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LETTER.

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FROM

ROBERT HALDANE, ESQ.

loan TO
J. Jacques Coton
M. J. J. CHENEVIÈRE,

PASTOR AND PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY AT
GENEVA:

OCCASIONED BY HIS "SUMMARY OF THE THEOLOGICAL
CONTROVERSIES WHICH OF LATE YEARS HAVE
AGITATED THE CITY OF GENEVA."

PUBLISHED IN THE MONTHLY REPOSITORY OF THEOLOGY
AND GENERAL LITERATURE.

EDINBURGH:

PUBLISHED BY WM. OLIPHANT, SOUTH BRIDGE;
AND SOLD BY M. OGLE, AND CHALMERS & COLLINS, GLAS-
GOW; A. BROWN & CO. ABERDEEN; J. HATCHARD & SON;
HAMILTON, ADAMS & CO.; J. NISBET; J. DUNCAN; AND
B. J. HOLDSWORTH, LONDON.

1824.

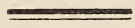
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LETTER.



SIR,

YOUR recent publication, in an English periodical work, admits the well-known fact that the pastors of Geneva have sunk very low in the public esteem. But, while you admit this, you employ no small address in endeavouring to show that the public opinion respecting them is unfounded. As I am not altogether a stranger to this subject, and as you have brought forward my name in connexion with it in a very prominent point of view, I feel it my duty, as well in justice to myself, as for the sake of preventing others from being misled, to put the public on their guard against the effects of your misstatements, and, with this view, to exhibit the present state of religion in the church of Geneva in its true light.

You begin by exultingly proclaiming the former glory of Geneva, resulting from her preserving the light of divine truth amidst surrounding apostasy and

error, and from the reputation of her clergy, firmly established on the basis of knowledge and virtue. To the justice of this eulogium, but applied to a much earlier period than that to which you seem to refer, I most cordially subscribe. Geneva, from the prominent place she held in the revival of religion, is entitled to the gratitude of the surrounding countries. The noble stand there made against prevailing anti-christian delusion by the illustrious Calvin and his able coadjutors, and their successful efforts in diffusing divine truth, will ever live in the remembrance of all who value the truth. No enlightened Christian, in the present day, will feel the smallest inclination to derogate from the high esteem in which those favoured servants of God have been deservedly held. Their praise is in all the churches, and the blessed effect of their labours will descend to the latest posterity.

Respecting, then, that "height of prosperity and glory to which Geneva had been elevated by the Reformation," there is no difference between us, unless it be, (what I believe is really the case,) that I am disposed to attach a much higher value to her exertions at that period, than, with the sentiments you hold, it is possible for you to do.

After this retrospective view, you go on to observe, that 'suddenly all is changed: At the beginning of the 'nineteenth century an offensive league is formed 'against Geneva; as if the language of commendation 'were exhausted, she now hears only the voice of reproach and outrage.' That this change has neither been so sudden nor so recent as you would have your

readers suppose, I shall afterwards have occasion to show ; but, with respect to the general reproach of which the clergy of Geneva now find themselves the objects, I entirely agree with you. You are “ left as a beacon upon the top of a mountain, and as an ensign on a hill.” But I may ask, in the language of the prophet, “ Hast thou not procured this to thyself?”

In cursorily glancing at your statement, one might be induced to imagine, that the present pastors of Geneva stand on the same ground which Calvin and Beza, and others of their worthy predecessors occupied. But, on considering it more attentively, your readers will perceive that the state of things amongst you is completely altered. You have entirely abandoned the principles of your church at the Reformation, and your complaint now is of the revival of *Calvinism*, the very doctrine that was then taught. What ! Sir, are you afraid of Calvinism ? Has the ghost of Calvin, whom you thought dead, and buried, and forgotten, appeared among you ? Is he again raising his voice from the chair which he once occupied, but from which you had hoped that it would never more be heard, and are you greatly alarmed ? This furnishes ample proof that a radical change has taken place at Geneva. And, in that case, can you be surprised that the same admiration which was enjoyed by men whose religious sentiments you hold in abhorrence, is not equally bestowed on you ? Can you expect your neighbours to be so inconsistent ? Shall we confound together things which are in themselves so manifestly incongruous ? Shall we call darkness light, and light darkness ?

‘ Geneva is no longer Christian ! is the cry which
 ‘ resounds in the city itself, and, reiterated by malevo-
 ‘ lence, is heard in England, in Holland, in Germany,
 ‘ and France, and has even reached the astonished ears
 ‘ of the inhabitants of the New World. Why this out-
 ‘ cry? Why this tumult?” The reason is obvious. Be-
 cause you have denied the truth of God, and are de-
 generate successors of those who held it forth in its
 purity. Because the doctrine which you preach is not
 the Gospel of the grace of God, but, on the contrary,
 subversive of it ; because, in one word, you have be-
 come Arians, and thus, in the judgment of all who
 venerate the principles of the Reformation, subjected
 yourselves to the charge of being *false teachers who*
have PRIVILY brought in damnable heresies. From
 this important fact your statement is calculated to
 draw off the attention of your readers, and to direct it
 to what, if the real cause be kept out of view, must
 appear an unaccountable and unprecedented combina-
 tion against the pastors of Geneva. As, however, you
 have brought forward nothing to vindicate them from
 the charge of a change of doctrine, all that you have
 said is to no purpose, nor will any thing that can be
 said avail to relieve them from their present degrada-
 tion, till they have repented of their apostasy, and re-
 turned to the profession of the doctrines which placed
 their predecessors in the pre-eminent situation they so
 justly occupied.

You have traced what you call “ the first symptoms
 of perturbation,” and enumerated “ the successive at-
 tacks on the pastors of Geneva,” of which you ex-

hibit no fewer than thirteen. Amongst your assailants, Mr. Empaytaz is placed in the foremost rank. He published, you say, ‘ Considerations on the Divinity of Jesus Christ, addressed to his former Companions, the Theological Students of Geneva, in which he attacked the Faith of the Clergy of that City.’ He did so, and his considerations, Sir, are convincing. He has placed beyond all doubt the humiliating fact, that the great body of the pastors * of Geneva have entirely departed from the all-important doctrine of the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. What he has written on the subject is not the production of a stranger, but of one thoroughly acquainted with all that is passing among you. This attack, had it not been founded in truth, might have been easily and satisfactorily repelled. The charge might have been explicitly denied, and the doctrine in question affirmed to be maintained at Geneva in all its purity and force. Every faithful preacher, who, like the Apostle Paul, had determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified, could, in such circumstances, have appealed to the whole of his ministry against such an imputation. But so far was the body of the clergy from pursuing this course, that only one voice was raised in her pulpits in defence of the ancient doctrine of Geneva. ‘ An aged pastor,’ you say, ‘ a man deservedly honoured, and till then pointed out as a model of wisdom and moderation, went into the

* My remarks in this letter do not apply to the whole of the pastors of the Canton of Geneva. M. Chenevière himself distinguishes one, who, he says, “ was never the friend of his clerical brethren.”

‘ pulpit, and to the amazement of his hearers, openly
 ‘ attacked those who did not hold the opinions he es-
 ‘ teemed orthodox : he treated as a fatal system the
 ‘ ideas of those instructors and members of the church
 ‘ who disbelieved the *consubstantiality* of the Word. A
 ‘ few days afterwards, a preacher, in allusion to this
 ‘ attack, preached on the Mysteries, blaming those mi-
 ‘ nisters who insisted on abstruse and incomprehensible
 ‘ doctrines, and represented them as fundamental, and
 ‘ the belief of them essential to salvation.’

Is it possible to figure any thing that more completely substantiates the truth of Mr. Empaytaz’s assertions ? An aged pastor treats as a fatal system the ideas of those instructors of the church who deny the divinity of the Son of God. This excites *the amazement of his hearers*, and for this he forfeits his character for *wisdom and moderation*. To repel “ this attack,” a preacher (yourself) stands forward without delay, and openly and loudly proscribes the obnoxious doctrine ; in this manner, impiously attempting to remove the foundation which God has laid in Zion,—to nullify the atonement made for sin,—to anathematize, under the pretext of mystery, the ascription of supreme divinity to Him whom the spirit of prophecy attests to be “ Jehovah our righteousness,” to whom the apostles witness, as “ over all, God blessed for ever ;” who declares himself to be one with the Father, and whom the Scriptures represent as the object of worship to the whole intelligent creation of God in earth and in heaven !

On this occasion, it might have been hoped, that the pastors of Geneva would have manifested some-

thing of the spirit of Paul, when he declared that, if an angel from heaven were to preach another Gospel, he should be held accursed; that they would have followed the example which he exhibited when, on the appearance of false brethren, he gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour, that the truth of the Gospel might continue with the churches. At any rate, it might have been confidently expected, that the "aged pastor" would have stood forward as "a minister of Christ, and a steward of the *Mysteries* of God." But quite the reverse. "There was none that moved the wing, or opened the mouth, or peeped." An unholy combination was entered into. 'The basis of a pacific plan was laid, the two preachers who had censured each other were consulted, and *mutual concessions* were made by all parties.' And thus, by your own account, a disgraceful and iniquitous compromise was entered into. The pastors of Geneva agreed to be silent in their public discourses on the subject of the divinity of the Son of God, as a doctrine which they considered incomprehensible, and not essential to salvation!

The purpose of M. Empaytaz's pamphlet is accomplished. The melancholy fact it asserts stands no longer in need of proof; it is admitted by the parties accused. It is openly avowed; it is publicly acted on. On the one part, the doctrine in question is opposed; on the other, it is laid aside. Its friends are silenced, and its enemies triumph! But is not the accusation here preferred too strong? Is not this doctrine still maintained by the pastors of Geneva? Do they not all admit its truth? "Each one of them," you

say, “ confessed that Jesus was a divine being.” After such a declaration, what shall be thought of your candour? This is an insidious attempt to deceive, which admits of no excuse. For what is the obvious tendency of your declaration? Is it not to induce the belief that, with respect to the divine nature of Christ, there is no difference of sentiment among you? and how is the fact? There is a difference, and a difference not less than between *finite* and *infinite*. One of the parties believes that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Eternal Jehovah, the other that he is merely a creature. If any Christian in England, in Holland, in Germany, in France, in the New World, who has heard of the defection of the Genevan pastors, has hitherto entertained the smallest doubt on this subject, he can doubt no longer. From the mouth of M. Chenevière, Pastor and Professor of Divinity, he must now be convinced of the fallen state of the Geneva Church.

Next to Mr. Empaytaz, in your account of the successive attacks that have been made upon you, comes, “ Secondly, the Counsellor Jaques Grenus,” of whose character you speak in terms of unmeasured reprobation. Of this man I heard nothing when I was at Geneva. If, as you say, he was convicted as a calumniator, the punishment awarded to him was just. Were they calumnies only, by which you have from so many quarters been assailed, your task in refuting them would not have been difficult, and their falsehood would consequently have been long before now detected.

‘ Thirdly,’ you say, ‘ about this time the pastors
 ‘ learned that they were to reckon amongst their pro-
 ‘ fessed adversaries two men who were very different
 ‘ from the Counsellor Grenus,—two pastors who were
 ‘ going to reprint the Helvetic Confession of 1566,
 ‘ with a preface, explanatory of their motives and reli-
 ‘ gious principles. In vain the clergy sent a deputa-
 ‘ tion to the elder and more gentle of the two,* to re-
 ‘ present to him that the publication of such a work
 ‘ might excite fresh disturbances, and that if Chris-
 ‘ tians saw their teachers opposing each other, and ex-
 ‘ hibiting the Holy Scripture as self-contradictory, it
 ‘ would produce mistrust, and be injurious to their
 ‘ faith and piety; that the pastors, therefore, having
 ‘ warned these two brethren of the danger to which
 ‘ they exposed religion if they persisted in their un-
 ‘ dertaking, threw all the responsibility on them-
 ‘ selves of the unhappy effects which might follow.
 ‘ Mr. Cellerier, sen. and Mr. Gaussen were not de-
 ‘ terred from publishing their Confession of Faith and
 ‘ their Preface; and what was the time chosen for this
 ‘ publication?’ That at which the pastors were un-
 ‘ justly assailed, and at which silence was enjoined by
 ‘ the civil authority. Neither the Confession nor the
 ‘ Preface produced the impression anticipated by
 ‘ these gentlemen.’

Here, Sir, amongst your professed adversaries, you

* Mr. Chenevière here refers to “ the aged pastor” above spoken of. This publication of the Helvetic Confession did not take place till more than two years after the compromise mentioned. Page 7th.

bring forward two of your own pastors, whose conduct, as you relate it, does them much honour. Aware of the total departure of so many among the clergy of Geneva from the ancient faith, and convinced that their heresy, which they had “privily brought in,” would prove the eternal ruin of all who embraced it, they reprinted the Helvetic Confession, accompanying it with a preface, in which they declare their adherence to the form of sound words which it contained. You complain that this was done “at a time at which the pastors were unjustly assailed.” You certainly ought to be the last to make this complaint. How were they unjustly assailed? They were charged with denying the divinity of the Lord and Saviour, and you were the foremost to justify the truth of this charge. In such circumstances, was it not the imperative duty of these two pastors openly to admonish the people of their danger, and thus to exonerate themselves, so far at least, from the guilt of concealing their sentiments, and proving unfaithful at such a crisis? You speak of the gentleness of one of these pastors, but, because he is gentle, must he betray his master? He may have been very desirous of peace, but peace itself is not to be maintained at the expense of truth. “The wisdom that is from above is *first pure*, then peaceable.”

How different the light in which, according to your account, the matter was viewed by the other pastors. In vain they sent a deputation to represent the injurious consequences of such conduct, as tending to excite fresh disturbances, to produce mistrust in the minds of the people, and to injure their faith and

piety. Your calling out for peace, as you do here at the expense of truth, and lamenting that although the clergy actually differed *toto coelo* among themselves respecting the very foundation of the Gospel, they should not all agree to act so as *to impose upon the people by making them believe that they were all of one mind*, shows plainly the system on which you are proceeding, and justifies a most material part of the charge exhibited against you both by Christians and Infidels. By the one and by the other, you have long been accused of acting in an underhand dishonest manner ; of secretly intriguing in such a way as to have effected a complete change in the system of divine truth once taught at Geneva, while your real design in this matter has been carefully kept out of view.

Your great object appears to be an artful concealment of your downward progress, of which you do all in your power to keep other churches in ignorance. When your change of sentiment is in any way detected, when light is from any quarter let in on your secret machinations, you are greatly alarmed and offended. But the ground of your offence and alarm is, not that the sentiments of some of the pastors are really opposed to those of others ; but that this opposition should be discovered, and mistrust excited. And ought not mistrust to be excited ? In such circumstances should not the people be taught the necessity of examining for themselves ? Would this be injurious to their faith and piety ? On what foundation, I would ask, does that faith and piety rest, which would be injured by an appeal from fallible men to the in-

fallible standard of the word of God? particularly when these very men to whom they have been accustomed to look up for direction, stand diametrically opposed to each other on subjects of the last importance, and are accusing each other as blind, incapable guides. Are such "the principles of the Reformation" of which you speak? Was the whole of that great work to issue in this, that the people are to be handed over from one set of intriguing ecclesiastics to another, who, in whatever else they may differ, are unanimous in this, that their flock should be led by them blindfold, and impressed with the belief, that if they examine the Scriptures for themselves, as enjoined in the sacred writings, it will prove injurious to their faith and piety? Why do you not act with the same consistency as your Roman Catholic brethren, and altogether interdict to the people the reading of the word of God? On what principle can you be vindicated in uttering the sentiments contained in your statement? Have you confidence in your own opinions, or have you not? Are these opinions essential, or are they not essential? Is it, or is it not a matter of any moment what idea we entertain of Him whom we worship?

In your list of assailants, appears, ' fourthly, Mr. ' Ami Bost,' who published, you say, ' in 1819, a work, ' entitled *Geneve Religieuse*, in which he represented ' the church in his country as in a lapsed state. One ' of the proofs which he adduced, was a discourse ' lately pronounced in the Consistory, to many parts ' of which he attributed a sense directly opposed

‘ to that of the author. He professed that the pas-
 ‘ tors had some object, some secret, which *if revealed*
 ‘ *at a certain epoch, would have excited indignation;*
 ‘ insinuating that the pastors had conceived some mys-
 ‘ terious and guilty project; whereas this phrase, pur-
 ‘ posely detached from its context, related merely to
 ‘ the suppressing of confessions of faith, resolved on
 ‘ in 1705, and kept secret during twenty years at
 ‘ the request of the government. Mr. A. Bost spared
 ‘ neither his masters nor professors; he endeavoured
 ‘ to convince the people that they were led astray; . . .
 ‘ he blamed every thing which proceeded from the
 ‘ pastors, and approved every thing, even to the writ-
 ‘ ings of Grenus, which was inimical to them.’

This publication of Mr. Bost’s is of such a nature,
 prefers such strong accusations, supported by facts,
 and bears so hard on the characters of the pastors of
 Geneva, even with respect to common integrity, that
 were it possible to prove them unfounded, no man,
 or body of men, who have any regard for their repu-
 tation, would allow them to pass uncontradicted.
 You say, indeed, that the clergy of Geneva are con-
 demned to silence by the magistrates, whom you ac-
 cuse of acting in this respect ‘ under the influence of
 ‘ unwarrantable timidity.’ As far as respects any dis-
 cussion concerning your doctrines, and the innova-
 tions which you have introduced into the church of
 Geneva, their prudence in thus imposing silence,
 will, I presume, be generally admitted. The more
 that such a cause as yours is examined and discussed,
 the more will its deformity appear in its proper co-
 lours. But when your moral conduct is attacked,—

when accusations are directed not merely against your doctrines and against your capability as teachers, but also against your *integrity* and *moral character*, it is not to be supposed that any magistrates, who know the value of character, either to themselves or to others, and especially to the public teachers of religion, could be so cruel or impolitic as to prohibit you from attempting your own justification. Your silence, then, on this occasion, must be attributed to some other cause.

Speaking of the innovators in religion on the continent, Mr. Bost affirms, "they conceal or discover themselves as their interest requires. They avow their opinions if they are favourable to them; they conceal them, or even deny them, when they are openly attacked. They bend, they shuffle, they are silent, they intrigue, in one word, they lie." "I have not attempted," he adds, "to apply strictly all that precedes to the conduct of the professors and pastors of Geneva towards the church which has been confided to them. I have spoken in a general manner. I am astonished, however, to find that they are very far from being innocent in this respect; * and I will cite, as a striking proof of it, a passage taken word for word, from *a discourse pronounced to the Consistory, 14th January, 1819, by the pastor, M. De Fernex*. I repeat it, it is not without astonishment that I have read the remarkable declarations which follow. "Geneva,"

* I except in all that follows, a small number of pastors and professors, who have no part in the line of conduct now under consideration.—BOST.

said he, p. 20, ‘ enjoyed for almost a century religious
 ‘ tranquillity; she could *boldly* submit her creed to the
 ‘ examination of her reason, and separate the fundamen-
 ‘ tal truths incontestably taught in the Gospel, from
 ‘ those which are not of equal importance; she could, in
 ‘ attaching herself firmly to the one, suspend her judg-
 ‘ ment on the other, till new light permitted her to
 ‘ pronounce upon them with more maturity. But this
 ‘ happy privilege she possessed *unknown to the other*
 ‘ *churches*; content to enjoy peace, *she did not aspire*
 ‘ *to appear to have shaken off a yoke* to which they
 ‘ were every where else still too much subjected, *to lead*
 ‘ *her to hope that she would be able to make them relish*
 ‘ *her principles*. In the mean time, they accuse her
 ‘ of swerving from the received doctrine, of giving less
 ‘ importance to certain dogmas; *they press her for an*
 ‘ *answer*; *she hesitates*; she fears to be engaged in
 ‘ quarrels; they insist, and although decided in re-
 ‘ maining faithful to the silence, that the circumstances
 ‘ and the authority of the chiefs of the state imposed
 ‘ on her, SHE ALLOWS IN SOME DEGREE HER SECRET
 ‘ TO ESCAPE, WHICH, IF REVEALED AT CERTAIN
 ‘ EPOCHS, WOULD HAVE REVOLTED THE MINDS OF
 ‘ MEN, (remark reader) and at others would not have
 ‘ caused any sensation, &c.’

“ Have we well understood!” continues Mr. Bost,
 “ Have we read aright! The church of Geneva, making
 progress *unknown to the other churches*. The church of
 Geneva shaking off, *without wishing it to appear*, a yoke
 which others still retained! and calling the profession of
 the ancient doctrines a yoke! Her conductors *having a*
secret! and *allowing it to escape!* as in spite of them-

selves! consequently resolved, if they had been able, *to go still farther!* *A secret, which if revealed at certain epochs, would have revolted the minds of men!* Thus at such a time, the church of Geneva was conducted in secret by her pastors, in such a manner, and towards such a point that, if she had known it, *she would have revolted at it!* See, my countrymen, how they have conducted you! See how the church has been led! even to the 14th of January of the present year," (1819.)

Here a system of *secret* intrigue is laid open. Your condemnation proceeds from yourselves, and is discovered in such a way as leaves no room for denial. Do not imagine that all this can be explained away in the easy manner in which you allude to it. What alteration can "the connexion," from which you say it is detached, make as to the system avowed in the foregoing quotation, from a discourse pronounced to your Consistory? It speaks for itself. To vindicate the line of conduct which it avows you have pursued, transcends, I imagine, your utmost art.

You charge Mr. Bost with approving of every thing inimical to the pastors, "even to the writings of Grenus;" and, a little before, when referring to this Grenus, you said, 'we see with what kind of succours the enemies of the Genevan clergy reinforced their ranks.' Connecting these assertions together, your readers would be led to suppose that a confederacy had subsisted between Grenus and your other opponents. But, from Mr. Bost's pamphlet, page 74, the very contrary appears to be the truth. Afterwards having stated his decided disapprobation

of this writer, Mr. Bost quotes certain facts that Grenus has advanced respecting your conduct, which appears, he says, "RIGOROUSLY JUST." As these alleged facts deeply arraign your moral conduct, and distinctly assert your want of integrity, your silence concerning them can be viewed in no other light than as a tacit admission of their truth.

'Fifthly,' you say, 'come the heads of the New Church, as they are pleased to term it, who put out several pieces all written with the same intention,' as the pamphlet of Mr. Bost. You give them credit, however, for the open manner in which they have acted in their separation from you.

'Sixthly,' you observe, 'that we may number, amongst the antagonists of the Genevan clergy, the pastors of Lausanne, who broke off all communication with them; at their head was Dean Curtat, who took every opportunity of speaking and writing against the Genevans with all his wonted violence. He laughed at the attacks on his neighbours, which he beheld from the height of his orthodoxy, as from an impregnable fort; he was ill able to conceal his joy when he saw them insulted; nor did he show much repugnance to insulting them himself; but he no longer laughed when the Methodists and young ecclesiastics, who had caught their fanaticism, inveighed against his faith and his public instructions in the terms which he had considered so appropriate to those of the clergy of Geneva; he now lost his temper; his indignation was roused; with a voice of thunder he cried, shame

‘ on his aggressors, and he had recourse to measures
 ‘ against them of much greater severity than those em-
 ‘ ployed by the pastors of Geneva, which he had spoken
 ‘ of with disapprobation.’

‘ Seventhly, the Editor of the British Critic.’

‘ Eighthly, the Christian Observer.’

‘ Ninthly, The Archives du Christianisme.’

‘ Tenthly, Mr. Meganel.’

‘ In the eleventh place, a little regiment of mid-
 ‘ dle-aged ladies, armed with a small Bible.’

‘ Twelfthly, a host of Methodists of both sexes.’

‘ In the thirteenth place, and, above all, M. Malan,
 ‘ who, by his own pamphlets, and those of his friends,
 ‘ and by his journeys and his preaching moved earth,
 ‘ and almost represented heaven as uttering an audible
 ‘ voice, to convince men that Christianity and infallibi-
 ‘ lity in Geneva were with him and his partisans alone.’
 Yes, Sir, the manner in which M. Malan has been treat-
 ed by you has moved the earth. Yet his great crime
 amounts to this, that, instead of “ speaking smooth
 things, and prophesying deceits,” he has, like the
 prophets of old, lifted up his voice to show the people
 their transgressions and their sins. Like the apostles,
 he has said, “ Repent and be converted, that your
 sins may be blotted out.” He has preached among

you the doctrine that Calvin and your other first reformers preached, by whose means your city was "elevated to a height of prosperity and glory," from which it is your lamentation that she has fallen. But that doctrine, which is according to godliness, "which teacheth men to live soberly, righteously, and godly, and to look for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the Great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ," can no longer be tolerated by you.

