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OBJECTIONS
AGAINST THE
DOCTRINE OF THE METHODISTS;
ESPECIALLY SUCH AS ARE CONTAINED IN
A SERMON OF MR. WESLEY'S,
ENTITLED,
"THE ALMOST CHRISTIAN,"
CONSIDERED.

By ANDREW HAMILTON.

"And well prepar'd by ignorance and sloth,
By infidelity and love of world,
To make God's work a sinecure; a slave
To his own pleasures and his patron's pride.
From such Apostles, oh, ye mitred heads,
Preserve the Church! and lay not careless hands
On sculls that cannot teach, and will not learn."

COWPER.



Beware, therefore, lest that come upon you which is spoken of in the prophets; behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days; a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.

Acts xiii. 40, 41.

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James Little's Book
P R E F A C E.

Carraguit-tang

GREAT and numerous as have been the cavils and objections raised against the glorious and divine system of Christianity since the days of its first great Author, and his immediate successors the apostles, perhaps none have been more deeply prejudicial to its real interests, than those which have been broached and promulged by its professed and apparent friends; the reasons whereof are obvious: 1st, Such persons (especially if eminent in the church) have wide and extensive influence, and their doctrines, if adverse to the depths of christian experience, must unavoidably make considerable impressions upon their readers and hearers; I say, if adverse to the depths of christian experience, for we well know the extensive depravity of the human heart,

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and the force of the apostolic assertion, that *the carnal mind is enmity against God*; hence the unconverted man embraces with avidity whatever has a tendency to destroy or impair the excellent truths of christianity; while on the other hand, he is a fool and slow of heart to believe all that God has spoken by his prophets and apostles.

- 2dly, The generality of men being unable to distinguish for themselves the glorious lamp of divine truth from the dark lantern of error and infidelity, have unhappily learned to leave the discussion of these important questions to their c——, whom they naturally suppose must be the real friends of that religion of which they are the professed advocates, and by which they have their livelihood or livings, which you please; therefore men are usually off their guard when attacked with erroneous principles from the apparent friends of religion, and the professed advocates of revelation.—

Nor

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Nor are these observations merely speculative: we have multitudes of instances wherein the most glaring facts have amply demonstrated their awful truth.—Witness the dreadful frauds, the horrible deceptions, the known and wilful errors,—the dangerous heresies publicly taught and promulgated in a certain church, too well known to be named, for many ages; and whose stains, the revolutions of eternity itself will never obliterate; yet amidst all these pollutions of principles and practice, the influence of their c——y strikes us with astonishment.

These observations have arisen in my mind from the perusal of a pamphlet which a friend some time since put into my hands; and though I would incline to acquit its author of an intention to deviate from truth, or to mislead his readers, yet am I fully persuaded that either his ignorance of, or his inattention to the exalted privileges of a christian believer;—a partaker of the divine nature—hath led him to
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misrepresent the matter *in toto*, and engaged him in attempt (how far successful we shall see hereafter) to overturn one of the most masterly productions of our late venerable Father, and the whole body of doctrines as taught and believed among us.

If the spirits of just men made perfect, now in heaven, can possibly feel any sorrow, what must be the feelings of a Cranmer, Taylor, or Latimer, when so many of their successors at this day obstinately deny the doctrines for which *they* cheerfully bled and died: and engage themselves in a conspiracy little inferior to that on the continent, whose motto was, "*Crush the wretch.*" The system I now refer to, declares that all the advantages arising to us from the coming of Jesus Christ is, the establishing of a mere naked *moral* form, and the republication of the *religion of nature*.

These are awful times indeed. Such are the attempts of avowed infidels, and the
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affiduous efforts of the pretended friends of revelation, to banish all ideas of *experimental* religion out of the world, that each friend of the Redeemer should bring his little mite as he can, to cast into the treasury,—to own his Saviour before men, that he may be owned by him before his Father and the holy angels.

This pamphlet was penned a considerable time since, and thrown by; but, through the opinion of some respectable friends that it may be of some use, I give it to the public.

Notwithstanding the great number of our books that are in the world, 'tis astonishing how ignorant thousands are of the principles we hold. Many of the clergy themselves think we are Calvinists, and hate us on this account,—whilst others suppose we preach salvation by works, and take the crown from off the head of the Lord's anointed.

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. I have endeavoured in this piece to follow a mode rather new in our publications, and for the satisfaction of the friends of the reformation, have been at some trouble to produce plentiful quotations from authors of high respectability, to convince the candid enquirer after truth, that the doctrines as taught among our people are according to the form of sound words,—the Liturgy, Homilies, &c. and supported by the greatest lights these lands ever produced.

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OBJECTIONS, &c.

THE Objector commences his pamphlet thus, "There are none of Mr. Wesley's works more universally admired by his followers, or which they are more industrious to disperse, than his Sermon under the title of the "*Almost Christian.*" For this reason, a few remarks on this Sermon in particular will be desired by many, and may be attended with more general advantage. This mode of bringing his doctrines to light appears preferable to a systematical and less pointed display of them, for it admits of closer reasoning and less evasion, and will not take up so much time: besides the generality of readers can much better see the justice and conclusiveness of what is said on such things as lie immediately before their eyes, than they can understand the general refutation of a system, of which they may have but a confused notion, and for which they must search in a number of places."

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This is certainly a very curious method of bringing doctrines to the criterion; but such a plan answers the Objector extremely well, who seems to be better calculated to play upon words, and to make a few remarks upon a Sermon, than to bring doctrines properly to the light, and to display them in a systematical and pointed manner; and the generality of his admirers can more clearly see his *uncommon* learning, in hunting down a few expressions, and shewing his masterly skill in defining *expletives* and *compounds*, than in the refutation of a system, which neither he, nor any of his opinion, are by any means able to overturn.

Page 2. “ All Mr. Wesley’s peculiar tenets are comprized or glanced at in this Sermon, of which the following is the substance. He holds, that before we can be in favour with God, we must have a supernatural conviction of his wrath abiding on us. Next to this, he maintains that it is indispensably necessary to salvation, that we should be sensible of a direct impression from the Holy Spirit witnessing to us our pardon and the favor of God. He farther contends, that every person who has this impression is perfect, and that every person who has it not, is in a state of damnation.”

It being self-evident, that the Objector’s production is irregular and confused, I shall endeavour,



your, first, to follow him through his miscellaneous remarks, and then take notice of the doctrines contained in the above quoted passage, together with other points he has attempted to injure. Before I begin these remarks, I beg leave to mention one very capital mistake in the last quoted paragraph. He declares, that Mr. Wesley has taught, that every one, who has not a direct impression from the Holy Spirit; witnessing his pardon, is in a state of damnation.

Mr. W. indeed, constantly taught, if we died without that saving faith, mentioned in the Scriptures, and taught by the Reformers, we should then without doubt perish. But he never said to any one, as long as his probation continued, (altho' he had not obtained that living faith,) that he was in a state of damnation; but in this, as well as in many other parts of the publication, I may truly say,

Quo teneam vultus mutantem Protea nodo.

P. 2, 3. "Agrippa did not call himself an *almost christian*: he certainly was no such person, according to Mr. W.'s sense of the expression; and it is difficult to conceive in what sense he could be deemed one; for it does not appear that he ever professed christianity, and his life was very unbecoming that of a good christian. If a profligate, on hearing a good discourse, should declare to the preacher of it, that he was

almost persuaded by him to live well, it cannot be supposed that he would thereby call himself an almost good liver. This case is exactly parallel to the one before us: therefore, the appellation of an *almost christian* cannot be proved to be scriptural from the text: and if not, Mr. W. has chosen one which bears no relation to his subject."

Salvation by works, not only appears here to be the sentiment of the Objector, but in every page of his pamphlet. According to the system of doctrines in the Scriptures, a person who has lived in sin of the most enormous kind to the present moment, may be exhorted to repent. If this admonition is regarded, (through grace) they may then be intreated to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus it was with the woman caught in the very act of adultery. Thus with blaspheming and lying Peter, and thus with the trembling gaoler. Now, suppose Agrippa had been as bad as Magdalen, or Manasses, whilst he trembled, being deeply affected by sincere contrition, he was nearer, being a christian believer, than those who abstain from enormous and scandalous vices, comply with the outward ceremonies of the church, and plume themselves on decently performing their duties. The Objector does not seem to understand this important point of scripture, that if there could have been a
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law, whereby to obtain salvation, Jesus Christ would not have suffered. That by the works of the law no flesh living shall be justified. Unless our righteousness exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees, we cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. The Objector's parallel comes therefore to the dust; because Jesus came to save sinners, not the righteous: for the whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.

P. 3. "Nor is it to be supposed that it was St. Paul's intention in his reply to Agrippa, to call himself an altogether or perfect christian, for he never considered himself as having already attained perfection; but literally that he wished that all who heard him were not only in a small degree, but also in a high degree such as he was: that is, that they were as thoroughly convinced of the truth of christianity as he was, and that they lived suitably to it, at least as much as he did."

The Objector would endeavour to make the doctrine of christian perfection look awkward, if it lay in his power; but, indeed, his attempt is very trifling and weak. That St. Paul had attained to a very considerable degree of gospel perfection, even at this period, is very certain, and as easily proved. Though he speaks of himself in the most humiliating manner in general, (as was his bounden duty,) yet, when he

found it necessary; when evil-minded teachers attempted to injure his character, he could then tell us what he was, and unto what he had attained, by the grace of God. "For he never considered himself as having already attained perfection." The Objector is much mistaken in this unguarded assertion. He was so strong in the Lord, he could do all things through Christ strengthening him. St. Paul spoke wisdom among some of his hearers that were perfect; and others that were not so far advanced, he exhorted to go on to perfection. Heb. 6. 1.

Ibid. "Mr. W. has taken no pains to illustrate his text, but we see his construction of it by the inference he draws from it; which is made thus, in the second sentence of his Sermon; "Seeing it avails nothing before God to go only thus far, it highly imports us to consider first, what is implied in being an *almost*, secondly, in being an *altogether Christian*. Every part of this sentence is objectionable."

Objections to such honest dealings and sound divinity, are cultivated only among men like the Objector, who blow the trumpet with an uncertain sound,—continue to preach smooth things to the people,—affright them from looking after genuine religion, by branding it with the hideous names of enthusiasm and hypocrisy. What availed all the fastings and efforts of those mentioned
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by the prophets, who came before the Lord as his people, and seemingly worshipped him in sincerity, whilst their hearts were far from him? What availed the good character and morality of the rich young man, when he would not forsake all and follow Christ? What availed the regularity and outside form of religion in the foolish virgins? Had they not much good in them? And, according to the Objector, ideas of the gospel, were highly rewardable, "for every good disposition must avail something:"—Contrary to the doctrine of the Bible, and church of England, which informs us, that all works done before justification, and the inspiration of the Spirit, are unacceptable; inasmuch as they do not proceed from a lively faith. Was it not, therefore, equitable in Mr. W. as a genuine minister of the gospel, to point out to the world, the distance they might go in natural religion and mere morality, and not be possessed of that principle, which constitutes them real christians, in the esteem of the most High? For it is not every one that says, Lord, Lord, or even has the permission to minister in holy things, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but they that fully do his will.

