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*curious and valuable work contains
both the parts and rather scarce*

THE

TRIAL OF SPIRITS,

of Lowley's BOTH IN *Book Hampton*
TEACHERS AND HEARERS. *Norris Book,*

WHEREIN IS HELD FORTH

The Clear Discovery, and Certain Downfal

1846

OF THE

CARNAL & ANTICHRISTIAN
CLERGY OF THESE NATIONS.

TESTIFIED FROM THE WORD OF GOD

TO THE

UNIVERSITY CONGREGATION IN CAMBRIDGE.

By WILLIAM DELL.

WHEREUNTO IS ADDED,

A Plain and Necessary Confutation of divers Gross Errors,

DELIVERED BY

MR. SYDRACH SIMPSON,

IN A SERMON PREACHED TO THE SAME CONGREGATION
AT THE COMMENCEMENT, ANNO 1653.

Wherein, among other things, is declared, that the Universities, according to their present statutes and practices, are not, as he affirmed, answerable to the Schools of the Prophets in the time of the law; but rather to the idolatrous High Places.

And that Human Learning is not a preparation appointed by Christ, either for the right understanding, or right teaching the Gospel.

With a brief Testimony against Divinity Degrees in the Universities.

As also, Luther's Testimony at large upon the whole matter.

And lastly The Right Reformation of Learning, Schools, and Universities, according to the State of the Gospel, and the Light that shines therein.

ALL NECESSARY FOR THE INSTRUCTION AND DIRECTION
OF THE FAITHFUL IN THESE LAST TIMIS.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED BY E. HUNTINGTON, 55, HIGH STREET,
BLOOMSBURY.

1817.



J. INNES, Printer, 61, Wells-street, Oxford-street, London.

TO
ALL THE TRULY FAITHFUL,

THE VERY LITTLE FLOCK OF CHRIST IN THESE NATIONS, NOW DESPISED AND ALMOST WORN OUT, ACCORDING TO THE PROPHECIES, FOR THE WORD OF GOD, AND TESTIMONY WHICH THEY HOLD,

GRACE BE MULTIPLIED UNTO YOU, AND PEACE, FROM GOD OUR FATHER, AND THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, OUR HEAD AND HOPE.

I COULD not choose but distinguish you thus from all the rest of the people of these nations, of what condition or quality soever, seeing God himself hath first done it, having chosen you to himself in Christ, and set you apart for himself, as “a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” And I have chosen to speak this only to you, because you are all taught of God, and have heard and learned from him the truth, as it is in Jesus; and because you have an inward unction from God, whereby you know the truth from error, though it be never so much reproached by carnal christians; and whereby you know error from the truth, though it be never so much exalted and magnified by them. You are those spiritual men who judge all things, because you have received the Word and Spirit of judgment in Christ, from

the Father. Besides, you are the men whom God will use in his greatest and most glorious works, which he hath yet to do in the world, to wit, in the destruction of the kingdom of antichrist, and in the setting up and enlarging the kingdom of Christ; which things are not to be done by the might and power of worldly magistrates, which it may be you have not received, and if you had it would not be helpful here, but by the Spirit of the Lord, which you all have received in some measure. Yea farther, none but you will be contented to live only by faith, and to follow Christ in untrodden paths, and to undertake impossible works to flesh and blood: and none but you will be willing to have the residue of Christ's life and works, and of his sufferings and death, fulfilled in your mortal bodies.

It grieves me much to see so many men as I have known once hopeful in the army, and elsewhere, to be now so full gorged with the flesh of kings, and nobles, and captains, and mighty men; that is, with their estates, manors, houses, parks, lands, &c. that they can now be contented to take their ease, and to comply with the world and worldly church, and the teachers thereof, and can persuade themselves, that there is enough done for their time, after it hath fared thus well with them; and can leave the remainder to men that are as plain and mean as themselves were at first, forgetting him who remembered them when they were in low condition. But they that were indeed

righteous among them, are righteous still, and they that were indeed holy, are holy still ; and prosperity hath only slain the fools, as the scriptures speak. But you, christians, are called, chosen, and faithful, and you will still be found with the Lamb on Mount Sion, and with the rest who have his name, and his Father's name written in their foreheads ; and you dare still own the ancient truth, cause and work of Christ, how great disadvantage soever is for the present risen up against it, through the apostacy of carnal christians, the lovers of this world. And you all know, that all that hath been done hitherto by the sword, is but the preparation of Christ's way to his work, and that the work itself is still behind, and to be done by those worthies of the Lord, who love Jesus Christ and his kingdom, and coming, a thousand times better than the present world, and all the best things of it ; yea, than their own lives. Wherefore I advise you all, to whom now I speak, to take heed that you neither drink nor sip of the clergy's cup, which carries in it the wine of the wrath of the fornication of antichrist ; lest having drunk thereof, you fall asleep through the strength of their enchantments, and so are rendered unable to follow Christ any farther : for many powers and magistrates of the world, once hopeful, have been thus overcome and seduced into antichrist's cause against Christ, to their utter ruin in the end. And how have the present clergy, with their most plausible men, attempted some of this present

power; yea, some of the very chiefest and most godly in the army; and have put them into some, that I say not, great danger. Wherefore remember you that word of the Lord spoken by his angel, Rev. xiv. 9, 10, "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture, into the cup of his indignation," &c.

"If any man worship the beast," that is, the antichristian church of the pope and his prelates and clergy, which is called the beast, because of its fierceness and cruelty against the saints: "or his image," that is, the church of the bishops and presbyters, which in a lesser volume, and less letters, doth answer the other, and is directly like it. Whoever shall worship these, that is, highly esteem them for their human learning, and school divinity, and sacredness of their orders, and count them worthy all honour and respect, and worldly maintenance; and also to have power in matters of religion, to allow and determine of doctrine, and to appoint and institute in matters of government: and being worldly powers, do subject themselves, and all the worldly people under them, to these men's religion, authority, doctrine, discipline, &c. Whoever shall thus worship them, or shall "receive his mark;" that is, this principle, that it is lawful to punish and persecute men in matters that merely relate to faith and the

gospel, and this under pretence of the glory of God, and good of christian people ; which is the beast's mark in every age, and under every change of outward form : whoever shall receive this mark " in their forehead," that is, to profess this doctrine only ; " or in their hand," that is, to execute it according to laws, which the nations have been seduced to make to this purpose : " The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation ; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb ; and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever."

Wherefore you faithful ones have great cause to be very well advised in these things, seeing the chief design of antichrist is to seduce the elect ; seeing he hath nobody else in all the world that dare oppose him, or know how to do it, but you : and he knows, if he can prevail with you, all the world besides will follow him headlong, as the Gadarenes swine ran into the sea and were choked.

Now I have adventured, through the inspiration of the Almighty, to undertake openly and plainly against the clergy and universities, which in their present state are the residue of the hour and power of darkness upon the nations ; and the Lord of his grace hath helped me through this work, by his Spirit of counsel and might. And so I have freely and willingly exposed myself for Christ and his

truth's sake, to all the reproaches, slanders, revilings, contradictions, and if their power shall serve, persecutions, of the universities and clergy; and of all those people, high and low, bond and free, who have received their mark, and worship them: choosing rather to suffer with Christ, and with you, his seed, all manner of tribulations, than to reign with them; and much rather embracing christian communion with poor plain husbandmen and tradesmen, who believe in Christ, and have received his Spirit, than with the heads of universities, and highest and stateliest of the clergy, who under a specious form of godliness, do yet live in true enmity and opposition to the gospel.

I do indeed freely acknowledge, that I have often been ready to complain to God in the anguish of my spirit, that he had called me, a very bruised reed, to a more difficult task, in one regard, than either Wickliffe, Huss, or Luther, those strong pillars in the house of God; to wit, because much of the gross body of antichristianism, against which they chiefly engaged, being done away by their ministry, there still remains the cunning and subtle soul and spirit thereof, which yet is all in all in antichrist's kingdom, though it be farther removed from the knowledge and notice of the common sort of christians. And so the mystery of iniquity, is now become more mysterious and deceiving than in their times; and as perfect and bitter enmity against Christ and his Spirit, and the true temple of God, the spiritual church, as

ever was in all their times, doth now prevail under the name of orthodox doctrine, and the reformation of religion, by the late assembly of divines, which the clergy are all now ready to set up, if they could gain the secular arm to strengthen them thereunto, of which now they have greatest hopes, and without which, their religion can find no high place in this world.

Now herein the old mystery of iniquity is renewed amongst these men, that they would have an outward letter and ministry, without the Spirit of Christ, to be the doctrine and ministry of the New Testament, which is the ministration of the Spirit and not of the letter: and would have the secular magistrate to have right and power to enforce men to such a religion, as himself judges true, by the help and counsel of those ministers, which himself judges orthodox: as if some men were able to teach spiritual things, and all to understand them, by natural reason made use of, and improved; which yet these men deny, in terminis, whilst they assert it in the principle. For they will not leave it to the Father, to draw whom he pleaseth to the Son; neither will they leave it to the Spirit to choose what living stones he pleaseth, to build them together to be the habitation of God: but the ecclesiastical state having seduced the temporal, do make them believe, that the magistrate's worldly power, in union with their worldly religion, may make a national church of all that they between themselves please; and may

allow and set up, such a doctrine for orthodox, which these men, who are in academical degrees and ecclesiastical orders, do approve for such: though the Spirit of God in all believers testifies, that these men have not the mind of Christ, but of antichrist, in all they teach, and act, and counsel; in their assemblies, churches, doctrine, ordinances, works, duties, days, times, fastings, thanksgivings, and every thing else. Yet these having the outward carcase or appearance of religion, though destitute of the inward soul of it, which is true faith and the Spirit of God, do cozen not only the meaner people, but the very magistrates of the world, who are glad to hear, that the clergy have given them such high power in the kingdom of Christ, and made them magistrates in both worlds; though indeed, in the end, it be not for the magistrate's advantage, but wholly for the clergy's.

And thus is the mystery of iniquity grown more mysterious now, than heretofore. But this is our comfort and help, that God still causes his light to shine forth proportionably to his people, to discover every new change and form of the mystery of iniquity. And though the mystery of iniquity, in every age, is mysterious enough to cozen all the unbelieving world, though never so wise and learned; yet it is never able to deceive the faithful, who have always sufficient light from God to discover it, and sufficient grace to overcome it.

And now you faithful and beloved ones, to whom I have spoken all this, stand you fast, and depart not from Christ, his word, and work, all which you know in faith, for any good or evil things that may befall you in this short life; but finish in faith and patience, the work which God hath given you to do, in your several places, waiting for the glory which shall be given you at the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ: in whom I remain, though most unworthy,

Your humble and faithful Servant

in the Gospel,

W. D.

THE
TRIAL OF SPIRITS.

1 JOHN IV. 1—6.

“ Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone forth into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God. And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist whereof you have heard, that it should come, and even now already it is in the world. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world hears them. We are of God; he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the Spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.”

IN this scripture we may take notice of these six things.

1. The apostle gives notice to the beloved congregation of spiritual christians, of a great evil risen up in the world, which if not carefully heeded, might occasion some great trouble and

danger to them : “ Many false prophets,” saith he, “ are gone out into the world.”

2. He prescribes them a sufficient remedy against this evil, saying, “ Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God.”

3. That the faithful might be able to make a right judgment of spirits, he gives them one short rule of trial, which yet comprehends in itself all rules : “ Hereby know ye the Spirit of God : every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God ; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God,” &c.

4. He shews them, with whom these false prophets, who have the spirit of antichrist, should not prevail ; to wit, with none of the true children of God. “ Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them ; because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.”

5. He shews them, with whom the false prophets should prevail, to wit, with the world and carnal people ; “ They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.” The world seeking its own things, receives antichrist, and his prophets.

6. He shews, how the spirit of truth and error may be known in the people, as well as in the teachers ; to wit, by the people’s cleaving, either to the teachers of truth, or to the teachers of error. “ We are of God ; he that knoweth God, heareth us ; he that is not of God, heareth not us ; hereby

know we the Spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.”

These six things are held forth to us in this scripture, and they are all very profitable and necessary for the true church to be acquainted withal, especially in these last of the last times. I shall begin with the first: which is,

First Point. The great and dangerous evil of which the apostle gives notice to the church of believers, and that is, The going out of false prophets into the world: “ Many false prophets are gone out into the world.”

And here it is to be noted, that from the very beginning of the world, there have been two seeds or generations of men, very contrary the one to the other, as is evident in Gen. iii. 15, where God saith to the serpent, “ I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed:” so that the serpent hath his seed, as well as the woman her seed. And this was the woman’s curse, to have her sorrows and conceptions multiplied, and to bring forth the serpent’s seed as well as her own, that is, the children or seed of the first blessing; and both these contrary seeds do partake of one and the same common nature or humanity. And one of these seeds are called the sons of God, the other the sons of men, Gen. vi. 4. And both these, being the children of one Adam according to the flesh, are yet distinguished by several spirits, that dwell in them, and inspire them. For the Spirit of God, that is, the spirit of righteous-

ness and truth, doth inspire the one, and these are truly called the children of God, as Paul saith, “As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God:” and the spirit of satan, which is the spirit of wickedness and error, doth inspire the other; and these are truly called the sons of men, who all have sinned, and are deprived of the glory of God.

Now these two different and contrary spirits, which have dwelt in these two distinct seeds, have begun to act presently from the very beginning of the world, each one according to his own nature, and to trade and traffick about mankind, and out of it to bring forth children to themselves, like to themselves in all things; and so one hath endeavoured to beget and bring forth the children of God, and of truth; the other the children of men, and of error. And to this end, the one hath held forth the truth of God, by the true Spirit of God; the other hath held forth error and falsehood, yet as it were the truth. The one hath endeavoured to bring man unto God through true faith and repentance; the other to turn men from God through sin. The one hath sought to work salvation in men, the other destruction.

Now the false spirit hath been the most common in the world, and hath had the greatest opportunities and advantages to multiply itself, seeing it finds the whole world already lying in wickedness, and fully prepared to receive itself. But the true spirit hath been found in very few, and that

from the beginning ; for there have been but few true prophets, who have had the true Spirit, and have spoken the true word, as you may see all along in the scriptures, especially in the times of Elijah and Micaiah. But Christ saith, “ Many false prophets shall arise, and deceive many ;” and Peter saith in his second epistle, “ That as there were false prophets among the people,” that is the Jews, “ so there shall be false doctors and teachers among the christians, who should privily bring in damnable heresies ; and that many should follow their pernicious ways.”

So that as there have been many false prophets from the beginning, so especially in the days of the New Testament ; for the more Christ hath appeared by his Spirit to lead men into truth, the more hath the devil appeared by his spirit to lead men into error, and this is properly called antichrist : for flesh and blood is not antichrist, but a spirit contrary to Christ’s Spirit, that dwells in flesh and blood, and chiefly among those that profess the christian religion ; this is antichrist.

No spirit in the Jews or Gentiles, is properly called antichrist ; but the spirit of satan in false christians appearing as an angel of light, this is antichrist. Before Christ came in the flesh, the devil was an evil spirit, and a liar, and a murderer, and the unclean spirit, and prince of this world ; but he was not properly antichrist, because Christ was not then come in the flesh. The devil was the devil before, and did dwell and work in evil

men; but from the beginning of the christian church he is called antichrist, and that not every where, but in the church or kingdom of Christ: for antichrist is a spirit that dissolves Jesus, and that not openly, but subtilly and cunningly; yea, under the name and pretence of Jesus, he is wholly contrary to him. Wherefore the discerning of spirits, as it hath been necessary from the beginning of the world, so also it is especially necessary in the days of the gospel, wherein the mystery of iniquity is become most mysterious, through the operation of antichrist in those "many false prophets, which are gone forth into the world." And so we proceed to the

Second Point. And that is, That sufficient remedy which the apostle prescribes to the true church, against that great evil, of many false prophets being gone out into the world.

Now the remedy the apostle prescribes to the faithful against these false prophets, is not, that they should stir up the secular power, to imprison, banish, or burn them, that so they might be rid of them; for this is antichrist's proper remedy against those that oppose him: but the apostle shews a more christian remedy, which is this, "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God;" and this remedy alone is sufficient for the true spiritual church of the faithful in every age, to preserve it safe and sound against all false teachers whatsoever, and their false doctrines: neither doth it desire, or need any

other. Wherefore in this case, the apostle contents himself, to give only this caution to the faithful; "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God."

"Believe not every spirit," &c. that is, every one that speaketh of spiritual things. Whence it is plain, that we neither ought rashly and hastily to believe every man's doctrine, nor yet rashly and unadvisedly to censure and condemn it, till it be heard and known what it is: but it is a christian's duty to "prove all things, and to hold fast that which is good," upon proof, as Paul adviseth; wherefore John also adds here, "But try the spirits whether they are of God."

Whence we may note, that christians have right and power to try and judge the spirits and doctrines of their teachers: and this is evident by many plain scriptures, as Matt. vii. 15, "Beware of false prophets," saith Christ to the faithful, "which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves; ye shall know them by their fruits." Matt. xvi. 6, "Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the pharisees, which is hypocrisy." Matt. xxiv. 4, "Jesus said, Take heed that no man deceive you; for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many." John x. "My sheep hear my voice, and know my voice, and a stranger will they not hear, but flee from him, for they know not," that is, own not, "the voice of strangers. And all that came before

me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them." By all which scriptures, and many more that might be added, it is manifest, that the faithful, the true sheep of Christ, have right and power to judge of the spirits and doctrines of the teachers.

Let fathers, schoolmen, doctors, councils, assemblies of divines, universities, ministers, propound and publish what doctrine they please, the sheep of Christ, the faithful flock, have power and authority from Christ himself, to try and judge, whether the things they speak be of Christ, or of themselves and of antichrist. And this power the faithful people ought not to part with, neither for any fear, nor for any favour. Yea, it most nearly concerns the faithful, to try the spirits, and judge the doctrines of the teachers, for these two considerations among others.

First, Because we must each one give an account for ourselves before the judgment seat of Christ: wherefore it concerns every one of us, to look to our own eternal condition, and not to leave this care to others for us. In death and judgment, each one must answer for himself; and therefore we ought to be as certain of the word of God, on which we build our immortal souls, as we are sure we live, and are creatures; we ought, I say, to be sure ourselves, and not to trust any body for us, in this great matter whereon depends either eternal life, or eternal death.

Secondly, It concerns us to try the spirits and

doctrines, because otherwise we may easily mistake, and instead of antichrist and his disciples, dash against Christ himself, and his precious saints. Yea, we have seen how the world and worldly church, not being able to try the spirits and doctrines, have contradicted and crucified the Son of God himself, and have reproached and persecuted all his people, who are baptized into one spirit with him; and doing this, they have thought they have done God good service too: and all because they were not able to judge of the spirit and truth of Christ in himself and his members; but have followed the judgment and counsel of the chief guides in the outward church, who have caused them to err, and to mistake truth for error, and error for truth; Christ for antichrist, and antichrist for Christ.

Wherefore it concerns every one, to be wise to salvation for himself, and to try the spirits for himself, and not to content himself to say, thus said Augustine, Ambrose, Hierom, &c. or this was the judgment of the fathers, or thus have the councils and universities determined, or thus do our ministers teach us; but if thou art one of Christ's flock, thou must have skill to know and judge for thyself, which is Christ's Spirit and doctrine, and which is antichrist's; otherwise thou wilt certainly miscarry in this great matter, and be undone for ever. If thou build on men in these things, and canst not judge for thyself, thou wilt be sure to be undone.

But now this power of trying spirits, and judging doctrines, which Christ hath given his true flock, and which they ought to have upon so good grounds, the teachers of the false and antichristian church, that is, the common clergy, distinguished by several names, titles, and degrees, have robbed them of, and have falsely and treacherously arrogated to themselves the power of trying spirits, and judging doctrines, and have said, that it belongs to the clergy or national ministry, and their councils, and assemblies of divines, to judge of spirits, whether they be right or false; and to judge of doctrines whether they be agreeable to God's word, or no; and that all christians ought to expect their judgment and determination, and to submit to it, and to depend on it, as on an oracle from heaven; yea, though it be, not only without, but also against their own particular judgment.

And these men, I mean the clergy, through the ecclesiastical and temporal power which they had gotten, have stricken great fear into the whole world, and have miserably vexed innumerable consciences, with a grievous and lasting bondage, and have even driven them to despair, whilst none durst approve or own any spirit or doctrine, though never so manifestly of Christ and his gospel, without their allowance and approbation; so mightily hath the power of antichrist prevailed in the world, and that against the express word of Christ.

Now the ground of this their antichristian pride

and usurpation, is this, that they arrogate to themselves that they are the guides and shepherds of all christian men, and are to teach them the gospel, which they are only to receive from their lips; whereas Christ hath promised his true church, that they shall be all taught of God, and shall hear and learn themselves from the Father; and hath also promised to send to them the Spirit, to lead them in all truth; and to give them an anointing, to teach them all things.

Now they by robbing the faithful of this power, and arrogating it to themselves, have made themselves, contrary to Christ's command, lords and masters in the church of God, and have usurped to themselves superiority and authority over other believers, and have subjected all the world to their opinion and judgment in the things of God: by which means they have set wide open the flood-gates to antichrist and his kingdom, to break in upon the world, and to overflow it, whilst they had robbed all christian people of their own judgment in all the things of God, and had made them to depend wholly on the judgment of the clergy.

And had not christian people thus unchristianly delivered up their judgments to the clergy, and that in the very highest points of religion, christianity had not been so miserably blinded and corrupted as it is, and the mystery of iniquity had not so much prevailed in the world, as now it hath. For when christians would not try the spirits whether they were of God, and the doctrines,

whether they were the word of God or no, but thought this a matter too high for them, and would refer and submit all to the judgment of their ministers; then antichrist, the apostle of the devil, came forth boldly, and proudly exalted himself above all that is called God; and his kingdom, above all the kingdoms of the world, having first put out both the eyes of christians, by taking away from them their right and power of trying spirits, and judging doctrines.

But when true christians shall search the scriptures, as God I trust hath now fully put into their hearts to do, and shall justly and lawfully take to themselves the power which God hath given them, to try spirits and doctrines, then antichrist, and his agents, the carnal clergy, must soon be brought down: for the faithful by that word shall soon perceive, that they are not of God, nor their doctrine of that right gospel, which is after the mind of Christ. Well then, by what hath been said, you, who are of Christ's true sheep, may perceive, that it is evident by the word, that faithful christians have right and power to try spirits and doctrines, though antichrist for many ages hath robbed them of this privilege.

For, that I may speak a little more to this matter, the trial of spirits doth unquestionably belong to all men, who have received the Spirit of God: for to this Spirit of God which dwells in the faithful, the gift of discerning spirits is inseparably annexed: and the Spirit of Christ, which truly

dwells in all true christians, cannot deceive, nor be deceived in the trial of spirits. So that this now is a common grace, that in some measure belongs to all true christians, who have received the unction that teacheth them all things, and is true, and is no lie.

And though there be in the church diversities of gifts from the same Spirit, which are given to some, and not to others, as tongues, and interpretation of tongues, and miracles, and gifts of healing, &c. mentioned by Paul, 1 Cor. xii. yet this gift of trying spirits is given to all in some measure, that have received the Spirit. For as in the natural body there are several gifts given to several members, which are not given to all the members, as seeing to the eye, hearing to the ear, walking to the foot, &c. but feeling is given to all the members; so also in the body of Christ, that is, the spiritual church, several gifts are given to several saints, but the trial of spirits and doctrines to all saints, who have received the Spirit; and, "If any have not Christ's Spirit, he is none of his;" and if any have Christ's Spirit, he can in some measure discern and judge of all spirits in the world: and the more any man receives Christ's Spirit, the more able is he to judge of all other spirits.

Wherefore they who are true believers, and have received Christ's Spirit, their judgment is to be preferred in the trial of spirits, before the judgment of a whole council of clergymen.

And they only, who can try spirits by the Spirit of God, and doctrines by the word of God, written in their hearts by the Spirit, are fit to commend ministers to the work of God: that is, the congregations of the faithful, and not universities, and assemblies of divines. And thus you may perceive, that seeing “many false prophets are gone out into the world,” it concerns the faithful, as they tender their own everlasting salvation, not to believe every spirit that speaks of Christ, and his kingdom, and his things, but to “Try the spirits whether they are of God.”

Objection. But now, it may be, some will be ready to say, We ought indeed to try the spirits, seeing there are many false prophets in the world; but we hope there are no such persons among us, but only some upstart men, with their new light, who with their novelties and fancies trouble the nation, and would fain turn all things upside down; and we know these well enough already, and do sufficiently despise them.

Answer. It is very like you do; but yet let me say to you, Men, brethren, and fathers, understand yourselves, and know what you do in this matter. For at the beginning of the reformation by the ministry of Luther, Zuinglius, Calvin, and divers others, precious servants of Jesus Christ, the popish clergy applied all these scriptures, “Try the spirits whether they are of God, for many false prophets are gone out into the world:” and, “Beware of false prophets, which come to

you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." I say, these, and the like places of scripture, they applied to these godly men, and yet they themselves were the false prophets indeed: and the other, whom they termed such, were true ones. Wherefore it is possible for you to be mistaken as well as they, and no doubt but you will be mistaken, except the Lord be gracious to you, and give you his own Spirit, by which alone you can make a right judgment in this matter.

Wherefore that he that reads may understand, you must know, that the false prophets are not so easily discerned as you think; for they seem to be true prophets, and godly, holy, learned, orthodox men, men of eminency and renown in the church and state: and so to flesh and blood, and the wisdom and religion of the world, it will be a difficult, yea, an impossible thing to find them out: for the false prophets have several glorious vails over them, to hide and obscure them from common knowledge. Wherefore we declare unto you from the word of the Lord, touching these false prophets, who shall do so much mischief;

1. That they shall not proceed, or come forth from among the Jews, or Turks, or out of the barbarous nations, but they shall arise out of such as are called christians.

2. Seeing among christians some are openly profane and evil, others seem to be religious and godly; the false prophets shall be found among

the better sort; and therefore, saith Christ, they shall come in sheep's clothing, as if they were of Christ's own flock. And Paul saith, they have a form of godliness; that is, they shall be painted over gloriously, with all appearances of truth, righteousness, honesty, goodness, and all the names of godliness.

3. Seeing amongst those that seem to be the better sort of christians, some give themselves to the ministry of the word, and some do not; the false prophets shall be found among those christians who take upon themselves to be preachers, as Paul testifies, Acts xx. where having called together the elders and teachers of the church of Ephesus, he saith to them, *Ex vobis ipsis*, "Out of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."

4. And seeing among those who are ministers, some are light, and vain, and carnal, and formal persons, and others are men of great worth and reputation, and seem to be the precious members of Christ, and even pillars in the church, so that the common people think, that all religion would go down with such good men, they having some gifts and enlightenings of the Spirit, and seeming more than ordinarily godly, religious, wise, holy, sober, devout; now the false prophets shall be found among these. And as they who opposed Christ at his first coming in the flesh, seemed more wise, and holy, and eminent in the church than

the rest, as the scribes and pharisees, who sat in Moses chair, and had the outward letter of the word in all exactness, and the outward form of religion in all strictness; so they, who do, and shall most oppose Christ in his coming in his Spirit, and shall contradict his word, and resist his servants and witnesses of his truth, do, and shall appear more wise, holy, learned, and godly, than the rest of the teachers of the church.

And thus you see, that the false prophets of antichrist shall arise among christians, and among such christians as seem to be godly; and among such seeming godly christians as preach the word; and among such preachers of the word as seem to be of greater worth and eminency than the rest: and so in all these regards it will be a hard matter to discern them.

2. Again, such persons, of such appearance of worth and holiness as these, do usually get to their side the greatest and highest persons in the kingdoms and nations, and do obtain, not only their countenance and favour, but also their power and authority for themselves.

3. By both these means, to wit, their seeming holiness, and their interest with worldly powers, they exceedingly enlarge their credit and reputation with the world, and do get multitudes of people and nations to entertain them. For antichrist could not deceive the world with a company of foolish, weak, ignorant, profane, contemptible persons, but he always hath the greatest, wisest,

holiest, and most eminent in the visible church for him, and by these he seduces and subjects to himself, even the whole world.

Besides, they that are against him and his false prophets, are but a very handful of saints, who have the Spirit of Christ, and through his Spirit discern them, and oppose them, and for so doing are despised and hated of all the world. Wherefore it is a harder matter to try these false prophets, than we are well aware of. And yet as hard as it is, the apostle, by the Spirit, hath given us a manifest and certain rule of trial: and this is the third general thing I named.

Third Point. To wit, The sufficient rule whereby the true church may thoroughly try the spirits and prophets, how cunningly and subtilly soever they are disguised, and this he lays down: "Hereby know we the Spirit of God; Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God," &c.

Now this scripture we may understand two ways.

1. Of a right knowledge of Jesus Christ in his own person: 2. Of a true receiving of this Christ into us by faith.

First. Of the right knowledge of Christ in his own person.

1. For whereas he saith, "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh,"

&c. this gives us to understand that he is true God, and was before he came into the flesh.