Besides exhibiting to your readers that formidable band, in thirteen divisions, which has made "successive attacks on the church of Geneva," you have enrolled my name as one of your opponents. I shall ever have reason to bless the Lord that I have, in any degree, contributed to recall the attention of the inhabitants of your city to the Gospel of the grace of God, from which they had so generally departed. From Geneva that Gospel once sounded out to all the surrounding countries, and to Geneva, perhaps, not one among them all is so deeply indebted as the country in which I write. This, were it possible, would enhance the gratification which I feel in having been made instrumental in carrying back the light of truth to a place where it once shone with so much lustre, but in which it had unhappily been extinguished. To use the words of an eloquent speaker at one of our public meetings here, in reference to Geneva, "We borrowed from them, at the Reformation, the torch with which we lighted the fire upon our altars; and cold, indeed, must be the heart which would refuse them a spark to rekindle the flame which now burns so dimly upon their own."

‘ A Scotchman,’ you say, ‘ Mr. Haldane, a rigid Calvinist, whose theological principles are to be found in print, especially in his Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, in which those who have the courage to undertake the task may judge of his doctrines.—Mr. Haldane invited to his house some students and ministers, occupied their minds with the mysterious points of the Christian religion, and inoculated them with his own exclusive and intolerant spirit. He insisted so strongly on the contempt with which reason, proud reason, ought to be regarded, that one of his hearers, in going out of his house, once cried out, ‘ Yes ; I see plainly, that in the affairs of religion, reason ought to be trodden under foot !’ Mr. Haldane waged war so indiscreetly against good works, that they were spoken of with disdain in the discourses of his adherents, and in the pamphlets circulated to perpetuate his influence after his departure.’

The above paragraph contains four distinct allegations or charges. I occupied the students and ministers who came to my house with the mysterious points of the Christian religion. I inoculated them with my own exclusive and intolerant spirit. I insisted on the contempt with which reason ought to be regarded ; and I waged war against good works. For the truth of the whole, you appeal to my publications.

In order that what you refer to may be understood, and all misrepresentations occasioned by the above or similar statements obviated, it is necessary to be ex-

plicit and particular in my reply to each of your charges. I shall begin by adverting to the first allegation, and shall fully explain how far I occupied the minds of the ministers and students who came to my house with the mysterious points of the Christian religion, and my reason for so doing.

When I went to Geneva in the year 1816, one of the theological students having been introduced to me, we entered into conversation respecting the gospel. On every thing peculiar to it I found him completely ignorant ; yet in a state of mind that seemed to show that he was willing to be instructed. He returned next day and brought another student with him. I questioned them respecting the Revelation which God has made in his word, and respecting their personal hope of salvation, and the foundation of that hope. Had they been trained in the schools of Socrates or of Plato, and had they enjoyed no other means of instruction than those afforded, they could scarcely have been more ignorant of the doctrines of the gospel. They had, in fact, learned much more of the doctrines of those heathens than of that of Jesus Christ. To the Bible and its contents their studies had never been directed.

While such was the deplorable state of religious instruction in the Theological Academy, the school in which they had hitherto studied, nothing was heard from the pulpits of Geneva to compensate to the students for this woeful defect. The doctrines and the examples of the heathen philosophers, together with the recommendation of a very scanty morality, dressed up according to the oratorical art, formed the ge-

neral topics of preaching at Geneva, while the name of the Saviour of the world was rarely and slightly mentioned. In the smooth superficial harangues of most of the preachers, it is unquestionably true that "the mysterious points of the Christian religion" had no place. Scarcely any thing peculiar to the gospel was exhibited. There was little or no allusion to the fall of man, or his ruined condition by nature: nothing of the necessity of the New Birth, which the Lord urged so particularly in his conversation with Nicodemus as the only way of access into his kingdom; or, if this doctrine was referred to at all, it was explained to signify mere reformation of conduct. The imputation of Adam's guilt being repudiated, the imputation of the Redeemer's righteousness, and justification by his blood, were also set aside. The person, and the work of the Son of God were passed by. The work of the Spirit was overlooked. The strict precept of the holy law, requiring perfect, universal, and unceasing obedience, which, if preached in its extent and spirituality, without the gospel, would drive all to despair, formed no part of the instruction. There was nothing brought forward to affect the conscience of a sinner, or to lead him to cry out, "What must I do to be saved?" In short, what was preached was neither law nor gospel. But all this was extremely pleasing to the people, who seemed quite satisfied with their preachers, by whom they were all addressed as Christians. They appeared to be in the state of those who are spoken of by the prophet, "which say to the Seers, see not; and to the Prophets, prophesy not unto us right things; speak unto us smooth things, pro-

phesy deceits. Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us." Thus, as was said to Israel of Old, "A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means, and my people love to have it so; and what will ye do in the end thereof?"

As for you, Sir, in particular, I have been present when you preached, and I am free to declare, that never in my life did I hear the word of God so directly contradicted from the pulpit as in your discourses. You assuredly, above all, could not be accused of occupying the minds of the people with the mysterious points of the Christian religion. No, you preached indeed on the "mysteries," but it was to prove to your hearers that they had nothing to do with them. In your exclamation, "Ah, are we not born pure!" profound ignorance of the word of God was manifested in a manner more gross than ever I witnessed either before or since; and the whole train of your reasoning proceeded on this assumed principle; a principle not more contrary to the express declarations of scripture, the conduct of Providence, and the whole plan of redemption, than to the universal experience of mankind. Yet you are theological professor at Geneva!!

The two students whom I first conversed with soon brought others; their visits became so frequent, that I suggested the propriety of fixing a certain hour for them at stated intervals. Three evenings of the week were appointed for this purpose, and eight of the students commenced a regular attendance at these times.

I took the Epistle to the Romans as my subject, and this portion of Scripture I continued to explain to them during the winter. After we had proceeded for about a fortnight in this course, I was earnestly solicited in the name of the other students to begin anew ; in which case, I was assured the greater part of the theological students would attend. I accordingly did so, and their attendance through the winter, and till the time of their vacation at midsummer, continued numerous and regular.

The attention which these interesting young men very soon manifested to the word of God was more than I anticipated. The truth is, that any thing like biblical instruction was altogether new to them. The study of the word of God had formed no part of their preparation for the ministry. Every other branch of improvement necessary to qualify them as scholars and public speakers, appeared to have been attended to ; but a smattering of church history, some superficial knowledge of what is called natural religion, combined with a more extensive acquaintance with the writings of the heathen philosophers, was all they had attained in the shape of theology. As far as I was enabled, I endeavoured to lay open to them the rich stores of religious instruction, contained in the Epistle to the Romans, a portion of the word of God which, on the continent, is very generally considered unintelligible.

In studying this epistle, I turned their attention to the great doctrines of the Gospel so successfully revived at the Reformation by Luther and his associates, as well as by Calvin, with whose writings, though

the founder of their church, they had no acquaintance, and whose theological sentiments they had been taught to regard as quite antiquated. In discarding the instructions of these reformers, they had been led to understand that they were following the superior illumination of the present age. I did not attempt, however, to make them disciples of Calvin, or of any other man, to say, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos ; but to bring them to be followers of Christ, to sit at the foot of his cross, and to learn of Him, who spake as never man spake. I therefore appealed to no authority, either ancient or modern, but solely “ to the law and to the testimony,” always reminding them, that, “ if they spake not according to this word, it was because there was no light in them.” Is. viii. 20.

With doctrinal instruction I connected attention to practical godliness, and constantly inculcated the necessity of their paying regard, in the first place, to their own salvation. I showed them that they must have a right view of God as revealed in Scripture, subsisting in three distinct persons, * the Father, the

* “ If I am asked what is the exact meaning of the word *person* in this case, I answer that I do not know. Here the Unitarian usually triumphs over his antagonist ; but the triumph is without foundation or reason. If I ask in return, ‘ What is the human soul,’ or ‘ the human body ?’ he is obliged to answer, that he does not know. If he says that the soul is organized matter, endowed with the powers of thinking and acting, I ask again what is that organization ? and, what is matter ? To these questions he is utterly unable to furnish any answer. Should he ask again to what purpose is the admission of the term, if its signification is unknown ? I answer, to what pur-

Son, and the Holy Ghost; infinite, eternal, unchangeable. I drew their attention to the character of God, as holy, just, good, and merciful, perfections which, in their combination, are all of them gloriously displayed in the Gospel. I warned them against the loose and erroneous notions so generally entertained concerning the way in which mercy is exercised. God is, indeed, "merciful and gracious," "he delighteth in mercy;" but while justice is an indispensable attribute, mercy is solely vouchsafed as he sees good.*

pose is the admission of the word *matter*, if its signification is unknown. I farther answer that the term in dispute serves to convey, briefly and conveniently, the things intended by the doctrine, viz. that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God; that these are three in one sense, and one in another. The sense in which they are three, and yet one, we do not, and cannot understand. Still we understand the fact; and on this fact depends the truth and meaning of the whole Scripture system."

* Claude, in his Essay on Justification, speaking of the heathen, says, "It is false that mercy is a natural and necessary attribute in God. It is an arbitrary virtue in God, which he exercises with regard to the time in which it seems good unto him, and with regard to the persons towards whom it pleases him. So that were even an angel, that is to say, a spirit perfectly enlightened, to reason upon the conduct of God in the works of providence, he could not have concluded that God had the design to bestow his grace that bringeth salvation upon the men who lived among the nations before the coming of Jesus Christ, nor that he would call them to repentance; because that, although he might conclude, that there was in God some design to be merciful, yet there would ever remain this impenetrable question which could not be determined by the simple contemplation of the

Accordingly, to fallen angels, God has displayed only his justice, while to fallen man he has declared himself merciful. "The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him." Psalm ciii. 17. This mercy, however, is never exercised but in strict conformity to justice; and mercy is not to be found but where justice has received full satisfaction. Here we were led to consider the state of fallen man, and his personal character as a sinner, as well as to an examination of the holy law of God, both in its perfect precepts and awful sanctions, and to see that it is only in Christ that we can be redeemed from its curse and eternal condemnation; and born again in order to participate in the blessings of his redemption.

In introducing and dwelling on the subjects above referred to, we followed the course traced out in the epistle we were considering. The apostle commences that epistle by briefly announcing what he intends afterwards fully to discuss, that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, because in it is revealed the righteousness of God. Unless such a righteousness had been provided for them, all men must have suffered the punishment due to sin, seeing God hath proclaimed his high displeasure against their ungodliness and unrighteousness. These

works of providence; namely, if this design regarded the time present, or if it was only for the time to come. And I call this question impenetrable, because the exercise of mercy depends upon the free will of God with regard to time, place, and persons; nothing can decide this but the revelation that God gives us of his will on this subject, and he does not give it but in his word."

are the great truths which the apostle immediately proceeds to unfold. And as they stand connected with every part of that salvation which God has provided, he is led to exhibit a most animating and consolatory view of the whole of that great plan of mercy, which proclaims 'glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good will to man.'

The first point which the apostle establishes, is the ruined condition of men, who by nature are all under sin. The charge of ungodliness and consequent unrighteousness, he proves first against the Gentiles. They had departed from the worship of God, although in the works of the visible creation they had sufficient notification of his power and godhead. In their conduct they had violated the law written in their hearts, and had sinned in opposition to what they knew to be right, and to the testimony of their consciences in its favour. All of them, therefore, lay under that sentence of condemnation which will be pronounced on the workers of iniquity in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men. The apostle next brings a similar charge of guilt and transgression against the Jews, notwithstanding that they had been favoured with the superior advantage of a written revelation. Then taking both Jews and Gentiles together, he exhibits a striking picture, drawn from the infallible testimony of the Spirit of God in his word, of their universal guilt and depravity. Thus having proved that every man in his natural state lies under the just condemnation of God, as a rebel against him in all the three ways in which he has been pleased to reveal himself, he arrives at the

inevitable conclusion, that by his obedience to the law, no man living shall be justified; that so far from justifying, the law proves him to be a transgressor.

The way is thus prepared for the grand display of the grace and mercy of God announced in the Gospel. What the law could not do, not from any deficiency in itself, but owing to the depravity of man, God has fully accomplished. Man has no righteousness of his own remaining which he can plead, but God has provided a righteousness for him. This righteousness is infinitely superior to that which he originally possessed, and infinitely transcends what pertains to angels. It is the fulfilment of the law in its penalty; its complete execution; an end which cannot be attained by the punishment of creatures, who, after enduring the longest period of suffering, will not be able to say that they have finished transgression, and made reconciliation for iniquity. It is also the fulfilment of the law in its precept by Him who ordained it, and who consequently by his obedience conferred more honour upon it than it could have received from the obedience of all creatures. Besides, the creatures can only yield to it what is due in each successive moment of their existence; but the righteousness brought in is an "everlasting righteousness," available not only during the time in which it was performed, but through all eternity. No mere creature, nor indeed all the creatures together, could have in this manner fulfilled the law, either in its commands or threatenings, and far less in both. None but he who suffered on the cross, could ever say, *it is finished*. In one word, the righteousness provided for man,

which will place those who are invested with it nearest the throne, and first in the song of praise, is, **THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD.**

This righteousness, although now only fully revealed, is not newly discovered. It was intimated in the first promise of mercy; it was more clearly unfolded to Abraham, the father of believers; the example and type of all who are justified, whether Jews or Gentiles; it was prefigured in the ceremonial law, witnessed to by the prophets, and at length wrought out and fully displayed in the incarnation, the obedience, the sufferings, and the resurrection of the Son of God.

The righteousness of God is provided solely by grace, and received solely by faith. It is placed to the account of the believer for his justification, without the smallest respect either to his previous or subsequent personal obedience. It is "without law." 'We conclude that a man is justified by faith without works of law.'* 'Now to him that *worketh*

* The usual evasion that the Apostle Paul, in his discussion of the doctrine of justification by faith without the works of the law, refers to the ceremonial law, or to any part of the law that was peculiar to the Jews, was here noticed and obviated. When this Epistle was written, all that was peculiar in the law to the nation of Israel was abrogated. But the apostle declares, that the law to which, in this Epistle, he all along refers, (viz. the moral law of everlasting obligation under which all mankind are placed,) remained in all its authority and force, being in no degree weakened or changed, but, on the contrary, established by the doctrine which he taught. The

‘ *not*, but believeth in him that justifieth the *ungodly*,
 ‘ his faith is counted for righteousness, even as David
 ‘ describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom
 ‘ God imputeth righteousness *without works*.’ So
 far from being contrary to the justice of God, this
 method of justification, “freely by his grace,”* illus-
 trates his justice, and vindicates his former dealings
 to men. So far from making the law void, it esta-
 blishes it in all its honour and authority. This way
 of justification equally applies to all, both Jews and
 Gentiles—men of every nation and of every charac-
 ter; “there is no difference” here, for all without ex-
 ception are sinners.

The contemplation of the glorious Person who ful-
 filled this righteousness, with whose character, accord-
 ing to the manner of the four evangelists the epistle
 opens, here occupied our attention—of him who “in
 the beginning was God,” who assumed the human
 nature into union with the divine, whose earliest
 name, as Redeemer, is the seed of the woman; who is
 the Child born, the Son given, whose name is Won-
 derful, Counsellor, the mighty God. Every part of

fiction of the introduction of a mitigated law under the Gos-
 pel, on account of the atonement of Christ, demanding only
 sincere, though imperfect obedience, was also exposed.

* “He who affirms,” says Luther, “the justification of all
 men who are justified, to be perfectly free and gratuitous,
 leaves no place for works, merits, or preparations of any kind;
 no place for works, either of condignity or congruity; and thus
 at one blow Paul demolishes both the Pelagians with their
 complete merits, and our sophists (the Arminians) with their
 petty performances.”

Scripture, from its commencement to its close, furnished materials for proof on this subject. Our attention was particularly engaged by that remarkable passage, Rom. ix. 5, "Of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ *came*, who is over all, God blessed for ever, Amen," a passage which so distinctly marks both his divine and human natures, that nothing but the most obstinate prejudice and unbelief could have led men to oppose and to pervert it.

We were led at the same time to consider the atonement which the Lord Jesus has made to divine justice for sin, and the absolute necessity of that atonement, in order to procure the salvation of sinners. The absurdity and inconsistency of the opinion of the Arians, concerning atonement, was pointed out; which, denying the divinity of Jesus Christ, undermines its foundation, as it does, of every part of the plan of redemption. The divinity and distinct personality of the Holy Spirit were likewise considered; as was also his work in the application of redemption, so largely spoken of in the eighth chapter of the Romans.

The doctrine of free justification by *grace*, Rom. iii. 24, Titus iii. 7, by *the blood of Christ*, Rom. v. 9, by *Christ*, Gal. ii. 17, and by or *through faith*, Rom. iii. 28, &c. produced a most powerful impression on the students. We dwelt a considerable time on it, both on account of its importance, and because it appeared to be entirely new to them. This is a doctrine peculiar to the Christian religion, by which it is distinguished from every other form of religion that ever was in the world. It is a doctrine, indeed, that is discarded,

as chargeable with the worst consequences by those who have false views of the gospel. But to them who are the "heirs of the righteousness which is by faith," it operates with the most powerful efficacy, both as a ground of consolation and as their great incitement to obedience. This the apostle abundantly shows in the beginning of the fifth chapter.

The explanation of the fifth chapter opened a wide field of useful instruction. Here the blessed *Accompaniments*, the *Security*, and the *Foundation* of justification are described. This last branch of the subject is interwoven with an account of the entrance of sin and death into the world, while a beautiful parallel is drawn between the first and the second Adam in their opposite tendencies and influences. By the first came sin, condemnation, and death; by the second, righteousness, justification, and life. From this comparison, occasion is taken to show the reason why God had made the promulgation of the written law to intervene betwixt the Author of condemnation and the Author of Justification. On the one hand, the extent, the evil, and demerit of sin, and the obstructions raised up by law and justice to man's recovery, were thus made fully manifest: while, on the other hand, the superabundant riches of divine grace in its complete ascendancy and victory over them, in the way of righteousness, were displayed to the greatest advantage, and with the fullest effect.

As this doctrine of the sinner's justification by faith without works, while it manifests in all their extent the guilt, depravity, and helplessness of man, in order to

magnify grace in his pardon, might be thought to set aside the necessity of obedience to God, the apostle, in the sixth and seventh chapters proves, that so far from this being the case, that doctrine stands in indissoluble connexion, with the only foundation of holiness and obedience. This is union with the Redeemer, through that faith by which the believer is justified. Whereas the law, instead of sanctifying, operates by its restraints to stimulate the corruptions of the human heart, and brings them into action, and at the same time it condemns all who are under it. But through their union with Christ, believers are delivered from the law, and being under grace, which produces love, they are enabled to bring forth fruit acceptable to God. The law, however, is in itself holy, and just, and good, and spiritual; as such, it is employed by the Spirit of God to convince his people of sin, to teach them the value of the remedy provided for sin in the gospel, and to lead them to cleave unto the Lord from a sense of the remaining corruption of their hearts. This corruption, the apostle, by giving a striking description of his own experience, shows, will continue to exert itself in believers as long as they are in the body.

The astonishing display of divine grace in the eighth chapter, detained us long in the consideration of it. As a general conclusion from all that had gone before, the believer's entire freedom from condemnation through union with his glorious Head, and his consequent sanctification, are both asserted, effects which could neither of them have been accomplished by the law. The opposite results of death to the carnal mind, which actuated man in his natural state, and of life

to the spiritual mind which he receives in his renovation, are clearly pointed out ; and, as the love of God had been shown in the fifth chapter to be so peculiarly transcendent from the consideration that Christ died for men, not as friends and worthy objects, but as without strength, ungodly, sinners, enemies ; so here the original state of those on whom such unspeakable blessings are bestowed is described as “ enmity against God.” The effects of the inhabitation of the Holy Spirit in those who are regenerated are next declared, together with the glorious privileges consequent on it. Amidst present sufferings, the highest consolations are presented to the attention of the children of God, and their original source and final issue pointed out to them.

The feelings of the believer described in the close of this chapter, as viewed in Christ, form a remarkable contrast with what is said of him in the end of the former chapter, where he is viewed in himself. In the one view he mournfully exclaims, “ O wretched man that I am.” In the other he boldly demands, who shall lay any thing to my charge ? Who is he that condemneth ? Well may the man who has received the Spirit of adoption ; the man with whose spirit the Spirit itself beareth witness that he is a child of God ; who is declared to be an heir of God, a joint-heir with Jesus Christ, well may that man defy universal nature to separate him from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus his Lord. Although at present the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together, and although even he himself groaneth within himself, waiting for his manifestation in his

true and proper character, yet, in the mean time, all things are working together for his good. The Holy Spirit himself is interceding for him in his heart ; Jesus Christ, who died for him, and who lives for him, is interceding for him before the throne : God hath chosen him from eternity, hath called him, hath justified him, and will glorify him.

The apostle had begun this chapter by declaring, that there is no *condemnation* to them who are in Christ Jesus ; he concludes it by affirming, that there is no *separation* from him.

The contemplation of such ineffable blessings reminds the apostle of the mournful state of the generality of his own countrymen, who, though distinguished in the highest degree by their external privileges, still, as he himself had once done*, rejected the Messiah. Nothing in all this, however, had happened contrary to the purposes of God ; his word had taken effect as far as he had appointed it. The doctrine of God's sovereignty is fully treated of in the ninth chapter ; and that very objection to it which is daily made, " Why doth he yet find fault ? " is stated and silenced. Instead of national election, the great subject is national rejection, and the personal election of a small remnant, without which the whole nation would have been destroyed, v. 27. So void of reason is the objec-

* Read in a parenthesis, the words in the third verse, *For I could wish* (I was wishing or did wish) *that myself were accursed from Christ.* In this parenthesis Paul describes his former state of mind as similar to that of the Jews, to whom he wrote.

tion usually made to the doctrine of election of its being a cruel doctrine.

The apostle is thus led to the consideration of the fatal error of the great body of the Jews, who sought justification, in part at least, by works, and not by faith alone. Mistaking the intent and the end of their law, they stumbled at this doctrine, which is the common stumbling stone to unregenerate men. In the end of this chapter, and in the tenth, it is shown how the Jews thus excluded themselves from salvation, not discerning the true character of the Messiah of Israel as the fulfiller of the law, and the author of righteousness to every one that believeth in him. And yet when they reflected on the declaration of Moses, that to obtain life by the law, the perfect obedience which it demands, must, in every case, be yielded to it, they might have been convinced that on this ground they could not be justified: that, on the contrary, by the law they were universally condemned. The apostle next exhibits the freeness of salvation through the Redeemer for the acceptance of all; and the certainty, that all who trust in him shall receive it. And since faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, the necessity of preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles is thence inferred and asserted. The result corresponded with what had been predicted. The righteousness which is by faith was received by the Gentiles, although they had not been inquiring after it; while the Jews, who sought after righteousness, and who were earnestly invited to accept of it, had nevertheless rejected it.

In the eleventh chapter, the doctrine of the personal eternal election of the remnant of Israel is resumed, and affirmed in the most express terms to be wholly of grace, consequently it excludes every idea of work or merit on the part of man. A most consolatory view is then given of the present tendency and final issue of the dispensations of God, in the bringing in of the fulness of the Gentiles, and the general salvation of Israel. And thus also by the annunciation of the reception which the Gospel should meet with from the Jews, first in rejecting it for a long period, and afterwards in embracing it, the doctrine of the sovereignty of Him who has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and hardeneth whom he will, is further displayed and established. The apostle concludes, by declaring, that God is the creator of the universe, the Alpha and Omega of all things, and by ascribing to him the glory which is due to him; and for the manifestation of which, he will cause all things to issue in the final accomplishment of those great designs which he hath purposed from the beginning.