P. 4. "Thus his first setting out gives us no favourable opinion of his whole subject; for it is not to be supposed, that a structure built so hastily,

tily, on so weak a foundation, can have either beauty or strength. Perhaps we shall be confirmed in this idea, when we shall have considered the character of the *almost* and of the *altogether christian*, with the extraordinary distinction made between them, and the ground of it."

Mr. W. thus, setting out on the real gospel plan of salvation, by faith through Jesus Christ, could not but be as a thorn in the side of worthless pastors, who do all their works to be seen of men; who outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Shepherds that eat the fat, and clothe them with the wool; they kill and are fed; but they feed not the flock. As Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.

In the early days of christianity, the gospel doctrines were opposed strenuously by the learned. At every period when the unadulterated gospel was about to revive, the Scribes and Pharisees, together with the rulers of the people have consulted, What! ye do nothing, whilst all the nation follows after him! To this day the same principle holds good. The foundation which Mr. W. has laid, and the structure built thereon, has both beauty and strength, if the Bible and the doctrines of the reformation be true.

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To a man like the Objector, who considers christianity as a cold philosophical assent to a few propositions in the gospel, evident before the gospel was divulged, "the whole of religion to consist in attendance at fashionable places of public worship, and to be found among the fashionable contributors to public charity, (whilst many of the necessitous very near them are disregarded, and pining away in penury,)" I do not at all wonder that he hates the real foundation-stone, and rails against that doctrine that gives all the glory to God.

P. 4, 5. "The character which he gives the former is so excellent, that we should imagine he had mistaken the order he had prescribed himself, and had begun with a description of the *altogether christian*; for he appears to represent in the first place, the perfection of christian piety and virtue. The character of the other, though very high strained, does not command our admiration in near an equal degree; for it appears inferior to the former, so far as piety and virtue in idea are inferior to the same, exemplified by a good and useful life."

Mr. W. well considered the order he laid down, and most excellently adhered to the same; but jealous evangelists never fail to represent as deceivers and novices, the true ministers of the gospel, causing the truest piety and genuine doctrine

doctrine to wear the semblance of enthusiasm and folly. " For it appears inferior to the former, so far as piety and virtue in idea are inferior to the same, exemplified by a good and useful life." Nay! but as piety and virtue flowing from a living faith, and Jesus in us the hope of glory, is superior to washing the outside of the cup and platter, and wearing phylacteries round our necks.

P. 9. " He passes a solemn declaratory sentence on the *almost christian* in those words: The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who now standeth in the midst of us, knoweth, that if any man die without this faith and this love, good it were for him that he had never been born."

The Objector has told us what was the original ground on which those last words were spoken, namely, the sentence held out to the traitor Judas. " In this place he decidedly excludes the *almost christian* from the kingdom of heaven." And so does Jesus Christ, who declares, that unless we are converted, and become as little children, we shall in no ways enter into the kingdom of heaven. And so does St. Paul, who asserts, that it is not by works of righteousness, as of ourselves, that we are to be saved, but by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.

Ibid.

Ibid. "It cannot be urged in Mr. W.'s excuse, that he illustrates his theory hypothetically, by putting an imaginary case." No! he does not act like the false prophets of old, and in these present days, who heal the hurt of the people slightly, and cry peace, when God has not said it. He has acted like the honest Nathan, and said, *Thou art the man*. He did not act like a certain clergyman in London some time ago, who mentioned, unless the people would repent, they would go to a place which he had too much manners to mention to them. He did not act like many, who, after descanting on some of the leading evils of the day, their almost constant method is to say, Brethren, we hope better things of you, and things that accompany salvation: when many present directly answer the description so far justly drawn, who perhaps may feel a little on the occasion, but from such encouragement go comfortably on in their vicious course of life.

P. 6. "He says, he was himself, at one time, that extraordinary person who went so far for many years, as to the perfection he attributes to the *almost christian*. If he had died then, on his own account, he could not have been saved: yet in that state, which he now thinks was a damnable one, he might, in opposition to St. Paul's

Paul's opinion, have challenged justification by his works."

Well has the Apostle said, the natural man 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. How little does the Objector seem to know, concerning the difference between works that flow from a changed heart, invigorated by grace, and mere dry pharisaical performances. Was not St. Paul a very moral man before his conversion? He verily was an *almost christian* as well as Mr. W. Hear what he says, 'My manner of life from my youth, which was at first among my own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews, which knew me from the beginning, that after the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee. Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God unto this day. Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.' Now, notwithstanding he went thus far in morality, he was not then an *altogether christian*; nor was he esteemed such in the esteem of God, or his own conscience, until he believed on the Lord Jesus Christ with his heart unto righteousness.

Ibid. "Let us consider a little more fully the character of the person, who is shut out from the kingdom of heaven, and consequently delivered
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over to weeping and gnashing of teeth. He is one whose christian piety and virtue is superior to that possessed by any person since the Son of God made his appearance in the world; to whom repentance seems unnecessary for any bad action committed, for any good one omitted, or for any remissness whatsoever in the performance of duty."

Be astonished, O ye Heavens! and give ear, O Earth! Here is a gentleman, under the character of a christian, with consummate confidence, recommending unto us the fashionable doctrines of Rousseau and Voltaire. Could we not produce from the writings of heathen moralists, such as Pythagoras, Socrates, or Plato, nearly as perfect a picture of exterior sanctity, as that mentioned by Mr. W. as characteristic of the *almost christian*? How clearly did the Apostle prophesy concerning these times, when men would not bear sound doctrine! Is it not strange to hear a person who pretends to believe in Jesus, declare, that there could be a character that stood not in need of repentance, for any bad action committed, for any good one omitted, or for any remissness whatsoever in the performance of duty? The Objector seems to be in the mistake of the Jews, who were contemporary with St. Paul. 'For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their

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own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God.' Rom. x. 3.

Ibid. "The *almost christian* is endued with all the negative virtues. He is honest and true in all his dealings. He does nothing which the Gospel forbids; he sweareth and curseth not; he profanes not the day of the Lord, nor suffers it to be profaned. He not only avoids all actual adultery, but every thing of that tendency. He avoids all idle words and detraction, all conversation that is not good, to the use of edifying. He abstains from excess in eating and drinking. He avoids all strife and contention. He avengeth not himself, neither returns evil for evil. He is no railer, brawler, or scoffer at the faults or infirmities of his neighbour. He does not hurt or grieve any man, does nothing to any man which he would not have done towards himself. In the next place, he is endued with all the positive virtues. He has the form of godliness prescribed in the gospel of Christ. He labours with all his might to promote the good of all men, of friends and enemies; of their souls as well as their bodies. He reproveth the wicked, instructs the ignorant, confirms the wavering, quickens the good, and comforts the afflicted. He labours to awaken those that sleep; to lead those whom God has already awakened, to the fountain opened to wash away sin, and to excite them

them to adorn the gospel of Christ in all things. He uses all the means of grace, and at all opportunities; his whole deportment speaks nothing presuming, nothing else but God be merciful to me a sinner. Farther, he does all this with sincerity, and is actuated with a sincere view of pleasing God in all things. Sincerity of design runs through the whole tenor of his life; this is the moving principle, both in his doing good, his abstaining from evil, and his using the ordinances of God."

The above is Mr. W.'s most excellent and well-executed picture of an *almost christian*, (for which, as also for his other numerous pieces, divinely calculated to awaken those that are asleep in their sins,—to strip the Pharisee of his sancted righteousness,—to build up the believer in his most holy faith,) millions are indebted unto him under God. The description of the *almost christian*, undoubtedly goes a great length; but no farther than the Scripture and the authority of the church of England has allowed. Mr. W.'s portrait of an *almost christian*, just comes up to that department, in the process of the work of God on the soul, represented in a symbolical manner, by the prophet Ezekiel, in his vision of the valley of dry bones; where after bone came to his bone, and all the skeleton was covered with nerves, sinews, flesh, and skin, what did all this avail

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until the spirit was breathed on them? Morality may certainly exist without internal religion; but inward real piety cannot subsist without morality, and being conformed to the letter of the law. Let any man that wishes for more information on this point, read the Sermons of the prophets to many of the moral Jews,—of our Saviour and his Apostles to the Scribes and Pharisees. Let him consider St. Paul's own experience. Let him look to the 13th of 1st Corinthians, and then he may see, if he will, that a man may go thus far, and be only a tinkling cymbal and sounding brass. I beg leave to recommend to the Objector's notice an extract from a charge delivered to the clergy of a certain diocese, at the visitation by the bishop, which is much to the purpose, and very clearly elucidates the point in hand. ' My brethren, I beg you will rise up with me against *moral preaching*. We have long been attempting the reformation of the nation by discourses of this kind. With what success? None at all! On the contrary, we have dexterously preached the people into downright infidelity. We must change our voice. We must preach Christ and him crucified. Nothing but the Gospel is, nothing will be found to be, the power of God unto salvation besides. Let me therefore again and again request, may I not add, let me *charge* you to preach Jesus, and salvation through his name.

name. Preach the Lord who bought us ; preach redemption through his blood ; preach the saying of the great High Priest, he who believeth shall be saved ; preach repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.'

P. 7. " And now, how is our astonishment excited, when we see an insinuation, that, even under the merciful dispensation of the Gospel, all those endeavours avail nothing before God ; when we see it positively asserted in a solemn asseveration, wherein the Almighty is called to be a witness, that as the *almost christian* is still supposed to be destitute of certain impressions from the spirit, good it were for him that he had never been born."

The merciful dispensation of the Gospel, is, in general, esteemed as a ground for more extensive iniquity than former dispensations, rather than a bringing of life and immortality to light, and additional holiness and purity to the human mind. How cruel is the sin of soul-murder ! What miserable consequences proceed from the building of unskilful workmen in the church of Jesus ! As the Almighty complained of the worthless pastors in the Jewish church of old, so may he on much better ground complain now, ' His watchmen are blind : they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark ; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they

are greedy dogs, which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand; they all look to their own way, every one for his gain from his quarter.' Isa. lvi. 10, 11. By this latitudinarian system, Christ Jesus is made the minister of sin,—we may continue in sin, that grace may abound. How many precious desires are destroyed, how many beginnings of amendment nipped in the bud, by the ill-timed effeminacy of these modern men-pleasers in divinity?

• “ Shall Heav'n that gave us ardor, and has shewn
Her own for man so strongly, not disdain
What smooth emollients in theology,
Recumbent virtue, downy doctors preach
That prose of piety, a lukewarm praise !”

The holy Scriptures inform us, if we have not the spirit of Christ, we are none of his. Christ has told us, that unless we are converted, and become as little children, we shall not enter into the kingdom of God. Mr. W. on this authority, has declared, the *almost christian* shall only be almost saved, i. e. altogether lost.

P. 8. “ We are now to consider what has been said of the *altogether christian*. This title is of great importance, for it implies perfection; yet Mr. W. makes no attempt to justify it, but assumes it without proof. If it be enquired, says he, what more is implied in being altogether
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a christian? I answer, first, the love of God,—such a love, as employs the utmost extent of all the faculties of the soul. Secondly, the love of our neighbour, and one thing more, which is faith!”