2. Whereas he saith, "Every spirit that confesseth that Christ is come in the flesh:" this gives us to understand that he is true man, our very brother, partaker of the same flesh and blood with us.

3. Whereas he saith, "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh," &c. this also gives us to understand, that in him, true God and true man are united into one inseparable person.

4. Whereas he saith, "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh," &c. this gives us occasion to consider the end of his coming; seeing God did not become man in vain, or for some slight cause, but that he might redeem unto God, all those whom the Father had elected in him, and save them perfectly, from the law, sin, death, and hell: and hence we may rise up to conceive of his offices, to wit, of his priestly, prophetic, and kingly office; and of the infinite virtue and efficacy of them.

Now he that makes this confession of Jesus Christ, from the revelation of the Father, is of God; and he that speaks otherwise, is not of God. But,

Secondly, We may understand this scripture, not only of the true knowledge of Jesus Christ, but also and especially of the true receiving of him by faith. "Every spirit," saith he, "that

confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God:" that is, he is of God, that believes and acknowledges that the Son of the living God is come, not only into that humanity of Christ that was born of the virgin, but also that he is come into us, and dwells in us, according to these scriptures, "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith:" and, "Christ in you the hope of glory:" and, "Know ye not that Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates," &c. Wherefore the true prophets do not only acknowledge that Jesus Christ is come into his own flesh, but also into theirs, which by this means is made his; and that Christ is in them of a truth, and dwells in them.

For antichrist himself, and his ministers, do all acknowledge, that Jesus Christ is come into that flesh which he did assume of the virgin, but they will not confess that this is true in him, and in us: they will acknowledge the mystery of God manifested in the flesh, as to Christ the head, but they will deny it, as to the church his body: and so, whilst they separate the head from the body, and the body from the head in this mystery, they do, *Solvere Jesum*, they 'dissolve Jesus.'

I say, some hold that the eternal Word or divine nature came indeed into that flesh which was born of the blessed virgin, but they will by no means allow it to come into ours, through our union with him by faith: only they say, some created habits or gifts of grace come into us, or in our flesh, but

not Christ himself, or the divne nature, or Son of the living God. And so these men set up these created gifts and graces in the members, instead of Christ himself the head. And yet these teachers make a glorious shew in the flesh; and this is antichrist, to wit, when men think that these created habits of grace, which they fancy will renew, comfort, sacrifice, and save them; and so do make to themselves of them a glorious, but yet a false Christ. Wherefore let us know, that he that denies Jesus Christ in the members, is, though not so great, yet as true antichrist, as he that denies Jesus Christ in the head; and he that denies Christ dwelling in our hearts by faith, to be, and to be alone wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption to us, as he that denies him to be the power, wisdom, and righteousness of God in himself.

The sum of this matter is this, that the true spirits or prophets do acknowledge, not only that Christ the Son of the living God is come into that Son of man which was born of the blessed virgin, but also that Christ is come into them, and dwells in them, as in his own true and proper members. And so, he that hath Jesus Christ dwelling in his heart, is a true prophet; and he that hath not Christ dwelling in his heart, is a false prophet, though his knowledge and religion be never so high, and glorious, and holy also in the opinion of the world. And this is the chief sign and mark whereby we may know the true prophets and true

christians, from the false prophets and false christians.

Object. Now if any shall say, but how shall we know whether a man hath Christ dwelling in his heart or no? and so consequently, Whether he be a true or false prophet?

Answ. You shall certainly know it, by the truth of the word of Christ in him, and by the truth of the life of Christ, in reference to his office in the word. First then,

1. The true prophets are to be discerned from the false, By the truth of the word of God in them. For the true prophets speak the true word of God, even the word of wisdom, the word of righteousness, the word of life, the word of power, the word that is able to save, which is the true gospel word. For this is the covenant that God hath made with Christ and his seed, saying, "My Spirit that is upon thee, and my word which is in thy mouth, shall never depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, from henceforth and for ever." And this was perfectly fulfilled in Christ; for that word which in the beginning was with God, and was God, was made flesh in him, and dwelt in him; and out of that word Jesus Christ spake all that ever he spake; his whole doctrine did flow from that eternal Word which dwelt in him.

And Christ communicated to the disciples the same word which he had received, as he saith, "I

have given to them the words that thou gavest me," that is, the word of righteousness and life; "and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me:" and so that word, which they themselves received by faith, they also held forth to others, as John saith, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of life, declare we unto you." And to this also John the Baptist gives testimony, John iii. 34, where he saith, "He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God:" not the words of men or angels, but of God; and this is true, both in Christ and in his seed.

But now the false prophets speak not the word of God, for they have it not in their hearts; but what word they have in their hearts, that they speak; and so they speak the words of their own reason, wisdom, and righteousness, or of other men's; but beyond human things they do not go, whether they pretend to high notions on the one hand, or to sound orthodox doctrine on the other hand. Now of this, true christians are to take special notice; because, as the true word of God is the greatest commodity to the church that can be, and brings the presence of Christ, and all the things of Christ along with it; so the word of man is the greatest mischief to the church that can be; for it brings antichrist, and his kingdom,

and all his things along with it. And thus doth vain philosophy, and school divinity, which is an unlawful mixing of philosophy with the outward letter of the word, pervert all things in the church of carnal and false christians.

2. As the true prophets speak the true word of God, so also they speak it by the true Spirit of God, and not by their own spirit: and thus did Christ, who saith of himself, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he hath anointed me to preach the gospel:" and so he spake the word of God by the Spirit of God.

And Christ commanded his disciples to stay at Jerusalem till they had received the Spirit, and then to go forth and preach; because he knew they could not preach God's word aright, without God's Spirit: and also Christ saith of all the faithful, that, "It is not they that speak, but the Spirit of their Father that speaks in them;" yea, and the whole gospel is called the ministration of the Spirit. Now the true prophets, speaking the word of God by and in his Spirit, do also speak it in the right sense, and after the true mind of Christ; as Paul saith of himself, and of other believers who had received the Spirit, "We have the mind of Christ."

But the false prophets, though they speak the word of the letter exactly, and that according to the very original, and curiosity of criticisms, yet speaking it without the Spirit, they are false prophets before God and his true church; seeing

all right prophecy hath proceeded from the Spirit in all ages of the world, but especially it must so proceed in the days of the New Testament, wherein God hath promised the largest effusion of his Spirit. And they speaking the word of the letter without the Spirit, do wholly mistake the mind of Christ in all; and under the outward letter of the word of God, do only bring in the mind of man. And this is one of the greatest delusions, and most mischievous snares that can be laid in the church, to bring in the word of Christ without the mind of Christ, yea, to bring in the word of Christ against the mind of Christ, and according to the mind of antichrist: this is the effectual operation of error, whereby all hypocrites and false christians are deceived, and that without all hope of recovery.

And thus you see, that the true prophets bring the true word, and bring it also by the true Spirit, and this manifests them to be of God: but the false, either bring not the true word, or if they bring the word in the letter, yet they bring it without the Spirit, and thus it is manifest, they are not of God.

Objection. But some will object here: If a man preach the word in the letter, even good, sound, and orthodox doctrine, no doubt but such a man is to be heard, and he may do much good in the church, though he want Christ's Spirit. This I have heard from very many, who have thought they have said something.

But to this I answer: That they who want Christ's Spirit, which is the Spirit of prophecy, though they preach the exact letter of the word, yet are false prophets, and not to be heard by the sheep.

1. Because under the New Testament we are not to regard the letter without the Spirit, but the Spirit as well as the letter, yea, the Spirit more than the letter: and therefore Paul saith, that Christ shall destroy antichrist with the spirit of his mouth, and the brightness of his coming, **2** Thess. ii. 8. He scarce takes any notice of the letter, but calls the true preaching of the gospel, the spirit of Christ's mouth, or the ministration of the Spirit. And therefore the spiritual people cannot join to that ministry, where the Spirit of Christ is wanting, though there be the outward letter of the word in it.

2. They that preach only the outward letter of the word, without the true Spirit, they make all things outward in the church, and so carry the people, with whom they prevail, only to outward things, to an outward word, to outward worship, outward ordinances, outward church, outward government, &c. whereas in the true kingdom of Christ, all things are inward and spiritual; and all the true religion of Christ is written in the soul and spirit of man, by the Spirit of God; and the believer is the only book, in which God himself writes his New Testament.

3. They who preach the outward letter of the word, though never so truly without the Spirit,

do, as hath been said, wholly mistake the mind of Christ in the word, for want of the Spirit, which is the only true and infallible interpreter of his mind; and so, under the outward letter of the word, preach their own mind, and not Christ's mind; and do make all the scriptures serve their own turns, even their own worldly ends and advantages, and nothing else.

4. They that preach the outward letter of the word without the Spirit, can with such a word both live themselves, in all the inward evils of corrupted nature, and allow others to do so too. And thus the gospel, which in the spirit of it is the judgment of sin, is made in the letter of it the covering for sin, and the encourager of it: seeing such men, who have the letter of the word in their mouth, do live in the inward corruptions of their hearts, more securely and quietly than other men.

5. Last of all, let us know that whoever doth agree with Christ never so exactly in the letter, and yet differs from him in spirit, is very anti-christ. And therefore when the devils in him that was possessed, said to Christ, "We know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God," and so agreed very exactly with the gospel in the letter, yet Christ forbad them to speak, because they spake not by a right spirit. And Christ hath said, "Whoever is not with me," that is, in the Spirit, "is against me," though he have the same outward letter of the word with him. And so, as Christ builds up his church by his Spirit through his

word; so antichrist builds up his church by the word, without the Spirit: and Christ's church and antichrist's do often differ very little or nothing in word or letter, yet do always infinitely differ in spirit. Wherefore to conclude, Let us know, that that church that hath the word, if it wants the Spirit, is antichrist's church; and that that ministry that useth the word, and wants the Spirit, is antichrist's ministry; and that all works, duties, prayings, preaching, fasting, thanksgiving, &c. without Christ's Spirit, are nothing but the very kingdom of antichrist, and the abomination of desolation.

And so I proceed to the second general rule of trial, which I propounded, whereby we may discern the true prophets of Christ, from the false prophets of antichrist, and that is, By the truth of the life of Christ, in reference to his office in the word. And here I shall give you many trials, how you may certainly know and discern the false prophets of antichrist from the true, humble, and faithful ministers of Jesus Christ. And the Lord Jesus Christ, before whom we are all present this day, and before whose tribunal we shall all be judged, he knows, that I shall not purposely speak any thing at this time, either to please myself, or to displease you: but I shall desire to speak all out of very faithfulness to him, "who hath remembered me when I was in low condition, for his mercy endureth for ever."

The first sign then, whereby the true prophets

may be discerned from the false, is this: The true prophets are all sent of God. So was Moses, whom God sent to the children of Israel, and bid him tell them that "I AM, even the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, had sent him to them;" and he gave him a proportionable measure of his presence, to cause them to believe it. And Christ, a greater prophet than Moses, even the head of all the children of God, said by Isaiah, xlvi. 16, "Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning: and now the Lord, and his Spirit, hath sent me." And every where in the gospel, he still declares, how he came not of himself, but his Father sent him.

And as the Father sent Christ, so Christ sends all his seed, the true ministers of the gospel, as is manifest, John xx. 21, where Christ said to his disciples, "as my Father sent me, so send I you;" which he spake not only touching them, but touching all that should believe in his name through their word. And Paul also saith, "How shall they teach, except they be sent?" So that true preaching comes from true sending, and this comes from the grace of God.

Now I desire you further to take notice, that God hath reckoned the choice of his ministers, one of the weightiest things that belong unto his kingdom; wherefore he would never commit the trust of this to any sort of men whatsoever. Yea, Christ himself did not choose his disciples at his own human will, but only at the will of God, and

therefore was much in prayer before he chose them. And the apostles themselves durst not, of themselves, when they were all met together, choose any one into the room of Judas, but they betook themselves to prayer, and desired the Lord to shew whom he had chosen. And, Acts xiii. "The Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." And Paul tells the Galatians, that he was an apostle, "not of man, nor by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father." By all which scriptures we may perceive what care the Lord hath always had, to send his own ministers himself into his own church, and would have his true church receive no ministers but such as he sends them. And the great and chief sending into the church is from God himself, as we see in Moses, and all the prophets, and in Christ himself, the head of them, and in all the apostles, and in all believers.

Now the proof of a man's sending from God, is this, to be anointed with the Spirit. When Christ said to his disciples, "As my Father sent me, so send I you," he breathed upon them, and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit:" for his Father sent him only by pouring out his Spirit on him; and he sends them so only; and he that saith, the unction of the Spirit alone is not sufficient for the ministry of the **N**ew Testament, he denies Christ and his apostles to have been sufficient ministers; and he perverts the scripture, and seduces the people. Now the true teachers, through the

pouring forth of the Spirit on them, they do truly know Christ himself, and the great mystery of the gospel, and all the things that are freely given us of God; and they are also filled with love to their brethren, and are enabled to confess the truth, and to do thereafter, and to contemn the world, and patiently to suffer rebukes, &c. all which is a sufficient proof of any one's sending from God. And thus the true prophets are all sent of God, which is their great comfort and support in all trouble and difficulties, because he that sends them, is still with them. "Lo," saith Christ, "I am with you always, to the end of the world."

But now, on the contrary, the false prophets and ministers of antichrist are not sent of God, but are sent and appointed by men, and that through their own desire and seeking. And of such the Lord complains, "I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied: but because I sent them not, neither commanded them, they shall not profit this people at all, saith the Lord." And Christ saith, "Many false christs, and false prophets shall arise;" that is, are not sent of God, but shall arise of themselves. And Paul saith to the elders of the church of Ephesus, "Out of yourselves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw disciples after them:" they arise of themselves, they are not sent of God. Now such teachers as these do usually spring up in the church, through academical degrees, and ecclesiastical ordination; which two

things have poured forth into the church whole swarms of false prophets, and antichristian ministers, never sent of God, nor anointed of his Spirit; to the irreparable damage, prejudice, and ruin of the people and nations who have received them, with their false and poisonous doctrine. Wherefore all those teachers who are not sent of the Lord and his Spirit, but arise of themselves, and come into the church in the strength and might of their degrees and orders, they are all false prophets.

The second sign. The true prophets, who are sent of God, take all their warrant and authority from God for what they teach; and do not at all regard men, or build on them. And this hath all along made the true teachers so bold, and so confident, in the name of God, against the world and worldly church. So Isaiah, l. 4, &c. saith, "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in due season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned. The Lord hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. For the Lord God will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know I shall not be ashamed. He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? let us stand together; who is mine adversary? let him come near to me. Behold the Lord will help me; who is he that shall condemn me? Lo,

they all shall wax old as a garment ; the moth shall eat them up." See here the admirable confidence of a teacher sent from God.

And so also our Lord Jesus Christ in the days of his flesh, how bold was he in his ministry, coming in the name of the Lord, and having his authority and doctrine from him ! How boldly did he reprove the scribes and pharisees, the chief teachers of the Jewish church ! And what a clear and glorious confession of the truth of God, did he hold forth against all their opposition and contradiction.

And the apostles, when the rulers, elders, and scribes, and Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and all the kindred of the high priest were gathered together, and threatened them, and straitly charged them, to preach no more in that name ; they answered, " Whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye : for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." And so Wickliffe, John Huss, and Luther, who were sent of God, did take all their authority from God alone, and so were bold and confident, each of them in their time, against the whole world.

But now the false prophets, who come of themselves, and by the sending of men, they do all by the authority and warrant of man ; and accordingly do join themselves together* by secular power, to bring about their doctrines and designs

in the church; and from the civil authority they procure leave and power to publish their doctrine, and to set up their discipline in the church, and to suppress whatever is contrary thereto; and without this worldly license and authority, they neither can nor dare do any thing: and are never bold, but when the authority of man is for them. But the true prophets, as hath been said, do only take their authority from Christ for what they teach, and are bold in his name only, to hold it forth: and so after they have published the word in faith, in the same faith they leave the maintenance and defending of it to him alone, whose word it is; and they neither publish it for man's commanding, nor smother it for man's forbidding. Wherefore those teachers, who have not their warrant from Christ for their doctrine, and are not bold in his name alone, but do derive all their authority and encouragement from men, to speak and act in the things of God, they are all false prophets, and ministers of antichrist.

The third sign. The true and faithful teachers, as they are sent of God, and take their authority from God, so in all their doctrine they only hold forth Jesus Christ. And this they have learned from God himself.

For the Father speaking immediately from heaven, preached nothing but Christ, saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear him:" and this he spake thrice from the excellent glory; manifesting, that he

himself had no higher thing, nor no other thing to declare to the world, than his Son Jesus Christ, in whom alone are hid all the treasures of all true and spiritual wisdom, and knowledge.

The Son also, in all his ministry, only declared who himself was, whom the Father had given to the elect church; saying, "I will publish the decree, whereof the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." And in all his ministry only declared who he was, and to what end his Father had given him: saying, "I am the bread of life, which cometh down from heaven; he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth in me shall never thirst. I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the Father but by me." And all his doctrine and works were to this end, that we might believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and that believing in him we might have eternal life.

The apostles also of the Lord, after they had received the Spirit, did go up and down the world, only preaching Jesus, and repentance, and remission of sins in his name. And Paul, a laborious preacher, through the grace of God, did renounce and reject all his worldly learning, and all his human accomplishments and excellencies, in the ministry of the gospel, and preached nothing but the right knowledge of Christ, and right faith in him, as he himself testifies; saying, "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for

the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, and be made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." And he also tells the Corinthians, that he desired to know nothing amongst them, but Jesus Christ and him crucified. And thus the true teachers preach nothing but Christ; and him they preach, not according to their own human conceptions and apprehensions, but according to the revelation they have received from the Father by the Spirit. But on the contrary, the false teachers preach nothing less than Christ, and faith in him: but they chiefly teach the law, and moral doctrine, and works, or else philosophy, and philosophical subtleties and speculations, which yet the apostle hath expressly forbidden, saying to the faithful, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the elements of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, who is the head of all principality and power," Col. ii. 8—10. And so we need not turn from Christ to philosophy,

that vain deceit. Wherefore they who preach not the mystery of Christ, through the revelation of the Father and the Spirit, but moral virtues and vain philosophy, instead of Christ, are all of them false prophets, and ministers of antichrist.

The fourth sign. The true ministers and prophets of Christ, as they only hold forth Christ, so they hold him forth only for the love of God, and their brother, and not for any worldly profit or gain.

Thus Christ taught his disciples, out of the love of God; as he saith, "I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart," that is, his love to God. And also out of love to his brother; for, "Having loved his own, he loved them to the end," and out of this love taught them; as he saith, "I have called you friends; for whatsoever I have heard from my Father, I have declared unto you."

And as he taught out of love himself, so he hath commanded all his seed to teach one another out of the same love, and hath given them his Spirit, which is love, that thereby they might love both him and their brethren; and therefore Christ, (knowing how difficult a work it was, to feed his sheep with the right and sound doctrine of the gospel, and that none could or would perform this, except they loved Christ from their very heart-root,) said thrice to Peter, "Peter, dost thou love me? dost thou love me? dost thou love me? then feed my sheep, my lambs, my sheep." And Paul saith, "The love of Christ constrained him," to teach the

gospel: and the fruit of the Spirit, in all believers, being love, in this brotherly love they serve one another in the gospel.

And as Christ himself did not sell his spiritual travel to his church for worldly profit or gain; no more do his true seed and servants: for saith Paul, "I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel; yea, ye yourselves know that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them who were with me." And, 2 Cor. xii. 14, "Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you, I will not be burdensome to you, for I seek not yours, but you. Did I make a gain of you, by any of them whom I sent unto you? or, Did Titus make a gain of you? walked we not both in the same Spirit?" And thus the true teachers do not seek any temporal gain or commodity from the hands of men by their preaching, but do truly and cheerfully teach out of the love of Christ, and their brother.

But on the contrary, the false teachers, though they do not teach the gospel, being destitute of the Spirit, but vain philosophy and human doctrines instead of it, yet will they live by the gospel, and not by the labour of their hands in a lawful calling; they will have the temporal goods of the church, and yet not minister the spiritual treasure of it; and what they do minister, they do it for reward, as it is written: "The priests teach for hire, and the prophets divine for money; and he that putteth not into their mouths, they even

prepare war against him." And to shew they preach for the love of gain, they are brought up to the ministry as to a trade to live by; and they run in this way, from one place to another, from a lesser to a greater living; and where they may gain most of this world, there will they be sure to be. Yea, so much are they addicted to their worldly advantage, that they had rather Christ's kingdom should never be set up in the world, nor antichrist's never be thrown down, than suffer any loss or diminution in their profit, power, dignity, authority, or in any worldly thing, whereof they have got the possession and enjoyment. Wherefore they that teach Christ, not for the love of Christ, and their brother, but for temporal gain, and worldly advantage only, are all of them false teachers and ministers of antichrist.

The fifth sign. The true teachers teach Christ to others, as they have been taught him of God, only for the glory of God, and not out of vain glory. Wherefore Christ said of himself, "I seek not mine own glory." And John vii. 18, "He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory; but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him." So that whoever speaketh from God, seeketh God's glory. And so also Paul saith, "Nor of men sought we glory; neither of you, nor yet of others." So that the true teachers do not preach the word to win to themselves glory in the world, and praise and applause from men; but do rather

seek the glory of God by their doctrine, though hypocrites and carnal people, for this cause do deride and scorn them. But on the contrary, the false teachers seek above all things their own glory by their ministry, and to this end,

1. They get to themselves titles and degrees in the university, for their pretended knowledge in divinity above other christians; and by these degrees, they get the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and are called of men, Doctor, Doctor, which Christ hath expressly forbidden in his gospel.

2. Having got such titles, they go forth in their own name as men of approved religion, learning, reputation, and worth, and for such they make account the world should receive them.

3. They especially desire to preach to rich men, and great men, and men in place and authority, that from them they may have protection, favour, preferment, and a quiet life; and care not much to preach to the poor, plain, mean people, by whom they can expect no worldly advantage.

4. To this end also, they speak in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, and so mingle philosophy with divinity, and think to credit the gospel with terms of art; and do sprinkle their sermons with Hebrew, Greek, Latin, as with a perfume acceptable to the nostrils of the world. In a word, they preach all things in a pleasing spirit to the world, that they by all may get glory to themselves, and may be accounted, with Simon

Magus, some great ones : and in all this, they shew they speak of themselves, and not of God ; seeing they seek not God's glory, but their own ; for, " He that speaketh of himself, seeketh his own glory."

Wherefore they who by their ministry do not seek the glory of God alone, and of his Son Jesus Christ, but seek their own glory, and the praise of men, as the clergy generally do, and not least of all in this place, they are all of them false prophets, and ministers of antichrist.

The sixth sign. The true preachers and ministers of Christ, when they are opposed, resisted, slandered and persecuted for the word's sake, they endure it with all meekness, humility and patience. Thus Christ endured all the reproaches, contradictions, revilings, and persecutions from the Jews : " Who when he was reviled, reviled not again ; when he suffered, he threatened not ; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." And Paul saith of himself to the Corinthians, " The signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience."

But on the contrary, the false teachers, when any truth is preached that they know not, or that is against their gain or glory, they snarl and bark at it, and bite them that bring it. And therefore saith Paul, " Beware of dogs ;" not dogs by nature, but by practice and condition. Now a curst dog lying on a rich garment, or soft carpet at his ease, as long as he may be still he is very quiet,

but if you would remove him from his place, he soon snarls and flies at you, and shews of what mettle he is made. So the false teachers, who have gotten a carnal knowledge of the world, and have thereby gotten preferment, and great advantages in the world, they lie quiet on these soft things, as long as they may lie still: but if any seek by the word of God to rouse them up from these things, they rise up like angry dogs, and bark at them, and rend them, as much as they can or dare.

Wherefore those teachers who cannot patiently suffer wrongs for the word's sake, but on the contrary, when they are reproved by the word, and their sheep's clothing pulled off, even their false vizard of religion, do presently grow impatient and furious; and they that bark and foam against the late revealed truth, which toucheth them very near, they are all false teachers, and ministers of antichrist.

The seventh sign. The true prophets and ministers of Christ, do not force any body to hear them, and obey their doctrine against their wills, neither do they vex and trouble them with secular power, who will not obey them, and be subject to them; but they leave all such people as they found them, lest they should seem by their doctrine to seek any worldly thing.

Thus Christ, when he taught the gospel, still cried out, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear;" and he that had not ears to hear, he did

not punish him. And again, saith Christ, "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me;" and still left men to their own freedom, whether they would be his disciples or no. And as Christ did thus himself, so he left the same thing in command with all his true disciples; and when he sent them forth to preach, he charged them, saying, "Whoever will not receive you, nor hear your words, when you depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet, as a testimony against them:" he doth not bid them, if they be refused, to betake themselves to the secular power, to get authority from thence to stay and abide there, whether they will or no, or otherwise to punish them; but bids them only, to shake off the dust of their feet, that they might know, they came not to them for the love of earthly things. And when the apostles out of a false zeal would have had Christ to have commanded fire to have come down from heaven, to have destroyed them that would not receive him; he plainly reproveth them, saying, "Ye know not of what spirit ye are; for the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them."

It is recorded in the life of Simon and Jude, the apostles, as both Gulielmus de Sancto Amore and John Huss relate, That when the chief ruler was very angry with those who defamed the doctrine of those apostles, and in great zeal commanded a great fire to be made, that such opposers might be cast

into it, the apostles fell down before the Emperor, saying, ' We beseech you, Sir, let not us be the authors or causers of this destruction, who are come to publish the doctrine of eternal salvation; neither let us who are sent to revive those who are dead through sin, become the killers of those who are alive.'

Wherefore those teachers who for worldly advantage sake, will force themselves upon those men against their wills, who will not willingly receive them: and will provoke the worldly powers and magistrates to punish those who will not hear and receive them and their doctrine, they all are false prophets and ministers of antichrist.

The eighth sign. The true teachers are content that others should teach as well as they, and would not make a monopoly of the ministry to themselves alone, for worldly advantage sake.

Thus our Lord Jesus Christ did not content himself to preach the gospel alone, but he sent forth others, as his Father sent forth him; yea, he pours forth his Spirit on all flesh, that sons, and daughters, and servants, and handmaids, may prophecy, and so knowledge may cover the earth, as waters the seas: and to make the world willing to receive such teachers, he saith, " He that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me."

And when Eldad and Medad upon whom the Spirit of the Lord did rest, did prophesy in the camp of Israel, without asking any licence from

Moses, and one told Moses of it in great displeasure, and Joshua thereupon wished Moses to forbid them to prophesy, then Moses, the meek servant of the Lord, replied, "Enviest thou for my sake? would God," saith he, "that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them all." And so the godly mind of any faithful teacher, desireth to be helped in the work of the word, that the precious truth of the gospel, which he himself alone cannot sufficiently express, all men's tongues might declare. And so they do not envy in others, those spiritual gifts which God hath given them, but do wish, that every man had a mouth and wisdom given him, to declare the mystery of the gospel, and the infinite love, mercy, wisdom, truth, power, redemption, and salvation of God by Jesus Christ, which cannot by all men's tongues be sufficiently published in the world.

Farther, as no worldly prince or magistrate hath such unlimited power over the goods of the people, as to forbid them to give corporal alms to them that stand in need, as occasion is ministered; no more hath any power, whether ecclesiastical or civil, such dominion over the word and truth of God, written by the Spirit in the hearts of believers; but that they may at all times, and upon all occasions, minister spiritual alms to them who stand in need, by the teaching of the gospel.

Wherefore those teachers, who are envious that any should preach the word but themselves, and

their own tribe, as they call it, because they get great worldly advantage thereby, whereas otherwise they would be contented that any should preach; and so would have the civil magistrate only to license them to be preachers, because of their degrees and orders, and to forbid all others, they all are false teachers, and ministers of anti-christ.

The ninth sign. The true teachers do not only teach the word, but are also ready to seal to the truth of it, with their estates, liberties, and lives. Thus did Jesus Christ, as was foretold by Isaiah, where Christ saith by his Spirit, “The Lord hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back; I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them who plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.” And in the days of his flesh, how willingly did he seal to the truth of his New Testament doctrine with his suffering; and suffered himself to be apprehended by the hands of men, and to be crucified, when he could have commanded legions of angels for his succour, if he had pleased, and would have made use of his own infinite and almighty power.

And this submission and willingness to suffer for the truth, Christ hath commanded all his disciples, saying, “He that will save his life, shall lose it; and he that will lose his life for my sake, shall save it.” And, “If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself, take up the cross,

and follow me." And again, " I send you forth as sheep among wolves; and ye shall be brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake," that is, for the true and spiritual teaching of the gospel. Now as nothing will procure us more enmity, than the spiritual holding forth of the gospel, which will cause the worldly church to cast out our names as evil, and cast our persons out of their synagogues, yea, and also to kill us, when they can get power; so if we be true teachers, must we be ready and willing to suffer all this for Christ's name sake.

