our Protestant dissenting brethren? In both cases, such charges are offensive in a very high degree; and as, in both, the drift of the expressions is clear and manifest, it

\* Inquiry, p. 18.

is scarcely worth while to inquire, whether they convey mere insinuations, or amount to positive assertions.

In one place, I am told by the Inquirer\*, that, although my language may well justify the distribution of the Bible alone, it is better calculated to serve the cause of dissenters than the cause of the church. My reply is, 1st, That I greatly miss my aim, and wade through all this drudgery to little purpose, if I do not serve the cause of peace and harmony better than Dr. Marsh has done by his treatment of our Protestant dissenting brethren. And, 2dly, That it is my decided judgment, that it is not in the power of man to give solid reputation to any sound apostolical church, such as I verily believe the Church of England to be, more effectually, than by promoting as extensive a dissemination of the pure word of God as can be contrived.

On the feeble attempts at argument, which have been grounded on misrepresentation respecting the Liturgy and Popish traditions, I say nothing at present: I may briefly notice them hereafter. But I have little anxiety respecting any charges that concern myself. My chief anxiety arises from a prospect of disunion among the members of our own church, and of a mischievous and unnecessary irritation of the dissenters.

In regard to the latter, let the reader judge of the tendency of the following expressions of Dr. Marsh, viz. The cause of dissenters—the encouragement of dis-

\* Inquiry, p. 23.

senters—the interests of dissenters—the importance given to the dissenting interest—fresh accession of danger to the Established Church—dissenters cannot be well affected to the church—dissenters can combine to oppose the church—their interests in religion are different from ours—we increase the political and religious importance of dissenters—churchmen of the Bible Society divide their influence—they divert it into the channel of the dissenters—the current may turn against them—the pre-eminence of the Established Religion may be forgotten and finally lost—thus the Bible Society may contribute to the dissolution of the church.

Such are the avowed sentiments proclaimed in Dr. Marsh's late publications on the subject of the Bible Society. The careful reader has an opportunity of examining both the Address and the Inquiry, and I may now safely leave the question to his judgment, whether he thinks a single instance can be produced, for many years past, where a churchman has, on any occasion, promulgated so many groundless insinuations. It is not for me to decide, whether they are more offensive to churchmen themselves, or to dissenters; but I will venture to affirm, that if they were as strictly true, as I believe them to be unfounded in argument, affronting in their expression, and rash and presumptuous in prediction, nothing short of the most urgent necessity could ever justify such an effusion of harsh suspicions and unfriendly intimations.

Let us, then, briefly review what those circumstances were.

In an age, when a cold and sceptical indifference

towards Revelation had half frozen the religious principle of many, and when a more subtle and dangerous spirit of infidelity, under the specious garb of reason and freethinking, had produced a host of active and malignant adversaries to the cause of truth, this highly-favoured country had been rejoicing to find the clergy of the Establishment every day growing more enlightened in principle, and more active in practice ; and to behold, also, for upwards of eight years, a most glorious and unexampled concurrence of the hands and hearts of Christians of all denominations, united for the single purpose of disseminating throughout the world the pure word of God.

The astonishing increase and progress of this Society in its numbers, in its funds, and in its blessed effects, have been for some time before the public, and are the daily objects of pious and grateful admiration. These, then, are the circumstances of the case ; and this is the moment of general increasing harmony, when a discordant note or two are heard, “that the church is in danger.” That church, which, for purity of doctrine, and wisdom in the several parts of its constitution, has not, I verily believe, had its parallel since the days of the Apostles : this is the church that is in danger ;—in danger, too, from the prodigious distribution\* which has taken place of the holy Scrip-

\* I say, from the prodigious distribution of the holy Scriptures : for, however loud, or long-continued, may be the outcry concerning the danger of neglecting to distribute the Prayer-book, I shall persist in so expressing myself till the following questions are satisfactorily answered :—

tures, through the united benevolence of churchmen and sectaries of all descriptions. The Church of England, it seems, may dwindle to annihilation, while the dissenters will increase and multiply to any extent.

It will be quite unnecessary to detain the reader by going over the same ground again. My Lord Francis Osborne most truly observed, that the understanding of a child was sufficient to do away the objections. And, in regard to the pretence of not distributing Prayer-books, there is not, in fact, either a neglect of the distribution of them, or any want of disposition in the clerical members of the Bible Society to procure and to distribute them among the poor.

In writing these Strictures on Dr. Marsh's Address and his Inquiry, I have had to struggle with this difficulty: I had before me a mass of extraneous and irrelevant materials, interlarded with many equivocal and invidious representations. To notice

Did there, before the late extensive distribution of the Bible by the Bible Society, appear to exist any just grounds for suspicion, that even those obnoxious churchmen, called Calvinists, did not distribute the Prayer-book as liberally as other churchmen?

Or, since this extensive distribution of the Bible, has it appeared, on a fair examination into the fact, that they neglect the distribution of the Prayer-book?

In regard to the objection from our connection with the dissenters in this good work, I must, on similar grounds, reply, that, until some symptom of evil design, mischief, or treachery shall appear, I cannot surrender the conviction of my judgment, founded on both reason and experience, to the mere imaginations of speculators and alarmists.

every thing, therefore, requiring notice, and yet preserve a consistent method, and avoid tautology, was almost impossible.

My aim has been, to adopt such measures as were most likely to restore the question to its real and native simplicity; to obviate that confusion which has been caused by the admixture of irrelevant matter; to fortify liberal and ingenuous minds against imaginary alarms; to expose the various fallacies and misrepresentations which are so productive of prejudice; and, lastly, to dispel all delusive pretensions to logical nicety and refinement, and to substitute in their place the broad and legible lines of just and requisite discrimination.

In fine, my object has been to detect the errors, and dissipate the fancies, which have served to disguise and perplex, what, in my judgment, is one of the most simple, and, at the same time, one of the grandest considerations that was ever contemplated by the human intellect, viz. the dispersion of the Bible by the voluntary and united efforts of all ranks and orders of Christians.

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#### GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON DR. MARSH'S CHALLENGE, AND ON THE STUDY OF DIVINITY.

Sir Isaac Newton, amidst the insolent censures of the Cartesian bigots of his time, introduces to the world his edition of the Principia (the greatest effort of human ability that ever appeared) with the following modest request:—" Ut omnia candide

legantur, et defectus in materia tam difficili non tam reprehendantur, quam novis lectorum conatibus investigentur, et benignè suppleantur, enixè rogo.”

Dr. Marsh, on the contrary, at a time when neither the extent nor the success of his labours were called in question, challenges\* his opponents to prove that they have laboured harder than he has done to promote the study of the Bible.

It was with great reluctance that I brought myself to notice this ostentatious challenge given to the friends of the Bible Society. Self-commendation is at all times repulsive, but never so disgusting as when accompanied with an invidious and degrading comparison of others. It then absolutely invites opposition and contention.

How slow are we all in learning to put ourselves fairly in the situation of others! It is not long ago that, on a very pertinent occasion†, I happened to mention the notorious fact, that the Elector of Saxony, Frederic the Wise, on the approach of death, was greatly afflicted to reflect that the Word of God had not had its free course in Germany. Yet the extreme sensibility of Dr. Marsh's delicate feelings appears to have recoiled at my forwardness; and I am reprimanded as a person who proclaimed his knowledge of history—reprimanded, too, by one whose own writings are most remarkably interlarded with instances of ostentatious self-adulation.

When I reflect on the several marks of attention shewn to me in Dr. Marsh's Inquiry, I cannot be

\* Inquiry, p. 9.

† The meeting at Cambridge for an Auxiliary Bible Society, in December, 1811.

sure that his spirited challenge respecting the study of the Bible, was not intended to have a particular reference to myself; and this consideration gives me an opportunity of introducing a few explanatory remarks on this subject.

Every thing which Dr. Marsh has advanced in the way of mere personal censure, and which can be separated from the great question now before the public, I could easily have overlooked. It is well known, that more than once I have suffered much greater misrepresentations to pass without notice; but the cause of the Bible Society is emphatically important; and although it has already found several of the ablest defenders that ever appeared on any occasion of controversy, every little addition of weight increases the preponderancy, and I have reason to believe that my public testimony in favour of this good work will not be unacceptable.

As to entering the lists with Dr. Marsh on the subject of Divinity, I will not undertake to predict whether, on the termination of a conflict of that kind with several of those good friends and advocates of the Bible Society whom I could mention, he would, or would not, have reason to applaud his forwardness in issuing challenges. In regard to myself, however, I am satisfied that my ideas concerning the nature of the study of divinity are widely different from those of Dr. Marsh; and more especially as they respect those branches of this study to which I conceive it is desirable that the younger students of our University should chiefly attend.

Dr. Marsh appears to me to lay abundantly too much stress on the niceties of Biblical criticism. I do not think that such a depth of that kind of knowledge, as I understand him to recommend, is at all necessary for students in general; nor do I think that much time spent by them in such pursuits would be well spent; especially as it would leave them too little time for the study of other branches of divinity. I do not think that a minute and accurate investigation of the various readings of manuscripts, or a scientific knowledge of the grounds of preference in settling the very best reading in all cases, ought to be considered as the most important part of divinity. Experience shews, that men may be very knowing in these things, and yet be very poor divines; may spend their lives in the cultivation of this species of knowledge, and yet be neither remarkable for the soundness of their faith in Revelation, their skill in apprehending its doctrines, or their zeal in enforcing them\*.

\* Dr. Marsh challenges the advocates of the Bible Society to declare whether they have laboured harder than himself to promote the study of the Bible.—(Inquiry, p. 9.)

Now, that our Margaret Professor of Divinity himself cannot have been influenced by any extraordinary zeal for promoting the study of divinity, in that sense of the term according to which, in my judgment, the science of real divinity consists, I collect from these facts. He was chosen the Margaret Professor in 1807. He read six public lectures in the year 1809, and six others in 1810; all of them, after the introductory one, *treated merely on the criticism of the Bible*. We were led to expect that his next lectures would be on the *interpretation of the Bible*. The third branch of them was to relate to the *authenticity and credibility of the Bible*; the fourth, to

Nothing here said is to be construed as if I could undervalue those labours of learned men, by which the holy Scriptures are rendered more correct. On the contrary, I rejoice that so great pains have been taken for this purpose, and with so much success: moreover, I think it highly to be commended, that where taste, and talent, and leisure concur, the followers of these learned men should pursue the same tract, and make further discoveries.

Nor, again, would I be understood to discourage students of divinity from attending, all their lives,

*its Divine authority; the fifth, to its inspiration; the sixth, to the DOCTRINES contained in it; the seventh, and last, to ecclesiastical history.* See Dr. Marsh's second Lecture.

This may suffice to shew that labouring in verbal criticisms, and labouring to promote the study of the Bible, are not exactly the same thing. Or is it, that Dr. Marsh imagines he promotes the cause of the Bible most effectually by attacking those who endeavour to disperse it as extensively as possible?

Dr. Marsh's own account of the Study of Divinity, recommended at Oxford, is, that the plan consists of fourteen divisions. The 1st relates to Practical and Pastoral Duties; the 2d, to Devotion; the 3d, to Religion in general; the 4th, to Revealed Religion; the 5th, to the Scriptures; the 6th, &c. &c. (See Dr. Marsh's second Lecture.) Such, I suppose, is the arrangement of the learned Prelate, who published the Cautionary Remarks on Michaelis's Introduction and Dr. Marsh's Hypothesis. But "a more judicious Prelate," says Dr. Marsh, "of our own University, in the preface to his Elements of Christian Theology, divides the subject into four parts; the first, relates to the Exposition of the Scriptures; the second, to the Divine Authority of the Scriptures; the third, to the Doctrines and Discipline of the Church of England; the fourth, to Miscellaneous Subjects, including Sermons and Ecclesiastical History."

I own, it is to me a gratifying circumstance to perceive, that both these systems accord abundantly better with my own notion of real divinity, than with that of Dr. Marsh.

to such valuable improvements in Biblical criticism as are made, from time to time, by retired persons of peculiar habits.

In my opinion, it is one of the material uses of Biblical critics, that ordinary students, by the labours of such men, have been relieved from the drudgery of going over the same ground themselves; while it affords a rational satisfaction to find that the Canonical Scriptures, as they have constantly been received by the Church, after the most diligent scrutiny, made both by friends and by adversaries, furnish so few ambiguities in the readings; and none that can materially affect the evidence for any one important doctrine.

If every young student of divinity is first to go through a long course of Biblical criticism, his time will not only be taken from objects of far greater importance, but there is also considerable danger, lest on meeting with numerous and unexpected variations (however small and trivial in themselves) in many of the readings of the MSS., his mind should become impressed with sceptical surmises and suspicions respecting the truth of the whole book itself. Great, and perhaps incurable, mischief may easily be done in this way before solid habits of thinking, the result of *experience only*, shall have taught the juvenile divines to account for such petty differences in a rational way.

Dr. Marsh may be assured, that some of his greatest admirers have thought him not sufficiently on his guard in this respect.

But this is not a topic on which I am called to say much in the course of these Strictures. I touch

upon it merely to put Dr. Marsh in mind, that when he offers a challenge of combat to his clerical brethren, it can scarcely be deemed equitable that he should choose his own weapons; or to lay aside metaphors, when the object of the challenge is to prove who has done the most to promote the study of the Bible, he must not be allowed to adopt his own definition of the study of the Bible, at least not without the leave of the party who disputes his pretensions. He must not take it for granted, that Biblical criticism is the first and most important part of divinity, while his adversary probably insists that the study of the *doctrines* of the Bible, and the illustration and enforcement of them are superlatively the prominent points which call for the exertion of the faculties of every good divine.

Dr. Marsh perhaps may think, that the preaching and expounding of the word of God, and diligently exhorting the people to an observance of Christian duties, however useful these parochial employments may be, scarcely merit the name of the Study of Divinity. On the other hand, I should not be surprised if some of his opponents (as he terms them) should insinuate to him, that Biblical criticism is a subject on which a person of tolerable attainments and plausible address may, in a little time, and with no great depth of learning, compose a few superficial lectures, extracted from various prefaces, and prolegomena of authors, especially from those of the laborious German writers, which may appear sufficiently specious and imposing to those who are scarcely acquainted with such subjects; but that "rightly to divide the word of truth," to understand

the doctrines of the Bible, and to apply them with judgment and effect according to the different circumstances of men in various parishes and congregations, is divinity indeed—is that which indeed merits the dignified name ; and that to do all this well, requires length of time, sobriety of thought, with much pious zeal and practical observation.

None of my candid readers, I hope, will suppose that I am taking upon me to decide between Dr. Marsh and his opponents (as he calls them) the question, who has done most to promote the study of the Bible ; when the purport of these general observations is merely to shew that no progress can be made towards the solution of this question, till the parties have come to an understanding as to the nature of the study of divinity, as to the particular things in which that study essentially consists.

Now, long experience has convinced me, that one of the most injudicious practices into which a public lecturer on any subject can fall, is that of undertaking *too much*. We live in an age when sciences have been canvassed with incessant industry ; when all that is known in them has been commented on with the greatest ingenuity, and placed in a variety of lights ; and when doubtful points have been stated with much fairness and impartiality, and objections removed and the truth defended with dexterous argumentation. The consequence has been, that through the abundance of materials ready at hand in almost every branch of science, it is become a very easy thing to form comprehensive syllabuses or heads of lectures, which, by their large promises, shall attract the fancy of persons eager to acquire

much knowledge, with the least trouble, and in the shortest time.

Little more than a superficial knowledge of the subjects is requisite for this purpose. What is deficient in solidity is supplied by the aptness of men's minds to be pleased with abstracts of extensive systems and arrangements, and with the alluring prospect of acquiring a superiority in science, by merely giving attendance to a few courses of public lectures.

My views on the subject of a clerical education will, probably, be at variance with those of Dr. Marsh, when I submit it to the judgment of those who are best qualified to decide, whether, in the present circumstances of this country, taking into the account the expenses of a liberal education, and the difficulty of furnishing our Ecclesiastical Establishment with a sufficient number of clergymen truly respectable on account of their qualifications for the discharge of parochial duties, the best method of study in divinity might not be something like the following. First, as a foundation for the superstructure, to secure a competent knowledge of the learned languages, including the Hebrew; and to induce habits of closer reasoning by some degree of the study of the mathematics, and of philosophy, both natural and moral.

Such would be my preparation for a more immediate application to the study of divinity; in the commencement of which, I would content myself with a very concise and general account of the history and operation of that Biblical criticism which

has brought the text of the holy Scriptures to its present state of improvement. And in thus proceeding, I conceive, I should act very much on the same rational grounds that calculators do, who hazard their reputation, their own property and that of others, and even their lives, on the accuracy of astronomical tables and tables of logarithms.

Our most skilful navigators depend on the numerical computations already made to their hands, for enabling them to avoid rocks, and shoals, and dangerous coasts, without having ever themselves gone through the process for ascertaining the truth of so much as a single logarithm or a single longitude of the moon.

But it would be beside my purpose to expatiate further on the entire reasonableness of giving credit in this manner to what others have done, especially when a variety of persons, unconnected with each other, have made diligent inquiries into the text of the Sacred Writings, and have all come to the same, or nearly the same, conclusions.

This system of confidence is, however, by no means to be carried so far as to exclude a very careful personal examination of the evidences of Revelation;—those evidences, I mean, which prove that the canonical books of Scripture are the genuine writings of authors who had Divine authority to teach the Christian religion.

In the pursuit of this object, I esteem the three little volumes of Dr. Paley, (containing the marrow of the more elaborate writings of the learned Dr. Lardner), together with his single volume of *Horæ*

Paulinæ, far above whole book-cases full of the voluminous, indigested speculations of many well-meaning authors.

When the serious student is satisfied—not indeed so as to be able to answer completely every objection he may meet with, but satisfied—that the God of Israel is the true God; and that Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent, is the way, the truth, and the life; and that the holy Scriptures contain every thing that is necessary for salvation, he ought not, according to my views of the importance of time and the use of talents, to spend year after year in attending to minute difficulties, and refined speculations; but immediately to begin the study of the *doctrines* of his Bible, and their application to practical purposes. And here it can scarcely be necessary to observe, that in searching the Scriptures with a view to doctrinal points, the examination of the Articles and Liturgy of the Church of England will claim the peculiar attention of students. These will supply abundant materials for the exercise of all their reasoning faculties; especially if they should be disposed to enter upon religious inquiries of the abstruser kind. I will, however, venture to affirm, that the more active and zealous they are in the discharge of the practical duties of their profession, the less time and the less inclination also will they have for the niceties of theoretical disquisitions in divinity.

The study of ecclesiastical history, by which I do not mean the secular history of religion, but the history of the true Church of Christ, wherever it is to be found, and also the history of the corruptions of

Christian doctrines, will furnish a subsidiary attainment, and prove exceedingly useful to the young divine in his pursuits, both by confirming and illustrating sound interpretations of scriptural doctrine; and by furnishing the mind with practical maxims for the direction of his conduct.

The candid reader will supply the imperfections of this brief statement, which I bring forward, not at all for the purpose of arguing the question, Which is the best mode of studying divinity? but, as I have already intimated, merely to shew what different notions men may have of divinity, and how absolutely necessary it must be first to settle the point, in what consists the proper study of the Bible, before we can undertake to determine who has laboured the hardest to promote that study\*.

Dr. Marsh himself, I think, provided he allows that this is indeed the right outline of that mode of studying the Scriptures which ought to be recommended in the education of divines of our own Establishment, will scarcely maintain that he has any just pretensions to the character of an eminent theologian, or that great numbers of the clergy, whom he calls his opponents, have not done abundantly more to promote the study and knowledge of the Bible than he can undertake to prove, by a fair comparison of facts, that he himself has done.

In this discussion of the nature of scriptural divinity, and the best methods of acquiring the knowledge of it, I deprecate all application of what I have said to my own case. A man, whose whole

\* Inquiry, p. 9.

life, from the year of his first academical degree, has been a continued scene of bodily suffering, and of subsequent valetudinarian infirmity, must never pretend to assume the character of a champion, and to solicit contention, or even to stand forward in readiness to accept any literary challenge; yet if there be any truth in the observations I have just made, the candid examination even of my own labours, though perpetually interrupted by ill health; might enable me to make a much better figure than Dr. Marsh may probably suspect.

1. Many scores of my former pupils are at this day grateful in remembering how indefatigably laborious I was for many years in teaching the right principles of moral evidence, and in pointing out the discriminations requisite for obtaining the just measures of probabilities of all kinds; and I should be much surprised if any pupil of mine should ever err so egregiously as Dr. Marsh has erred from the first rules of sound philosophy, and the true grounds on which all just conclusions respecting probabilities must ever be founded.

2. In the continuation of the History of the Church of Christ\*, I have spent much time in diligent researches into the corruptions of Christianity under the Papal hierarchy, as well as into the true character of the most eminent reformers. With what success I have laboured in this branch of ecclesiastical history, the learned public must judge. The work is at present very imperfect; but there are two circumstances which might encourage me to

\* Vols. IV. and V.

persevere. 1. Some very respectable judges have owned, that they never before had entertained just views either of Popish despotism and Popish corruptions, or of those worthies who at the hazard of their lives shook the pillars that supported them. 2. I have long been convinced that a more accurate knowledge of the nature of that Antichrist which is so significantly pointed at in the prophecies, is an essential ingredient in the information of every good divine, and was never more loudly called for than at the present day, when some of our best statesmen seem to have almost forgotten what the Roman Catholic religion always was, and still continues to be.

3. Lastly, although I have to lament that I can seldom leave my own chamber without danger to my poor fragments of health; and although many of my intimates well know my infirmities to be such that I can seldom trust myself at church or other assembly, without suffering very considerable inconvenience, yet for a great many years I have struggled to preach six, eight, ten, or twelve times in the year at Carlisle, and also four or five times at Queen's College, usually on some important points in divinity, and with reference to the Articles and Liturgy of our own church. And, notwithstanding Dr. Marsh's invidious insinuations about Calvinism, I believe I never introduced that subject into the pulpit more than once; and then, only for the express purpose of exhorting well-meaning persons not to entangle themselves with such unedifying disputations, which are apt to perplex and harass the mind, and to divert it from practical considerations of real moment and utility.

No person, however, must hence infer, that if my sentiments were really Calvinistical in the highest degree, I should be at all disposed to flinch from the frank and open avowal of them. For no injurious intimations, no ungenerous advantages taken of prevailing prejudices, are likely to have any effect on the conduct of a man, who has never acted any other part than that of a steady and warm inquirer after truth, and who in its service is always willing to encounter whatever disadvantages he may meet with.

It may be deemed some proof of this, that I have ventured to speak in the manner I have done of some of the professional labours of Dr. Marsh. I earnestly desire, however, that a deaf ear may be turned to me when I do not prove every point capable of proof; or when, in cases where probability only is to be expected, I do not shew the probability to rise very high.

In regard to such questions as, "Who has done most to promote the study of the Bible?" and again, "Is Dr. Marsh an eminent divine?" I conceive, after what I have said, there can be little difficulty. For it happens in this case as in many others, that all obscurities and ambiguities vanish as soon as the terms of the inquiry are clearly stated. Never yet have I heard a single person contend that Dr. Marsh was "mighty" in the doctrines of the "Scriptures;" or that he was either skilful or industrious in making men wise unto salvation. He tells us\*, that he has frequently tried our Liturgy and

\* Inquiry, p. 20.

Articles of Faith by the test of the Scriptures. I wish that among his various writings there was to be found, for our instruction, a single discourse or dissertation on any important doctrinal subject. But as I am not aware of this, I shall content myself with simply observing, that in the two or three specimens which I remember of Dr. Marsh's divinity, delivered in the pulpit of St. Mary's, I had to lament what I thought an erroneous conception of a most essential article of our faith, and also a misrepresentation of a divine who is well known to have maintained it with singular zeal and perseverance.

In fact, the attention of Dr. Marsh has been drawn to things very different from the leading doctrines of the Scriptures, and their application to practice; and I am persuaded he has yet much to learn, before he can convince any person who looks into evidences, and ventures to judge for himself, that he is either an eminent divine, or that he has much contributed to the promotion of sound scriptural knowledge.

I cannot conclude this head better than in the words of the Right Rev. anonymous Author of the Remarks before quoted—"Upon the whole," says he, "it will be thought, I trust, that I speak moderately, when I say only, that Mr. Marsh takes too much upon himself\*."

\* Supp. VII.

## OBSERVATIONS ON THE DEAN OF CARLISLE'S INFIRMITIES.

I know not what Dr. Marsh's feelings may be, but I have no hesitation in owning, that the temporary alienation of mind produced by controversies of this sort, between acquaintances or familiars resident in the same University, who, as far as I know, never harboured a single unkind thought of each other, is with me no trivial source of uncomfortable and mortifying reflection.