That it is of the utmost importance to become an altogether, or genuine Gospel believer, will be readily granted by every serious enquirer after truth. If Mr. W. has not so profusely quoted divine authority in his description of the *altogether christian*, in the above sentence; he has introduced a great plenty of scripture proofs in his numerous writings, to establish in the most unshaken manner the doctrines at present referred to. In the above quoted sentences, Mr. W. has presented to our view the substance of Gospel religion. His method, in general, is very clear, and his manner quite succinct, often mentioning a world of matter in a few words. Mr. W. here draws a beautiful picture of the superstructure of religion. The love of God employing the utmost extent of all the faculties of the soul, and the loving our neighbour as ourselves.—On these two points hang the Law and the Prophets. That he might prevent superficial christians from supposing they were genuine believers, by their paying a strict regard to rites and ceremonies, and walking in the letter of the law blameless, he boldly and scripturally affirms, that it is by
faith

faith working by love, and not by our own righteousness, that we are to be brought into the favor of God. 'Every one,' saith the beloved disciple, 'that believeth, is born of God. As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.' Yea, our Lord himself declares, 'he that believeth in the Son hath everlasting life: and cometh not into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.' "But here let no man deceive his own soul. It is diligently to be noted, the faith which bringeth not forth repentance and love, and all good works, is not that right living faith which is here spoken of; but a dead and devilish one. For even the devils believe, that Christ was born of a virgin, that he wrought all kind of miracles, declaring himself very God: That for our sakes he suffered a most painful death, to redeem us from death everlasting: That he rose again the third day; that he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father, and at the end of the world shall come again to judge both the quick and the dead. These articles of our faith the devils believe, and so do they believe all that is written in the Old and New Testaments. And yet for all this faith they be but devils. They remain still in their damnable estate,

estate, lacking the very true christian faith." Hom. Sal. Man.

P. 8. "Certainly a man must be perfect in all these respects, before he can be an *altogether christian*; but how can it be implied from our granting this, that there is any such person?"

Here again the Objector turns to his darling theme of salvation by works, plainly intimating by our own power, &c. &c. we are to love God and our neighbour, and then we shall be altogether christians, ~~Not considering the Scriptures~~ and the homilies of the church, which positively assert we must first be converted to God, before we can do any thing that can be essentially pleasing to Almighty God. "But how can it be implied from our granting this, that there is any such person." It may not only be implied, but also proved from almost every part of the word of God, that there have been such persons as Abel, Moses, David, Daniel, Zechariah, and Elizabeth, &c. And as our dispensation is not in a declination to darkness, but rather life and immortality more fully coming to light by the preaching of the gospel, we may safely conclude there are such persons still. To love the Lord our God with all our strength, with all our heart, and with all our mind, and our neighbour as ourselves, in the esteem of Christ is the sum total of religion. Now that there are certain persons who

who do thus extensively love God and their neighbours, plainly appears from hence. It is the command of God we should do so. If then the matter is not possible, and grace not sufficient to effect this great work, the command of Christ whom we esteem as a benign and merciful Saviour, would be more cruel than the bloody mandate of a Nero, or Domitian.

Ibid. "The Scriptures exhort us to love God with all our heart and strength, and to love our neighbour as ourselves; but they no where say that any man does, or can do either in perfection; but in a number of places they say the direct contrary."

Mr. W. according to the form of sound words, exhorts the believer to love God with all his heart and mind, he does not mean we should do this with Angelic ardour, or Adamic perfection, according to his primeval state of innocence; but as St. Peter expresses it, 'As he that hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.' According to this Apostle then, perfection is another name for universal holiness: inward and outward righteousness, holiness of life, arising from holiness of heart. 'Tis something strange, that one of the most blessed passages relative to inward holiness is introduced,—and an acknowledgement, that the Scriptures exhort us to this holiness, and then in the most peremptory

peremptory manner to declare, that there is no such thing to be obtained. How conversant in divinity must the Objector be, when he introduces parts of Scripture to prove, there is no such thing as that inward holiness, mentioned in the above passage, that either relates to the innate depravity, occasioned by the original transgression, or passages that belong to the dark dispensation of the Mosaical institution?—His first reference 2 Chron. vi. 36. ‘If they sin against thee’ (for there is no man that sinneth not). These words are a part of a solemn prayer offered by Solomon at the dedication of the temple. Now there can be nothing taken from these words to serve the Objector’s purpose on any account. For first, the meaning of the words plainly appears to be,—There is no man that hath not sinned. This fully appears from v. 38. ‘If they return to thee with all their heart and soul, then hear thou from the Heavens, even from thy dwelling place, and forgive the people which have sinned against thee’. When they returned to God with all their heart and soul, did they continue in their habits of evil as usual? Moreover the darkness of the dispensation was such, that many things were allowable then, and continued to be so, until the bringing in of a more spiritual commandment, under the New Testament dispensation. 2d reference, Psal. ciii. 14. ‘For he knoweth our frame: He remembereth

remembereth we are dust.' What a masterly stroke to prove, that it is not possible to love God with all our heart?—That there can be no such thing as to be perfect, in our degree, as our Father which is in Heaven is perfect?—Another reference is Prov. xx. 9. 'Who can say I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin.' The Objector seems to incline to this presumption in a very considerable manner, who denies the doctrine of salvation by faith, who declares concerning an almost christian, that "repentance seems not to be necessary for any bad action committed, for any good one omitted, or for any remissness whatsoever in the performance of duty." If the Objector will take the pains to open his Bible, I will point him to the person, who by faith in Jesus Christ, has obtained a clean heart, and in an evangelic sense, is made pure from his sin. Vid. Psal. xv. from the beginning to the end.

Ibid. Eccles. vii. 20. 'For there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good, and sinneth not.' Observe, this was the dark dispensation:—but now it is said, whosoever is born of God, committeth not sin; he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not. But not to take advantage of this, I am of opinion we can prove, that the just person spoken of by Solomon, was rather a morally honest

nest man, than one that delighted in the law of God, after the inner man, according to his dispensation. Job lived under this dispensation, and yet in the esteem of God, he was a perfect and an upright man, one that feared God, and eschewed evil. He was not only a just man, morally honest, as many of the Scribes and Pharisees were, but he believed in Jesus, and knew by divine assurance his Redeemer lived. Thus we are told after all his unprecedented trials, 'In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.' Job i. 22.

Ibid. Matt. xix. 17. 'And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God:—What absurdities will men run into to defend an untenable point! What has the above quoted passage to do with the doctrine before us? The meaning of the passage is, there is none good, supremely, originally, essentially, but God: But does this imply there are none good in their degree by grace thro' faith? Do we not read of a good man bringing forth good things from the good treasure of his heart? Is it not said of Barnabas, that he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith? For scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

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Ibid.

Ibid. Rom. iii. 23. ' For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.'—Tell it not in Gath, nor publish it in Askelon ! A passage used by the Apostle, to prove our universal depravity, and the necessity of flying to God for mercy, to be produced as a proof that there is no such thing as to love God with all our hearts, and to walk in his commandments blameless !

I shall now mention a great variety of passages, from which it is very clear that it is our undoubted privilege by the grace of God, (in a gospel sense) to love the Lord with all our heart, and our neighbour as ourselves. Gen. vi. 9. Ibid. xvii. 1. Job viii. 20. Psal. xxxvii. 37. Matt. v. 48. Ibid. xix. 21. John xvii. 23. 1 Cor. ii. 6. 2 Cor. xiii. 11. Eph. iv. 13. Heb. xiii. 21. James iii. 2. 1 John iv. 18.

Ibid. " There may be perfect knowledge of some things, but perfect faith, or belief, is an improper expression."

Of what things may there be perfect knowledge on this side the grave ? Upon what object in Heaven, or Earth, can we turn our acutest enquiry, and not discover the incompetency, blindness, and vanity of the human understanding ? In thought, in will, in motion, in a ray of light, and a grain of sand, the most philosophic mind is absorbed in unfathomable depth. The philosophic

phic ministers of the day take peculiar pains to exalt the powers and abilities of man, and by the most untired efforts to overthrow the system of revelation.—With regard to knowlege it is first, *Natural*. Rom. i. 21. Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened; professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.—Behold in the opinion of Almighty God, a picture of perfect knowledge!—second, *Artificial*. Exod. xxxv. 31. And he hath filled him (Bezaleel) with the spirit of God in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowlege, and in all manner of workmanship,—third, *Legal*. Rom. iii. 20. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowlege of sin. In this sense of the word there is a perfection in knowlege, so far as it goes. For every perfect gift cometh from God:—but the grace whereby we see the spiritual nature of the commandment, comes from God alone, therefore, this knowlege in this part of the process of the work of salvation, is perfect knowlege,—fourth, *Evangelical*. 2 Cor. ii. 14. Now, thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the favor of his knowlege by us in every place. In this sense of the word more fully than in the

last mentioned, is knowlege perfect. Thus, I acknowledge the propriety of the expression, knowlege being perfect in every sense, as it appears to be the immediate gift of God, from its earliest operation, until it comes to the fullest measure of the knowlege of salvation, and the sanctification of all our nature. But in the sense that the Objector understands it, I deny that there is any such thing as perfect knowlege. Vid. Rom. i. 21. "But perfect faith or belief is an improper expression." According to the method I have explained knowlege, I prove there is perfect faith. Not only faith in the most sanctified believer is perfect faith, but in its first process on the heart of the weakest believer it is perfect: for faith is the gift of God, and every gift of God is perfect. Faith is mentioned among the fruits of the spirit, Gal. v. Now can we suppose an imperfect work to be performed by the great author of harmony and order? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works? and by works was faith made perfect, James ii. 22.

P. 9. "When he describes more particularly the faith which is to constitute a man an *altogether christian*, he in the same manner as before assumes in his premises what ought to be the conclusion. Whoever, says he, has this faith, which purifies the heart—from all unrighteousness, from all filthiness of flesh and spirit. But the Apostles predicate

predicate of no man that he is purified from all unrighteousness, from all filthiness of flesh and spirit: They only exhort us to this purification."

If the doctrine of salvation by works, was the doctrine of the gospel, the Objector's ideas of premises and conclusions would be tolerably orthodox.—But as this is not the doctrine of the Scripture, I take upon me most positively to declare, the proposition to be both illogical, and inorthodox. The Church of England says, The only instrument of salvation (whereof justification is one branch) is faith: that is, a sure trust and confidence, that God both hath and will forgive our sins, that he hath accepted us again into his favor, for the merits of Christ's death and passion. See Ser. Passion.

From hence it appears, that Mr. W.'s premises and conclusions are perfectly right, if the gospel be true, and if the doctrines of the reformation will stand the test—which declare, all works done before justification, and the inspiration of the spirit are unacceptable, (and for what reason?) because they proceed not from a lively faith.

" But the Apostles predicate of no man that he is purified from all unrighteousness, from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, they only exhort us to this purification." 'Tis possible the Objector

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had

had his friend Horace before him, when he penned this sentence :

“ *Naturam expellas furcâ, tamen usque recurret,
Et mala perrumpet furtim fastidia victrix.*”

Hor. Epist. Lib. 1.

How childish it is to tell us we are exhorted to purification, and then to inform us, there is no such thing to be obtained. The Objector is exactly of the same sentiments with Virgil ; both perfectly agree there must be a place of purification, after we leave this life. God has declared, that without holiness of heart we shall not see his face ; but if we are not cleansed from all unrighteousness here, we must consequently be cleansed in another world, before we can enter into glory.