Wherefore those teachers who embrace the height and honour of this life, and will not own the gospel of Christ, farther than they may thereby procure to themselves credit, reputation, profit, and preferment in the world; and to this end, in doubtful and difficult times carry themselves so subtilly, that whatever party shall prevail, they may still stand on their legs, and enjoy their present prosperity and preferment; and so are neither hot nor cold, neither truly for the truth, nor openly against the truth, but seek by all subtile means to decline the cross of Christ. And though in Christ himself, they praise his meanness, plainness, simplicity, suffering, and cross, yet they themselves are delicate, and cannot endure these things for Christ's sake in themselves, but bend and frame the whole course of their ministry so, as they may obtain all good things from the world, and avoid and escape

all evil things from it: these all are false prophets, and ministers of antichrist.

By these nine signs, for I shall name no more now, may the true prophets and ministers of Christ be manifestly distinguished and discerned from the false ones of antichrist, by all the true people of God, who have received his Spirit. Now, "Let God," and his word, "be true, and every man a liar."

And now I shall make but two uses of this discourse briefly, and so conclude for this time. And the first shall be to those of you who are spiritual christians: and the second to the carnal clergy.

First, You who are true believers, and spiritual christians, may judge aright, by what you have heard, of the present clergy, or common ministry of the nation; and may see by the clear light of the word, that they, for the generality of them, are not true but false prophets; not the ministers of Christ, but of antichrist; not sent of God, nor anointed by his Spirit, but ordained and appointed by men, at their own desire and seeking, for worldly advantage sake; men who stand and minister in the church, only in the strength of their academical degrees and ecclesiastical ordination, but do not stand and feed the people, in the strength of the Lord, and in the majesty of the name of their God. And this corrupt ministry or carnal clergy have deceived the people and nations, with a corrupt and carnal understanding

of Christ, and of the scriptures, and of the kingdom of Christ, and of the government of his kingdom, and of all the things of Christ: yea, they have under the name and pretence of Christ, set up a church to antichrist every where, and do continually mislead thousands of poor souls, and carry them captive to hell, and that under the colour and pretence of religion.

And this, I say, is the great evil in these false teachers, that under the name of Christ, they fight against Christ; and under the name of the word, they fight against the word; and under the name of the church, they fight against the church. And this is a grievous abomination of desolation in the temple of God, that they who should be the chief for the truth, are the chief against it; and that they who should be faithful witnesses to the holy truth of Christ, should prove lying witnesses against it. If a profane person, or heathen should do this, it would be wickedness and impiety in them; but this is horrid abomination, and antichristianism in the church of Christ, that they, who are come into it as friends, and have obtained the chief places in it, should yet under this vizard be indeed very enemies and seducers, and hinderers of the word of Christ crucified. Wherefore saith the truth against such, "It was not an enemy that reproached me, then I could have borne it; neither was it he that hated me, that magnified himself against me, for then I would have hid myself from him: but it was thou, a

man, mine equal, my guide, and my acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company," &c.

And so these false teachers are these familiar enemies, who exercise all their hatred under the pretence of love, all their enmity under pretence of friendship, and practise all their wickedness under a form of godliness; and by this subtilty have they deceived the world. They will not plainly contradict the words of the prophets, apostles, and Christ, in the letter of it, but will praise it, and speak well of it; but yet they are utter enemies to the true and spiritual meaning of it, both in their lives and doctrine: and the more these men make a shew of religion and holiness, the greater antichrists they be in the church.

Wherefore to you who are true christians, and have received an anointing from God, this is the word and charge of God, "Come out from among them, my people, and touch not the unclean thing," that is, their carnal doctrine; have nothing to do with such prophets and ministers, but remember what Christ saith, John x. that his sheep hear his voice, and will not hear the voice of strangers; for they know the voice of strangers. And if any of you live in any town or parish, where such false prophets are, though they go under the name of godly and orthodox, yet touch not the unclean thing, but know, that it is better for you believers to assemble together among yourselves, though you be but few, than to com-

municate with the false prophets in their false ordinances; seeing Christ hath promised his presence to his believers, even where but two or three meet together in his name: yea, hath said, "If any two of you shall agree together to ask any thing on earth, it shall be done of my Father which is in heaven." And if you, having these promises, shall meet together among yourselves, in the name and Spirit of Christ, in the use of the word, and prayer of faith, lo Christ himself will be with you; and though you be but few, yet are you the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth, and of that very church, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail. And thus much to you spiritual christians.

Second. And now for the carnal clergy, or false prophets, their burden is this from the Lord. You have run when you were not sent; you have said, thus saith the Lord, when the Lord hath not spoken by you; you have grieved the hearts of the faithful, and strengthened the hands of the wicked; you have been forward to advance the form of godliness, whilst you have been bitter enemies to the power of it: you have deceived the nations, and made them drunk with the cup of the wine of your fornications: you have done more against Christ and his true church, and more for antichrist and his false church, than all the people in these nations besides. Wherefore this is the word of the Lord to you, throughout all your quarters, That the nations shall not much

longer be deceived by you, nor buy any more of your merchandize, for your wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps; your doctrine being the word of philosophy, and not of faith; after the mind of man, but contrary to Christ's mind: to set up yourselves and your own interest, to the prejudice of Christ's word and people. Wherefore how much you have glorified yourselves, and lived deliciously by this trade of making merchandise of the word of God, so much torment and sorrow shall God give you, and your plagues shall come upon you in a day, and your judgment in an hour; and your lovers shall not be able to help you, nor the petitioners for you, to uphold you; but God shall bring you down wonderfully, by the clear light of his word, and his mighty and irresistible Providence accompanying it: and the world shall tremble, and wonder at the noise of your downfall: and the heavens, and holy apostles, and prophets, shall rejoice over you, when God shall avenge their cause upon you. And the Lord will save his flock; and they shall be no more a prey to you, neither shall you any more serve yourselves of them. And he will set up one shepherd over them, even Jesus Christ; and he shall feed them, and be their shepherd. And till these things be fully brought to pass, you shall be cloathed with trembling, when you shall perceive the Lord is risen up, to perform all these things according to his word.

And now for conclusion, if any of you, or most

of you, or all of you, are offended at these things, in such sort, that you cannot contain yourselves from anger, and bitter zeal, I do intreat you, to consider seriously, how much better, and more profitable to your eternal salvation it would be, for you to desist, and to refrain from such evil and unchristian passions: and that you would rather, if there be any hope, return to your own hearts, and try your works, and repent before our holy and righteous Lord, and return truly and speedily to Christ from antichrist, lest you be inwrapped, both in his temporal and eternal destruction.

And thus much was delivered to the University Congregation in Cambridge, for a Testimony against them, except they repent. The rest, for the substance of it, was delivered elsewhere in the Town, as followeth. Anno 1653.

THE
TRIAL OF SPIRITS.

1 JOHN IV. 1, &c.

“ Believe not every spirit,” &c.

IN this scripture we have noted these six things.

1. That the apostle gives the faithful notice of a great evil risen up, “ Many false prophets are gone into the world.”

2. He prescribes them a sufficient remedy against that evil; “ Believe not every spirit, but try,” &c.

3. He gives them a right rule for trial, ver. 2 and 3.

4. He shews, with whom those false prophets, who come in the spirit of antichrist, should not prevail, to wit, with none of the true children of God, ver. 4.

5. With whom they should prevail, to wit, with the worldly and carnal people, ver. 5.

6. He shews, how the spirit of truth and error may be known in the people, as well as in the teachers, ver. 6.

Of the three first of these points, I have spoken already, in the university congregation. The last time I spake of the third thing, that is, the rule of trial, how the false prophets may be known and discerned from the true. And I gave forth clearly and plainly, out of the word of God, nine signs to distinguish them, not one of which can possibly be contradicted, but by the spirit of antichrist, or by the profane and ignorant world. And then I also delivered two uses, the one to spiritual christians, and the other to the carnal clergy, all which you may have recourse to, in the former discourse.

But how these things have since vexed and tormented the false prophets, you very well know; and how exceedingly grieved and angry they are, that this word of God should be taught the people, and that in their presence. Unto which word of Christ they say by their deeds, as satan in the possessed said once to Christ himself in words, Mark i. 24, "Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God." This unclean spirit knew, and acknowledged Christ to be the Holy One of God, and yet would have nothing to do with him, because he was come to destroy him. So these false prophets cannot choose but acknowledge, in their hearts at least, that the word that hath been taught them, is the holy word of God, but yet they say, What have we to do with it? for it is

come to destroy us. For the more the word of Christ is held forth in the clearness and plainness of the gospel, the more doth it destroy them, and their affairs: their carnal clergy, flowing from the antichristian fountain of the universities; their ecclesiastical assemblies, arising out of the clergy; their presbyterian government, springing up out of their ecclesiastical assemblies; their national church, the product of their presbyterian government: together, with their worldly power and domination, their high titles, their scarlet robes, their divinity degrees, &c. I say, the word of the gospel comes with full might and mind to destroy all these, and all their other things, in which their souls delight, as bringing worldly profit, power, and honour to them. Wherefore this word, which abases, and casts down them, and all their things, and exalts Christ alone, and all his things, they cannot endure, but do account it their reproach and shame, and say to it, What have we to do with thee, thou holy word of God! for thou art come to destroy us: and so against this word they are angry, and enraged at no ordinary or human rate, but as David saith, Ps. lix. "They belch out with their mouth, and make a noise like a dog, and go up and down, full of pride, cursing and lying." But the Lord laughs at these heathen, and hath them in derision, for he seeth the day is coming, when "they shall wander up and down for meat, and grudge if they be not satisfied."

Now this behaviour of theirs towards the word

of God, is plainly foretold, Rev. xvi. 10, 11, where it is said, that when "the God of heaven poured forth his vial by the fifth angel on the seat," or throne, "of the beast, his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and yet repented not of their deeds." Now the throne of the beast in these nations, are the universities, as the fountain of the ministry; the vial poured on them, is the true word of God, or the plain and simple gospel, which is the word of faith, than which nothing is more grievous to them who have been bred up in philosophy, and in the knowledge, wisdom, learning, righteousness and spirit of the world. Now the primary event of the pouring forth of this vial of the word of God on this seat, is the darkening of antichrist's kingdom, as it is said, "His kingdom was full of darkness;" it was full of darkness before, but now it is discovered to be full of darkness. Their philosophy is darkness, and vain deceit; their school divinity darkness, and anti-christianism; their divinity acts and clerums, darkness; their professorships of divinity darkness, yea, all their doctrine, faith, worship, works, church discipline, titles, ordination, and all are discovered to be darkness, even gross darkness, by the word of faith. And then follows the secondary event of the pouring forth this vial, which is, "They gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of

their pains and sores," which the word inflicted on them; that is, they had not the ordinary anger of men against the word, but the anger and wrath of devils, causing them to blaspheme again. But yet for all these things, "they repented not of their deeds;" as we see manifestly, which yet would have been more profitable for them. And this also discovers them to be false prophets indeed, and the right ministers of antichrist: and this appertains to the sixth sign of false prophets, which I gave before.

Fourth General Point. And now I proceed to the fourth thing, wherein the apostle shews, with whom the false prophets, which come in the spirit of antichrist, should not prevail; namely, with none of the true children of God: and this is set down in ver. 4, "We are of God little children, and have overcome them, because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." Here now the apostle shews the victory, which the truly faithful and spiritual christians do obtain over antichrist and his false prophets, together with the grounds of that victory.

1. The victory is set down in these words, "Little children, ye have overcome them."

2. The grounds of this victory are two: 1. Because the faithful are of God, as children of their father: "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them." 2. Because that Spirit which the faithful have received, and which dwells in them, is stronger, and mightier than that spirit

which the world receives, and which dwells in them. "Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."

I shall first speak something of the victory itself; that is, of that glorious victory, which all the true children of God do obtain over antichrist. For though antichrist and his teachers do come in Christ's name, as Christ hath foretold, and in sheep's clothing; and though they transform themselves into the apostles of Christ, and come with all deceiveableness of unrighteousness, holding forth a false Christ the head; a false church the body; a false word, a false worship, false works, false ordinances, and all these false things exceedingly like the true, and in the very form and appearance of the true; in such sort, that they prevail with all the national church, and the generality of the people of the world, which all wonder after them: yet are they not able, by all these things, to prevail with any of the true children of God, as Christ himself hath taught us, saying, "Many false christs and false prophets shall arise, and shall come with lying signs and wonders; able, if it were possible, to deceive the elect." And though they do deceive all others, yet is it not possible for them to deceive the elect of God, that is, throughly and fully, as they do deceive others; but the faithful and elect people of God do escape their deceits, and do overcome them; yea, though they be but little children, new in

the faith, and young in Christ, yet do they overcome all the false prophets in the world. For these little children are so stript of their old nature, that they overcome the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life, which are not of God, but of the world, and through which only, the ministers of antichrist are mighty: and so these teachers can find nothing in them, on which they can lay hold to prevail. Besides, as new born babes can discern and taste which is good and wholesome milk, and suitable to them, and can refuse what is otherwise; and this instinct they have in their very nature, as soon as they have a being, to judge of their food, which is good for them, and which is hurtful: so the children of God, as soon as ever they by faith are made partakers of the divine nature, they can immediately judge of the milk of the word, and can surely taste and discern whether it be sincere or adulterated, whether it be good or hurtful for them. And so in the virtue of their new nature, they reject and overcome all the false doctrine of the false teachers.

And thus we have seen all along, in the several ages of the reign of antichrist, that Christ hath always had a people of his own, though but few in number, and mean in condition, and despised of the world, whom antichrist could never prevail against, neither by the subtilty of his doctrine, nor by the violence of his tyranny; but they

have by their faith and patience, and word of their testimony, withstood him and his multitudes, yea, the whole world, whom he hath all along seduced. Thus in every age hath Christ had so great care of all those whom his Father hath given him, that he hath lost none of them, no not one single person; but by his word and Spirit which he hath put into them, and by his own presence in them, through his word and Spirit, he hath still preserved them, and hath strengthened them, to oppose and resist antichrist to the death, and to overcome as he overcame. And so during all the reign of antichrist in the world, Whom hath he prevailed withal, and deceived, but only the world? but not one single person of the elect children of God, though he hath especially sought to prevail with them.

But Jesus Christ, who only knows who are his, hath kept all along those whom he hath known, that we might understand, that the care of the true church is committed to him alone from the Father; and that all the magistrates and powers of the world, are not at all capable of such a trust, which would have been too great for the very angels of heaven. And though antichrist during his reign, had inwrapped the elect themselves into all his errors, before faith came, as the first Adam had inwrapped them in all his sin; yet as God wrought faith in them, and gave them his Spirit, so they by degrees recovered out of the errors of antichrist, and prevailed against them.

Lastly, Seeing all the true children of God do overcome antichrist and his ministers, antichrist hath no cause to boast of his reign in the world, nor the true church of Christ to be discouraged at it. Antichrist, by all his subtilty and strength, and by all his own ecclesiastical power, and by all the temporal power of princes, whom he hath seduced, hath conquered to himself none but the world, that is, the people that were not of God. And the true spiritual church of Christ's own building, the new Jerusalem from above, that sojourns in this world, hath not lost one stone out of its building, nor one member out of its body, by all that antichrist, and the devil his head, could do. And therefore antichrist hath no cause to boast, for he hath got none but his own; and the true church hath no cause to be discouraged, for it hath lost none of its own; and none ever went out from it, but those that were not of it; and all that were truly of it, have ever continued with it. And thus much briefly touching the victory which the faithful obtain against antichrist and his prophets.

Now the grounds of this victory here named, are two.

1. The first is, because they are of God: "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them."

Antichrist and his false prophets cannot prevail against the truly faithful, because they are of God, as the Spirit also speaks elsewhere; saying,

“Of him are ye in Christ Jesus.” And they are of God, as children are of the father, as it is written, James i. 18, “Of his own will begat he us by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures.” So that, as the children of men, are of their fathers, through a natural generation, and being; so the faithful are of God, through a spiritual generation, and being. And as the children of men partake of the very nature of their fathers, so do the children of God partake of the divine nature: the faithful being born again, “not of corruptible, but of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which lives and abides for ever.”

That as Jesus Christ, who (according to his human nature, was a man, and in all things like to us, sin excepted), came to be of God, and to be the Son of God, through the coming and dwelling of the living word of God in his flesh, according to the love, will, and counsel of the Father; so the same living word, coming and dwelling in the faithful, his members, according to the same love, will, and counsel of God, they also come to be of God in Christ, as Christ is of God, according to his human nature.

And as Christ being thus of God, according to the word of God, that dwelt in his human nature, overcame the devil, the head of antichrist, and antichrist, and his body, the temple of the devil; so do all Christ's members overcome antichrist, and his prophets, through the same

living word of God dwelling in them, or through the word of righteousness and life, its being incarnate in them; that is, its being written in their hearts, by the Spirit, or put into their inward parts. Wherefore Christ throughout, that is, from the head itself to the lowest member, is called "Immanuel, God with us," or which is all one, "God manifested in the flesh."

And for this cause these faithful, or little children of God cannot be prevailed against, inasmuch as they are of God, and so have in them, by true union and communion, the nature of God, and the word of God, and the Spirit of God, and the righteousness of God, and the wisdom of God, and the power of God, and the life and light of God, and all the things of God: as the apostle Paul saith, in the new creature, "all things are become new, and all things," that is all these new things, "are of God," that is, they are the very things of God. And so these faithful people cannot be prevailed against by antichrist, or by the devil, the head of antichrist; but they do prevail against the doctrine of antichrist, by the doctrine of Christ; against the spirit of antichrist by the Spirit of Christ; against the sin of antichrist by the righteousness of Christ; against the error of antichrist by the truth of Christ; and against all the things of antichrist, by the infinite and eternal things of Christ. Wherefore you see, that all they that are of God, through a new birth, and are the true children of that heavenly Father, and do

partake of his divine nature, and all his divine things, they cannot be overcome of antichrist and his prophets, but they do mightily overcome them all; through that immortal seed of the true and living word of God, of which they are born, and in which they live and act.

But, they that are overcome by antichrist and his teachers, through their deceiveableness of unrighteousness, they never were the true children of God, but hypocrites, and unbelievers, under a form of godliness; that is, as the apostle stiles them, bastards, or false children, who never had received the true nature of God through faith. And now follows,

The second ground, why the faithful cannot be overcome by antichrist, and his prophets; to wit, "Because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."

And here the apostle shews, that the true faithful christians, are not only of God, but also have God himself dwelling and abiding in them. For they are "built up by the Spirit to be the habitation of God, and God is in them of a truth;" and that not by created habits of grace, as antichrist and his prophets have thought and taught; but the true God is in them of a truth, and he dwells in them, and walks in them, as himself hath said, and "The tabernacle of God is with men." And now, as the sun is never without its light and heat, and all its virtues, and wherever it goes, all these go

along with it, being inseparable from it ; so wherever the Lord God comes, he comes with all his righteousness, wisdom, power, peace, joy, and all his infinite and eternal things ; and where God himself is, there are all the things of God.

And thus God in his faithful people, is greater than he is that is in the world ; that is, he is greater than antichrist, and the devil his head. He is greater in his true word, than they in their pretended word ; greater in his true Spirit, than they in their pretended spirit ; greater in his true righteousness, than they in their pretended righteousness ; greater in his true wisdom and power, than they in their pretended wisdom, and power, &c. “ Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.” Now for certain, the less is overcome by the greater ; and seeing God and his Spirit in his saints, is greater in goodness, righteousness, wisdom, and all things, than the devil is in antichrist and his prophets ; therefore the faithful in whom God dwells, and manifests himself, must needs overcome antichrist and the false prophets, in whom the devil dwells, and manifests himself. Now hence we may learn several things. And

First, We may learn that antichrist can prevail against any outward form of religion and godliness, against any human virtues and graces, and works, and prayers, or any thing that is of man, or flows from him, though in never so great appearance of holiness ; as we by sad experience have seen, many

men of great seeming religion, famous for preaching and praying, and reputed pillars in the church, when they have come hither into the university, (where antichrist and his spirit have remained in their full strength, notwithstanding the great consumption which God hath brought on them by his word, in other parts,) how soon have they ceased from that sense of the gospel which they once seemed to have had; and how suddenly have they been entangled and overcome with the spirit of the university, and of antichrist, for worldly honour and advantage sake? And so, the highest and strongest formal religion in the church, antichrist can soon prevail against.

But antichrist can never prevail against God, in the saints, nor against the righteousness, wisdom and power of God in them, all which are contained in his true presence; nor against the faith, hope, and love of saints, which are the works of God in them by his Spirit; against these antichrist cannot prevail: "For greater is he that is in us, than he that is in the world." So then, if thou hast any thing in thee that is truly of God, or rather, that is God himself in thee, that antichrist cannot overcome, by all his arts and powers; but he will easily overcome any thing else. Antichrist cannot prevail against Immanuel, which is "God with us," nor against the mystery of godliness in us, which is, "God manifest in the flesh;" but every other thing, though it seem never so angelical, he prevails against.

Second, We may learn hence, that it is not an easy thing to overcome antichrist, and to get the victory over that beast, and his image, and his mark, and the number of his name, seeing antichrist's coming is after the working of satan, as the apostle saith: and through antichrist the devil himself speaks, works and acts, yet as an angel of light, in all lying or false power, wisdom, and righteousness; and this he doth for the damnation of men, and to bring them all, who have no true love to the truth, to perish with himself for ever. And his operation of error is so mighty and efficacious, that it cannot be resisted and overcome by any in all the world, but by those who are born of God, and do partake of his nature and presence in them. For the power, wisdom and righteousness of antichrist and his prophets, which is so suitable to the nature of the world, and so glorious in its eye, cannot possibly be overcome, but by the true power, wisdom and righteousness of God, in his true children or prophets.

Third, hence also let us learn, not to be dismayed at antichrist and his prophets, who have in all ages got such reputation, power and glory to themselves in the world, because of their seeming learning, righteousness and religion: seeing Christ in us, and in all his poor people, is infinitely more mighty than they are, and the devil in them; and nothing can prevail against us, except first it can prevail against Christ. Wherefore if we in ourselves are never so weak, and through our weak-

ness never so fearful and trembling, yet let us not be discouraged, or faint, seeing our might is not in ourselves, but in Christ, who dwells in us, and who is infinitely greater than he that dwells in the world. He that dwells in us through faith is greater than he that dwells in them through unbelief; and in his strength let us abide by his word and doctrine, even to suffering and death, if need be: and in all these evils we shall overcome them, by whom we seem to be overcome, as also Christ our head did, and thus much for the fourth general thing.

Fifth Point. The apostle shews with whom antichrist and his teachers should prevail, to wit, with the worldly and carnal people, verse 5. "They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world hears them."

"The world hears them." Antichrist and his prophets prevail with the world and worldly people, and do obtain their favour, love and applause: and they are their auditors, and delight in them and their doctrine. Now by the world here is meant, such people, who though they have an outward christianity and religion, yet inwardly remain in their natural condition and corruption, without any true renewing through faith and the Spirit. And all such people, notwithstanding their seeming religion and righteousness, do love themselves and this world, and the things of it, better than Jesus Christ and his truth. And these here are called the world: and this world, or these worldly

christians, do hear and entertain the teachers of antichrist, and their doctrine. Two grounds of which the apostle here gives us, to wit, why these people cleave to these teachers. 1. The first is, Because these teachers are of the world. 2. Because they speak of the world.

1. They are of the world. That is, though by their breeding and profession, their degrees and ordination, they seem to be set at a great distance from the common people, and to be nearer the kingdom of God, and the knowledge and possession of it, than the common people of the world; yet for all this, they indeed and in truth, are still of the world; and all their liberal education, their manner of life, their study, knowledge, learning, languages, sciences, degrees, and ordination, doth not at all change their inward evil nature, mind, will, affections, nor the corrupt disposition and principle in which they were born; but notwithstanding all these things, they are still the very same throughout, as when they came first into the world, being destitute of a new birth and heavenly nature. Nay, by all these things they are more taken into the spirit of the world, into the corruptions and evils of it, into the pride, lust, covetousness, and ambition of it, by how much, through such endowments and accomplishments, they think themselves better than other men; and so, notwithstanding their academical degrees, and ecclesiastical orders, they are not less, but more of the world, even fully of the world.

And hence we may learn, that it is not study, parts, breeding, learning, nor any natural endowments or acquired accomplishments, that will deliver any man out of this world, or corrupt state of mankind, or that can change his nature, or give him the least place or interest in the kingdom of God ; but only a new birth, and true faith in Jesus Christ, whereby we are made the children of God : without which, men are still of the world, notwithstanding all their other improvements.

And this very thing manifests, that universities cannot be the fountains of the true ministry of the gospel, seeing all the education in it, philosophical, moral, and theological, cannot change men's natures, or deliver them from their corruptions, or translate them one hair's breadth out of this present evil world ; yea, generally we see, that by university education, as things have hitherto been managed, youth is made more of the world than they were by nature, through the high improvement of their corruptions, by their daily converse with the heathens, their vain philosophers, and filthy and obscene poets : and by these heathenish abominable accomplishments, are they made the more fit teachers for the world and worldly people, and become the more suitable to them, and obtain the greater aptness and ability to please them. Wherefore it may be most truly said of that ministry that flows merely from the fountain of the universities, that it is of the world.

And now, when the teachers are of one nature

and principle, of one heart, mind, and consent with the hearers, there must needs be a great agreement between them; for each one approves and loves that which is like himself; and so the worldly people must needs cleave to the teachers that are of the world. Yea, farther, and which is very considerable, the world can endure and like any doctrine, though in the letter never so holy and spiritual, from such teachers as are of one nature and spirit with itself. And he that speaks of the things of Christ, without the Spirit of Christ, and by the spirit of the world, can never, by any such doctrine, be grievous to the world, but rather acceptable; seeing there is more in the nature of those teachers to reconcile the world to them, than in their doctrine to set the world against them; for the world cannot but agree with those teachers that are of the world, let their doctrine in the letter be what it will. Whereas on the contrary, the faithful are not of the world, but of another seed, nature, and principle, which is in direct enmity to the world; and so they speaking the things of Christ in the Spirit of Christ, must needs be grievous and troublesome to them who have the spirit of the world; and the friends of Christ crucified, cannot but be grievous to the friends of this world. And this for the first ground.

2. The second ground, why the worldly people hear the worldly teachers, is this, Because they speak of the world. For as they are, so they

1 speak ; “ Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh ;” and so they that are of the world, speak of the world : and this we may conceive of in three particulars.

1. The worldly teachers speak of the world, that is, they speak the spiritual word of God in a carnal and worldly sense ; they speak of divine things, as of human things, according to their natural and human mind, reason, knowledge, learning, and understanding of them. And so, they give forth Christ himself, and his kingdom, and all his things, his redemption, reconciliation, salvation, as also faith, hope, love, and all the graces of the Spirit, and riches of Christ, they give forth all these things, in a carnal understanding and notion to the people. And the world can like well enough of Christ, his kingdom, and things, in a worldly sense ; they can bear, or endure faith and repentance, and the new creature, and the new Jerusalem in a carnal sense ; while in the true spiritual sense of them, and as they are in themselves, and according to the mind of Christ, they are the greatest enemies to them that can be.

Now believers must know in this matter, that whoever speaks the things of God’s Spirit, by the spirit of a man, or spiritual things, in a human, carnal, and worldly sense, is a false prophet, and teacher of antichrist. Whoever reading or learning the gospel of God our Saviour, doth understand and frame it after his own human sense, and doth not so understand it as the Lord hath

spoken it, he is a false prophet, understanding and speaking the gospel after his own mind, but contrary to Christ's; and these open their own hearts to the people, and not God's.

Now when the people that are of the world, hear the teachers that are of the world, speaking spiritual things in a carnal and worldly sense, and according to such an apprehension as they have already in their own hearts; they do exceedingly cleave to, and embrace such teachers, and their doctrine. For such doctrine, man in his natural condition can well like of, seeing it leads men only to a change of outward works, and to a performance of outward worship, which any man by his own natural abilities can perform: and the world can well endure to put on the fairest form of godliness, and the strictest, so their nature inwardly may remain the same. And thus the worldly people comply readily with the worldly doctrine of the worldly teachers, seeing it is after the sense and mind of man.

But on the contrary, Christ and his seed, as they are not of the world, so neither do they speak of the world, but being of God, they speak the things of God according to God; they speak of the things of God by the Spirit of God, and so according to the mind of God: they speak of the things of God, in the wisdom, righteousness, truth, light and life of God; and thus the world cannot endure the word, nor those that teach it.

2. The prophets of antichrist speak of the world,

that is, they turn the word of God into worldly and carnal doctrine, for worldly advantage sake; they preach the spiritual word of God carnally, that they may make it serve their own ends and turns. That word of the gospel, which God hath given only to serve the spiritual and eternal welfare of his church, the worldly teachers frame and use this, only thereby to serve their own worldly credit and reputation, their worldly profit and preferment, and their worldly authority and dominion. And thus that word of faith, which in its own proper nature and working, calls off all men from this world, and the things of it, to the kingdom and glory of God; they make this very word to sound carnally, that by it they may seek themselves, and the things of this present life. But Christ and his seed, who are of God, they speak of God, and not of the world, seeking no worldly thing at all by the word of God, which they teach and hold forth, as is manifest in the life of Christ, and his christians.