Notwithstanding Dr. Marsh's present excessive sensibility for the safety of our church, on account of the Calvinistic tenets, and attachment to the Bible Society, of several of its members; it is no longer ago than in the spring of 1811, that he was pleased to make very honourable mention of some of these very members, and to represent them as sound both in their political and their religious principles. In a little performance, called the "Question Examined, whether the Friends of the Duke of Gloucester, in the present Contest, are the Enemies of the Church, by Herbert Marsh, D.D." the author puts this question: "Is the present Vice-Chancellor, is the Bishop of Bristol, is the Dean of Carlisle, is the Deputy Regius Professor, is the Margaret Professor, &c. men attached to the present administration with no less sincerity than the Duke of Rutland, to be branded as enemies of the church, because they refuse to join the Manners party in the election of a Chancellor? Shall such men be told that

they must either violate the spirit of their statutes, in electing for their Chancellor a nobleman so connected with the town, or submit to the displeasure of high ecclesiastical authority, and be represented as opposing the great cause of the church?"—Yet *I* was at that very time, and had been for several years, one of those degenerate churchmen who had supported the Bible Society.

It is not in my power to repay Dr. Marsh, for this honourable mention of my name, by any equivalent public testimony of respect; yet he will allow me to produce an instance of most unfeigned civility on my part, and which I have no reason to believe was not cordially received on his with quite as much sense of grateful acknowledgment as could possibly be due to so petty an obligation.

I allude to his requesting me to sit in my place as Vice-Chancellor, at St. Mary's, during his course of public lectures in the year 1810. The reading of the divinity lecture there was so new a thing that it had only occurred once before. There was neither custom nor necessity to render the Vice-Chancellor's attendance a duty. Indeed, it is well known that the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge is often almost overwhelmed with business of various kinds, and several persons thought it scarcely fair to add to his burdens: and, in my own particular case, I have already observed how incompatible it is with my infirmities to be present in public assemblies, and confined to the same situation, especially when the air is cool and damp. When I was elected Vice-Chancellor the first time, now more than twenty years ago, three physicians and one or two surgeons sub-

scribed a report on the nature of my bodily complaints, for the inspection of the Heads of Colleges; in consequence of which they undertook to divide among themselves almost all that part of the Vice-Chancellor's duties which required him to leave his chamber.

At present I am absolutely supported by large doses of the most powerful medicines, repeated several times every day; and although I am thereby enabled to make considerable exertions at home, I can rarely stir out for any length of time with safety, and seldom do stir out without suffering very considerable inconvenience.

I am not sorry, that among the many disagreeable circumstances, unavoidable in a controversy of this sort, a fair occasion has been afforded me of explaining certain peculiarities in my own conduct; the reason of which, though well understood by my friends and familiars, for many years past, have nevertheless sometimes furnished a handle to the uncandid for misrepresentations of various kinds. I rest assured, that no considerate person will expect me to be more explicit in this matter.

In the instance, however, to which I have alluded, of Dr. M.'s application to me, all the objections I have stated, (and which will not be deemed very slight,) concerning the inexpediency of my remaining long in the same situation in public assemblies, were instantly outweighed, in my mind, by the strong opinion which I perceived Dr. Marsh to have formed, that the Vice-Chancellor's presence in his proper place would add respectability both to the Professor of Divinity and to his public lecture.

Such, to the best of my knowledge and belief, were the very fair terms on which Dr. Marsh and myself stood, before the commencement of that bustle which has been raised, in consequence—of what?—tell it not in the University of Cambridge; publish it not in the metropolis; publish it not in the streets of our great towns and cities—in consequence of *an actual* distribution of Bibles to an astonishing extent; and of a *conjecture* of an individual, by no means celebrated for his keen insight into the probabilities of future events, that Prayer-books will not be distributed by the churchmen who support this extensive dissemination of the Bible.

It is generally reported, that Dr. Marsh is fond of controversy; and indeed, if his pen were not always ready dipped in ink for that purpose, I conceive the Margaret Professor of Divinity would scarcely have judged it consistent with the dignity of his profession, to print and circulate such an electioneering squib as has been mentioned, against the aggrandizement of the power and influence of the *Manners family*. And again; I cannot but suppose, that a person of a less restless disposition for appearing in print, would have permitted the late Cambridge meeting for an Auxiliary Bible Society to take its free course, without irritating the friends of the measure, by circulating, in the shape of an Address, three quarto pages of suspicions, suggestions, and predictions, destructive of Christian harmony and brotherly love.

Dr. Marsh, on reflection, can hardly suppose, that, in repelling such an attack, less notice could have been taken of his Address than that which is

contained in Mr. Farish's Account, now before the public. His Inquiry is a performance quite in the usual style of the author. Its professed object is, to secure the church from the danger with which it is supposed to be threatened by the Bible Society. Of what service this publication will prove, either to the church in general, or to particular members of it, time may discover. All that as yet can with certainty be predicated of it is, that it has notoriously contributed to extend and amplify the connections, the resources, and the operations of the Bible Society; and likewise, that, almost immediately after its appearance, it called forth in reply the exertions of several churchmen distinguished for their talents and sound principles. If Dr. Marsh, as is said, has really a passion for controversy, he has before him, I suppose, a prospect of considerable gratification. I think proper, however, to warn him not to expect from me any further contribution towards his enjoyments of this kind.

## PART V.

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 AN ACCOUNT OF THE ANSWERS ALREADY PUBLISHED.

THE indirect promotion of the objects of the Bible Society, by Dr. Marsh's exertions, is unquestionable: and although we allow this to be only an incidental good, yet it is pleasing to reflect, that it will, in a considerable degree, compensate the mischiefs which, according to my apprehensions, it is the natural and direct tendency of his Address and Inquiry to produce.

An additional satisfaction is also furnished by the consideration, that these mischiefs cannot fail to be in some measure remedied by the good sense and sound argument contained in the several pamphlets which have made their appearance in reply to Dr. Marsh's publications.

1. The spirited reply of Dr. Clarke, although sent to the press a very few hours after the publication of Dr. Marsh's Inquiry, contains the substance of all that needs to be said to expose the fallacy of the objections to the Bible Society.

2. Soon after appeared Mr. Otter's admirable pamphlet, remarkable for its conciseness and per-

spicuity, and for the mixture of plain good sense and argumentative acumen which appears in every page.

I consider this reply of Mr. Otter as peculiarly valuable, not only because the reasons of its excellent author are unanswerable, and accordingly Dr. Marsh has not thought proper to attempt an answer; but because he speaks experimentally, that is, from what he himself personally knows and has seen in his own parish, of the happy effects of the Bible Society in promoting the distribution of the Prayer-book.

3. The Three Letters of the Right Honourable Nicholas Vansittart, as being the production of a layman and a person of distinction, have operated with admirable effect on the public mind. The elegance and piety with which the author conveys his wholesome admonitions, do not diminish the keenness of his censure. The history of controversial writings does not afford an instance of a work better calculated to silence an opponent. Dr. Marsh was so sensible of the amiable spirit of this writer, that he exclaimed, "Let other advocates of this Society take a lesson from Mr. Vansittart!"

But why not have said, "Let us *all* take a lesson from Mr. Vansittart?" Is it that — *nemo in se tentat descendere; nemo; sed præcedenti spectatur mantica tergo?*

4. Mr. Simeon likewise appeared in this controversy with extraordinary advantage. It was unfortunate for Dr. Marsh, that this indefatigable and exemplary clergyman, in consequence of his appointment to be a public preacher in the University,

for 1811, had, before the first of Dr. Marsh's publications appeared, delivered four excellent sermons in commendation of that very Liturgy, of the utility of which we were then represented as thinking so lightly.

The extensive acquaintance also of Mr. Simeon with the most pious and active parochial ministers of our own church, and his accurate knowledge of their proceedings, particularly qualified him to speak, with the best information, on the undoubted effect of the Bible Society, in increasing the distribution of the Prayer-book.

5. Mr. Dealtry, the learned and indefatigable champion of the Bible Society, has closely followed the Inquirer through all his sinister windings and subtle deviations. He never suffers him so much as to pause and take breath. Abundantly better acquainted with the concerns of the Bible Society than any one else, perhaps, that can be mentioned; and with an established reputation for learning and talents that is exceeded by few; this excellent scholar and able disputant has fully satisfied those who have taste and leisure for entering into *the detail* of this controversy.

6. When the adversaries of the Bible Society, of whatever rank or description they may be, shall have perused the speech of Mr. Gisborne, made at the meeting for an Auxiliary Bible Society at Stafford, I cannot but hope they will be disposed to review their objections, and fairly ask themselves, whether they can possibly think that the surmises of Dr. Marsh are to be put in competition with the plain, luminous, and energetic statements of Mr.

Gisborne. Or, again, if they are disposed to give weight to authority, let them seriously consider where they will find materials to preponderate against the scale that contains the talents, the learning, the studies and labours in divinity, the exposition and illustration of duties, and, lastly, the parochial ministrations, of such a clergyman as Mr. Gisborne\*.

\* The impartial reader will do well to consult the speech of this learned and excellent divine, made in the County Hall at Stafford, at a meeting in April, 1812, for the purpose of forming a Staffordshire Auxiliary Bible Society.

By a convincing argument, founded on fact, he shews that in England and Wales the number of families, which were at that time in want of Bibles, probably amounted to 350,000.

From this actual state of the poor, he infers that the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, which has been employing its exertions during 110 years, is incompetent to furnish to the poor of this country the requisite supply of the Scriptures, especially when it is considered that those exertions have been vigorously seconded by the operations of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

Nothing, however, is more remote from Mr. Gisborne's mind, than the idea of imputing blame to this Society, of which he himself has been a member about twenty-six years, and always speaks with sentiments of respect and regard. "It has been," says he, "powerfully and extensively beneficial. But a very large portion of its revenues is necessarily absorbed in the other objects which belong to its institution."

Mr. Gisborne then proceeds to answer the objections made to the Bible Society, very briefly, but very satisfactorily.

1. The Bible Society is said to be opposed to the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge.

"An opinion more erroneous was never entertained. Not only has no opposition ever been meditated, but the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge has derived great and durable advantages from the establishment of the British and Foreign Bible Society."

"The two societies are two sisters, partly having one object in common, partly having each of them an object peculiar to herself.

THE DEAN OF CARLISLE'S REASON FOR APPEARING  
IN THIS CONTROVERSY.

After this enumeration of worthy and able characters, who have appeared in defence of the Bible Society (and several others might have been added to the list), I anticipate a question so reasonable and so natural as to call for an explicit answer.

“If it be indeed my sincere opinion, that the subject has been thoroughly canvassed, and all objections completely done away, why is the public to be further troubled, and the contention still kept alive by fresh publications, when it is acknowledged, indirectly at least, that there is now no necessity for them?”

Let them proceed hand in hand, from county to county, from village to village, from cottage to cottage” . . . . .

2. But the Scriptures are circulated exclusively in their simple form, without any accompanying explanations.

“At one time,” says Mr. Gisborne, “it was clamorously alleged, ‘Notes and comments and interpretations will be inserted in your Bibles—you will undermine the Church of England by the exposition which you will interweave into the Sacred Volume.’

“‘It is impossible,’ replied the Society: ‘it is a fundamental law of our constitution, that neither note nor comment should ever be added.’

“Then succeeds an accusation from the opposite quarter of the sky. ‘Why do you send forth the Scriptures without an interpretation? The established church will be ruined.’” Here Mr. Gisborne acutely observes, that both these classes of objectors are equally anxious for the overthrow of the Bible Society; that he leaves them to settle accounts; and that, when they have determined whether it will be more conducive to the shipwreck for the wind to blow from the

I answer, that, on certain momentous occasions, it is not enough barely to establish the truth; it sometimes, also, becomes highly expedient to trace and expose the errors that have served to conceal and disguise it. It is in this latter service that I have perceived there still remained a distinct line for me to take. In truth, I am not qualified, as Mr. Dealtry is, to repel the attacks which may possibly be made on every particular proceeding of the Bible Society, by those "who seek occasion to cavil." Perfectly satisfied with the grand principle of its constitution, and rejoicing in its success, I became long ago one of its supporters, without ever dreaming of any possible objection or opposition to it: and there are perhaps few of its advocates less acquainted than myself with the detail of its history.

Nevertheless, I remain satisfied with the blessed effects which it produces, and am impressed with

east or from the west, or from both the east and the west at once, it will then be sufficiently early for the pilots to deliberate how they may best avoid rocks and quicksands.

3. In regard to the objection grounded on the association of churchmen with dissenters, Mr. Gisborne, with a laudable sensibility, asks, "Are dissenters then a body of men with whom *no communication* can be held? Are they a body of men with whom a churchman is in *no instance* to have intercourse? Are they a body of men to be interdicted from the use of fire and water? Are they a body of men, who, if they engage in a good work, pollute it? Are they a body of men with whom if a churchman engages in a good work, *he* is polluted? Or, is it *only* in the distribution of the Scriptures, that we are to fly from the possibility of contact with them? . . . Are we to go hand in hand with them in every circumstance, except in the donation of a Bible?"

4. The objection grounded on the non-distribution of Prayer-books by the Bible Society, is answered by Mr. Gisborne in the very satisfactory manner adopted by Mr. Otter.

an unconquerable conviction, that, as long as the objects of it are simply the dissemination of the pure Bible, there must be much good, and can be no mischief.

In these Strictures, I pretend not to have made any discoveries; all I profess is, to discriminate between bad reasoning and good. This is the line which I have considered as still open to *me*, and as supplying materials for further observations.

It is in the pursuit of this track, that I have ventured to call in question the *authority* of Dr. Marsh; and, surely, if I have shewn to demonstration that in his Inquiry he has confounded together things which ought to have been kept distinct; that he has pronounced of individuals what is true only of the collective body; that he has grossly misapplied the historical events of our own country; that he has illogically deduced conclusions unconnected with their premises;—moreover, if I have shewn that all this erroneous procedure appears to be radically of the same class with those other grievous mistakes into which, several years ago, while treating of subjects of the greatest importance, our Inquirer fell; I must at least have excited some reflections agreeing with the observation of a Right Rev. Prelate, that Dr. Marsh is apt to “take too much upon himself.”

The questions which have been raised respecting the Bible Society, are precisely of that kind in which an ill-placed confidence may do abundance of mischief. I may prove an algebraical theorem to be absurd in principle; and a wild hypothesis to be inconsistent with the rules of sound philosophy; but

mere conjectures, let them be ever so extravagant, provided there be no contradiction in the terms, cannot possibly be confuted.

In such cases, all that is in our power is to do away confidence, or at least to diminish it.

What a frightful prognostic has Dr. Marsh formed, both of the near and the remote consequences of the operations of the Bible Society! And what uncharitable inferences has he already drawn, not concerning the future merely, but even the present neglect of the Prayer-book by the clergy! Therefore, in lessening his authority as a judge of probabilities, and a predictor of future events, I reckon upon considerable advantages. Nevertheless, those who suppose that I am chiefly influenced by fearful apprehensions for the prosperity of the Bible Society, very much misconceive my sentiments. In fact, I have no anxiety about its prosperity. Already it is *actually* prosperous, and I believe it will continue to be so. My principal anxiety arises from an apprehension of those mischiefs which I have already described as likely to result from the representations of Dr. Marsh: I mean, the disunion among churchmen, and chiefly among the clergy; the irritation among the dissenters; and the general impression that the clergy are more anxious for the security of their own establishment than for the spreading of the holy Scriptures among the people.

Far be it from me to say, that the clergy have given just occasion for such an imputation; but in my judgment, the tendency of Dr. Marsh's publications is to produce these mischiefs; and it is on

this ground that I have endeavoured to do my utmost to avert the danger. Let it but be well understood, that our Inquirer's accusations of his clerical brethren, his suspicions of the dissenters, and his general apprehensions of their increasing influence through the instrumentality of the Bible Society, are altogether without foundation; and I will venture to predict, that there will soon be returning good humour among churchmen and the clergy; that dissenters and churchmen will shake hands with each other, without fear of contagion on either side; that the two great Bible Societies will flourish, and heartily wish one another good luck in the name of the Lord; that every individual will follow his own judgment as to the preference he gives; that in a short time, there will scarcely be a poor family in the kingdom without a Bible, or a poor churchman's family without both a Bible and a Prayer-book; and lastly, that the people in general, instead of harbouring unworthy suspicions of their rulers and instructors, will look on them as their spiritual benefactors, and receive their Bibles and Prayer-books, and other religious tracts, with gratitude.

If these things should not follow, I would for ever leave to Dr. Marsh the business of prediction.

Dr. Marsh professes his concern for the security of the church, which he supposes to be in danger from the Bible Society. I too have my fears, but for very different reasons; nor is it necessary to detail them at present. It is, however, my unfeigned belief, that if the community in general should ever seriously imagine that the main body of the clergy can be induced, by such arguments and

exhortations as Dr. Marsh has used in his Address and Inquiry, to imbibe hostile sentiments towards a society which employs all its active energies in the dissemination of the Scriptures, an impression of this sort must necessarily be considered as increasing those dangers, whatever they may be, to which the church is exposed, and as assuredly portentous of discontent and disunion.

My first perusal of his Address convinced me, that I had never read *three pages*, which contained so much ground of just and reasonable objection. In his subsequent Inquiry, some of the most irritating circumstances respecting the dissenters are either omitted, or insisted on in a less offensive manner; but the clergy of the Bible Society, with the single exception of the bishops, "to whom," he allows, that "no man of common sense would ascribe dishonourable motives," are treated with a most merciless presumption; and throughout both these performances, there is manifested a spirit, which, although perfectly consistent with worldly views, appears to exclude every thing that may justly deserve the name of Christian seriousness.

It will be here a poor defence to urge\* that the subject did not call for any enthusiastic effusions; *because* no subject will justify the use of such effusions; neither, as I conceive, will any invidious allusion to new "lights," or to Calvinistic tenets, or to the excessive zeal of the advocates of the Bible Society, easily convince the thinking part of the

\* Inquiry, pp. 45, 46, the note.

community, that Dr. Marsh has adopted prudent means to add strength and stability to our ecclesiastical establishment. Even the extraordinary anxiety which he manifests for the secular pre-eminence of the church appears to me, in the present critical situation of the country, much more likely to defeat than to promote its object.

When our Inquirer speaks of the religious interests of the dissenters as being different from ours, he cannot be supposed to maintain that dissenters from the church, as to every thing which respects their spiritual and eternal concerns, are not as deeply interested in religion as churchmen; and if, by the different interests of dissenters, his intention is to contrast their church government, discipline, and worship with those of the Church of England, I would then repeat the observation which I made at the Cambridge meeting—that, lamenting as much as any member of the Establishment can do, the separation of dissenters from the national church, nevertheless, the very circumstance of their dissent is with me a reason why, in other respects, I desire to go hand in hand with them as far as I can. It is because I prefer the government and discipline and worship of the Church of England to their church government, that I am anxious to concur with them in any point where we do agree; and in none can I more cordially agree with them than in the distribution of that Bible which is the foundation of the common hope and belief of Christians.

Without doubt, the Liturgy of our church is as sound and as spiritual a composition as ever was penned; and it would be with pleasure that I should

hear of Dr. Marsh's explaining and illustrating its doctrines, either in the way of sermons or of public lectures; particularly those grand fundamental doctrines which constitute the essence of the Christian Religion. In such an event, the preacher or lecturer should find me among the first to proclaim his meritorious labours in promoting the study of the Bible.

It may be said, perhaps, that Dr. Marsh, in recommending the Prayer-book so strenuously, recommends it on account of its inestimable contents; namely, its prayers, its catechism, and its summaries of sound doctrine; and that no one has a right to suppose the contrary. But whoever thinks such a reply will shelter him from the force of my objection, entirely mistakes the objection itself. God forbid that I should pretend to any insight into the secrets of the heart! What I mean both to advance and to maintain is this, that such an opposition from any clergyman of the Establishment to the distribution of the Bible, as Dr. Marsh has made, will infallibly expose that clergyman to a suspicion, not easily to be removed by any subsequent inquiry or examination, that he has not that perfect esteem and respect for the Bible itself which he ought to have. I am here inquiring, not into the *reasonableness*, but the *certainty* of the suspicion; and in the same sense I would be understood to affirm, that Dr. Marsh has so expressed himself as to give great advantages to the adversaries of the church to inculcate, on the minds of the people at large, that neither the Prayer-book nor the Bible itself was so much the object of his concern, as the temporal interests and

the temporal pre-eminence of our ecclesiastical establishment.

To speak plainly, I utterly disapprove of every species of contention concerning power and interest in such a business as the distribution of Bibles—a business which, in every stage of its progress, in every branch of its ramifications, ought to exhibit the Christian principles of meekness, humility, and charity. What room for strife can there be among sincere Christians, where the avowed object is the beneficent dispersion of the word of God, except this, who shall be most active in distributing Bibles, and in finding proper objects of their liberality?

I most particularly dislike those portentous apprehensions expressed in Dr. Marsh's Address, which represent what he calls the constitutional equality between the church and dissenters as dangerous to the pre-eminence of the Established Religion of the country. For, in the first place, whoever attends to the standing regulations of the Bible Society cannot but observe how very considerable must be the preponderancy of its church members on several accounts; and, in regard to the national pre-eminence of the Established Church, I conceive, that, exclusive of the intrinsic excellence of our ecclesiastical establishment, and the number of its adherents, it rests entirely upon the Acts of Parliament which protect and secure to it all its peculiar advantages.

Now, I cannot find a syllable advanced by Dr. Marsh to qualify his mysterious intimations, that the unlimited distribution of the holy Scriptures, by a great society constituted as the present Bible So-

ciety is, will either lessen the number of the adherents to our church, or deteriorate the excellence of its cause; or weaken the efficacy of the Acts of Parliament in its favour; or, lastly, will darken the prospect of their durability.

The very idea of any struggle for pre-eminence being excited, by a systematic distribution of Bibles for the religious instruction of the poor, is, to my mind, a most unpleasant reflection; and I think it by no means improbable, that in the imprudent publication of such an idea by a Doctor of Divinity of our own church, there may be sufficient irritation to prove a source of considerable mischief. Without meaning an unhandsome allusion, I may be allowed to observe, that nothing requires so little talent as the production of mischief.

Every syllable I have advanced, concerning the tendency of that tone and spirit which pervade Dr. Marsh's two late publications, receives additional strength from the manner in which he has been pleased to introduce into his Address the subject of religious and political dissension, as connected with each other\*. And thus, by a far shorter process than was ever devised by Euclid or Newton, the distribution of the Bible, as the premises, brings our logical Inquirer to *political evil* as the conclusion. Here, therefore, I say, Dr. Marsh may explain and rejoin, may complain and recomplain, quote and requote; but, as I have before observed, I will forever abandon to his superior penetration the province of prediction, if, by any appeal to history, or

\* See Address in the Appendix.

by any process of abstract reasoning, he should find it easy to extinguish the suspicion of the multitude, that the *temporal* interests of the church were uppermost in his mind.

Certainly it might afford some satisfaction to observe Dr. Marsh allowing, that the Bible Society provides for the *spiritual* wants of the people, were it not that this very concession is made with so flippant a levity, and in connection with such temporal concerns, as nearly to exclude all serious reflection on the eternal interests of mankind. Add to this, that as the Bible Society distributes Bibles only, the waters of this sacred fountain itself are, according to him, as likely to prove turbid as they are to prove clear.

“The Bible Society,” says the Inquirer, “in its present form, has advantages, which not every member will abandon. Though its splendour is derived from the operations abroad, its influence depends on the operations at home. It there provides for temporal as well as spiritual wants. It gives power to the dissenter, popularity to the churchman, and interest to the politician; which is useful at all times, and especially at the approach of a general election\*.”

My disposition to smile at the complacency with which, I doubt not, the author read over this concluding sentence, is very much checked by the mischief which I perceive to be contained in it. Who sees not its tendency to sow the seeds of division, and to excite disgusts and animosities among the

\* Inquiry, p. 80.

members of the Established Church as well as dissenters, and to raise a flame of contention among all ranks and orders?

We know very well that our Inquirer's pen was ready for issuing electioneering squibs, and discussing corporation and county interests; but nobody, I believe, suspected that, when the most extensive and magnificent dissemination of the Bible that ever existed was the question before the public, a grave Doctor of Divinity would have contrived to interweave his thesis with such political considerations as, of all others, are the most fertile in contention, and the most destructive of peace and good neighbourhood.

Doubtless, every clergyman will be much affected when he compares Dr. Marsh's conclusion with the Christian meekness, zeal, and piety, which appear in the last pages of the admirable letter of that most able and excellent layman, the Right Hon. Nicholas Vansittart:—

“ I have thought it necessary,” says he, “ to state the arguments which have induced me to consider my taking a part in the concerns of the Bible Society, as not only consistent with, but as a proof of the sincerity and warmth of my attachment to the Church of England; and which still, on reflection, seem to me to have so much weight, that, far from repenting of what I have done, I feel convinced I shall least of all repent of it as I approach that state in which the distinction of churchmen and dissenters shall be no more.”