“ *Quin et supremo cum lumine vita reliquit,
Non tamen omne malum miseris, nec funditus
omnes*

*Corporeæ excedunt pestes ; penitusque necesse est
Multa diu concreta modis inolescere miris.*

*Ergo exercentur pœnis, veterumque malorum
Supplicia expendunt. Aliæ panduntur inanes
Suspensæ ad ventos : aliis sub gurgite vasto
Infectum eluitur scelus, aut exuritur igni.*

Vir. Æm. L. 6. L. 735.

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The Apostle in the 6th of 1st Corinthians, draws up a dreadful catalogue of sins and transgressions of the law, and then says, 'Such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.' 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' 1 John i. 9. '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.' Ezek. xxxvi.

P. 12. "If a man may be permitted upon any occasion to deal out judgments, they should be directed against the perpetrators of known wickedness, and against such as are positively condemned in the word of God. Does Mr. W. observe those self-evident rules? So far from it, that he supposes the condemned christian free from every thing we call vice; and he does not attempt to shew that such a person is even mentioned in the word of God. But though this point required the clearest proof, if ever any thing did, yet he contents himself with this simple assertion."

Mr. W. looked upon himself as not only permitted; but a necessity was laid upon him to preach the gospel as it is in Jesus, and not in the fashionable effeminacy of the present times. He therefore

therefore took up the sword of the Spirit, with its two edges, to convince (under God) the audaciously impure, and to cut in sunder the vain sophistry of wretched formalists, and mere pharisees. Did not our Lord deal out his threatenings more against the pretended christians of his day, the Scribes and Pharisees, than against open sinners? These Pharisees like certain persons now-a-days, had substituted human traditions in the room of God's word, affected to make a great show of religion in outward things; but were proud, covetous, unjust, superstitious. After all their morality, and being *almost christians*, against whom does he deal out his judgments more frequently? Matth. xxiii. 26. Luke xxiii. 13. Was the man that concealed his talent a perpetrator of open and known wickedness? Was the person who came to the feast, to whom it was said, Friend, how camest thou hither, not having the wedding garment, a perpetrator of known wickedness?

Conscious of these, and such like awful truths, Mr. W. sounded the trumpet of alarm. Many moral ones believed the report, fled from their self-righteousness, have taken shelter in the wounds of Jesus, and found him to be the Lord their righteousness. Jesus has declared, that publicans and harlots, the vilest of the people, (upon sincere contrition,) shall enter into the kingdom

kingdom of heaven before the proud, unmortified formalist.

P. 13. "As he does not tell us here what he means by experience, we must therefore collect it from his other writings. In them we read of a two-fold experience, which has already been described when we spoke of his peculiar doctrines: first; a supernatural conviction of the wrath of God; and next, a direct impression from the Holy Spirit, witnessing to him his pardon."

The Objector tells us of a supernatural conviction of the wrath of God, and does not inform us what he means by it; nor does he bring in one argument to convince us there is no such thing. In order to understand this important doctrine aright, it behoves us to premise a few things. The Scriptures inform us, that man was originally formed in the image of the Lord, in righteousness and true holiness. But short, very short, indeed, was his continuance in this estate of innocence. According to the word of the Lord, the moment our first parents committed sin, they died: 'For in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die,' Gen. ii. 17. Now we are certain, that tho' animal death is the consequence of the transgression of the Law, given to man in his innocence, that it was not the death immediately following the disobedience

disobedience of the commandment; but an extinction of that holiness and innocence, in which he was originally created. Hence the writers of our Articles very pertinently explain it.

Original Sin standeth not in the following of Adam, (as the Pelagians do vainly talk,) but it is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit, and therefore in every person born into this world it deserveth God's wrath and damnation. Art. 9.

This is the uniform doctrine of the word of God, and though I could fill up pages with the bare mentioning of texts, in proof of the same, I shall content myself with a quotation from the second part of Hom. Mis. of Man, to shew that in the estimation of our Reformers, there is a necessity for that part of experience; namely, a conviction that every person in his natural estate deserveth God's wrath, &c.

“ Thus we have heard how evil we be of ourselves, how of ourselves, and by ourselves, we have no goodness, help, nor salvation, but contrariwise, sin, damnation, and death everlasting; which, if we deeply weigh and consider, we shall the better understand the great mercy of
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of God, and how our salvation cometh *only* by Christ. For in ourselves (as of ourselves) we find nothing whereby we may be delivered from this miserable captivity, into the which we were cast through the envy of the devil, by breaking of God's commandment in our first parent Adam. We are all become unclean, but we are not able to cleanse ourselves. We are by nature the children of God's wrath, but we are not able to make ourselves the children and inheritors of God's glory. We are sheep that ran astray, but we cannot of our own power come again to the sheepfold; so great is our imperfection and weakness. In ourselves, therefore, we may not glory, which (of ourselves) are nothing but sinful."

Archbishop Cramer, in a piece entitled, *Necessary Erudition for a Christian Man*, observes, besides many other evils that came by the fall of man, the high power of men's reason and freedom of will were wounded and corrupted; and all men thereby brought into such blindness and infirmity, that they cannot eschew sin, except they be illuminated and made free by an especial grace, that is to say, by a *supernatural help and working of the Holy Ghost*. It is upon this ground that the Apostles, Primitive Fathers, the Reformers, and Mr. W. have insisted on the *experience of conviction*; which I hope every reasonable man will perceive from the above quotations; cannot

cannot be produced by our own power, and of consequence must be supernatural.

After shewing on what ground this doctrine is established, I shall endeavour to cast some light upon this point, which the Objector and many others strive to explode.

A beautiful writer says, "Towards making and forming a christian, if supernatural assistance of the divine Spirit was necessary at the beginning of the Gospel, I do not see what should render it less necessary at any time since, nor why it may not be expected now." From hence it is, that every gospel minister declares, The condition of man, after the fall of Adam, is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and good works to faith, and calling upon God. Art. 10. At the same time declaring, that Jesus Christ the Head of the Church has sent the Comforter to convince the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. From whence do such convictions as these flow, when felt in the heart, and confessed with our lips?—We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against thy holy laws. We have done those things which we ought not to have done; And there is no health in us. We acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, which we from time to time most grievously have committed, by thought,
word

word and deed, against thy divine Majesty, provoking most justly thy wrath and indignation against us. We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us; the burthen of them is intolerable.

“ For when men feel in themselves the heavy burden of sin, see damnation to be the reward of it, and behold with the eyes of their mind the horror of hell, they tremble, they quake, and are inwardly touched with sorrowfulness of heart for their offences, and cannot but accuse themselves, open this their grief unto Almighty God, and call upon him for mercy. This being done seriously, their mind is so occupied, partly with sorrow and heaviness, partly with an earnest desire to be delivered from this danger of hell and damnation, that all desire of meat and drink is laid apart, and loathsomeness of all worldly things and pleasures cometh in place, so that nothing then liketh them more than to weep, to lament, to mourn, and both with words and behaviour of body to show themselves weary of this life.”

1. P. Hom. Fas.

We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works or deservings. Wherefore, that we are justified by

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faith

faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort. Art. 11.

Works done before the grace of Christ, and the inspiration of his Spirit, are not pleasant to God, forasmuch as they spring not of faith in Jesus Christ. Art. 13.

For all the good works we can do, be imperfect, and therefore not able to deserve our justification: but our justification doth come freely by the mere mercy of God. 1 P. Hom. Sal. Man.

And after this wise to be justified only by this true and lively faith in Christ, speak all the old and antient authors, both Greeks and Latins. Of whom I will especially rehearse three, Hilary, Basil, and Ambrose. Saint Hilary saith these words plainly in one of his canons upon Matthew, faith only justifieth. And Saint Basil, a Greek author, writeth thus, ' This is a perfect and whole rejoicing in God, when a man advanceth not himself for his own righteousness, but acknowledgeth himself to lack true justice and righteousness, and to be justified by the only faith in Christ.' Saint Ambrose saith, ' This is the ordinance of God, that they which believe in Christ should be saved without works, by faith only, freely receiving remission of their sins.' Consider diligently these words, without works by faith only, freely we receive remission of our sins.

ans. We read the same in Origen, Saint Chrysostome, Saint Cyprian, Saint Augustine, Prosper, Oecumenicus, Proclus, Bernardus, Anselme, &c. 2 P. Hom. Sal.

From what has been said, I am of opinion, that every man who wishes to be saved will see, that the experience of conviction and saving faith, are absolutely requisite to bring us fully into the favor of God.

Ibid. " But if his doctrines were found or scriptural, he need not have been reduced to defend it by an argument, the bare mention of which gives us just reason to suspect him of fanaticism. For experience has been the plea of every fanatic in every age, both in the heathen and christian world; and hypocrites have equally pretended to it."

Mr. W.'s doctrine is both found and scriptural; nor is he reduced to experience alone to defend the same. Whosoever will candidly and impartially read his numerous works, will find the most satisfactory proofs for all he says: but at the same time it is most assuredly certain, that no man can properly defend the doctrines of the Bible, (with regard to the benefits there declared to be the privilege of believing souls,) but he that hath obtained experimental religion. The outward testimony of the truth of the Gospel is certainly a very strong one; but yet it is found

insufficient without the inward testimony. The best understandings have remained unconvinced by the outward testimony; while the meanest have been fully persuaded by the co-operation of the inward—the divine irradiation of the Holy Ghost shining upon and giving lustre to the letter of revelation. “The bare mention of which gives us just reason to suspect him of fanaticism.” How easy it is to call out fanaticism, assumption, without proof, &c. &c. Having obtained mercy from God, and having had his eyes opened to behold the wonders of God’s law; Mr. W. like Paul of old, desired most affectionately to persuade his countrymen, to be reconciled to the Lord.

“By him, the violated law speaks out
 Its thunders, and by him, in strains as sweet
 As angels use, the Gospel whispers peace,
 He stablishes the strong, restores the weak,
 Reclaims the wanderer, binds the broken heart,
 And arm’d himself in panoply complete
 Of heavenly temper, furnishes with arms
 Bright as his own, and trains, by ev’ry rule
 Of holy discipline, to glorious war,
 The sacramental host of God’s elect.”

Dr. Lucas, (that celebrated author,) says,
 “Though every honest man be not able to discover all the arguments on which his creed stands,
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he yet may discover enough ; and what is more, he may have an inward, vital, sensible proof of them ; he may feel the power, the charms of holiness, *experience* its congruity and loveliness to the human soul, so as that he shall have no doubts or scruples. But besides this, there is a voice within, a divine Teacher and Instructor."

Ibid. " For experience has been the plea of every fanatic in every age."

Now, suppose hypocrites have pretended to this, and harm been done by disorderly fanatics in several ages of the church, by abusing a good doctrine. Is this any reason, why we should abandon the form of sound words? " Bad money, indeed, is frequently put into our hands ; but is it necessary, on this account, to obstruct the free course of that which is intrinsically good?"

Mr. W. was a great enemy to enthusiasm and fanaticism. He even took peculiar care to guard his doctrines against such dangerous extremes. Wherever he found any appearance of the kind, he laboured with unceasing pains to have the evil removed. He particularly adopted Dr. Young's sentiment :

" Wrong not the christian, think not reason
yours,

'Tis Reason our great Master holds so dear.