3. The ministers of antichrist or worldly teachers speak of the world, that is, they turn the word of God into worldly doctrine, that thereby they may avoid the cross, which the word of God, in the spiritual sense of it, would certainly expose them to. But now these worldly teachers, as they love the world, so they cannot endure the cross, that is, reproach, poverty, shame, sufferings and death for the true word. Wherefore they preach the gospel in such a sense as shall please the world,

but never offend them : as shall make the world their friends, but never their enemies; for they cannot endure to think of, much less to suffer, the utmost hatred and persecution of the world for Christ's name sake. Wherefore I say again, though in Christ they will praise his reproach, his shame, his poverty, his tribulation, his death and crucifying, yet they cannot endure these things in themselves for his truth's sake; but are the most careful and studious to preach the word of God in such a worldly sense, as shall never provoke the world against them, to do them the least harm; but shall rather incline them to confer upon them, according to their own phrase, all countenance and maintenance. And thus the worldly teachers speak of the world in this sense also.

But Christ and his seed who are of God, they speak not of the world, but of God, that is, they speak the word of God, according to God, never regarding whether the world be pleased or displeased therewith. Yea, they speak God's word, according to God's mind, though they certainly know, that it will procure them all sorts of reproaches, and tribulations, and all manner of evil to be spoken and done against them; inasmuch as they love God and his word, more than themselves and this world: and so, they are so far from declining the cross of Christ, which the right confession of the word will bring upon them, that they account it their greatest glorifying, to have fellowship with Christ in his sufferings, and to be made

conformable to him in his death ; all which things he endured, because he spake God's word, according to God's mind, and contrary to the mind of the world, and worldly church. And thus we see by John's doctrine, who spake by the Spirit, who they are with whom antichrist and his false prophets prevail, to wit, the world and worldly people, as also the grounds why they prevail with them, namely, because they are of the world, and speak of the world. And now for the use.

The world hears these teachers, who are and speak of the world. And hence first we learn, that antichrist and his prophets, the worldly teachers, come with such deceiveableness of unrighteousness, that no natural or worldly men whatever, of whatever parts, learning, knowledge, righteousness, can possibly discern them. If men are but natural men, though never so accomplished, antichrist deceives them all, and makes them his disciples. For antichrist comes so subtilly, and in such glorious appearances of holiness and religion, that none can know him and his ways, except they be singularly taught of God ; according to that of Christ to his disciples, " To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, to them it is not given." And to whom it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of Christ, to them also it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of antichrist; and none can truly know, either the one or the other, without a special gift from God. Whence it is most evi-

dent, that men are not able to understand antichrist and his kingdom, and things, as they are men learned in philosophy, and in the knowledge of the tongues, or as they are men of such and such degrees and titles in the university, or of such and such ecclesiastical orders in the church : I say, men by all such abilities and accomplishments, as they speak, are not able to discern antichrist, but rather are the more ready to be overcome by him, seeing by all these human and ecclesiastical things, antichrist can lay the faster hold on them, and make them the more his own.

And antichrist must needs be unknown to such men, inasmuch as Christ himself, as he is held forth in the word, and whatever he is and doth, both in himself and members, is wholly unknown to them ; yea, is so strangely unknown, that by a prodigious mistake they do judge Christ, and his members, and their doctrine to be antichrist, and his members, and their doctrine : and on the contrary, they do judge antichrist, and his members, and their doctrine, they do account and esteem of, as of Christ himself, and his members, and their doctrine. And thus is the multitude of carnal christians, which are even the whole world almost through the effectual operation of satan, brought to think and believe assuredly, that the prophets of antichrist, who handle the scriptures carnally, and after the mind of man, do verily teach the very doctrine and truth of God ; and of this they are so confident, that they would have the worldly

powers and magistrates to force all men to believe as they say, and to practise as they command. Yea these worldly men, with all their worldly accomplishments, are so deluded by antichrist, that whilst they oppose and persecute the faithful people of God, or rather Christ himself and his word, works, truth, and righteousness in them; they verily think they oppose and persecute antichrist himself, and the falseness of his members. And as the scribes and pharisees, the chief teachers of the Jewish church, being deceivers themselves, did yet call Christ a deceiver, and in killing and crucifying him, thought they did God good service: so the carnal clergy, and the head of them, being antichrists themselves, do yet tell of, and terrify people with another antichrist; and being seducers themselves, do yet rise up against the very members of Christ, as seducers, that thereby they may boast themselves to be righteous. So thoroughly and perfectly hath antichrist deluded and enchanted them, through the cup of the wine of his fornications.

Thus the whole world is overcome by antichrist, and cannot by all their highest attainments discern him from Christ; only they, who are born of God, and are his true children, and being plain, simple, meek and lowly in spirit, are taught of God, these only know antichrist, and overcome him; but these are the little flock.

Secondly, in that the world hears the ministers of antichrist: we are given to understand, that

men that are of a worldly spirit, and through that are addicted to the world, and to seek and follow after the profits, pleasures and honours of this life, they cannot possibly understand the impostures and deceits of antichrist and his teachers, but they all are seduced and overcome by them. Whoever therefore do profess or pretend to religion and godliness, and nevertheless live in the spirit of this world, and are swallowed up with the cares and comforts of this world, all such christians are a fit prey for antichrist : seeing,

1. Such carnal christians are so addicted to worldly occasions, that they cannot attend to the word of God in the spiritual sense of it, which is only known by temptation, prayer, and God's own teaching. And hereupon they want the true light by which only antichrist can be discerned. For antichrist comes in so great subtilty and likeness to Christ, that he cannot be perceived, but by christians much acquainted with the word, and much mortified and quickened through it.

2. Such carnal christians, as they neglect the word in the spirituality of it, so also they do love this world, and this quenches in their hearts the love of God, as John saith ; " If any man love this world, the love of the Father is not in him." Now they whose hearts are inwardly destitute of the true love of God, and yet do outwardly profess and worship God, all these are a fit prey for antichrist. And thus the world loving and seeking itself, and its own things, receives antichrist whilst

it cannot discern him. Wherefore the scriptures do every where give christians so many warnings against covetousness, which takes from men all true desire after Christ, and all regard, sense, and knowledge of antichrist. Christ therefore said to his disciples, "Take heed and beware of covetousness; for where the treasure is, there will the heart be also," &c. And thus all they, who are lovers of themselves, and of this world, the greater outward profession they make of religion, the more ready are they to receive and entertain the ministers of antichrist, and their doctrine, seeing, they are, and speak of the world.

3. Seeing the world hears antichrist, and his teachers, we are to take notice, that the carnal and antichristian ministers have a numerous auditory, all the worldly people cleaving and joining to them, because they speak that which is in their hearts. And therefore it is said, Rev. xvii. 15, "The waters whereon the great whore," that is, the ecclesiastical state which chiefly consists in the clergy, "sitteth, are people, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues:" so that the false prophets have all the world to hear them, except the faithful and spiritual people, and multitude is a certain sign of their church. And Rev. xiii. 7, it is said, that "power was given to antichrist over all kindreds, and tongues and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the Lamb's Book of Life." So that antichrist by

degrees, and by his several forms and appearances, one still more deceitful than another, doth win to himself all mankind, but the very elect. And so from time to time hitherto, he hath gotten to himself national churches, even the generality of all the people, of whole nations, kingdoms, and commonwealths, to hear his teachers, and to receive and submit to his doctrine and discipline, as most true and orthodox. And thus hath antichrist multitudes, even the whole world to follow his teachers, and to submit to them. But let not the true church, and little flock of crucified Jesus, be offended hereat, seeing they are but the world who hear antichrist's teachers, that is, they are such people.

1. Whose inward nature is earthly, carnal, devilish.
2. Such, who love an outward form of religion and godliness, whilst they are bitter enemies to the power of it.
3. Such, who love such a doctrine and religion, as may stand with their old corrupt nature, and may beautify and support it; and so may make them painted sepulchres, outwardly fair, whilst they are inwardly abominable.
4. Such, who love the world, in the sense of their own mind, but hate and abhor it, in the sense of Christ's mind; and reckon it so, to be the greatest error and heresy in the world.
5. Such, as so profess Christ and his gospel, as to make them serve their own worldly ends and advantages, without the least regard or respect had to Christ's true kingdom.
6. Such, as love them-

selves and their own things, the provisions of the flesh, and a quiet, easy, and commodious life, better than Christ Jesus, and his things. 7. In a word, they are such, as under the glorious profession, and subtle pretence of Christ's church, are truly and inwardly the church of the devil and anti-christ.

Such a people and no other hath antichrist to hear him, and to embrace and depend on him, and his doctrine, ministry, and ordinances ; that is, the multitude of false and carnal christians, which are almost the whole world of the outward professors of the gospel and christianity. For as antichrist and his prophets are of the world, and speak of the world, so also the world hears them. And thus much for the fifth point.

Sixth Point. In the sixth place the apostle shews, How the Spirit of truth and error may be known in the people, as well as in the teachers, to wit, by the people's cleaving to the teachers of truth, or to the teachers of error, saying, " We are of God ; he that knoweth God heareth us ; he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the Spirit of truth, and the spirit of error."

" We are of God ;" to wit, according to his new workmanship in Christ Jesus, through which we partake of the true nature of God in Christ, as members, as Christ himself doth partake of that nature, as head ; and being thus of God, we cannot but confess God, his name, and truth, in our heart, mouth, and life.

“ He that knoweth God, heareth us ;” that is, he that knoweth God through the teaching of God, knoweth us who are born and taught of God ; because we speak to them of God, and the things of God, as God himself hath taught them, of himself, and of his things ; and therefore they readily receive from us that testimony of the truth, which God himself, either hath already inwardly taught them, or doth teach them by his Spirit, whilst we yet speak by that Spirit. And so they hear us, by being satisfied, and acquiescing, or being at rest, in the true and wholesome, and saving doctrine of Jesus Christ, which we teach. “ Hereby know we the spirit of truth,” to wit, in the hearers ; when they cleave to the truth of the Spirit, or to the truth, as it is and dwells in Jesus, published by the teachers of truth. It follows,

“ He that is not of God heareth not us ;” that is, he that is not of God, through a new birth, and the renewing of the Spirit, and so is destitute of the divine nature, or of the eternal Word, and Spirit, which through his unbelief have no place in his heart : “ He that,” thus, “ is not of God,” but contrarily is of the devil, through sin, error, darkness, death, enmity to God, and his whole evil nature, “ he heareth not us ;” that is, he doth not taste, and relish, and approve, and receive, and embrace, and love the word of faith, and mystery of Christ and his gospel, which we teach ; but doth rather hate, oppose, reproach and persecute our doctrine.

And, “ Hereby know we also the spirit of error,” to wit, in the hearers, when they do not receive the word of truth from the teachers of truth, but do contrarily cleave to human, and philosophical, or moral, or formal, and national doctrine, published and held forth by the teachers of error. Now hence it is evident, that there are two heads, or chief teachers in the world, which are Christ and antichrist; and also, that there are two seeds, or generations, which flow from them, begotten by their doctrine. The one is Christ’s seed, or the elect and faithful; the other is antichrist’s seed, or the reprobate and unbelievers: and each sort of these people, do join themselves to their several and proper heads; and by this they are certainly distinguished, known, and discerned.

Antichrist and his false teachers, who are the head of the malignant church and people, they come in great pomp and glory, as to the eye of the world, being beautified, and dignified with degrees, names, and titles; being exalted to great honour, authority, and power; being full of fleshly wisdom, rhetorical eloquence, and philosophical learning; and so to human judgment, they are most considerable persons in the church, and very angels of light in appearance. And they being thus adorned and beautified, to the pleasing and content of the world, all the world come in, and commit fornication with them, and do hear and conceive them, and are conquered by their enchant-

ments. But Christ and his teachers, come in true humility, and self-denial, and meekness, and lowliness, and without the titles and glory of the false teachers, which they utterly despise, and refuse, and without all excellency of speech, and wisdom, and learning of this world; and these do contradict the religion and righteousness of the world, and speak the truth which is of God, by the Spirit which is of God: and these teachers, all the true sheep of Christ, the faithful flock do own and acknowledge, and they come and hear the words of their lips; being assured, that it is not they that speak, but the Spirit of their Father, which speaks in them.

For the body and members of Christ, do necessarily cleave to Christ their head; and the body and members of antichrist, do in like manner necessarily cleave to antichrist their head. And as the body and members of Christ do cleave to Christ their head, and to those that are in his spirit, and will not, nor cannot join to antichrist, and to those that are in his spirit; so also the body and members of antichrist, do cleave to antichrist their head, and those that are in his spirit, and will not, nor cannot, join to Christ, and to those that are in his spirit. For such as the body itself is, such a head will it choose to itself; and so a spiritual, heavenly, and faithful people, will join themselves to such a teacher, or rather to Christ himself, in and through him: and a carnal, worldly, and unbelieving people, will join themselves to

such a teacher, and to antichrist himself, in and through him.

Wherefore, as they that hear the true teachers, and Christ in them, and do join and cleave by faith to the word and doctrine which they hear, knowing that it is of God, as all such are certainly of God, even his true children and people, and the true sheep of Christ, inasmuch as they know his voice, and cleave to it; so they that hear the false teachers, and antichrist in them, and do cleave to their doctrine and ministry, and do like, commend, and applaud that, all such are not of God, but of their father the devil, and the true and natural members, and people of antichrist. And this very doctrine Christ himself hath clearly taught in his gospel; where he saith to the Jews, "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not; another shall come in his own name, and him ye will receive." That is, the unbelieving Jews would not come and cleave to Christ as their head, though coming in the name of God, that is, in the true power, wisdom, and righteousness of God, because they were none of Christ's own sheep: but antichrist coming in his own name, that is, in his own power, wisdom, and righteousness, they receive him, and join to him as to their own true and natural head. And again, Christ saith to the Jews, "He that is of God, heareth God's word; ye therefore hear it not, because ye are not of God."

Whence it appears, that to hear and cleave to

the true word of God, taught and held forth by Christ and his prophets, is a manifest token that men are of God; but to turn away from it, and to despise it, and to embrace another doctrine, is as manifest a sign that they are not of God, but of the devil, as Christ saith to the same people: "Ye are of your father the devil; for there is no truth in him, and he abideth not in the truth; no more do ye." Again, John x. 4, 5, Christ saith, his own sheep follow him, the true shepherd, because they know his voice; "and a stranger will they not follow, but flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers."

Wherefore they that hear the word of faith, in the true teachers of the gospel, they have in them the spirit of truth; but they that dislike and disrelish that word, and join to the teachers and doctrine of antichrist, they all have in them the spirit of error. And therefore it concerns us, more than the world is aware of, to take heed whom we hear: for if we cleave to the teachers of truth, as hath been declared, then have we the Spirit of truth; but if to the teachers of error, then are we of the spirit of error.

And thus this scripture teacheth us how to know and discern the spirit both of Christ, and of antichrist, and that both in the teachers and in the hearers; both which are of great use to the true church of God in all times, but especially

in these last times. And these things I have spoken and testified freely, according to the measure of grace given, knowing that they will be as acceptable to the true friends and members of Christ crucified, as they are troublesome and displeasing to the members of antichrist.



A
PLAIN AND NECESSARY
CONFUTATION

OF DIVERS

GROSS AND ANTICHRISTIAN ERRORS,

DELIVERED

TO THE UNIVERSITY CONGREGATION,

AT THE PUBLIC COMMENCEMENT, ANNO 1653.

BY

Mr. SYDRACH SIMPSON,

MASTER OF PEMBROKE HALL,

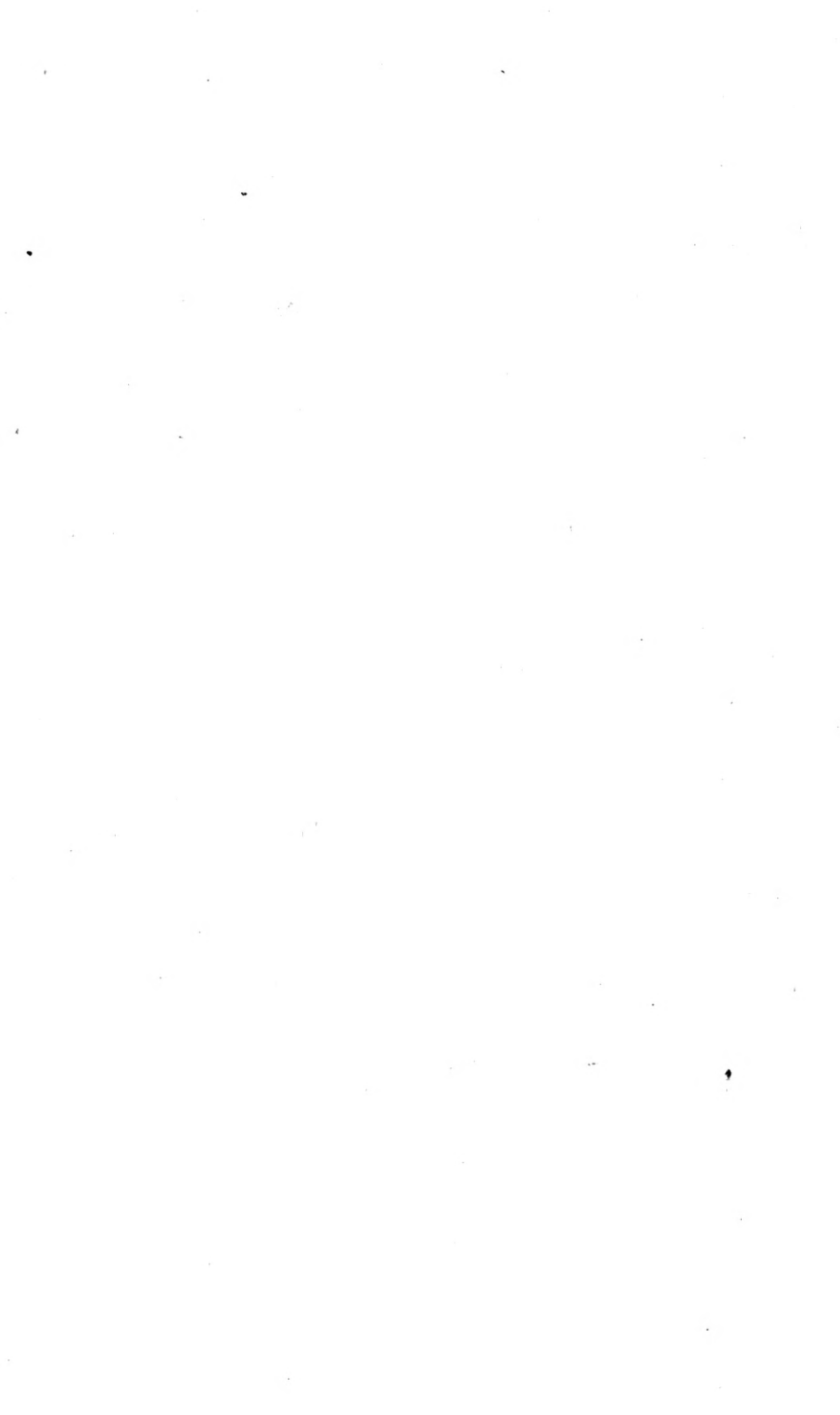
IN CAMBRIDGE.

Potentior est veritas quam eloquentia, potior spiritus quam ingenium, major
fides quam eruditio : et ut Paulus ait, Stultum Dei sapientius est hominibus.

Luth. Epist. ad Caspar. Bornerum. Profes. Lipsens.

Non est istud temeritas, sed fides ; neque inconsideratio, sed ratio ; neque
furor, sed fiducia.

Hilarius lib. contr. Constantium Augustum.



AN APOLOGY TO THE READER,

TOUCHING THE FOLLOWING REPLY TO

MR. SYDRACH SIMPSON'S SERMON.



IF it shall seem grievous to any, that I have dealt thus freely and plainly with Mr. Sydrach Simpson, one of the first pastors of an Independent congregation in England; let them consider how Paul dealt with those brethren, "To whom," according to his right zeal, and the present occasion, "he gave no place by subjection, no not for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with the Galatians." And though those brethren seemed to be somewhat, yet saith Paul, "whatever they are, it makes no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person;" and so notwithstanding their reputation, he did not spare them. Yea, let them consider how Paul at Antioch withstood Peter to the face, for dissembling with the Jews in the case of the Gentiles, and for not walking uprightly according to the truth of the gospel; wherefore Paul did publicly and sharply reprove him before them all. For no true believer is to keep silence, when the doctrine of the gospel is corrupted by the doctrines of men, or is

to be modest in this matter. Wherefore I was compelled to speak thus plainly to him, for his gross prevarication in the things of God; and I am well satisfied in my conscience in the discharge of my duty, whatever shall be the censure of carnal christians, who have no true sense of the glory of Christ's gospel, or of the profit of his people; whom yet Christ so loved, as to lay down his life, and to be crucified for them.

2. Again, if it shall offend any, that I deal thus roundly against human learning; let them know, that I am not against human learning upon all accounts, but do allow human learning, so it be sober and serious, in its own place and sphere, as well as other human things. But I do oppose it, as it is made another John Baptist, to prepare the way of Christ into the world, or to prepare the world's way to Christ; and also, as men make it necessary for the true knowledge of scriptures; yea, the very unction for the ministry.

And herein, according to the grace of Christ, I both do and will contend against it for ever; seeing human learning mingled with divinity, or the gospel of Christ understood according to Aristotle, hath begun, continued, and perfected the mystery of iniquity in the outward church. Wherefore I do in all boldness appear for Christ, the wisdom of God, against human learning, the wisdom of the world; knowing assuredly, that he is as very antichrist who opposes Christ as the wisdom of God, as he that opposes him as the

power and righteousness of God: and men may as well bring into the church of God another righteousness than Christ, and another power than Christ, as another wisdom than Christ. Wherefore, as they who bring in human righteousness, that is, civil or moral righteousness, or any works or duties of men for righteousness, into the church of Christ, they are true antichrists in so doing; seeing herein they are contrary to, and do oppose Christ the righteousness of God: and as they who bring in human power, or the secular arm into the church of Christ, to do or leave undone, to reward or punish, to promise or threaten, to encourage or discourage by that, they are true antichrists in so doing; seeing herein they are contrary to, and do oppose Christ the power of God: so also they that bring in human wisdom, or the learning and philosophy of men into the church of Christ, they also are true antichrists in so doing; for herein they are contrary to, and do oppose Christ, the wisdom of God: for Christ is, and is to be, the only power, the only wisdom, and the only righteousness in the church of God; and he that brings in any other power, wisdom or righteousness, besides Christ himself, that man is indeed very antichrist. And in this matter also, it was necessary that I should be bold for Christ against antichrist.

3. Again, if any shall be offended that I speak thus freely against the universities, which are of such honourable esteem every where in the

nation, especially with the ignorant and vulgar people, and with men of all sorts, who have not the right knowledge of Christ and his gospel, wherein are so contained all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, that no part of this treasury is left out thereof, to enrich heathenish philosophy withal, which by the gospel is left as a desolate thing, empty and destitute of all true wisdom and knowledge: I say, if any think that I have too deeply censured these universities, let them know, that I have done in this matter but as Wickliff, Huss, Luther, and several others, holy men of God, and happy instruments in the hand of Christ, have done before me. As for instance;

Wickliff terms the universities, *Castra Cainitica*, ‘Cain’s castles;’ *Synagogas satanæ*, ‘the synagogues of satan,’ and affirms, that they were never ordained or instituted by Christ.

John Huss, or Otho Brunfelsius, if he set out the contents of the chapters, calls them, *Satrapas antichristi*, ‘the lieutenants of antichrist.’

Luther in his book, *Contra Ambrosium Catharinum*, shewing out of Daniel the prophet, that antichrist is, *Rex facierum*, ‘the king of faces,’ or appearances, he affirms, that the universities are one of those faces of antichrist, and that they are very comely or sightly to look on, and yet indeed are a very chaos and open gate of hell, and that in these the most choice youth of christian people are prostituted, and are cast into the open throat of hell; and that in these Aristotle

is read, whereby the wits of christian youth are possessed and busied with human and heathenish learning; yea, are quite blinded and oppressed with it.

He saith also, that the universities are the woe, that the fifth angel (mentioned Rev. ix.) brought upon the earth; and that whoever it was that did first institute and confirm universities, he was a star fallen from heaven to earth: to wit, from the gospel of Christ to human learning.

And in his exposition on Psal. xxii, he calls the universities the mothers of learned men, the gates of hell, and saith, they are called (*Scholæ*, i. e. *Ludi*) schools, that is, plays, by a fatal name; seeing they make sport with the scriptures, and cast lots upon them, as upon the garments of Christ, every one dividing to himself a share of them, according to his own humane and philosophical apprehension. And he saith, that the doctors of these universities are by the same providence, called, *Doctorés scholastici*, i. e. *Ludicri*, vel *illusorii*: school-doctors, that is, trifling or may-game doctors. Again, he saith, Those most glorious mothers of studies, the universities, stink before God with most loathsome abomination.

These universities are those antichristian soldiers, who put a reed into Christ's right-hand instead of a sceptre; and this reed is philosophy, that vain deceit, or as the apostle elsewhere terms it, the operation of error: by which philosophy, saith

he, the unhappy people of Christ began to be governed, that is, to be seduced, and to be led away from the gospel of God. And this vain reed they put into his right hand, by preferring learning before godliness, saying, according to their usual manner of speaking, he is a learned and a godly man; hereby making learning to take place of godliness. And yet this philosophy is nothing but a weak reed, which counterfeits a sceptre, rather than represents it, and so is nothing but vain deceit; for there is nothing propounded in such doctrine, but vanity and lying, though under the title of knowledge and religion. In a word, he calls them Antichristi lupanaria, 'the stews of antichrist.'

Melancthon also terms the universities, *Domos mendacii*, 'Houses of lies,' and saith, It is manifest that they are all heretical by their school divinity; which all the schools in Europe have received from the university of Paris, and are thereby infected with heresy; and he saith, The students in the universities, are not the people of the gospel, nor yet of the law, but are the people of Aristotle's morals.

And thus it is manifest that others have spoken freely and sharply against the universities before now. And therefore wise and godly christians will have no just cause to be offended at me, who have spoken in like manner, having the same cause.

Now if any shall object, that they all spake against popish universities, and that our universities are otherwise now, than they were then; and so, there is not the same cause to speak against them now, as there was heretofore.

To this I answer, That though the outward form of gross popery be taken away from them, as also from the rest of the people of this nation, God having put it into the hearts of the civil power to reject it, after the light of the gospel had begun to shine to them; yet are the brains, heart, bowels, bones, marrow, sinews and blood of the universities, the self-same now as heretofore; and though the outside of it hath passed under a very little change, yet the inner parts of it remain as before, in the full strength of antichrist's kingdom, and that without any alteration at all. For the self-same statutes of the universities and colleges still remain with them in force, which were at first given to them by their popish founders, through the help of antichrist: and these statutes are of such authority with them, that they depart from the rule of Christ's gospel, to walk by the rules of sinful men, for worldly stipends and rewards' sake. Farther, the same philosophy or heathenism, and the same school divinity or antichristianism, are yet instilled into the youth and students, as were many hundred years ago, in the darkest times of popery; and these things are all in all in the university learning and education; insomuch, that no man is of any esteem and reckoning with them,

know he the gospel of Christ never so soundly and truly, if he be not (as they speak) a good philosopher, and school divine. So that the university for its inside is the self-same now, as it was in Wickliff, Huss, or Luther's time, being informed and possessed with the same heathenish and antichristian doctrine, now as then: Yea, many of the self-same outward and antichristian forms and follies still remain with them, more than with any other people in the nation again; even to their hoods, caps, scarlet robes, doctoral ring, kiss, gloves, their doctoral dinner and music. Neither could they ever yet to this day find in their hearts to lay aside their very prevaricator, which is some notable varlet picked out of the university, and brought forth in the presence of all the heads, students, scholars, and all the great resort of ministers and people, at their public commencement, to make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience before them all; and in open defiance of the gospel, which stands in faith and love, to abuse, and deride, and jeer, and reproach all sorts of persons, of all ages, sexes, professions, and this presently after their divinity acts; which is a wickedness the very heathen would be ashamed of, and which plainly declares what kind of divinity is taught and learned in the university, which can endure, allow, countenance, and be merry at that, which so highly contradicts God's word, and grieves his Holy Spirit: yet because it makes them merry after a full dinner, and puts more

joy into their hearts than the holy scriptures, they could hitherto dispense withal, to this day.

And so, however religion for the outward form, hath been much reformed in these nations; yet the universities, as the strongest holds which anti-christ hath had amongst us, have still remained much the same, not only as to the inward substance of all things, to wit, their statutes, philosophy, and divinity, but also in a great measure to their outward forms, as they were in their first antichristian institution.

Wherefore it was necessary also, that I should be plain and free for Christ's sake, and his churches, against these, as Luther calls them, stews of anti-christ, and dens of thieves, who have been, and still are, the constant and fruitful seed of anti-christ's kingdom in the world, out of which it might suddenly on all occasions and opportunities grow up afresh, how greatly soever it had been before wasted and destroyed among the people, by the clear word of God, and his mighty providences and works accompanying it.