There was nothing brought under the consideration of the students which appeared to contribute so effectually to overthrow their false system of religion founded on philosophy and vain deceit, as the sublime view of the majesty of God, which is presented in these concluding verses of this first part of the epistle. ‘Of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things.’ Here God is described as his own last end in every thing that he does. Judging of God as such an one as themselves, they were at first startled

at the idea that He must love himself supremely, infinitely more than the whole universe, and consequently must prefer his own glory to every thing besides. But when they were reminded that God in reality is infinitely more amiable and more valuable than the whole creation, and that consequently if he views things as they really are, he must regard himself as infinitely worthy of being most valued and loved; they saw that this truth was incontrovertible. Their attention was at the same time turned to numerous passages of Scripture, which assert that the manifestation of the glory of God is the great end of creation; that he has himself chiefly in view in all his works and dispensations; and that it is a purpose in which he requires that all his intelligent creatures should acquiesce, and seek to promote as their first and paramount duty. Passages to this effect both in the Old and New Testament, far exceed in number what any one who has not examined the subject, is at all aware of.

Turning the attention of the ministers and students in the above manner to this instructive part of the word of God, I occupied their minds, as you assert, with the mysterious doctrines of the Christian religion. I did this in the full conviction, that they are conducive in the highest degree to the interests of holiness, and that in no respect do they interfere with the responsibility of man. It is the doctrine of divine revelation rather than its precepts, which furnishes the chief means of advancing holiness. Love to God is not so much excited by the precept—thou shalt love the Lord thy God, as by the discoveries of

the excellencies of his character, and of the abundance of his grace.

When the Apostle Paul had, in the first eleven chapters of this epistle, dwelt at such length on the glorious and mysterious doctrines of divine revelation, he looked back on the whole with mingled astonishment and delight. Under the impression of these feelings, he exclaims, "O the depth, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." Far from judging as you do, that Christians have nothing to do with "the mysteries," he delighted to expatiate on them, he designates them "the mercies of God," and all his exhortations to practical duty are constantly founded on them. The distinguishing character which he assumes to himself and his fellow-labourers, is that of "*ministers of Christ, and stewards of the MYSTERIES of God.*" 1 Cor. iv. 1.

Respecting what you affirm of my inoculating the students with my "exclusive and intolerant spirit," I shall deal with you as frankly as I have done in regard to the mysterious doctrines of religion. On the subject of what you call an exclusive spirit, I hold a very decided opinion. While errors in religion are endless, I am convinced that there is but one exclusive system of divine truth, but one foundation which God has laid in Zion, but one name under heaven given among men by which we can be saved—the name of Jesus, the great mediator. Hence a mistake concerning his person as God and man, will, if persisted in, prove fatal. This I inculcated on the students to

the utmost of my power. But I am also aware, that the Apostle Paul, in the very place where he affirms, that other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, has also declared, that on this foundation different materials may be built ; so that many errors may exist in the mind of one who holds the fundamental saving truth. You will accordingly find this sentiment fully expressed in my Commentary, vol. i. p. 18, where it is denied that Arians and Trinitarians can both of them be Christians.

Besides an exclusive spirit, you impute to me an *intolerant spirit*. As to toleration respecting differences of opinion among Christians in articles not fundamental, I taught a system the very opposite to intolerant. To this I was directly led by the consideration of the fourteenth and part of the fifteenth chapters of the Romans. You will find a long article in my Commentary which carries forbearance towards all Christians as far as the Christian character can be discerned. The whole of that discussion is summed up in the following rules. Vol. ii. p. 248. 1. To do nothing to preserve communion with our brethren which would mar communion with God. 2. To maintain communion with our brethren as far as we can do it without marring communion with God.

In the above discussion, a distinction is all along made betwixt those who are weak in faith, and those who evidently have no faith. The subject is again taken up at page 248, and carried on to page 267, and the difference between forbearance and charity, in the restricted sense in which the latter is frequently used, is considered as well as the common errors that are

circulated respecting the precept not to judge others. The whole is placed in a point of view which I have no fear that you will be able to contravert.

So much with regard to my intolerant spirit, if you understand, by the expression, want of forbearance towards Christians, or if it respects the judgment which Christians ought to form of men of the world. But if you mean, by intolerance, any thing that relates to action, as if I were disposed to persecute those who differ from me, or who oppose my religious sentiments, I must inform you, that I hold every approach to such a conduct in the utmost abhorrence. I consider it not more contrary to sound policy in civil governments, than it is to every principle of the Christian religion. That this has long been my fixed opinion, will appear by the following extract from my book of evidences. Vol. i. p. 63.

“ The weapons of our warfare,” said the Apostle Paul, “ are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds ;” and so they proved in opposition to all the powers of the world. Whoever then knows and reflects, that “ except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God ;” and that “ no man can call Jesus Christ, Lord, but by the Holy Ghost,” will not suppose that shedding a man’s blood or using violence of any kind, is the way to convert him, and to make him obedient to God. There is no need of laboured essays on toleration, to prove to the Christian, who studies the word of God, that he must not dare to use violence to promote the cause of the Gospel. Liberty of conscience to all men from each other is there written as with a sun-beam. And

whenever any real Christians, misled by the prejudices of the age in which they lived, or giving way to the depraved principles natural to the human heart, have resorted to carnal weapons to propagate their religion, they have always grievously erred from the faith, and have generally pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

After all, I rather suspect that my principles are more tolerant than yours. I have reason to believe that it has not been from want of desire on the part of the pastors of Geneva, that some persons, whose religious sentiments differed from theirs, were not banished from your city; and that had not your civil governors been more tolerant, and possessed juster views on the subject, this would actually have taken place. Had they listened to you, they would have been exhibited in the odious light of a protestant government, in the centre of civilized Europe, persecuting Protestants solely for their religion, while they tolerated and protected (and this they did most properly,) Roman Catholics.

Your next accusation respects the manner in which, you say that I taught the students to disparage the use of reason in all that belongs to religion. Most erroneous ideas are often entertained on this subject. Many affirm that nothing is to be received as truth but what we can fully comprehend, and that, as you would have your hearers to believe, we have no concern with the mysteries of the Christian religion. According to this opinion, what ought we to believe? not the being of God, for "canst thou by searching

find out God? canst thou know the Almighty to perfection?" Job xi. 7. Not even our own existence for we cannot comprehend ourselves. By the same rule the holy angels would be excluded from contemplating the stupendous plan of redemption.

"All mankind readily admit, and if they believe any thing, must every moment admit mysteries, as the objects of faith. This world is made up of atoms. What are they? They have been defined to be *centres of attraction and repulsion*. This definition, translated out of Latin English, is, that atoms are centres of *drawing to and driving from*; a definition which I believe would puzzle any man to unriddle. They are also defined to be *solid extended somethings*. What is the something thus solid and extended? Here our inquiries are stopped, and an atom is found to be an absolute mystery. The world is made up of atoms. What binds them together, so as to constitute a world? *Attraction*, it is answered. What is attraction? To this there is no answer. The world, then, on which we tread, on which we live, and about which we think we have extensive knowledge, is wholly formed out of particles, absolutely mysterious, bound together by a power equally mysterious.

"These atoms constitute *vegetables*. What is a vegetable? 'An organized body,' it is answered; 'the subject of vegetable life.' What is vegetable life? To this question there is no satisfactory answer. In the same manner, we are conducted to a speedy end of all our inquiries concerning the mineral, vegetable, and rational worlds. Mystery meets us at every step, and lies at the bottom of the whole. If mysteries thus

are found every where in the works of God, can it be supposed that they are not found in the character and being of the same God?

“ I can follow him but one or two steps in his lowest and plainest works, till all becomes mystery and matter of amazement to me. How shall I understand his nature or account for his actions? In *these* he plans for a boundless scheme of things, whereas I can see but an inch before me. In *that* he contains what is infinitely more inconceivable than all the wonders of his creation put together, and I am plunged in astonishment and blindness, when I attempt to stretch my wretched inch of line along the immensity of his nature. Were my body so large that I could sweep all the fixed stars visible from this world in a clear night, and grasp them in the hollow of my hand; and were my soul capacious in proportion to so vast a body, I should, notwithstanding, be infinitely too narrow-minded to conceive his wisdom when he forms a fly, and how then should I think of conceiving of himself? No, this is the highest of impossibilities. His very lowest work checks and represses my contemplations, and holds them down at an infinite distance from him.”

Contravert these statements if you can; and if you cannot, then learn how very *irrationally* you act, when, in preaching, you tell your hearers that they have nothing to do with mysteries in religion.

The proper and only legitimate use of our reason in reference to religion, is to listen when God speaks, and to “ receive the kingdom of heaven as little chil-

dren," which, if we do not, we shall never enter into it. This is the declaration of Him who cannot err, and it entirely comports with every sober conclusion of sound reason. Here, indeed, the Lord abases the "*proud reason*" of man, reminds him that he is a creature, infinitely beneath the Creator, who works all things according to the counsel of his own will, nay, that he is a fallen creature, whose reason, as well as every other faculty of his nature, is weakened and disordered through the influence of sin. Nevertheless, he addresses us in his word as intelligent creatures, and deals with us as such. The manner of God's procedure towards his people in the operation of his grace is in no wise opposed to the principles of their intelligent nature. The service which God requires of us is called a "reasonable service." "Judge not," it is said, "according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment." But does this give us a license to turn upon the Creator, and to say, "Why hast thou formed me thus?" "There are many things in thy word which I cannot comprehend, and which therefore I will not believe, nor regard, although uttered by thy voice." Our reason is given us that we may be able to ascertain that it is God who speaks to us, and to understand what he says, and that in the result we may, as his intelligent creatures, implicitly believe his declarations, submit to his authority, and give ourselves up to his guidance. In this way we shall attain to all "the riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the *mystery* of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom

and knowledge. And this I say (the apostle adds) lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.—Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ, for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily.” Col. ii. 2.

Look well, Sir, to this admonition. If properly understood it would lead you to a view of the whole of divine revelation, very different from that which unhappily for yourself and others, you at present entertain. It would prevent you from ever again preaching such a sermon as that on “the mysteries.” It would lead you to make a better use of your reason, than, while professing to believe the Bible to be a Revelation from God, to take the liberty of sitting in judgment on its contents, and of retrenching from it all that, in your wisdom, you conclude ought not to have been found there. Remember that “the world by wisdom knew not God;” that “God hath made foolish the wisdom of this world,” and that prophets and apostles taught “the wisdom of God in a mystery.” They spake not “in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.” “Let no man,” say they, “deceive himself; if any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.” Yet, “vain man would be wise, though man be born like the wild asses colt.” Job xi. 12.

But whatever you may think of my trampling proud reason under foot, be assured I never taught the students any thing so contrary to reason, indeed

so shocking to it, as to desire them to believe in a mere creature as God. I did not instruct them to honour a mere creature even as they honoured the Creator, John v. 23. I did not say to them, that to a creature belongs, and is ascribed in the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testaments, every thing peculiar to Deity; all the names, the attributes, the actions of God, as well as all the relations which God sustains to his creatures. I did not teach them, that while Jehovah is represented throughout the Scriptures, as his own last end and object in every thing, that to a mere creature the same glory is also ascribed, as the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, by whom and for whom all things were created. I did not say to them that they ought to believe, that in the beginning a creature was God, and was with God, and that all things were made by him, and that without him was not any thing made that was made, and that consequently he made himself. But I reminded them that “He that built all things is God.” I did not teach them the violation of the first commandment, by representing a mere creature as the object of universal worship, equally with the Creator, who has declared, “I am Jehovah, that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another,” Isaiah xlii. 8. But I showed them that it is because Christ is “over all, God blessed for ever”—that he is the object of the adoration and praise of *every creature*. “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And *every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the*

earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." Rev. v. 12. It is written, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Matt. iv. 10. And it is only through the evil suggestion of one, of whose existence you are not aware, that man has ever been tempted to worship any other.

I never taught the students any thing so diametrically opposed to the reason and the common sense of every reflecting man, as that the innumerable myriads of the human race are all "*born pure,*" and yet that every individual among them, in every age of the world, and under all different circumstances, without one single exception, becomes sinful and impure, as soon as the powers of his mind begin to develop themselves, and that in express contradiction to his nature and original constitution. Even the pastors of Geneva, you tell us, confess that all men are sinners.

I did not instruct them to acknowledge the Bible to be a revelation from God, and at the same time to consider themselves at liberty to sit in judgment on its contents. But I showed them the folly, the daring impiety of summoning their Creator to the bar of their reason, and of receiving or rejecting the different parts of his word according to its proud decisions. I taught them that, being convinced that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God," 2 Tim. iii. 16, they ought to search it with diligence, to study it with prayer, that God would open their eyes to behold the

wondrous things which it contains, and to use them as rules of obedience, and as motives and encouragements in the exercise of it; and in things evidently mysterious, to bow in humble submission to the divine teaching, and to receive with adoring faith and love what they could not comprehend. In one word, I reminded them of the declaration of the apostle, which it would be well for you to ponder. “The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down *reasonings*, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.”
2 Cor. x. 4.

I proceed now to consider your last charge of my having waged war with good works. I have informed you how I occupied the minds of the students in the explanation of the doctrines contained in the first eleven chapters of the Epistle to the Romans, I shall here notice the manner in which I enforced the practical influence of these doctrines from the last six chapters of the same epistle. The way to this had been prepared by the previous explanation of the sixth chapter, in which, as has been already noticed, the apostle vindicates his doctrine of justification by faith, without works, from the common objection urged against it, and reiterated from his time to the present, that it leads to licentiousness. So far from this being true, Paul proves, that the method of justification by grace is that alone by which a

man can be delivered from the dominion of sin. Being made one with Christ he is freed from sin, both from its guilt and dominion. "Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the law, but under grace." Rom. vi. 14.

In the seventh chapter, the apostle explains what he means by not being under the law. The believer being dead to it by the body of Christ, (what Christ suffered in his human nature,) and his marriage-union with it, as his first husband, being dissolved, he is married to him who is raised from the dead, that he may bring forth fruit unto God. In this way, he who is united to Christ is for ever freed from the law in its covenant form. In the deplorable circumstances in which we stand naturally, every man is subject to the precept of the law, and to the penalty of the law; to its precept binding him to perfect obedience, and to its penalty, consigning him over to eternal damnation as a transgressor. But Christ has become "the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." Heb. v. 9. He has ratified with his blood the gracious covenant entered into with the Father, that covenant which we find so often referred to in Scripture. Received into this covenant all who believe are delivered from the covenant of works, under which mankind were originally placed, and under which they all continue, till, regenerated by "the Spirit of grace," they are united to the Lord Jesus Christ, made subjects of his kingdom, and become the children of God; till then, they are subjects of the kingdom of darkness and children of the devil.

The way to eternal life by obedience, which was first pointed out to man, is often spoken of in Scripture. "The man that doeth these things shall live by them." But, in order to this, he must not be chargeable with the slightest violation of the holy law; he must be completely free from sin. As this, however, cannot be the case with any of the fallen race of Adam, "for that all have sinned," Rom. v. 12, so on this ground no man can attain to eternal life. This was intimated immediately after the fall, when the cherubims and a flaming sword were placed to guard the way to the tree of life, denoting that, by the first covenant, it was no more accessible to man. But a new and living way of access to God is now opened. Jesus declares himself to be "the way, the truth, and the life." "To him that overcometh," says he, "I will give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God."

As, however, the law was originally written on the heart of man, so, even after it has been broken, all mankind are like the Jews of old, still prone to seek justification by means of it.* When, on this principle, the

* "Even Satan himself," says Luther, "sometimes teaches the necessity of good works, and sometimes even proposes good things, to the end that men, resting upon their actions, good in appearance, may be kept at a distance from the faith of the Gospel. I cannot too much insist upon this, for you will find, after my death, that this artifice will be practised in a manner that you cannot at present suppose. Never imagine that by your works you can be made Christians. Christ is presented to us under a double point of view. First, he makes us child-

young man came to Jesus, and asked what he must do to inherit eternal life, the Lord answered a fool according to his folly; but he did this in order to convince him of his real character. "If thou wilt enter into life keep the commandments." This the word of God shows to be impossible to man as a sinner. "As many as are of the works of the law, (seeking justification by their obedience to it,) are under the curse; for it is written, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them; but that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident, for, The just shall live by faith." Gal. iii. 10.

But while believers are no more under the law as a *covenant*, to give them either life or death, they are under it as a *rule*. In this view all of them thankfully receive, and endeavour to obey it. Being brought into union with the Lord Jesus Christ, they are become capable of serving him. Love takes place of servile fear. Their consciences are "purged from dead works to serve the living God." Heb. ix.

ren of God, this he effects by his word alone, without any kind of work on our part. If it is his will to come to you, then you will come to him, and he will save you by his blood and his sacrifice. Satan hates this doctrine, and false teachers never preach it. Secondly, Christ is proposed to us as an example. If his word is in my heart, I am in possession of the great commandment, which is love. Nevertheless, it is not from me, a depraved creature, that he expects the fruits of love, except by the influence of that Spirit which has been imparted to me by the hearing of his word, and by believing in him."

14. The leading motives of their obedience are love and gratitude; and they are enabled to “serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.” They “have known and believed the love that God hath to them;” and they “love him because he first loved them.” But, above all, they who belong to the covenant of grace, receive the promise of the Father in the communication of the Holy Spirit dwelling in them. God works in them to *will* and to *do* of his good pleasure. They are conformed to the image of his Son. “Thy people shall be made willing in the day of thy power.” Psalm cx. 3. God “enlarges their heart, and they run the way of his commandments.” Psalm cxix. 32. In their regeneration and sanctification, no constraint is put on the will of believers, their hearts and dispositions being changed. “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” 2 Cor. iii. 17. “If the Son therefore shall make you free, you shall be free indeed.” John viii. 36. On such foundations I urged on the ministers and students at Geneva, the duty of observing the holy precepts, contained in the last six chapters of the Epistle to the Romans.

In considering the duties of the Christian life, contained in the twelfth chapter, I endeavoured to enforce on their consciences, the necessity of practising them, always keeping it in view that the whole of what the apostle here says, proceeds on the supposition that those whom he addressed had deliberately surrendered themselves to God, as not accounting themselves their own, but “bought with a price.” In the winning language of the inspired

writer, they are besought "by the mercies of God," to be no longer conformed to this world, but to present their bodies (themselves in whole) a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is their reasonable service. A most beautiful delineation of the Christian's duty follows. Humility, that distinguished grace, takes the lead, as in the Lord's sermon on the mount. Then follows exhortations to diligence in the employment of diversified talents,—to love,—fervency of spirit,—joyful hope of eternal life,—patience,—prayer,—and the whole is summed up in an earnest recommendation of particular duties to brethren, to friends, to enemies. Produce to me, if you can, any thing in the writings of all pagan antiquity, that is comparable in the most distant degree to this portion of the word of God, either in the practice which it enjoins, or the motives which it suggests to enforce that practice.

Proceeding to the thirteenth chapter, the duties of Christians to their civil rulers, as well as to their neighbours in civil society, were distinctly pointed out. The first of these, respecting that submission to civil government, so expressly inculcated there, and in other parts of Scripture, seemed to be as entirely new to the students, as the view formerly given of the doctrines of the Gospel. In the fourteenth chapter, their attention was directed to the line of conduct enjoined to be followed towards Christians, particularly with respect to things indifferent, or to minuter differences of opinion and acting. Remark- ing on what is there said concerning the difference of days, I took occasion to show, that the Sabbath

is not referred to; and I entered very fully into the consideration, both of the obligation and of the right manner of sanctifying that day. This I found to be indispensably necessary, from having witnessed how grossly it is profaned at Geneva, and from observing that the students had not the smallest idea of its proper sanctification.

In the forenoon of the Lord's day, the fourth commandment is solemnly read in the churches, and in appearance attentively listened to. "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it *holy*." In the evening the duty is forgotten, and the commandment trampled on. Even those who ought to be examples to the flock—those who must render a solemn account—even they are not afraid nor ashamed to profane the Lord's day. Instead of spending the evening of it in their retirements, in the duties of meditation and prayer, reading the Scriptures, Christian conversation and family instruction, it is passed at balls, in "soirées," in frivolous amusements, vain and idle conversation, or in playing at cards. A man who calls himself a minister of Christ, and who is looked upon as such, passes the evening of the Lord's day in one or other of these ways! It cannot indeed be alleged, that, owing to this, family worship is precluded, for family worship, either on Lord's days or on other days, appears to be unknown at Geneva, both among pastors and people.

Under every dispensation, before and after the fall, God has appointed one day in seven to be consecrated to his peculiar service, and the command to observe the seventh day is inserted in the decalogue, with the

other precepts of the law, as equally with them of everlasting obligation. The first Sabbath commemorated the completing of the work of creation, the second that of redemption. This day, then, (still the seventh part of time,) is now sacred to the memory of the triumphant resurrection of the Saviour, who, in the morning of it entered into his rest. Predicting the introduction of the new kingdom, when all things were to be made new, the Psalmist says concerning it, "This is the day which the Lord has made, we will rejoice and be glad in it." Psalm cxviii. 24. But to spend the evening of this day in spiritual duties, and in the exercise of spiritual joy—to seek on it something of a blessed foretaste of that heavenly rest which remaineth to the people of God, formed not a part of the religion of Geneva. "See that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time;" and it is added, "be filled with the Spirit." Eph. v. 15, 18. Is it walking circumspectly, redeeming the time, and not acting as fools; is it the way to be filled with the Spirit, to spend the evening of the Sabbath in "soirées," in idle conversation, in playing at cards, and in dancing at balls? This is indeed waging war against good works. How different this from the manner in which God directs that the day which he has set apart for himself should be spent, and to the due observance of which he has annexed promises so gracious and encouraging. "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable, and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding

thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words ; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord ; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father : for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Isaiah lviii. 13, 14.*

With the remainder of the Epistle to the Romans, I proceeded in the same manner. From the beginning to the end of it, I entered at some length into every subject that occurred, which required to be investigated, the knowledge of which, either as to doctrine or practice, appeared to be necessary to the students. Among others, I did not omit to turn their particular attention to the deplorable picture it exhibits of the heathen philosophers, with the praises of whose doctrines and morality the pulpits of Geneva so incessantly resounded. In what a different light did the inspired apostle view them ! Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools ; and as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave

* If the fourth commandment was openly violated at Geneva, the precept and the threatening in the third were boldly set at defiance. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain ; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." This commandment, as well as the fourth, is solemnly read every week in the churches there. Yet the name of God was in common conversation, even about the merest trifle, constantly in the mouths both of pastors and of people, in the incessant repetition of "*Mon Dieu—Grand Dieu.*" If this be not to take the name of God in vain, what can be held to be a violation of the third commandment ?

them up to a reprobate mind, so that they were filled with all unrighteousness. By referring to their own writings, and the authentic history of the times in which they lived, I have shown in my Commentary on the first chapter of the epistle, that the dreadful account there given of the heathen world, and especially of the heathen philosophers, is not an overcharged picture. In opposition to this authentic testimony of the word of God, it is lamentable to hear their doctrines celebrated in nominally Christian pulpits, and their examples proposed as more or less models to those who call themselves Christians. It would be well if your preachers would learn to attach themselves to the Scriptures of truth, rather than to the miserable tenets of these heathen instructors, and to their still more miserable examples. I insisted on this point the more fully with the students, on account of the false views respecting it that were presented to them by their pastors, and the strong prejudices which, from the ignorance of their teachers in the academy, they had themselves imbibed.

Necessarily connected with the pernicious and erroneous ideas entertained of the heathen philosophy, I found it was a prevailing opinion at Geneva, that the Gospel was a very good thing, and calculated to be useful to those who attended to it; but that the knowledge of it was by no means indispensable to salvation. This fatal error, so much calculated to lull men into security, and to strengthen their natural propensity of resting their hope of salvation on their own works, I strongly combated, on the authority of every part of the word of God, both in the Old and New

Testaments. In referring to the Old Testament, it was sufficient to state the way in which God instructed his ancient people to judge of the surrounding nations; and, in referring to the New Testament, it was only necessary to point out the uniform manner in which the idolatrous Gentiles, and they who “know not God,” are there spoken of. You will find references to all the principal passages which relate to this subject in my Commentary, vol. i. p. 67;—passages which speak a language more uniform and more decisive than many are aware of.