The temptation which I feel, before I lay down my pen, to subjoin some additional observations re-

specting my motives for appearing in this controversy, is overcome by reflecting, that it is not usual to give much credit even to the most positive declarations of motives; and that professions, if inconsistent with the general character of the person who makes them, will be totally disregarded.

Only one word more, therefore, on my general character and manner of life.

If I have laboriously discharged the several duties of my station, during a residence of more than forty years in the University of Cambridge; if when Vice-chancellor in 1792, by my vigorous exertions, I effected the banishment of a very turbulent member of the University, on account of his disaffection to the ecclesiastical constitution of this country; if, when again Vice-chancellor in 1810, I had to defend the rights and discipline of the University, and to punish a number of outrageous offenders; if, in every instance of opposition and contest, arising from legal niceties and distinctions, I have been so fortunate as to be supported in all the appeals to the different courts of law; if such conduct on my part has brought upon me a great deal of odium and misrepresentation, to which I have never yet condescended to publish so much as a single syllable in reply; if the only instance of my appearance in public controversy was in defence of an Essay, in support of Ecclesiastical Establishments and of the doctrine of Universal Redemption, against the Reverend Dr. Hæweis\*; lastly, if, at the age of between sixty and seventy, a life thus marked is not

\* See Personalities—Calvinism.

sufficient to fix my general character as one who is averse to controversy, of peaceable habits, and a true friend to the civil and ecclesiastical constitution of the country, no mere assertions that I can make would avail to that purpose.

If, however, I stood in need of the support of particular witnesses, Dr. Marsh would respect such testimony as I could produce. For a proof of the industrious and pacific turn of my mind, I might appeal to the knowledge of the Archbishop of Canterbury himself, during some of the earlier years of my life; as also to that of the Archbishop of York, for a period of almost twenty years of the latter part.

So much for general character and manner of life.

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#### BRIEF RECAPITULATION OF THE MANNER IN WHICH THE SUBJECT HAS BEEN TREATED.

This requires very little illustration. I considered Dr. Marsh's two publications as containing heavy charges, and replete with mischief.

The charges appeared to me to be frivolous and devoid of substance, yet at the same time covered with many clouds of darkness and confusion. The defence, therefore, consisted in taking away the veil; and in distinguishing from each other things that ought not to be confounded.

Some portions of English history I thought were exceedingly misapplied. Of course, the answer consisted in shewing the inaccuracy of the statements, the irrelevancy of the facts adduced, and the total want of parallelism in the cases compared.

Attempts were made by Dr. Marsh to prove, even by abstract reasoning, that the operations of the Bible Society tended to annihilate the use of the Prayer-book. Here I had to follow our Inquirer step by step; and to prove, that no argument could be conducted with less precision or argumentative connection.

I observed, that the extraordinary defect of argument was abundantly supplied by a parade of logical accuracy, and by an imposing tone of authority; grounded, as it should seem, on a reputation, supposed to be previously established, for judgment and penetration.

It became necessary, therefore to examine such high pretensions; and the reader has seen the consequence in two very remarkable instances. No mere mistakes, no mere errors in computation, should have been adduced by me. The instances to which I have referred are instances of grievously unsound ratiocination.

At the same time, I would by no means be understood to inculcate that the mathematical management of the doctrine of probabilities is an useless speculation, or that it may not be of infinite use even in the affairs of common life.

The following easy instance may shew this.

I scarcely know a more common mistake than for persons to conclude an event to be itself likely to

happen, provided the several events upon which it depends be each of them very probable. Thus, suppose an event should depend upon the happening of three distinct unconnected events, each of which has two chances to one in favour of its happening. I never knew a person, not accustomed to such considerations, who was not much surprised upon being told that it was nineteen to eight, that is, almost two and a half to one, that the event which depends upon the happening of all the three will not take place.

It may still be said, perhaps, that all this can be of no use in the ordinary practical concerns of life, because one can never say what is the exact probability of winds and tempests, of fine weather, of plenty or want, of war and peace, and in general of human volitions and the like. The answer is, we *can* say in abundance of instances that one event is much more probable than another, although we may be unable to state the exact measure of the probability. We can also very often foresee that an important event depends upon several other independent events. Thus, in time of war, it may be very probable that, in a certain month of the year, the wind will blow from that point of the compass from which we wish it to blow; it may also be very probable that about the same time our ships of war will be joined by those of our allies; and again, it may be extremely probable that this combined fleet may fall in with the enemy at the critical moment. Now here, though it is impossible to compute the exact *degree* of the probability of any one of these events, yet may it be quite certain that each of them is in itself very probable; and this very circum-

stance may prove a snare to those who stand at the helm of public affairs, if, in the regulation of their discretion, they do not keep in mind that the probability of the happening of any event, which depends upon the happening of *several* other events, lessens at a prodigious rate as the number of those other events increases.

So much I have judged it necessary to subjoin by way of caution, lest I should leave an impression on the mind of my reader, that I *underrate* that branch of mathematics by which the probability of future events is estimated. On the contrary, I have ever considered it as peculiarly valuable; I constantly instructed my pupils in it for many years, and exemplified the technical rules of it by numerous examples drawn from the practical concerns of life.

The curious reader may see some beautiful instances of the application of the mathematical theory of probabilities in the *Theorie Analytique of La Place*,—but he should never forget that it is a subject which calls for great judgment and circumspection.

Dr. Marsh seems not to have been aware how delusive the first thoughts are apt to be in considering nice questions of *chance*. It was Professor Porson's opinion, that in forming a judgment of MSS. and their readings, circumstances arose which were not reducible to mathematical calculation. To establish this point, however true, was no part of my design in my observations on Dr. Marsh's theorem. These were intended to detect a deficiency in the principle of his reasoning. For let it be admitted that the probability of the identity of MSS. may be

truly assigned by algebraical theorems, it will still remain true that the theorem in question is unfounded and fallacious; and it has appeared to me to be very important, in the present controversy with its inventor, to make this point incontrovertibly clear. For when Dr. Marsh, *without evidence*, reproaches the conduct of the advocates of the Bible Society, as *tending* to ruin the Established Church, I cannot doubt, that in defending themselves, they will be justified in producing proof that their adversary is not a good judge of the probability of future events. And in like manner, when, without satisfactory credentials, he boldly challenges a body of clergymen to compare their own labours in promoting the study of the Bible with his, I conceive it cannot be impertinent to shew, that this indicates vanity and confidence rather than true learning or genius, which are rarely observed to be forward and obtrusive.

And lest the public should conclude, that our Inquirer would scarcely have taken such extraordinary liberties with the friends of the Bible Society, if, in some way, they had not shewn a want of attachment to the doctrines of their Prayer-book, and thereby merited his harsh intimations and animadversions,—nothing occurred to me more likely to prevent such an injurious inference, than to remind them that this present instance of rough treatment was by no means a new thing with Dr. Marsh; for that precisely the same self-complacent, authoritative tone had appeared in his controversy, some years ago, with a Right Reverend Prelate.

Such has been my manner of treating the subject-

matter of Dr. Marsh's Address and Inquiry. I have applied it both to the heavy charges and also to the mischiefs which I conceive to be contained in those two publications.

Some of our excellent defenders of the Bible Society, either in their anxiety to remove every objection of Dr. Marsh, or from their extraordinary forbearance, have not taken much notice of the mischiefs likely to result from his two publications.

I leave it, however, to the reflecting reader to judge, after what I have said, whether the tendency both of his Address and his Inquiry is not to disunite the clergy and other members of our own establishment, and more particularly at Cambridge — to irritate dissenters of all descriptions — and to produce an impression on the public mind, that a considerable portion of the clergy are deficient in respect for the Bible.

I am convinced, that in a case where there is such a dearth both of facts and arguments, nothing can be more efficacious for the acquittal of those who are unjustly accused, or prove a better preservative against the mischiefs of irritation and disunion, than the production of a general persuasion, that the accuser has no way of proving his charges; and that his predictions of secret hostility and danger and dissolution to the establishment, which are the sources of the irritation and disunion, are founded on no rational views of probability.

On the National Society for the Education of the Poor, although a subject on which I think a great deal may yet be said, I have scarcely touched; because I believe the introducing and blending of it

with the concerns of the Bible Society, has been productive both of much confusion and much prejudice. And with respect to the system of Dr. Bell and Mr. Lancaster, I am unable to conceive what either churchmen or dissenters can have to do with either of them, otherwise than as candid hearers of what the reflection and experience of those instructors may have taught them to recommend for the improvement of children; and more especially, in regard to the suggestion of mechanical contrivances and management. Nevertheless, that these subjects are effective *ad invidiam*, I do not deny; but there is no end of noticing materials so irrelevant. I would undertake, at a moment's warning, to open at random any one volume of the Encyclopædia Britannica, and there find materials for repelling Dr. Marsh's insinuations, with quite as good a connection and pertinency as he has preserved in bringing forward the National Society and Dr. Bell and Mr. Lancaster, to the discredit of the Bible Society.

At present, therefore, I dismiss all further inquiries respecting the National Society for Education, or the plans of Messrs. Bell and Lancaster; and all I have to request of Dr. Marsh on this head is, that, whenever he shall think proper to bring before the public any thing that passed between himself and me in private on these subjects, he will not content himself with giving only *a part* of the substance of our conversation.

To Dr. Marsh's intimations for new-modelling the Bible Society, so as to remove his objections, I am not disposed to give much attention. I have lived

too long not to suspect the advice of so determined an adversary as Dr. Marsh has shewn himself to be.

The life and soul of any society consists in its energetic activity. The Inquirer's alteration of the present system would infallibly destroy the energy of the Bible Society; it would in fact annihilate the society itself. And although such an event would probably be a matter of no regret in Dr. Marsh's estimation, yet, with the friends and advocates of the Bible Society, the preservation of that vigorous and diffusive energy, which is now actually dispersing the word of God into every cottage of his Majesty's dominions, and almost every corner of the world, is not a trivial concern. They cannot look on it as an affair of indifference, to be given up or hazarded on account of any alarms excited by fanciful theories and imaginations respecting remote consequences. One of the ablest and most zealous friends\* of the Bible Society, bids "others indulge, if they please, on such a subject, in the speculations of a cold and calculating expediency; it is one," says he, "on which, in my estimation, the arguments of the heart claim a hearing as well as those of the understanding. When I read this universal injunction of the blessed Jesus, 'Search the Scriptures,' and his solemn commission to his disciples after his resurrection, of 'Go ye into *all the world*, and preach the Gospel to every creature,'—I confess that not only the propriety, but the necessity, of its dissemination, rush upon my mind with all the force of a self-evident proposition."

\* J. Hardy, Esq. Recorder of Leeds.

## PERSONALITIES.

After I had determined to take a part in this controversy, my first intentions were to follow Dr. Marsh, page by page, through both his Address to the Senate, and his succeeding Inquiry; and to make such observations as I might judge expedient for the defence either of myself, or of that society whose interests I espouse.

I soon perceived, however, that a minute detail of the numerous misrepresentations and charges of Dr. Marsh, which affect me personally, with my answers to each, would prove tedious and uninteresting to the public, while it would have little tendency to elucidate the great question under consideration.

I determined, therefore, at once to dismiss by far the greater part of the personal charges; to select only a few, which may seem to be connected with the main Inquiry; and to trust the rest to the decision of an impartial public.

I. *Corrective.*

Dr. Marsh has taken great umbrage because the Dean of Carlisle, in his speech at the Cambridge meeting, in December 1811, had said, "he would not represent the distribution of the Bible alone as dangerous to the Establishment unless accompanied

with the *corrective* of a Prayer-book of the Church of England \*.”

On the same ground, in another place, he accuses the Dean of having charged him with considering the Prayer-book as the *corrective* of the Bible †.

And, again, he intimates ‡ that an advocate of the Bible Society at Huntingdon, whom he contemptuously denominates the Orator, had misrepresented him as maintaining that the Scriptures stood in need of a *corrective*. He charitably supposes, however, that the orator was in this instance, perhaps, misled by the example of Dr. Milner, in the use of that term.

The complaints of misrepresentation which Dr. Marsh has made respecting the application of the term *corrective*, and his extreme anxiety to have it understood that he had no other meaning than that the Prayer-book should be regarded as a *safeguard*, or *companion* to the Bible, are circumstances which have given an importance to this branch of the controversy, far beyond what otherwise it can be supposed to merit.

In a very few words, I hope to convince my reader that Dr. Marsh has no substantial grounds for such a complaint, and that he could not have supported, for one moment, even the *pretence* of having been misrepresented, had he not suppressed the real history of the introduction of the term *corrective*.

In fact, it will appear, that he himself first introduced the expressions “correct the evil,” and “the correction will be easy;” and then afterwards com-

\* Pp. 22 and 61, the notes.

† P. 4.

‡ P. 63.

plains, that that very thing, which he had pointed out as an easy correction of the evil, should, by his adversaries, be denominated a corrective.

In his printed Address to the Senate of our University, when contrasting the two Bible Societies to the advantage of the ancient one, he says, "that the ancient society distributes the Liturgy as well as the Bible; for though it acknowledges the Bible to be the only fountain of religious truth, yet it knows, from the experience of all ages, that the waters of that fountain would be clear or turbid according to the channel into which they are drawn."

He afterwards tells us, that the members of this society believe (what no churchman denies) that the doctrines of the Liturgy are correctly derived from the Bible; and that, therefore, they consider it as their duty to unite the one with the other. Uniformity, continues he, of doctrine, can never be produced without an adherence to this rule. But this salutary rule cannot be observed by the modern Bible Society.

He then proceeds: "It is true, that those members of it, who are attached to the church, may *so far correct the evil*, that when they have obtained Bibles for distribution from this Society, they may of themselves add Prayer-books . . . . and that *this correction* will be rendered easy if they are also members of the other society."

On these passages my first observation is, That this last sentence is not to be found in the Inquiry, though it stands in the Address: and I have already shewn, that there is little reason to believe that the Address,—a publication of only three quarto pages,

and circulated in the University of Cambridge, at a particular moment, to serve a particular purpose—will in general be before the readers of the Inquiry. It is true, the quotation in page forty-three of the Inquiry, as far as it goes, corresponds, word for word, with the Address, but it omits the sentence last quoted: “It is true, that those members of it who are attached to the church, may so far correct the evil . . . . and that this correction will be rendered easy” . . . .

Nevertheless, our Inquirer, bids us\* consult the passage in note page 34; in which note, indeed, a portion of the Address is quoted, but *not* the important sentence in question;—*not* the very sentence which of all others ought not to have been suppressed, because it is the sentence which not only accounts for the introduction of the term *corrective*, but completely justifies its application by the Dean of Carlisle and by any other advocates of the Bible Society, who were thus informed, by Dr. Marsh, how they might easily correct the supposed evil into which they had fallen.

Correct the evil! The correction will be rendered easy!

In the name of every thing that is honest and of good report, what does this Professor of Divinity mean?—Correct the evil!—He cannot here mean the pernicious measure of our having associated with dissenters, because I apprehend that no distribution of Prayer-books, however great, could in his judgment acquit the friends of the Bible Society

\* Page 63, note.

of the blame of having made so unnatural a connection. That evil, therefore, as I suppose, cannot be thoroughly corrected, except either by making such alterations in the constitution of the society as would paralyse its active energies, or by churchmen withdrawing themselves from those of their associates, whose "interests in religion," according to Dr. Marsh, are "different" from their own.—Neither can he mean the evil in the abstract, of neglecting to distribute the Prayer-book, because the evil of that neglect applies to every individual churchman who is guilty in that point of duty. There is left, therefore, nothing on which his meaning can be fixed, except the evil of distributing the authorised version of the holy Scriptures *alone*. But whatever was Dr. Marsh's real meaning, I contend that the term *corrective* was precisely the term which was called for on this occasion, according to its established signification in the English language.

If words are to have any meaning, there was an evil to be corrected; and the members of the Bible Society were told how they might correct the evil to a certain degree, namely, by adding Prayer-books to the Bibles which they had obtained from their own society for distribution; and they were further told, that in certain cases, the correction would be easy\*. Now, if that which corrects the evil may not properly be denominated the corrective, there can be no such thing as propriety in the use of language.

Will our Inquirer reply, that it is not the exten-

\* See the Address.

sive circulation of the Bible, but the extensive omission of the Liturgy, which he considers as the evil that calls for correction? I rejoin, that it is as plain as words and circumstances can make it, that it is *not* the extensive omission of the Liturgy, abstractedly considered, but the omission of it in the dissemination of the Bible by the Bible Society, which, in his Address, appears to constitute the evil to be corrected.

Mark well the connection in which the terms evil, and correction of the evil, are introduced in the Address to the Senate. There we are told, that although the Bible is allowed to be "the only fountain of religious truth," yet "the waters of that fountain will be clear or turbid according to the channel into which they are drawn."

And again, that churchmen "consider it as their indispensable duty to unite" the Liturgy with the Bible, because "uniformity of doctrine can never be produced without an adherence to this rule," as "every Christian party either finds, or supposes that it finds, its peculiar doctrines in the Bible."

Let us now turn to the *Inquiry*, where we find our opponent objecting to the term *corrective*, and substituting in its place two other distinct expressions, for the purpose of illustrating his meaning, viz. *companion*, and *safeguard*. In page four, the Prayer-book is called "a proper companion for the Bible;" and in page twenty, the distribution of Prayer-books in company with the Bible is recommended as "a *safeguard* against the false interpretations to which men are exposed on every side."

Surely, then, the just conclusion may now be safely left to the plain understanding of any man who takes the trouble to put these things together. There can be no need of peculiar learning and sagacity. A clear fountain!—turbid waters!—a companion! and that companion in the character of a safeguard! Whatever be the degree of authority or of influence which Dr. Marsh ascribes to the Liturgy, is it possible a doubt should remain, that, according to him, it is a dangerous thing to put a Bible alone into the hands of an unlettered churchman; and that the non-distribution of Prayer-books by the Bible Society is pronounced an evil, because the fountain of truth will become turbid, the pure doctrine of the Bible will be misrepresented, unless the evil of leaving the Sacred Volume of Revelation without safeguard be corrected by the distribution of Prayer-books?

In this way of speaking, there certainly appears to me to be a great deal too much of Popish sentiment. Possibly the Inquirer may have been drawn into it through inadvertence. The propriety, the expediency, and the necessity of distributing the Prayer-book among the poorer members of the church, I most unequivocally allow to be incontrovertible; but I should express my reasons for thinking so in very different language from Dr. Marsh.

The entire suppression of the above passage of the Address, together with the marked anxiety, which frequently appears in the Inquiry, to convince the reader that the author of those two performances had been perfectly consistent throughout

in his objections to the Bible Society, betray, in my judgment, a consciousness in the writer's mind, that he had incautiously been treading too close on the heels of the grand Popish sentiment,—“that the holy Scriptures are not safely to be trusted in the hands of the people.”

Let the attentive reader weigh carefully the expression at the bottom of page 44 of the Inquiry: “The point,” says Dr. Marsh, “on which I am at issue with them is, whether the Church of England may not possibly be injured by an extensive omission of the Liturgy.” Injured very much, if by an extensive omission is meant an extensive omission originating in the minds of churchmen from a principle of dislike or neglect of their Liturgy: but, on the other hand, injured in no wise, let the omission be ever so extensive, as long as it is merely the omission of a society, which, acting in its collective capacity, cannot, by the very nature of its constitution, distribute Prayer-books. Very important is the distinction between a defensible or venial omission, and a blameable neglect. The question is therefore replete with ambiguity, and must be answered according to circumstances.

If all Protestants, without exception, in his Majesty's dominions, should combine to give Bibles to the poor, I would never admit that so desirable an event afforded any presumption of the existence of a blameable or dangerous omission of the Liturgy, by the churchmen who happened to belong to such a combination of Christians. On the other hand, an extensive omission of the Liturgy by churchmen; whether acting merely among themselves or in con-

cert with dissenters, on a principle of neglect and disregard of their Prayer-book, or of indifference towards it, would indeed be a dangerous symptom of mischief to the church to which they belong. Such an omission, fundamental in its principle, and confirmed by habit, might well be considered as a just cause of alarm. But how different is this from an omission, like that of the present Bible Society, which, after the nicest scrutiny to detect grounds for blame and censure, has not led to the minutest source of objection, except what arises merely from the liberal and abundant distribution of the holy Scriptures.

No person will question the entire right of Dr. Marsh to explain, or even change, his sentiments. Undoubtedly he has the liberty, if he pleases, at one moment, to maintain that there is an evil in distributing Bibles without Prayer-books; at another, that the evil may *easily be corrected*; and, again, on another occasion, he may judge it expedient to declare, that there can be no harm whatever, but great good in disseminating the Scriptures \*; and, lastly, he may contend, that, throughout the whole agitation of this business, he has been uniform in his views, and consistent in his explanations †. I

\* Inquiry, page 3.

† In the very outset of the Inquiry, Dr. Marsh says there is no harm whatever in giving away a Bible. "On the contrary, the more widely the Scriptures are disseminated, the greater in all respects must be the good produced."

Yet, in the note of page 26, there is this sentence: "If my objection, therefore, had been *fairly* stated at the Town Hall, it would have been simply this, that I objected (namely, on the part of

shall remain perfectly satisfied, provided I have convinced my reader that the term *corrective* was not introduced without good reason. He is now aware of the very important fact, that *only* the Address was before the public at the time of the Cambridge meeting; and that the Inquiry does not contain that passage of the Address which so fully justifies the use of this term.

If Dr. Marsh had contented himself with saying, that the Bible Society did not do all the good they might do; that they *omitted* to protect the Established Church by distributing Prayer-books among the people; he might have called forth, in perfect good humour, the powerful reasons on which the constitution of the Bible Society is formed. He would probably have been told, that so magnificent and blessed a union of hands and hearts to disseminate the word of God, could not possibly have been effected in any other way than by the Society's confining itself to that one great and important object in which all ranks and denominations have heartily

churchmen) to the distribution of the Bible alone, or without the Liturgy."

And in page 20, the distribution of the Liturgy and Articles is recommended "as a safeguard against the false interpretations to which men are exposed on every side:" and in page 5, it is called a *safeguard* against the delusions of false interpretations.

The reader will not call on me either to reconcile such passages as these, or to separate what I conceive ambiguous or erroneous in them, from what may admit of explanation or defence. He has materials before him in abundance, to form his own judgment of the evil of which Dr. Marsh speaks—the correction of the evil—the *corrective*—the safety or the danger of trusting the Bible alone—the office of a *safeguard*, &c. &c.

concurred. He would have been told, that it was impossible for one branch only of this religious community to insist on the dispersion of their own peculiar criterion of faith, without conceding a similar licence to the rest; and that, therefore, the omission was so far from implying a neglect worthy of censure, that, on consideration, it would be found to be a defensible, and even a laudable omission. Our Inquirer might further have been told, that no one had a right to take it for granted, that the churchmen who had displayed so much piety and zeal in disseminating the Bible, would not be equally careful to make due provision for the distribution of the Liturgy among their brethren of the Establishment. Lastly, he might fairly be put in mind, that to suppose the contrary, to the disadvantage of the church members of the Bible Society, would be as unreasonable a procedure as to conclude that Dr. Marsh, were he the active leader of a society for distributing Prayer-books only, was inimical or disaffected to the dispersion of the Bible.

There is no length to which a person may not be carried by that species of reasoning which, from observing men's laudable zeal and activity in some particular good works, leads him to infer an indifference in the same persons, or even an aversion and hostility, to other things, perhaps equally commendable and equally necessary. I remember, that not many years ago, associations were formed for furnishing certain articles of clothing to the soldiers, who were suffering from the inclemency of the season: now, in such a case, could it be deemed can-

did, or even just, to conclude, that, because the relief afforded by these benevolent associations had not extended to *every* article of clothing necessary for the protection of the body, therefore the individuals belonging to them cared little whether the poor soldiers should go partially naked or not?—Surely the reverse is the fair and natural inference of every unprejudiced mind.

Such being my unfeigned sentiments, in contemplating this great event, namely, the establishment of the Bible Society, with its magnificent and brilliant operations, I cannot but lament that want of candour which has appeared in the objections and censures of Dr. Marsh.

A mere omission on the part of the Society—an omission which we think, in every view of it, perfectly justifiable—he magnifies into a mischievous and alarming neglect.

Then, in the next place, what is still more uncharitable, Dr. Marsh, from this mere omission of the distribution of Prayer-books by the Bible Society, which in their collective capacity could not possibly be avoided, would infer the existence of a disparagement of the utility of the Prayer-book in the minds of the individual churchmen who belong to it:—an unworthy intimation, both unfounded in fact and improbable in its nature!!