'Tis Reason's injur'd rights his wrath resents ;

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'Tis

'Tis Reason's voice obey'd, his glories crown ;
 To give lost Reason life, he pour'd his own.
 Believe and shew the reason of a man ;
 Believe and taste the pleasures of a God."

" For the operations of the Holy Spirit upon the hearts of believers, are to be distinguished from the effects of enthusiasm in the imagination of visionaries, just as readily as we distinguish health from sickness, wisdom from folly, and truth from falsehood."

Ibid. " There was no innovation attempted which had not its inspired projectors and inspired advocates. The numerous sects which disgraced the reformed religion about a century ago, pretended that they had the witness of the Spirit for their contradictory fancies."

Many of the men referred to, of the last century, were some of the greatest that England ever produced ; and yet under what colour does the Objector represent them ? I cannot set the matter in a clearer light, than in the words of a late sensible writer. " As these doctrines were the principles and language of the dissenters, and others, who followed the standard of the parliament against King Charles the first, though they were not the particular movers of the war, nor could contract any just blame from the unhappy issue of that war ; yet, at the restoration of King Charles

Charles the second, the resentment which took place against dissenters ran high, and I apprehend, led the church-clergy not only to be angry with the men, but to forsake their principles too, though right, and innocent in themselves, and afore-time held in common among all protestants. Every thing, (says this Author,) besides morality, began from that time, by the church-clergy, to be branded with the odious term of enthusiasm and hypocrisy."

Ibid. "But he has often said, that the false pretensions to experience of some persons, is no argument against other persons having real experience. It is probable, that the generality of his readers will look upon this sophistry as equal to demonstration; because we cannot deny the proposition."

Having selected such respectable authority toward the proof of experimental religion; it probably may appear, that Mr. W.'s argument is not sophistry, but solid sense and sound divinity. 'Tis very certain, that the false pretensions of some is no argument against it, no more than a man who has no palate, (and consequently cannot-taste,) is an argument that all men are in the same condition.

Ibid. "It is not by this sort of reasoning that Mr. W. will convince us of the reality of his
experience;

experience: but he must prove by miracles, that he is commissioned, and that he has received revelations from him."

The Objector does not consider that there is a possibility of working miracles, and yet be void of a true christian faith. Deut. xiii. 1, 2, 3. To be inquisitive after miracles, was the plan of the Pharisees of old. Master, we would see a sign, Matt. xii. 38. Then said Jesus unto them, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe. John iv. 48. We are certain that the most of those, after all the signs and wonders they saw, did not believe in Jesus Christ. But as this is an argument of great weight with infidels, and modern teachers in general, I shall answer it more fully by an extract from one of the most eminent divines that even this or any other country produced.

“ 1st. There is no mention made of the miracles of Andronicus, Junia, and Barnabas, who were real Apostles: nor are miracles attributed to Titus or Timothy, though they were the undoubted successors of the Apostles. Some miraculous gifts were common in the church of Corinth, even among those who were neither Apostles nor Evangelists: and these gifts were so far from being essential to Apostolic zeal, that many unworthy brethren, many false Apostles, as well as the traitor Judas, were endued with them.

2d. If

2d. If any of those pastors, who make a profession of following St. Paul, are observed to publish another gospel, or to depart from the order established by the Apostles, the world has then reason to require miracles at their hand, as a demonstration that their doctrines are divine, and that their recent customs are preferable to those which were formerly adopted in the church of Christ. But if they simply proclaim that glorious gospel, which has been already confirmed by a thousand miracles, and are observed to adopt no other method than that of the Apostles; it is absurd in the highest degree, to insist upon miracles as the only sufficient evidences of their mission.

3d. No sufficient reason can be given, why the humble imitators of St. Paul should be required to evidence their spiritual mission by extraordinary actions. On the one hand they do but simply declare those religious truths, of which they have had the most convincing experience; and on the other, they earnestly solicit the wicked to become partakers of the same invaluable blessing. Now the certainty of such declaration, and the sincerity of such invitation, may be solidly established on two kinds of proof: first, upon these proofs which support the gospel in general: and secondly, upon the holy conduct

duct of those, who bear this testimony and repeat these invitations.

4th. External miracles, which effect no change in the heart, nor rescue the soul from a state of spiritual blindness and death; miracles, which serve only to repair the organs of a body, that must shortly be consigned to the grave; miracles which tend merely to modify matter, such as causing green trees to wither, withered trees to spring, and water to gush out of the flinty rock: miracles of this nature are far less important than those which cause the thorns of vice to wither, the seeds of grace to spring, and streams of sacred consolation to flow through those very hearts which were formerly barren as a desert, and hard as the rock, that Moses smote."

" Before he thus proves the consistence of his doctrine, and confirms it by miracles, it would betray the most contemptible weakness to embrace his opinions for the sake of any assertion of experience, especially as those opinions seem directly calculated to drive us into despair and madness; and according to which, viewed even with the eyes of a Methodist, we must pass sentence of condemnation on ten thousand of our fellow creatures, for one we acquit; but viewed in their true light, we must send the whole race of mankind to perdition."

Mr.

Mr. W's opinions are very far from being calculated to drive men into despair and madness. If properly understood, they will have the opposite effect; for they will save men from those things that would create despair, and after leading them through the sorrow of repentance, bring them to the enjoyment of constant peace and happiness.—Treasures unknown to the open sinner,—Blessings to which the Pharisee and formalist with all their *natural religion* are perfect strangers. Methodists do not wish to pass sentence upon any man, farther than is allowable by the word of God. They from thence conclude, that wide is the gate, and broad the way that leadeth to hell, and many there be that go in thereat: and strait is the gate, and narrow the way that leadeth to Heaven, and few there be that find it.

P. 18. “ Yet it is past our comprehension, how a Methodist can have two witnesses for his fancied experience. He thinks he enjoys a demonstrable sight of God, and the things of God by infallible senses. Therefore his own knowledge is absolute, and it would be as absurd to say, that the spirit witnesses to him the certainty of what he knows by intuition, as that I should say, that the person standing by me witnesses to me, that I see the book lying before my eyes.”

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What a melancholy reflection it must be to every sensible and pious man to find the partisans of infidelity increasing every day, and several of the clergy foremost in the ranks: If the Bible be true, there are two witnesses in the breast of every believer, as touching his experience of justification. St. John says, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards the Lord. This is the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity, &c. This is one witness. But ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of adoption, crying Abba, Father. The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God. Are these two witnesses the self-same thing? "He thinks he enjoys a demonstrative sight of God, and the things of God by infallible senses." He has no such thoughts; but he knows, as St. Paul says, that him hath he quickened who was dead in trespasses and sins, Eph. ii. 1. And he that was once in darkness, is now light in the Lord. The Objector seems to have small conceptions of the immortal soul,—its original state of excellence,—its present state of depravity,—of its being dead in trespasses and sins,—asleep, having eyes, and seeing not,—understanding, and knowing not. When the soul is brought out of this prison of iniquity, its powers are quickened, rea-
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son reassumes its empire, the light of the Lord shines around, and they answer the end for which they were made. The eyes of their understandings being now opened, they know what is the hope of their calling, and what the riches of the glory of the inheritance of the Saints. Eph. i. 18. 'Tis by such ways as these, the believer sees the Lord. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Matt. v.

Ibid. "It is certainly incumbent on every Methodist, who thinks he has experience, to consider what ground of assurance he has for it, more than a confessed enthusiast may have."

The Methodists tolerably well understand the difference between experimental religion, and enthusiasm. I can assure the Objector in this sense of the word, they are of opinion,

"Est modus in rebus; sunt certi denique fines,
Quos ultra citraque negant consistere rectum."

Consequently, there is reproof, exhortation, rebuking with all long-suffering and patience, and deep examination whether they be in the faith. Some of them are penitents labouring under conviction,—these are exhorted to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and they shall be saved: Some of them have obtained mercy from God, being freely justified.—These are exhorted to leave the first principles of the doctrine of Jesus,

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and to go on to perfection. The quintessence of enthusiasm is to expect an end, without using the means,—living in sin, effeminacy, neglect of duty, getting a little morality, and then expecting from this to obtain that reward, which will only be administered unto them, who shall be made holy thro' faith in Jesus Christ. The Methodist teachers are well aware of what enthusiasm is, and therefore take particular pains to open the doctrines of revelation in a plain, simple manner, and both by example, as well as by precept, convince the people there is real experimental religion to be obtained now, as well as in former days. They would look upon themselves as enthusiasts, if they acted as certain persons do, if they supposed that immortal souls, dead in trespasses and sins, would be awakened by a dry lecture of a few minutes in which (I speak with conscience) there is not so much divinity, as in many of the writings of the heathen philosophers.

“ The things that mount the rostrum with a skip,
 And then skip down again ; pronounce a text,
 Cry hem ; and reading what they never wrote,
 Just fifteen minutes huddle up the work,
 And with a well-bred whisper close the scene ! ”

P. 19. “ If Methodists should decline all reasoning and inference, and should boldly declare that

that they are conscious of their experience; the enthusiast is equally confident, advances his claim with the same appearance of truth, and is with the same difficulty refuted."

The Methodists have never declined fair reasoning and inference since their earliest existence as a body, but have ever been ready to give a reason of the hope that is within them, to all who would impartially enquire. The writers of Mr. W's life say, " Many of those who wrote against Mr. W. were far from being respectable: and some of them were destitute, either of ability or information." Some of his friends have regretted, that he would condescend to bestow an answer on them. But though these writers knew neither the man they vilified, nor the subject they treated, yet they generally made a fierce attack; however clumsy, on some part of what he esteemed the truth of God. To this they were indebted for an answer. And many who never saw the publications of these gentlemen, have been edified by his replies; the truth appearing to them in a still stronger light than ever before.

From hence it appears, so far from declining reasoning and inference, Mr. W. has profusely proved that his doctrine was a doctrine of sound words, and truly agreeable to the canon of holy

Scripture. The Objector endeavours with some cunning, to involve the genuine experience of Christians with the over-heated imaginations of visionaries and fanatics. Such reasoning may pass for sterling sense with some, but men of piety and understanding will easily perceive the weakness: and after all the pains to tinsel over the matter, will conclude there is experimental religion, so sure as there is a God in Heaven. Says Dr. Watts, " Be convinced then that christianity has a more noble *inward witness* belonging to it, than is derived from ink and paper, from precise letters and syllables. And though God in his great wisdom and goodness, saw it necessary that the New Testament should be written, to preserve these holy doctrines uncorrupted through all ages, and though he has been pleased to make it the invariable and authentic rule of our faith and practice, and made it a glorious instrument of instructing ministers, and leading men to salvation in all these latter times; yet christianity has a secret witness in the hearts of believers, that does not depend on their knowledge and proof of the authority of the Scriptures."

The Scriptures when examined do most positively declare, that upon sincere repentance we shall receive the remission of our sins. He that believeth

believeth shall be saved. He that soweth in tears shall reap in joy. Faith and faith only is the instrument of receiving this blessing. When God forgives, he gives the knowlege of it. He sends his holy spirit to bear witness that we are the children of God. When under the curse of the law, sensible the wrath of God hangs over us, faith wrought in the penitent by the Holy Ghost, applying the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, is the means whereby he perceives himself in the favour of God.