You were not unacquainted with the nature of the instructions I was giving the students and ministers, so entirely at variance with those which they had previously received. I was informed by them (for I did not happen to hear you myself) that at this time you preached a sermon on the case of Cornelius, as furnishing an example of a man who was accepted of God, without the knowledge of the Gospel. In order that they might not be misled by you in a matter of such magnitude, involving such important practical consequences, I immediately turned their particular attention to the history of Cornelius. The substance of what I advanced, you will find in my Commentary, vol. i. p. 144—151; and you may, if you choose, publish your sermon on the opposite side, and leave it to others to judge whose views of the subject are most scriptural, and most conformable to recorded facts.

In instructing the ministers and students at Geneva, I followed the example of the Apostle Paul, who first lays the foundation, in a full exhibition of the doctrine which furnishes the motive to action,

and then proceeds to the practice which flows from that motive. I explicitly taught them, both from the Epistle to the Romans, and from the Epistle to the Galatians, that in justifying a sinner, and in the continuation of his justification, God has no regard whatever to any work of man, but solely to the work of his beloved Son, on account of which, and of that alone, he justifies the sinner the moment that he believes in his name. In the former of these epistles, this doctrine is regularly stated and established; and the conclusion already quoted, is formally drawn, that a "man is justified by faith without the works of the law." In the latter, it is particularly shown, that to attempt to do any thing, however little, in order to our justification before God, makes Christ of "no effect" to us. Paul, who in other circumstances, had circumcised Timothy, and who, in this very epistle, affirms, that in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth any thing nor uncircumcision, declares to those to whom he wrote, that if they were circumcised, in the view of doing something towards their justification, they would become debtors to do the whole law, and Christ would profit them nothing. In short, that to be justified, they must either rest solely on the work of the Saviour, or on their own works; there being between them no medium and no possible cooperation. Keeping this point of essential moment constantly in view, I directed the attention of the students, as has been shown, to the holy precepts of the word of God, declaring the necessity of good works in their proper place, and for their proper end. In one word, I taught that Jesus Christ is made to

all who are in Him by faith, not only justification, which is wholly by imputation, but also sanctification, of which he is the only source, but which he implants in the soul by the influences of his blessed Spirit. In justification, there is no change of the sinner's character, but there is a complete change in his state. In sanctification, there is a real change of heart and disposition communicated. Now, as both these blessings are provided for in the new covenant, which is ordered in all things and sure, it is impossible that they can ever be disjoined.

It was at the same time constantly inculcated, that no unbeliever (a man not united to the Lord Jesus by faith) can perform what the Scriptures call, and what God acknowledges to be, a *good work*. The term, "good works," is never used in the New Testament for ritual obedience, or moral virtue, as practised by unbelievers, or for any other good work than the fruits of the Spirit. How many who shall be placed at the last day on the left hand of the Judge, will be astonished to find that not one of the works they ever did shall be acknowledged good! They may have performed many benevolent actions, expended large sums in feeding the hungry and clothing the naked, but their works were not, in the true sense, good, because the right motive was wanting. "Ye did it not to me." Matth. xxv. 45. Doing any work to Christ is the proof of union with him, and in this case the smallest act of obedience to him, the giving a cup of cold water only to a disciple, because he belongs to Christ, is acceptable to God, and shall in no wise lose its reward. Matth. x. 42. The existence, or the want of

this union with Christ, of which every man's works shall be appealed to as the proof, will be the ground of acquittal or of condemnation in that decisive day.

To constitute a work really good and acceptable to God, the action must not only be right in itself, but it must proceed from a right motive—the love and fear of God, and a habitual regard to his authority ; and it must be directed to a proper end—his glory. 1 Cor. x. 31 ; Col. iii. 17. Without this every act of man, although, considered in itself, it may be materially good, is the act of a rebel, and consequently carries with it its own condemnation. Accordingly, it is said, “ The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord,” Prov. xv. 8, and all men, before justification, are declared in the Scriptures to be wicked or “ ungodly,” Rom. iv. 4. This character is ascribed to all, without exception, Rom. iii. 10—18, before they have received the righteousness of God by faith ; “ till then there is none good, no, not one.” Every man, before regeneration, is “ dead in trespasses and sins.” Eph. ii. 1. The tree must first be made good, before it can bear good fruit. “ A corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.” Matth. vii. 17. “ Without me,” says the Redeemer, “ ye can do nothing.” John xv. 5. “ Without faith, it is impossible to please God.” Heb. xi. 6. But where there is faith there must be holiness. “ Faith purifieth the heart.” Acts xv. 9. “ Faith worketh by love.” Gal. v. 6. “ Faith overcometh the world.” 1 John v. 4. “ The fruits of righteousness, *which are by Jesus Christ*, with which believers are filled to the praise of the glory of God,” Phil. i. 2, are the necessary accompaniments and evidences of

faith. "Show me thy faith by thy works," says an apostle. These are truths which all believers must keep continually in view, remembering, that while it is solely by the work of the Redeemer, and not by their own works that they are saved, yet they are not saved without good works, if there be opportunity afforded to perform them. Good works are necessary, not to procure a right to salvation, but as the appropriate and indispensable duty of those who are justified and entitled to salvation. Though not the cause, they are the inseparable consequence; indeed, a main branch of his salvation who is called Jesus, because he saves his people from their sins, who saves both by water and by blood, 1 John v. 6, by removing the pollution of sin as well as its guilt. The disposition and ability to do good works are a part of salvation, and cannot, of course, be in any sense the cause of it.

In his Commentary on the Galatians, Luther settles the true bounds and limits of the law and gospel, and distinguishes between acceptance with God, and personal holiness, which follows after. He shows that the former is received as a free gift, on Christ's account alone, through the medium of faith, and that it implies complete pardon and reconciliation with God; but that the latter, which he insists on as equally necessary to eternal happiness, is conjoined, but not compounded with the former; that in this life it is always imperfect, but that it is pressed after and delighted in. "In regard to works," he says, "evangelical faith does not set them aside, but directs us not to put our trust in them: It enlightens the conscience, and teaches men the principle on which they

are to perform good works, not from servile fear, or with a view to justification. Such works are not wrought under the covenant of the law, but of grace ; they are the effect of Christ himself working in us by faith, and are therefore as necessary and indispensable as faith itself.

“ A true and lively faith is opposite to the feigned faith of the hypocrite, and a true faith incites a man to good works through love. He who would be a Christian must be a believer ; but no man is a sound believer, if works of charity do not follow his faith. Thus, on both hands, the apostle shuts hypocrites out of the kingdom of God. On the left hand he shuts out all such as depend on their works (either in part or in whole) for salvation, when he says neither circumcision nor uncircumcision, that is, no kind of work, but faith alone, without any dependence on what we do, avails before God. On the right he excludes all slothful idle persons, who are disposed to say, If faith justifies us without works, then let us have no anxiety respecting good actions ; let us only take care and believe, and we may do whatever we please. Not so, ye enemies of all godliness. It is true, Paul tells you, that faith alone, without works, justifies ; however, he also tells you, that true faith, after it has justified, does not permit a man to slumber in indolence, but that it worketh by love. The liberty of the Gospel is an inestimable thing ; but take care that ye use it not as an occasion to the flesh.

“ Satan has not stirred up an evil either more extensive or more destructive than this, namely, when men abuse their Christian liberty to licentiousness. For

the flesh does not understand the doctrine of grace. Therefore, when it hears that we are justified by faith only, it abuses and perverts the doctrine, by reasoning thus, ‘if we are without law we may live just as we please.’

“It is, however, very useful for sincere and pious persons to know and meditate on Paul’s doctrine concerning the contests of the flesh and the spirit, Rom. viii. It is an admirable comfort to the tempted. When I was a monk, if at any time I happened to feel the motions of a bad passion, I used to think my prospect of salvation was entirely over. I struggled in a variety of ways, both to overcome the bad passion and to quiet my conscience. All in vain. The lust of the flesh returned, and I was harassed with thoughts of this sort,—‘thou hast committed this or that sin; thou art impatient; thou art envious; in vain hast thou entered into holy orders.’ Now, had I rightly understood Paul’s doctrine of the flesh lusting against the spirit, I should not have so long and so miserably afflicted myself. I should have reflected and said, as I do at this day, in similar situations, Martin, as long as thou remainest in the flesh, thou wilt never be entirely without sin; thou art now in the flesh, and therefore thou must experience a contest with it, and this is agreeable to what Paul says, the flesh resisteth the Spirit. Despair not thou, then, but strive manfully against all carnal dispositions, and fulfil not their lusting.”

On the whole, good works are the effect and the evidence of regeneration; they are the way by which God conducts his people to glory, and qualifies them for the enjoyment of it. But it is not possible that

this important matter can be placed in a clearer point of view than in the following words of the inspired apostle, addressed to justified believers. "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them." Eph. xi. 8—10, and Titus iii. 3—5.

Now, Sir, I ask, how you come to charge me with waging war against good works? Where is your warrant for such a charge? No, Sir, I did not wage war against good works. The whole of my writings, both Commentary and Evidences, speak a language directly the opposite of this. I appeal to them both, and affirm, that not only the necessity of good works is formally dwelt upon, explained, and enforced, in a multitude of passages, but that this truth is interwoven with the whole of their texture. It is again and again declared in them, that it is to men's works that the appeal will be made at the last day, when every man shall be judged according to his works; when every one shall "receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." 2 Cor. v. 10. In short, "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap, for he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting." Gal. vi. 7.

That the above sentiments on this important subject are contained in my Commentary, to which you have appealed, for the truth of what you advance, a

few references among hundreds that might be given, will sufficiently prove.

The subject is fully treated of, vol. i. p. 74—80. It is opened by observing, “ that the Scriptures declare that men are not *chosen*, Rom. xi. 6, are not *justified*, Rom. iv. 2, 5, are not *saved*, Eph. ii. 9, Tit. iii. 5, *by their works*—that they are not *saved according to their works*, 2 Tim. i. 9, but that they uniformly teach that men shall be *judged* according to their works.”—See again, vol. i. p. 204—214.

In vol. ii. p. 290, the character of the obedience required of us is declared to be *implicit, impartial, universal*. In vol. ii. p. 374—389, a whole chapter is occupied in proving that the doctrine of eternal election is a motive to holiness. And the whole of the discussion, vol. i. 136—144, respecting what is said of justification by the Apostles Paul and James is to the same effect. It terminates as follows: “ There is no contradiction then between the two apostles ; Paul establishes the doctrine of justification by faith, and James writes against those who pervert it. The result of their doctrines is this, *1st*, The righteousness of God wrought by Christ, revealed in the Gospel and received by faith, is that alone by which men can be absolved from guilt, and reputed just by God. *2d*, The fruits of righteousness that are by Jesus Christ which believers produce, are the proof of the reality of their faith ; they clearly evince the truth that they have received by faith the Spirit which has been promised ; they show that those who bear these fruits are united to the living Head, and receive in consequence the praise and approbation of God, who is glorified by

them; and these fruits will be appealed to in the day of judgment to justify believers against all imputation of hypocrisy, which will be established against all those who *say* they have faith, but who have not works."

Everywhere in the foregoing publications, as well as in my instructions to the ministers and students, and to many others who regularly came to my house at Geneva, I inculcated the necessity of obedience to God. It was always my aim to show that the whole tendency of the doctrine of grace is to produce sobriety, righteousness, and godliness. Titus ii. 11. I proved that the Gospel is emphatically and properly designated "the doctrine according to godliness." 1 Tim. vi. 3. I ever enforced the inspired maxim—"He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." 1 John ii. 4. In one word, the declaration of the apostle—without holiness no man shall see the Lord, Heb. xii. 14, would be an appropriate motto to both my Commentary and my Evidences.

The knowledge of the doctrines of divine revelation, and submission to the authority of God, act reciprocally in the advancement of each other. "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." John vii. 17. In the way of obedience, communion with God is promoted and enjoyed. "If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." John xiv. 23.

Besides referring you to my writings, I may appeal, in justification of the soundness of the instructions I gave the ministers and students at Geneva, to the happy effects that followed. It pleased the Lord, in his infinite goodness, to bless his own word to the conversion of a goodly number of them, who are now preaching the Gospel in different parts of the continent, where the French language is spoken. On this subject I have received from several of them the most pleasing accounts, accompanied with every expression of gratitude for having had their minds thus directed to the words of eternal life. I may mention one, as his spirit is returned to him who gave it, who is now, I trust, before the throne, beholding him, whom, having not seen, he loved; in whom, although he saw him not, yet believing, he rejoiced with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. I have a letter from Mr. Rieu, late pastor of Fredericia, in Denmark, dated July 7, 1819, of which the following is an extract:—

‘ Fredericia, July 7, 1819.

“ Sir, and much Honoured Father in Jesus Christ.

. . . . “ I HAVE at all times deeply engraven in my heart the instructions which the Lord vouchsafed to me the grace to receive from you, Sir, and which opened my eyes to the fundamental truths of the Gospel. Now that I am called by a benediction, for which I cannot enough praise the Lord, to teach them, as well as to nourish myself continually by them, I feel every day more and more the incalculable importance, and the absolute necessity of founding up-

on these truths all other instructions and exhortations, if we wish that they should penetrate into the heart. There is the fullest evidence that they are the only ones that the Lord accompanies with his Spirit. The enjoyment which is felt in the reading of the Bible, which takes place of all other reading, is the certain proof of it. It is only when taking it for our guide that we can penetrate truly into the centre of the Gospel, and comprehend how this meditation can be our constant and entire occupation during life, without ever coming to an end of the discovery of new truths, and new causes and of subjects of praise, and of exalting the God of the Gospel.

“To lead a parish of labouring people to Christ, is the work that the Lord has confided to me at this time. Not having heard the truth preached to them for many years, I found them in that state of lukewarmness and alienation which naturally follows the neglect of the Gospel. Love of their own personal righteousness, want of submission to the law of God, no feeling of their need of the Saviour, and therefore no thankfulness for what he has done—such, as you may suppose, are the difficulties I have to struggle with. . . . I seek to dispense to them the mystery of godliness with the greatest fidelity possible; above all, doing my utmost to accustom them to meditate for themselves upon the Gospel.... If your engagements permit you to send me a word of friendship, will you impart to me all the counsels, exhortations, and directions, that you believe proper to fortify me in faith and piety in Jesus Christ. In my situation, insulated from all my brethren, I have greater need than others

of being roused by salutary advices ; I desire, above all, to make rapid progress in the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, since these are our only powerful arms, to convince, to overturn, and to build up. Following your counsel, I have resumed the reading of the Old Testament, and I have there found what I did not before know was there, when I was less instructed in divine truth, and when, in many respects, the veil remained upon my eyes, that Christ is every where in it, from one end of it to the other. All renders testimony to him ; the prophecies in particular were never presented to me with so much grandeur and so much beauty. O how admirable is this ! What perfection ! What agreement ! How is this work raised far above all the impious attacks of men ! . . . I am very impatient, Sir, to have direct accounts from you. I recommend myself always to the continuance of your kind regard, and to your prayers. It is with a very lively sentiment of gratitude that I shall ever remain,

Sir,

And much honoured Father in Jesus Christ,
 your very affectionate, and devoted servant,
 C. RIEU."

You see in what way Mr. Rieu expressed himself respecting the mysterious doctrines of the Christian religion, with which I had occupied his mind. Will you affirm that he neglected to do good works ? Read the account that has been published of his laborious and faithful discharge of the trust committed to him, by which he made " full proof of his ministry," and of his happy departure from this world. In his death he has furnished an example of the

triumph of faith, which nothing in modern times will be found to exceed. A young man in the vigour of life, in the very midst of his usefulness in the service of his beloved Master, when his last illness commences, can with difficulty bring himself to believe, that so great a grace should be vouchsafed to him, that when he had but just entered upon his work, the Lord should remove him from this world, and call him away by death.

I subjoin the following extracts from the very interesting memoir of his life, in which you will see what were the views he entertained of God, of his Saviour, and of himself, which bore him up in the immediate prospect of appearing before his judge, and filled his mind in that solemn hour with such unspeakable peace and joy.

“ Jules Charles Rieu, was born at Geneva, of a distinguished family. . . . His life was a life of faith, he was always in the presence of the Lord; the earth was nothing to him but a place of passage, of trial, and of expectation; and though he was so young, he thought habitually on that desirable moment when he should be delivered from his mortal body to be with Christ, which he knew would be for him far better. He watched and prayed continually that he might be ready at whatever hour the Son of man might judge it proper to come. He wrote me when he was full of vigour and of health:—‘ Let us study, dear brother, not to lose one single moment which the Master hath confided to us. How short is the time called *life*; and how much shorter may it not be than we are aware! Let us not place the

boundary any longer at the distance of a year, a month, or even a week; let us place it at the evening of every one of the days on which we find ourselves on the surface of this transitory world. Let us live and act every day, as if it were the last of our days. This calculation will not deceive us, and it is the only way of not being surprised.' He wrote this on the 15th of May 1821, and, six weeks after, there was 'time no longer' for him.

"On the 21st of June 1821, Mr. Rieu felt the first symptoms of this malady; he was ready—death was to him only a messenger of good tidings. What had he to fear, or to regret? 'The Spirit of God bare witness with his spirit, that he was a child of God.' He knew that his Redeemer lived; that there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus; and he presented himself before his Judge, wholly stripped of his own righteousness, but clothed in the wedding robe; holy through the holiness of his Saviour, and righteous through his righteousness. He left his relatives and friends, but it was to go to be for ever with a better and still more tender Friend, in whose bosom he hoped very soon to see again those whom he preceded only a few moments: he left his dear flock without a visible conductor, but he left it in the hands of the sovereign shepherd;—he was therefore free from uneasiness.

The same day he wrote to the elders of his consistory the letter which follows, with the exception of a few lines of a purely private nature—

Fredericia, June 21, 1821.

"SIRS,—Dearly beloved Elders, and dearly beloved

ed brethren of the French Reformed Church of Fredericia:—

“ Being seized to-day with the symptoms of a distemper which has already laid many of our brethren in the grave, I think it proper to leave with you some important instructions, should it be the will of the Lord to take me to himself.

“ All my papers of every kind are to be sent to my relations without delay; I will bless the Lord if they derive any edification from them.

“ At present, my dear parishioners, I have only a single word to say to you; it is to repeat to you what you must already know—that which will occupy my thoughts even unto death—it is, that I have loved you, and love you still with all my soul; I have prayed, and will pray for you with my latest breath. I trust I have manifested my affection in preaching to you the word of God, such as I believed it in my conscience and before God. Before preparing the nourishment which I was appointed to give you, I constantly prostrated myself at the foot of the throne of grace, to beseech the sovereign Bishop of Souls, to speak to you himself by my mouth, and not to permit me to mingle a single thought of my own. Alas! I am persuaded, that, but for my unbelief, the Lord would have in a much greater degree perfected his strength in my weakness, and would have more exclusively exhorted you himself. Nevertheless I have this firm and perfect confidence, that He who has chosen me (me, an unworthy creature, conceived and born in sin and iniquity, dead and condemned more than a thousand times through my errors and my sins,) is faithful, in having granted to me to build

upon the only foundation, *Christ crucified*; and that, notwithstanding the numerous imperfections and pollutions which, in a thousand instances, stain my work, *will keep what I have committed to him unto the end, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom*; and this the more assuredly, that I lay myself at this moment at the foot of his cross, fully and completely renouncing my own righteousness, which from first to last is but as the most filthy rags, and solemnly declaring before God, that I acknowledge Jesus Christ, *God blessed for evermore*, as my only Saviour, who, by his blood shed upon the cross, has cleansed me from all iniquity, and purified me by his Spirit, so that I can appear before him in righteousness. With the publican, I smite my breast, under a deep sense of my transgressions, and I cry out, like the crucified and converted thief, ‘Lord, remember me in thy kingdom.’

“Death, however, will be to me the happiest moment of my life; although I feel myself in a strait betwixt two—that I might instruct still those souls which the Lord has entrusted to me; but I likewise repeat, from the bottom of my heart, ‘my sincere desire is to depart, to be with Christ, which is for me far better.’ Certainly if he takes me to himself at so early a period, it is still a favour for which I cannot sufficiently humble myself before him, and sing songs of praise. What was I, Oh! my God, that the conflict should so soon be finished, before having resisted even unto blood, in fighting against sin.

“My dear parishioners, take heed!—I have declared to you the counsel of God; it is true, (and I am humbled, and lament for it before the cross,) with a

great deal too much weakness, and fear of men; and, above all, my conscience reproaches me with not having sufficiently imitated the example of the apostle, in exhorting each of you in particular, from house to house; but nevertheless you can bear me witness, that I have never been ashamed of Christ crucified, in speaking his word to you from the pulpit. His kingdom is therefore come nigh unto you; the arches of the edifice where you worship will attest it. Oh! how much did I wish that all had listened to this word of life, which alone can save your souls! What delight would it have given me if many had been converted to Christ! Hear! hear his voice while it is to-day. I cry this to you from the recesses of my tomb. If you hear not you would not be persuaded 'though one should rise from the dead in your presence.' Heaven and earth shall pass away, but his word shall not pass away. O Christ! save them, and pray for them, as thou hast vouchsafed to pray for me.

“Farewell, then, my dear parishioners! I commend you to God, and the word of his grace: watch and pray for yet a little time, and He that shall come will come for you likewise. We shall see each other in a very short time, before the tribunal of Christ. . . . Even unto my latest breath I will pray God for you all, whom I love with the most tender affection. May grace and peace be and remain upon you henceforth, and for ever. I remain, deeply affected by all the marks of attachment you have given me, your devoted pastor,

CHARLES RIEU.”

He took to his bed on the 22d, and on Sunday, the 24th June, he wrote with his pencil the following journal:—

“ Journal addressed to my family, to show them the progress of events during my sickness, if it please the Lord to grant me the favour of withdrawing me from this world. It is to be sent along with the letter written on the evening of the 21st. (Sunday, June 24, 1821.) . . . I cannot say that I feel the smallest pain. The physician thinks me better to-day, (Sunday,) nevertheless, as there have been so many instances of danger re-appearing suddenly and unawares, I shall not in any wise regret having scribbled, from affection, these sheets for you. My soul enjoys an unutterable peace and joy. If any thing would make me count upon recovery, it is the immensity of that grace which would be manifested towards me by so speedy a removal, almost before engaging in the combat. At present, I cry more for this, I think more than for the other blessing; for this crowns the whole: Who am I? I, the most unworthy and most polluted of creatures, who am I, that so much love should have been bestowed upon me? I would owe for it undoubtedly more gratitude than for any other blessing. I have done nothing to deserve it; but what say I? rather, is not all, all absolutely gratuitous? It will be pleasant for me to speak to you from time to time, in short and rapid sentences; this brings me nearer to you, and to speak to you of God; for it is he alone whom we must regard in all this work, and learn to listen to his voice and to follow it.

“ A little later.—Some symptoms rather more serious ; the same tranquillity of mind. I know in whom I have believed. I advance with a joy indescribable into the dark valley, for I advance towards Jesus, towards my God, towards Christ who has conquered for us. All his promises converge in one point, to overflow my soul with a joy I never felt before. No, he has not deceived us. Happy those who have believed without having seen ; I go to see him as he is. I see him already. I feel his hand supporting every part of my soul ; in proportion as this clay falls, the inward man is renewed ; I go to be changed into his image, to be like unto him. There, where is no mourning ! How I could wish to make this joy pass into your souls ! But it is there where you will enjoy it, and it is he who will now console you ; for I am not separated from you ; the moment when I fall asleep here, I see with you Christ coming in the clouds. May you all sleep in him—adieu to all ! O my well-beloved, a little hope. That happy moment is now arrived for which I sighed so earnestly—in which I habitually placed my greatest delight. Oh ! how good art thou, Lord ! Thy presence fills me with joy.—Resurrection and life.—Eternity, eternity with Jesus. So loved without having seen him ! What shall this be ! I am overcome !

“ The last thing which could still slightly oppress my conscience, was to give a warning to openly avowed sinners, which I had neglected in consequence of late circumstances. I have just caused them to be

admonished by the means of my elders, so that I feel assured their blood will not be imputed to me.