Indeed, to represent the distribution of Bibles; whether with or without the Liturgy, as implying *an evil*, in any sense—an evil too, calling for correction—appears to me to be going strange lengths; lengths which, as far as I know, no Protestant since the days of Luther and Melancthon, Zuingle and

Ecolampadius, have ever gone, *until* the present controversy commenced.

Again, while Dr. Marsh speaks of the importance of the Liturgy; the excellence of the Liturgy; the danger of neglecting to distribute the Liturgy; the evil consequences of such neglect;—all is perfectly intelligible, and every sincere churchman heartily concurs with him. But the moment these expressions are connected with the distribution of the Bible, in the way that he has chosen to connect them, it seems as if the supposed fault of neglecting to give Prayer-books were, in his judgment, substantiated, and even aggravated, by the liberal distribution of Bibles; as if he thought the abundant distribution of the Bible rendered a defect of the distribution of the Liturgy a more dangerous thing than it would have been if the Bible had not been so distributed. It looks as if the distribution of the Bible alone was deemed an evil, and that the grand corrective of the evil was the distribution of the Prayer-book.

If our Inquirer intended no more than to accuse churchmen of a blameable neglect, or even of a mere omission of distributing the Liturgy, why not content himself with simply making that charge in a manner which would admit of no other construction? Whereas, his charge is, not only that the Liturgy is omitted, but omitted in the distribution of the Bible. Place this matter in every possible point of view, it will still be found, that it is the Bible Society with its abundant distribution of *Bibles alone*, and not a deficiency of the distribu-

tion of Prayer-books, or any regret on the account of the discovery of such a deficiency, that has produced all this outcry, and constituted the evil which so loudly calls for correction.

To all this I scruple not to add, that the explanatory term *safeguard*, used by Dr. Marsh in his Inquiry, does not appear to me to affect materially the state of the question.

A more unnecessary confusion and jumble I never remember. All that is of value in this contest, may be comprised in five lines; namely, The distribution both of Bibles and of Prayer-books by churchmen is indispensable. If the distribution of Bibles has been deficient, the correction consists in distributing Bibles; if that of Prayer-books, the correction will consist in distributing them.

Neither the head nor the heart of man can make more of this matter.

## 2. *Liturgy and Popish Tradition.*

However high, and however deservedly high, Dr. Marsh may allow that the name of the Dean of Carlisle stands at present, it is pretty plain that the Dean's reputation must descend considerably, if the heavy charges contained in pages 19—23 of the Inquiry should appear to be well founded.

The charges are, that the Dean held up to public indignation a Professor who contended for the distribution of the Liturgy in company with the Bible; and that thereby he diminished, in the estimation

of young students of divinity, the value of the Liturgy, which is really the bulwark of the Established Church.

So much in the *haste*, and I think the *heat*, of the controversy.

But when the transport of our Professor's zeal for the church had carried him so far, he found no difficulty, it should seem, in rising to a much higher strain of hostile complaint and accusation. He demonstrates, in as curious a specimen of sophistry clothed in a logical dress as I ever remember to have seen, that the Dean of Carlisle not only reproaches the Liturgy, but degrades its importance by comparing it with Popish traditions. The history which I have given of the introduction of the term *corrective*, will doubtless lead the reader to anticipate all that it can be necessary for me to add in reply to these charges.

Indeed, were I called upon to defend myself at the most formidable tribunal to which the most infuriate bigotry could summon me, I much question, whether I could do better than simply request permission from my judges, that Dr. Marsh's Address might be read, together with the two half sentences of my own speech at the Cambridge meeting, upon which alone all these charges are founded.—I said, first, "I would not represent the distribution of the Bible alone as dangerous to the Establishment unless accompanied with the corrective of a Prayer-book;" and, secondly, "I greatly mistake, if, among the numerous errors of the Church of Rome, there exists a more dangerous tenet than that the

holy Scriptures themselves must be tried at the bar of the traditions of fallible men."

Such are the words in which my accuser finds himself held up to public indignation, and bitterly reproached; the Liturgy also degraded, and compared with Popish traditions.

With what intrepid confidence does our Inquirer endeavour to impress the public mind with a belief that there has been no ground for complaint against him, this one thing excepted, that he has represented the Book of Common Prayer as a useful companion for the Bible, and that churchmen should not neglect to distribute it to the poor!

From the repeated representations and admonitions of this sort, in the Inquiry, a man of plain understanding would be led to conclude that the churchmen of the Bible Society, and especially the clergy, had lately betrayed, in some unequivocal way, a lamentable want of attachment to their Prayer-book; and that if they had not openly expressed their dislike of it, yet secretly, at least, they were every where undervaluing its excellencies, and suffering it to fall into contempt and desuetude.

Such charges, or even bare insinuations, are calculated to blast the honest fame of many excellent clergymen, who ought not to have met with such unworthy treatment, merely on account of their annual subscription of a guinea or two to the Bible Society.

A solid and satisfactory answer to them all, be they direct charges or indirect insinuations, is implied in that grand distinction, on which we have

so repeatedly insisted, between the collective distribution of Bibles by the Society, and the private distribution of them by its members. It is the confounding together of things which ought to be separated, that not only gives rise to alarms and apprehensions of danger to the Establishment, but also for a time confirms the delusion and supports the credit of such spectres and bugbears.

But I must not forget, that at present I am to confine myself to the personal misrepresentations of Dr. Marsh.

My answer to the charge of holding up Dr. Marsh to public indignation, cannot be expressed in any other terms than those of complaint and remonstrance.

In page 21, he more than intimates, that he was treated thus because he “ contends for the distribution of the Liturgy *in company* with the Bible.”

In page 22, he says expressly, that Dr. Milner “ denies my position, that it was necessary to accompany the Bible with the Liturgy ;” and in the note of the same page, he speaks of Dr. Milner’s CENSURE of his position, that the Liturgy should be distributed in company with the Bible.

Now the fact is, I never denied, I never censured, the position of the Bible and the Liturgy being proper companions for each other in the hands of churchmen. What I censured then, and still censure, is, the representing of it as a thing unsafe in itself, or dangerous to the Establishment, to distribute the Bible alone. I complain, therefore, that Dr. Marsh charges me with doing what I did not do ; and I remonstrate with him, that he has

not in his Inquiry distinctly pointed to the passage upon which he founds his accusation. It is true, that the passage of my speech where I declare that I would not represent the distribution of the Bible *alone* as a thing that cannot be done with safety, unless accompanied with the corrective of a Prayer-book, stands in more places than one of the Inquiry; nevertheless, it is quoted in such a manner that probably no reader will suspect that sentence to be the ground of the accusation in question; and for this plain reason, because it contains neither denial nor censure of Dr. Marsh's position. Surely, I may see reasons for the expediency, nay the necessity, of supplying poor churchmen with Prayer-books; and yet, with perfect consistency, may censure any position which goes the length of maintaining that the distribution of the Bible alone cannot be made with safety.

I have already touched on this subject in pages 41, 42; where the reader finds an additional reason for complaint—that the passage is not quoted, but only referred to in the Cambridge Chronicle.

On the importance of distributing our excellent Liturgy; on the confounding of the collective and the individual distribution of the Bible; on the use of the term *corrective*, and the history of its introduction; enough has been said already.

I will now advert to what has been said on POPISH TRADITIONS.

This is not the place to enter into any detailed discussion of the principles of the Roman Catholic religion; but it may be briefly observed, that the most celebrated teachers of that communion are

unanimous in deriving all the articles of their faith from two sources, Scripture and tradition. The misfortune is, they have never agreed on the point where resides the authority which is to declare what doctrines are, and what are not, deducible from those sources of truth. Such of the Romanists as support the unlimited pretensions of the Court of Rome, bow implicitly to the Pope; while the more reasonable part claim to themselves the right of consulting Scripture and tradition, and of forming rules of faith and practice in all matters pertaining to salvation, with the exception only of questions of extraordinary difficulty and importance, which they leave to the determination of General Councils.

From this account, we may see at once how impossible it must be to ascertain, with any degree of precision, what are the doctrines of the Romish Church. Scripture and tradition, or, as the Romanists call them, the *written* and the *unwritten* word\*, are the basis of the whole superstructure; but when a succession either of Popes or of General Councils are allowed to be the expositors, it is in vain to expect a uniformity of doctrine. The history of the Church of Rome accords with this representation. With all her ostentatious pretensions to unity and harmony, she has ever been divided with dissensions and contests. The boasted unity and harmony consist in profession. She professes, not only to submit herself to the holy Scriptures, but to interpret them according to the sense of the

\* Bossuet. Expos.

holy fathers, and not to receive any doctrine which is not conformable to the tradition of all preceding ages\*. Such is her profession; but it is notorious, that both Popes and Councils have differed repeatedly, and also grievously erred.

Moreover, it is well known, that in the decisions of the Council of Trent, as also in the most authorised confession of the Romish faith, some things are expressed with a vague laxity and ambiguity, which were probably intended; and others are entirely omitted, which, nevertheless, no Roman Catholic is allowed to call in question.

I remind the reader of these things, that he may be aware of the unavoidable uncertainty of the extent of the operation of tradition. The Protestant founds all his religion on the holy Scriptures; but the Roman Catholic, by having recourse to another fountain of religious information, is exposed to clouds of darkness and ambiguity. He cannot tell what he is to believe. There is no necessity to charge him with maintaining that the testimony of tradition is superior to that of the written word of God: his system is, to deny that the *written* and the *unwritten* word of God can ever clash with one another, because they are equally of Divine authority. It is in this sense, that the Church of Rome may be said to try the Scriptures at the bar of the traditions of fallible men. It is the Protestant, however, and not the Roman Catholic, who looks upon tradition as fallible. With the Roman Catholic its empire is almost un-

\* Council of Trent.

limited. When the Scriptures speak, tradition interprets their sense; and when they are silent, tradition is listened to as to the voice of the Apostles themselves\*.

The theoretical principles of the Roman Catholics are so uncertain in their application and extent, that the only sure method of acquiring a knowledge of the real doctrines which direct their practice, is found to be a careful observation of the *language* which they ordinarily use in the description of their tenets and the management of their religious concerns.

The language of one of the highest authorities of the Romish Church is of the sort which follows.

We receive the Canonical Scriptures on the authority of the church: we learn tradition also from the church; and by means of tradition we learn the true sense of Scripture. And when the church has spoken, her children will be taught that they ought not to begin again to examine those articles once so resolved on; but are bound humbly to receive her decisions. The church banishes all arbitrary interpretations which make men's imaginations pass for Scripture; she interprets according to the sense of the holy fathers †.

Let us now turn to Dr. Marsh.

After acknowledging the Bible to be the only fountain of religious truth, he subjoins, as a matter of experience, "that the waters of that fountain will be clear or turbid according to the channel into

\* Bishop of Meaux. Expos.

† Bishop of Meaux.

which they are drawn\*." . . . "It becomes doubly necessary, if we would preserve the poor of the Establishment in the religion of their fathers, to provide them with a *safeguard* against the delusions of false interpretations. And what better *safeguard* can we offer, than the Book of Common Prayer, which contains the *doctrines of the Bible* according to its true exposition? †"

In the very next sentence our Inquirer tells us that the poor *cannot*, without assistance, understand the Scriptures; and that, therefore, when there are so many illiterate teachers, they *must* be tossed about by every wind of doctrine, "unless provided with that *authorised exposition of the Scriptures* which is contained in the Liturgy ‡."

To the same purport, in p. 11, we read, "But if we neglect to provide the poor of the Establishment with the Book of Common Prayer § as well as with the Bible, we certainly neglect the means of preventing their seduction from the Established Church."

Have the poor "either the leisure, or the inclination, or the ability, to weigh the arguments for religious opinions?"

From the comparison of these materials, I could wish that others, rather than myself, should draw the inference concerning the tendency of Dr. Marsh's representations. I shall only observe, therefore, that although the Romanists ascribe Divine authority to tradition, yet, on the strictest investigation of this

\* See Address.

† See Inquiry, p. 5.

‡ Ibid.

§ It is remarkable, that either the charge or the insinuation of our neglecting to distribute the Prayer-book never ceases, though there is no other proof except that we distribute the Bible liberally.

matter, it appears, that what they call tradition, and suppose to be infallible, amounts to no more than the judgment of their own church, which, when expressed in articles of confession and decrees of councils, becomes, according to them, their safeguard from all false interpretations of Scripture\*.

The judgment of a very learned and able dissenter † may not be deemed, on this occasion, unworthy of the notice of the public, and even of Dr. Marsh himself; especially as it is the judgment of one who scruples not to speak of our *Liturgy* in the following terms :

“ Though a Protestant dissenter, I am by no means insensible to its merits : I believe that the evangelical purity of its sentiments, and the chastised fervour of its devotion, and the majestic simplicity of its language, have combined to place it in the very first rank of uninspired compositions.”

After premising that he is utterly at a loss to conceive of a Revelation from Heaven that *must not be trusted alone* ; . . . . . of a fountain of truth more calculated, when left to its silent operation, to send forth bitter waters than sweet . . . . . Mr. Hall proceeds to say,

\* The attentive reader, while he is considering the several expressions of Dr. Marsh, which have been supposed to savour of Popish sentiments, will not fail to remark, that, with great injury to the clearness of the discussion, as well as to the reputation of the advocates of the Bible Society, the neglect of the distribution of the Prayer-book by churchmen is all along taken for granted by Dr. Marsh as a fact completely ascertained.

I need not repeat, that the churchmen of the Society constantly deny the justice of the imputation.

† The Rev. Robert Hall.

“Whoever weighs the arguments of our opponents, must be convinced that they all turn upon the following supposition ;—that the Scriptures are so ambiguous and obscure, that when left to themselves, they are more likely to generate error than truth ; to foment division, than to produce unanimity and agreement. If this implies no reflection on the excellence of the Bible and the wisdom of its Author, what, I will ask, can imply such a reflection? . . . . .

“To dread the indiscriminate perusal of the Scriptures, and, under pretence of tender consideration for the weakness of the common people, to prohibit their circulation, has always been regarded as one of the most detestable features of Popery : from the very dawn of the Reformation, it has been stigmatised, by Protestants of every description, as constituting a principal branch of the mystery of iniquity. But wherein does the maxim of our opponents differ from that of the Papists on this subject? If any difference can be perceived, it certainly is not in the *nature*, but in the *extension*, of the principle. The Papists contend that the common people are not to be entrusted with the Bible *at all*, while our opponents assert that they are not to be trusted *with it alone*. Surely this must be considered as strange language in a Protestant country, and most offensive to Protestant ears.

“What is the reason that the Scriptures may not be trusted alone? Why, say our opponents, they are liable to be misinterpreted and wrested to countenance the respective opinions and practices of different sects and parties. Be it so ; we admit this

to be possible ; but what remedy can be devised to obviate this evil ? Is their use to be entirely prohibited ? No, say our opponents, but they must be invariably accompanied by another book, which may be considered in the light of an *authorised commentary*. But we would ask again, are we to judge of this commentary, or are we to receive it simply on the ground of authority, and upon the principle of implicit faith ; or is any exercise of private judgment permitted to us ? If it be replied that it is not, this is neither more nor less than open and barefaced Popery. If the judgment is to be exerted at all, and every thing is not to be taken upon trust, their commentary must be judged by some criterion ; and what can that be but the Scriptures ? The Scriptures must then, after all, be appealed to, before it is possible to determine on the correctness of the commentary ; and thus we are led back to the precise point from which we set out, that is, the examination of the Scriptures. According to the views of our opponents, we are either to admit the principle of implicit faith to its utmost extent, which is open and avowed Popery ; or we are first to interpret the Scriptures by the commentary, and then to judge of the commentary by the Scriptures. This is the circle out of which it is impossible for our opponents to escape, and they may be lashed round it to all eternity."

Dr. Marsh will probably say that this is the language of a dissenter, and consistent with his principles ; but that *he* wishes to strengthen the hands of the church. I reply, it is the language of a dissenter of learning and ability, who knows well in

what Popery consists, and who is therefore a good judge of Popish sentiments. It is in this light only that I produce this extract from Mr. Hall. The expediency and the necessity of churchmen's distributing the Prayer-book among their poor brethren of the Established Church, I have already admitted in the strongest terms. But although churchmen and dissenters should both fail to convince Dr. Marsh that, in point of fact, he has used terms which savour of Popish doctrine, one would think that when the Rev. Peter Gandolphy, a respectable priest of the Roman Catholic persuasion, with no small triumph and exultation has claimed him as an advocate of the Roman Catholic cause, he could no longer hesitate to own that he must have been incautious, at least, in his *manner* of attacking the Bible Society, and of recommending the distribution of the Prayer-book.

It is much to be wished that the admirers of Dr. Marsh's Inquiry would peruse the Congratulatory Letter of Mr. Gandolphy to its author.

Mr. Gandolphy observes with what real delight and satisfaction he perceived that Dr. Marsh contends for this principle, "true religion cannot be found by the Bible alone." "The soundness of this doctrine," says he, "was originally contested by Luther," . . . . . "but you have given up this vital principle of Protestantism."

He cannot tell, he says, how pleased he is with the beginning of the Inquiry. He then quotes from some of the passages which I have already laid before the reader — concerning *illiterate* teachers — preserving the poor in the *religion of their fathers*

—providing them with a *safeguard* against the delusions and seduction of *false interpretation*—without *assistance*, the poor cannot understand the Scriptures—leaving them to be tossed about by every wind of doctrine—unless provided with that authorised exposition of the Scriptures—the *Prayer-book should be distributed with the Bible*.

Dr. Marsh must know best whether he is flattered by Mr. Gandolphy telling him, p. 15, that he bears down *their common adversaries*; and in pp. 16 and 17, that he cannot sufficiently admire the ingenuity and masterly manner in which Dr. Marsh *urges the necessity* of an *other* rule besides the Bible only. It is a *coup-de-grace* to the old principle of the Reformers, from which Mr. Gandolphy thinks they can never recover. And it is given, he adds, in the true Catholic style of boldness, which convinces Mr. Gandolphy that Dr. Marsh feels his *own* strength.

In p. 19, Mr. Gandolphy is in raptures with Dr. Marsh. “Oh! how charmingly, Sir, have you throughout illustrated and enforced the Apostle’s words to the Ephesians: ‘He gave some Apostles . . . . . that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine.’”

In p. 22, he puts Dr. Marsh in mind that he has “*confessed the defectiveness of the grand Protestant principle* of Luther and Chillingworth, *the Bible alone*.” “You have honourably to yourself and religion, publicly *returned to the old principle of Catholics*, and now contend with us for that very Liturgy which the Reformers rejected. *Your prin-*

principle is *mine*." He concludes, "I congratulate both you and myself on the opposition which you make to the Bible alone." . . . . . "We entertain a common sentiment on this subject\*." . . . . .

It should constantly be remembered, that the question before us is not, what are the sentiments which Dr. Marsh *intended* to express, but, what are the sentiments which, upon a fair construction of the words, he *has actually expressed*. I do not hesitate to acknowledge, that *I cannot* believe he used terms designedly to sanction Popish doctrines; but, notwithstanding this concession, should it be the opinion of an impartial public that in *fact* he has brought forward arguments which savour of the Roman Catholic persuasion, then the *least* offensive conclusion to which a true Protestant can arrive must be, that whoever pretends to great industry, deep penetration, and profound thought, unless these endowments are tempered with caution and discretion, must fail to become a judicious adviser and supporter of our Ecclesiastical Establishment.

Throughout almost every page of Dr. Marsh's

\* Mr. Gandolphy, towards the conclusion, contends for the preference due to the Roman Catholic Liturgy above ours. The English Liturgy, he tells Dr. Marsh, is what the Roman Catholic Church generally term *Tradition*; and adds, that *we* derive ours from the Reformers. It rests, therefore, "on their opinions and judgment." Some may say, "on their interpretations of the Scriptures,"—and the *interpretation* of the Scriptures on *their* opinions. "But this would be a *circulus vitiosus*."

The reader will think it sufficiently amusing that the Protestant Dissenter, Mr. Hall, and the Roman Catholic, Mr. Gandolphy, should concur in representing Dr. Marsh's leading principle respecting the Liturgy as resting on a species of defective argument running in a circle.

Inquiry, I perceive the influence of an opinion which I cannot but think very erroneous, although it may have proved abundantly sufficient to betray the author into much inconclusive reasoning.

Every where he takes it for granted, that the poor and unlearned cannot understand the Bible. Now, whatever doubts may be raised on other points, this is notoriously a Popish sentiment, and is doubtless the foundation of a large portion of mischievous Popish practice. I differ essentially from Dr. Marsh in this point, that the poor and unlearned have not judgment, have not ability, have not leisure, have not inclination, for understanding the holy Scriptures, and the great fundamental truths contained in them. I believe they can understand them in all the essential points, that is, in all the points which concern the salvation of the soul, as well as the most learned Professors of Divinity. Nay, I believe that a number of poor, modest, simple-minded, unlearned inquirers after truth, would, on reading the Scriptures with devout care and application, and with a direct view to improve the heart and correct the practice, differ much less from one another in their ideas of the Gospel, than learned divines frequently do, who, leaning too much to their "own understanding\*" and attainments, become "spoiled through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ †." Indeed, if these things were not so, if the Gospel

\* Prov. iii. 5.

† Coloss. ii. 8.

were not peculiarly adapted to the circumstances of the poor, so as to be intelligible to their understandings in all things necessary to salvation, I should be utterly at a loss to comprehend that memorable thanksgiving of our blessed Saviour; "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes\*:" as also that no less memorable answer which he returned to the disciples of John, "Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight . . . . . and the poor have *the Gospel preached unto them* †."

Here I know not whether Dr. Marsh will allow (certainly most Christians will) that by the preaching of the Gospel to the poor, is to be understood those very things, which, through the inestimable blessing of Almighty God, are delivered to us in the Sacred Oracles. Even if Dr. Marsh should think that the Gospel, as originally preached, was contained in that document, which he supposes to have once existed although it be now no more, the argument will be in no wise affected by that consideration.

The distribution of the Bible alone, without note or commentary, has been productive of several events, which could not possibly have been foreseen.

1. Dr. Marsh's arguments against this distribution have been supposed to savour of Popery; and a respectable Roman Catholic Priest congratulates him "on having publicly returned to the old

\* Matthew xi. 25.

† Ibid. 5th verse.

principle of Catholics \* ; and says, in the plainest terms, "I actually consider you a champion of the Catholic Church, a defender of tradition †."

2. Dr. Marsh, in his Inquiry, p. 22, accuses the Dean of Carlisle of applying a term of reproach to the Liturgy of the Church of England. "Is it wise," he asks, "in a dignitary of the church to apply a term of reproach to the Liturgy?" And again, p. 23, "What a notion will men form of the University of Cambridge, when they read that the Master of a College . . . . compares that Liturgy with Popish traditions!"

3. It seems, however, that Mr. Gandolphy, who looks on our Book of Common Prayer as a corrupt innovation on their Apostolic Liturgy, is better pleased with me; for it suited him, as a Roman Catholic, to follow Dr. Marsh in representing me as a person who styles our Liturgy the traditions of fallible men †.

— What a strange and unaccountable jumble is here of contradictory sentiment — misrepresentation — accusation! And, what may seem most extraordinary, entirely originating from the simplest, and one would think the most unexceptionable, thing that can be imagined, — the dissemination of the pure word of God alone.

*The charge is*, that the Liturgy is compared by Dr. Milner with Popish traditions.

Now as it sometimes happens that an extravagant supposition may serve to illustrate a subject, let us for a moment admit that the Dean of Carlisle, by

\* Gandolphy's Letter, p. 22.

† Ibid. p. 26.

the expression "traditions of fallible men," did really mean the venerable Liturgy of the Church of England, and even that Liturgy exclusively. On this concession undoubtedly it may be maintained, that the Dean of Carlisle represented it as a dangerous tenet that the holy Scriptures themselves are to be tried at the bar of the English Liturgy. But what does this concession amount to after all? Will Dr. Marsh deny it to be a dangerous tenet, to maintain that the holy Scriptures are to be tried at any human tribunal whatever, and therefore at the tribunal of the Liturgy of the English Church?

Our Inquirer, by a curious and elaborate piece of logic, would prove that the Dean's expression, "traditions of fallible men," cannot possibly apply to any other book but the Liturgy. The fact is, it applies, and was intended to apply, to all human opinions and all human compositions whatever, without a single exception! Dr. Marsh has here spent his strength to no purpose. He says, it is impossible the circumlocution should apply to any other book than that which had been mentioned\*. He would have been much nearer the truth if he had said, "that book which has already been mentioned must be *included* in the general expression." This is the erroneous step in the argument, and it is this which vitiates the conclusion.