Now as it was necessary this work should be done, so through the grace of Christ, was I made willing to do it, seeing nobody else more fit and able did appear. And, well knowing that he that provokes the universities and clergy against him, provokes "principalities and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world" against him; as is evident in the example of Wickliff, Huss, Luther, Tindal, and others: I have therefore according to

Christ's counsel, sat down and counted the cost of this undertaking, and after all do say, "The Lord is on my side, I will not fear what man can do unto me." And so I commit thee, Christian Reader, to that grace which is from God, to keep thee in this new hour of temptation, if the Lord suffer it to come forth upon the earth.

4. Again, if any shall object in reading this reply, that I myself make use of human learning, whilst I speak against it,

I answer; What part of philosophy is here made use of? or, Who of the heathens are here quoted? I have chiefly made use of the testimony of some faithful christians, who have lived in several ages, and yet have all witnessed by the same Spirit, the same truth. And it is no more human learning to quote believers in the church since Christ, than to quote the patriarchs and prophets before Christ, or the apostles and evangelists which immediately followed him.

5. And last of all. If any say, I myself relate to the university, why then do I speak against it thus?

I answer, That I neither do, nor will relate to the university, as it is polluted with any of the abominations herein mentioned: But as by the providence of God alone, I have been brought to that relation in which I now stand, and continue in it, against the wills and workings of many; so through his good pleasure I will remain, till he shall otherwise dispose of me: and during my

sojourning with them, I will not fail to testify against their evil, and to endeavour to win all those, whom God shall persuade to receive his truth, from heathenism to the gospel, and from antichrist to Christ.

Wherefore let none be offended that I am made willing to hazard and part with my worldly accommodations for Christ's name's sake; but let them rather praise the grace of God, which hath enabled me to witness a good confession, whatever worldly disadvantage I might run into thereby. Wherefore, Welcome the righteousness, power, wisdom, truth, word, and whole kingdom of Christ, though they swallow up all my earthly accommodations; for such fear and love of his name, hath the Lord graciously put into my heart, that I would not willingly conceal any thing of his most precious truth, either to gain or to preserve to myself the whole world. And so righteous Father, Not my will be done, nor theirs, but "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."



THE
CON F U T A T I O N
OF
MR. SYDRACH SIMPSON'S ERRORS.

ISAIAH LXII. 1.

“ For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.”

MASTER SYDRACH SIMPSON at the Commencement, Anno 1653, preaching to the University Congregation in Cambridge, and to many others, especially ministers there gathered together at that time, from several parts of the nation, among other things, he let fall in that discourse of his, these gross and antichristian errors.

The rehearsal of the errors.

1. He brought in that scripture, 2 Kings vi. 1, 2, which was his text: the words whereof are these, “ And the sons of the prophets said unto Elisha, Behold now, the place where we dwell with thee is too strait for us. Let us go, we pray

thee, unto Jordan, and take thence every man a beam, and let us make us a place there, where we may dwell. And he answered, Go ye." This scripture he used to prove the lawfulness and religiousness of the present universities, and the usefulness and necessity of human learning to the church and ministry of the New Testament. And what the scripture speaks of those schools, he brought to countenance, encourage and justify these: adding, that if it were objected, that that was the Old Testament; he did answer, That the Old and the New were not distinct Testaments, but administrations: thereby holding forth, that the universities now, are answerable to the schools of the prophets that were then; and that the universities are as agreeable to the New Testament, as the schools of the prophets to the Old.

2. That they who have endeavoured to pull down schools, have always been men who were found enemies to religion. So Julian the apostate shut up the doors of the schools, because he would have all religion to go down.

3. That the knowledge of heavenly things cannot come to us but by things on earth, and that all divinity is swaddled in human learning.

4. That Paul was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, and that God took him so fitted, and made him an able minister of his church.

5. That men's hatred to God, doth as well appear in their hatred to human learning, as if they hated the scriptures.

6. That if the Spirit teach without means, men may as well be without the ordinances, as without the universities and human learning.

7. That men now are not to receive the Spirit, in that immediate way to understand the scriptures, in which it was given to them who wrote the scriptures.

8. That men now are to get knowledge by studies and human learning, and not by inspiration.

9. That human learning is as the out-works to the fort of the gospel, and as the outer court to the temple of the gospel : and so, if you will keep the fort well, you must keep the outworks strong ; and if you will preserve the inward, you must look to the outward court.

10. But what is the bottom of all this, saith he, to wit, of some men's appearing against human learning, as the unction of the ministry, and against the universities, as the fountain of the ministry, but this? that some say, They are one with Christ ; and as Christ hath the divine nature in him, so every believer hath ; and he that hath God in him, need not go to any man to learn ; whereas in John xvii. Christ speaketh of believers as at an infinite distance from him : and if believers be so united to Christ as they say, then will follow, that Christ should not be the only begotten of God ; and that Christ and we should be equal, and he not our Lord, &c.

11. Arts and tongues are the cups in which God drinks to us.

12. We shall never keep up religion, if we do not keep up learning: but when learning goes down, religion goes down too.

13. Seeing religious foundations are so ancient, then keep them up. Your destruction will never be but from yourselves.

These notes were taken from Mr. Simpson's mouth, and delivered to me by an honest hand, and affirmed to be true for the substance of them; and I also heard several others who were hearers of that Sermon, relating the same things.

Now because I find that this doctrine hath not only grieved the hearts of the faithful, but also strengthened the hands of the carnal and evil people; the things which he then delivered, being usually the thoughts of their hearts, and words of their mouths; I thought it my duty, being set in my place for the defence of the gospel, to give a public reply to such gross errors so publicly delivered, to the danger of so many; and which one would never have thought should have proceeded from such a man; especially after the day of the gospel hath so far dawned, and the antichristian shadows are so far retreated and flown away. And so I shall begin with the first of these errors, and proceed in the order in which they are set down.

1. Error. He brought that scripture, 2 Kings, vi. 1, 2, touching the sons of the prophets, asking

leave of Elisha to go and build at Jordan, to prove the lawfulness and religiousness of the universities, in their present use and customs, &c.

To this I reply, that there is a vast difference between those schools and these universities, as in many other things, so chiefly in this. That in those schools of the prophets, named by him, the holy men of God freely taught the youth who came willingly to them to learn, especially in the corrupt times of Israel and Judah; I say, they taught them only the knowledge of the books of Moses, and of the other prophets then extant, and no heathenish knowledge, or disciplines of the Gentiles at all. And these kind of schools began early in the church: for the fathers before the flood, and the patriarchs after, all taught their children and families the word of God; and so each of their families was such a school. And that we may not be at uncertainties in this matter, it is manifest what doctrine they taught, by that which God himself saith of Abraham, Gen. xviii. 19, "I know Abraham," saith God, "that he will command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the Lord, and do justice and judgment;" this was the sum of Abraham's doctrine to his family. And this is further confirmed by that of Asaph, where he saith, "I will open my mouth in a parable, I will utter dark sayings of old; which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the genera-

tion to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done." Where we plainly see what doctrine the children received from their parents, and the parents taught their children, from one generation to another ; to wit, not vain philosophy, and the disciplines of the heathens, but the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and wonderful works. This also is manifest by the practice of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, who sent his princes with the Levites up and down throughout Judah, and they only took the book of the law of the Lord with them, and no heathenish authors, and taught the people, 2 Chron. xvii.

And Ezra after the people's return from Babylon, took only the book of the law of Moses, and read it to them: and the Levites also read in the book of the law of God distinctly to the people, and gave them the sense, and caused them to understand it, Neh. viii. And this also James the apostle witnesseth, saying, "Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day." So that the faithful prophets of the Lord during all the Old Testament, had the chief care in their schools to keep the word of the Lord among them in a right sense, according to the mind of the Spirit. For seeing the Lord's people are his portion, they knew they were to be carefully educated and instructed in the right knowledge of the scriptures, to prepare them for the Lord, and to make them meet for his

kingdom. And the keeping of the word and doctrine of God pure, is one of the greatest matters of all in the church of God; for as the word is, such is the worship, such is the faith, such is the conscience, such is all. Wherefore the holy men of God would by no means bring in the philosophy or doctrine of the heathens into their schools, to teach that to their sons or scholars, but only the true, faithful, and unmixed word of God.

And if against this it is objected, that Moses was learned in all the learning of the Egyptians;

To this I reply. But did Moses ever teach any of that learning in the church, or publish any of the doctrines of it? or did he command or encourage any of the people of God to learn it? Or did any other of the prophets of the Lord in any age, teach their sons or scholars, any of the Egyptian Philosophy, which was the ancientest, or the Smaragdine table of Hermes Trismegistus, the pretended scholar of Moses, so much boasted of, or any heathenish author whatsoever, of which there were many then extant? I say, let them prove that but one heathenish author was read by any of the prophets to their scholars, and then they will have some colour for the present universities and their practice: but this they can never do, during all the Old Testament.

And now for the New Testament, it is well known, that Christ himself, who was the Son of God, made of a woman, was the first and chief teacher of this doctrine: even the Son, out of the

bosom of the Father, full of grace and truth: and he set up the first christian school, and taught his twelve apostles, whom at his own pleasure he chose to himself. And what the doctrine was which he taught them, is manifest in the gospel; in all which there is not one word of heathenish philosophy, or of the doctrine and traditions of men, but he only taught them the words of eternal life; which no man nor angel could teach. He teaches that word which is the power, wisdom, and righteousness of God; through which sin is forgiven, and righteousness is given; death is destroyed, and life is brought in; hell is put out, and heaven is planted, in all them that do believe. He teaches a word through which the world is renewed, and men are made like angels, and are made meet to partake of the inheritance of the saints in light. He teaches a word wherein is contained all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge that are in God himself. And so Christ taught in his school no vain philosophy or heathenish doctrine, and yet he came from God and went to God, and is a pattern for doctrine to all true christians that are his disciples indeed; to whom he commanded when he left the world, and went to his Father, that they should teach all nations, and gather one christian school out of them all, by teaching them to observe and do whatsoever he had commanded them, to wit, in the gospel; and nothing else or more. He commanded them to teach all that, and only that; and promised himself

to be with them to the end of the world, in all such doctrine.

And the apostles accordingly, not by any help of human learning, but when they had received the Spirit, went forth to teach the nations, and to set up christian schools every where by their doctrine; and they all, only taught Jesus, and the resurrection from the dead. Thus Peter first taught the men of Judea, and inhabitants of Jerusalem, "That God had made Jesus whom they had crucified, both Lord and Christ: having raised him from the dead, because it was not possible for him to be holden of death," who was the Lord and author of life. And Stephen disputing with the Libertines, Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and divers philosophers of Cilicia and Asia, did hold forth to them nothing but Christ; and that he should put an end to the temple and law, and should change all the customs of Moses. "And they were not able to resist the wisdom and spirit by which he spake," Acts vi.

And Paul at the university of Athens, reprov'd there heathenism, and taught nothing among the Epicureans and Stoicks, and other sects of philosophers, but the resurrection of Christ, and his kingdom and judgment, Acts xvii. He also disputed daily in the school of one Tyrannus, and that for two years together, "and persuaded only the things touching the kingdom of God," brought into the world by Jesus Christ, Acts xix. And he so prevailed with his doctrine, that "many

which used curious arts, brought their books together, and burnt them before all men: and the price of them was counted at fifty thousand pieces of silver:" so that as the gospel prevailed, and the name of Christ was magnified, so did people renounce philosophy, and burn their books of curious arts; to recover which books again out of their ashes, if it might be, our university would give as much money, if they could procure it from good benefactors, as they were then valued at by the heathen. So that as they through the efficacy of the gospel, of heathens became christians, and threw away all other learning, and burnt their books of great value, lest they should infect others: so on the contrary in our universities of pretended christians, men usually become true heathens; never valuing the precious gospel of God our Saviour, as they do other heathenish and philosophical books.

Farther, the same Paul dwelt after at Rome two whole years in his own hired house, and during all that time, "Preached only the Kingdom of God, and taught those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all boldness:" but taught not one word of philosophy. He also at Corinth, a great and famous city of Greece, full of philosophers and orators, taught nothing among them but "Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness; but to them that believe, both of Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." And as he made no use of human learning all this while,

so in 1 Cor. ii. he plainly renounces it, and rejects it; saying,

“And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For, I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in meekness, and fear, and much trembling. And my speech, and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory, &c. Which things also we speak, not in the words that man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.” In a word this whole chapter tends to the utter rejection of philosophy, which is the wisdom of the world, in the kingdom of Christ, which is the kingdom of God.

He also in his Epistle to the Colossians, chap. ii. gives forth another plain testimony against philosophy, desiring, ver. 2, “That the hearts of believers might be comforted, and that they might be knit together in love, and unto all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the

acknowledgment of the mystery of God, of the Father, and of Christ: In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge:" and this, saith he, " I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words:" Wherefore, ver. 8, saith he, " Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments or elements of the world and not after Christ: for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, who is the head of all principality and power." Here is a sufficient caution against philosophy, for the true church for ever. For what need we, if we are true christians, to turn aside for wisdom, and knowledge, and learning, and curious arts, to the heathen, seeing God hath given Christ to us, in whom is treasured up all the heights, and depths, and lengths, and breadths of wisdom and knowledge, whereby the whole world was made, and every creature formed and fashioned, and in which it hath its being, subsistence, and operation? Yea, in this Christ dwells all the fulness of the infinite and eternal God, and he is the head of all principality and power, in earth and heaven; and there is in him alone, infinitely enough to make us wise and learned for ever, without calling in the help and contributions of the vain philosophers, and their foolish wisdom. It is enough for christian schools, to be taught to know Christ, by the ministration of the Spirit; and all other learning that is out of Christ, though

it seem to be never so high and deep, all faithful christians are to reject it, as meer sophistry and deceit. And thus you see that the apostles, as well as Christ, taught their scholars and disciples only the gospel, and spake not one word for philosophy, but directly against it.

And the following fathers, and next teachers of the christian church after the apostles, they also obeyed the command of Christ, and followed the example of the apostles in this matter. For the bishops and presbyters, that is, the overseers and elders, had tender regard to the children of christians, and did teach them as well as the people, the pure doctrine of the gospel; they held forth to them, Christ crucified, and did exhort them to faith, new obedience, the confession of Christ, and patient suffering, and did not at all intermingle philosophy with their divinity, but always rejected and condemned it, all along the first and purest times of the christian church, till the mystery of iniquity began to arise, and did cunningly insinuate itself into the church by the means of human learning.

And here it will not be amiss to relate what Justin Martyr saith of himself, as to this matter; who was before his conversion to the christian faith, a great philosopher; and lived about 150 years after Christ's nativity. He, in his dialogue with Trypho, relates, how first he joined himself to that sect of philosophers called the Stoicks, and after to the Peripateticks, after to the Pythagorean

sect, and after to the Platonists, but had no satisfaction in his mind by all this knowledge. But at last he beholding the torments and sufferings of christians, and seeing them bear them with such comfort and constancy, he did thereby conceive that it was impossible for that kind of people to be subject to any vice, or carnality; which vices of their own nature are not able to sustain any sharp adversity, much less the bitterness of death. And hereupon, he began to love and search after the christian religion; and being afflicted in mind, he did withdraw himself into a solitary place, where there met him an old ancient father, of comely visage, and gentle behaviour, who began to reason with him, and to tell him that there was no knowledge of truth among the philosophers, who neither knew God, nor were aided by his Holy Spirit: and did farther reason with him of the immortality of the soul, of the reward of the godly, and punishment of the wicked. Then Justin being satisfied with his reasons, yielded to him, and demanded of him, How he might attain to that true knowledge of God, whereof he had spoken? Who counselled him to read the scriptures, adjoining therewith prayer, &c.

And as this Justin left all other learning, and betook himself only to the scriptures; so in the understanding of the scriptures he rejected all his philosophy, and philosophical apprehensions; saying, that the interpretation of the scripture is to

be accommodated to the will of the doctrine of the Spirit, and not to human reasonings. And that he might be sure and safe in all things, he had constant recourse to the scriptures, thus understood. So that Justin Martyr being effectually converted, wholly left his philosophy, and betook himself to the scriptures, and taught them to the church, as he had been taught them of God by his Spirit.

Constantine, the Emperor, though he were the first that brought in the mystery of iniquity into the christian church, by mingling the civil and ecclesiastical states and laws together; there being in his time a great increase of christians, through the ministry of the gospel, and a great confluence of them to his imperial city for the word's sake, he wrote to Eusebius, Bishop of Nicomedia, in a special letter, wherein he desired him, with all diligence and speed, to procure fifty volumes of the scriptures to be written in parchment well and legibly; and in such a bigness or volume as might be carried with greatest ease; for the further teaching and instructing of those that came to attain the knowledge of the christian religion: judging it most meet, that christian people should be instructed in the doctrine of Christ only, and not in heathenish philosophy. And though afterwards, when the suffering times of the church began to be over, christians became more carnal and secure, and that in the very days of Constantine, and so began to decline the word of faith,

and to seek after philosophy; yet had God in all the ages of his church some of his servants, who did reject it, and did cleave only to the word. Among which, I shall only for the present, produce the testimonies of Berno, who lived above six hundred years ago; and Zuinglius of latter times.

Berno, who lived about the year 1008, and was a man furnished with all sorts of learning, saith, 'That he had for many years rejected as dung the figments of the poets, and the histories of the heathens, and the study of secular letters; and had converted the whole intention of his mind to the word of God, and the divine things contained therein:'* and accordingly, he taught no other doctrine to any.

Huldricus Zuinglius also, pastor of Zurich in Helvetia, a man who had been educated in all kind of learning, and was after through faith and the teaching of God, an eminent instrument in his church, he saith thus of himself: 'When,' saith he, 'I being yet a youth, was exercised in all sorts of learning, I can truly say, that I did not profit less than the rest of my equals. But when about seven years ago I betook myself to the study of the holy scriptures, then the things that I had before sucked in, or learned from philosophers and divines, did procure me so much trouble, that being then moved by the authority

* Berno in Epist. ad Magnifred.

of the scriptures, I judged that all those things were to be cast away and counted as dung, and that the true mind of God was only to be received from his pure and simple word. And therefore I began humbly to intreat the Lord that he would vouchsafe me his own light: by which means it shortly came to pass, that the reading of the holy scriptures did much delight and please me; and they being nakedly and alone propounded, did flow unto me with more ease than if I had read them divided and distracted with variety of comments.* And as he rejected philosophy wholly, and entertained the word, so did he only teach this word to faithful christians, who are the only true school of Christ in the world.

Now by all this it appears, that the schools of the prophets and apostles, and of Christ himself the head of them, and of the most faithful christians, that followed Christ, in the first and latter ages, were in no sort like the schools in the present universities, where human learning, according to the statutes of the universities, prevails for the first seven years; and they think, youths cannot be made good christians except they be first made good heathens.

The schools of the prophets and apostles would not meddle with the philosophy of the heathen, but led the children and youth presently to the word of God, and therein to the true knowledge

* Zuingl. lib. de Certitud. et Veritat. Verbi Dei.

of God in Christ. But these schools first lead youth from God and his word several years together, to the corrupt reason, wisdom, notions, conceptions; yea to the idolatry, blasphemy, atheism, lusts, filthiness, and villanies of the cursed heathen, that thereby (in a strange and antichristian method) they may be the fitter to know and understand the scriptures. The schools of the prophets taught only Moses and the prophets, to the Jewish youth; and the schools of the apostles taught Christ only and his gospel, to the children of christians: But the universities lead men both from Moses and from Christ, both from the law and the gospel, to the heathen, to make men hereby the more able christians and divines.

The Queen of the South, neglecting the Magi, or wise men of the heathen, came from the utmost parts of the earth, to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and the universities leave Christ, who is infinitely greater and wiser than Solomon, and go to the utmost parts of the earth for wisdom from the heathen. So that in these universities, there hath been the greatest apostacy and withdrawing from Christ, and the greatest dishonour and disparagement offered to him and his gospel, as ever was known in all the world. For, is it not a matter of greatest wonder and amazement, that after that Word, which was with God, and was God, and is God blessed for ever, hath been manifested in the flesh, and that flesh of his hath been justified by

the Spirit, to have the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in it bodily : and, that this so wonderful a person hath come to his church, in the same common nature with it, filled with all the righteousness, wisdom, truth, power, life, peace and joy, and all the things of God ; I say, is it not strange, that he who alone comprehends the fulness of all things, and in whom are hid all the infinite treasures of divine and heavenly wisdom, and knowledge ; that he alone should not be counted sufficient and enough, no, not by those who pretend his name, to make us wise to salvation (which is the only true, excellent, and necessary wisdom in the world) and to make the man of God perfect, and the whole church of God complete ? But to the great dishonour of Christ, yea, to the very rejection of Christ, the children of christians must be led from the doctrine of Christ, the Son of the living God, to the doctrine and disciplines of the wretched, filthy, abominable, wicked, and damned heathen ; and to spend the prime and flower of their youth in these things : who but antichrist himself could have brought in, and set up such an abomination of desolation in the church of God ? And yet for the better credit of all things, must these corrupt heathenish schools be called the schools of the prophets ; though nothing but the ignorance of the law and gospel be taught in them ; and the highest enmity to Christ in all the world, lives and flourishes in them.

And thus as the christian schools at first brought men from heathenism to the gospel; so these schools carry men from the gospel to heathenism, as to their great perfection. And the fruit of this education of youth is manifest; For where hath the gospel found less favour, and more enmity at any time, than from the universities?

Ridley the martyr, with Cranmer and others, being in prison in Oxford for the testimony of the gospel, writes thus to Bradford: 'As yet,' saith he, 'there was never learned man, nor any scholar, or other that visited us, since we came into Bocardo.' And in another letter to him, he saith, 'And yet as we hear, the scholars bear us more heavily than the townsmen; a wonderful thing, among so many, never yet scholar offered any of us, so far as I know, any manner of favour, either for, or in Christ's cause,' Fox, vol. iii. p. 442, 443. Yea, farther, where shall you see youth again in all the nation, so vain, proud, fantastical, bold, impudent? Where shall you meet with such mockers and scoffers at God, and his gospel, as here? How many hopeful youths have here been sacrificed to the heathen, and their careful parents after much cost have received them home, as full of heathenish manners, as doctrine? And if some are lately become more civil and seemingly religious; yet is their enmity to the gospel in its true spiritual sense, as it is the word of faith, nothing abated: for such as is the doctrine among

them, such also of necessity must their consciences and lives be.

Wherefore the universities, according to their statutes and usual practice, are not the schools of the prophets, or of christians, but of heathen men; and Plato, and Aristotle, have more credit in the university, than Moses, or Christ himself. And, if after their course, or running their circle in philosophy, they betake themselves to divinity; yet do they so mingle, spoil, and corrupt it with philosophy, according to which they both understand the scriptures, and speak of them, that their divinity cannot be called the doctrine of Christ, but of antichrist, being wholly contrary to the word of faith. And therefore Mr. Simpson was the more to blame to flatter them in their evils, and to deceive the world, in appropriating to them the glorious title of the schools of the prophets, who are in all things so contrary and contradictory to them.

Now the sum and certainty of this matter, is this; That the congregations of believers, where only the word of the gospel is truly taught, according to the ministration of the Spirit, whether to youth or men, they, under the New Testament, are answerable to the schools of the prophets under the Old, who only taught Moses and the prophets. And the universities wherein philosophy is first taught the youth, and after divinity, and then both are mingled together, to the utter perverting and corrupting the gospel of Christ; I say, these uni-

versities in the time of the gospel, are answerable to the high places in the time of the law, where a doctrine and worship prevailed, which was not according to God's word, but man's will; and where judaism and heathenism were mingled together into one mongrel religion, most odious and abominable to God and his people. And so the universities in the time of the gospel, are only answerable to the high places in the time of the law; but not at all to the schools of the prophets, as Mr. Simpson pretends.

And now for the conclusion of this matter, which I reckon to be of great concernment for the true church to be thoroughly instructed; I shall bring forth the testimony of some godly men; of whom some shew how the schools and universities of christians came first to be corrupted, to wit, by departing from the plain word of the gospel, and bringing in philosophy; and another foretels the reformation of the schools of christians again, to wit, by rejecting philosophy again, and bringing in the word of faith. All which will serve as a confirmation of what hath been already spoken.

Matthias Parisiensis, a Bohemian by nation, who lived about the year 1380, wrote a large book against antichrist, wherein he affirms, 'That antichrist had seduced all universities and colleges of learned men; so that now they teach no sincere doctrine, neither give any true light to christians through their teaching;' to wit, they being all

corrupted through philosophy, and having through that corrupted all divinity.*

And John Huss, that humble and faithful servant of Jesus Christ and blessed martyr, saith, 'That antichrist hath seduced all carnal christians from divine wisdom, which is full of salvation, and the Holy Spirit, to the wisdom and science of men, and of the princes of this world, which (wisdom and science) he hath exceedingly enlarged and increased, and made authentical, and very gainful of riches and honours in this world; that so by this means, divine wisdom and science might be neglected of christians, and grow old, and be covered over, and be accounted as vile and unprofitable by them; and, that only that, which is high with men, (to wit, human learning) might be reckoned glorious and excellent, and of great authority with christian people.'†

The same Huss saith, 'That this human learning, wisdom and knowledge, antichrist doth perfectly subject to himself and his service, he being more mighty and subtil through the operation of satan, than all worldly men, whom, with all their learning, disciplines, and abilities, he strongly subjugates to himself, and doth especially serve himself of these: wherefore saith Job, chap. xli. *Sub ipso erunt radii solis*, the beams of the sun shall be under him, that is, the holy scripture, and

* Illyric. Flac. Catal. Test. Veritat.

† John Huss, *Lib de Vita et Reg. Antichr. cap. 30.*

the chief doctors and teachers of it: and he shall prepare gold as dirt, that is, he shall have all the wisdom and learning of men at his pleasure, and in great readiness, and with much ease shall gain it to himself. And antichrist by such men,' saith J. Huss, 'doth make his body or church strong against the saints of God, and well-favoured and glorious, that it may appear very taking to the world, and may win in all men to it, that are not taught of God and renewed by his Spirit.' And thus antichrist serves himself of all learning and learned men; whereas divine learning, and the teaching of God, he could never in any measure subject to himself, but is always discovered, resisted, and overcome by it.

Martin Luther saith, 'That whosoever it was, whether Alexander of Hales, or Thomas of Aquine, who first instituted universities; he was a star fallen from heaven to earth, who received the key of the bottomless pit, and opened it, and brought forth into the church, philosophy, long ago dead and damned by the doctrine of the apostles; and from the smoke of the bottomless pit, that is, philosophy, came forth locusts on the earth; that is, saith he, *Populus universitatum, è philosophia natus*, the people of the universities, born and bred of philosophy, &c.* thus Luther.

Abbas Joachim Calaber, who was long before these, and flourished about the year 1230, in his

* M. Luther, de Captiv. Babylon.

commentary on Jeremy the prophet, speaks to this purpose, 'That the sixth angel, mentioned, Rev. ix. opens the bottomless pit, and brings out philosophy into the church: and out of the smoke of this doctrine, locusts proceeded, and are spread over all the church into every fruitful place. And these locusts,' he saith, 'are, *Scholastici et magistri, qui nunc facie tenus blandiuntur ut decipiant, nunc cauda tenus feriunt ut subvertant simplices et incautos*; that is, the locusts are scholars and masters (according to the academical degrees) who sometimes flatter with their countenances to deceive, and sometimes strike with their tails, that they may subvert the simple and unadvised. And to these scholars and masters, the ignorant and common people resort; and they open to them the old cisterns of heathenish learning and disciplines, long ago stopt up by the doctrine of the apostles; and these cisterns they open, by teaching philosophy to the people; but they shut up the living fountain of saving water, that is, the word of faith. But the spirit of the Lord,' saith he, 'in the following prophets, whom the Lord shall raise up, *Idola studiorum carnalium visitabit*, shall visit the idols of carnal studies, maintained and kept up by secular stipends.'

Further he saith, 'That as antichrist brings forth his mark, which is philosophical doctrine in the church of Christ, and by this mark all his teachers and people are known; so there shall rise up against these such as have the mark of Christ, or

the sign of Thau in their foreheads, that is, the open and manifest doctrine of Christ crucified. And as the signs of Moses destroyed the signs of the magicians, so shall the word or preaching of the cross destroy all philosophical doctrine, and human and secular learning out of the church.' And then the children, and youth, and men of all ages, sorts, and conditions, shall be taught no other doctrine in the church of Christ, than that which is found in the scriptures, even in the writings of the prophets and apostles; and that not according to any human and philosophical understanding, but according to the teaching and mind of the Spirit. 'And God by all his true servants shall destroy the studies of carnal doctors and masters in divinity, and shall dissipate all secular and philosophical learning, by the word of truth in their mouths.' And so shall the church be reformed aright, when the doctrine of Christ only shall be received and esteemed of, and shall live and flourish among christians.

. And thus as antichrist hath laid aside the scriptures, and all true spiritual and divine learning out of his schools and universities, and hath brought into them instead thereof philosophy and human learning, and so these schools are most unlike to the schools of the prophets, so in due time, when God shall undertake to reform his church, all this sort of learning shall be cast out again, as dirt and dung, and the plain word of the gospel only shall prevail and flourish among the christian

people: which time the Lord hasten for his elect's sake.