P. 22. " I have now shewn that a claim to spiritual experience, is a very suspicious argument,—that it has done incredible mischief,—that it can have no authority unless supported by miracles,—that even miracles will not support it, if it be contrary to Scripture,—that Mr. W.'s claim is not supported by miracles,—and that it is produced to prove a doctrine not to be reconciled with God's attributes. If all this be true, and it is not easy to imagine how any part of it can be controverted, then not only is the character and distinguishing properties of the *almost christian* built on the most visionary grounds, but farther, Mr. W.'s whole system falls to nothing; for experience is the means by which he endeavours to establish his doctrine, and it is also the very doctrine to be established."

The Objector in his reasoning against experimental religion, has given no proof whatever to satisfy any man of sense. The whole force of his argument depends altogether on his bare assertion. He has produced no author of consequence, or without consequence, to prove his assertions. —I have fully demonstrated from the word of God, and authors of the first note in divinity, (the most of them of the established church,) that there is such a blessing to be obtained as experimental religion,—Conviction for sin,—a sense of the wrath of God, through his supernatural grace or aid,—Conversion, justification by faith alone, by which we are made partakers of the divine nature, and inheritors of those graces,—the fruits of the Spirit, whom Christ sendeth us as an Holy Comforter, to be with his own children to the end of the world. I have also proved from undeniable authority, that not preaching experimental religion has done infinite mischief; and that the Objector's plan of preaching scarcely arrives at the zenith of heathen morality. That miracles are not requisite at present to prove the revelation we acknowledge. That, properly speaking, the greatest miracles have been wrought in our days by insisting on experimental religion. The dead in trespasses have been brought to life, the openly impure have been reformed, the thorns

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of vice have been eradicated, the flowers of divine grace have been planted in their place.

Mr. W. during his ministry, was witness to thousands of such miracles, and these are miracles of the most substantial nature. Mr. W.'s doctrine is well calculated to do justice to God Almighty's attributes; and there is no other way, whereby the Almighty's attributes can be reconciled, and the sinner saved, than by submitting to the gospel plan, repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. 'Tis the time-pleasing Doctors of the day, who preach a doctrine altogether irreconcilable with the attributes of God, who represent the Almighty as if taking no cognizance of his creatures, and that he is too benevolent under this merciful dispensation, to condemn any one whatsoever. To such belong these remarkable words :

“ What mean ye

That set at nought Heav'n's jarring attributes,
And with one excellence another wound,
Maim Heav'n's perfections, break her equal beam,
Make mercy triumph over God himself,
Undeify'd by your opprobrious praise,
A God all mercy is a God unjust ?”

I have fully proved that Mr. W.'s doctrine of the *almest* and *altogether christian*, are perfectly agreeable

agreeable to the holy scriptures. This doctrine is so unequivocally taught in the Homilies, that I am surpris'd that any man that ever read them, would ever after gainsay the truth. I am positively sure, that in many places, they speak stronger (if possible) of conviction and conversion,—the lengths a man may go, and not have saving faith, than ever Mr. W. did.

I shall take an extract from one of the Homilies, to convince the Objector that in the opinion of the Reformers he cannot be an orthodox christian by denying the doctrines he has written against. “ Holy Scripture teacheth us, this (faith by the operation of God’s Spirit) is the strong rock and foundation of the christian religion ; this doctrine all old and antient authors of Christ’s church do approve, this doctrine advanceth and setteth forth the true glory of Christ, and beateth down the vain glory of man ; this whosoever denieth, is not to be accounted for a christian man, nor for a setter forth of Christ’s glory, but for an *adversary* to Christ and his gospel, and for a setter forth of men’s vain glory.” 2 P. Hom. Sal. Man.

P. 23. “ Nothing of any consequence remains now to be considered, but his quotations from the Homilies, and those texts of Scripture which he produces, as implying the faith of the *altogether christian*. This faith is the direct
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knowledge of salvation, which includes in it the perfection of all religion. If none of his quotations prove the necessity of such a surprising faith, and if no other quotation can possibly do so, then it must appear that he has fallen into a most unhappy mistake, in condemning those who are not condemned in the word of God."

The Objector enters the field as a champion for the injured Homilies: he strives to make us believe that Mr. W. quoted and applied them in a sense the writers of them did not intend; whilst it is evident that it is he himself that is guilty in this point. In quoting a passage beautifully descriptive of faith, the Objector says, "The writer of the Homily appears to describe rather an effect of a genuine faith which worketh by love, than faith itself." Whereas the writer of the Homily says, "The right and true christian faith is, &c. &c." After quoting another piece of an Homily, he says, "Though these definitions of faith are rather confused, yet consider if it be possible to reconcile them with Mr. W.'s account of it." Is not this a most faithful son of the church? Is this the man that cries out against Mr. W. for applying them in a sense he should not? No wonder Mr. W. was esteemed inorthodox, when our Reformers of blessed memory are accused of being confused in their description of one of the most important and necessary points of divinity.

P. 27.

P. 27. “ In many places they speak of the inspiration of the Spirit, and his working in our hearts; yet nothing can be more plain than that they allude to the fruits of the Spirit: Such as his quickening the minds of men,—stirring up godly motions in their hearts,—giving patience and joyfulness,—inspiring peace, &c. &c. By such fruits we may believe that we are inspired by God’s holy Spirit. But the Homilies speak not a word about a direct perception of the Spirit, of our distinguishing between himself and the good dispositions which we attribute to his influence, of a witness from him pointedly declaring unto us our salvation. And it must certainly be admitted, that they no where say that any knowledge of this kind is faith, which is essential to salvation.”

I much doubt whether the Objector ever read the Homilies before the time he examined them to find out something to prove Mr. W. an heretic. The passages are so numerous that are diametrically opposite to what he has advanced, that I scarcely know what part to turn to first, to confute what he has said.

“ And in reading God’s word, he most profiteth not always, that is most ready in turning of the book, or in saying of it without the book, but he that is most turned into it, that is most inspired”

inspired by the Holy Ghost." I. P. H. S.
 Now I ask, is the edification derived from this spiritual exercise, the same with the Holy Ghost by whom this edification is produced? But when the Holy Ghost worketh, there is nothing impossible, as may farther also appear by the inward regeneration and sanctification of mankind. When Christ said to Nicodemus, Unless a man be born anew, of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God: he was greatly amazed in his mind, and began to reason with Christ, demanding how a man might be born which was old. Can he enter (saith he) into his mother's womb again, and so be born anew? Behold a lively pattern of a fleshly and carnal man. He had little or no intelligence of the Holy Ghost, and therefore he goeth bluntly to work, and asketh how this thing were possible to be true. Whereas otherwise if he had known the great power of the Holy Ghost in this behalf, that it is he which inwardly worketh the regeneration and new birth of mankind, he would never have marvelled at Christ's words, but would rather take occasion thereby to praise and glorify God. I. P. H. W. Is this work of regeneration and the new birth the same thing with the Holy Ghost, who works this change in the mind of believers? Is the motion arising from the quickening

quicken power the same with the agent that operates? Are the godly motions the same thing with the divine mover? Is the increase of faith, of hope, &c. &c. the Holy Ghost? Now, on the ground of common sense, is there no way of distinguishing between the Holy Ghost, and the good dispositions which we attribute to his influence? The Holy Scriptures and the Homilies declare the doctrines of the divine witness in the heart of the believer. The Scripture saith, that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. Eph. i. 17. Gal. v. 13. 2 Cor. iii. 17. Rom. viii. 26. Eph. iii. 16, 17. 'Hereby we know that we be of the truth, and so we shall persuade our hearts before him, for if our own hearts reprove us, God is above our hearts, and knoweth all things. Well-beloved, if our hearts reprove us not, then have we confidence in God, and shall have of him whatsoever we ask, because we keep his commandments.'

2 P. H. F. The Apostle Paul addresses the believers at Corinth, as being perfectly sure of their acceptance, from a direct witness of the Holy Spirit. 'Know ye not, that ye are the temple of God, and that his Spirit dwelleth in you? Know ye not that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost, which is within you?' O what a comfort is this to the heart of a true christian,

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to think that the Holy Ghost dwelleth within him!" : P. H. W.

P. 28. "We are in the next place to consider Mr. W.'s quotations from Scripture. Here let it be considered what I undertake to prove : If ever any of the inspired writers had Mr. W.'s faith ; it must have been Moses and St. Paul, who were favoured with the sight and hearing of as much as man could see and hear. Moses and St. Paul were thus highly favoured but once in their lives ; but Mr. W. teaches that when we have not the same privilege, we are not in a state of salvation."

Mr. W. never taught that it was the privilege of believers to see God and talk with him as did the legislator of the Jews. Notwithstanding, (in the evangelical sense) we may enjoy greater comforts and larger communications of grace, than any person whatsoever under the dispensation of the law. So says our Saviour : ' But what went ye out for to see ! A prophet ? Yea, I say unto you, more than a prophet. Verily, I say unto you, Among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist : notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven, is greater than he.' By the kingdom of heaven, here is meant the kingdom of grace, after the coming down of

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the Holy Ghost at the days of Pentecost. As to St. Paul's vision, Mr. W. never insinuated, that believers were to expect any such thing; but that we might enjoy grace in the ordinary way, as well as St. Paul, Peter, Barnabas, &c. For the promise is to them that are afar off, even as many as shall obey the call of the Lord our God.

“ All these fathers, martyrs, and other holy men, (of whom St. Paul speaks,) had their faith surely fixed in God, when all the world was against them. They did not only know God to be the Lord, maker, and governor of all men in the world; but also they had a special confidence and trust, that he was and would be their God, their comforter, aider, helper, maintainer, and defender. This is the christian faith, which these holy men had, and we also ought to have. Wherefore, saith Saint Augustine, the time is altered and changed, but not the faith. The same Holy Ghost that we have, had they. But now, by the coming of our Saviour Christ, we have received more abundantly the Spirit of God in our hearts, whereby we may conceive a greater faith, and a sure trust than many of them had. And St. Paul so much extolleth their faith, because we should no less, both in profession and living, now when Christ is come, than the old fathers did before his coming.” 2 P. H. F.

P. 29.

P. 29. " He is not satisfied with making our privilege thus far superior to that of Moses and St. Paul, but the object of our intuition must be infinitely beyond their experience. In the second part of his farther appeal, he defines faith thus; faith is a loving obedient sight of a present and reconciled God ;—and without this faith he asserts constantly, that we are altogether unholy, that we do every thing to deserve everlasting destruction. That this present sight of God, or any intuitive knowledge either of him or our pardon, is not essential to salvation, is all that I contend for."

Mr. W. has declared our privilege without exaggeration. He has often set St. Paul's example and doctrines before the people as a standard; but never told them they were to go beyond it. The part of Mr. W.'s definition of faith objected to, is the loving and obedient sight of a present and reconciled God. If the Bible and Homilies were read with attention, it would be seen that the condition of man by nature is very wretched, poor, blind and naked. Hence our Lord says, "the Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor, he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and *recovery of sight to the blind, &c.* In our natural

estate we are blind; but when God illuminates the eyes of our understanding, then we truly see. The penitent can say with David, Open mine eyes, that I may behold wonderful things out of thy law. The converted soul can say, I have seen thee in the sanctuary. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. "The doctrine of God's total inaction, in the moral and intellectual world, is irreligious and unphilosophical. The wisest heathens exploded it. Fortunately it is refuted in the strongest language of Scripture. For after our Saviour's ascension, the Holy Spirit was expressly promised, and the ministration of the Spirit, co-operating on the heart of man with the written word, is to continue its energy, as it does at this hour, to the end of time." Why do ministers read frequently, that he pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent, &c. if they believe the doctrine is not true? Why do they read the prayer for the Holy Ghost to cleanse the thoughts of our hearts, if such blessings are not to be experienced? The time was in the C——, when men took on them the office of ministers, thro' a reverend regard to God, and love to souls; but at present love of gain is the general stimulus to that office.