My argument runs thus: It is a dangerous and a Popish tenet to try the Scriptures by the traditions of fallible men.

The Liturgy, with all its excellencies, is nevertheless a production of fallible men.

\* Pp. 22 and 23.

Therefore the Scriptures must not be tried even by the Liturgy itself.

Then why would Dr. Marsh represent me as placing the Liturgy of our Church on a footing with Popish traditions? The explanation is, because such a colouring is more suited to his purpose.

The Dean of Carlisle (says Dr. Marsh) *compares* the Liturgy with Popish traditions\*.

Now I challenge the keenest eye to detect the minutest trace of such a comparison, beyond the single circumstance that both the Liturgy and Popish traditions are of human authority—a view of the subject from which the Dean does not recede in the smallest degree; nor can he easily believe, that even for a moment, Dr. Marsh was persuaded that the Dean placed the Prayer-book, as to its intrinsic merits, on a level with Popish traditions. I admit, that an experienced controversialist might suppose that he perceived some advantage in the use of the equivocal term *compare*. For as the excellent Liturgy of our Church and the most contemptible Popish tradition are in this one respect of the same class, that is, as neither of them must be ranked among things of Divine authority, an opening—I cannot say a fair opening—presents itself of suggesting, under the shelter of a term of vague and undefined import, the indecent intimation that because the English Liturgy and Popish traditions admit of comparison in the single circumstance that both rest on human authority, *therefore* whoever

\* Inquiry, p. 23.

compares them in respect of *that circumstance*, must be supposed to consider them, as not materially differing from each other, in their intrinsic merits.

But there is no wisdom in seizing such vantage-ground as this.—It was Dr. Marsh, and not the Dean of Carlisle, who introduced the word COMPARE.

To what a dilemma, then, is our Inquirer reduced! He must either allow, that what he has called the Dean's comparison of the Liturgy with Popish tradition, applies *exclusively* to the circumstance just mentioned, of its not being a human composition, or he must affirm, what he himself does not believe, that the Dean of Carlisle places the intrinsic merits of the Liturgy on a level with Popish tradition.

I would not venture to say this, if Dr. Marsh had not explicitly owned, page 21, that he does not question the Dean's sincerity when he declares that no man can entertain a more exalted idea of our Liturgy than himself.

It may be difficult to account for this mass of confusion and contradiction; and perhaps useless, to hazard conjectures upon it. Otherwise, I might be induced to observe, that a great fondness for the parade of logical accuracy, when not under the direction of sound discrimination, frequently proves a dangerous and delusive stimulant to contentious discussion.

I have rarely seen an instance where much pretension to logical niceties has served the cause of truth; but I could produce many where it has over-

awed, or confounded, the genuine operations of common sense, and protected foolish and erroneous doctrines.

Dr. Marsh, however, has had the candour and consideration to declare (p. 22), that he should be very sorry to do injustice to the Dean of Carlisle; by torturing his words into a meaning which they do not really convey. Nevertheless, he must permit me to suggest to his better judgment, that in future, it may be as well for him not to repeat charges too often, where doubts arise in his mind that the expressions on which they are founded *are actually tortured* from their real meaning. For whatever effect the conciliatory declaration of being very sorry to do injustice to the Dean may produce on myself, I doubt not, but in the watchful mind of the public, it will excite a considerable degree of suspicion, that some troublesome feelings of an honourable consciousness did intervene, although not sufficiently powerful to intercept the hasty censures of a confident and impetuous controversialist.

It will here be naturally asked, How could Dr. Marsh possibly suppose that any person, whom he really believed to have a sincere regard for the Liturgy, should have intended to place that same Liturgy on a level with Popish tradition? *Irresistible* evidence—not *tortured* evidence—and nothing short of irresistible evidence, could have justified so injurious a representation.

It would be in vain for me to aim at reconciling inconsistencies of this sort. But in return for his acknowledgment of the sincerity of my professions

of high regard for the Liturgy, I will endeavour, as far as in me lies, to rescue *him* from all undue suspicion of Popery.

I cannot, however, deny, that I do not like his use and application of the term *evil, correction of the evil, safeguard*, and the like. Had he said no more than that the Prayer-book was a *proper* companion for the Bible in the hands of a churchman, there could not have been a murmur against so reasonable a position. But the peculiar terms in which he has been pleased to express his disapprobation of the Bible Society, have induced a suspicion at least, that it was his opinion, not merely that the distribution of the Prayer-book increased the safety of our Ecclesiastical Establishment, but that the distribution of the Bible *without* the Prayer-book lessened that safety; and who will deny that such a sentiment savours of Popish ideas?

His precise meaning I do not pretend to understand; but so far from accusing him of such a Popish reverence for the Prayer-book as might induce him to prefer its *authority* to that of the Bible, I do assure him most unequivocally and without the slightest reserve, that I neither now think, nor ever did think, nor ever heard any other person insinuate, that Dr. Marsh's attachment to the Book of Common Prayer, or to the doctrines contained in it, had appeared on any occasion to be a very uncommon or extraordinary, much less a reprehensible or unjustifiable, sort of attachment.

After all, I am disposed to think that the University of Cambridge, who well know the characters both of Dr. Marsh and of the Dean of Carlisle, will

only smile at these mutual conciliatory exculpations. They know, that at bottom, Dr. Marsh is as little afraid of the imputation of Popery as the Dean of Carlisle is of a charge of heresy. They know, that in regard to the Dean of Carlisle, no suspicion of heretical sentiments can possibly attach to a man who, for the space of forty years, has omitted no fair opportunity of showing his unfeigned belief of the Articles of our church, and his cordial affection for the Book of Common Prayer. And in regard to Dr. Marsh, they also know, that any imputation of his leaning to Popish sentiments cannot possibly create the smallest uneasiness in the mind of a man, who has had so much reason to be satisfied with the honourable distinction which he has lately met with from his brethren of the Establishment. He himself proclaims the honour which, at a public meeting at Bartlett's Buildings, was conferred on his sermon, to have been, as he believes, "without precedent." "It was resolved," says he, the Archbishop of Canterbury himself being in the chair, "that it should be printed immediately, on account of its great importance\*."

It is not to be supposed, therefore, that the satisfaction of *such* a champion of the Establishment can be disturbed at being suspected of entertaining Popish opinions. His brethren of the Establishment, he doubts not, in general applaud his labours in defence of the common cause, although there may be found a few anomalous churchmen, who, seduced by a bigoted attachment to the Bible Society,

\* Inquiry, p. 27, the note.

reprimand him for discovering an unnecessary anxiety for the distribution of the Liturgy, or who even compare that Liturgy with Popish traditions\*.

I am deceived, however, if, after all, the best friends of Dr. Marsh would not do well to whisper in his ear, that in our days, a Professor or Lecturer in Theology, has abundantly more reason to apprehend mischief to his reputation, from a vain ostentatious display of novel thoughts, from the parade of inconclusive logic, and from a busy restless interference in political contests, than from any imputations of Popery †, or from the indignation of dissenters, with the idea of which his mind seems to have been so much disturbed.

The printing and publishing of electioneering squibs, though even at the election of a Chancellor of the University; the introducing of political interests into so serious a concern as the most extensive dispersion of the Bible ever known; the putting men unnecessarily in mind of their religious disagreements, with many irritating circumstances; the telling both churchmen and dissenters, that we know the latter can combine for the purpose of opposing the church; and that churchmen, by connecting themselves in the Bible Society with dissenters, may be contributing to the dissolution of the Establishment;—this is the language, and this is the line of conduct which must infallibly lower the credit and dignity of any professor of theology.

\* Inquiry, p. 23.

† Ib. pp. 8 and 43.

3. *Misrepresentation in Respect to the Liturgy, with some Remarks on the Liturgy and Articles.*

Dr. Marsh's declaration, "that he should be very sorry to do the Dean of Carlisle the injustice of torturing his words . . .," had given me such an insight into the Professor's mode of conducting his Inquiry, that the instant I saw the words, "if I understand Dr. Milner rightly\* . . .," I suspected there might be, at no great distance, another example of torturing words from their real meaning, into a meaning which they were never intended to convey.

After expressing my exalted idea of the Liturgy, and my wish that all Christians could be persuaded to use it, I had added, "but as this" (the adoption of the Liturgy) "is not to be expected, while dissenters of several denominations adhere to their own system of ceremonies and of church government, I would not represent the distribution of the Bible alone as dangerous to the Establishment, or as a thing that could not be done with safety, unless accompanied with the corrective of a Prayer-book of the Church of England."

On this, Dr. Marsh's observation is, that if he "understands Dr. Milner rightly, he considers the objection of the dissenters to the Liturgy, as a reason not only why churchmen may omit the Liturgy when they give the Bible, but why they may omit it with safety."

\* Inquiry, p. 61, the note.

Dr. Marsh might well say, "IF I understand Dr. Milner rightly," &c. He knew perfectly, that Dr. Milner was then speaking of the distribution of the Bible by the Bible Society, consisting of churchmen and dissenters. "This is the sole object," said Dr. Milner a little before, "of the society to which we belong\*." He knew that Dr. Milner had said not one word concerning the distribution of either Bibles or Prayer-books by individuals. He knew that the objection of the dissenters is a reason why our Prayer-books *could not* be distributed by a society constituted as the Bible Society is, viz. of a mixture of churchmen and dissenters; and lastly, he knew that the aggregate objection of all the dissenters together was *no* reason why any individual churchman should, in his private capacity, omit to distribute the Liturgy in company with the Bible.

I have too much respect for Dr. Marsh, either to affirm or to insinuate such a charge as wilful misrepresentation. My belief is, that this is one example, of which I have shown there are many to be found in his Inquiry, where the Inquirer confounds two different things, and treats them as if they were the same; namely, the distribution of Bibles by the Bible Society, and the distribution of them by the individuals who compose it. Indeed, this is the error which, either directly or indirectly, pervades a large portion of the Inquiry. Strike out this error, together with all its necessary consequences (which fair dealing requires), and the whole Inquiry will be reduced to a few empty suspicions, and emaciated

\* Dr. Milner's Speech, in the Appendix.

conjectures; and its effects will be almost annihilated.—But enough of this has been said before.

So much has been said by Dr. Marsh, on the *necessity* of distributing the Liturgy and Articles of our church, which necessity every churchman admits; so much also on the *neglect* of the church-members of the Bible Society to distribute them, the existence of which neglect, I hope, very few believe; that it will not be deemed improper, I trust, if I here subjoin a few observations expressive of my ideas of the nature and use of those inestimable compositions.

The Prayer-book I consider as the criterion of the Church of England, or the test by which churchmen are to be tried.

The Articles of our religion contain an admirable summary of Christian doctrine, indisputably built on the holy Scriptures.

These important doctrines are, with great ability, industriously woven into many of the public prayers and supplications, and also into the two books of Homilies, which are referred to in the Articles for more explicit illustration.

The most essential parts of doctrine are digested into a very excellent catechism, adapted in general to the use not only of youth but of persons of all ages.

The whole is expressed in most simple and beautiful language, of which no parallel can be produced.

This Prayer-book and these Articles of religion, containing the declared sense of the church, and assented to by every member of it, are indeed a bulwark

against innovation and heresy in our own church; Men cannot well remain in the church, and yet hold the opinions of Arius, Socinus, and other heretics, while the Prayer-book and their own subscriptions witness against them.

The decision and practice of our church, in the important concern of the public worship of God, I deem a matter of great consequence.

By no means, however, intending to censure the use of extemporaneous prayer, either by dissenters in their public worship, or by churchmen in their private families; I have long been satisfied, that when congregations of Christians meet together for the worship of Almighty God, the preference is greatly due to forms of prayer.

The ground of this preference is admirably stated by Bishop Beveridge. "If," says this pious prelate, "I hear another pray, and know not before-hand what he will say, I must first listen to what he will say next. Then I am to consider, whether what he saith be agreeable to sound doctrine, and whether it be proper and lawful for me to join with him in the petitions he puts up to God Almighty; and if I think it is so, then I am to do it; but before I can well do that, he has got to another thing."—This reasoning appears to me unanswerable.

No men appear to have been better qualified to speak of the nature and usefulness of public worship, and of the Book of Common Prayer, than Bishop Beveridge and Mr. Hooker. It is a fine observation of the latter, that the very form and reverend solemnity of Common Prayer, duly ordered, so helps that imbecility and weakness in reli-

gious minds, that they become inflamed with the love of public devotion; whereas, otherwise, they would be the less apt to perform unto God so heavenly a service, with such affection of heart and disposition in the powers of the soul as is requisite. It was the opinion of this judicious author, who had deeply studied the subject, that it was owing to God's singular care and providence, that the church hath evermore held a præscript form of Common Prayer, although not in all things every where the same, yet for the most part retaining still the same analogy. So that if the "liturgies of all ancient churches throughout the world be compared amongst themselves, it may be easily perceived, they had all one original mold, and that the public prayers of the people of God, in churches thoroughly settled, did never use to be voluntary dictates proceeding from any man's extemporal wit\*."

It is under the weight of such authorities, and such observations as these, that my mind has for many years past been strongly impressed with the absolute necessity of distributing Prayer-books to poor churchmen;—and why am I to suppose, that in a concern of such moment, a pressure of duty similar to that which I have described, and equally strong, is not felt in general by the good members of our Establishment? In my judgment, it is one of the most extraordinary and almost unaccountable circumstances belonging to this controversy, that Dr. Marsh should never have suspected a neglect

of the distribution of Prayer-books, or if he did suspect it, should have remained silent concerning it, till the late exuberant dissemination of the Bible had roused his attention to the dangers which, he supposes, threaten the Church. In vain I look for any explanation of this difficulty, except what in another place I have called . . . . . "a rooted aversion to any connection in religious concerns with any Christians if they dissent from the Established Church\*." Nor is this a mere hypothesis. Enough is said in Dr. Marsh's Address concerning dissenters to convince me, that here is a *vera causa*, quæ explicandis phænomenis sufficiat.

With me, the chief arguments for furnishing poor churchmen with Prayer-books, are of the following stamp. Pure religion requires a regular celebration of the public worship of Almighty God. The church to which we belong has wisely ordained that this worship, throughout every part of it, should be conducted by special forms and regulations; and that, in many parts of the service, the people should join with the minister in reading the Psalms and making alternate responses. But this cannot be done without printed formularies for the use of the congregation. Hence it becomes the indispensable duty of the opulent to provide their poor brethren of the Establishment with those requisite formularies which themselves cannot afford to purchase.

It is not because the Bible cannot be trusted alone with safety in the hands of the poor and unlearned that we acknowledge our obligation to fur-

\* See Dean of Carlisle's Speech, in the Appendix.

nish them with Liturgies, but because without the Liturgies they cannot properly join in the public worship of God; and consequently must be deprived of many of the inestimable advantages of religious communion. Add to this, the Liturgy is an excellent manual of devotion, and, as such, is used by many pious churchmen in their private families.

On these accounts, it must be of immense importance in *practice* that every member of our Establishment should be supplied with its Liturgy, for the purpose of forming and of maintaining in strength and vigour a devout habit of worshipping God both in public and private. Here, with the blessing of God, is indeed a *safeguard* against leading a prayerless life, against that coldness and indifference in spiritual concerns of which the best Christians complain; here is a most valuable help to true devotion—an excellent preservative of a right Christian spirit of supplication!

Thus, it is in a *practical*, much more than a theoretical or controversial, point of view, that I consider the Liturgy as a *safeguard* to the poor and unlearned against the delusions of false teachers. The man who on his knees is in the habit of saying, “O God the Father,”—“O God the Son,”—“O God the Holy Ghost,” will not be an Infidel, a Socinian, or an Arian, but will trust in God’s mercy through Christ for redemption, and in the Holy Ghost for sanctification. So, he who daily acknowledges that he is “tied and bound with the chain of his sins,” and entreats God that the “pitifulness of his great mercy may loose him,” cannot consistently

deny the doctrine of original depravity and become a self-righteous Pharisee. On the other hand, it is impossible that those who earnestly pray for true repentance, and forgiveness of "all their sins, negligences and ignorances," and that they may be "endued with the grace of the Holy Spirit to amend their lives," should adopt Antinomian principles, and deny the necessity of holiness of life.

The more this subject is considered the more clearly will it appear, that the great good which we may hope the poor and unlearned will derive from the Liturgy must be brought about in the manner described, namely, by rendering the precepts and sanctions of the Gospel familiar to their minds through the influence and efficacy of a daily practical use of their Prayer-book.

Doubtless, the sound doctrine contained in the Liturgy is the basis of all the good we can expect from its distribution and practical use. Nevertheless, it is not so much in the light of a commentator or an interpreter of the Bible, that I view the Liturgy as a protector of the poor and unlettered from the seductions of false teachers; it is the influence of the Liturgy on the minds of the ignorant, by its daily use and application, which I contemplate with peculiar satisfaction as excellently adapted to this purpose. Already I have expressed my sentiments, that the Articles of our Church and some other parts of the Book of Common Prayer, as they comprise in a little room the great doctrines of our Establishment, are of admirable use against the most learned and artful innovators of every kind. Yet even on these doctrinal parts of the Prayer-book,

I own, I do not much rely for a *safeguard* to the poor and ignorant. The framers of them seem to have frequently had their eye on ancient heresies and dissensions; and, in some instances, they have penned the article with a sort of technical or scholastic language, and with a conciseness also, which, although it may add strength and beauty and even perspicuity to the composition when examined by a learned theologian, renders it, however, less suited to the capacity of a poor illiterate member of the church than the Scriptures themselves. These, I must for ever contend, are sufficiently clear to the most uncultivated mind in all things which concern the great and essential doctrines of salvation.

I allow with Dr. Marsh, that the Prayer-book will lead men to the same conclusions *at once*, to which the *study of the Bible* led the English reformers\*; but if we are to understand him to mean that churchmen by having the Liturgy put into their hands will thereby be led *at once* to those conclusions so as *to believe them*, it is plain that this will be effected only *by the authority* of the church established, and not by a conviction of the understanding—the result of a rational investigation. But be it so. I am not afraid of the charge of Popish sentiments, when I assert, that the mere authority of the church to which we belong ought by no means to be disregarded. It is an authority which ought to have great weight with all her members, especially those who are young and unlearned. In this way they

\* Inquiry, p. 16.

come to know what its doctrines are; and in this way, it may be allowed, they become attached to her, and even *prejudiced* in her favour. This, however, is the very point at which Protestants must separate from Roman Catholics. Roman Catholics withhold the Bible, or the greater part of it, from the poor and illiterate. Protestants open every page of it to the members of their communion; and it is then found that the more sincerely and steadily they have been accustomed to join in our Liturgy's several confessions of sin and unworthiness, and its various prayers and thanksgivings, the more easily will their understandings afford an entrance to the leading doctrines of the Gospel in their theory, and connection, and the more decidedly will their thoughts be "brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ\*."

All these observations unite in establishing the same inference, — that whatever there may be in the Prayer-book of a *safeguard* to the *poor* and *unlearned*, it depends much more on the pious habits and affections, which are promoted and cherished by a diligent *use* of it, than on any formal or systematic explanation of doctrine which it supplies. In particular, the Ten Commandments, and the summary descriptions of our duties to God and our neighbour, are thereby struck deep into the memory of the catechumens.

In p. 12, of the Inquiry, Dr. Marsh says . . . . "if the Liturgy is *not wanted to explain the Bible*, it would be the height of presumption for a *churchman*

\* 2 Cor. x. 5:

to suppose that the instruction of *an individual* could be wanted."

Instead of detaining the reader with criticisms on this passage, it will be much more to my present purpose to observe, that comprehensive liturgies themselves neither are nor can be made, consistently with the requisite brevity, so perspicuous, in every instance, as completely to exclude hesitation and to render all the doctrinal points intelligible to the cursory reader.

I shall never forget being present at a conversation when a sensible Roman Catholic, who was hard pressed on the absurdity of the doctrine of the real presence, maintained that the Church of England held the very same tenet, because we pray that, receiving God's "creatures of bread and wine, we might be partakers of Christ's most blessed body and blood." The usual answer was given—that the words were to be taken in a spiritual sense, as appeared from the exhortation in the Communion Service, "for then we spiritually eat the flesh of Christ and drink his blood." . . . . "Very well," replied the acute Roman Catholic, "then turn to your own Catechism, where you find these words: "the body and blood of Christ, which *are verily and indeed taken* and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper. Keep in mind also," said he, "that this Catechism is for the use of children, who must be supposed incapable of making nice distinctions; and then lay your hands on your breast, and tell me whether you do not find the real presence in those words. For my part, I never wish any one of our own communion to be more explicit."

In the same conversation, objections were made to the enormous power claimed by the Pope and the Romish Clergy in the matter of Absolution. The Roman Catholic replied, "Do not your clergy claim the same authority?" "No," was the answer: "our priest only *declares*, that there is absolution and remission of sins for the penitent; for immediately after this declaration he adds, that it is '*Almighty God* that pardoneth and absolveth.'" . . . . "Then," said the Roman Catholic with an air of triumph, "turn to your office for the Visitation of the Sick, and there you will find the power of the Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in HIM," (viz. Christ) "acknowledged in as expressive and positive terms as it was ever maintained by the Romish Church; in pursuance of which your priest addresses the sick person thus, '*By HIS authority* I absolve thee from all thy sins.'"

I have heard many persons own that they could readily subscribe to the doctrine of the Trinity as they found it in the Scriptures, which ascribe Divine attributes to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; but that they were at a loss to comprehend that explanation of the doctrine which the Prayer-book contains in the Athanasian Creed.

Again: few subjects have proved more fertile in difficulties and objections than the Baptismal Services of our Liturgy, taking into the account the questions which arise concerning the use of god-fathers and godmothers,—the interrogatories put to them,—the answers made in the name of the infants, and the like; yet, I do not remember to have ever heard an unlearned person of a plain un-

derstanding making any difficulties concerning the duty of baptism as far as it is treated of in Scripture.

In noticing these things, nothing can be further from my intention than that any of them, or that all of them together, with many others that might be added, should be made the ground of serious objection to any part of the contents of the Book of Common Prayer. I have produced them merely in reply to the notion, that while the Scriptures confessedly contain many things which to the unlearned are obscure, the Prayer-book is universally so clear and simple, that, without its aid as a commentator, interpreter, or safeguard, the Scriptures cannot safely be trusted alone in the hands of the poor and illiterate. Both in the Scriptures and in the Book of Common Prayer, the difficulties which occur in particular passages are best resolved by attending to the general tenor of the whole.

The absolution in the office of the Visitation of the Sick must be explained by that form of absolution which is in daily use at the beginning of the Morning and Evening Prayer, and is perfectly free from ambiguity. And the declaration of our Saviour, "Whosoever sins ye remit they are remitted," must be so understood as not to be inconsistent with that great and acknowledged truth, "Who can forgive sins but God only?"

The Creed, which takes its name from Athanasius, was composed for the express purpose of rejecting many ancient heresies, which it has accordingly done with admirable conciseness and perspicuity. And by the help of the parochial minister, even the

poor and unlearned may be enabled to comprehend the meaning and to see the force of its several clauses.

Similar observations are to be made respecting the introduction and use of god-fathers and god-mothers in the office of Baptism.

In regard to that answer of the catechumen which affirms that the "body and blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper," the emphatical term *faithful* must be distinctly pointed out as demonstrative of a spiritual, not of a corporal, reception of the body and blood of Christ. In a spiritual sense the body and blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful, and by them only. If the real presence had been intended, the unfaithful, although unworthy communicants, would equally with the faithful have been partakers of the body and blood of Christ.

I here repeat, that there is not any one member of our Church Establishment who entertains a more exalted idea of the excellence of our Prayer-book than I do. Dr. Marsh has given me credit for this; and I trust that on candid reflection he will not think worse of me because I happen to differ from him in contending for a greater perspicuity of the Bible than he seems to allow. This perspicuity is owing to the variety of lights in which the several doctrines are exhibited by our Saviour and his Apostles, their discourses being on some occasions didactic; on others, exhortatory; and on others again, narratives of instructive transactions. If certain parts of the Creeds, the Catechism, or the Articles

are found sometimes too difficult for the comprehension of the illiterate, this is in great measure owing to the brevity with which they are necessarily expressed. The framers of these compositions were so sensible of this, that in the important article of the doctrine of justification by faith only, we are put in mind in the Article itself that "this wholesome doctrine" is "more largely expressed in the Homily of Justification."

In the 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, and 13th Articles, the fundamental doctrines of the English Church are truly expressed with a brevity, a strength, and a perspicuity with which such summaries ought to be expressed. Nevertheless, distinct, and accurate, and luminous as they unquestionably are, whoever consults the different interpretations of them which have been supported by learned men, will not think them calculated to produce a uniformity of sentiment among the poor and illiterate. I adhere to my position, that it is chiefly through the practical and not the theoretical use of the Liturgy, that the poor and illiterate imperceptibly imbibe just notions of the Gospel of Christ: and correct and improve their affections, which are naturally prone to evil.