2. Error. That they who have endeavoured to pull down schools, have always been men who were found enemies to religion; so Julian, the apostate, shut up the doors of the schools, because he would have all religion to go down.

Answer. True it is, that they who have sought the subversion of christian schools, wherein the doctrine of the gospel is purely taught, without the mixture of philosophy and heathenism, they all have been, and are, very enemies to the true religion; but they that seek to put down heathenish schools and to erect christian, or to reform the schools of heathen into christian, or to remove heathenism out of christian schools, they are not, before God and good men, enemies to true religion, but the great friends of it. Nay, they that call heathenish schools by the name of christian; that they may still remain with the better credit in their heathenism, without any true reformation according to the gospel, I rather judge them to be enemies to the true religion, and friends only to their own profit, preferment and ends.

Julian indeed did forbid that christians should be instructed in the disciplines of the Gentiles; but saith Sozomen, the writer of the ecclesiastical history, he did this because he thought, that by those disciplines men might attain to a great faculty to persuade, which advantage he would not have the christians to gain to the help of their

religion.' Now certainly this was done, as Socrates, another writer of the ecclesiastical history, doth acknowledge, by the singular providence of God. For seeing then christians had begun to degenerate from the gospel, and to betake themselves to heathenish learning, Julian attributed all the glory and excellency of christianity to that learning, and so thought with Mr. Simpson, that if human learning were denied to christians, christianity itself would soon be at an end. Wherefore the Lord stirred up Julian to put down the doctrine of the heathen in the schools of christians, that it might appear to all the world, That as the true christian religion is not helped by human learning, so neither is it hindered by the want of it: and that there is more light, knowledge, truth, wisdom, power, utterance given to christians by the unction of the Spirit alone, which all receive who believe, than through all heathenish disciplines; and also that it might be manifest, that true christianity is founded on faith in Christ and the gift of his Spirit only, and not at all on human learning. For what human learning had Peter and John? And yet in what wisdom and authority did they, being ignorant and unlearned men, reprove, convince, and silence the greatest and ablest men of the Jews? And what human learning had Stephen? and yet he confuted the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and all the philosophers of Cilicia, and Asia, which disputed with him; " And they all were not able

to resist," not the human learning but "the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake." Acts vi. 10. And Christ hath promised all his people, that when for his name's sake they should be brought before kings and rulers, who usually have the greatest accomplishments of human learning, that then they should not study beforehand what to say, for he would give them, in that very hour, "a mouth and wisdom which none of their adversaries should be able to resist." And the power and virtue of the gospel, and the wisdom, knowledge, and utterance of God's Spirit, is more gloriously manifest in plain men than in learned men; for in the one, the grace and virtues of the Spirit are attributed to human learning; but in the other, to God only, who dwells in them. Wherefore that the wisdom and knowledge, and light, and power of the word of faith in true christians, might not be attributed to human learning, God stirred up an enemy to christian religion to be so serviceable to it, as to hinder heathenish doctrine from being taught in the schools of christians, that so the church might be restored to be as in the days of its youth, when there flourished in it only the simple and plain word of faith, without any intermingling philosophy or human doctrine. And if Constantine had made such an order in his time, Julian had not had such an opportunity to have renounced christianity, and turned heathen. For Julian being instructed in the philosophy and disciplines of the heathen by Libanius his tutor, by this means

he came to love philosophy better than the gospel, and so by degrees turned from christianity to heathenism; which may be a fair warning to all christians, that they suffer not their children to be so educated, lest at last, with Julian, they, at least in their hearts, loathe and reject the gospel, and become with him apostates and pagans.

And hence it is most evident, that heathenish philosophy is so far from being a profitable study for the children of christians, that it is very dangerous for them to be so educated, as Socrates is forced to confess; where he saith, 'For christians to be thoroughly instructed in the disciplines of the Gentiles, there is none will grant that this is profitable to the christian religion: for it is not without danger for christians to be taught in the learning of the heathens, seeing this teacheth that there are many gods. And therefore,' saith he, 'the doctrine of the heathen is not approved by Christ, or any of his apostles or disciples.' Wherefore, said Luther, 'My counsel is, that a youth should shun philosophy and school divinity as the death of his soul.'

3. Error. That the knowledge of heavenly things cannot come to us but by things on earth: and that all divinity is swaddled in human learning.

Answer. I conceive that all christians at the first reading of this, will acknowledge that this doctrine is not divine, but philosophical. The philosophers say, that nothing is in the under-

standing, but that which is first in the sense, which is proportionable to that which Mr. Simpson speaks, and yet they know not what they say, when they say so. But let us consider if this be so, that the knowledge of heavenly things cannot come to us but by things on earth. Then how shall we know the mystery of God, even the Father, and the mystery of Christ, who is God manifest in the flesh? Or how shall the mystery of faith, and of our union with Christ through faith, into one flesh and spirit with him, be known? Or the new birth and new creature, which hath all things new in it, and all those new things, the things of God? Or how shall the free justification of a sinner through the death of Christ, and his reconciliation to God, be known, with all the rest of the things of the gospel; seeing nothing on earth can reveal the least part of these things? And if the world by wisdom, that is, its philosophy, knew not God, how can it by that wisdom reveal God and his things, which it never knew? Nay, the apostle doth clearly testify against this carnal and corrupt doctrine, in 1 Cor. ii. 7, 8, saying, "We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory. Which none of the princes of this world knew." And by princes of this world, he means not only worldly powers, as Chrysostom affirms, but also philosophers and orators, who often obtained the chief government among the nations. God hath wrapped up his gospel,

saith Paul, into such hidden wisdom, that they are never able to search into it, or to discover the least part of it, seeing God contrived it all, and appointed it before the world, unto our glory : and all their knowledge is but from the world. Yea, he adds, “ Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have ever entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him :” in which words God hath shut out the natural man for ever, with all his study, knowledge, abilities, and attainments, from the having any right understanding of his kingdom, or the things of it ; for the eye of man hath not seen them at any time, nor his ear heard them, nor hath any knowledge of them entered into his heart : and yet, so far is this doctrine from truth, that the knowledge of heavenly things cannot come to us but by things on earth. But the apostle shews how the faithful come to know these high, holy, spiritual, and eternal things, which lie infinitely beyond the knowledge and discovery of all men, to wit, by the Spirit, saying, “ But God hath revealed them to us by the Spirit : for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.” So that the people of God know the things of the gospel, not by earthly things, as Mr. Simpson affirms, nor by philosophy and outward wisdom, which only reaches to earthly things, but by the Spirit.

Farther, If all divinity be swaddled in human learning, then I do affirm that all such divinity

hath no great depth, seeing the bottom of human learning is easily fathomed. But can any christian heart think, that all true divinity, which comprehends in it the height, and breadth, and length, and depth of the love of God, which passeth knowledge, and all the unsearchable riches of Christ, and all the infinite and incomprehensible treasures of his wisdom, power, and righteousness, of his love, goodness, truth, faithfulness, and of all the fulness of the godhead, wherewith he is filled, can be contained and wrapped up in the narrow and scant bounds of human learning? How much truer doctrine had it been to have taught, that all true divinity is contained in God and his word, and that we can know nothing of God aright, but by his word, which holy men have spoken by the Spirit, and believers do receive by faith; and out of this word, all the learning in the world doth not contain in itself, neither can it reveal to us aright, the least thing of God, or of his mind and will.

But I conceive he might speak thus, that all divinity is wrapped up in human learning, to deter the common people from the study and enquiry after it, and to cause them still to expect all divinity from the clergy, who by their education have attained to that human learning which the plain people are destitute of: for it is the old and new design of antichrist, to make the people depend on the clergy for all divinity, though the people have the scriptures as near them, and the grace of God

usually nearer to them, than they; seeing God resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble. Again, if all divinity be swaddled in human learning, then must it sadly follow, that all who want human learning, must needs also want divinity; and then how shall poor plain people, who live in lawful callings; and have not the leisure to attain human learning, how shall they do to be saved? Or what help must they have to teach them divinity, who have not opportunity to gain human learning? And yet farther, if all divinity be swaddled in human learning, then Christ and his apostles had no true divinity, for they had no human learning to swaddle it in, nor would have none. Shall we say now, according to Mr. Simpson's doctrine, that they had no divinity? I do with all boldness affirm, that this doctrine is contrary to the christian faith.

4. Error. That Paul was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, and God took him so fitted, (to wit, with human learning) and made him an able instrument in his church.

Answer. Not so, but God took Paul, not a good scholar, and so made him an able preacher; but he took him as a blasphemers, and persecutor, as a cruel and enraged enemy against Christ, and his truth, and people, and magnified the riches of his mercy, in converting such an one. And Paul having much forgiven him, loved much; and through his great love was the fitter to preach the gospel, according to that of Christ to Peter; "Peter, lovest

thou me? feed my sheep." Yea, Paul himself ascribes his painful and profitable preaching, not to his learning and education under Gamaliel, (which also was, or ought to have been, only in the law and prophets, as hath been proved) but to the free grace of God bestowed on him, saying, "I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God in me;" so that Paul became so excellent a preacher, not by his fitting through human learning, but through the grace of God.

And here I shall mind Mr. Simpson of a passage which I have read in Chrysostom, which comes home to this matter in hand; it is in his third homily on the first epistle to the Corinthians, where he saith, 'That God had no need at the beginning of the gospel, of learned men, and sophisters to preach the gospel, and to convince the world with syllogisms, but did only use the word of faith, in the mouths of plain handicraftsmen, and artificers. Wherefore,' saith he, 'When the Greeks shall accuse the disciples of Christ, as ignorant of letters, and unlearned, let us ourselves who are christians, accuse them more. Neither let any one say, that Paul was wise and learned; but let us say, their men were wise and learned, but ours were rude and ignorant: for in thus doing,' according to the truth, 'we shall have the greater advantage against them. For if Paul were unlearned, and yet overcame learned Plato, his victory was the greater, and the grace of God the more glorious.'

‘ Now this I say,’ saith he, ‘ because the other day I heard a certain christian discoursing ridiculously with a Greek ; each of them in their discourse prejudicing their own cause : for the Greek spake that which the christian should have said ; and the christian spake that which the Greek should have said. For the question between them being touching Paul and Plato, the Greek endeavoured to prove that Paul was rude and unlearned ; but the christian through his simplicity, did endeavour to prove, that Paul was more learned and eloquent than Plato. And so, the Greek should obtain the victory, if the christian’s reasons should prevail. For if Paul were more learned than Plato, then might men object, that he overcame not the world through grace, but through eloquence. Wherefore that which the christian spake, made for the Greek ; and that which the Greek spake, made for the christian. Wherefore,’ he saith, ‘ when the Greeks shall say the apostles were rude, and unlearned, poor, mean, simple, obscure persons, let us acknowledge it as the truth ; for this is not their reproach, but their glory ; that being such, they yet overcame the learned men, the wise men, the philosophers, the rhetoricians, the orators, the princes, and all the world, as if they had not been men. For when any thing is done above the state and power of nature, this doth exceedingly manifest and magnify the grace of God.’ And so it appears, that Chrysostom was of another mind in this matter touching Paul, than Mr. Simpson ;

and that Paul was of another mind touching himself.

Now seeing Mr. Simpson doth here insinuate, that human learning fits a man to the ministry of the gospel; and seeing this also is the opinion of all the carnal and unbelieving people, I do desire them to consider, what some godly men have spoken clearly from the word of God in this matter.

Chrysostom, who knew the mystery of the gospel more clearly than any of the ancient writers, in his comment on the first epistle to the Corinthians, doth wholly exclude human learning from contributing any thing, either to the speaking or receiving the gospel. 'For,' saith he, 'to believe in him that was crucified and buried, and to be fully persuaded that he rose again, and sits at the right hand of God, and hath all power in heaven and earth given to him, and that he is made of God to the whole church, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption; this doctrine stands not in need of human wisdom and reasonings, but of faith only, and that both in them that spake it, and in them that receive it. For the apostles did not proceed in this matter in outward wisdom, but in faith, and so became more wise and excellent than the worldly wise; and so much the more, as it is a greater matter to receive the things of God by faith, than to be persuaded into them, by the force of argument.'

He adds also, 'That to the receiving the doctrine of the gospel, neither is the wise man profited any thing by his wisdom, neither is the plain man hindered any thing by his ignorance: yea, if I may speak a wonderful thing,' saith he, 'ignorance is more fit and ready to receive the gospel than wisdom. And a shepherd and a ploughman will sooner receive the gospel and submit to it, than a scholar who lives in the strength of human wisdom and reason.' He farther saith there, 'That where the wisdom of God is,' as it is in the gospel, 'there is no need of man's wisdom, as where the sun is, there is no need of a candle.' And he concludes there this matter thus, 'That the preaching of the gospel is a heavenly thing, and that human wisdom and learning cannot help therein, but rather hinder. And that therefore when Christ sent forth the first teachers of the gospel, he took not wise and learned philosophers, that the cross of Christ might not be made void, and that the faith of christians should not stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God: but he chose plain fishermen, tent-makers, publicans, obscure, simple, poor, contemptible, ignorant and unlearned men; and these overcame kings, princes, people, nations, Greeks, philosophers, orators, sophisters; they overcame the antient manners, customs, and the very religion of the world, also their laws, judgments, divers sorts of punishments, and innumerable kinds of deaths: and by all this,' saith he, 'it was manifest, that their preaching was not

in human wisdom, but in the grace of God.' And thus doth Chrysostom affirm, and prove, that human learning doth not fit men to the ministry of the gospel, but is rather a hindrance thereunto; and that the grace of God only, fits them for the heavenly work.

Hear also what Wickliff saith to this matter, in his book entitled, *The Pathway to Perfect Knowledge*; where he sheweth, that it is not human learning that helps to understand the scriptures, and to profit in the study of them, but something more high and heavenly; his own words are these, 'He whose heart is full of love, comprehendeth without any error, the manifold abundance, and largest teaching of God's scripture: for Paul saith, the fulness of the law is charity; and in another place, the end of the law is charity, of a clean heart, and good conscience, and of faith unfeigned. And Christ saith, Thou shalt love thy Lord God of all thy heart, and of all thy soul, and of all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself; for in these two commandments, hangeth all the law and the prophets; and, as the root of all evil is covetousness, so the root of all good is love. Charity, by which we love God and the neighbour, holdeth surely all the greatness and largeness of God's speeches. Therefore if we have not leisure to search all the holy scriptures, and to pierce into all the privities of them; hold thou love, whereon all things hang, and so shalt thou hold that which thou learnest there, and also that

which thou learnest not. For if thou know charity, thou knowest something whereon also that hangeth which thou knowest not. And in that that thou understandest in scripture, love is open; and in that that thou understandest not, love is hid. Therefore he that holdeth love in virtues or good life, holdeth both that which is open and that which is hid in God's word.' And after speaking to the clergy, he saith, 'Therefore worldly fools, do ye first repent of your sins, and forsake pride and covetousness, and be ye meek, and fear ye God in all things, and love your neighbour as yourself, and then shall ye profit in the study of holy writ.' And this is a far other way to understand the scriptures than human learning.

And after, he speaking of the abominations of the university of Oxford, saith thus: 'The fourth abomination is, that it is now purposed to hinder christian men from learning freely God's law, till they have spent nine or ten years at art, or philosophy, which comprehendeth many strong errors of heathen men, against the christian belief. It seemeth well, that God will not cease from vengeance, till it and other things be punished sore. For it seemeth that worldly clerks, and feignedly religious, do this under pretence, that simple men of wit and knowledge, know not God's law to preach it generally against sins in the realm. But wit ye, worldly clerks and feignedly religious, that God both can, and may if it liketh

him, speed simple men out of the university, as much to know the holy scriptures, as masters in the university? Wherefore,' he saith, 'it is no great matter, though men of good will be not poisoned with heathen men's error, nine or ten years together; but let them live well, and study the holy scriptures, and preach truly and freely against open sins till death.' Thus he. Whereby he declares, that the scriptures are not to be understood by human learning, but by faith and love: and that human learning doth not prepare men to the knowledge of the word, but rather corrupt them with heathen men's errors.

Tindal also, that apostle of England, as Fox calleth him, and blessed martyr, speaks thus to this matter; 'They will say yet more shamefully,' meaning the clergy, 'that no man can understand the scriptures without Philautia, that is to say, philosophy: a man must first be well seen in Aristotle, ere he can understand the scripture, say they. Now,' saith he, 'Aristotle's doctrine is, that the world was without beginning, and shall be without end, and that the first man never was, and the last never shall be; and that God doth all of necessity, neither careth what we do. Without this doctrine,' saith he ironically, 'how could we understand the scripture, that saith, God created the world of nought, and God worketh all things of his free will, and for a secret purpose? And that we shall rise again, and God will have accounts of all that we have done in this life?

Aristotle saith, give a man a law, and he hath power of himself to do, or fulfil the law, and becometh righteous with working righteously. But Paul and the scripture saith, that the law doth but utter sin only, and helpeth not; neither hath any man power to do the law, till the Spirit of God be given him through faith in Christ. Is it not a madness then to say, that we could not understand the scripture without Aristotle? Moreover, Aristotle's felicity and blessedness standeth in avoiding all tribulations, and in riches, health, honour, worship, friends, and authority, which felicity pleaseth our spirituality well. Now without these, and a thousand such like points, couldst thou not understand scripture, which saith, that righteousness cometh by Christ, and not of man's will? And how that virtues are the fruits and gifts of God's Spirit, and that Christ blesseth us in tribulations, persecution, and adversity. How I say, couldst thou understand the scriptures without philosophy, inasmuch as Paul, Col. ii. warned them to beware lest any man spoil them, that is to say, rob them of their faith in Christ, through philosophy and deceitful vanities, and through the traditions of men, and ordinances, after the world, and not after Christ.' And after; 'But now ye drive them from God's word, and will let no man come thereto, until he have been two years master of art. First, they nuzzle them in sophistry, and in bene fundatum; and there corrupt they their judgments with apparent argu-

ments, and with alledging to them texts of logic, of natural philosophy, of metaphysic, and moral philosophy, and of all manner of books of Aristotle, and of all manner of doctors, which yet they never saw, &c.’

Again, Huldricus Zuinglius speaks thus to this matter. ‘We must needs be taught of God, and not of men,’ to wit, in the knowledge of the gospel. ‘For this is the saying of the Eternal Truth, which knows not how to lye, John vi. But, and if you do not firmly believe that you may be taught of God, human doctrines being utterly rejected, ye are yet destitute of true faith. Neither have I myself devised this thing; for Hilary also is of this opinion; but there is no need of his testimony, when we hear that both Christ, and all the apostles, were of the same mind. And here the whole use of school divinity falls to the ground, and whatsoever is drawn out of the philosophers; for all these things do lean on human reasons, which when they have once possessed a man’s mind, he then thinks that the heavenly doctrine is wholly to be directed and framed according to the rule of human learning, which he judges to be most firm and infallible. Which thing they sufficiently discover in their words, saying, *Ubi cessat philosophus, illic incipit theologus*; where the philosopher ceases, there the divine begins: whereby they signify thus much, that he is able to judge most rightly in divine things, who comes most furnished with human learning;

as if so be the light of our will were more excellent, and more perspicuous than the divine glory; when yet we hear Christ saying, "I receive not glory of men: but I know you, that you have not the love of God in you." For they who have the love of God, cleave to no word so constantly, as to the word of God; seeing this is the light that enlightens every man that comes into the world. But no man is able to prove that philosophy is such a light. For which of the philosophers instructed the apostles? Those simple, and in the judgment of the world, those foolish men, unskilful, and unlearned fishermen, were elected and instituted of God, and then were sent forth to preach, that they might become the masters and teachers of the whole world: to wit, that God according to the saying of Paul, might make ashamed all the strength of the world, and all the wisdom of the world.' Thus he.

Luther also saith, 'It is an error to say, that a man cannot be a divine but through Aristotle; nay,' saith he, 'a man cannot be a divine except he become one without Aristotle.' And again, 'A man becomes a divine by living, yea, by dying, and by being damned,' to wit in his own sense, 'not by studying, reading, or speculating.' And again, 'In holy things we must not dispute or play the philosophers; but in divinity we must only hear and believe, and resolve in our heart that God is true, though the things he speaks in his word seem never so absurd to reason.' And again,

‘ We shall then do well, if we, leaving logic or philosophy in their own sphere, do learn to speak with new tongues in the kingdom of faith, without all sphere; for the affection of faith is to be exercised in the kingdom of faith, and not a philosophical understanding.’ And thus have these godly men held forth and proved from the word, that human learning is rather a hindrance than a help, to the ministry of the gospel, and doth rather unfit than fit men for it; and that the grace and teaching of God only, prepares and enables men to this divine work, and no human thing at all.

Wherefore let all true christians be advised, that human learning is so far from fitting men for the gospel and the ministry thereof, as is suggested, that indeed there is nothing in greater enmity to Christ crucified; nor more contrary to the word of the cross, than that; yea, nothing in all the world hath been such an introducer, favourer, supporter, and inlarger of antichrist’s kingdom, as human reason, learning, and philosophy. This hath brought in all the hypocrisy, superstition, false doctrine, false worship, sects, schisms, divisions, which have at any time prevailed in the church, during all the reign of antichrist: and the gospel of Christ, and the true belief and practice of it, hath not had at any time a greater, and more subtle, and plausible enemy than this. Yea farther, the gross ignorance and blindness of the rude world, hath not so perverted and falsified the word of the gospel, nor rendered it such contradiction and re-

sistance, nor hath brought such annoyance to the faithful who have received and confessed it, as human science hath done; for this hath enabled men stoutly to oppose the truth, and subtilly to defend error as the truth; this hath made men bold and cunning to suppress God's mind from the world, and to hold forth their own mind to them as if it were God's, under the pretence of the outward letter of the word; and a multitude of other evils have sprung from this corrupt fountain. Wherefore the apostle Paul, is so far from encouraging christians to betake themselves to human learning to fit them for the gospel, that he by the Spirit utterly forbids christians heathenish philosophy, lest they should be spoiled through the vanity of it, and be led away from Christ. And thus in this matter hath Mr. Simpson manifestly departed from the doctrine of the scriptures, and of faithful men who have spoken from it.

5. Error. That men's hatred to God doth as well appear in their hatred to human learning, as if they hated the scriptures.

Answer. I conceive Mr. Simpson's heart was hot within him, out of his great zeal to human learning, the great goddess by which the university lives, when he thus spake: and it appears he is very tender of the reputation and glory of it, who thus vindicates it, at as high a rate as the very scriptures. But Sir, do you know no more difference between the most precious word of our eternal Lord God, and his Son Jesus Christ, and the

foolish, corrupt, and stinking doctrine of men? Is there no more difference in your divinity, between the word of righteousness, life, and salvation, which God hath spoken by Christ, and Christ by his servants; and the word and doctrines of wretched men; full of sin, death, and destruction? And if the law itself, given by the ministration of angels, loseth its glory before the gospel, as the apostle testifies; how much more doth heathenish philosophy, brought forth, partly from the corrupt reason of man, and partly from the inspiration of the devil, become loathsome and abominable before it, for ever! And cannot we be enemies to this, say you, without hating the blessed word of God? Nay, the blessed word of God where it prevails in truth, doth make men to hate this, and to count it loss, and dung, and filth, and the most loathsome baseness in the world, in comparison of itself. Wherefore, through the grace of Christ, we will so love the scriptures, which are divine learning, as to hate human and heathenish learning for their sakes, seeing it hath put a veil of darkness in the church, over this glorious sun, the word of faith.

6. Error. That if the Spirit teach without means, men may as well be without the ordinances, as without the universities and human learning.

Answer. We do not say, that the Spirit usually teacheth without means in the church of Christ; but we say, he teacheth by means of his own appointing. And how will Mr. Simpson prove by

any scripture, that universities and human learning are means which the Spirit of God useth to teach his church by? Where did ever the Lord speak one word, that he would use the disciplines of the Gentiles, as means whereby to teach men to know the mystery of Christ? Wherefore this is strange doctrine, that arts and sciences are the means whereby the Spirit teacheth the church. For sure I am, the Lord never taught his church, either of the Old, or of the New Testament, by these means: only antichrist hath taught his church after this manner, and hath set up human learning as an ordinance of God, yea, as an ordinance of the New Testament to learn Christ by; that christians might be ^{ably} trained up to know Christ the wisdom of God, by human learning, the wisdom of the world, which is in direct enmity to God.

The chief ordinances whereby God helps his church, are the word of faith, and the prayer of faith; and by the ministration of the Spirit, he begins and carries on the salvation of his spiritual people: and these ordinances the true church cannot want, neither doth God do any thing in his church without them. But the spiritual church, for ought that I could ever yet read in the word, may well want their divine ordinance of human learning, and yet not want any ordinance of God, that he hath appointed and sanctified for the use of his true church.

7. Error. That men now are not to receive the Spirit, in that immediate way to understand the

scriptures, in which it was given to them who wrote the scriptures.

Answer. Surely Mr. Simpson will not deny, that the Spirit is given to that whole church which is the body of Christ; seeing Paul saith, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his," he is no member of his. Now the Spirit is always given to whomsoever it is given, by the Father and the Son, as Christ taught his disciples, promising them that the Father would send the Spirit to them in his name; and also, that he himself would send it to them from the Father. And was this promise only made to them, and not to all the faithful also, who should believe in Christ through their word? Doth not Paul say, of the whole church, that "by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, and are all made to drink into one Spirit?" He saith also to the Galatians, "Because ye are sons, God hath sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." And thus it is manifest, that the whole church of believers, and every true member thereof, do receive the Spirit of God. And do they not receive it alike immediately from God? Who can give the Spirit of God to man, but God himself? When God promised to pour out his Spirit in the last days upon all flesh, did he name any difference in the pouring of it out, saying, some shall receive it immediately, and some mediately? No, but all that are counted worthy to receive the Spirit of God, do receive it alike

immediately from him ; neither hath Christ left any lieutenant or deputy in the world, to give his Spirit to men in his absence : but he himself is always present in his true church to the end of the world, both to teach them, and to give them his Spirit. He is too much in the darkness of antichrist, that denies this.

It is manifest then, that all the true church do alike receive the Spirit of God ; and that they all receive it alike immediately from God, seeing no man nor angel can give the Spirit of God, but God himself gives his own Spirit to whom he pleases ; by his own word, which he himself ministers by his own Spirit. And by this Spirit did holy men speak the scripture ; and by this Spirit only, do holy men of God understand the scripture, as Paul saith ; “ Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God ;” among which his word hath a chief place : and after saith, that by the Spirit they had the mind of Christ, which others want, who yet have the same letter of the word, and are destitute of the Spirit. And so as the faithful spake the word by the Spirit of faith, so through the same Spirit of faith only so given, do the faithful understand it. And though this thing be clear in itself, yet I judge it convenient to add here the testimonies of Luther and Calvin in this matter.

Luther saith, ‘ The scriptures are not to be

understood, but by that very Spirit by which they were writ; which Spirit can be no where found more readily and effectually, than in those holy letters of his, which he hath written.* And Calvin saith, ‘The same Spirit that spake by the mouth of the prophets, it is necessary that that should pierce into our hearts, to persuade us, that they faithfully delivered that which was committed to them of God.’ † So that we must necessarily have the same Spirit to know his mind, that they had to utter his mind. Wherefore it is evident, that Mr. Simpson is not orthodox in this point neither.

8. Error. That men now are to get knowledge, (to wit, of the scripture), by studies, and human learning, and not by inspiration.

Answer. This doctrine carries the visible mark of antichrist upon it; for it is only the inspiration of God that enables a man to know the things of God, and not a man’s study, or human learning: it is not in this case, in him that wills or runs, but in God that shews mercy. Wherefore Christ hath said, “No man knows the Son but the Father, and he to whomsoever the Father will reveal him;” wherefore Paul prays for the Ephesians, “that God would give them the spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of Christ:” without which spirit of revelation, Christ and the Father can

* Luth. Tom. 2. Fol. 309. a.

† Calv. Institut. lib. 1. cap. 8. § 4.

never be known. What can human learning, and the studies of men find out of the mystery of Christ, which was hidden from ages and generations, as Paul testifies, till the Spirit revealed it? Yea, Christ hath taught, that God hides these things of the gospel from the wise and prudent, that is, the studying and learned men, and reveals them to babes; and that this is his good pleasure so to do. And so no man can know Christ and his gospel, and what is the faith, hope, and love of the gospel, but by the most present teaching and revelation of God himself by his Spirit. Wherefore to deny the inspiration of God's Spirit now, and to ascribe all knowledge of the word of God to men's studies, and to human learning, is the most gross and palpable doctrines of antichrist and his prophets; whereas, all the people of God are taught of God himself, in all the things of God, as Christ hath said: because no man by his own studies and pains can attain thereunto.