Auri sacra fames,

Quid non mortalia pectora cogis???

“ But

“ But in their room, as they forewarn,
 Wolves shall succeed for teachers; grievous wolves
 Who all the sacred mysteries of heav'n
 To their own vile advantages shall turn,
 Of lucre and ambition; and the truth
 With superstition, and tradition taint,
 Left only in those written records pure.”

MILTON.

Ibid. “ We see no reference to any text in scripture, which can be supposed to imply a direct witness, until we come to his allusion to Rom. v. 5. because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us.— The questions now to be resolved are, how did God's love affect the hearts of the first christians? and how did the Holy Ghost prove God's love towards them? Perhaps Mr. W. will say that the Holy Ghost imparted to them some faculties by which they had a direct sensation of God's attribute of love. According to this sense, the text would bewilder us in a metaphysical speculation impenetrably abstruse; and would be without a parallel in the whole Bible.”

If the Objector could understand the question; I would ask him, are we able in our natural and unconverted estate to love God, even according to the way he has moulded the text himself? The Scriptures declare the whole world (*natur-*

rally) lieth in the wicked one.—In this situation we are called *ἵδμεν ἐν τῷ κοσμοῦ*.

Mr. W. talked of no additional faculties, no new ones to be added, but the reinstating in their former empire, those that were so much injured by original and actual depravity. By the authority of holy writ, he insisted on our inability in our natural condition to love God; but at the same time declared when the eyes of the understanding were opened by divine grace, we could *then* see, and taste that the Lord is gracious.

Ibid. “ In answer to the other question, we say, that the Holy Ghost proved God’s love towards the first christians, by proving the Gospel. And the manner by which the Holy Ghost proved this redemption, was not by a direct revelation to each particular person, but by external signs, as appears to a certainty from a great number of places.”

In what strange colours does the Objector attempt to draw Almighty God, by representing the great dispensation of the Spirit, so much longed for by Jews and heathens, to be so short-lived, and its blessings obtainable by so very few. Is this the way that all flesh was to see the glory of God? Is this the way he was to pour out his Spirit, ’till all should be filled with the fullness of the Lord, as the waters fill the depths of the sea?

fea? “ As the mistaken Jews, perfectly satisfied with the law of Moses inscribed on tables of stone, rejected, with obstinacy, the promised Messiah; so carnal christians of this day, contenting themselves with the letter of the New Testament, perversely reject the Holy Spirit of promise. But if it be said, the Spirit of Christ was fully given to his first disciples, and that is sufficient for us; this argument has in it as great absurdity, as the following method of reasoning: Moses instructs us, that God created the sun, and that the patriarchs were happily enlightened by it: but the supreme illumination of that sun is no longer to be discovered, except in the writings of Moses: and those labourers are downright enthusiasts, who imagine they need any other rays from that luminary, except such as are reflected on them from the book of Genesis. The Scripture informs us, that God commanded the earth to produce a variety of fruits and plants for the nourishment of its inhabitants; covenanting, on his part, to send refreshing rains and convenient seasons. But, we do not live, exclaims a rational farmer, in the season of miracles, nor am I enthusiastic enough to expect, that rain shall be sent on the earth. Mention, indeed, is made in ancient history, of the former and the latter rain; and the books which speak of these fructifying showers,

showers, and promise a continuance of them to the latest posterity, are undoubtedly authentic; nevertheless, all the rain we can reasonably now expect, must flow from these books alone, and from those speculations, which our reason can make upon the truth they contain."

P. 31. "The context puts it beyond a doubt that the experience of a Methodist is not implied in the text: for the Apostle, after mentioning the good fruits, which the persons he addressed might reap from tribulation, concludes with hope. Nor still can it be pretended that we may obtain a higher dispensation than hope in this world, for St. Peter desires us to hope unto the end. If now St. Paul who was miraculously converted, who wrought miracles himself, was witness to many more, and was caught up into the third Heaven, still calls his religion by the name of hope, how can any man pretend that he is authorized by the same Apostle to call his own religion—Sight!"

The Objector is much mistaken in every part of this text. St. Paul in this chap. is enumerating the several benefits that flow from justification by faith. He shews us how one grace generates and begets another. "The justified person (who has obtained the knowledge of salvation by the remission of his sins) shall not find his hopes of glory

glory frustrated, but exceeded; and the reason is added, why the christian's hope will not deceive or shame him, namely, because the love of God is shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost: —Burkitt."

The Objector is certainly in an error, when he declares there is no higher dispensation than hope, with regard to the re-obtaining the image of the Lord, before we return to the dust from whence we came. The persons whom the Apostle addresses as having this hope, were characters that did see the face of God reconciled through Jesus Christ, and having entered into the veil by faith, they waited for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of their bodies. St. Paul enumerates the different parts of the christian panoply, and in this he calls hope the helmet of salvation. Does the Objector think that the helmet is the altogether, and only necessary covering for a christian soldier? The same author says, Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity, from the enjoyment of which heavenly principles, they knew, were assured, were confident, that when he should appear, they should be like Him and see Him, even as he is.

P. 33. "Is this commandment, says Mr. W. written in your hearts, that he that loveth God, love his neighbour also?"

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A law written in our hearts, says the Objector, implies nothing more than a natural, moral sense of good and evil, and then brings for proof Rom. ii. 15. There is scarcely a more comprehensive word in the Scripture, than the word *law*. Sometimes it signifies a rule directing and obliging a rational creature in moral and religious actions, Prov. xxviii. 4. 2d, That which hath the force of governing and over-ruling our actions in our present imperfect state, Rom. vii. 23, 25. 3d, The whole doctrine of the word delivered by God to his church, Psal. 1. 2. 19. 7. 4th, The decalogue, Rom. ii. 25. 5th, The second table of the law.

Ibid. "Dost thou believe that Christ loved thee, and gave himself for thee? The Scriptures speak not a word of any internal certain knowledge of those truths. And if any one should pretend, that he has now an internal sense demonstrating to him that Christ suffered on the cross for our sins, he deserves no serious answer."

The question before us at present, is extremely proper, and worthy of a man of God to propose to a serious enquirer after the kingdom of Heaven. Let me inform the Objector, that the Scriptures do constantly speak of an internal, and certain knowledge of the truths of salvation. 'That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have
looked

looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life; that which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus,' 1. John i. 3. I am the light of the world, whosoever followeth me shall not walk in darkness. Christ promised that the Holy Ghost should bring all things to the remembrance of his servants.

“ Can length of years on God himself exact,
 Or make that fiction, which was once a fact?
 No—marble and recording brass decay,
 And like the gravers mem'ry pass away;
 The works of man inherit, as is just,
 Their author's frailty, and return to dust;
 But truth divine for ever stands secure,
 Its head is guarded as its base is sure;
 Fix'd in the rolling flood of endless years,
 The pillar of th' eternal plan appears,
 The raving storm and dashing wave defies,
 Built by that Architect who built the skies.
 Hearts may be found, that harbour at this hour
 That love of Christ in all its quick'ning power;
 And lips unstain'd by folly or by strife,
 Whose wisdom, drawn from the deep well of life,
 Tastes of its healthful origin, and flows
 A Jordan for th' ablution of our woes.”

COWPER.

Ibid.

Ibid. "Believest thou the Lamb of God hath taken away thy sins, and cast them as a stone into the depth of the sea? There is no question of this sort in the Bible, nor any idea like it, if with Mr. W. we suppose that believing always means seeing."

Have you ever read the Bible altogether through? The Objector says there is no such question, or any idea like it in the Bible. I beg leave to point him to the place where he may find it. 'He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us: he will subdue our iniquity: and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.' Mic. vii. 19.

P. 34. "John the Baptist points to Christ and says, Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world! Will it follow from hence that our sins will never be forgiven until we are directly informed so by the Holy Spirit?"

I answer, that it is by the receiving of the spirit of adoption, that we are assured of the pardon of our sins. Christ says, When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me. And this spirit was to be with his followers even unto the end of the world.

Ibid. "Hast thou indeed redemption through his blood, even the remission of thy sins? St. Paul's

Paul's words are, In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins. Will any one say that the construction of St. Paul's and Mr. W.'s words is the same? St. Paul's words are a general declaration that Christ has purchased for us the forgiveness of our sins by the merits of his death; but Mr. W.'s quotation would insinuate, that each particular person must have a demonstrative proof that his own sins are forgiven."

Now suppose we should take the catechetical side a little, we might ask the Objector, who told him, that the ordinary privileges of grace, during St. Paul's day, are not the same at this moment? According to his own words, if Christ has purchased for us the forgiveness of sin, if it would not be esteemed an heresy, might we ask, at what period is this to be known or experienced? What does he mean by that article in the Apostle's creed,—the remission of sin? What were his ideas, when the bishop asked him at the time he was ordaining him for a priest, Will you be ready with all faithful diligence to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines, contrary to Gods word? "Our Saviour Christ departing out of the world unto his Father, promised his disciples to send down another Comforter, that should continue with them for ever,

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and

and direct them into all truth. Which thing to be faithfully and truly performed, the Scriptures do sufficiently bear witness. Neither must we think that this Comforter was either promised, or else given, only to the Apostles, but also to the universal church of Christ, dispersed through the whole world." Hom. Whit.

P. 34. " But the text which he has reserved for the last question is the strong hold of Methodists, and should be thoroughly explained, The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. The spirit itself is most probably the Holy Ghost, and not the spirit of adoption mentioned in the former verse, as some persons contend. The word *summarturêi* implies, that there are two witnesses: now the spirit of adoption must signify a disposition, or dispensation, as spirit signifies in the parallel place to Timothy; and cannot be the holy spirit, or he must also be called the spirit of bondage, which is every way absurd. If then the spirit of adoption be a disposition or dispensation, it is hard to conceive how it can witness any thing along with our own spirit; for a disposition is a testimony of our own spirit, and a dispensation cannot properly be said to witness at all."

Here

Here is a heaping of Pelion on Ossa.—Here is a declaration of war against God himself—

“ Qui évadit Scyllam incidet Charybdim.”

Here is one of the most blessed passages of Scripture dismembered, but the operation is so shockingly unskilful, that a man of ordinary understanding, not proficient in Greek, may suspect that there is injustice done to the subject. The spirit that beareth witness with the believer's spirit, is none other than the Holy Ghost, and the spirit of adoption is also acknowledged to be the same Holy Ghost, by every commentator of common sense. As the Objector does not fully tell us here, what he means by the spirit of adoption, we shall find his explanation of it at large by turning to the 39th page of his performance. “ Ye have not received the spirit of bondage, &c. but the spirit of adoption, &c. That is, by the gospel ye have not received a disposition of slaves (or a dispensation of slavery) as was formerly the case, which would produce fear, but ye have received a liberal and ingenuous disposition (or dispensation) which as sons enjoy who look up to a kind and indulgent father.” From the most impartial survey of the Objector's explanation of the spirit of adoption, it appears all that he means by it is, we are not now under the

H 2

dispensation.

dispensation of rites and ceremonies and the bondage of the old law ; but that we all are now christians, since the commencement of the latter dispensation, because we are under this dispensation or disposition.