That contrariety of sentiment to be found in the various expositions of our Articles is no proof whatever to me of their intrinsic obscurity. It is rather an evidence of that unwillingness which shews itself in the proud hearts of fallen creatures to acknowledge "the fault and corruption of the nature of every man," whereby he is "very far gone

from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil \*.”

The Articles, Creeds, and Catechism still remain a bulwark against innovation in our own church. Still they check the tendency to heresy. Men cannot distort their obvious meaning without doing *some* violence to their own feelings, and a great deal to common sense.

But there is nothing which I more dislike, because I know nothing more mischievous, than to represent the Scriptures as so very difficult of interpretation, so extremely productive of different religious denominations, that they are scarcely to be trusted with safety in the hands of the poor and ignorant. In my judgment this representation is so far from just, that both the learned and the unlearned would seldom fail to reach the *substance* of evangelical truth, if they would study the Sacred Oracles with due humility, and with prayer for the help of the Spirit, that they may understand those things which the natural man cannot know “because they are spiritually discerned †.”

Very few words will suffice to express my sentiments in general on the government and discipline of our church.

The Book of Common Prayer, with the Articles of Religion, the Canons, and the Ordination services usually printed in the larger editions, comprise a system of ecclesiastical government and discipline, of which (although it pretends not to be accurately

\* Art. IX.

† 1 Cor. ii. 14.

modelled in all its parts from scriptural archetypes) it may justly be affirmed, that, both in its foundation and superstructure, its authors have availed themselves of every light that Scripture could afford; have called in all the helps that could be derived from the history of the primitive Christians; and, lastly, where neither special precepts nor examples were to be found in Scripture or in the history of the church, have supplied the unavoidable deficiencies with admirable skill, and executed the whole with so much practical wisdom and Christian moderation as to have merited the unqualified esteem and commendation of all succeeding ages.

These things are set forth by the judicious Hooker, in his Ecclesiastical Polity, with a beautiful perspicuity of expression, and a comprehensive accuracy of argumentation, which are unexampled in polemical discussions.

When I call to mind, that about forty years ago I was an undergraduate in the University of Cambridge, and belonged to a college of which most of the leading members were then supposed to be far from orthodox in the faith; that I was the only student in my own college who, at the great hazard of every prospect of advantage I had at that time in the world, refused to join in a petition against subscription to the Articles of our Church; and that I have been rejoicing ever since to observe the effectual check which our Prayer-book is continually giving to heretical departures from sound doctrine; I consider it as an extraordinary incident in my life that I should have lived to see myself represented as reproaching the Liturgy by comparing it with

Popish traditions\*. Yet not half a page before this charge, the author acknowledges that he does not question the sincerity of my assertion, that “no man could entertain a more exalted idea of our Liturgy than I did †.”

Inconsistencies of this sort in Dr. Marsh’s Inquiry, it is not my business to explain; but I may be allowed to suggest, that imputations so wantonly injurious as those of neglecting and undervaluing the Prayer-book are not to be justified by some few prefaces of little meaning, such as “I should be sorry to do injustice to the Dean of Carlisle ‡,” I should be “unwilling to torture his own words, &c. §” and others of like import. For however fair, and candid, and modest, declarations of this sort may be in appearance, they will, I apprehend, leave on the mind no considerable impression of integrity, candour, and modesty, unless well supported by the facts to which they refer.

Modesty consists not in profession but in action. “Non pudendo, sed non faciendo id quod ~~not~~ decet, non impudentiæ nomen effugere debemus.”

#### 4. *Misrepresentation respecting Lancaster.*

In page 29, Dr. Marsh complains, that friendship was sacrificed for the purpose of crushing the author of the Address. The reply is, that Dr. Milner has no pretensions to the honour of Dr. Marsh’s friendship. He never visited Dr. Marsh so much as

\* Inquiry, p. 22.

† P. 21.

‡ P. 22.

§ P. 6.

once in his life. Nor does he believe that Dr. Marsh will say, that Dr. Milner *sacrificed their* friendship. Nevertheless, Dr. Marsh has so expressed himself, that the *public* will be led to form this conclusion, because no other name is mentioned, to which the charge can attach, except that of Dr. Milner, and his name stands so close to the charge, that only a single line intervenes.

I further request the reader to attend to this sentence of Dr. Marsh, pp. 28, 29. "The very men who had supported me in its application\* to the religious instruction of Mr. Lancaster, (among whom, I may reckon Dr. Milner himself) were suddenly converted into zealous opponents. Even friendship was sacrificed, &c."

I have already observed, that Dr. Marsh cannot accuse me of sacrificing friendship. As little ground has he for representing me to be one of those who "were converted into zealous opponents †." In fact, I never altered my ideas respecting Mr. Lancaster's plan; because, from first to last, I never considered myself as having any thing to do with either his plan or that of Dr. Bell, beyond the mere mechanical part.

Dr. Marsh has owned in his note, that when he waited upon me, I readily subscribed to the Society for the National Education; but it is a perversion of my motives, to represent my subscription as im-

\* By *its application*, Dr. Marsh means the application of what he calls his "fundamental principle" concerning the use of the Liturgy.—Inquiry, p. 28.

† Inquiry, p. 29.

plying opposition to Mr. Lancaster. Dr. Marsh knows, that at that very time, I informed him I was a subscriber to the school at Cambridge; and that I looked on the systems both of Dr. Bell and Mr. Lancaster, as good things, and would subscribe to both\*. Still, though I subscribe to both, it never entered my mind, that the subject-matter of the instruction was to be in anywise under the direction either of Dr. Bell or of Mr. Lancaster. I conceived, that that was always to be left to the discretion and superintendance of the managers of the schools.

My sentiments on this subject are no secret.

In regard to the management of the mechanical part, I know not to which of the two systems the preference is due. In general, I hear that the Lancastrian is the cheaper.

The point of preference being settled, I do not yield to Dr. Marsh in zealously maintaining, that the poor scholars belonging to the Establishment should be carefully instructed in such selections from the Prayer-book, as are best adapted to their age and circumstances; and that they should constantly attend Divine service on the Lord's day.

It would also be a part of my plan, that the children of dissenters should be admitted to the schools, on condition that, if they did not attend

\* As Dr. Marsh will not deny this, I may safely leave the rest with an impartial public, who will not be at a loss to understand why so very material a part of the little which passed at Queen's College, between Dr. Marsh and myself, was suppressed in his Inquiry.

a place of Divine worship under the Establishment, they should regularly attend their own place on Sundays.

A school of this description we have at Cambridge; and so little am I attached to names, that I have no objection to its being called an *improved Lancastrian school*, although it certainly commenced under the auspices of Mr. Lancaster.

I have not heard of a single instance of an objection being made by a dissenter, to any part of the instruction adopted in this school, notwithstanding that the Church Catechism forms one part of it. I am convinced, that such a conciliatory system of education as this would not fail to strengthen the Established Church, by increasing the number of its conscientious members. With pleasure, therefore, I hear that the national schools are now conducted on this plan, or nearly on this plan, in the metropolis and many other great towns.

### 5. Calvinism.

In controversial discussions, it is very difficult to steer perfectly clear of insinuations, and especially in cases where neither prudence, nor the customs and maxims of the age in which we live, will allow a man to speak every plain truth, or strong probability, that occurs to his mind. I will not undertake to define with precision, the justifiable extent of the use of such a weapon as insinuation, which is always the more dangerous, as it affords a shelter for retreat; but I may venture to assert that,

in the practice of it, men but too often transgress that decorum and moderation, and even that regard to justice which ought ever to be strictly observed.

These reflections are suggested to my mind, on reading the latter part of the note in page 42, of Dr. Marsh's Inquiry. Indeed, to his former note, page 22 of Inquiry, where the Inquirer speaks of my *censure* of his position, "that the Liturgy should be distributed in company with the Bible," I must by no means apply the term *insinuation*; because *there*, the public are positively informed, that I *censured* a position which I never did *censure*. I have already noticed this mistatement, and at the same time observed, that what I censured was *this*; that Dr. Marsh had represented the Bible Society as an institution dangerous to our Ecclesiastical Establishment, and the church-member§ of it as disaffected to their Prayer-book, because that society distributed Bibles *only*. Not one syllable did I say or intimate respecting the distribution of Bibles by individuals.

The *insinuation* in the note, page 42, is contained in these words:

"There is one method of producing uniformity of sentiment among those to whom Bibles are distributed, even if they receive not the Prayer-book; and that is, by the addition of tracts. If, for instance, they who withhold the Liturgy, accompany the Bible with Calvinistic tracts, the Bible in such company will be uniform in the production of Calvinism."—Indeed!! Does even the Prayer-book then produce uniformity of sentiment among churchmen themselves? Do the tracts of the Society for pro-

moting Christian Knowledge itself always agree with each other, even on the same point of doctrine? Does not Dr. Marsh sneer at the word GODLY, and yet the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge did not think it improper to place among their tracts, *An Account of the Lives and Sufferings of several GODLY Persons?*

But having already pointed out, at some length, the unfair and ungenerous advantage which the Inquirer has endeavoured to take of the present unpopularity of Calvinistic sentiments, I shall forbear at this time, to make any further remarks either on the inconclusive, illogical, reasoning of this note, (p. 42) or on the indecent liberties in which, in various parts of his *Address* and *Inquiry*, the writer indulges himself with regard to such churchmen, or such of the clergy as he supposes to be Calvinistical in their sentiments. I would confine myself entirely to the *personal* insinuation contained in the words now before me.

Calvinism, and Calvinistic tracts, are here introduced by the Inquirer, merely, it should seem, as an instance of the manner in which he supposes uniformity of sentiment will be produced. But tracts, in support of *any other* tenet, would have illustrated whatever there is, in this note, of an attempt at argument, just as well as Calvinistic tracts can answer that purpose. I grant, however, that the mentioning of any other species of tracts might not have been equally well calculated to answer every intention of the Inquirer. He well knows, that for some time past, as well as at the present moment, there has been a loud outcry raised against

Calvinism in general, and against Calvinistic clergymen in particular. Therefore, an impartial reader will be inclined to ask, for what fair and honourable purpose is this invidious stroke at Calvinism introduced, so close to the name of Dr. Milner, (*viz.* in the sentence immediately preceding), the only name too of any living person which is specifically mentioned in the whole paragraph. Surely (it will be said), Dr. Marsh did not hope to derive strength to his cause, by imputing to his adversary the maintenance of tenets which happen to be extremely unpopular at the present day. Surely he did not flatter himself, that an invidious nick-name (Calvinist) would do that for his argument which not all his zeal, or industry, or learning, or penetration, or logical subtilty could effect!

Dr. Marsh may, undoubtedly, as I observed, retire under the shelter of insinuation, but he must once more permit me to admonish him on his own account, quite as much as from a regard to his opponents, not to repeat a practice of this kind. When our Inquirer, by mere abstract reasoning, attempts to expose the mischievous tendency of the Bible Society, we object not to the mode of his argumentation, but call in question the soundness of it. Even the pretence to logical accuracy, without the reality, may be endured, because inconclusive reasoning, however artfully disguised, may always be detected. The most specious coverings of error impose on the mind no longer than during the operation of the charm which supports the delusion. It is not so with the poison of insinuation, which is often found to possess a more durable efficacy.

Thus, when, under the protection of insinuation, the public are led to believe that the advocates of the Bible Society entertain religious sentiments of a stamp peculiarly offensive at the present time, and even inconsistent with the sobriety of good sense and sound principles, such indirect attacks, although in every respect unworthy of the pious and good man, of the scholar, and the Christian, are extremely difficult to withstand. They produce impressions which imperceptibly wound the reputation; and are the more mischievous, because that, in order to serve the purpose of insinuation, it is not always necessary it should produce an absolute conviction. It is quite sufficient, for example, in the present case, to inject the suspicion of the offensive doctrine of *Calvinism*. The disposition of the public mind supplies the rest.

Now, as to the personal insinuations of Calvinism, whatever weight they may be supposed to carry along with them in the mind of the Inquirer, a few concise observations, directly applicable to my own case, will, I conceive, be deemed satisfactory.

Without pretending to a perfect recollection of all that I have written, much less of all that I have said, both in public and in private, on religious subjects, at different periods of my life; yet, relying on the sincerity of my professions, and that consistency of opinion which I have maintained for a great many years, I confidently affirm it to be impossible to produce a single expression, written or spoken by me, from which a charge of Calvinism may fairly be inferred, by any person who knows what the offensive and objectionable part of the

tenets of Calvin really are ; or, in other words, who knows how to distinguish the sound doctrines of that learned divine, from those peculiar dogmas which he has pronounced with great positiveness, and which I, with many others, exceedingly disapprove, as violent, rash, and unscriptural.

I sincerely hold, and ever have held, unequivocally, the very important scriptural doctrine of universal redemption.

Moreover, the Seventeenth Article of our church, in its plain and literal sense, expresses my unfeigned sentiments on the difficult subjects of which it treats. That the doctrine of universal redemption is reconcileable with the Seventeenth Article, I make no question. Nevertheless, those who find no difficulties in considering the abstruse subjects of the Divine prescience ; the freedom of man, and his responsibility ; the declarations in Holy Writ concerning the native innocence of our first parents, and the subsequent corruption of human nature ; convince me that hitherto they have only reflected on these points in a superficial manner.

Such are the more explicit sentiments on this abstruse and difficult branch of theology, which I promised to state in this section\*. At the same time, it may not be amiss to clear up an historical circumstance relative to this subject.

It is a common, and at the same time an erroneous notion, that the difference of the sentiments of Luther, from those of that class of Protestants on the Continent who had no connection with his

\* Page 160.

churches, lay very much in the article of predestination. The fact is, that, in the early part of the Reformation, *consubstantiation* was almost the single point which caused the unhappy separation among the Protestant churches. Besides this, whoever seriously attends to Luther's answer to the diatribe of Erasmus, will be convinced that this great Reformer then maintained, in strong terms, the doctrine of the absolute decrees of God. On the contrary, throughout the voluminous writings of Ulric Zuingle, who is looked on as the founder of those reformed churches which held no communion with the Lutherans, I have observed nothing which implies a predilection for what are usually called Calvinistic sentiments.

Experience seems to have afterwards taught Luther the wisdom of using great moderation on subjects of this nature.

The following extract from one of his Epistles, written for the express purpose of comforting a person, whose mind, by indulging a curious and inquisitive spirit of prying into the secrets of the Divine will, had been much distressed, has, to my certain knowledge, proved extremely edifying to some sincere Christians.

“Many,” says Luther, in his letter to a neighbouring minister\*, “have perished in the indulgence of such curious inquiries; it is a temptation which leads even to blasphemy. I myself, by giving way to it, have more than once been reduced to the last

\* Second Edition of Milner's History of the Church of Christ. Vol. V. chap. xvi. p. 514.

extremity. We, poor mortals, by faith, can scarcely comprehend a few rays of the Divine promise, or receive in practice a few sparks of the Divine precepts; and yet, feeble and impure as we are, we rashly attempt to fathom the majesty of God in all its brightness. Do we not know, that *his* ways are past finding out? Instead of using well the mild light of the promises, which is adapted to our faculties, we rush with eyes of moles to view at once the majestic splendour of the Deity. What wonder, then, if his glory should overwhelm us in the attempt to investigate it? We ought to know, that there is such a thing as the secret will of God: but the danger is, when we attempt to comprehend it. —I am wont to check myself with that answer of Christ to Peter, who had asked what was to become of John:—‘What is that to thee? follow thou me!’ But suppose we could give an accurate account of the judgments of Almighty God, in his secret determinations; what advantage would accrue to us from such knowledge, beyond what lies open to us from the promises and precepts,—from the former, addressed to our faith; from the latter, to our practice? Tell your friend, if he would have peace of mind, to abstain from such intricate speculations. The subject is incomprehensible, and the study of it may drive him to despair and blasphemy. Let him not give way to Satan, who would weary him out, by presenting impossibilities to his mind. Let him exercise faith in the promises, and obey the commandments; and when he has discharged those duties well, he will be able to judge whether he will have any time left for impossibilities. There is no

other remedy than to neglect, and not give way to such thoughts; though this is a difficult task, because Satan suggests the absolute necessity of attending to them. This battle, however, must be fought; and many persons fail in the contest, by not suspecting their thoughts to be the temptations of Satan; whereas these are the very fiery darts of that WICKED ONE. He himself fell from heaven, by aiming at a knowledge above his station. Thus also he vanquished Adam, by teaching him to be dissatisfied with his ignorance concerning the will of God. Flight is the true wisdom here. There is no room for Christ to dwell in the heart, as long as reasonings of this kind are uppermost."—In another letter, while he admits the preordination and foreknowledge of God, nevertheless, from Ezek. xviii. 23, "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die, saith the Lord God," he argues, that God chose, and seriously decreed from eternity, the possibility of the salvation and everlasting happiness of all men. And hence he concludes that the general promises of a gracious God ought by no means to be limited; nor those suggestions of Satan to be indulged, which would separate us from the Divine mercy, which is represented in Scripture to be infinite. He then refers the afflicted penitent to the voice of God himself, "This is my beloved Son, hear him;" and to the words of Christ, proclaiming in the streets, "Come unto me, all ye that labour." "He invites all, even the very worst, as publicans and harlots. Why should we perplex ourselves with difficult and circuitous roads, when

the direct road is so clearly pointed out to us in the Gospel?"

It may be thought not a little extraordinary, that in the only controversy (the present excepted) in which I have ever been engaged, I should have had to defend an essay on the importance of religious establishments against the gross misrepresentations of a very rigid Calvinist, Dr. Haweis; and also at the same time to support the sentiments of my late brother, the Historian of the Church of Christ, on the subject of universal redemption.

The coincidence with the present controversy is in both these points so remarkable, that the reader will excuse a short quotation or two on each of them from my animadversions on Dr. Haweis.

Mr. Milner, Vol. II. p. 506 of his Church History, had said, "The notion of particular redemption was unknown to the ancients, and I wish it had remained equally unknown to the moderns."

Dr. Haweis on this occasion expresses himself "shocked that the Scriptures of truth should be treated thus slightly, or the greatest and best of men laid under so unbecoming a censure."

Then comes my observation.—"But Dr. Haweis does not inform his reader, that Mr. Milner, in the very page quoted by Dr. Haweis, refers to the Scriptures of truth in proof of his position. 1 Tim. ii. In which chapter are these words:—'Of God our Saviour, who will have *all* men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom

for *all*.' One would think," I added, "that any plain man would be allowed to infer from this Scripture of truth, that Christ died for *all*, without shocking the nicest feelings\*."

The essay on the Importance of Religious Establishments † not only entirely accords with my own sentiments, but, as is very well known, was in great measure composed by myself. I reviewed it also with great care before it was published, and I afterwards defended it against the censures of Dr. Haweis.

The Essay contains such sentiments as these:

"Corruption of doctrine and discipline ought not to be laid at the door of ecclesiastical establishments, but to be imputed to the degeneracy of men themselves."

"The best ecclesiastical establishments cannot prevent the decay of vital godliness; but, under the providence of God, they strengthen the hands of sincere, humble-minded believers, and they check the influence both of open and of disguised enemies, of Christianity."

"The Liturgy alone, of the Church of England, has long proved, and continues to prove, a strong bulwark against all the efforts of heretical innovators and corrupters of doctrine."

"If these arguments and observations were kept in view, dissenters, who have been accustomed to speak disrespectfully of our ecclesiastical establish-

\* See Dean of Carlisle's Animadversions on Dr. Haweis's History, either by themselves, or printed in the Preface to Vol. I. Milner's Church History, 2d. edit.

† Vol. II. p. 225, Milner's Church History.

ment, would probably find more to commend and less to find fault with."

"The happy government under which we live, has for many years past exhibited to the world a fine example of an ecclesiastical establishment framed and modelled according to the principles inculcated in this chapter."

"It is expedient that there should be a public liturgy, and proper persons to read the same, and to teach the true doctrines of Christ; and it is very necessary that these persons should be known to approve the forms of worship according to which they officiate, and to believe the doctrines which they are bound to inculcate."

Here, then, I also leave it to a candid and impartial public to decide, whether, after having thus exerted myself, to the best of my ability, in the defence of our Liturgy and Ecclesiastical Establishment, I merited the treatment I have met with from Dr. Marsh, for no other reasons but—because I belong to a Society which distributes Bibles alone;—because I did not submit to the slanderous insinuations of neglecting and undervaluing the Liturgy;—and lastly, because I expressed my dissent from him in two or three half sentences, which, after all imaginable amplification and exaggeration, amount to no more, than that I could not agree in sentiment with any man who thought that the distribution of the Bible alone, by such a society as the Bible Society, was dangerous to the Establishment; but rather considered such apprehensions as savouring both of Popish sentiment and Popish practice.

After much reflection on this subject, and after

having attentively observed the effect produced on the minds of judicious and well-informed persons of our own church, of dissenters also, and of Roman Catholics, by Dr. Marsh's representations of the neglect of churchmen in distributing the Liturgy, and of the dangers of trusting the Bible alone among the poor and unlearned, I scruple not to declare, that I now view *the tendency* of his expressions, as savouring of Popish sentiments, in a much stronger light than I did at first; and, consequently, although I mean not to intimate that this tendency has not, through inadvertence, escaped the notice of our Inquirer, I cannot do otherwise than look on the expressions themselves as liable to just and considerable exception.

## CONCLUSION.

THE consideration of the very few years that an invalid like myself, hastening fast to the usual limit of the life of man, can probably have to live, admonishes me to be careful in watching the avenues of my own heart, and guarding against the treacherous intrusion of bad passions of every sort.

With pleasure, therefore, I reflect, that no dispute or misunderstanding ever took place between Dr. Marsh and myself, to produce one moment's alienation of mind or interruption of good will; for although this circumstance is no absolute security against prepossession and partiality, it may surely encourage me to have the less suspicion of any previous bias on my mind, or of allowing any admixture of improper motives.

That such objects as those of peace and union ought to be near our hearts, is a position no one will call in question; and were I aware, that, while I was endeavouring to compass them, I had in any part of these Strictures either stated unfairly, or in the least degree overstated, a single circumstance, I would instantly cancel the passage.

The times in which we live are emphatically eventful. Our Establishment, I believe, is threatened

with considerable danger; not, however, in any respect, from the Bible Society or its operations: impossible! but from causes which at this time I forbear to describe. I am more disposed to turn my attention to such things as, under the direction of a kind Providence, may help to avert the danger.

And for this purpose, there is nothing on which I more confidently rely, than the steady cultivation of pure evangelical "charity," which in Scripture is called "the bond of perfectness\*:" nothing which I more dread, than the mutual animosities and exacerbations which often arise among good men from needless or trivial causes.

Alas! that the distribution of the Bible itself should have become a bone of contention among Christians, is a most deplorable instance of human infirmity!

Dr. Marsh exhorts the friends of the Bible Society to acknowledge their mistake; and puts them in mind, that their regard for the general good will outweigh the private feelings which accompany such an acknowledgment: and, in order that his exhortation may be the better received, he bids them recollect that the wisest and best of men are liable to error; that they are peculiarly liable in the great concerns of religion; and that there is *no* subject in which, from its extreme intricacy, men are *so* liable to error as in the present †.

Surely there is matter here for just and considerable surprise. That wise and good men are liable to error, is a trite observation which is but too well

\* Coloss. iii. 14.

† Inquiry, p. 54.

confirmed by experience. Moreover, that peculiar difficulties often arise in religious concerns, will not be denied. But that there should be *no* subject in which, from its extreme intricacy, men are *so* liable to error, as the present—that is, in the distribution of the Bible free from any human comment—is a position which may well startle the minds of Protestants of the calmest temperament, who hitherto have been in the habit of supposing that, whatever difficulties or intricacies there might be in many religious concerns, yet that the free use and exhibition of the Bible, whether with or without any other book, was that peculiar good thing against which it was altogether impossible that the most ingenious and active spirit of contradiction should devise an argument.

In my opinion, Dr. Marsh could never have arrived at such hostile conclusions against the Bible Society, if he had not followed the very reverse of Mr. Locke's directions concerning the conduct of the human understanding. Whenever a subject is intricate and perplexed, the instructions of that great man will constantly lead the careful student to separate as much as possible from each other the several circumstances which by their connection serve to create darkness, confusion, and intricacy. Experience, also, has shewn, that, considering the uncertain and complex nature of human concerns, those are generally the best advisers who do not much embarrass their minds with intricate *prospective* theories, but carefully watch the circumstances as they arise, and apply the suitable remedies to such evils as actually exist. On this great practical principle are ground-

ed all the observations with which, in these Strictures, I have combated Dr. Marsh's hostility to the Bible Society. He, on the contrary, in the character of an Inquirer, has involved and disguised one of the simplest questions in the world with such a variety of extrinsic and irrelevant materials, that the understanding is in danger of being bewildered and alarmed with the contemplation of mere fanciful theories and conjectures, instead of prosecuting a great and positive good with zeal and thankfulness.