And in this matter, I shall also add the testimony of Luther, and Latimer. Luther saith, 'No man sees one jot or tittle in the scriptures, but he that hath the Spirit of God: for all men have a darkened heart, in such sort, that if they could speak, and knew how to bring forth all things of the scripture, yet have they not any true sense, or right knowledge of them. For,' saith he, 'the Spirit is required to the understanding of the whole scripture, and of every part thereof.'* And Latimer

* Luth. Tom. 3. fol. 169. a.

saith, 'The carnal and philosophical understanding of the scriptures is not that wisdom of God which is hid from the wise, and revealed to little ones.'*

9. Error. That human learning is as the out-works to the fort of the gospel, and as the outer court to the temple of the gospel; and so, if you will keep the fort well, you must keep the out-works strong; and if you will preserve the inner, you must look to the outer court.

Answer. How highly hath Mr. Simpson honoured Socrates, Pythagoras, Plato and Aristotle, &c. to make them a strong guard for the person of Christ! And how highly hath he honoured their learning, to make it a defence for the gospel! And how weak and feeble hath he sought to render the word of faith, that must be thus defended by the arts and disciplines of men, as not being able to stand alone, and to defend itself. Doth this man truly believe in the Son of the living God, who makes him such an helpless idol? Or doth he believe the word of the gospel, which hath given eyes to the blind, and ears to the deaf, and feet to the lame; which hath raised the dead, and cast out devils, and commanded the winds and waves, and they have obeyed? I say, doth he believe this word to be of God, which hath done the very works of God, and yet openly affirms to the world, that it cannot maintain itself, or subsist without

* Latimer in his Answer to Sir Edward Bainton's Letter.

the help of philosophy? Is that word, which mightily and perfectly saves all the elect, and that in despite of the world and the devil, and the gates of hell, not able to save itself without human help? Must that word be secured by Aristotle, which delivers all the elect from sin, death, and hell for ever? Are grammar, rhetoric, logic, ethics, physics, metaphysics, mathematics, the weapons whereby we must defend the gospel? Is Mr. Simpson so ill a proficient in christianity, that he hath not read, or doth not remember that of Paul, Eph. vi. 12, where he saith, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breast-plate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance." Here now are the true christian's weapons, whereby he defends himself through the word, and defends the word against all the world.

And the same Paul, in 2 Cor. x. 3, saith, " For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds ; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ : and having in readiness to revenge all disobedience." So that the faithful do not defend the gospel by philosophy, as is heathenishly suggested ; but by the gospel, they defend the gospel : and the gospel hath in itself that wisdom, righteousness, strength, and those virtues which are infinitely able to defend itself against all the world, and against all the powers of darkness. And how contrary is this doctrine to Mr. Simpson's ? And thus much for his outworks to the gospel.

Now for his outer court to the gospel : I know no other outer court the gospel ever had, than the law of Moses, which law was the preparation to the gospel, and the schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, which human learning never was. But human learning is the outer court to antichrist's temple, it is the schoolmaster to bring men to antichrist. And thus would Mr. Simpson also turn the law out of its place, and set up human learning in the stead of the law, and so would make void both law and gospel for human learning's sake. Surely one would think he hath some

considerable advantage thereby, that he thus fences for it.

10. Error. But what is the bottom (saith he), of all this, (that is, of some men's appearing against human learning as the unction of the ministry, and against the universities as the fountain of the ministry) but this, That some say, they are one with Christ; and as Christ hath the divine nature in him, so every believer also hath; and he that hath God in him, need not go to any man to learn. Whereas, John xvii. Christ speaketh of believers as at an infinite distance from himself; he their Lord, they his servants; he in glory, they in the world. And if they be so united to Christ, then it will follow, that Christ is not the only begotten Son of God; and that Christ and we should be equal, and he not our Lord, &c.

Answer. Now doth not all this declare a most woeful ignorance of, and enmity to the gospel of God our Saviour? For is our union with Christ, the foundation of error? Or have true believers no real union with Christ, but imaginary? Do not the saints partake of the divine nature? Doth not Peter expressly affirm it, where he saith, "Exceeding great and precious promises are given unto us, that we thereby should be made partakers of the divine nature." And what is the divine nature, but the very nature of God? See Luther on the place.

Again, Are believers, as he affirms, at an infinite distance from Christ? If this were true,

what sad news would it be to the church of God. How can this doctrine agree with these scriptures? "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith;" and, "Christ in you the hope of glory;" and, "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus." Again, saith Christ, "I am the true vine, and ye are the branches:." And so as the vine is in the branches, and as the branches are in the vine, so is Christ in christians, and so are christians in Christ. Again, John xiv. 20, "At that day ye shall know," saith Christ himself, that you need not doubt of the doctrine, "that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you." And again, saith Christ, "I pray not for these alone," that is, who now believe, "but also for all that shall hereafter believe on me through their word; that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me." Here now is no infinite distance between Christ and believers, but a wonderful and admirable nearness, and oneness; which the learned ignorance of philosophy understands not, nor the ignorant knowledge of any carnal christian. But sure this word of God is true, and the saints receive it in faith, and will not be deluded with any philosophical, sophistical, or antichristian glosses of false teachers.

And thus doth the holy word of God affirm plainly enough, that Christ and his christians are

most nearly united; and yet doth not this union make an equality and rob Christ of his due glory, seeing Christ is the head, and they his members; Christ the first born, and they his brethren. And so as Christ hath the preeminence in all things above them all, as becomes the head and first born, so they have communion with him in all things, as becomes his members and brethren.

And whereas he jests, and saith, he that hath God in him, needs not go to man to learn; I do affirm this is true enough, and the scripture hath affirmed it in several places. Isaiah saith to the spiritual church, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord:" and Christ saith, "It is written, they shall be all taught of God; he therefore that hath heard and learned of my Father, cometh to me." And John saith, "The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie." And this doctrine is so manifest from the scriptures, that he is of antichrist that denies it; for God inwardly teaches all his people by his Spirit his own self: and they so hear the word by the ministry of man, that it is always God that teaches them, and not man.

11. Error. Arts and tongues are the cups in which God drinks to us.

Answer. In what a sad condition then are the common and plain people, that they cannot pledge him. But only the learned clergy keep these cups

to themselves, as heretofore they kept the cup in the sacrament.

But what strange phrase is this? savouring of the ranters religion; as if God was the familiar companion of the clergy, and sometimes drank to them in a cup of Hebrew, sometimes in a cup of Greek, and sometimes in a cup of Latin; and as if sometimes he drank to them in a cup of logic, and sometimes in a cup of ethics, sometimes in a cup of metaphysics. Is not this truly, *Profana vocum novitas*, a profane newness of speech, never before heard of to my knowledge in the church of God, and which the apostle utterly condemns?

12. Error. We shall never keep up religion, if we do not keep up learning; but when learning goes down, religion goes down too.

Answer. The church is founded on Christ, and Christ and his church, it seems, are both founded on human learning. It is no wonder now that Mr. Simpson lays so great stress on it every where; and that men of his religion, term the university *Fundamentum ecclesiæ*, the foundation of the church. And if human learning do indeed uphold all christian religion, let all men and magistrates come forth and uphold it in the name of God. But surely the religion of the gospel depends wholly on Christ, as Christ on God; and there is no need of human learning to support this, except God and Christ are insufficient. We have a sure word and doctrine of the gospel, that remains firm for ever, and inviolable, and unconquerable, in

and through Christ, and his Spirit, and the Father; and all the world shall shatter in pieces, and human learning go down to hell, and this shall stand fast for ever: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, and not one jot or tittle of my word," saith Christ.

Believers know, that not one point of their religion depends on human learning; but all on Christ himself, who is the true and living Word. Wherefore these are the fears of antichrist and his prophets, that their religion will go down with human learning, because it was set up by it; but the true religion of the gospel of God our Saviour, was at first set up without it, and hath hitherto remained without it, and will abide so for ever. And to this the Spirit and the bride give witness.

13. Error. Seeing religious foundations are so ancient, then keep them up; your destruction will never be but from yourselves.

Answer. Religious foundations! what religion founded the universities is well known. For by the counsel of four monks, the scholars of Bede, to wit, Rabanus, Albinus, Claudius and John Scotus, the university which had been translated from Athens to Rome, was translated by Charles the Great, from Rome to Paris, An. 791. And for our english universities of Cambridge and Oxford, thus it is recorded that the study of Cambridge was instituted, Anno 630, by Sigisbert King of the East Angles, who after changed his purple or kingly robes for a friar's cowl or hood. And the lectures here were begun by four monks, of which brother or friar

Ode, as they termed him, read grammar, according to Priscian's doctrine : Terricus, an acute sophister, read Aristotle's logic, according to the Institutions of Porphyrius, and Averroes; brother or friar William, read Tully's rhetoric: and Gislebertus read divinity to them on sundays, and saints days.

And for Oxford, that was founded by King Alfred, Anno 895, by the persuasion of Neotus the monk ; and rewards were propounded for those that would profess learning there. Afterwards both these schools were made universities, in Edward the First's time by the court of Rome, as Robert Remington affirms.

Yea farther, by the very names of the colleges, it is manifest what religion set them up; some being founded in the honour of one saint, some of another saint; one being founded in the honour of Christ, another in the honour of Jesus, another in the honour of Immanuel, another in the honour of the Trinity; whereby they have rent the name of God in pieces, each one seeking to honour that name of Christ most, in the honour of which his college was founded. Yea, some colleges have been founded in the honour of Christ's body, as the colleges of Corpus Christi, in both universities: and one in Oxford for the help of all dead souls, and for their rescue out of purgatory; and so it is well known what religion founded them. And what religion will in due time destroy these foundations, if they be not reformed, is as well known.

For Wickliff, whom God raised up to be one of

the most eminent reformers of the christian religion, since the apostles times, speaks thus touching universities, colleges and students. 'Seeing Christ,' saith he, 'hath not ordained these universities, or colleges, it is manifest that both they and the graduations in them, are nothing but so much vain heathenism introduced; in testimony whereof, as well the collegiates, as other graduates, do seek the things which are their own, leaving the rules of charity: from whence do arise envies, and comparisons between persons and countries, and many other seed-plots of the father of lies.'*

Again, he having spoken of other sects, saith, 'Our judgment concerning colleges is the same, as touching their general studies: for through them, persons and countries are accepted against the rules of charity, and inward envies are heaped up, with other sins, perjuries, and simonies, against their own statutes. Notwithstanding it is granted, that out of such colleges many good things do arise, as well as out of other sects; yet not so many, as by the occasion of the sin of the devil, and the sin of the first man. And therefore let a faithful man be ashamed, to alledge the fruit of such profit.' Again, saith he, 'If these colleges are in their conversation rejected of the Lord, who doubts but that to nourish them in this way is no alms, but the foolish presumption of a faction and party against Christ? For all these sects, and all newnesses

* Wickliff in *Speculo militantis Ecclesie*, cap xxvi.

which are not founded on Christ the Lord, they tempt Christ with the devil, Mat. iv. seeing they despise the free ordination of his sect, and do rather choose another servile sect, less good : as if they would not ascend into the heavenly Sion, by the steps which God hath ordained, but would fly to the pinnacle of the temple by the carrying of the devil. What alms therefore is it to cherish such a child of the devil, in Cain's castles, against Christ? * He also affirms, 'That one idiot through the help of the grace of God, doth more good in the church than many graduates in the schools and colleges; and that God's inspiration of such doth more profit the community of the faithful, than all the universities, and all their studies and privileges.'

Thus hath Wickliff witnessed in this matter, who was also himself master of Baliol College in Oxford. And Philip Melancthon gives this testimony of him, *Equidem sapientem virum judico fuisse Wicklefum Anglum, qui omnium primus, quod ego sciam, vidit universitates fuisse satanæ synagogas*; that is, I do indeed judge Wickliff of England to have been a wise man, who for aught I know, first of all saw universities to have been the synagogues of satan.

John Huss also, that excellent instrument of Jesus Christ, and blessed martyr, saith, speaking on that scripture, Isai. xxviii. "Woe to the crown of the pride of Ephraim, and the crown of pride

* Wickliff. lib. de cura Pastoralis, cap. x.

shall be trodden under foot," saith, 'The doctorships and masterships of many, who having the word of God wholly choked in them, do now too shamelessly make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, and love the chief chairs in the schools, and to be saluted in the markets, and to be called of men, doctor; and by this, they go in the apparel and harness of the mystical body of antichrist, because it is written, that he is the king of all the children of pride. And the crown of pride, of these children of pride, shall be trodden down.*'

And thus, as it is manifest, what religion founded the universities; so it is as manifest what religion will, in the appointed time, destroy these foundations, if they be not truly and thoroughly reformed. For surely as they are, if the work of Christ go forward in the world, as it necessarily must do, notwithstanding the present defection, in the appointed time, they can no more be held up, than the house built on the sand, in the time of tempest. For the true spiritual church is built on the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; and so it is firmly founded upon a rock, and can never fall. But the universities are built on the philosophers and heathens, Plato and Aristotle being the chief corner stones; and so they are built upon the sand. And neither can their own hands uphold

* John Huss, *Lib. de Regno Antichristi.* cap. 14.

them, nor the secular arm establish them, in that day, wherein the Lord alone shall be exalted. But it is not men of moral and civil religion and righteousness, who will do this work, and execute this vengeance; for the enchantments of the universities are too strong and mighty for all human spirits; but the called, chosen, and faithful ones of Christ, when he shall summon them, and call them to his foot, they shall not stand on compliments, formalities, and niceties; nor regard friendship or enmity; but through the power of faith, shall break through all that can be said and objected, by the wisdom, policy, prudence, and religion of man, and shall execute the righteous judgments of the Lord, on these mothers of harlots, and fornications of the nations.

And whereas he saith, their destruction will never be but of themselves: I do verily believe that: for seeing their root is rottenness, their fruit must needs be destruction. Yea, the Lord will raise up his word in the midst of them, to destroy them: for the more the word of the Lord shall blow upon the university, the more shall this grass wither, and the flower thereof, that is human learning, fade away, till it be at last quite dried up. And this is the university, whose day is coming, when iniquity shall have an end.

And thus have I done with these things. There were many other things in that sermon, as contrary to the gospel, which for brevity's sake I have

omitted. Now what a sad thing is it, that such poisonous doctrine should be poured forth into an university congregation, and that by the ministry of such a man? And if the ceremonies of the law were in use under the gospel, how ought we to rend our garments at the hearing of these things?

And now, O blessed Lord Jesus, who wast crucified, dead, and buried, but yet art risen from the dead by the eternal Spirit, and art ascended on high to fill all things, have mercy on thy poor church, which is so grievously rent and torn this day, by wolves in sheep's clothing; and is thus hurt and consumed by poisonous doctrines of men, who seek themselves, and their own things, to the harm and ruin of thy poor people! O thou Son of the living God, who art the way, the truth, and the life, how shall the kingdom of antichrist be brought down, when the hands of such men, who seem pillars in the church, are stretched forth so strongly to hold it up? And how shall the days of antichrist be shortened, when his kingdom is coming forth again, in the greatest deceiveableness of unrighteousness, that hath ever yet appeared in the world, to delude the nations? O Lord, remember all thy promises, and make haste to destroy Babylon the Great, with all its mysteries of righteousness and unrighteousness, and let it sink as a millstone in the sea, without any hope or possibility of a resurrection. And seeing there is no hand of man stretched out for this work, but all

hands are against it; do thou destroy it, O Lord, without hand, even with the spirit of thy mouth, and brightness of thy coming, according to the truth of thy promises, and the unutterable sighs and groans of thy Spirit occasioned thereby, in the hearts of all thy faithful and elect. Even so Lord, and let thy kingdom come, and make no long tarrying. Amen.

A TESTIMONY FROM THE WORD
AGAINST DIVINITY
DEGREES IN THE UNIVERSITY,
OR,
ANY ACADEMICAL DEGREES
MADE USE OF FOR THE MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL.

THE universities, whose very soul and life do lie in human learning and school divinity, that they might gain the greater profit to themselves, and glory to their children, have, after the example of the heathen, given their children degrees in divinity, as they in arts, and the glorious titles of Bachelors, Masters, and Doctors in Divinity, as so many crowns of gold upon their heads, to win them honour and reputation with all people who have been under the delusion of antichrist. And in the confirming of these graduations or degrees, which also is done for a sum of money, they give the graduates licence and power to preach, and to expound the scriptures, and that by the sole authority of the university.

For the Vice Chancellor, admitting a bachelor in divinity to his degree, useth these words in the name of the university, ‘ We admit you to declare all the apostolical epistles, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.’ And so the bachelor in divinity hath power, according to his degree, only to deal with the apostolical epistles, but must go no farther. And admitting a doctor to his degree, the Vice Chancellor saith thus, ‘ We admit you to interpret and profess all the holy scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.’ And thus doth the university, through power received from antichrist, give men, chiefly for money, divinity degrees; and through those degrees, it gives authority and privilege to bachelors in divinity to expound part of the scriptures, and to doctors to expound and profess all the scriptures; and they that gain these degrees to themselves are, as there is good reason, the great men in account with the university, and also with the carnal people of antichrist, how destitute soever they be of the faith and spirit of the gospel.

Wherefore I cannot choose but give in my testimony against this glorious and gainful priviledge of the universities, to wit, their conferring upon their children degrees in divinity, and creating them masters in that mystery which none can teach but God himself; and which none can learn but true believers, who are born of God, and are his true disciples. And so I do openly affirm that

degrees in divinity, for I meddle with none else, given by the universities to their children, are plainly and grossly antichristian, being most manifestly contrary to the word of the gospel, and the light that shines in the New Testament.

For First, In the gospel of God our Saviour, we learn, that only a new and heavenly birth, makes men to be of the true church; and that the pouring forth of the Spirit on these children of God, according to the measure of the gift of God, makes christians of several degrees in this church, and not academical graduations.

Secondly, In this gospel also we are taught, that all the true ministers of Christ are equal, and not one superior to another, as these degrees make them.

Thirdly, In this gospel also we are taught, that the true greatness amongst Christ's true disciples, doth not stand in academical degrees, or worldly honour and dignities, but in the faithful's near and exact following of Christ, in word and conversation; and that the sons of Zebedee, in desiring superiority and preeminence above the other disciples, contrary to the life and doctrine of Christ, did grievously offend, and were therefore sharply rebuked of Christ.

Fourthly, Yea, here, we hear Christ himself forbidding this very thing to his disciples, that antichrist and his prophets might have no cloke for doing the contrary, where his gospel is truly taught and published. For, Matt. xxiii. Christ

doth forbid his disciples before all the multitude, to be as the Jewish Rabbies, or doctors, who, saith Christ, do their works to be seen of men, and disguise themselves with different garments or habits from others, that they might be the more taken notice of, and have the more respect; and do love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, doctor, doctor; but saith Christ to his disciples, Be not ye called doctors, "for one is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren," and so equal. Whence it is evident, that this practice of universities and colleges in giving men degrees in divinity, as they call it, and titles, habits, and dignities accordingly, is contrary to the express command of Jesus Christ, and so is a meer invention of antichrist, to put honour and reputation on his ministers.

It is also manifest, that this practice of the universities, hath all along made many doctors in the church, which yet never were Christ's true disciples. It is also manifest, that these degrees and titles do cause men to be proud, and to lift themselves up above their brethren, and to think themselves something when they are nothing; such graduates usually proving *Theologi gloriae*, divines of glory; and not *Theologi crucis*, divines of the cross, as Luther speaks: that is, proud and haughty clerks, and not the humble ministers of Christ crucified.

These degrees also do break the simplicity of

the people of God, and do prejudice the communion of saints. Farther, these degrees are a dangerous snare to simple people, causing them to receive all for good doctrine that is delivered by such men, though it be never so erroneous and unsound; inasmuch as their high titles which they have gotten in these high places, and the reputation of their learning, strike an awe into them, that they dare not once question what such men deliver, much less contradict it. Wherefore, as much of the mystery of iniquity is discovered and dissolved already, so there is no doubt but that this glorious relick thereof, to wit, divinity degrees, will also in due time follow, as the lightnings of God shall enlighten the world.

And seeing so much of the light of the gospel hath shined forth in this age, it were to be wished that the universities, heads of colleges, and clergy, would not wilfully for worldly honour, respects, and advantage sake, shut their eyes against it, or rather with open eyes, maliciously seek to extinguish it, but that they would be contented to have all their honour lye in their likeness to Christ, who was in the church as one that served; and who was so far from receiving honour, and taking titles from men, to make himself thereby of account in the world, that being Lord of all, he made himself of no reputation; and that they would reject all the pomp and pride of the false church, which being destitute of faith and the Spirit, makes itself and its ministers glorious in outward

names and titles. Now though this be a plain case in the gospel, and there needs no testimony of men, yet for the fuller conviction of the world, I shall add the witness of other believers, that it may appear that I am not alone in this matter; though to have been alone with the word, would have been sure and safe enough.

In Edward the Third's time, there was an excellent discourse set forth, called, *The Plowman's Complaint*, &c. which testifieth against these divinity degrees in these words; 'Antichrist,' saith it, 'maketh masters too many, who teach the people with their own teaching, and leave God's teaching which is needful, and hide it with quaint glosses from the mean people. But,' saith he, 'these glossers object, that they desire not the state of mastery to be worshipped thereby, but the more to profit the people when they preach the word. For they say, the people will more believe the preaching of a master, that hath taken a state of school, than the preaching of another man that hath not taken the state of mastership.' To which he replies, 'That it is no need that masters bear witness to God's teaching or word, that it is true and good; neither,' saith he, 'can any man by his state of mastership, which God hath forbidden, draw any man from his sin, rather than another man which is not a master, nor will be none, because it is forbidden him in the gospel.' And a little after, he saith, 'Seeing we are to believe a man's works more than his word, the

deed sheweth well of these masters, that they desire mastership, rather for their own worship, than for profit of the people,' &c.

After, John Wickliff, that chosen servant of Christ, did witness against these antichristian degrees, who saith, 'The clergy do busily seek their own worldly worship and glory, and by great gifts and vain costs to be called masters in divinity, and to speak before lords, and to sit at meat with them, and not to teach truly the gospel to all manner of men, by meek life, and freely, as Christ bids.' The same Wickliff on Matt. xxiii. cap. 4. saith, 'Although in some studies, the name of doctor imports excellency, seeing it is a heathenish rite, heaped together of many honours and states, yet in the text of the apostle, it is taken more plainly for any faithful man, who doth notably teach the catholic faith; and so the name, doctor, speaks desert and labour, and takes away pride and eminency of state, according to this world.' Again, saith he, 'Every sect, state and operation, which Christ doth not approve in his gospel, is in reason to be rejected; and therefore seeing Christ doth not approve, but reprove the forenamed heathenish mastership, it is manifest that it is to be discharged, and cast out of the church.'

Again, saith he, 'Note that the name of an office doth much differ from the name of a scholastical graduation, heathenishly brought in.' He saith also, 'That Christ hath specially forbidden his disciples, heathenish or scholastical mastership;

and that Christ would have the name of master or doctor singularly reserved to himself, seeing he, by reason of his hypostatical union, hath a certain excellency which cannot agree to any other of mankind.' And concludes, 'That seeing there is danger in attributing to men the title of master or doctor in divinity, therefore in good reason, those titles are to be shunned in the church of God.'

John Huss also saith, 'That they who take to themselves academical degrees, and titles answerable, do go in the apparel and harness of the mystical body of antichrist, who is king of all the children of pride, to wit, of the masters and doctors in divinity.' Again, in another place, he speaks to this purpose, 'Christ,' saith he, 'saith, John viii. "Neither came I of myself; but the Father sent me;" so the saints have come in the name of the Lord Jesus, and in the name of Jesus they have performed their priesthood, and he is the crown of their glory. And by this they are distinguished from certain, who are otherwise crowned as masters, and doctors, and bachelors, and from others of other kind of titles, according to the manifold wisdom of this world: for these excelling others by their pains, and through their own science and learning, are notably beautified with their own titles and crowns, and therefore do rather perform their office in their own name, than in Christ's. Thus he.

Luther speaks much to this purpose also; but I shall have occasion to use him more largely.

Zuinglius, on that scripture, Matt. xxiii. "Be ye not called doctor, for one is your master, Christ," &c. saith thus: 'Thou hearest here, that these titles of masters and doctors, are not of God, seeing Christ forbids them.'

Conradus Pellican also, a godly preacher, having the sense of this on his death bed, desired his friends, that he might by no means be buried, as the manner then was, in the habit of a doctor, because he hoped he should rise to judgment, not as a doctor, but as an humble christian.

Now methinks, the clear and precious word of Christ alone, should take off the universities and clergy from giving and receiving these degrees and titles, if they do in good earnest profess themselves to be his disciples; but how much ought they to be ashamed and confounded, when they see other believers, for the love of Christ and his word, utterly renouncing these things before their faces, that they, if they persist, may be left wholly without excuse before Christ and his church. And now for the conclusion of this matter, I shall hold forth to the universities, the true degrees which Christ the Son of God, did himself take in the church of God, and which all his saints are to take after his example.

Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, the first and chief teacher of the New Testament, did neither commence bachelor nor doctor in divinity, but he took five other degrees, wherein the university graduates are usually wanting.

1. Christ's first degree in the church was this, that he was the Son of God, as the Lord said to him, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee;" and again, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." And this is the first degree that Christ himself took in the church, his divine Sonship according to his human nature. And this degree all the faithful take with him, for they all are begotten of God, and born of the immortal seed of his word; and their being the children of God through faith, is the first degree also that they take in the church.

2. Christ's second degree in the church, was his unction with the Spirit; for being the Son of God, the Spirit of God came and sat upon him in the form of a dove, which was his New Testament baptism: and his first degree was confirmed to him by the Father, when he took his second; for whilst the Spirit rested on him, a voice from heaven said, "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." And this second degree also, all the faithful take with Christ; for they all as his fellows, are anointed together with him, the chief among them; they as members are anointed together with him the head, with the same oil of gladness; and being sons, God sends the Spirit of his Son into their hearts; and the Spirit of the Son in their hearts, is a sure testimony they are sons. And their second degree also confirms their first, to wit, the gift of the Spirit, their sonship.

3. Christ's third degree was this, that after he was anointed by the Spirit, and declared to be the Son of God, then for the proof of both, he was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, forty days and nights together; and in all these temptations, through his sonship and unction he overcame the devil, and came away conqueror. And this was his third degree in the church of God, that the anointed Son of God overcame the devil, in all the greatest and most grievous temptations he could assault him withal. And this third degree also, all the faithful take with Christ; for when they are the anointed sons of God, satan sets upon them with all sorts of temptations, and they are led by the Spirit of God to wrestle with principalities, and powers, and spiritual wickedness set in high places, and the rulers of the darkness of this world; and yet they, in the strength of their sonship and unction with Christ, do also with him tread satan under their feet, and go away conquerors, through the grace of God in them; and this also is their third degree in the true church.

4. Christ's fourth degree in the church was this, that after his Sonship, unction, and victory over the devil in all temptations, he then went forth as a fit and able minister to teach the gospel of the kingdom, against all the enmity and opposition of the world, devil, and false church, as it is taught us, Matt. iv. 11—17. And this fourth degree also,

all the truly faithful take with Christ. For, after they through faith are the sons of God, and through their sonship are anointed, and through their unction overcome the devil in all his temptations, then also they preach the gospel of the kingdom, being all of them “a chosen generation, and royal priesthood; to shew forth the virtues of him that hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light,” as Peter testifies. And they all speak as they do believe, and have experience; and their sonship, unction, and victory over temptation, is as sufficient a ground for them to teach, as it was for Christ to teach; and so they without any regard of the laws of antichrist, or orders of the clergy, go forth to teach the everlasting gospel, as Christ did before them; and this is the fourth degree of Christ and the faithful in the church.

5. Christ's fifth and last degree which he took in the church, was this, that he having both preached and lived the word, whereat the world and worldly church were wholly offended and enraged; did at the last, willingly confirm his doctrine with his death, and did seal to the truth of it, with his blood; exposing himself to the most shameful and ignominious death of the cross, to confirm his gospel to his church; and this was the highest and most glorious degree that Christ took in his church, as Christ testifies, when speaking of his sufferings; he saith, “Now is the hour come, that the Son of man should be glorified.”

And this fifth degree also, all the truly faithful do take with Christ, either in deed, if need require, or in preparation and readiness of mind, and that whilst they live in outward peace. All the blessed martyrs have taken this highest degree in the church with Christ; and all the rest of his seed have been, and are ready to take it also, when it is the good will of their heavenly Father, seeing they can say, in the same faith and Spirit with Christ, even in this matter, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not my will, but thine be done:" for they also are come to do the will of him that sent them, even to the laying down of their lives.

Now these are the only degrees that Christ himself took in the church, and which all the saints take with him; and the true spiritual church of believers, allows and approves no other degrees but these. And what now are the university degrees in divinity to these? they are degrees in antichrist's church only; and every heathen or human creature, turk or infidel, may take them as well as they, with a little time and pains, and money.