“ My peace is from henceforth pure and perfect, and without alloy ; my joy surpasses all understanding. I only desire to communicate it to you, in order that you may pant after it. Assuredly it is not to be found in the noisy circles of the world ; and its track has not been pointed out by the philosophers of the age. No, no ; it is thou alone who givest it, O God, God the Saviour, God the Comforter. Praised, praised, praised for ever, be the name of thy glory ! Still Sabbath morning, I will not write any more till tomorrow.”—(Here the journal ends.)

“ I will not,” says his biographer, “ weaken the feelings which the reading of the foregoing must excite, by attempting to describe them ; I would merely call to remembrance, that he who thus wrote three days before a death which he foresaw, was not 29 years of age, and saw before him a useful, pleasant, and happy life, even according to the estimation of the world.—Monday the 25th he was seized with delirium, and on Thursday the 28th, at half-past one o’clock in the morning, his soul entered into the joy of his Lord.”

Towards the end of the session, and when the time arrived that the students were to be ordained, it became sufficiently apparent that they knew something else besides the morality recommended by heathen philosophers and nominal Christians. You found they could do more than deliver a smooth harangue, inculcating the observance of a scanty morality, ac-

accompanied with the studied attitudes of a comedian to give it stage effect. They had begun to take him for their model, whose speech and preaching was not with the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power. They could address their hearers in a style different from the smooth language of the Genevan pulpit, as if all were Christians, all very good sort of people, who needed only to be reminded to go on as they were doing in the performance of their duties, or who at most required some little reformation. They could tell them they were guilty sinners, lying in the ruins of the fall, and as being one with the first Adam, involved in his condemnation. But, at the same time, they could direct them to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world. They could declare to them, that whosoever believeth in him hath eternal life. They could point out to them the necessity of being born again, of being washed in that fountain which is "opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness."

Addressing believers, they could remind them of the grace of God vouchsafed to them, of their infinite obligations to him who is the absolute sovereign, who dispenses his favours as he sees good, who, in his adorable kindness to them, had made them to differ from others who had redeemed them from all iniquity, and purified them to himself a peculiar people zealous of good works—who had made them a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, to show forth the praises of him who had called them out of darkness into his marvellous light, which in time

past were not a people, but were now the people of God ; which had not obtained mercy, but now had obtained mercy. For their humiliation, as well as encouragement, these preachers could call their attention to the great plan of redemption formed by infinite wisdom in the counsels of eternity, conducted with the same infinite wisdom in all the steps of its progress, and happily accomplished by the exertion of infinite power. They could remind them that the glory of God is his last great end in the work of redemption, in which he has “ magnified his word above all his name.” And that the whole is designed not merely to command the admiration of men, but “ to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known, by the church, (God’s dealings towards it,) the manifold wisdom of God.” Eph. iii. 10.

They could urge upon Christians the duty of searching the Scriptures in which, as in a glass, this glory is exhibited. They could remind them that the Bible does not come to ask their opinion of its contents, but presents a constitution of divine grace, which it was their unspeakable privilege to receive, although neither their limited faculties, nor their imperfect knowledge, enabled them fully to comprehend it. They could teach them that God does not act in the salvation of men as if he were making a compact with them, to bestow certain advantages on his part in exchange for certain services for theirs, but that, as a sovereign, he confers on them unmerited blessings. Every part of the new covenant has been designed, entered into, and carried into effect in the eternal

counsels, and by the joint co-operation of the Triune God; and its blessings are conveyed to man in the way of absolute unconditional promises. The wages of sin, what it merits and what it conducts to, is death, but the GIFT of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

“Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the Sons of God.” What a solid foundation is here laid for humility, love, and gratitude. These are the true sources of an evangelical, an acceptable obedience to God. On the ground of such motives, the students and ministers could urge on all who had received the spirit of adoption, the various and important duties of the Christian life. They could call on them to imitate him who desired to be found *in* Christ, not having his own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith, who forgetting those things which were behind reached forward to those things that were before. They could remind them, that although it did not yet appear what they should be, yet they knew, that when he appeared they would be like him, for they should see him as he is. And they could confidently impress it upon them as the infallible testimony of the Spirit of God, that “every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as he is pure.” That such must be the Christian’s employment through life, such his model and standard of duty.

But this doctrine of salvation, possessed of such incomparable energy, and when carried home to the

heart by divine influence, accompanied with such signal effects ; this doctrine, which had for so long a period been unknown in the pulpits of Geneva, and which formed such a contrast to what was there held forth in its Arian, semi-Arian, Pelagian, Arminian, insipid nothingness, could not be borne among you. When it unexpectedly burst on you in one of your temples, “ to the amazement of the hearers,” it was like a clap of thunder. I shall not soon forget the astonished, chagrined, irritated, indignant countenances of some who were present. Many seemed to say as the Athenians did when Paul preached to them, “ thou bringest strange things to our ears.” But far were those, who “ seemed to be pillars,” from adding, “ We would know, therefore, what these things mean, and we will hear thee again of this matter.” An interdict against appearing in the pulpit was soon after laid on the preacher, who, on account of his perseverance in well-doing, has been since divested of all his offices, and driven as far as the apostate church of Geneva has been able to pursue him. Its language to him from that day to the present has been similar to that directed to the prophet of old, “ O, thou seer, go, flee thee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there. But prophesy not again any more at Bethel ; for it is the king’s chapel, and it is the king’s court.” Amos vii. 12.

But as it was known that this preacher was not the only one who could bring strange things to the ears of the people, and whom much learning seemed to have made mad, the far-famed articles of May 3, 1817, were now hatched and brought forward to be signed by every minister before he should be allowed “ to

exercise the pastoral functions," and by every student before he should be "set apart for the Gospel ministry" in the Canton of Geneva.

The regulation entire, together with the preliminary remark, as given by yourself, is as follows :

"The pastors of the church of Geneva, imbued with a spirit of humility, peace, and Christian charity, and convinced that the existing circumstances of the church, entrusted to their care, demand, on their part, wise and prudent measures, have resolved, without giving any judgment on the following questions, or restraining in any degree the liberty of opinion, to require the students who desire to be set apart for the Gospel ministry, and the ministers who aspire to exercise the pastoral functions, to enter into the following engagement :—We promise, as long as we reside, and preach in the Canton of Geneva, to abstain from discussing, either in whole discourses, or in parts of our discourses, the subjoined topics :

1st, The manner in which the Divine Nature is united to the Person of Jesus Christ.

2dly, Original Sin.

3dly, The Operation of Grace, or Effectual Calling.

4thly, Predestination.

We engage also not to oppose in our public discourses the sentiments of any minister or pastor on these subjects.

“ Lastly, We promise, that if we should be led to mention these topics, we will do so without expatiating on our own views, or departing more than is unavoidable from the words of the Holy Scriptures.”

‘ The above regulation, you tell us, was everywhere ‘ represented as an instrument of tyranny ; it was declared to be imposed by force, and signatures to it ‘ exacted ; the clergy of Geneva were reproached with ‘ it as a demonstration of their heresy.’ And never, assuredly were representations and declarations more just, or reproaches more deserved. It is pretended, you say, that this regulation is so obscure that it is susceptible of thirty different interpretations. This may be true, but one meaning at least is obvious, according to which it is so framed, as completely to exclude from your pulpits “ the glorious Gospel of the blessed God,” and to perpetuate, undisturbed, a system of preaching, which has long prevailed there, and which has more affinity to Mahometanism than to Christianity. ‘ The regulation,’ you add, ‘ ill understood ‘ and unexplained, occasioned a violent outcry.’ Hitherto, indeed, it does appear to have been ill understood by some, who otherwise would sooner have thrust their hands into the flames than have employed them to sign such articles. In a letter subjoined, which I have received from a friend, you will find the whole fully explained, and its malignity detected. As the subject, however, merits particular attention, I shall not allow it to pass without some remarks.

The divinity of the Saviour, original sin, the operation of divine grace, effectual calling, and predestina-

tion, are the topics which preachers at Geneva are bound by this regulation to abstain from discussing. The first article, it is true, is worded in a most artful manner. On a superficial view, it would seem that the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ is admitted, and that you merely desire to exclude a vain intrusion into things not revealed. But when it is recollected that the principal framers of this article are decided Arians, and that they have here resorted to a most dishonest artifice in using the words *divine nature* in an equivocal sense ; and when, in connexion with this, it is remembered what a violent opposition was made to the introduction into the pulpit of the subject of the Eternal Godhead of the Lord Jesus Christ, on one solitary occasion, when it was not pretended that any vain speculation was entered into respecting the manner of the union of the divine and human natures ; it becomes sufficiently manifest, that it is against this doctrine that the blow is struck, and that the discussion of it is actually interdicted. If any doubt of this remain, it must be removed when the other articles are considered. These stand not only in inseparable connexion with each other, but also with the doctrine of the divinity of the Son of God. In order, then, to detect the mystery of iniquity contained in your regulation, it is necessary to observe this connexion, and to consider the place that each of these articles holds in the plan of redemption.

The Gospel of the grace of God is adapted to the state and circumstances of man. God views him as he really is, a ruined, guilty, condemned rebel, who has neither the means nor the inclination to restore

himself to the divine favour. In the Scriptures, the lost condition of man is written as with a sun-beam, often explicitly asserted, and everywhere implied. He is declared to be “shapen in iniquity, and conceived in sin.” Psalm li. 5. “Estranged from the womb, speaking lies.” Psalm lviii. 3. “Dead in trespasses and sins—influenced by the devil—by nature a child of wrath.” Eph. ii. 1, 3. This fact of all men’s ruined condition is fully exhibited in Rom. v. 12—18, where both their state by nature, and the manner in which they have come into it by the sin of the first man, the representative of all his posterity, is declared no fewer than five times. It is afterwards repeated in verse 19th, where the entrance and imputation of sin, on the one hand, and of righteousness on the other, are formally declared in language, the meaning of which may be resisted, but cannot be misunderstood. “As by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.”

Man having thus become a sinner, and subject to all the consequences of sin, God, in his infinite mercy, resolved that the whole of mankind should not perish, but that many amongst them should be renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him. Mercy, however, could be exercised only in the way of justice, and grace must reign through *righteousness*. Righteousness, then, or exact conformity to the law, and complete fulfilment of it must be provided, in order to accomplish the salvation of a creature who was totally divested of it. But where was a righteousness available to such an important purpose to be found? It

could not proceed from him who had sinned, and through sin fallen under the curse of the law. No created being could supply it for another. Every intelligent creature, of whatever order, is bound to perform for himself all that the law of God requires. He must love God and obey him with all his heart and strength. The just and holy law never could command less, and it is impossible that a creature can do more. All his righteousness is consequently required for himself, nor has he the smallest portion beyond this to spare for another. The righteousness, then, in which man is to be clothed anew could only be provided by God. It has accordingly been performed by him as well as accepted by him; and He who actually wrought it is "Jehovah our righteousness." Jer. xxiii. 6. In the Old Testament God frequently denominates this righteousness, "My righteousness,"—connects it with his salvation, and expressly shows, that it is provided for sinners. Isa. xlvi. 12, 13; li. 5, 8; liv. 16. Compare Isa. lvi. 1, Psalm xcviii. 2, and Rom. i. 17. Thus the prophets were commissioned to declare that God's righteousness was near to be revealed, and the apostles testify its actual revelation.

To accomplish this righteousness by fulfilling and honouring the broken law, and to render its imputation to the sinner consistent with justice, God was pleased to assume the human nature into personal union with the divine. "He who was in the beginning with God, (marking a distinction in personality,) and who was God, became flesh." John i. 1, 14. "In his incarnation he was made of a woman, made under the law,

to redeem them that were under its curse. Gal. iv. 4, 5. "Being in the form of God, he took upon him the form of a servant." Phil. ii. 6, 7. His original form was as really that of God, as his assumed form was that of a servant. His taking upon him the form of a servant incontestibly proves, that originally he was not a servant, for how could a servant take on himself the form of a servant? Can a man take on himself the form of a man? But had he been the highest super-angelic creature, he must have been both originally and for ever a servant, *infinitely* beneath the Creator.

Invested with the human nature, the Son of God placed himself under the law, and not only obeyed its precepts, but suffered its penalty, both being necessary for the redemption of men, by whom the law had been broken. The guilt of their sins being imputed to him, he suffered the punishment due to them, and his obedience being imputed to them, they receive the blessing of righteousness, (that blessing of Abraham which was to come on all nations,) and with it a title to its reward. Upon the ground of this transference of sin and righteousness, the apostle employs these affecting words. "As though God did beseech *you* by us; we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God, for he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." Thus, the Redeemer "magnified the law and made it honourable." He honoured its precepts by his complete obedience, and magnified its penalties by his all-perfect sacrifice. "He finished transgression, made an end of sins, made reconciliation for ini-

quity, and brought in everlasting righteousness." He is become the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, the end or finishing—the same expression used by him on the cross, when he said, "It is finished;" and, again, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

In this wonderful transaction, Jehovah hath manifested himself the *just* God and the *Saviour*. Isaiah xlv. 21. He could not have been just, if, in redeeming a sinner, he had accepted an apparent, and not a real satisfaction to his justice. But now every transgression receives its merited punishment, and while God remains just he exercises mercy to sinners. "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." Psalm lxxxv. 10. "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face." Psalm lxxxix. 14.

Such are the original circumstances of man, and such the remedy which God has provided for him. But how shall man be prevailed on to receive this remedy, so contrary to his natural pride, and to his rooted enmity against his Creator? Rom. viii. 7. He is wholly alienated from God, through the ignorance that is in him, because of the hardness of his heart. Eph. iv. 18. His "heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." Jerem. xvii. 9. "He loveth darkness rather than light, because his deeds are evil." John iii. 19. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." Jerem. xiii. 23. "No man can come to me, said the Lord Jesus, except

the Father which hath sent me draw him." John vi. 44, 65. The whole human race would, after all, perish, Rom. ix. 29, if God himself did not interpose and apply the salvation which he has provided; sanctifying as well as justifying the subjects of his grace, and thus making them proper objects of salvation, and capable of enjoying it.

Accordingly God has interposed. He had graciously determined that, by the knowledge of his righteous servant, *many* should be justified. Isa. liii. 11. In them the Redeemer was to see of the travail of his soul, and to be satisfied. He was to become the Father's servant, to accomplish the work of redemption, and according as it was written of him, he was to come to do the Father's will. On the other hand, the Father declared that, "If his soul shall make a propitiatory sacrifice, he shall see a seed which shall prolong their days; and the gracious purpose of Jehovah shall prosper in his hands." It is added, "I will distribute to him the many for his portion; and the mighty people shall he share for his spoil; because he poured out his soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many; and made intercession for the transgressors." Isa. liii. 10, 12. Such is the tenor of the everlasting covenant entered into between the Father and the Son, by which a numerous seed was *given* to the Saviour, to whom he was to give eternal life. Of these he frequently made mention during his ministry on earth. He declares that all that the Father hath *given* him shall come to him, John vi. 37, and that he gives unto them eternal life, and that

none shall pluck them out of his hand. John x. 28, 29, and xvii. 2. All these are chosen *in* Christ. Eph. i. 4. And of them it is said, "Whom he did foreknow, them he did *predestinate*, to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among *many* brethren: moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also *called*; and whom he called, them he also *justified*; and whom he justified, them he also *glorified*." Rom. viii. 29.

The election of those who are predestinated to this conformity to the image of the Son of God is wholly an election of grace, having no respect whatever to the works of those elected, for to these they are predestinated. This is formally declared respecting the election of the remnant of Israel. "Even so at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace, and, if by grace, then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace. But, if it be of works, then it is no more grace, otherwise work is no more work." Rom. xi. 5. The Christians at Ephesus are addressed in the most decisive language respecting their original ruined and lost condition, and are reminded that it was solely by the gracious interposition of God that they were brought out of it, and that to this cause all that was good in them was to be attributed. "And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein, in time past, ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom also we all had our conversation in times past, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of

the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God who is rich in mercy for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved, *) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Eph. ii. 1—6.

All the spiritual blessings bestowed on those who had thus been dead in trespasses and sins, flow from the election and predestination of God. The saints are represented in the following passage as coming forth from the source of their eternal election. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath *chosen* us *in* him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love; having *predestinated* us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved; in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace; wherein he hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself; that in the dispensation of the fulness of time, he might gather together in

* In the eighth verse, it is said, "by grace are ye saved through faith." Grace is the cause, and faith is the effect produced by that cause.

one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him ; in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being *predestinated* according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Eph. i. 3—11.

Those blessings which God has thus bestowed comprehend every part of salvation ; and they are all, as we are again assured in the following declaration, applied as well as provided by himself. Addressing the saints at Corinth, Paul says—" Of him (God) are ye in Christ Jesus, who, of God, is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption." 1 Cor. i. 30. Here the completeness of the salvation of believers—its source in the sovereign election of God—the special designation of the Redeemer, and all the blessings flowing from union with him are pointed out. In their natural state, those who are saved, as one with the first man who sinned, had no hope, and were without God in the world ; but he who works all things according to the good pleasure of his will, brings them into union with Christ. *Of him* are ye *in* Christ Jesus. It was by him also that this glorious Redeemer was appointed and invested with the plenitude of all spiritual blessings for their behoof. For, it is said of him, that *of* God, he is made the author of these blessings to his people. They are fools, and blind by nature, incapable of discerning the things of the Spirit of God. But the moment this blessed union is formed, by faith, the gift of God, and which he communicates by his Spirit in regeneration, they are made wise

unto salvation, deriving all their *Wisdom* from their glorious head and representative, the Prophet of his church, who is “the wisdom of God.” Guilty and condemned in themselves, the *Righteousness* which Christ, as the High Priest of their profession hath wrought, is imputed to them. And thus they are justified, accounted perfectly righteous, as if they had personally fulfilled the law. Being by nature enemies to God by wicked works, he is also made to them *Sanctification*—a new heart is given them, their dispositions are changed through his power, who, as their King, has rescued them from the captivity of Satan, cast down their reasonings, and every high thing in them that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and brought every thought into captivity to himself. Lastly, Their *Redemption*, both in soul and in body, from every remainder of sin, and from all its consequences, will be completely effected at the resurrection of their bodies from the grave in the last day ; and this also will take place through their union with the Son of God, who, in the exercise of his several offices assigned to him, will perfect and complete this redemption, as the sum of his gracious purposes of love and mercy to all whom the Father hath given him. Such is the manner in which all these blessings shall be conveyed by God to his people, and they are so conveyed, expressly with the design, that “No flesh should glory in his presence ; but that, according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” 1 Cor. i. 29, 31.

It follows then, that not only is righteousness imputed to the believer, by which he is justified, and his state

changed ; but there is also a righteousness derived from the same source implanted in him. The communication of this righteousness is the great end of redemption, as it respects man, and it is what makes him meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. Along with justification, it is amply provided for in the new covenant, as well as the perseverance of the saints to the end' of their course. " Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you ; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." Ezek. xxxvi. 25. " This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel ; after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people." Jer. xxxi. 33. " And I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them and of their children after them. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good ; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." Jer. xxxii. 39.

Such are the invaluable blessings which flow to men from the " everlasting love" of the Father, and from " the love of Christ which passeth knowledge," which are conveyed through the sanctifying operation of the blessed Spirit. He opens their hearts to receive him, Acts xvi. 14 ; enters into them, unites them

by faith to the Saviour, and communicates to them from his fulness all spiritual blessings. Thus they receive the promise of the Spirit. He dwelleth in them. They become habitations of God through the Spirit, Eph. ii. 22. They are the temples of the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. vi. 19. They receive the spirit of adoption, Rom. viii. 15, and the earnest of the Spirit, 2 Cor. v. 5. They are sealed by the Spirit unto the day of redemption, Eph. iv. 30. The Spirit himself maketh intercession for them, Rom. viii. 26 ; and thus is fulfilled the great blessing of the new covenant, " I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them." Ezek. xxxvi. 27.

" The Holy Spirit is Jehovah, a person in the self-existent Godhead, equal with the Father in every attribute. His office name is *Spirit*. The idea is taken from air such as we breathe, to denote his being the breather or inspirer of spiritual life. Every thing done by him in this character tends to holiness ; and therefore he is called the *Holy Spirit*. His office in the covenant, as well as his co-equality with the Father and the Son, entitle him to equal love and equal worship. For he undertakes to carry into execution the purposes of the Father's love in Christ Jesus. The fulfilment of these purposes depends entirely upon his grace. The Son has been incarnate, he has made atonement for sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness. The Father is satisfied with his finished work, and has demonstrated his acceptance of it. The Son is now upon the throne of glory, with all

power in heaven and earth. To this the Holy Spirit bears witness.

“ It is his divine office to apply the salvation of Jesus, and to make it effectual. He does all *in* the heirs of promise. The Father gave them to the Son, the Son redeemed them ; but they are in the common mass of corruption, dead in trespasses and sins, till the Spirit of life enter into them. They feel not their guilt nor their danger, till he convince them. They are quite ignorant of God, and of the things of God, till he make them wise unto salvation. They cannot believe in Jesus, till the Spirit of faith enable them. They cannot rejoice in the Father’s love, till the Comforter makes them sensible of it. They are without strength, till they be strengthened with strength in the inner man. They cannot go on in their Christian course, but by a constant supply of the Spirit. They cannot hold out to the end, but from his abiding with them for ever. So that he is the Lord and giver of life. He begins the good work, and he performs it until the day of Jesus Christ.

“ Every motion of spiritual life is from the Holy Spirit, and all those whom he makes alive, he makes sensible of the debt which they owe him. He manifests his love to them, and thereby he engages their love to him. They experience how great the love of the Spirit is. They are sensible of their obligations to him, and desire to be thankful for them. Thus their affections return to the proper object of love and worship. They receive daily the blessings of the Father’s love, through faith in the Son’s salvation, by the

applying power of the Holy Spirit ; and hereby they are reconciled to the first and great commandment ; it is become the delight of their souls to love the Lord God.”

The promise of the Holy Ghost was declared by an apostle, to be “ for the people of Israel and their children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall *call*.” Acts ii. 39. And God hath from the beginning chosen his people to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth. 2 Thess. ii. 13. “ They are elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.” 1 Pet. i. 1.

As then man, in his natural state, antecedent to regeneration and to the communication of grace, receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him ; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned, 1 Cor. ii. 14, as no man can say that Jesus Christ is Lord but by the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. xii. 3, God, therefore, gives the Holy Spirit to those on whom he will have mercy, *

* “ God may be considered under two different aspects, either as judging with equity, or as disposing arbitrarily of his benefits ; or in other words, as a Judge or as a Sovereign. Under one or other aspect, he is the Supreme God, in whatever manner he acts, having nothing higher than himself. Sovereignty, when this word is applied to the Supreme Being, signifies the exercise of the arbitrary will of a *Benefactor*, because, that under the other aspect, there is no place for the exercise of this arbitrary will. In the exercise of his *justice*, he is sovereign in his judg-

that they may know the things that are freely given to them of God. 1 Cor. ii. 12. The salvation of sinners, their election before the foundation of the world, and their predestination to the participation of all the blessings of the covenant of grace, are entirely according to the good pleasure of the will of God, flowing from his everlasting love, and to the praise of the glory of his grace. And all the grace which is dispensed to "the vessels of mercy which he had afore prepared unto glory," Rom. ix. 23, is treasured up for them in the person of the Mediator of the new covenant. "The

ments and his punishments, but not arbitrary; because he does not judge without demerit in the object of his judgment. When he acts as Judge and Supreme Ruler, his acts are founded upon equity; but when he acts as Sovereign, his acts are founded upon his free favour, and dispensed with wisdom.

"It is certain, that however great may be the goodness and the mercy of God, those of his creatures who are miserable, do not participate equally of them. This is evident by the distinction established between fallen angels and men. The first are entirely given up to punishment, and none are saved; and this is surely without derogating from the mercy of God. Yet there would be as much reason for accusing God of failing in goodness, because he leaves *all* these angels to perish, as because he gives up to punishment *a part* of men. The power of God is determined in its exercise by sovereign will and divine wisdom: and why should not his goodness and his mercy be so also? Mercy, which is a particular kind of divine goodness, is sovereign; and to confer favours freely, but under the direction of the divine wisdom, does injury certainly to no one. If God was *only* just, there would be no place for mercy. If he had not a *right* to act as a Sovereign Benefactor, there could have been no place for the plan of redemption."

Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth; and of his fulness we have all received, and grace for grace." John i. 14, 16. The Holy Spirit is "the Spirit of truth," John xvi. 13; "the Spirit of grace," Heb. x. 29, who glorifies the Saviour; for "he shall take of mine," said Jesus, "and show it unto you." John xvi. 14. The love of God for his people (a sense of that everlasting love wherewith he hath loved them, and therefore with loving-kindness hath drawn them to himself, Jer. xxxi. 3, that love which he has commended to them, in that he gave his Son to die for them,) is shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto them. Hence as the sum of all benedictions, the apostle's prayer for the Corinthians is, that the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost (the communication of those blessings of grace and love, by means of his presence and sacred influences in their souls) might be with them all.

Redemption, then, the chief of the works of God, is begun, carried on, and completed, by grace. Every part of it, from its commencement, in the counsels of eternity, to its ultimate consummation in the everlasting blessedness and glory of the redeemed, when the top stone shall be brought forth with shoutings, crying, "Grace, grace unto it," originates in grace, and is applied by grace,—the free unmerited favour of God. The believer is *elected* by grace, Rom. xi. 5. He is *predestinated* to his adoption, to the praise of grace, Eph. i. 5, 6. He is *call-*

ed by grace, Gal. i. 15. He *believes* by grace, Acts xviii. 27. He has *redemption and forgiveness* by grace, Eph. i. 7. He is *justified* by grace, Rom. iii. 24; Titus iii. 7. He is, *in all respects, under* grace, Rom. vi. 14. He is *what he is* by grace, 1 Cor. xv. 10. He *serves* God by grace, Heb. xii. 28. He *labours* in the service of God by grace, Heb. xiii. 9. He has his *conversation in the world* by grace, 2 Cor. i. 12. His heart is *established* by grace, Heb. xiii. 19. He is *upheld* by grace, 2 Cor. xii. 9. He is an *heir* of grace, 1 Pet. iii. 7. He has *good hope* through grace, 2 Thess. ii. 16. His *reward* is by grace, Rom. iv. 4. Grace shall be *brought to him* at the revelation of Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. i. 13. The grace of God *bringeth salvation* to him, Tit. ii. 11. In one word, he is *saved* by grace, Eph. ii. 5, 8. Such is the operation of grace, in respect to those who are the subjects of it, for whom it was from eternity deposited in their glorious Head. He "hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," 2 Tim. i. 9.

Thus, viewing the plan of redemption in its different parts, we see what judgment we ought to form of the regulation enacted by the pastors of Geneva, respecting the doctrines which are to be preached in their pulpits. By that antichristian enactment, the discussion of every fundamental principle of the Christian religion is proscribed and shut out from their pulpits. By the first article, the doctrine of the divinity of the Son of God, on which depends the whole

of the execution of the plan of mercy which the Gospel reveals, is excluded, and along with it, the Scripture character of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The second article prohibits the declaration of the natural state of man as a fallen and depraved creature, and so precludes the imputation of sin to him, as the former article does the imputation of righteousness. The third article excludes the annunciation of the application of redemption in all its parts, and of the work of the Holy Spirit, the Sanctifier, as well as the exhibition of that grace which is the first moving cause in "*effectual calling*," and the constant operating principle in the progress of salvation. The last article forbids the proclamation of the sovereignty of God, in which originates the whole plan of grace and redemption. In short, the discussion of every thing essential to salvation is thus shut out, both in respect to God as a sovereign, and to man as a guilty rebel. We have seen what the Gospel of the grace of God, as it is emphatically designated, Acts xx. 24, ascribes to the operation of grace, and shall they be accounted ministers of that Gospel, "*ministers of Christ*, and stewards of the *mysteries of God*," 1 Cor. iv. 1; "good stewards of the manifold *grace of God*," 1 Pet. iv. 10, who have entered into a deliberate compact, which they intend to force upon all who shall succeed them, to abstain from discussing, either in whole discourses or in parts of them, the subject of the great "*mystery of godliness*, God manifest in the flesh," 1 Tim. iii. 16, and "the operation of grace?"

If the regulation, established by the pastors of Geneva, needed any explanation from its authors to make their intention by it more clear, you have furnished us with one, the meaning of which cannot be mistaken. On the important subject of the operation of grace in the influences of the Holy Spirit, the whole consistory of Geneva has come forward and proclaimed their judgment. In the case of M. Malan you inform us, ‘The venerable consistory having again deliberated, decreed that the Moderator should ask admittance to the Council of State, to make known its determination, and its motives in the following terms. 29th April, 1823.’—After other things, the Address proceeds, ‘Most Honourable Lords! Although several doctrinal points taught by M. Malan are not contained in the Sacred Writings; although the doctrine, in particular, of the influences of the Spirit on the minds of individuals, on which he has been so fond of expatiating, is attended with incalculable danger, in the first instance exciting pride, and afterwards urging on to the excesses of fanaticism, yet it is not of this we complain; in fact, he has taught it publicly during four years, in the midst of us, and we have not made the slightest remonstrance.

Here we have the deliberate judgment, not of an individual, but of the whole “venerable consistory” of Geneva, making “known its determination.” A more impious document it will be difficult to produce. The influences of the Holy Spirit, on which *the whole of the application of redemption from first to last depends*, without which the proclamation of the Gospel would

prove to every son of Adam, whose ears it reached, “the savour of death to death,” 2 Cor. ii. 16, are here not merely denied, but stigmatized as fraught with the most baleful consequences. It is superfluous to make any further remark on this point—it is not necessary for the conviction of Christians; and with respect to Infidels, it would be of no avail. There is not an Atheist or a Deist in the world, who will not cordially unite with the “venerable consistory” of pastors at Geneva in decrying the doctrine of the influences of the Holy Spirit on the minds of individuals, as exciting pride, and urging on to the excesses of fanaticism. Is there one left among you who knows the truth as it is in Jesus? Will he not, like Elijah, lift up his voice?

The following extract from the letter of M. Rieu, above referred to, dated July 7, 1819, will show in what a different light he viewed the subject of the work of the Spirit; and also what was his opinion concerning the doctrines taught in the church of Geneva, and of the adversaries of the Gospel of the present day, and *above all those of his own country.*

“It would, I believe, be of much importance to have a work at this time which would very clearly establish against the adversaries of our day, and, above all, against those of my country, the rights and the operations of the Holy Spirit, with respect to the truths of the faith; for they seem really to have forgotten that there is a Holy Spirit. Some would make us believe that there is uncertainty in the foundation of the faith, and that it is dependent on the intelligence of men. Others, that it is capable of being brought

to perfection by reason, and the progress of light in the sciences. So many monstrous errors prove the absolute ignorance in which they are of the clear and positive promises of Jesus Christ to send to all the faithful, to as many as the Lord shall call to himself, the Spirit of truth, which should be in all ages and in all countries absolutely the same, and conduct into the same truths. I would wish, above all, to have it shown, that this Spirit, which is promised to enlighten, is the same Spirit which regenerates; so that, where we do not see regeneration, it need not surprise us that we do not there see the light. It has, no doubt, more than once been treated by the able, or rather by the pious disciples of Jesus; but I would like to see it at this time particularly directed against our infidels of the present day."

In the concluding part of your publication, you profess to give some account of Methodism, without entering "into discussions of too deep a nature." Your account presents such a mixture of ignorance, evasion, and perverse sentiment, that, after what I have already stated, there is no necessity for advertising to it, further than by making a few remarks.

In the first place, I would observe, that I am not a Methodist, and that neither M. Malan, nor any of my friends at Geneva, belong to that denomination; but, on the contrary, hold sentiments that are in many respects widely different from those of the Methodists. But any farther than to prevent the confounding of things that differ, it is comparatively of

small moment, whether you designate those whom you oppose Calvinists, or Methodists, or Momiérs. With you these terms are, I believe, quite synonymous.

Some of your statements respecting the doctrine of those whom you are so anxious to hold up to reprobation are correct. But in bringing these forward as you do, you display your opposition to those Scriptures in which they are explicitly taught. In other places you entirely misstate their sentiments, as I have shown that you have misrepresented mine.

Were it necessary to notice what you advance on the subject of doctrine, it would be easy to expose the inaccuracy of your statements, your general opposition to Scripture, and your ignorance of the sentiments of those whom you oppose.

‘What is the final object of Christianity?’ It is ‘to give us strength, to furnish us with means for accomplishing the great end for which the Creator has placed us in this world; to lead us by the hand till we obtain eternal salvation, after a life of watchfulness.’ (Observe how this is explained in the concluding part of the sentence.) ‘For this purpose all the truths of Christianity, beautifully connected together, are as brilliant lights to illuminate our path; as land-marks to direct, and, if need be, to support us.’ Here lights and land-marks are represented as communicating to us strength, and, *if need be*, support! This position, so absurd in itself, is perfectly consistent with your system, which discards the internal operation of the Holy Spirit, and stigmatizes with the harshest epithets every pretension of men to be actuated by the influences of grace.

‘ The man who believes is washed and justified; he is passed from death unto life. His faith is a gratuitous gift.’ Afterwards, ‘ Good works are altogether unavailable to conversion.’ The above you give as specimens of the doctrine of your opponents, which you characterize as ‘ *widely different from the religion of Christ.*’ Here, how easy would it be to prove the direct opposition of your statement to the Scriptures! Where, for example, do you find good works spoken of in the word of God, as existing before conversion? All works, before the conscience is purged by the application of the blood of Christ, are “ dead works.” On this subject I would recommend to your further attention, a passage which you yourself have quoted. “ *Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit.*” On the other hand, a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit.* The tree must be made good before the fruit produced by it can be good, Matth. vii. 12, 17, 18, 33. To the same purpose it is said, that “ the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God; neither indeed can be.” Such being naturally the condition of man, how is it possible that good works can precede conversion?

‘ The followers of Whitefield,’ you say, ‘ believe in absolute predestination to life or to death, independently of the conduct of the individual.’ Here the

* “ Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?” “ A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil.” “ Wickedness proceedeth

designation of Methodists is exchanged for "the followers of Whitefield;" but still the same persons are intended. Again, 'The Methodists, whose salvation is wrought out and perfected, have only to labour for the salvation of others. Methodism teaches that good works and sanctification are produced necessarily by faith in Jesus Christ; and as the Methodist possesses that faith, he is no longer required to *work out his own salvation*, and to tremble for his own sake; he has to work and to tremble only for the sake of others.'

Of these charges, as far as they are unfounded, you will find a complete refutation in the following extract from my Commentary, vol. ii. 105, to which you have appealed in proof of the instructions which you say I gave the students.

"There is nothing in election to salvation which does not require the use of means to arrive at it. The end

from the wicked." "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one." Before a man can do good works he must be good himself. He must be born again, "*for that which is born of the flesh is flesh*," that is to say, is corrupt and bad; "*They that are in the flesh cannot please God.*" Rom. viii. 8. It is necessary, then, that a man be created anew in Christ Jesus; that his heart be washed and purified; that the law of God be written in it before he can render obedience to the law; for that is not obedience which does not proceed from love to God. All works really good are the fruits of the Spirit of God. These are the only ones which are called good in Scripture, and all others which do not proceed "out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned," as the root of the whole, are dead works.

and the means are included in the same decree, and it is in the use of means that the decree itself receives its accomplishment. When the apostle Paul found himself in imminent danger of being shipwrecked, he announced to those who sailed with him, that not a man should lose his life; that the ship only should be lost. "For," said he, "there stood by me this night, the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cæsar, and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, Sirs, be of good cheer; for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me." When, however, the mariners were about to flee out of the ship, Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, "Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." This did not at all weaken the confidence he had that they would be all saved, as it had been announced to him. For God who had ordained that they should be saved, had also determined the means, and that it should be by the help of the mariners. Thus, although God has ordained the salvation of all those who are to be saved, he has not done it without at the same time determining that it shall be in the way of faith and of holiness, and that *they shall work out their own salvation with fear and trembling*. Besides, to pretend that it is useless to pray, to make any exertion, and to make use of the means of salvation, because that all is determined in an absolute manner, is openly to contradict the Scriptures, and to introduce ideas which have not any foundation with respect to God. Prayers, and

the use of means, were equally present to God from eternity, as in the present moment they are present to men. They were present to God as a part of his decree, and had in eternity an existence as real, with respect to God, as they have in time relatively to us. So that it can no more be said that these things are useless, because God has predetermined all things, than that they would have been useless if they had existed at the moment even of the decree of election, since they are really a part of it.

“ There is no decree then which fixes that the elect shall be saved, whether or not they work out their salvation, or that they may continue to live without being converted, and without desiring to have any part in the blessings of eternity, and, notwithstanding, enter at last into heaven. If a man is appointed to eternal life, he is at the same time appointed to be awakened to the sense of his misery and the guilt of his sin; to be ardent in prayer and diligent in walking in the path that God has commanded. If some men make the decrees of God a pretext for not occupying themselves with their salvation, it is only an excuse for their indolence, and for not believing themselves obliged to do what they have no inclination to do. For these same persons do not draw the same conclusion from the decrees of God in matters of a different nature, and less important than salvation.”

You speak of your opponents as ‘ zealous missionaries, who appear consumed with the desire of converting the world.’ It is much to be regretted that

so small a portion of zeal is manifested by them, and that, in this, as in every other respect, they are all of them so far behind in their imitation of Him who hath left us an example that we should follow his steps,—of Him concerning whom it is written, that he was clad with zeal as a cloak, Isa. lix. 17; and “the zeal of thine house hath consumed me,” John ii. 17. But when did you ever hear of any being “*converted*” by your preaching and zeal? I believe that the idea is as far from your thoughts as the thing itself is from being realized.

‘The Methodist,’ you say, ‘is never without the Bible in his pocket; he watches for the moment when he can pull it out, and publicly display it; every where, in his own house, in the street, in stage coaches, in all his conversation, he is every minute pronouncing the name of the Lord, and the words of piety and faith are ever on his lips.’ I hope you have here drawn a true picture of those whom you describe. But does it offend you? Are we not here again reminded of Him “who went about doing good,” Acts x. 38; of him whose meat it was to do the will of his Father who sent him; and who, on every occasion, introduced that great subject in which man is mainly concerned? Happy, indeed, would it be for the servants of Christ, if they were found with the words of piety and faith ever on their lips, constantly endeavouring, as they have opportunity to turn the attention of men around them to the things that belong to their peace, before they be hid from their eyes. They see men every where intoxicated with the vanities of this world, and pursuing them as if they were to con-

stitute their supreme happiness—ignorant and thoughtless, and even indifferent respecting the interests of their immortal souls. In these circumstances, is it not their duty to endeavour to save them “with fear, pulling them out of the fire?”

While you attest the fact of the zeal of “the Methodists,” you attribute to them the unworthy motives of pride and ostentation. The harsh judgment which you thus pronounce, is the more inexcusable, as it stands in immediate connexion with your reminding your readers of the office of charity. ‘Charity is the basis of the Christian life . . . *Charity thinketh no evil*; faith, without charity, is unavailing, these are the declarations of the Holy Spirit, 1 Cor. xiii. Leaving it to your own ingenuity to reconcile your admonition with your practice, I would have you, as a matter of importance to yourself, to consider, whether you are actuated by a zeal at all commensurate to the exigency of the case of those multitudes around you, whom sin and death are urging on to their final doom: whether you are “watching in all things, making full proof of your ministry.” Do others make the same complaint of you which you bring against the Methodists, that you are “consumed with the desire of converting the world,”—that you are “*instant in season, out of season*?”

‘The Methodist,’ you say, ‘is every minute pronouncing the name of the Lord.’ I hope this is never done by him in the same light and profane manner in which the name of God is incessantly pronounced by the pastors of Geneva. In this respect they are worse than Jews or Mahommedans. “The

Jews would not pronounce the name of Jehovah, except in one peculiarly solemn act of worship. Such of the Mahommedans as cannot read, carefully lay aside any written or printed paper which they meet with, because they do not know whether it may not have the name of God upon it."

' How ostentatious is this sect in their Jewish observance of the Sabbath ; in their prohibition during that day of the most innocent pleasures ! Religion amongst them assumes not the appearance of a friend, a sister, a mother, anxious and zealous for our happiness, but rather that of an austere officer forbidding the most blameless recreations to those under his command. What ostentation in the multiplicity of religious services which occupies every hour of the day and evening of the Sunday ; in those readings of the Scripture which last for hours, notwithstanding the enfeebled attention, the wandering thoughts, and the weariness which are the necessary result ; in those endless prayers, filled with the useless repetitions which Jesus Christ forbids ! The Christian, obedient to the precept of his Master, conceals himself while he is doing good ; he loves and prays in the privacy of his heart.'

Omitting the motive to which you ascribe all this, one would suppose you were writing a panegyric on the Methodists. Do they, indeed, employ the Sabbath day in the manner you describe ? When they are merry, do they, according to the injunction of the apostle, sing psalms ? Do they turn away the foot from the Sabbath, from doing their pleasure on that holy day ; not *doing their own ways*, not *finding their*

own pleasures, not speaking their own words?” On that day, does their reading of the Scriptures last for hours? Are their prayers “endless,” although filled, (as you suppose, for most probably you never heard them,) with useless repetitions. Do the employments which occupy the hours of the evening correspond with the services of the day? The employments of the evening, like the services of the day, may be defective; and they whom you reproach with them feel and lament their defects. But still, how different this manner of spending the evening of “the Lord’s day,” from occupying it in those “*most innocent pleasures,*” and “*most blameless recreations,*” evening parties, worldly conversation, card-playing, and dancing!

Does it excite your indignation that these Methodists reckon that the time past of their life should suffice to have wrought the will of the flesh? Do you think it strange that they do not continue to countenance you in your open profanation of that day which the Lord hath sanctified, on it “doing your own ways,” “finding your own pleasure,” “speaking your own words?” God hath commanded, and when the command was delivered, the earth trembled at his voice, that the Sabbath-day shall be kept holy. This solemn command is weekly read in your churches. And wherefore is this done, if the command is not to be obeyed?

In opposition to the manner in which, you inform us, the Methodists publicly honour this day, you intimate something of the way in which you and your friends act on it. ‘The Christian, obedient to the

‘ precept of his master, conceals himself whilst he is ‘ doing good ; he loves and prays in the privacy of his ‘ heart.’ But how can we persuade ourselves, that you are, on the evening of the Lord’s day, concealing yourself and doing good, when you are making your appearance in worldly company, and joining in vain and idle conversation ; or that you are loving and praying in the privacy of your heart, while you are playing at cards, or dancing at a ball ?

According to you, M. Rieu was a Methodist. The manner in which he spent the Lord’s day is detailed in the Memoir of his life, which you will observe afforded him no time for your “ most innocent pleasures,” and “ most blameless recreations.” “ M. Rieu,” it is there said, “ always hailed their approach (the Sabbaths) with a joy of which the source was to be found in the manner in which he employed them. At nine o’clock in the morning he entered the pulpit, and preached in French. He afterwards visited three or four infirm persons of his flock, who, for many years, had not been able to quit their dwelling, and engaged with each of them in distinct services. At two o’clock he began his German service, after which he taught at his own house a very numerous Sabbath school. And at six o’clock this apostolic minister opened his doors, when those who were interested in the cause of God assembled with eagerness to hear the reading of the Holy Word, and the accounts of the progress of Christianity in the earth. The public services of the Lord’s day being thus concluded, the faithful pastor still prayed for his flock, and found in his own soul a sweet and powerful recompence of his labours,—a ge-

nuine foretaste of those eternal recompences which awaited him, and which he was about so soon to receive."

'Methodism,' you say, 'causes division; Methodism separates even the members of the same family: since the English have transplanted it into Geneva, disunion has taken place amongst old friends, children have been alienated from their fathers, and women from their husbands.' These things in themselves, are no doubt, very bad, but the question remains, by what are they occasioned? Must they be laid to the charge of what is evil, or of what is good? "Sin, taking occasion by the commandment," says the Apostle, "wrought in me all manner of concupiscence, for without the law sin was dead." But, he adds, "the law is holy, and the commandment holy, just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good." Rom. vii. 8. "All things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light." And when light is let in on the works of darkness, it always occasions much perturbation. The effect, so contrary to its own native tendency, which the Christian doctrine invariably produces when it comes into contact with human depravity, was distinctly foretold by our Lord himself, and his prediction has been since literally verified in every age and country in which his doctrine has been taught. "I am come to send fire on the earth, and what will I, if it be already kindled? Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you

nay ; but rather division. For, from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father ; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother ; the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law." Luke xii. 49. "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth. I am not come to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law ; and a man's foes shall be they of his own household." Matth. x. 34. When you threw out this reproach against the Methodists, did you recollect on whom it must ultimately fall ?

When entering the gates of Geneva with a person who now resides in your canton, I declared, in the most pointed manner, my full conviction, founded on the testimony of Scripture, that what you now relate as an historical fact, would certainly follow the introduction of the Gospel in that place. The fact, in this case, furnishes an additional instance to the innumerable proofs that have already been afforded, of the fulfilment of his prediction who knew what is in man, and possessed, also, a perfect knowledge of the influence of the prince of this world. Your lamentation concerning Geneva, in this and in other respects, has been repeated a thousand times by the opponents of Christianity. "These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city." Acts xvi. 20 ; 1 Kings xviii. 17.

Indeed, there is a wonderful agreement between the

objections which are commonly made against real religion in the present day, and those of the earlier infidels. An eminent church historian remarks this in the case of one of the most distinguished among them. "The peculiar doctrines of the Gospel," he observes, "man's fallen state, justification by Jesus Christ alone, divine illumination and influence, these which excite the ill-will of man in his natural state now as much as they did then;—THESE were plainly the doctrines which occasioned such misrepresentations and abuse as that, which we have seen. If the serious reader would take the trouble to examine a variety of controversial writings published against the revival of godliness in our own times, he could not fail to be struck with a remarkable conformity of taste and sentiment between Celsus* and many who call themselves Christian pastors." Milner, vol. i. 532.

'To excite our vigilance,' you say, 'the Gospel represents the seductions and perils of the world under the image of an enemy roaming about and ready to devour us if he find us sleeping, or heedless, or given up to the influence of the passions.' Your denial of the existence of that apostate angel, whose being, and actions, and influence, are so much spoken of from the beginning to the end of the Bible, appears in the above paragraph. In your mind all that is said concerning him is merely figurative, denoting the seductions and perils of the world. According to this interpretation, how will the following passages read, besides many others which might be

* Celsus was a virulent adversary of the Christians, and wrote against them in the second century.

adduced to show the absurdity of your opinion. Job, chap. i. verse 6 to 12; Job ii. from beginning to verse 7, which would declare as follows: "The seductions and perils of the world smote Job with sore boils, from the sole of his foot unto his crown." When the world and its works are burnt up, the wicked are to be sentenced to depart into everlasting fire, "prepared for the seductions and perils of the world, and their angels." "Michael the archangel, when contending with the seductions and perils of the world, (he disputed about the body of Moses) durst not bring against them a railing accusation." Jude 9.

'Methodism persuades its adherents, that this enemy respects and flees from them.' Yes, and so Scripture teaches them, "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you," James i. 7. The Apostle Paul was not ignorant of his devices, though you are it seems ignorant of his existence. Whatever might be the case with respect to yourself, you would do less harm to others, were you to deny the truth of the Bible altogether, rather than that you should use it as you do, in a manner in which as a man of common sense and candour you would not treat any other book.

You continue to speak of the church of Geneva, as 'one of the principal reformed churches of the continent;' and of the attack which has been made on you as 'the opening of a vast plan which would endanger the Reformation.' What do you mean by the Reformation? Was it merely a reform in respect to ceremonies and outward regulations, or was it not principally a reform of doctrine? This was the light in which Luther viewed it. When Erasmus wrote

against him on the freedom of the will, Luther in reply commended him as being the only one who had taken up the real matter of dispute. "I most exceedingly commend you," he says to Erasmus, "for as much as that you are the only one, who among all my adversaries in this religious cause, has attempted to handle the real matter in dispute: nor have you fatigued me with extraneous matter about the papacy, purgatory, indulgences, and such like trifles, about which I have hitherto been hunted on all sides to no purpose. You, and only you, have seen the true hinge upon which all turned, and have aimed your blow at the throat. On this account I can sincerely thank you." But on the point of dispute between these writers, on which Luther observed the whole matter turned, you *decidedly* rank with Erasmus. You reject, without exception, I believe, all the great doctrines maintained by the Reformers against their adversaries, as you also do others of the last importance, concerning which there was no dispute betwixt Roman Catholics and Protestants. How then would the Reformation be endangered by any thing that could happen to your church? You are much more nearly allied to the Roman Catholics (though they too would disclaim you) than to the Protestants.