No wonder, then, that Dr. Marsh and myself should arrive at conclusions almost diametrically in contrast with each other. The Margaret Professor, influenced by the dim and uncertain light of remote consequences, would annihilate the Bible Society; whereas the Dean of Carlisle, rejoicing in the indisputable good which actually arises every day from its splendid and extensive operations, would not, for all that this kingdom can bestow, have his conscience loaded with the bitter reflection that he had ever, directly or indirectly, been instrumental in obstructing the free progress of the holy Scriptures among his fellow-creatures.

The Dean, however, is very far from denying, that, like other men, he is open to prejudice. He even admits that an excess as well as a defect of light may prove unfavourable to an accuracy of judgment. He allows that the advocates of the Bible Society *may* be so delighted with its excellence as even to see the advantages of the institution in too strong a point of view. But still there will usually be this difference in the operation of prejudice in the two cases: The

prejudice which disposes the mind to view a good thing in too strong a light, may possibly excite a zeal somewhat excessive for a season, which time, however, will gradually moderate and correct; whereas the opposite prejudice, the prejudice which almost closes a man's eyes to a real substantial good, because that good happens not to have been brought about precisely in the way which suits his own peculiar views and inclinations, is apt to prove much more sturdy and untractable: nor is this last disposition usually much meliorated by time; for if not narrowly watched and withstood, it is often found to degenerate into a spirit of jealousy, suspicion, and censoriousness.

Let any candid person pause, at the present moment, and contemplate the good which, beyond all controversy, has been done by the Bible Society already. Does it not stand demonstrated, that thousands, and ten thousands of Bibles are actually in the hands of poor persons, both of our own and of foreign countries, which would not have been there if the Bible Society had never existed? Does not this very consideration warm the best affections of every Christian—Churchman, Dissenter, Protestant, and even Roman Catholic, I would hope—with a grateful spirit of thanksgiving to that kind and bountiful Providence whose blessed influence is the best preparation of the hearts of men? \* Is it possible that any reader of the New Testament should be disposed to dwell on one part only of Gamaliel's dilemma,—“ If this counsel or this work be of men,

\* Prov. xvi. 1.

it will come to nought ;” and to forget the other part,—“ but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it, lest, haply, ye be found even to fight against God ?” The advice of this learned doctor was, “ Refrain from these men, and let them alone \*.”

Is there even the shadow of a proof that there has been distributed among the poor churchmen a single Prayer-book less than would have been distributed if the Bible Society had never been instituted ? Is it not notorious, that since the institution of the Bible Society, thousands of Prayer-books have been distributed in consequence of it ? Let men explain this fact differently — doubtless they will do so according to their respective partialities ;—no method, however, of accounting for it can be devised which is in the smallest degree disreputable to the Bible Society. It cannot be denied that the Bible Society, which distributes Bibles only, must infallibly, by its extensive dispersion of them, enable the other Society, which distributes Bibles, Prayer-books, and other tracts, to increase its dispersion of the less and cheaper books, when by these means it is so much relieved from the expense of dispersing the larger and the dearer. Here, then, is a great good, which cannot be controverted. And should any person, who candidly admits the good, be disposed to think that we might do still better, I would put him in mind, that it is an established rule, among the wisest medical practitioners, rarely to hazard a change of system in the management of such patients as are evidently *doing well*, for the sake of

\* Acts v. 33.

trying another system which holds out some prospect of doing better. This judicious rule of medicine ought not to be materially departed from in the conduct of political concerns. Experience shews, however, that quackery but too often prevails in both.

In enumerating the good effects of the Bible Society, I would pass over such as are in the smallest degree equivocal, and dwell only on such as it is impossible any churchman can call in question;—otherwise, in my own mind, I consider that good understanding, among Christians of different denominations, which the Bible Society is calculated to promote, and has already promoted, to be one of the happiest consequences of this institution, which has become a centre of union and co-operation, where no contrariety of sentiment forbids the most entire cordiality. Possibly some churchmen are not yet prepared to coalesce with me in opinion on this subject; but, then, they will not deny that the two following *facts*, to which I would advert, merit their most serious notice. The facts I have in view relate to the two Books of Homilies, which, every member of our church will allow, contain a most important part of the instructions which the Church of England recommends to the attention of her faithful adherents. They are pointed out for this purpose in our Articles, and are therefore to be considered as having the sanction of the Legislature itself\*.

Fact 1. It is only within this last year, that, almost

\* Art. XXXV.

entirely through the zeal, influence, and activity of the church members of the Bible Society, another society has been formed for the dispersion of Prayer-books and Homilies exclusively.

Fact 2. The Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, which hitherto had not distributed the Homilies, has also within the same period undertaken to place these excellent compositions among their publications.

Now although, in commenting on these facts, some churchmen may possibly suppose that the members of the Bible Society, alarmed at the charges brought against them for neglecting the distribution of the Prayer-book, have been lashed into this attention to the Liturgy and Homilies; and although, on the other side, similar sarcastic reproaches may be cast by some persons on the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge on the account of their printing the Homilies, for the first time, at this particular season of supposed competition and rivalry, the FACTS will still remain in both instances as monuments of substantial regard for the good cause of religion in general, and of the Church of England in particular. And surely it will be far more becoming that we should rejoice in the facts, and leave the motives to HIM who only knows them;—that we should, like St. Paul, rejoice that Christ is preached, whether of envy and strife or of good will,—whether of contention or of love\*

Such are among those leading facts which, whatever becomes of motives, are indissolubly connected

\* Phil. i. 15—17.

with the institution of the Bible Society, and must be allowed a prominent place in the history of its prosperity.

After all, it will perhaps be said, that the merits of any human plan or system of conduct depends upon the result of a fair estimate of advantages and disadvantages; or, in other words, upon a just balance of the good and evil which will probably ensue from the adoption of it. And this is doubtless the general rule. But in the application of the rule to a case like that of the Bible Society, I have to observe, with no little concern, that there arises a previous question of great importance respecting the cause to which the evils ought to be attributed. That certain evils have been blended with the general good, must be granted: but are they evils which are essential to the constitution of the Bible Society; evils which naturally grow out of such a system, and might have been foreseen? Or, are they evils which have entirely originated in the unkind, unnecessary, and injudicious opposition that has been made to the distribution of the Scriptures by this Society?

Having already enlarged\* on the several evils and mischiefs which are likely to ensue from the attacks made on the advocates of the Bible Society, I shall now content myself, with reverting to that apprehension, concerning the reputation of the clergy, which hangs on my mind far more heavily than any other. The ground of my apprehension is explained at pages 177—184. The Protestant people of this country, God be praised! have a great veneration for the Bible; and it is certain that the late eight

\* Part III.

years' exuberant dissemination of it has produced on the minds of the multitude a deep impression of respect and gratitude. It is a fact, however, that, along with so laudable a sentiment, there is also impressed a mixture of astonishment, that any the least opposition should have arisen to it from any quarter, and more especially from the Established Church. The poorest and most illiterate churchman is not ignorant that the doctrines contained in his Prayer-book are to be proved by his Bible: when, therefore, he hears the distribution of the Bible opposed, he cannot enter into Dr. Marsh's nice distinctions. If he succeeds so far as to comprehend the propriety of a Bible and a Prayer-book keeping company with each other, he must yet be amazed on finding it urged that these two books must necessarily be procured at the same place; and that at all events, the present Bible Society is acting a dangerous part towards the established church. Thus, I contend, a suspicion is struck deep into their minds, that the clergy of the establishment dislike the Bible, and consequently, at bottom, dislike also the doctrines of their own church. The regard professed for the Liturgy, they can explain to themselves from Dr. Marsh's having told them that it is the tenure of ecclesiastical preferment. In the pages just referred to (177—184), where I have dwelt on this point more at length, I explicitly allow, that it is not the reasonableness, but the certainty and the danger of this suspicion, which affect my mind, and on which I earnestly beseech my reverend brethren of the Establishment to bestow their serious attention.

At the same time I cannot dissemble, that I think those persons must wilfully close their eyes who see nothing particular in the signs of the times.

Who would have believed, two years ago, that a learned Professor of Divinity of our own university should have expressed his sentiments in such a manner, as to be congratulated, by a sensible Roman Catholic divine, as a champion of the Roman Catholic church; as one who had boldly given up a vital principle of Protestantism; as one who urged the necessity of an *other* rule of faith besides the Bible only, and had given a *coup-de-grace* to the old principle of the Reformers\*?

Again, who would have believed that within the same short space of time, another learned Professor of Divinity, of the same university, in representing the difficulties which he supposes to occur in the Bible, should speak thus of the Psalms: "How many are there that exult in the calamities, and even imprecate calamities upon the head of the writer's enemies?" Or that in the same page, he should declare, that he "cannot think that the Epistles were designed, because they are evidently not calculated, for general diffusion †."

The reader will not be surprised, that this author should recommend a revision of the Articles of our church, and of "some parts, perhaps, of the Liturgy." What these things *tend to*, there can be little doubt.—To what point they may actually arrive, even in a short time, I pretend not to foresee.

\* Gandolphy, *passim*.

† Dr. Maltby's "Thoughts," p. 9.

The reader will do well to consult the truly admirable and very satisfactory answer which has been given to Dr. Maltby, by the Rev. J. W. Cunningham, Vicar of Harrow on the Hill. My business is with Dr. Marsh's Inquiry.

Since the publication of this tract, I have repeatedly, and with the closest attention of which my mind is capable, examined the principle on which the author rests his fundamental objection concerning the non-distribution of the Liturgy. And I am convinced, that it is scarcely possible for any human institution that can be devised, to stand the trial of so unreasonable a test. To illustrate my meaning, I would observe, that when, for the purpose of securing an important end, several good things are to be done, each of which is perhaps necessary, and even indispensably so, it will generally not be difficult in those cases to show, that there exists such a connection among the good things, that if any one of them be left undone, the want of it will be greatly felt; but who, except Dr. Marsh, ever thought of blaming those who actually execute a great deal of the important and necessary work, because they *do not*, perhaps *cannot*, finish the whole? A plain man would conclude, that commendation, rather than blame, attached to those who do so much, and who, consequently, render it easier for other well-wishers to the general cause, to complete what remains to be done.

According to the sweeping principle of Dr. Marsh, I should absolutely be at a loss to defend the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge;

because, notwithstanding the multitude of Bibles, Prayer-books, and Tracts, which it has distributed, it has not done every thing which a churchman may wish to see done: it has not, till very lately, undertaken to distribute the Homilies of our church. Now, how easy would it be for a person of Dr. Marsh's ingenuity, to represent the distribution of the Homilies as at least equally necessary and equally indispensable with the distribution of Prayer-books? Has not, he might say, the doctrine of justification by faith been tortured with controversy for many years? Has it not been often misrepresented and abused to Antinomian purposes? And where shall we find this important doctrine more accurately explained, than in the Homilies? Where is the Popish doctrine of the merit of works more ably withstood, and at the same time the necessity of real good works, as the fruits of faith, more largely or more clearly explained and inculcated? Do not our Articles themselves refer to the Homilies for this very purpose? And does not the Thirty-fifth Article\* represent them as intelligible to the people, and accordingly direct them to be read by the ministers? The Homilies, he might add, should therefore accompany the Bible: they are one of its very best safeguards for the unlearned, against the seduction of false teachers. They contain easy and familiar explanations of doctrines; and as the practice of reading them in churches has much declined

\* .....“ We judge them to be read in churches by the ministers, diligently and distinctly, that they may be understood of the people.” Article XXXV.

of late years, it becomes the more necessary that they should be distributed among the poor at a cheap rate.

On the supposition, that Dr. Marsh's objections to the Bible Society on account of their not distributing the Liturgy are well-founded, I assert that his reasoning is conclusive against the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge.—Our Inquirer may hence learn the fallacy of his principles.

When prejudice has taken deep root in the mind, it is by no means easy to limit its dominion. It should seem, that nothing in the present constitution of the Bible Society is viewed by Dr. Marsh with entire satisfaction. New model the institution, and give it a fresh dress, and then perhaps he might be induced to adopt what, in its present form, I suppose he considers as a spurious offspring of religious zeal. I observe, with regret, that even on such a subject as that of missionaries, he can find matter for invidious comparison, and for censure of the principles of the advocates of the Bible Society.

In "one respect," says Dr. Marsh, (*Inquiry*, p. 69), "the ancient Bible Society is much better calculated to promote Christianity among heathens, than the modern Society. For the latter is rather a *preparatory* society; it prepares the way for the exertion of missionaries, by supplying them with Bibles in various languages. But no missionary can be *employed* by the (Bible) Society." . . . "Now the former Society not only *can*, but really does employ missionaries for the propagation of the Gospel, and would increase their numbers with an augmentation of its funds." Here I am compelled

to take notice, that in an important concern, where two things are necessary for the attainment of a good purpose, a person of candour, especially if zealous for the extension of evangelical knowledge, would scarcely have stopped to inquire, which of the two was the more efficacious, or deserved the preference. Well convinced that the presence of the Bible, in a language intelligible to the heathens, was at least as indispensable a provision as that of the instructor who is to open its contents and to enforce them, he would not only rejoice that the two Societies concurred in the glorious and truly Christian enterprise, but would have a peculiar satisfaction in reflecting how the very circumstance—namely—want of funds, that impeded the progress of the pious designs of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, was removed or certainly much relieved by the Bible Society, which, possessing ampler funds, and confining its operations to a single object, is thereby enabled to furnish Bibles, when called for, to the missionaries, without increasing the expenses of the Society that employs them. All this, it is very true, implies that the two Societies should have a good understanding with each other, and act in concert; and Dr. Marsh will do well to consider how far his publications have tended to promote this harmonious and truly Christian spirit.

Indeed, to hope for such a friendly and benevolent co-operation, must be altogether a vain expectation, if what Dr. Marsh says be true, that we think “nothing more is requisite for conversion to Christianity, than the simple operations of our own

body." "I KNOW, indeed," says he, "that the advocates of the modern Society THINK nothing more is requisite for conversion, than the simple operations of their own body." Inquiry, p. 61.

How Dr. Marsh comes TO KNOW so much of the thoughts of the advocates of the Bible Society, I am at a loss to conceive. I am one of those advocates, and I do not think so; and further, there is not a single advocate of the Bible Society, who, to my knowledge or belief, thinks so. At the same time, if any of them have said, that in some, perhaps in several instances, the diligent perusal of the holy Scriptures alone may have availed, under the influence of the operation of the Holy Spirit, to produce in humble minds an understanding of all the leading doctrines of the Gospel quite sufficient for practical purposes, this would, I own, be a position which I should not be disposed to controvert. It is a position perfectly consistent with the sentiment, that, in general, missionaries as well as Bibles, are requisite for the propagation of the Gospel. Some few exceptions do not make void this general truth, which depends on reasons so obvious, that I need not detain the reader with a statement of them. It may not, however, be improper to observe, that among those obvious reasons, I do not reckon as one, that which Dr. Marsh has produced, for believing that missionaries are requisite for the propagation of the Gospel. He informs us (Inquiry, p. 61), that we have the authority of St. Paul for believing that a preacher is requisite for this purpose; alluding doubtless to these words, "How shall they call on him in whom they

have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a *preacher*?"\*

Here the only question is respecting the meaning of the term Preacher; and, to me, Dr. Marsh appears entirely to misconstrue the passage. The Apostle, as I conceive, does not intend, in this argument, to lay any stress on the precise mode of communicating the saving knowledge of the Gospel; but chiefly to point out the difference between the situation of those who had no opportunities of knowing, receiving, and depending upon, the Divine Saviour, and those who were favoured with that inestimable benefit. Men could not believe in Christ, unless, in some way or other, his Gospel was made known to them. In regard to the term *preach*, let any one observe how it is used by the *same Apostle* in another place, "Moses of old time hath in every city them that *preach* him, being *read* in the synagogue every Sabbath day †."

On the whole, I cannot but think that Dr. Marsh's representation of the sentiments of the advocates of the Bible Society, respecting the means requisite for the conversion of heathens, is very exceptionable.

But besides the passages in Dr. Marsh's Address and Inquiry, which contain attacks on the church members of the Bible Society, as being deficient in attachment to the Liturgy, and as endangering the Establishment, I observe, that the author of these publications frequently uses a peculiar method of impressing a conviction that the objections to the

\* Rom. x. 14.

† Acts xv. 21.

Bible Society have in fact already produced their effect, and that the points in dispute are now settled beyond all controversy.

The method I allude to, consists in conveying, under the shelter of a position harmless in itself, and such as no person would call in question, an indirect but violent insinuation of the mischievous tendency of the operations of the Bible Society. An example will best illustrate my meaning.

“A moderate increase,” says Dr. Marsh, *Inq.* p. 68, “in the influence of a society which is calculated to *support* the church, must be better than a great increase in the influence of a society” (meaning the Bible Society) “*which tends to UNDERMINE it.*” Here, who perceives not the sting in the tail of this sentence; which, however, is the less apt to be suspected, and is the better fitted to do its business effectually, on account of the easy, undesigning, imposing manner in which it seems to be introduced?

Again; “If,” says he, “our own church . . . professes Christianity in its purest form, the DOWNFALL of such a church would be an irreparable loss\*.” . . . . . This is doubtless a very important truth, and I regret that it should be made the vehicle of a heavy and unjust *insinuation* against any of the members of the Bible Society.

I will not detain my reader with the many instances of this kind which might be produced. It is a species of management to be learnt, as I suppose, in the school of controversy; and although, in

\* Address, in the Appendix.

the scale of just reasoning it is not to be estimated at a feather's weight, it is nevertheless calculated to leave injurious impressions on the minds of the unwary. When the ear is perpetually stunned with an unfounded cry of danger to the church, the controversy ceases to preserve the character of a sober and dispassionate investigation. Ingenuous minds which have not much leisure for such inquiries, are hereby kept in a state of continual alarm respecting mischiefs to be apprehended from they know not what quarter.

All I request, therefore, is, that in approaching this important question concerning the extensive dissemination of the holy Scriptures, — obvious and simple in the highest degree, according to my views, — excessively complicated and abstruse, according to those of Dr. Marsh, — the mind may not be previously made up, nor the judgment already biased to a determined opposition. Nothing short of such a predetermined bias can explain to me how any person should persuade himself to infer, either that it was wise in Dr. Marsh to irritate the dissenters by venting his unreasonable suspicions and conjectures; or that it was just towards his brethren of the church to represent a large portion of them as ill-disposed towards their Prayer-book, and as thereby endangering the very existence of the Establishment.

I am far from being willing to incur the imputation of being an alarmist; yet I cannot deny that enough has already happened to convince me that the period may be at no great distance, when churchmen, and especially the clergy, may be call-

ed upon to give their testimony to the excellence of the contents of their Prayer-book under very different circumstances from the present.

For example ; if a love of novelty should prevail to such an extent, as nearly to extinguish all respect and veneration for old establishments ; if the season should arrive when, by steadily adhering to the good statutes and ordinances of our forefathers, there should be much to lose and nothing to gain ;—then indeed would be most severely tried the sincerity of our attachment to the religion we profess : then might we distinguish those who, at the hazard of their reputation and their preferment, were ready to stand up in defence of those doctrines of their Prayer-book (that is, in effect, of their Bible) which constitute the very essence of Protestantism, from those whose temporising principles, had enabled them to mould their Protestantism into any convenient shape which the turbulence or mutability of the times might seem to require.

There is, however, a strong consolation of which the most inauspicious events cannot deprive me, viz. that I have contributed my best efforts to remove all impediments and obstructions to the diffusion of the knowledge of the Scriptures, and to produce a cordial co-operation for this purpose among Christians of all denominations ; and that, although the apprehension of saying unpleasant things is often a very great temptation to the suppression of truth, I have, nevertheless, from a deep sense of the importance of the case, had the resolution to lay open such defects in the reasonings of

Dr. Marsh, the principal objector to the Bible Society, as I know it is impossible to defend.

The requisite attention to this subject, although it has interrupted the progress of a work the speedy execution of which is near my heart, will not however be found entirely useless, even in that respect. The researches I have recently made into the history of the Liturgy, and of the Puritans, have led to the observation of several important materials which will enrich the sixth volume of the History of Christ, and illuminate the glorious reformation in England. The authentic facts are abundant, and, when exhibited in a well digested connection, will prove with how wise and just a spirit of discrimination our excellent reformers retained the sound parts of the Romish ritual, and rejected those which were the corrupt and idolatrous traditions of fallible men.

Should it be the will of a good Providence to grant me health and perseverance to bring this History down to the present times, the rise and progress of the Bible Society will supply a subject of most interesting narrative; and although the relation of the extraordinary objections it has had to encounter, as well as of the many other difficulties it has had to surmount, will prove an ungrateful task for the historian, yet the triumphs of its successes, and the brilliancy of its achievements, cannot fail to operate on his mind as a powerful encouragement to disregard any fragments of prejudice and hostility which may still be supposed to remain against a Society which steadily perseveres in its purpose of dispersing the pure Word of God. Happy, how-

ever, would it be for the honour of the cause of God, happy for the credit of the religion of his Son, if both parties should learn to improve in Christian charity and moderation:—if, on the one hand, the advocates of the Bible Society should learn to bear their successes with a grateful tranquillity and decorum; and, on the other, their adversaries should set an impressive example of a pacific disposition and of Christian good will.

The historian is determined at least to indulge the flattering hope,—that whenever he shall have to recount these transactions, there will then be found a good understanding among the parties which, at present, are but too plainly in a state of opposition and strife;—that both sides, without any diminution of attachment to their respective Societies, will have resolved, in some way or other, to unite in the mutual exercise of good offices on that common ground which it is impossible that both should not approve, the dispersion of the holy Scriptures. He fairly confesses,—that in the prospect of recording the annals of the year 1812, he sees matter for rejoicing with exceeding great joy. In that very year, when men's hearts almost every where were failing them, it pleased Almighty God to raise up a spirit in Russia to give an effectual check to the boundless ambition of a cruel and impious Despot; and be it had in everlasting remembrance, that the Emperor of Russia, in the very same year, and immediately after his great successes against the Disturber of Europe, sanctioned the formation of a Bible Society at Petersburg\*.

\* The PLAN, MEMORIAL, and REGULATIONS for a BIBLE SOCIETY having been submitted to his MAJESTY the EMPE-

It is now time that I should leave these observations to the judgment of candid and impartial readers, and to the blessing of that BEING whose sacred Word I ardently wish to see dispersed throughout every part of the globe. With the late Bishop Horsley, I believe that "every sentence of the Bible is from God, and that every man is interested in the meaning of it;" — I think also that Scripture language is most admirably accommodated to common apprehensions. The Word of God which goeth forth out of his mouth shall not return unto him void but shall accomplish that which HE pleases, and shall prosper in the thing whereto he sends it\*. This declaration is, to my mind, a most encouraging inducement to dismiss at once all fanciful conjectures that may be started concerning the dispersion of the Scriptures "which are able to make" men "wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus †."

It is the constant prayer of a churchman, that the good Lord may deliver him "in the hour of death and in the day of judgment;" and I have observed, that men whose established reputation for

ROR of RUSSIA, he was pleased to honour the same with his approbation; and on the 14th January last (the day on which the Russian forces crossed the Vistula), the IMPERIAL UKASE for the ESTABLISHMENT OF A BIBLE SOCIETY was issued. On the 23d a meeting was held at the house of Prince GALITZIN, Minister of Religion, when the Society was formally established; and Prince Galitzin was elected President, and the Vice-presidents and Committee nominated. The meeting convened for this purpose was composed of persons of the highest rank and of all descriptions of Christians. LAUS DEO.

\* Isaiah lv. 11.

† 2 Tim. iii. 15.

talents and piety effectually repels the most distant suspicion of enthusiasm, have had their serious attention drawn, during the agitation of this great question, to those awful moments in which the distinction of churchmen and dissenters shall be no more ; and have expressed their conviction that they will then be the least disposed to repent of having supported the Bible Society. It would be great presumption in me to rank myself with such characters in any point of view, except my entire agreement with them that when the innumerable partialities and prejudices which serve to delude mankind in this imperfect state shall completely vanish, or shrink into their just dimensions, the recollection of having been a friend and not an adversary of the Bible Society will afford me a vivid satisfaction, without any apprehension of blame for having been too zealous in promoting the dissemination of the Word of God.