Wherefore, that I may turn my speech a little to the university, Do thou university, if thy day, and time of visitation be not already past, lay this to heart, how much thou hast departed from the gospel of Christ in this matter, as well as in all the rest; and hast received the doctrine, and laws, and methods, and manners of antichrist,

wherewith thou hast deceived thyself as well as the nations. And thou university, hast like thy own mother Babylon, mystery written on thy forehead; for thou hast taken to thyself this glorious title, Alma Mater, the beautiful mother, which only belongs to Jerusalem from above: and though thou hast brought forth a company of prodigious children, heathenish, foolish, vain, vile and abominable, yet hast thou called them learned, and given them degrees in divinity, contrary to the degrees in the gospel, and hast sent them forth into every city, country, town, and village, as ministers of Christ, yea, as sons of the morning, though yet very unbelievers, and altogether destitute of the Spirit. And thus hast thou deceived the nations, and given them a false ministry instead of a true; and by this false ministry, a false word instead of the gospel; and the world hath not at any time received a greater woe, nor more grievous plague than from thee. Wherefore thus saith the word of the Lord, The day of thy vengeance is coming, and the years wherein thou shalt be made desolate; and thy dainty and goodly things shall depart from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all; and the voice of musicians and pipers shall no more be heard in thee; for in thee is found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that have been slain upon the earth, Rev. xviii. Thy human learning, to wit, thy philosophy, and

school divinity, and the false ministry that they have set up, and the false christians that have proceeded from that ministry, have devised and executed all these murders, and massacres, on the true saints of God.

FINIS.

Quis est sapiens et intelliget hæc?

THE
TESTIMONY OF MARTIN LUTHER
UPON THE WHOLE MATTER,

TO WIT,

TOUCHING UNIVERSITIES, HUMAN LEARNING, OR PHI-
LOSOPHY, UNIVERSITY DEGREES, &c.

MARTIN LUTHER, in his answer to Ambrosius Catharinus, expounding the vision concerning antichrist, Dan. viii. speaks thus:

‘The twelfth and last face of antichrist, is that chaos, and open gate of hell, yet very comely to behold, to wit, the universities; into which, perjury, and the abuse of God’s name, are the entrance; and the progress is a free and most licentious conversation, in all manner of wickedness. And yet under these sins and destructions, science and sapience are promised. Yea, titles and degrees are given instead of rewards.

‘But what do they perform at length? First, the most choice youth of christian people are here prostituted, and are cast into the open throat of hell; that I verily think this destruction was figured by

the idol Moloch, to whom anciently they made their choice children to pass through the fire. Afterwards Aristotle being read to them, and not rightly understood, the wits of christian youth are exercised with heathenish and human learning, yea, are quite blinded and oppressed with it. And instead of the word of God, the doctrine of antichrist is delivered, that it may seem the devil himself could not bring forth a more subtile and effectual invention and engine, utterly to extinguish the gospel, than to set up universities. Wherein under the pretence of christian doctrine, nothing should be taught but that which is most contrary to the christian faith. And if at any time it seems good, to call forth the choicest to the government of the churches, they call them out of these stews and dens.

‘And truly to me, this last face of antichrist seems to be the most hurtful of all, because this hath the pretence of the word, when all the rest have only the colour of example; and this is plainly, Schola Hidoth, the school of propositions, of which anon. For it is incomparably the greatest prejudice under the colour of the word, to teach things contrary to the word; seeing the face of examples is formed and strengthened by the face of the word, which otherwise would soon come to nothing, if the word should reign in its genuine sense; and also, seeing the pretence of examples doth only deceive the manners; but the pretence of the word, overthrows the word. But if by any

grace of God, the Universities should receive the word,' to wit, instead of philosophy and school divinity, 'how soon would the papacy, with all its faces or appearances, perish; seeing this face, to wit, the universities, is the prop, bones, and whole strength of that kingdom of faces.

'This deceitful face seems to be foretold, Rev. ix. which scripture it is worth the while to rehearse, and a little to unfold. For John saith, "The first angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth, and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit," &c. I will here make a trial a little,' saith he, 'with my own apprehension. Now certain it is, that by angels through all the Apocalypse, is meant the overseers of churches, as doth plainly appear out of the second and third chapters, where it is written to the angel of Ephesus, Smyrna and others. Further, that other sort of angels which sounds the trumpet, of which there are seven mentioned, chap. viii. cannot agree to any but the Roman bishop, seeing no others are said to sound with trumpet. Now to sound with trumpet, can be nothing else, as appears by the consequence of the text, and the following effects, than to make decrees, which none ever arrogated to himself besides the bishop of the Roman church. Neither is it said in vain, that they prepared themselves to sound, seeing chiefly in these popes, there hath been an impatient fury, and unquiet tyranny, to make laws, and thereby to subject others to themselves.

‘ But let us come to our first angel, who was the first among three, who were to bring three woes upon the earth, and this is he, who did first institute and confirm universities, whom it is not easy for me to name, histories so varying in this matter. But let him be whosoever he was, he was a star fallen from heaven to earth, whether it were Alexander of Hales, or, which I rather think, St. Thomas, who only, after the universities were approved, and this angel had sounded, was either the first, or chief author of bringing in philosophy into the christian world, being the most Aristotelian, yea plainly, Aristotle himself, to whom as to the earth he fell from Christ, the heaven, having obtained the authority of that most wicked angel, approving such studies.

‘ And he received the key of the bottomless pit, and opened it, and brought forth to us philosophy, long ago dead and damned by the doctrine of the apostles; and from thence ascended the smoke of that pit, that is, the meer words and opinions of Aristotle and the philosophers, as the smoke of that great furnace: for then philosophy prevailed, and became of large extent and power, so that Aristotle was made equal with Christ, in respect of authority and faith. And hereby was the sun darkened, even Christ the sun of righteousness and truth; moral virtues being brought in, instead of faith, and infinite opinions instead of truth; and the air also with the smoke of the pit; that it may be understood, not to be an eclipse of the sun,

but the obscurity of the air and sun, by the smoke of the pit ascending, to wit, human doctrines, obscuring Christ and his faith, as the sun and air.

““ And out of the smoke of the pit, there came forth locusts on the earth.” Here the people of the universities, bred and born of philosophy, are called locusts by a most fit name, because they are without a king, that is, Christ, and fly in companies, as is said, Prov. xxx. 27; and also because they waste and burn up all green things wherever they alight; and so the grammarians thiuk they have their name, *Locustæ*, locusts, *A loco usto et vastato*, from the place which they burn and waste. And so, this people of the universities, consumes and burns up all the green pasture of Christ, that is, the fruit of faith.

““ And power was given to them, as the scorpions of the earth have power:” to wit, to wound the conscience of men, because the green fruit of faith being wasted, which heals the consciences of men, it cannot be but the conscience must be hurt and prejudiced.

““ And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, nor any green thing;” that is, that they should not hurt the elect. For they do not hurt all, neither do natural locusts hurt every green thing, but some certain place; so it is here. “ But only those men who have not the seal of God in their foreheads;” that is, some grass they should hurt, to wit, those who have not

faith, which is the mark of God, which we carry in a pure conscience and free conversation.

“ And it was commanded them that they should not kill them, but only should torment them five months.” This seems to be spoken of moral doctrine, which seeing it teaches us the knowledge of sin like the law of God, it doth not kill, but only afflict a man with vain studies, wherein he is always learning, and yet never coming to the knowledge of the truth : for they who are killed with the letter, are quickened with the eternal Spirit ; they are not tormented five months, that is, the whole time of their sensual life, in which moral virtues reign. And we see by experience, that all moral divines are of a most evil and unhappy conscience, full of scruples and inquietness, and have power neither of good nor evil : and therefore it follows,

“ And their torment is as the torment of a scorpion, when he strikes a man.” Behold here a wounded conscience ; for here he expounds what he had said before, that they are not savingly killed, nor spiritually quickened.

“ And in those days men shall seek death, and shall not find it, and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them :” to wit, the death of sin, which doth too much live in the conscience, and yet is not rightly known : for if it were known, presently it being slain, would perish. But this cannot Aristotle’s ethics do, but it is the office of the letter and the Spirit.

“ And the shapes of the locusts were like to horses prepared to battle,” to wit, of scholastical disputation and conflict. He describes the war by this allegory ; for they are ready to argue pro et contra, as they speak. And on their heads were as it were, crowns of gold : that is, the names and titles of degrees, as *Magister noster eximius*; *sacræ theologiæ humilis et indignus professor*, &c. that is, our famous master : and the humble and unworthy professor of sacred theology, and the like. And these crowned ones, John Huss called *Hypocritas coronatos*, crowned hypocrites : and by reason of these crowns, they have authority and power among the multitudes of carnal christians, who are willing to entertain antichrist’s pomp into Christ’s church. Yet have they not true crowns, but as it were crowns of gold, which yet they are very proud of, and are much puffed up with them, though usually they are set on the head of ignorance and error.

“ And their faces are like the faces of men,” because their doctrine and life is governed, not by the Spirit of faith, but by the dictates of natural reason, and by the light of nature, illuminated by Aristotle. “ And they had hair like the hairs of women.” For philosophy brings forth effeminate ministers, given to ease and luxury ; and in whom is nothing of spirit, nor of manly abilities in Christ. For the hairs are priests, as you may see, Psalm lxxviii. Isaiah iii. and in other places.

“ And their teeth are like the teeth of lions.”

Consider only the Thomists instead of all other divines, whether they be not biting, slanderous, and devourers of all that speak a word against Aristotle's divinity. Yea, the Thomists, Scotists, and modern men, bite one another among themselves, and sharpen against one another, not any teeth, but the teeth of lions; neither is there any sort of men which war more fiercely, or with greater hatred, than those sects of divines, each of which desires to devour the other, that it may reign alone.

“And they have breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron;” and this is the pertinacious and confident presumption of each sect, on the truth and soundness of his opinion; and by these iron breastplates they are unconquerable: and these are the principles of each sect.

“And the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots, and of many horses running to battle.” The wings are the words of those that dispute and conflict, by which they do impetuously, brawlingly, and clamorously rush on one another, and fight; as we see in the tumults of disputants both by words and writings, where neither yields to neither, but each one is unconquerable. For he signifies this pertinacious affection of disputing, by the rushing of chariots and horsemen.

“And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails; and their power was to hurt men five months.” Here he explains what before he had propounded, to wit, that the

fruit and end of this divinity, is nothing but evil consciences, during all the time of the sensual lives of men. For that divinity is an abomination to those who are spiritual, because these are without the bounds of the five months, in the Spirit of liberty.

‘ “ And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in greek Apollyon.” Here we may learn, that the rector general of all universities, is not Christ, nor the Holy Spirit, nor any angel of God, but an angel of the bottomless pit; that is, one that is dead, and is among the dead and damned. Who is it then? even that light of nature, to wit, Aristotle, who doth truly reign in the universities, as Abaddon, and Apollyon, that is, a waster and destroyer of the church. For we have said that an angel signifies a teacher or a doctor in the church. And certain it is, that Aristotle who is dead and damned, is at this day, the great doctor of all the universities, rather than Christ; for he reigns alone, being exalted by the authority and study of Thomas, reviving free-will, and teaching moral virtues and natural philosophy, to wit, the three-headed cerberus, or three-bodied gerion.

‘ Behold the first woe which the church hath from the Romish antichrist by the ministry of Saint Thomas: and they whose duty it was chiefly to have prohibited and extinguished these things, they chiefly have crected and established them.’

Thus Luther, word for word, in the forenamed

place. He also in his book, 'De abroganda missa privata,' speaking of the idol Moloch, saith thus:

'Moses and Jeremy have described the worship of this idol to be after this manner, That they did burn or offer to him their children in the fire, supposing that hereby they did perform the greatest and highest service to God, inasmuch as after the example of Abraham they do not spare their own children; though they do this, not only not being called as Abraham was, but also without faith, and in the highest wickedness; and therefore the Psalmist testifies, "That they offered not their children to God, but to devils." For whatsoever is not done by the call and command of God, is not done to God, but devils, who suggest this, though it be done under pretence of the name of God.

'Now hereby,' saith he, 'I conceive the universities to be represented, in which the best and choicest part of christian youth is offered, as it were in burnt sacrifice to God, that there they may be instructed, and be made as it were wholly divine. For the common people believe there is no place under heaven in which youth can be better instructed, so that even religious people have recourse hither. For to learn any thing out of the university, is to learn nothing; but to have studied in the university, is to know all things. There all divine and human things are believed to be taught; for no man sends his son hither with any other opinion than this, that he can no where

be better sent. They think they perform the highest service to God, that they offer their sons to be formed according to the instruction of godliness, that thereby they may become profitable and useful ministers, preachers, governors, who may wholly become God's own portion, and be useful both to God and men.

' And hereto appertains the name Moloch, which signifies a king, or kingly, because this kind of study doth honour them with degrees and promotions, and renders them fit and able to govern others. For we see, that all that are preferred to governments, are taken out of universities: and he that is not a graduate or member of an university, is not qualified for preferment, or to be set over any people: but let the ass first be crowned, to wit, with a degree, and then let him reign.

' And parents do not see, and they that do see do not regard, that youth are usually here destroyed, through rude and vile manners, none commonly forbidding them. Yea, fornication, luxury, and other manifest sins, do but mildly destroy them; but that they are indued and possessed with philosophical, heathenish, human, wicked, and impious opinions, this is the fire of Moloch, which no tears can sufficiently bewail, seeing through this they especially are devoured and perish, who are the most studious and modest youth in universities. So great is the fury of God upon this valley of Tophet, and Hinnom, that they perish more grievously who learn

most, and live modestly, than they who learn nothing, and are corrupted with lusts. For these learn nothing which is to be unlearned again, seeing they know they do evil; whereas the other suck in poison which happily or never they do vomit up again, holding that for good which is evil, and instructing those with the like opinions, whom they take to teach.

‘ And to these pits of hell it is to be imputed, that the sun of the gospel is obscured with the smoke of the pit; for out of this smoke proceed those locusts which possess all chairs, and pulpits, and administer all governments: that satan from the beginning of the world, could devise nothing in all the world, more strong and pernicious to waste faith and the gospel, than universities: neither was it meet that this evil should arise, but in the end of the world, when the world through the prevailing of sin, being loaden with the wrath of God, should draw near to hell and damnation. For the miserable people must needs hear those things taught, and delivered out of the pulpits, which those Molochites have learned in the universities; and they have learned nothing but the highest blasphemies of God: neither is it lawful to have any where, any other pastor than these.

‘ In Jeremiah, that valley is called, Gehinnom, from whence Christ took that word, Gehenna, which what it signifies I do not well know: but it seems to me to come from Janah, which signifies

to eat up, or to pill, or waste, as tyrants or usurers do pill and suck out the people ; so that Gehinnom is the valley of pilling or wasting the people. For these being set over the people as shepherds, ought to feed them with the word of life, and they instead thereof, do insensibly waste and devour them, in their body, goods, and soul, with the pestilent doctrines of universities. And such teachers do the universities, those synagogues of perdition, give us.' Thus Luther.

These now are Luther's own words, which I have made legible to english men. Wherein it is manifest that he condemns the universities in the very institution and constitution of them, and chiefly in their chief studies, human learning, and school divinity ; and also, as to that gross popish opinion, that they are the fountain and nurseries of the ministry : and that none are fit to teach, or so fit to teach, as those that have been educated in them. Yea, though these be raw, foolish, ignorant fellows, yet being university graduates, must they be set over towns and parishes ; and the miserable people must not only hear them and their doltish doctrine, brought from the universities, but also must be constrained by secular power and laws to pay them well for such pains, which tends only to the ruin of their souls for ever : and no hand is yet strongly and resolutely stretched out to deliver the people from this intolerable bondage. For the necks of the people of the world have never endured so grievous a yoke from

any tyrants, as from the doctrine and domination of the clergy. For worldly tyrants have only afflicted men's bodies and temporal estates, which reacheth but to this short life: but these spiritual tyrants, the clergy or false ministry, when they have got countenance, strength, and aid from the worldly magistrates, how have they with their academical, philosophical, heathenish divinity infected, poisoned, and destroyed the people to eternal death; and nobody durst shun them upon pain of temporal death, or punishments. But now, through the great goodness of God, and his mighty providences and works from heaven, it is a more happy age! And happy shall they be who being called forth, shall do the work of God against all discouragements and difficulties, and shall not with Ephraim, being harnessed, turn their backs in the day of battle.

And now to return to our business again, touching the universities, let none object that Luther speaks against Popish universities only; for this is but a weak and simple defence, and altogether unable to ward off the mighty blow of God's word, from their heads and hearts. For the things condemned in the foregoing testimonies of Luther, are the self-same for the substance of them, as do live, prevail, and flourish in our present universities, as hath been before declared; and I leave it to every faithful christian to judge the truth in this matter. But men would fain preserve their titles, degrees, authority, dignity, state, stipends,

and therefore for defence of these things, they must needs say something, though it be to never so little purpose: but yet by such discourse, they sufficiently declare how cool and icy they are for Christ's interest, and how zealous for their own.

But certain it is, that as the universities were set up at first as nurseries for antichrist's kingdom, men being therein so educated (according to the undertaking of Charles the Great) in philosophy and school divinity, that it might be said to them, *Vos estis sal terræ, et lux mundi*, 'Ye are the salt of the earth, and the light of the world,' which yet only agrees to the faithful, who are born of God; so have they still remained the same hitherto in substance, though not without some small change of outward form.

2. For first, the philosophy taught and studied in the university, is the very same that it was at first; and this philosophy is nothing but the religion of the heathen. For what the law was to the Jews, and the gospel is to the christians, philosophy was and is to the heathen; and in this study the poor lads waste the flower and cream of their lives to no purpose, but to make them more heathenish, corrupt, and bold in evil, than they were by nature. And,

For their divinity, which they usually learn in the universities, out of the fathers, schoolmen, and systems; and in which they are trained up, to dispute either for it, or against it, in the schools

(it being in seriousness, all one to them, what they hold and maintain in religion, seeing all is but opinion to them) and which they after teach to the people, with special regard to their own profit and advantage; this is not the true word and ministry of the gospel. For the gospel is the word of faith; which word, is the word in our hearts, according to the tenor of the new covenant, wherein God saith, "I will write my law in their hearts, and put it in their inward parts." But now the university divines, the truth being indeed dead in their hearts, and having no presence nor power there, they take it up out of the books and writings of men, wherein it hath been buried; and by this means, bring forth a dead doctrine to the world (which other men have spoken, but themselves have no experience of) and not the word of life, which hath quickened them; but only a dead letter, raised up like the living letter, which they present to them. As the witch of Endor raised up a dead Samuel, in the outward habit and appearance of the living Samuel, and presented him to Saul; so these university divines bring forth the outward garments and appearance of the truth to the people, when they do best: but the substance, soul, and life of the truth, they cannot bring forth, because they have not the living word of God in their hearts, but have only a dead word, which they gather out of the books and writings of men. And this is the university divinity.

And Lastly, the preachers which the universities

send forth, are usually in the greatest enmity to Christ and his gospel, of all other men whatsoever, and do bring greatest prejudice to Christ's kingdom, and greatest advantage to antichrist's. For when men without learning, and yet without the Spirit of Christ, will undertake to teach the people, as many also now do, their ignorance is manifest to all, and is judged of all, and they through their rudeness, can never long deceive the world; but now, when men are as destitute of the Spirit as they, and yet have human learning, and the letter of the word, in a philosophical sense to help them, this is that, that exceedingly endangers and deceives the world; the people supposing, the doctrine of the gospel according to philosophical learning to be the ministration of the Spirit, and to be sufficiently enough to instruct the church. And so antichrist's kingdom is set up with credit and renown, by these: whereas the ignorant teachers, who are destitute of the Spirit, are able to do him no considerable service. But Christ will not have the learned men to be teachers in his church, through their learning; and as little will he have ignorant men to teach in his church, because of their ignorance; but whether men be learned or ignorant, according to the world, it is no matter in Christ's church, where each man is to speak in the Spirit of Christ, which makes both the ignorant and the learned alike wise in Christ; and so the learned man becomes ignorant in the church to be learned. in Christ; and the ignorant

man without worldly learning, forthwith becomes wise in Christ: and the learned, and the ignorant, meet together only in the wisdom of Christ, which is the wisdom of God, and swallows up at once all the learning and ignorance of the world alike, and will have all wise alone in itself.

Wherefore, all universities being left and forsaken as to this matter, let learned and ignorant men come alike to Christ, to be made wise in him, who is made unto us of God, our only wisdom.

THE
RIGHT REFORMATION OF LEARNING,
SCHOOLS, AND UNIVERSITIES,
ACCORDING TO THE
STATE OF THE GOSPEL,
AND THE
TRUE LIGHT THAT SHINES THEREIN.

THOUGH I do not pretend to that wisdom which might direct the world farther than the word of God is with me, yet shall I be bold, as one who desires to be faithful to Christ, and profitable to his true church, to offer my apprehensions and advice to the called, chosen, and faithful ones of Christ, that either now are, or hereafter may be in

Job Lowder's Book Hamphstead Norris Berks 1844

authority in these nations, touching the instructing youth, and ordering schools.

1. First therefore, as to this matter, I do judge, there neither is, nor can be any greater evil than to bring up children in ease and idleness, and to suffer them to live freely and without controul, according to those natural lusts and corruptions which they bring along with them into the world, which do soon wonderfully improve through such a careless and unmurtured life. And such children and youth usually become an early prey to the devil, who readily fills them with all the ungodliness and unrighteousness of the heathen.

2. I conceive it meet, that the civil power, or chief magistrates, should take great care of the education of youth, as of one of the greatest works that concerns them, and as one of the worthiest things they can do in the world; inasmuch as what the youth now is, the whole commonwealth will shortly be.

3. To this end, it is meet that schools, if wanting, be erected throughout the whole kingdom, and that not only in cities and great towns, but also as much as may be in all lesser villages. And that the authority of the nation take great care, that godly men especially, have the charge of greater schools; and also, that no women be permitted to teach little children in villages, but such as are the most sober and grave; and that the magistrate afford to this work all suitable encouragement and assistance.

4. That in such schools they first teach them to read their native tongues, which they speak without teaching; and then presently, as they understand, bring them to read the holy scriptures, which though for the present they understand not, yet may they, through the blessing of God, come to understand them afterwards.

5. That in cities and greater towns, where are the greater schools, and the greater opportunities to send children to them, they teach them also the Latin and Greek tongues, and the Hebrew also, which is the easiest of them all, and ought to be in great account with us, for the Old Testament's sake. And it is most heedfully to be regarded, that in teaching youth the tongues, to wit the Greek and Latin, such heathenish authors be most carefully avoided, be their language never so good, whose writings are full of the fables, vanities, filthiness, lasciviousness, idolatries, and wickedness of the heathen. Seeing usually, whilst youth do learn the language of the heathen, they also learn their wickedness in that language; whereas it were far better for them to want their language, than to be possessed with their wickedness. And what should christian youth have to do with the heathenish poets, who were for the most part the devil's prophets, and delivered forth their writings in his spirit, and who through the smoothness, quaintness, and sweetness of their language, do insensibly instil the poison of lust and wickedness into the hearts of youth; whereby

their education, which ought to correct their natural corruption, doth exceedingly increase and inflame it?

Wherefore my counsel is, that they learn the Greek and Latin tongues especially from christians, and so without the lies, fables, follies, vanities, whoredoms, lust, pride, revenge, &c. of the heathens; especially seeing neither their words, nor their phrases are meet for christians to take into their mouths. And most necessary it is, that christians should forget the names of their gods and muses, which were but devils and damned creatures, and all their mythology, and fabulous inventions, and let them all go to satan from whence they came.

6. It may be convenient also, that there may be some universities or colleges, for the instructing youth in the knowledge of the liberal arts, beyond grammar and rhetoric; as in logic, which as it is in divinity, as one calls it, *Gladius diaboli*, 'the devil's sword,' so in human things it may be of good use, if reason manage that art of reason: but the mathematics especially are to be had in good esteem in universities, as arithmetic, geometry, geography, and the like, which as they carry no wickedness in them, so are they besides very useful to human society, and the affairs of this present life.

There may be also in these universities or colleges, allowed the studies of physick, and of the law, according to that reformation which a wise

and godly authority will cause them to pass under, both being now exceedingly corrupt and out of order, both for practice and fees.

7. But why these universities or colleges should be only at Cambridge and Oxford, I know no reason; nay if human learning be so necessary to the knowledge and teaching of the scriptures, as the universities pretend, they surely are without love to their brethren, who would have these studies thus confined to these places, and do swear* men to read and teach them no where else: certainly it is most manifest, that these men love their own private gain, more than the common good of the people. But now seeing by the hand of God, a kingdom is turned into a commonwealth, and tyranny into freedom, we judge it most prejudicial to the common good of a commonwealth, that these two universities should make a monopoly of human learning to themselves, especially as is said, seeing they say, nobody can well understand or teach the scriptures without it; and so by reason of this their encroachment against the rule of love, through the former grants of popes and kings, all men should be necessitated to send their children hither, from all parts of the nation, some scores or

* *Juramentum Magistrorum in receptionibus et resumptionibus solemnibus. Jurent etiam, quod extra istam universitatem, nusquam alibi in Anglia, præterquam Oxoniæ, in aliqua facultate incipient, aut Lectiones suas solemniter resument, nec consentient quod aliquis alibi in Anglia incipient, hic pro Magistro, in illa facultate habeatur.*

hundreds of miles, for liberal education, to the great trouble and charge of parents: especially this considered, that the universities usually have been places of great licentiousness and profaneness, whereby it often comes to pass, that parents sending their children far from them, young and hopeful, have for all their care and cost, after several years, received them back again with their tongues and arts, proud, profane, wicked, abominable, and incorrigible wretches.

Wherefore doubtless it would be more suitable to a commonwealth, if we become so in deed and not in word only, and more advantageous to the good of all the people, to have universities, or colleges, one at least, in every great town or city, in the nation, as in London, York, Bristol, Exeter, Norwich, and the like; and for the state to allow to these colleges an honest and competent maintenance, for some godly and learned men to teach the tongues and arts, under a due reformation. And this the state may the better do, by provision out of every county, or otherwise, as shall be judged best, seeing then there will be no such need of endowment of scholarships; inasmuch as the people having colleges in their own cities, near their own houses, may maintain their children at home, whilst they learn at the schools; which would be indeed the greatest advantage to learning that can be thought of.

3. It would also be considered, whether it be according to the word of God, that youth should

spend their time only in reading of books, whilst they are well, strong, active, and fit for business. For commonly it so falls out, that youth lose as much by idleness, as they gain by study. And they being only brought up to read books, and such books as only contain wrangling, jangling, foolish and unprofitable philosophy, when they have continued any long time in the university, in these unwarranted courses by God, they are commonly in the end, fit for no worthy employment, either in the world, or among the faithful. To remedy which great evil, colleges being, as hath been spoken, dispersed through the great cities and towns of the commonwealth, it may be so ordered that the youth, according to Luther's counsel, may spend some part of the day in learning or study, and the other part of the day in some lawful calling; or one day in study, and another in business, as necessity or occasion shall require.

And thus shall youth be delivered from that ease and idleness, which fills the hearts of university students with many corruptions and noisome lusts, whilst they fill their heads only with empty knowledge and foolish notions; whereby neither can God be glorified, nor their neighbour profited.

9. And if this course were taken in the disposing and ordering colleges and studies, it would come to pass that twenty would learn then, where one learns now, and also by degrees, many men on whom God shall please to pour forth his Spirit, may grow up to teach the people, whilst yet they

live in an honest calling and employment, as the apostles did. And this would give them great efficacy and power in teaching, whilst they lived by faith, through their honest labour, and were delivered from the mischief of idleness: but and if the faithful shall desire any one that is more apt to teach, and hath received a greater measure of the anointing than his brethren, to spend more of his time in the word and prayer than his calling will afford, at such times they ought to supply him: and the law of love in the hearts of the faithful will be law enough in this matter, without calling in the aid of the magistrate.

And by this means, may the chargeable and burthensome maintenance of the carnal clergy, by degrees be taken away, and the church of Christ, and the very nations themselves, be supplied with a more faithful, christian, and spiritual ministry than now it hath, at a far less rate. For God hath promised in the last days to pour out his spirit on all flesh, and the sons, and daughters, and servants and handmaids shall prophesy; and then shall knowledge cover the earth as waters the seas.

Now for conclusion, I do conceive that none of the faithful and wise have any just cause to be offended for speaking for the use of human learning in this reformed way, which the gospel will permit; seeing by this means, these two errors of antichrist would be dissolved among us; the one of making universities the fountain of the ministry which one thing is, and will be more and more,

as Christ's kingdom shall rise up and prevail in the world, a millstone about their necks; and the other, of making the clergy a distinct sect or order, or tribe, from other christians, contrary to the simplicity of the gospel.

2. Let the faithful consider, that this reformed use of tongues and arts, justly hath its place in the world. For if all men cannot be christians, as Paul saith, "All men have not faith;" yet let them be men, and improved in the use of reason and sober learning, whereby they may be serviceable to the commonwealth in their age, whilst the church of Christ hath its own members and officers, through the call of God, and unction of his Spirit only. For* human learning hath its place and use among human things, but hath no place nor use in Christ's kingdom, as hath been sufficiently proved.

And thus have I freely offered my advice for mending things that are amiss, and making strait the things that are crooked in this matter.

* Sufficit autem ut homines de his rebus (scil. de artibus et scientiis) quantum in schola didicerunt, noverint propter usus humanos. August. in act. contr. Felicem.

FINIS.

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