You tell us that your discontinuing the custom of signing a confession of faith, was kept secret by your pastors during twenty years. But it is not merely that you have ceased to affix your signatures to your confession, you have discarded the doctrines which it contains. For what other reason than the fear that these offensive doctrines would be again brought into notice, did you so warmly oppose the publication of

the Helvetic Confession of Faith by two of your own pastors? Why did you and your colleagues so much dread the effect of that publication? I was informed, when at Geneva, that one of your Professors having examined a student respecting the doctrines which he had embraced, and being highly offended with them, desired him to give him his sentiments in writing, on the points in question. The student copied the Confession of Faith of the French Protestant church on these doctrines, and gave him the extract as a faithful compend of what he believed to be truth. The Professor, not aware whence the extract was taken, but supposing it to be the original composition of the student, received it with indignation, and declared that such doctrines were calculated to make men "*brigands*."

On the other hand, is there a fundamental doctrine of Christianity held by those to whom you are so warmly opposed that is not contained in the confessions of the reformed churches? If your church once maintained these doctrines, and was, in fact, founded on them, and if now you have not only discarded the confessions which contain these doctrines, but abandoned and denounced the doctrines themselves, what right have you to persist in designing the church of Geneva one of the principal reformed churches of the continent? You may perhaps suppose that the discoveries you have made, in following (according to the expression so much used at Geneva,) "the lights of the age," are great improvements. But if you do not intend to deceive, take some other name for the system which you have esta-

blished than that of a Protestant Reformed church ; the appellation, in the general understanding of Christians being appropriated to principles, and to a system essentially different from yours.

It is not your continuing in a state of separation from the church of Rome that entitles you to a name which you unwarrantably assume. You find fault with M. Malan for acknowledging certain Roman Catholics as brethren, while the Methodists, as you call them, cannot acknowledge you, or any who hold your principles, as Christians. But you do this without reason. There are pious Catholics who adhere to the doctrine of the divinity of the Son of God, and who consequently (although the wood, and hay, and stubble, which they build on that foundation shall be destroyed,) will, we doubt not, be themselves saved ; while, on the other hand, multitudes calling themselves Protestants have destroyed the very foundation of a sinner's hope. When I was on the continent, I met with a young gentleman from Ireland, a Catholic, who appeared to be a pious man, with whom I had some very agreeable conversations. He had boarded himself in the same house with a number of Protestant students of theology. He regularly attended the prayers of his church morning and evening, and appeared so much in earnest about his religion, that he was ridiculed beyond measure by his ungodly companions, the Protestant students. At length, disgusted with their opposition to every thing like religion, and their vain worldly conversation, he left the house in which they resided, and boarded at the hotel, where he met with officers of the army and others, many of whom were

avowed infidels. But he declared that their conversation, bad and disagreeable as it was, was not so disgusting to him as that of the students of theology, whom he had left.

Some time ago I received a letter from one of those who were students at Geneva when I was there. He expresses himself as follows: "O, my dear brother, how much harm did Geneva do to me! The manner of life of the French students in theology, entirely worldly and dissipated; the absence of all good theological and religious instruction—the auditory where I studied the physical sciences, which dry up the mind, where the lectures are given only by Infidels—the reading of the works of philosophers, Voltaire and Rousseau; these were as so many rocks, against which, not being previously established, I was unhappily driven. Entirely renouncing my religious sentiments, I entered, as it were, into a new world, giving up my mind, naturally ardent, to an excursive freedom, till then unknown, in a new sphere of ideas." These, Sir, are melancholy accounts of your *Protestant* seminaries; and it is an unquestionable fact, that the greatest opposition to the spread of the Gospel in your country is experienced from Protestants.

The question of chief interest to a serious mind is not, are you a Protestant or a Catholic, but are you a Christian? What think you of Christ? On this important subject, all that you have written is evasive. You keep to general declarations and carefully avoid giving any explicit statement. 'Without, then, professing to give a confession of faith, (why do you not

‘ give it?) or constituting myself the judge or historian of the doctrine of my colleagues, I confess, alas ! that there are amongst them some Methodists, Athanasians, some of those who are commonly called the *orthodox*, that is to say, those who believe entirely the Creed of the First Council of Nice ;’ (so, notwithstanding what you have in the same sentence professed to the contrary, you feel no hesitation in giving a confession of the faith of your colleagues,) and I may decidedly, without fear of departing from the truth, make the following assertions with respect to them all.’

‘ There is not one of the pastors of the church of Geneva who does not affectionately confess Jesus Christ as his Saviour, his Mediator, his Intercessor. There is not one who does not say with the apostle, *Neither is there salvation in any other ; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved ;* who does not say, it is by Jesus Christ that we are justified ; he has redeemed us from the curse of the law ; he has revealed to us the economy of reconciliation and of grace. There is not any Genevan pastor who does not *honour* the Son as the raiser of the dead and the judge of all the children of men ; there is not one who does not know it to be his duty, and feel it his happiness to study his laws, to obey his precepts, and to make his name known and loved on earth ; and to glorify by his words and actions the God of holiness and mercy.

‘ What more can be required ? Is not Jesus Christ the corner stone of the building ? Is not he a Christ-

‘ian who believes in Jesus Christ the promised Messiah,
 ‘in Jesus Christ, the prophet, priest, and king, in
 ‘Jesus Christ, Lord and Saviour to the glory of God?
 ‘Is it needful to exact on difficult questions, on deep
 ‘mysteries, an uniformity never to be met with, even
 ‘on more simple and comprehensible subjects?

‘The homage of the heart, charity, the love of
 ‘peace, these are the key-stone of the arch to the
 ‘Christian. “*If thou shalt confess with thy mouth
 “the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that
 “God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved,*”
 ‘said St. Paul to the faithful at Rome. When the
 ‘Ethiopian desired to be baptized, Philip replied, *If
 ‘thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And
 ‘he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is
 ‘the Son of God.*

‘Do you profess to have more knowledge, and to
 ‘act better than our guides, who were assisted by the
 ‘Holy Spirit?’

In the above declarations, you evidently wish to be understood, that, as far as they go, they comprehend both your own creed, and that of the Methodists whom you oppose. But is it then possible that such declarations can be satisfactory? For if the Methodists and you and your friends are so well agreed, why do you oppose them? In the idea, however, that you are agreed, you ask, “What more can be required?” I answer, much more; and that nothing you have advanced above exonerates you from the charge of having subverted the very foundation of the Gospel. “There is not,” you say, “any Genevan pastor who does

not honour the Son as the raiser of the dead, and the judge of all the children of men." This you may do according to your view of things ; you may honour the Son because he raises the dead, and because he has all judgment committed to him as the highest *creature*. But this is a very different thing from honouring the Son, even as we honour the Father ; John v. 23 ;—from viewing him as " over all, God blessed for ever." It is thus that, as you well know, those whom you call Methodists honour him ; and yet you here wish to confound their sentiments with your own ; acting over again the part which you did, when you said, that all the pastors confessed that Jesus was a divine person ; artfully concealing the fact, that the difference between you and them on this point, is (I repeat it) no less than between *finite* and *infinite*.

You quote the passage in the tenth chapter of the Romans, in which the apostle declares, that if a man confess with the mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in his heart that God hath raised him from the dead, he shall be saved ; and also the eunuch's reply to Philip's question, which was sustained as a sufficient answer. And then you ask triumphantly, if we profess to have more knowledge than our guides who were assisted by the Holy Spirit ? Do you not perceive why the apostle's declaration and the eunuch's answer were sufficient in the circumstances in which they were made ; and yet, that when quoted by you, they furnish no criterion from which to conclude that you annex to them their true and original meaning ? To the persons to whom the Apostle Paul made the above declaration, he had previously stated the cha-

racter of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Eternal God, and Philip, who acted under the inspiration of the same Spirit, had, before he received the eunuch's answer, "preached unto him Jesus." But to the view of the Redeemer's person given by Paul, we know that you stand directly opposed, and declaim against it as a mystery which you will not suffer to be preached in the pulpits of Geneva. I affirm, therefore, that your quoting these passages, and the other general assertions which you make, are nothing to the purpose.

When there was no difference of opinion respecting the passages quoted, but the same meaning was attached to them by both parties, nothing more was necessary but general statements of them. But when their meaning comes to be disputed ; when you quote them in such a manner, as at once to suit your own views, and the views of men whose system you affirm 'swerves from the religion of Christ,' and 'leads its disciples to conduct and sentiments far different from those which the Saviour enjoins on his children ;' and the effects of which are 'entirely opposite to those produced by Christianity,' on account of which, you say, the clergy of Geneva 'have given their voice against Methodism'—when you do this, then I am warranted to hold that you are acting in an evasive, dishonourable manner. You present us with assertions, which, you say, you can decidedly make respecting yourself and men whose systems swerve from the system of Christ, and are productive of effects entirely opposite to Christianity ; and you think that this is enough. What more, you exclaim, can

be required? But do you not see the absurdity of all this? If these assertions are applicable to men whose sentiments you explicitly condemn, what evidence do they afford that your sentiments are correct? Observing that you act in this manner, and at the same time, that you prefer charges against me and others, as if we were disturbers of the peace of your church, because those of your people who unite with me in sentiment have conscientiously reverted to, and now hold firm the doctrines of its founders and first reformers, I am surely entitled to call on you to come forward and avow what you really are, and to discontinue those evasions and *secret* machinations by which you and your predecessors have entirely, though to many imperceptibly, changed the character of your church.

The following quotation from my Commentary, vol. i. p. 16, expresses my reasons for not admitting, as of any value, your general assertions respecting the Lord Jesus Christ; and also the reasons why the Calvinists at Geneva, to whom you are so hostile, (while you acknowledge that they are “those who are commonly called the *orthodox*,”) cannot, while you hold your present sentiments, admit your claim to be considered as a Christian.

“The first and great truth, that the Holy Spirit testifies to believers, is respecting Christ. The Spirit of truth cannot testify two opposite things, the one that Christ is both God and man, the other that he is a creature, who however elevated he may be supposed to be, would always be infinitely below God. The one or the other of those who admit opinions so opposite

is in a fundamental error, and has received a *lying Spirit*. There is here no medium. He who believes that *Jesus is the Christ, is born of God*. But, if the doctrine of any one is erroneous in this respect, it has no relation to the Christ spoken of in the Scripture, but to an imaginary person, infinitely different. When, in saying that the fundamental article of faith is, that Jesus is the Messiah, it is understood that the person called by this name, who lived at such a time, and in such a place, ought to be thus named, while there is not included in the idea which this name expresses, all the qualities and the rights of this person, the opinion is entirely unreasonable; for neither the name, nor the time, nor the place, is of such importance as those things which are essential to the Messiah, and which are much more necessary to establish identity between the object of our veneration and love, and the person that the Gospel reveals to us. If we suppose that Christ, who, we are told, is a divine person, is simply a man, or even the first of all creatures, we represent to ourselves an object infinitely further from the truth than if, in acknowledging the existence of this divine person, we suppose that he has another name, or that he lived at another time, or in another place. Jesus himself reproaches the Jews for not having known him. In what sense did they not know him? It could not be in any other but in that of forming a false idea of him.

“ We may here remark, that those who depart from the true sense of Scripture respecting the essential divinity of Jesus Christ, depart also from all the principal points of the doctrine of the Gospel. They

differ from those who hold it on the fundamental doctrine of God the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and that these three are one ;—on the character of God as *just*, and at the same time the *Saviour* ; (the system of the Arians and the Socinians lead to the denial of his justice ;)—on the law as absolute, and as being satisfied with nothing less than perfect obedience ;—on the character of man, conceived in sin, and brought forth in iniquity, by nature a child of wrath, placed under the condemnation of death pronounced on him in his first parent ; in short, the total corruption of human nature ;—on the doctrine of the atonement of Christ ;—of regeneration ;—of justification by faith only, and without works of any kind, whether works of the law or works of faith ;—of sanctification by the influences of the Holy Spirit ;—of election by the sovereign decree of God ; lastly,—of the final perseverance of the saints, by efficacious grace. The Arians and Socinians also, in general, retrench from what they regard as the objects of faith, the doctrine of the eternal punishment of sinners in a future state ; the existence of the devil, or at least his influence on the minds of men. In one word, they reject the plenary inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. It is true, that those who deny these truths take the name of Christians as well as those who believe them ; but can it be conceived that both the one and the other are Christians ?”

Overturn the above statements if you are able. Your attempt, when its futility is exposed, may prove useful to some, who are at present “ as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth on the top of a mast.” Prov. xxiii. 34.

Truly, ye Arians of Geneva, ye have left the Gospel as ye have left yourselves, “ a tree unbranched, without boughs or leaves.” Ye have robbed it of all its grace and of all its glory. Having denied its peculiar doctrines, it would now be well for you to establish, if possible, your great discoveries. “ Man is born pure.” “ There is no devil”—“ no place of future punishment, or at most, but a sort of purgatory.” “ The Gospel is *useful*, but not *necessary* to men for salvation.” But in order to establish your scheme of doctrine, you must provide another Bible ; for the present Bible, even in the unfaithful translation you have made of it, will not serve your purpose.

Justly, indeed, has the epithet of blind guides been applied to you. If you continue in your present course, you yourselves, and those who follow you, must unavoidably fall into the ditch. The devil, we are told, without figure or allegory, “ walketh about seeking whom he may devour.” 1 Peter i. 8. Never does he so certainly overtake and devour his victims ; never does he so completely take men captive at his will—2 Tim. ii. 26 ;—never does he work in the children of disobedience with such dreadful efficiency, as when he has succeeded in convincing them that he has no existence. Having prevailed thus far, he pursues his advantage, employing you in that secret work of darkness, of which so many accuse you, and which you have been long engaged in carrying on. Oh ! that something which has been here said might lead you to reflect, and reach conviction to your minds before it be too late. You are not sensible either of the greatness of your danger, or of the extent of your guilt.

The contest you are carrying on is not against man, but against God. But “ you have imagined a vain thing.” “ Woe to him that striveth with his Maker !” Isa. xlv. 9. “ He stretcheth out his hand against God ; and strengtheneth himself against the Almighty ; he runneth upon him, even on his neck, upon the thick bosses of his bucklers ; because he covereth his face with fatness ; and maketh collops of fat on his flanks. And he dwelleth in desolate cities, and in houses which no man inhabiteth, which are ready to become heaps.” Job xv. 25. Mark here the true cause of that change of opinion concerning Geneva which you so much deplore, and which, as you affirm, has extended to the ends of the earth. “ Geneva is no longer Christian ! is the cry which resounds in the city itself, and is heard in England, in Holland, in Germany, in France, and has even reached the astonished ears of the inhabitants of the New World.”

I have said that this change, in the public opinion, has neither been so sudden nor so recent as from your account your readers would be induced to suppose. The date you assign to it is the beginning of the present century ; but, in reality, it took place at a much earlier period. You are well acquainted with the remarks on the pastors of Geneva in the Encyclopedia—the compliments paid them by D’Alembert, as well as with the extract from their register, published in consequence, dated 10th February 1758. The article, in the Encyclopedia, contains different charges ; among others, it is there said, “ Purgatory, which has been one of the principal causes of the separation of the Protestants from the Church of Rome, is now

the only punishment that many among them admit after death." It is added, " To say all, in one word, many of the pastors of Geneva have no other religion but a perfect Socinianism, rejecting all that they call *mysteries*." How fully is this verified by your sermon on the mysteries.

The answer of the pastors to the charges brought against them was insufficient and equivocal, and questions afterwards put to them on different important points, appear to have remained without any explicit reply. Even at that time also they proceeded in a clandestine underhand manner, and D'Alembert remarked of them, " I should be extremely concerned to be suspected of having *betrayed their secret*."

You are likewise acquainted with Rousseau's defence of them, and with the following letter from him on the subject.—" They demand of the ministers of the church of Geneva, if Jesus Christ be God? They dare not answer. A philosopher, with a glance of the eye, penetrates their character. He sees them to be Arians, Socinians, Deists ; he proclaims it, and thinks he does them honour. They are alarmed, terrified; they come together, they discuss, they are in agitation, they know not to which of the saints they should turn, and after earnest consultations, deliberations, conferences, all vanishes in an *amphigouri* ; and they neither say yes nor no. O Genevans, these gentlemen, your ministers, in truth, are very singular people! They do not know what they believe or what they do not believe. They do not even know what they would wish to appear to believe. Their only manner of establishing their faith, is to attack the faith of others."

Thus it appears, that the defection of the pastors of Geneva from the principles of the Reformation, and their artful attempts to conceal the change, were long ago subjects of ridicule, even to infidels. That the degradation of their morals kept pace with the degeneracy of their doctrine, the following anecdote, related at a public meeting in this city in 1821, of *the recommendation of suicide by one of the pastors to another of them*, affords a melancholy proof.

“ Geneva, which had been called the cradle of the Reformation, where Calvin dwelt, a man of high renown, into whose spirit our own illustrious reformer Knox had drunk so deep, and from whose wise and salutary institutions the church of Scotland has derived such important advantages; Geneva, this once famed city and church, which long continued the glory of the Reformation, has sunk into a state of the most deplorable degeneracy. He (the speaker) could not refrain from stating, in proof of this fact, an anecdote which he recollects to have heard more than forty years ago, of unquestioned authenticity, and which left an indelible impression on his mind. One of the pastors of Geneva, a man distinguished by his talents, and by the amiable sensibilities of nature, had been visited in the course of providence by successive domestic afflictions, in the death of several relatives, to whom his heart was attached by the most endeared and tender affection. He found it necessary for the benefit of his health, to retire to the country. With a view to sooth his mind, a friend, another of the pastors of Geneva, wrote a letter, in which, being a stranger to the consolations of the religion of Jesus,

he reminds him of those natural affections which worldly wisdom and a vain philosophy combine to suggest, after which he stated to his friend, that if these views were insufficient to afford the support he required, there still remained to him one resource, of which he could never be deprived, as *he had it always in his power, when he chose, to withdraw from a world which he had found so replete with disappointment and sorrow.* Miserable refuge! Nor does it appear from the most authentic testimony, that the state of religion and morals has since improved in the city of Geneva."

M. Bost, who is well acquainted with the pastors and professors of Geneva, has given in his publication of 1819, an account of their declension, from a very early period, and many particulars concerning their manner of proceeding.

"They commonly begin," he says, "by not believing the divinity of Jesus Christ. They say that he is the greatest of creatures, the most exalted being after God. Such are the opinions, which, among other authors, are professed by M. Vernet in his *Instruction Chrétienne*, fourth edition, one of the writers who has most influence over the church of Geneva. To conceal from the people this progress of light, as they express themselves, they have given to the same chapter in which they take away from Jesus Christ his divinity, the title, *Of the Divinity of Jesus Christ!* . . . When I call this a cheat who can convict me of falsehood? and when I prefer the same accusation against all those who follow the same method of teaching, who can accuse me of going beyond the language of truth, or that of charity?"

“ A great number of the pastors and professors of Geneva have embraced for a long time past the principles of Arianism and Pelagianism, and many others enter, more or less, into the different degrees of Socinianism and, for myself in particular, I can say confidently, that during the four years which I passed in the study of theology, I have constantly seen the two first of these systems followed, and the third appear under a thousand forms. . . . To the proofs which I have alleged, and which, on the first demand, could be supported by an unlimited number of witnesses, a multitude of others could be added. It is only necessary to consult the writings which have appeared on one side or other, to observe the silence of those against whom accusations are brought which require a formal denial, the weakness, the silence, and also the declarations of the catechisms and liturgies of Geneva, the epithet of useless or accessory constantly lavished on doctrines reputed by others of the highest importance.” “ If you believe you are of the truth,” adds M. Bost, “ why do you not communicate it to those whose pastors you are, that you may lead them to the truth ? Why your profound silence ? must it still be believed that this is a part of some plan which is pursued in secret, without your daring to avow it ? Does any one fear to say what he thinks, when he only thinks what is right ? Nothing, nothing, is preferable to rectitude. A man who does not believe, and who says so, is at least exempt from fraud. Declare yourselves, therefore, to your church, that the people may know at last on what ground they stand. Declare

yourselves separately if you cannot do it together—but, once for all, do it, and do it frankly: show yourselves; all the world calls out to you, to say what you believe, and what you do not believe.”

Here are direct assertions concerning the pastors of Geneva, not merely respecting their conduct since the beginning of the present century, but “*for a long time past,*” and accusations preferred against them of such a nature as fully to warrant the unfavourable opinion entertained of them by Christians of other countries. M. Bost, in his pamphlet, speaks a language too precise to be mistaken, and on his own personal knowledge of what he asserts. He appeals to the silence of the pastors as a proof of their guilt. You have animadverted on his pamphlet in such a way as to prove you feel its force, and that it has created in your mind no small uneasiness. Yet you have not dared to meet his accusations. Whoever peruses his pamphlet, published four years ago, or even the above extracts, must be convinced from what you have said, that you are incapable of extricating yourself and the other pastors from a situation sufficiently embarrassing. You are afraid to avow the truths he asserts, at the same time it is out of your power to deny them.

Come forward, Sir, at last, and openly declare what you really are. Tell the world plainly, that you have departed from all the important principles of the Reformation. In your denial of the doctrine of the Trinity—of the divinity of the Son of God, and of the Holy Spirit, you have removed the very foundations of the Christian religion. If you have erred from the

faith respecting the character of God, and the work of redemption, you have equally departed from it respecting the character of man. You have abjured the doctrine of justification by faith without works, which was the grand subject of controversy betwixt Luther and his opponents, and which he so justly designated "*Articulus stantis aut cadentis Ecclesiæ.*" In your entire ignorance of this leading article of the Christian religion, you charge those who hold it with waging war against good works. It would be saying little to affirm that Luther and Calvin would have spurned from them such pretended friends of their reformation. Even that very church from which they separated, maintaining, as it does, fundamental principles of the highest importance, which you discard as false, would utterly disallow your pretensions to the name of Christians.

"You have taken away the key of knowledge; ye enter not in yourselves, and them that were entering in, ye hindered." You have bound down your preachers in such a manner, that they can no more "declare the whole counsel of God." But "the word of God is not bound." In spite of you, it shall "have free course and be glorified." Your city in former times was highly favoured with the Gospel, which laid the foundation of all its prosperity. But the honourable distinction is lost; and on its churches, in which the Gospel was once so purely preached, is now written *I-chabod*, for the glory is departed from them.

THE LETTER REFERRED TO, PAGE 86, RESPECTING THE REGULATION, DATED MAY 3, 1817.

MY DEAR SIR,

I HAVE read with astonishment the extract with which you favoured me in your last letter, giving an account of the strange compromise entered into between the pastors of Geneva, for suppressing the glorious Gospel of God our Saviour. Not that it surprises me that men should be found in all countries, so hardened as to deny the Son, and all the distinguishing doctrines of his word; even as many have denied the Divine Existence itself. But is it not beyond measure astonishing, that men not lost to all regard to consistency and moral character, should be found to avail themselves of such disingenuity and equivocation in expressing their sentiments, as the Arians here employ, and that any evangelical preachers should bind themselves by this unholy covenant, to avoid preaching the substance of the doctrines of the Scriptures? In submitting to you, then, a few strictures on this extract, I shall have an eye chiefly to the inconsistency and dishonesty of both parties.