The first part of the paper is devoted to a general  
 consideration of the subject. It is shown that the  
 results of the present investigation are in complete  
 agreement with those obtained by other authors.  
 The second part is devoted to a detailed  
 description of the apparatus used in the  
 present investigation. It is shown that the  
 apparatus is capable of measuring the  
 rate of reaction with an accuracy of  
 one per cent. The results of the  
 present investigation are given in  
 Table I. It is seen that the rate of  
 reaction increases with increasing  
 temperature and decreasing  
 concentration of the reactants.  
 The third part of the paper is devoted to  
 a discussion of the results. It is shown  
 that the results are in complete  
 agreement with the theory proposed  
 by other authors. The fourth part  
 is devoted to a summary of the  
 results and a few concluding  
 remarks.

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# A P P E N D I X.

## I.

AN ADDRESS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE SENATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE; OCCASIONED BY THE PROPOSAL TO INTRODUCE IN THIS PLACE AN AUXILIARY BIBLE SOCIETY.

WE have at present *two* very extensive *Bible Societies*, the one founded in 1699, the other in 1804. *Both* of our Archbishops and *all* our Bishops (with the Prince Regent at the head) are members of the former: *neither* of the two Archbishops, and only a *small* proportion of the Bishops, are members of the latter. The members of the former, now amounting to about seven thousand, are exclusively *Churchmen*, no one being admitted to it without testimony of his attachment to the Constitution, as well in Church as in State. The members of the latter are much more numerous than those of the former; but they consist of *Churchmen and Dissenters* indiscriminately. The two Societies *agree* in the very laudable object of distributing Bibles both at home and abroad, though the number of Bibles distributed by the latter, especially abroad, greatly exceeds the number distributed by the former. For not only are the funds of the latter much superior to those of the former, but those funds are employed in the distribution of Bibles *only*, whereas the funds of the former are employed partly on Bibles, partly on Prayer-books,

and partly on Religious Tracts, which are in unison with the doctrine and discipline of the Established Church.

From this short statement it appears, that the former, or the *ancient* Society, is not only a *Bible Society*, but likewise (what the other is *not*) a *Church-of-England* Society. With the former it is an invariable rule, in promoting Christian Knowledge, to keep in view the doctrines, which the members of the Society believe and maintain. Especially where the Church of England is established, they consider it as *their* duty to promote Christianity, not under *any* form, but under that particular form, which, above every other, they are *pledged* to support, which alone is the *tenure* of ecclesiastical and even of civil preferment. In conformity with that rule, the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge (the *ancient* Bible Society) distributes, in its home circulation, as well the *Liturgy* as the *Bible*: for, though in the spirit of true Protestantism, it acknowledges the Bible as the only *fountain* of religious truth, yet, it knows from the experience of all ages, that the waters of that fountain will be clear or turbid, according to the channel into which they are drawn. And as the members of the Society *believe* (though without reproach to those whose belief is different) that the doctrines of the Liturgy are *correctly* derived from the Bible, they consider it as their indispensable duty, to unite the one with the other. Indeed uniformity of doctrine can never be produced without an adherence to this rule: for *every* Christian party either finds, or *supposes* that it finds, its peculiar doctrines in the Bible.—But this salutary rule, so necessary to promote uniformity, so desirable, therefore, by every true Churchman, *cannot* be observed by the *modern* Bible Society; for such a rule would not only be contrary to its present avowed object, but absolutely inadmissible from the very *constitution* of the Society. For it not only consists of Dissenters as well as of Churchmen; but an *equality* of power and interest, between the two parties, is the avowed *basis* on which this modern Society is built.

It is true, that those members of it, who are attached to the Church, may so far correct the evil, that when they have obtained Bibles for distribution from this Society, they may *of themselves* add Prayer-books and Religious Tracts in unison with the established faith, and that this correction will be rendered easy, if (as frequently happens) they are members also of the *other* Society. But, to say nothing of the question, whether it is not more adviseable for Churchmen to adhere *wholly* to a Society, which, in proportion as its numbers increase, will supply their wants without the necessity of correction, the dissenting members have the same resource with their brethren of the Establishment, it being equally in *their* power to distribute Bibles in company with such Religious Tracts, as favour their *own* opinions, and are always at hand, whenever they are wanted. The principle of *equality*, therefore, on which the modern Bible Society is formed, and which places Christians of every denomination on the same level, is upon the whole preserved; and in this *constitutional equality* there is evident danger, that the pre-eminence of the *established religion* should be gradually forgotten, and finally lost.

It is far from my intention to be unfriendly or disrespectful towards those, whose religious opinions are different from my own. Though sincerely attached to the Established Church, and desirous of promoting its welfare by all fair and honourable means, I fully recognise the *natural*, and in this country, *legal* right of private judgement in matters of religion; and I should be ever ready both to deplore and to oppose every effort to abridge the freedom of religious opinion, or religious worship, which is exercised in this country by dissenters of every description. But though I respect religious opinions in general, however different from my own, and respect them *because* they are religious opinions, yet I deeply lament that such diversity exists, not only because the greater the diversity the more abundant is the error, but because *religious* dissension. in consequence of our mixed con-

stitution, is closely connected with *political* dissension. Religious dissension therefore in this country becomes a *political* evil; and as such should not be *encouraged*, though dissenters of every description should for conscience sake be *tolerated*. This is the true line of distinction, which every Churchman should invariably observe; and I am convinced that every candid dissenter, so far from resenting this open and honest avowal, will do justice to the purity of my intentions. Indeed every man, who loves his country, will be ready to adopt a principle, which is calculated to promote political good, without producing religious evil.

Let us apply this principle to the modern Bible Society, as far as relates to the conduct of *churchmen*: for nothing which is here said is intended as a restraint on the conduct of those, who *dissent* from the Established Church. They have full liberty to distribute Bibles, either alone, or accompanied with such Religious Tracts, as they may think proper: and, if a Society, consisting *solely* of dissenters, had been formed for this purpose, the members of the Establishment would have had no right, either to interfere, or even to complain of it. *Such* a Society would have been perfectly consistent with those principles of toleration, which are happily established in these realms. But it is certainly a question for consideration among *churchmen*, whether it is prudent to *augment* the power of such a Society, by throwing into its scale the weight of the *Establishment*. If churchmen give the *whole* of their influence to the *ancient* Bible Society, they *retain* the strength of the Established Church within its *own* channel, and thus contribute to *preserve* it. If they divide their influence, and still more, if they give it wholly to the *modern* Bible Society, they *divert* the strength of the Establishment into a *foreign* channel, where the current *may*, at least, be turned against them: In supporting the *ancient* Bible Society they have ample security that they are supporting at the same time the *Established Church*: but in supporting the *modern* Bible Society, they have *no* such security, either in its constitution, or

in the general friendship of its members. It is true, that the professed *object* of the modern Bible Society is to distribute Bibles without note or comment, and, in this country, according to the authorised version. But were it *certain*, that, as the power of this Society increases, the present avowed object would still be retained, we can have no guarantee that *other* objects, inimical to the church, will not, in time, be associated with the *main* object. The experience of only seven years, under circumstances where circumspection has been peculiarly necessary, is a poor ground of consolation. The dissenters, however well affected in *other* respects, *cannot* be well affected to the church, or they would not be dissenters from it. Their *interests*, in respect to religion, are different from ours, and therefore *must* lead them a *different way*: and though we know from experience, that they can combine for the purpose of *opposing* the church, it would be contrary both to experience, and to the common principles of human action, to expect their co-operation, if the object in view was the *interest* of the church. If we apply then the principle above-mentioned, that churchmen should *tolerate*, but not *encourage* dissenters, we shall find in it a strong argument against the promotion of the modern Bible Society. For, independently of the reason above-stated, that churchmen should unite the *Liturgy* with the Bible, and thus prevent its misapplication to *other* doctrines, the very *constitution* of the modern Bible Society gives an importance to the dissenting interest, which otherwise it would never have obtained, and consequently brings a fresh accession of danger to the Established Church. That churchmen, by their association with dissenters in this modern Bible Society, increase both the political and the religious importance of the latter, is too obvious to require illustration. And that this increase of influence *may* hereafter be applied in a manner not contemplated by those, who now inadvertently promote it, is likewise a position which cannot be controverted. But by increasing the influence of the *ancient* Bible Society, we neces-

sarily increase the influence of the *Established Church*: for the *ancient Bible Society* is one of its firmest bulwarks. On the one hand, therefore, our encouragement of the *ancient Society must* contribute to the welfare of the *Established Church*, while, on the other hand, our encouragement of the *modern Society* not only contributes *nothing* to it in preference to *other churches*, but *may* contribute even to its dissolution. Now if we injure, or even neglect to support *our own church*, we shall hardly make compensation by our distribution of Bibles in *foreign parts*. If *our own church*, as we have reason to believe, professes Christianity in its *purest form*, the downfall of *such a church* would be an irreparable loss, not to *this nation only*, but to the *whole world*.

Under these circumstances, I respectfully submit the question to the consideration of this University, *which* of the two Bible Societies is most entitled to encouragement on the part of a body, whose peculiar duty (a duty so nobly displayed on a late occasion) is the support of the *Established Church*.

HERBERT MARSH,  
*Margaret Professor of Divinity.*

Cambridge, Nov. 25, 1811.

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## II.

SPEECH OF THE DEAN OF CARLISLE, AT THE MEETING  
HELD AT CAMBRIDGE, ON THE 12TH OF DECEMBER, 1811,  
FOR THE PURPOSE OF FORMING AN AUXILIARY BIBLE  
SOCIETY.

My Lord and Gentlemen, after hearing the able speech of the Noble Earl in the Chair, and the very satisfactory statements contained in it, as also the several eloquent and argumentative speeches which have followed, it must be ob-

vious to your Lordship, and this whole assembly, that there can be little cause for me to say more than that I do most sincerely and most heartily concur in the same sentiments which your Lordship, at the opening of this business, placed in so luminous a point of view, and which have been so powerfully supported, and received with such unanimous approbation.

I was perfectly aware, my Lord, from the very first agitation of this business, that it could not be either necessary or expedient for me at any public meeting to enter into a minute detail concerning the constitution of the Bible Society, or its proceedings. On those points much better information, than any I could pretend to give, was to be had from the numerous documents which have been printed and every where circulated. The subject has been thoroughly weighed and sifted; and able and distinct answers given to every objection which the most suspicious imagination could devise. Moreover, if any further light should be wanting, I knew that several gentlemen would not fail to be present, who, from their steady zeal, indefatigable activity, and long experience in the good cause, are admirably qualified to give prompt and satisfactory answers to every question.

Still, however, there were a few topics which I had conceived might, with sufficient propriety, be briefly touched upon by myself, viewed as a member of the Established Church, and as a Head of a College—especially as a late Address to our Senate, by a Learned Professor of Divinity, had drawn the public attention to the consideration of the objects of the Bible Society.

Now, even these topics also have been anticipated this morning; and so very ably anticipated, that if any one is disposed to suspect a mixture of ostentatious desire in my mind to be among the foremost in the discussions of this day, such a person must conclude that I may be mortified not a little on finding all the materials which I had intended to employ, used up, and better applied than I could have applied them.

It will be said, the Dean of Carlisle should have made his intention to be present sooner known; for, in fact, all the arrangements for the orderly proceedings of the meeting were settled before it was understood that probably I should be here.

I mention this circumstance, my Lord, for no other purpose but to afford myself an opportunity of introducing the real reason of my doubt and hesitation respecting my attendance at this most respectable assembly.

Your Lordship has heard that this measure originated in the zeal and activity of a number of ingenuous undergraduates, who discovered a great desire to see instituted in this place an Auxiliary Bible Society. The very moment I heard of their design, I saw the danger that must arise, if such a plan and its execution should remain in their hands. If undergraduates, persons in *statu pupillari*, should proceed to hold meetings and choose delegates, such proceedings, I thought, would be a just subject of alarm and of animadversion, however pure and laudable their intentions might be.

On this occasion, however, those of the undergraduates who stood forward, conducted themselves in the most unexceptionable manner. They stated their object to several persons of considerable standing and experience; and among others I was one, to whom they were anxious to explain their views and wishes. In particular, they signified to me at Queen's College their earnest desire to have the business of instituting an Auxiliary Bible Society taken out of their own hands, and transferred, as they expressed it with great modesty, to the hands of their superiors.

I am sorry to trespass so long on your Lordship's patience, and that of this assembly; but there are two points on which I judge it extremely important that I should give my decided and unqualified testimony. The first respects these ingenuous youths themselves: I do affirm, that nothing could exceed the modesty of their deportment and the moderation exemplified in their whole conduct. I affirm, that after more

than forty years' residence in this University, during which period I have seldom been an inattentive observer of what was passing; and after having noticed a variety of popular meetings of undergraduates; yet at no time do I remember any one instance where the zeal and fervour of youth was so entirely under the dominion of good sense, and so completely tempered with prudence and discretion.

The other point to which I am to testify, respects myself.—Perfectly docile as the undergraduates shewed themselves to be, I still felt the most imperious necessity laid upon me on no account to promote their purposes, till I was convinced there did not exist even a *germe* among them which might possibly grow into any thing like a disorderly combination. If they were to speak out, they would probably own that they had thought I returned them but a cold answer at Queen's College. For though my heart was with them, as to the grand object of establishing an Auxiliary Society; and though it was well known that I was to be depended on for a steady adherence to the principle of the Parent Society; yet were there many circumstances which called loudly on me to be most particularly careful to give no ground whatever for its being said (what, after all, it is far from being improbable will be said), that one Head of a College, secretly or openly, directly or indirectly, had been active in encouraging seditious and turbulent spirits. I frankly own, my Lord, that for some days I did seriously hesitate whether it might be prudent in me to appear at all in this meeting. I am not sure that I was not too much alive to suspicion and jealousy; but whether it be true or not that a disposition to be over cautious—the result of age, and of having experienced a great deal of misrepresentation—carried me too far, and kept me too long in suspense, it certainly is true that nothing but an explicit information, and a full conviction of the truth of that information—viz. that there exists not among the undergraduates at this moment any thing like an improper combination, or any thing that ought to create a suspicion of

such a combination; a conviction that if there has existed among them a symptom of a tendency to any thing of this sort (which, however, I find absolutely denied), it is now finally quashed and annihilated;—nothing, my Lord, short of such a conviction could have removed my scruples, or induced me to countenance this meeting, under the present circumstances.

No one, I trust, will be so uncandid and disingenuous as to construe what I now say into an ostentatious exaggeration of the importance of my attending or not attending; all I desire, is to close up every avenue to misrepresentation; and this point being settled, I shall never scruple to repeat with peculiar delight, that it is to the everlasting honour of the undergraduates that the ardour of youth, in the best of causes, has been directed by the most signal and extraordinary spirit of wisdom and moderation.

In regard to the grand object of this assembly, as well as to the opposition which has been made to it, I may be very brief.

My Lord, it is my entire persuasion, that the history of mankind, since the days of the Apostles, does not afford any instance of such numerous and animated exertions for the distribution of the Word of God as have been made during the last seven or eight years.—The sacred flame—I will run the hazard of being denominated enthusiastic or superstitious, while our Bibles teach us, that the preparation of the heart is from the Lord, and while I read in our Liturgy that from God all holy desires, good counsels, and just works do proceed—I say, the sacred flame of zeal and spirit for spreading the holy Scriptures among the nations has pervaded all ranks and orders of Christians; and I rejoice in contemplating this mark of the Divine goodness, that God hath put it into our minds to be the instruments of spreading the knowledge of the kingdom of his Son. Therefore, while others excite needless alarms and indulge unwarrantable suspicions, let us continue our endeavours to put Bibles into the hands of those who

have them not, resting assured that every calculation, which concludes against the expediency of our doing so, is in some part of it undoubtedly erroneous.

My Lord and Gentlemen, it is with pain and regret that I am compelled to allow that there are certainly persons of great learning, rank, and respectability in general, who not only do not approve of our proceedings, but also persuade themselves that they see great danger in them. The Author of a late Address to our Senate is one of those persons; and though his Address is but short, it contains imputations, which every member of our Establishment, who subscribes to the Bible Society, is called upon to repel.

When I left London, yesterday in the afternoon, I knew not whether the heavy charges imputed to us who are of the Establishment, and who contribute also to the support of the Bible Society, might not be brought forward and enforced at this meeting: I therefore prepared myself, with the aforesaid Address in my hand, to make such concise remarks upon it, paragraph by paragraph, as occurred to me on the perusal of it. But judging from the perfect unanimity which prevails in this numerous assembly, I now think it better to reserve myself on this subject to another opportunity, when, either through the press or otherwise, I may, if necessary and expedient, take into consideration the soundness of the arguments, the candour and Christian charity of the charges and insinuations, contained in the Address of the very learned and respectable Author.

My Lord, though I am under no anxiety respecting the impression which this Address may be supposed to make on the mind of any one who reads it, and notwithstanding the resolution I have just expressed of remarking very little on the contents of it at present, I must request leave to trespass for a few moments on the patience of the meeting, with one or two concise observations.

In this Address it is plain that every member of the Established Church who subscribes to the Bible Society is

treated as a person who may, in so doing, probably enough be contributing to the very dissolution of our ecclesiastical establishment. Now it must be allowed, that so heavy and tremendous a charge ought not to have been made on slight ground; and posterity, I think, will scarcely believe, that the foundation of this charge, that is, that the dreadful fault which we have committed, is, that we do our utmost to distribute throughout the world the authorized version of the Bible, unaccompanied with any other book, in the languages which the inhabitants of the respective nations can understand.

This is the sole object of the Society to which we belong; a society which candour will admit, and prejudice cannot deny, has done more in this view, during the short period of seven years, than all the societies in Christendom have done in a century.

The term authorized version is emphatical, because extremely important: it is so important in my mind, that whenever the Society shall begin to publish their Bibles with glosses, comments, and alterations of their own, that is, whenever they shall distribute unauthorized versions, I pledge myself that I will instantly withdraw my name from them.

But, my Lord, I will not dissemble that this is far from a complete statement of the grounds of the objections of our adversaries. There appears to be in their minds a corner in which resides the principle of a rooted aversion to any connection in religious concerns with Christians of any denomination, if they dissent from the Established Church. By permitting dissenters to join with us in this excellent work, we are said to throw weight into their scale, we desert the Establishment, we encourage and promote defection from it.—This, this is that solid nucleus of dislike and hostility; the nucleus, which, after enveloping itself, like the comet, in much nebulous obscurity, terminates in a fiery tail of portentous magnitude.

My Lord, I bring forward distinctly the objection that is made to us on account of our connection with dissenters,

because, on all occasions of contrariety of sentiment, I feel almost an instinctive aversion to vain and fruitless contentions concerning the outsides of questions. On all occasions I wish to meet fairly the real points in dispute, and to grapple with them : and so in the present instance. I am convinced that if several of our most respectable adversaries were now present, and amongst them I may well reckon the learned Author of this Address, they would say, that they heartily joined in many of the handsome things that had been said this morning respecting the extraordinary exertions of the Bible Society ; and that, in translating the Bible, and dispersing it into foreign parts, we had done well ; but that we marred every thing by having formed an amicable junction with the dissenters from the ecclesiastical establishment of this country.

Here, my Lord, though the promise I have already made not to trespass on your Lordship's time forbids me at this moment of perfect unanimity to produce any unnecessary detail of argument, I must not sit down without expressing my complete dissent from the principle, which seems to pervade almost every part of the learned Professor's Address now in my hands. The principle of the learned Author, I say again, seems to be, to have nothing to do with dissenters, in any concern which is connected with religion. Now my principle is *toto cælo* different. Lamenting their dissent as much as any member of our Establishment can do, and wishing prosperity to the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge as sincerely and as earnestly as any member of that society can wish it, still I would go hand in hand with the dissenters as far as I can. It is only when I cannot help it that I leave them. I do not dread the dissenters, as if they were infected with a contagion ; but I cordially rejoice to shake hands with them on all points where we do agree ; nor do I see any inconsistency in maintaining a friendly intercourse with them on such points, and at the same time in exercising a jealous attention over them in the points where

we separate from each other. And this I take to be "the true line of distinction for churchmen." Further, I am deeply convinced that the dangers of dissent, and even dissent itself, are best encountered by conciliation; whereas both dissent and its dangers are strengthened by irritation, opposition, and exclusion.

Your Lordship knows very well that I am one of those who think that the Roman Catholic question of Emancipation leads to considerations and inquiries of immense magnitude; yet whatever circumspection I may think requisite on that head, I should never have any scruple to give a Bible to a Roman Catholic: I should never scruple to join with a Roman Catholic in promoting the distribution of Bibles to others. In fact, I should look on the dispersion of the Bible and the free use of it, to be the likeliest way in the world to bring about a more complete reformation from Popery. History teaches us that it was by garbling the Bible, by keeping the Bible out of the hands of the people, by forbidding translations of the Bible into intelligible languages, that Popery was enabled so long to keep its ground among the nations. The great Saxon Reformer, Martin Luther, was so well aware of this, that while in the retirement of a secret asylum to escape the Papal fires which at that time were on the very eve of being lighted for his destruction, he employed the hours of his privacy with indefatigable industry in translating the Bible into the German language.

My Lord, the learned Author of this Address is too well versed in Ecclesiastical History, to have forgotten that for some time before the death of that eminent supporter of the blessed Reformation, the Elector of Saxony, Frederick the Wise, it was an afflictive consideration to the mind of that truly pious and conscientious Prince, to reflect that the word of God had not its free course in Germany.

I have but one word to add.—It appears to me, that to maintain, that Churchmen cannot safely join with Dissenters in distributing the authorised version of the Bible, amounts to

this declaration, that we can safely join with them in nothing of a religious nature;—a position surely not of easy digestion in a country where Christianity has produced, in any considerable degree, its genuine effects of universal disinterested benevolence.

Ever since the first agitation of this business, I have from time to time, and with all the care of which I am capable, examined the foundation of that apprehension of danger on which so much stress is laid; and I am compelled to avow that an intercourse and an agreement with the dissenters, of which both the basis and the superstructure, of which both the beginning and the end, and all the intermediate parts, are the dissemination of the holy Scriptures, is in itself utterly void of all reasonable objection;—and that, so far from widening the breach between us and the dissenters, such an intercourse tends to lessen it, and bring us nearer together; while, on the other hand, an excessive spirit of jealousy and distrust and suspicion has a tendency to irritate the temper, to exasperate animosities, and increase disunion in the country.

There is not any one member of our Church Establishment, who entertains a more exalted idea of the excellence of our Liturgy, and of our Prayer-book in general, than I do, and I heartily wish that Christians of all denominations could be persuaded to adopt the use of it; but as this is not to be expected, while dissenters of several denominations adhere to their present system of ceremonies and of church government, I would not represent the distribution of *the Bible alone* as dangerous to the Establishment, unless accompanied with the *corrective* of a Prayer-book of the Church of England.

My Lord—Our Liturgy itself owes its establishment to the free use of the Bible among the people; and I greatly mistake, if, among the numerous errors of the Church of Rome, there exists a more dangerous tenet, than that the holy Scriptures themselves must be tried at the bar of the traditions of fallible men.

The late printed Address to the members of this university would justify me in making many other observations on the different parts of it; but I forbear for the reason already given. If that should appear, which at present does not appear,—viz. that the author of it has gained, in any material degree, the public mind to believe, that we who subscribe to the Bible Society are unfaithful members of our church establishment,—it may then be necessary to defend ourselves by doing away his misrepresentations; again, if the members of the society itself should discover a disposition to depart from their avowed principle of printing the Bible without note or comment, we may then unite to check that disposition, or even proceed to the length of quitting the society entirely. Lastly, if other objects inimical to the church should indeed, as is intimated, appear to be associated with its main object, is it to be supposed that the artful, politic dissenters will be all awake, and the simple, honest, harmless, unsuspecting Church of England men fast asleep?

On the whole, and in conclusion, I am compelled to observe, that in this short Address to the university of Cambridge there appears to be such an accumulation of unkind intimations, suspicions, and conjectures (all of which I am to suppose were intended to have their effect), as call for much greater confidence than I have yet learnt to have in the author's ability for judging of the probability of future events.—I must own I do sincerely wish that the spirit which but too evidently pervades almost every part of it, had been more conciliating, and had savoured in general more of that true Christian charity, which hopeth all things.—That holy book, my Lord, the dissemination of which is the glorious object of this meeting, is itself the real cure of all dissent and all contentions that are not innocent; and it is my firm belief, that, if all persons who receive the word of God in sincerity, by no means excluding Roman Catholics, or the members of our own communion, did but read and study their Bibles more constantly, and with more devout care and application,

and with more of a direct view to improve the heart and correct the practice, Christians of every denomination, without exception, would approach much nearer to one another than they now do ; would actually coincide, or nearly so, in most essentials ; and in regard to subordinate matters, they would exercise so much mutual kindness and forbearance towards each other, as would almost annihilate the evil of any remaining difference of sentiment.

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