The dispute, I perceive, originated from two discourses, in opposition to each other, with respect to the deity of Christ. In the compromise, "each one of the pastors confessed that Jesus was a Divine Being." Now, Sir, here is a lie of the most disingenuous kind; a lie on the most important of all subjects. Is it not

essential to moral truth, that the expressions which we use be calculated, or at least intended, to convey our meaning to the minds of those whom we address? If so, here is an untruth; here is a declaration which, instead of being intended to convey the real sentiments of the writers, is artfully constructed for the very purpose of deceiving the public. What is generally understood by the phrase Divine Being? Is it not understood to mean one who possesses every attribute of Godhead? Is there any Divine Being but the one almighty, infinite, and eternal Jehovah? If any man, then, uses the phrase Divine Being to designate any thing but the true God himself, he employs his words in a sense different from that of common use, and in a grammatical point of view, speaks improperly. But, if he does so intentionally, to make others take a meaning out of his words different from his real meaning, it is that unmanly species of lie which is called equivocation. This artifice is very suitable to a school of Jesuits, but it is lamentable to detect it in the chair of the illustrious Calvin. O church of Geneva, how art thou fallen from thy once distinguished station among the churches of the Reformation! How awfully hast thou departed, both from the faith and from the morality of thy founder!

On the part of the Calvinistic pastor, how inconsistent was acquiescence in this deceitful, jesuitical confession! Does he not combine to delude all who are deceived by the ambiguous expressions employed in this compact? The public has his authority to believe, that the deity of Christ was acknowledged by his Arian confederate. Did he imagine that to con-

fess Christ as a Divine Being, in the sense of an Arian, is of any importance to salvation? Did he consider such a confession any way to the honour of the Saviour? Is it any compliment to Jesus to be acknowledged a god in the sense in which it was given to the whole brood of pagan divinities? Is *the elegant theology* of Greece and Rome to be revived under the Christian name by the divines of Geneva? Shall a Christian be content to have his Saviour such a god as the deified heroes of antiquity?

A like disingenuity is employed in the language of the confession, that *all men are sinners*. In such a situation, the term man refers to the human race, without distinction of age or sex. The expression *all men are sinners*, is equivalent to the expression, *every individual of the human race is a sinner*. Now, the Arians do not believe this: they maintain that all men are born pure. Therefore, when they sign an article, declaring that all men are sinners, they must understand the expression as extending only to those who are men in years, or at least such as are guilty of actual sin. The above confession then from an Arian, is a falsehood; and the Calvinist who unites with him in this confession, knowing the sentiments of his confederate, countenances that falsehood, and assists him in his imposture. Arian morality, we see, is here quite of a piece with their theology.

What shall I say of the humble confession of these sage divines, in which they all agree, “that from the origin of Christianity, no one had been able to comprehend the manner in which the Son had proceeded from the Father?” They here insinuate, that in or-

der to believe or teach the deity of Jesus Christ, it is necessary to comprehend the manner of this procession. But because all men are unable to comprehend what the Scriptures do not explain, are we therefore to avoid teaching what the Scriptures clearly assert? There is a capital error lies at the bottom of those reasons for avoiding the discussion of the disputed doctrines. It is supposed that the incomprehensibility of a doctrine affects the evidence of its truth; it is insinuated that what is incomprehensible is not to be believed, or at least not to be taught. Now, Sir, if we make the comprehensibility of a doctrine a criterion of its truth, we will reject many of the most important doctrines of the light of nature. These divines, as a dissuasive from preaching the necessity of divine influence in regeneration and sanctification, tell us that no man, from the origin of Christianity, has been able to comprehend the way in which God influences the human mind. Can they tell us the way in which the mind influences the body? Yet all men believe with the utmost confidence of conviction, that the mind influences the body in all its voluntary motions and operations. Can the divines of Geneva tell what way my mind conveys its influence to my hand in writing these observations? No philosopher has ever been able to explain this. Shall I then enter into articles with my sceptical neighbour, binding myself, for the sake of peace, not to declare my belief in the influence of my mind over my body? Would this be absurd? Not more absurd than the convention of the divines of Geneva. They agree not to preach that God in-

fluences the human mind; because, in the depth of their metaphysical sagacity, they cannot comprehend the manner of the divine operation. Contemptible theology! contemptible metaphysics! the grounds of their resolution are as silly as the resolution itself is daringly infidel. Can any thing be more impious and foolish than to refuse to believe or to publish what God testifies, because they cannot comprehend the nature of the thing about which he testifies? So far from being a sufficient ground for rejecting God's testimony, the incomprehensibility of a doctrine divinely attested, ought not even to form a difficulty. With respect to what is incomprehensible, the mind, by its own light, cannot say that it is either true or false. It cannot judge of a thing which it does not comprehend. That which I can declare false I must understand. That which I do not understand may be true, and if I have God's testimony in the matter, I ought to believe its truth with the most firm faith. The doctrine of the Trinity is incomprehensible. Had philosophers taught it as a discovery of their own, I could not receive it as truth, nor could I say that it is certainly false; because, though incomprehensible, it is not a contradiction. It does not say that the three Persons of the Godhead are one Person, or that one God is three Gods. The assertions of Trinity and Unity respect the subject in a different point of view. As a doctrine then, of man, I can neither receive it, nor reject it as an impossibility. I have no grounds on which to rest belief. But when I find this doctrine in the Scriptures, I believe the Trinity as confidently as I do the Unity. In this my faith is not

more the faith of a Christian than it is also the faith of a philosopher; for it is faith upon evidence that sound philosophy never yet rejected. Sound philosophy never presumes to "reject a truth founded on proper evidence, on account of being incomprehensible. I believe that there has been a past eternity, yet I can comprehend as little of duration without a beginning, as I can of one God in three persons. Space, I am forced to believe, has no limits, yet there is nothing in the Trinity more overwhelmingly incomprehensible than the existence of space without end. My mind sees clearly that there can be no bound to space, yet I cannot see how this is possible. There is a point beyond which I cannot place this thought. It has always appeared to me, then, that those persons who arrogate to themselves the appellation of rational Christians, because they believe nothing but what their reason comprehends, are the most irrational as well as the most presumptuous of men. The sternest voice of reason commands us to believe every thing of which it has evidence that God teaches. My reason forces me to believe the doctrine of the Trinity, because it finds it taught in the Scriptures with the light of a sun-beam. In a philosophical point of view, I cannot but look with contempt on the Geneva divines, for proscribing a number of doctrines, merely because there is something in the nature of the things to which they refer, which is incomprehensible to human wisdom. Considering them as teachers of the word of God, proscribing doctrines, the most important in Christianity, I cannot but look upon these divines of Geneva as God-daring rebels.

We are told in the extract, that “ all were equally convinced of the necessity of banishing these disputed topics from the Christian pulpit.” Is it a Christian pulpit from which these topics are banished? Is it a Christian pulpit that does not declare the true character of the Saviour? Is it a Christian pulpit that shows not to sinners that there is a sacrifice of sufficient value to atone for the offences of the most guilty? Is it a Christian pulpit that does not point out the only way in which any of the race of Adam can be saved? Is it a Christian pulpit that does not declare the full extent of human guilt? Is it a Christian pulpit that does not teach the work of the Spirit in regeneration and sanctification? No, it is not a Christian pulpit; it is the rostrum of Satan for haranguing his synagogue. It may, indeed, have stolen some sparks of heavenly truth to enliven its lifeless dogmas, but it is on that account the more dangerous deceiver. It may have taken from the mines of the Holy Spirit, as much precious metal as serves to gild its base coin, but this only makes it a more successful impostor. Ought the deity of Jesus Christ to be a matter of dispute among Christians? As well may Christianity itself be a point of dispute among them, as the deity of its author. Without this article there is no Christianity. Why do not the Geneva Doctors avoid asserting the divine origin of the Christian religion, to promote harmony between Christians and Deists? If God has declared the whole human race guilty in their head, ought it to be a question among Christians, whether they should daringly deny the debt, or accept pardon through the atonement? If all men are

naturally dead in trespasses, ought it to be a question with Christians whether God is the author of the spiritual life? As well may they question, whether their natural life is the gift of God, or is a work of their own.

But are all disputed points to be banished from a Christian pulpit? What then will remain as subjects of discussion? What doctrine of Christianity has not been disputed? What doctrine is there in natural religion itself that has not been denied? In a word, what truth is there of any kind that has not been questioned? Has not the existence of God itself been denied, and regular systems of atheism formed by the most distinguished philosophers? The very existence of the world has been denied; the testimony of the senses has been discredited; the authority of axioms has been resisted. Some philosophers have not believed even their own existence, and a sect, called Egoists, refused to believe in the existence of any thing but themselves. Moral distinctions have been denied, and the difference between right and wrong has been considered only as a feeling of the mind. Vice might have been virtue, and virtue vice, had man been differently constituted. What then have the divines of Geneva left for the discussion of the pulpit? If one disputed point ought to be avoided, all disputed points ought equally to be avoided.

But if the Geneva Doctors are right, Paul was altogether wrong. Instead of avoiding disputed topics, these he laboured with particular assiduity. Opposition to the truth, instead of being a reason with him for avoiding the disputed truth, was the very thing

that excited his earnestness in contending for it. What are almost all his epistles but controversial discourses, establishing truth in opposition to the errors of false teachers who had corrupted the Gospel? When the false teachers had succeeded in introducing circumcision to the churches of Galatia, did Paul enter into a compact with the ravenous wolves that sought to devour the flock? No, instead of this, he declares, "I would they were even cut off that trouble you." Does he strike a covenant with the judaizing teachers, to avoid the subject of controversy? No, he declares that the innovations would destroy the Gospel. (vide Gal. v. 2—4.) In the Gospel of Paul the slightest addition destroyed its efficacy; in the Gospel of the Geneva Doctors, there may be different Gods, without any injury. Jude, in like manner, exhorts Christians earnestly to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints; but now a happy method has been discovered by the divines of Geneva, by which the worshippers of different gods may worship together in harmony. War, then, war, eternal war, war without a truce, is to be carried on against the various corruptions of the Gospel. They who enter into covenants of peace with the promulgators of error, are like a general who has made peace with his king's enemies, contrary to the interests and orders of his sovereign. Instead of being praised as being a lover of peace, he will be condemned as a traitor.

The framers of this extract employ disingenuous artifice in expressing the topics in dispute. What are the real points in dispute? We may learn, from the origin of the contest, that the deity of Christ is

the chief of them. Yet, instead of candidly stating the deity of Christ as the point in debate, we are given to understand, that the disputed matter is the manner of the procession of the Son from the Father, and the manner in which the divine nature is united to the person of Christ. The phraseology of the first article will pass with careless readers for a recognition of the deity of Christ, yet, in reality, it excludes this doctrine. The person of Christ is supposed to be distinct from the divine nature. Christ is supposed to be possessed of the divine nature in the way in which Christians are partakers of the Spirit of God. This is not the godly simplicity and honesty recommended and exemplified by the apostles. Disputes about explanations of the incomprehensible things of God ought indeed to be avoided, because such explanations are forbidden, and are blasphemous. What is incomprehensible cannot be explained by examples. Should any man attempt to fathom and illustrate the doctrine of the Trinity, he would be guilty of temerity, impiety, and the most egregious trifling. We are to believe such things, not because we can understand them, but because God declares them. To attempt to gain credit to them by making them plain, is to affront God by supposing that what he reveals is not to be believed on his own testimony. What God deigns not to explain, it is blasphemous arrogance in man to attempt to explain. Attempts to explain the way in which God influences the human mind would indeed be unprofitable and vain. This subject ought to be avoided, not because it is matter of dispute, but because it is unrevealed. But is the reality of this

influence not to be taught, because the manner of it is inexplicable?

What is meant by “giving importance, not to the words, but to the spirit of the Gospel,” is to me as incomprehensible as any of the things referred to by the learned divines of Geneva. How do they know the spirit of the Gospel, but from its words? Is there an opposition between the words of a book and the meaning expressed by these words? Is there any danger that the words chosen by the Holy Spirit to express the Gospel, will lead to strife, while the spirit of those words begets peace and Christian charity? Had these pastors directed their reprehension against the silly affectation of those who make a point of conscience of using only scriptural words, their conduct would have been worthy of approbation. But, from the nature of the dispute, their intention must be wickedly to set the doctrines of Scripture at variance with the general spirit of peace and love which it exhibits. Now, the Scripture, instead of representing its doctrines as at variance with a spirit of love and peace, represents love and peace, and all holiness, as flowing from no other source than these doctrines. To make such a distinction, then, between the words and the spirit of the Gospel, is the work of Satan to destroy both.

In the preliminary remark, we find, that the pastors have been led to make this act from their being “im-bued with a spirit of humility, peace, and Christian charity,” &c. Now, Sir, how is humility concerned in the formation of these articles? Why, the subjects

referred to are so abstruse in their nature, that no humble-minded man can determine with confidence about them. Divines differ so much about these points, that humility forbids us to be confident. It is too assuming to say, that great divines could be in error. Is this humility? No, it is pride. It is paying a compliment to men at the expense of making God a liar; it is worshipping our own understanding at the expense of refusing submission to the divine testimony. Is it any want of humility to believe implicitly and confidently what God declares? Is it any want of humility to say that the man who contradicts God is a liar? Does the belief of the deity of Christ suppose that we can fathom the doctrine of the Trinity? Does the belief of the imputation of Adam's sin suppose that we are able to scrutinize the reasons of the divine procedure in this matter? Can we not give credit to the Judge of the whole earth that he acts righteously, although we cannot comprehend his unsearchable counsels? Does the belief of the operations of grace suppose that we are able to discern the way in which God acts on the mind? Does the belief of the creation of the world suppose that we have a conception of the way in which all things were formed out of nothing? Are we not to receive the kingdom of heaven as little children? And do children believe nothing on the word of their parents, unless they understand the nature of the things of which they are informed? Suppose an astronomer informs a peasant that the sun does not move round the earth, but that the earth moves round the sun; the latter cannot

comprehend how this can be. But cannot he know what the astronomer asserts on this point? Although he does not comprehend the doctrine taught, he knows, with the utmost confidence, what the astronomer teaches; namely, that the sun does not move round the earth as it appears, but that the earth moves round the sun contrary to appearance. Of the former he has no comprehension, and perhaps no belief; but, of the latter, the most enlightened philosopher cannot have a more confident conviction. Now, in what way will the peasant show humility of mind on this subject? Just in the very opposite way to that in which the Geneva pastors display their humility; not by the self-conceited arrogant assertion of ignorance, that the doctrine of the astronomer is false and impossible, because he does not understand it; but by declaring that the thing may be true, although a poor illiterate peasant cannot immediately comprehend it. If the self-conceit of the peasant is as great as his ignorance, like the Arian, he will confidently assert, that the doctrine of the astronomer is impossible. God testifies that there are three persons in the Godhead. What more is our business with respect to this divine assertion? Is it not to examine the Scriptures fully, whether such a doctrine is really taught; and, if we find it to be taught, to receive it with all confidence? To set about attempts to level the doctrine to our understanding, and suspend our belief on our ability to comprehend it, is the arrogance and rebellion of Satan. Is God worthy of credit no farther than we understand the things of which he testifies? Children give more credit to their parents; the ignor-

ant give more credit to the learned. Every man believes many things, the nature of which he does not comprehend.

Suppose the peasant, instead of directly affronting the astronomer, by denying the possibility of what he acknowledged him to teach, should deny that the astronomer made such an assertion, and should labour to explain his words in such a manner as not to imply the obnoxious doctrine, would not his conduct appear ridiculous and frantic? But this is the very thing which the Arians do. Though innumerable passages of Scripture clearly assert the doctrine of the Trinity—of original sin—of the influence of the Holy Spirit on the human mind, and of predestination—though these doctrines run through the whole texture of the divine word, and are fundamental to all that it teaches, the Arians are so mad as to deny that the Scriptures teach them. The conduct of Deists is not so absurd. They deny the Scriptures, because they contain the offensive doctrines; the Arians absurdly pretend to hold the Scriptures, while they deny all their peculiar doctrines.

Let us now glance at the spirit of peace and Christian charity with which the pastors tell us they are imbued. Christians ought indeed to follow peace with all men, and to love even their enemies. They ought to live peaceably, not only with Arians, but also with Deists and Atheists. But this does not require them to conceal any part of the counsel of God. The peace, however, and love to which the pastors refer, is that which ought to take place among Christians. To speak of peace and Christian

love, with respect to Arians, is the same as to inculcate it with respect to infidels and Atheists. That man cannot be a Christian who does not believe Jesus Christ to be what he asserted of himself. If Christ is God, that man cannot be a Christian who denies his godhead. But even among Christians the spirit of peace and love does not require Christians to compromise any part of the will of Christ. When there are differences of opinions among Christians, each should do what he judges to be the will of his heavenly Master. He is neither to judge for another, nor to enter into any unholy compact with him, mutually to abstain from teaching the things in which they differ. They ought to maintain peace and love, while each follows his own views of the will of Jesus. But what shall I say of a combination to maintain peace and love with God's enemies, at the expense of burying the truth that is salvation? Shall the soldiers of Christ spike their guns in the field of battle, lest they should batter down the fortresses of his enemies? When some, in the church of Corinth, denied the resurrection, Paul did not direct the church to maintain peace by avoiding that doctrine, but declares that it was to their shame to have such persons among them. On this occasion the apostle shows that he was not in the least imbued with that spirit of humility, peace, and Christian charity, that has powerfully operated on the pastors of Geneva. Had this church received instruction from the humble-minded, peaceful, and loving divines of Geneva, they would have been ordered to enter into a covenant to abstain from preaching either for or against the doctrines of the re-

surrection, with preliminary observations, importing the incomprehensible nature of the subject, and taking credit to themselves for the spirit of humility, peace, and Christian charity, that gave rise to the engagement. Indeed, the resurrection, as it respects identity of body, is as difficult to comprehend as the doctrine of the Trinity. But this was not Paul's method. Without any metaphysical disquisitions on the nature of personal identity, he declares, that to deny the resurrection, by implication is to deny the Gospel. In like manner, to deny the deity of Christ, is to deny the Gospel; for, if the Scriptures teach us that deity belongs to the person of Christ, to deny his deity, is to deny that Jesus is the Christ.

The compromise of the pastors of Geneva manifests on both sides a total disregard to candour, integrity, and the love of truth. If the Arians think they love truth, why did not zeal for it induce them to keep themselves unfettered in propagating their system? If they were honest men, would they bind themselves to conceal what it is of so much importance for the world to know? If they were lovers of truth, would they seek to advance her interests by equivocation and falsehood? Attachment to truth, even in philosophy, would not permit important discoveries to be kept in silence by their authors. Yet these Arians, who believe that the common opinion of Christians, with respect to the deity of Christ, is an error, and consequently that Christians in general are guilty of idolatry, bind themselves to silence on this all-important subject. With whatever spirit they are imbued, of the spirit of honesty and the love of

truth, they have not the smallest tincture. They see Christians, in their estimation, worshipping what is not truly God; yet they not only bind themselves to keep silence, but encourage the error by their shameful equivocations. Can such people hold up their faces as men of honour and integrity? If Christ is not God, why do they not cry aloud against giving the honours of Jehovah to a creature? Let Christians be called off from idolatry with the voice of thunder.

But what shall I say of ministers of evangelical sentiments, who bind themselves in this soul-destroying covenant? Do they not engage to be silent on the very subjects which Christ commands them to publish? When the doctrines excepted in the articles are excluded, there is no Christianity left. What is their gospel, when it does not include the deity of Christ? If Jesus is not God, his work can do nothing for sinners. Every act of obedience to God, of which his nature was capable, was due on his own account. What then is the *goodness* that these ungodly covenanters proclaim to a guilty world? If Jesus was not God, his sacrifice was of no more value than that of a sparrow, two of which were sold for a farthing. Of what use can be the preaching of such an atonement? Ah, shame, shame, ye have surrendered to the devil, and have obtained your liberty on parole that you will fight no more in the cause of the Saviour. Peter did indeed deny his Lord for a moment; but ye have deliberately bound yourselves never to serve him. May the Lord Jesus look on you, and give you the repentance of Peter! What

shall we think of one professing to be redeemed by the blood of Christ, entering into a covenant in which he binds himself not to publish the dignity of his Saviour? What would we think of the loyalty of a subject, who should bind himself never to own his sovereign? How can a Christian minister bind himself not to declare the glories of the person and work of his Saviour? How can his tongue keep silence on such a subject? Such a man certainly would not have endured persecution in the first days of Christianity. By silence, if not by idolatrous compliance, he would have avoided the offence of the cross.

But not only will his love of Jesus forbid a minister of the Gospel to submit to such articles, his love of sinners will lead to the same thing. He will not be withheld from declaring to men the guilt of their natures, and the grounds of the sufficiency of the atonement. The foundation of the hope of sinners, and the distinguishing glories of the Godhead, are to be seen no where else than in the manifestation of God by Jesus Christ. The Father is not to be known in any other way than by perceiving his glory in the person and work of his Son. He that hath not the Son, hath not the Father. The most glorious of the divine attributes, and the most important to the salvation of men, are not to be discovered any where but in the doctrine of the Gospel, regarding the Person and work of the Saviour. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son in his own person hath revealed him. God was manifest in the flesh, because Jesus possessed true deity. He that saw Jesus saw the Father; because he saw one who

displayed every attribute of Godhead: the wisdom and power of God are seen in the constitution of the person of Christ and his work, which in consequence of this he was enabled to perform, incomparably more fully than in the creation of the heavens and the earth. Perfect mercy, justice, and love to sinners, are seen no where else. Here is God seen to be infinitely merciful: not so the Arian god, whose mercy is a mixture of injustice and weak compassion, and extends only to those who deserve it. But in the incarnate God, infinite mercy grasps the chief of sinners. Here is pure mercy without merit on the part of man. Where do we find the perfection of the divine justice? Not in the Arian god, whose justice is tempered with mercy, and is limited and fettered a thousand ways. Not even in hell, in the eternal punishment of the damned, shall we find justice so fully displayed, as in the work of the incarnate God. Jesus gave justice all it could demand, so that now it secures the salvation of the redeemed as much as mercy itself. God is not only merciful to forgive, but he *is faithful and just* to forgive us our sins. Justice, instead of being reduced to the necessity of taking a part from the bankrupt, has received full payment, and guarantees his deliverance. On the other hand, if Jesus is not God, there is not a just God in heaven, if any sinner is saved. Where do we find infinite love to sinners? Not in the Arian god, for there is no point of view in which sinners are worthy of such love. But in the incarnate God, even the chief of sinners are perfectly worthy of the divine love, because they are not only perfectly inno-

cent, but have the righteousness of God itself. They who know not Christ, know not God in his scriptural character, for the glory of God shines in the face of Jesus Christ. Ah, shameful covenant! Are ye ministers of Jesus, who have bound yourselves not to declare the character of the God of the Scriptures? You have bound yourselves to conceal all the distinguishing glories of Jehovah. You have bound yourselves to conceal that view of the divine character, which is the only secure hope of the guilty. You have then bound yourselves to co-operate with Satan in the damnation of sinners. The arch-enemy of God and man has bribed you to neutrality. Awake, awake from your dreadful delusion! Break these accursed bonds! Proclaim the glories of your God and Saviour! Lift up your voice like a trumpet! Cry aloud, and spare not the schemes of treason! Take a look at the address of Paul to the elders of Ephesus, Acts xx. 17—31. Can you, like Paul, appeal to your hearers, that you have kept back nothing that is profitable? Have you not kept back every thing that could profit? Let this tremendous declaration of the apostle tingle in your ears. Carry it with you before the throne of God. Look at this address, and then look to the bar of Jesus. Is your conscience seared? Do ye defy the vengeance of the Almighty? Ye have bound yourselves to keep back the only things that can profit your hearers: their blood shall be on your heads. Can you, like Paul, take your hearers to witness, that ye have testified to all, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ? No, you have pledged your hands to the enemies of your master that ye will not preach

faith in him. Ye have bound yourselves to do the very reverse of what Paul did. Paul declares himself pure of the blood of all men, because he *shunned not to declare all the counsel of God*: Ye have bound yourselves to shun the whole counsel of God. Let no friend of Jesus put a hand to this covenant of iniquity. Let them not be ashamed of the testimony of Jesus. Let them remember the awful words of the Lord Jesus, “Whosoever shall be ashamed of *me, and of my words*, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father and of the holy angels.” Let them not fear the wrath of men. Hath not Jesus all power in heaven and on earth? The wrath of men, as far as he will allow it to appear, he will make to praise him: when it is not for his glory he will restrain it. Fear thou not them, even though they had power to kill the body. Read the letters to the seven churches of Asia. How exactly does Christ mark what his servants are doing. How greatly is he displeased with those who associate with seducers. “Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life,” Rev. ii. 10.

Yours, &c.

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