From the word that is used in the original *summarturêi*,

“ Una testor, simul testificor, testimonio meo comprobo.” Xen. Hellen. Plut. in Hom.

And the after explanation by the Holy Ghost, it is evident to a demonstration that there are two witnesses in the breast of a believer. Mr. Burkitt on the place says, “ That our adoption into God’s family is evidenced by the testimony of the spirit, bearing witness to and with our spirits; here are two witnesses produced to testify the truth of a believer’s adoption, namely, God’s spirit and his own. It is easy to prove that the spirit that creates bondage in the heart of the penitent, &c. and afterwards becomes the spirit of adoption, is the self-same spirit. Our blessed Saviour declared, that when the spirit of truth would come, he would convince the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. And yet he promised that the same spirit should be a Comforter to his believing children, to the end of the world. An author of no mean reputation says on this passage, “ The spirit of
bondage

bondage here seems directly to mean, those operations of the holy spirit, by which the soul, on its first conviction, feels itself in bondage to sin, to the world, to Satan, and obnoxious to the wrath of God. This therefore, and the spirit of adoption, are one and the same spirit, only manifesting itself in various operations, according to the various circumstances of the persons."

P. 35. To whom did the Apostle mean that the holy spirit itself bore witness with their spirit? In what manner did the spirit witness? and to what truth? We are first to consider to whom the spirit had borne witness. Was it a witness perceivable by none but by those particular persons who were real christians; or was it a witness in general to Christians, Jews and Gentiles, to all in short who would attend to it? The latter certainly, for the literal meaning of the words *summarturêi tô pneumati hêmôn* is, beareth witness with our own, and not to our own spirit. If the conjunction *sun* be merely expletive, we are not obliged to suppose two witnesses, and the spirit itself will naturally be referred to the spirit of adoption." On the best authority, I insist, it was a witness peculiar to the persons who received it, and that it has not the smallest reference to the dispensation itself. The translation "bear-

eth witness to our spirits," is perfectly strict and literal. With regard to the conjunction, *sun* being merely expletive, I altogether deny. *Sun cum, una cum, simul cum. pariter.* Scaput. Lexic.

St. Basil says, This was the end of Christ's coming in the flesh, of his life and conversation described in the gospel, of his passion, cross, burial, and resurrection; that man, who is saved by the imitation of Christ, might regain that ancient adoption. By the holy spirit we are restored into paradise, we regain the kingdom of Heaven, we return to the adoption of sons.

St. Cyril says, When the only begotten Son was made man, finding man's nature bereft of its ancient and primitive good, he hastened to transform it again into the same state, out of the fountain of his fulness, sending forth the spirit, and saying, *Receive the Holy Ghost.*

P. 38. "To what truth the spirit and the Apostles bore witness. This was, that Christians are children of God. Mr. W. will say, that this expression signifies justified persons, whose sins are forgiven, and who are in favor with God. It may oftentimes have this meaning; yet it is not the particular idea which the Apostle intended to convey when he said, that there were two witnesses, that they were children of God."

The

The Objector dwells much on the Epistle to the Galatians, and strives to shew from St. Paul's writing to them, that it was the dispensation of the gospel different from the law, that is here meant. But this is a most heinous mistake. The Galatians were fallen from grace, they had been bewitched, had ceased to obey the truth, they had turned to the weak and beggarly elements of the world: Many of them began in the spirit and ended in the flesh. For though they enjoyed the dispensation of the spirit, as a dispensation, many of them had fallen from their enjoyment of the spirit of adoption, by turning to the ceremonies and bondage of the old law, and more especially to their former sins.

P. 46. "Remember always to pray and not to faint, 'till thou also canst lift up thy hand unto heaven, and declare to him that liveth for ever and ever, Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee. Here he has contrived to work out a sublime rant by bringing together passages the most unconnected."

I shall just observe, that it is better, according to St. Paul's advice, to lift up holy hands without wrath, or doubting in prayer, than to have them employed as certain persons have at certain places.

"Forth

"Forth comes the pocket-mirror. First we stroke
 An eye-brow; next, compose a straggling lock;
 Then with an air, most gracefully perform'd,
 Fall back into our seat, extend an arm,
 And lay it at its ease with gentle care,
 With handkerchief in hand, depending low,
 The better hand more busy, gives the nose
 Its bergamot, or aids th' indebted eye
 With opera-glass to watch the moving scene
 And recognize the slow-retiring fair."

COWPER. *Petit-maitre Parson.*

P. 48. "What judgment should we now
 form of Mr. W.'s sermon, if it appears that
 none of his texts prove that we cannot be saved
 without an internal knowlege of our salvation,
 obtained by a direct revelation of the Holy Spi-
 rit;—nay, if none of them contains even the
 most distant mention of such a knowlege? If
 he cannot account for its necessity by some bet-
 ter reason than his experience, and if he cannot
 reconcile his doctrine with scripture, (which he
 can never do without reconciling contradictions,)
 then all impartial and well-informed men will
 pronounce that he has taught other Gospel than
 the Gospel of Christ: Nor will they attribute the
 innovation to generous and praise-worthy affec-
 tions

tions carried on to an excess, but to a gloomy and selfish enthusiasm."

This is the finishing paragraph of the Objector's Remarks on the *almost christian, &c. &c.*

Edisti satis, bibisti satis, nunc tempus est ludere.

Mr. W. is now gone to a better world, where he rests from all his labours. Almost all men of ingenuous and liberal minds, (his enemies in general not even excepted,) have not attributed his efforts to a gloomy and selfish enthusiasm; but to generous and praise-worthy affections for all men. The writers of the Encyclopædia (no mean judges) acknowledge him as one of the most extraordinary men since the Apostles, and to their honor bear record of the infinite good he was an instrument of doing in these lands. The Reviewers also, have shewn their regard for his character, by very properly chastising a certain writer of his life, for his ill-natured and ungenerous remarks.

The doctrines as preached by Mr. W. and his coadjutors, have been blessed with the most extraordinary success. Thousands and tens of thousands have been converted to God; have died happy in Jesus: have landed safely in glory. God has wrought a great work during these 60 years past, and now many, very many, are witnesses before God, of the heart-cheering doctrines

trines of Mr. W.—that Christ's errand into the world, was to give the knowlege of salvation by the remission of sin. Many, perhaps, who have as much sense as their neighbours, think that Mr. W's doctrines have been ably, nay, incontrovertibly proved, and hence contrary to the representation of the Objector, there is a very rapid encrease among the Societies formed by **Mr. WESLEY.**

ADDITIONAL.

ADDITIONAL REMARKS, &c.



P. 52. "WHAT must Deists and Atheists say, when they see it maintained by a set of christians, that the excellence and outward evidences of the gospel, under the ordinary influence of God's grace, cannot gain it belief; but that to produce this effect, it is necessary that we should each of us have an immediate revelation."

By the ordinary influence (from the Objector's frequent explanation) it consists in the disposition or dispensation, that we enjoy in these days, and not in the communications of divine power from the Holy Spirit working on the heart. That the Holy Spirit has not left us to external evidence; but still operates and performs wonders in the world of grace, has been the doctrine of the heavenly Reformers, and every spiritual son of the church ever since. "The spirit of grace is the spirit of wisdom, and teaches us by secret inspirations, by proper arguments, by actual persuasions,

suasions, by personal applications, by effects and energies; and as the soul of man is the cause of all his vital operations, so is the Spirit of God the life of that life, and the cause of all actions and productions spiritual; and the consequence of what St. John tells us of; ye have received the unction from above, and that anointing teacheth you all things. Unless the soul have a new life put into it, unless there be a vital principle within, unless the spirit of life be the informer of the spirit of the man, the word of God will be as dead in the operation, as the body in its powers and possibilities." Bishop Taylor.

P. 54. " This question puts the whole matter in dispute between us and the Methodists to a very short issue. If they will produce a single place in the Liturgy or Bible wherein this necessity appears, we shall grant that their doctrine has the authority of God and man. If they can even shew, that a direct witness of the Spirit is any where mentioned as a privilege, which christians in general may enjoy; though this will not be sufficient to justify them for making it essential, yet it will silence us, and prove our ignorance."

Bishop Gibson, a faithful friend of the church, has collected a number of passages from the Liturgy, to prove the point now in dispute between us;

us; and it is in the very sense he understands it, that Mr. W. did, and Methodists do still. Mr. W. had a conference with Bishop Gibson some time after he began to preach salvation by faith, after hearing Mr. W.'s explanation of the matter, the Bishop told Mr. W. to go on, if he preached it in no other way than he then explained it.

Mr. W. was persecuted by many as a zealous bigot for the church,—misrepresented by others as an enemy to her doctrines. Considering his zeal for the church, he might have exclaimed, especially against many of the clergy :

“ *Hosnè mihi fructus, hunc fertilitatis honorem
Rostrorumq; fero; totoq; exerceor anno?* ”

He has declared, if we will produce a single place for the Liturgy or Bible, wherein this necessity appears, “ he will grant that this doctrine has the authority of God and man.” I have produced many from the H. L. A. B. proving this necessity already. I shall, however, subjoin a few more authorities to prove that it is our privilege to obtain the witness of the Spirit now, in our days, as well as those who were contemporary with the Apostles and primitive fathers. “ The Apostle calls the law the ministration of the letter and of death, it being in itself but a dead
I letter,

letter, as all that which is without a man's soul must be; but on the other side, he calls the gospel, because of the intrinſical and vital adminiſtration of it in living impreſſions upon the ſouls of men, the miniſtration of the Spirit, and the miniſtration of righteouſneſs; by which he cannot mean the *hiſtory* of the gospel, or thoſe *credenda* propounded to us to believe; for this would make the gospel itſelf as much an external thing as the law was; and ſo we ſee the preaching of Chriſt crucified, was to the Jews a ſtumbling-block, and to the Greeks fooliſhneſs. But indeed he means a *vital efflux* from God upon the ſouls of men, whereby they are made partakers of life and ſtrength from him."

John Smith, F. Q. C. C.

Dr. Iſaac Barrow, a man well-known to the literary world, in writing on the offices of the Holy Ghoſt, ſays, "It is alſo another part thereof to aſſure us of God's gracious love and favour, and that we are his children; confirming in us the hopes of our everlaſting inheritance. The feeling ourſelves to live ſpiritually by him, to love God and goodneſs, to thirſt after righteouſneſs, and to delight in pleaſing God."

Biſhop Bull in writing on the neceſſity of the Holy Spirit ſtill continuing to ſuperintend his own work, ſays to them that deny this, "He that
that

that denies this; opposes himself against the stream and current of the Holy Scriptures, and the consent of the catholic church. Therefore to the perfect constitution of man, considered in this relation, a reasonable soul and body adapted thereunto are not sufficient; but there is necessarily required an union of the divine Spirit with both, as it were a third essential principle!"

"Now this illumination of the Spirit is twofold: first, external, by that revelation which he has given us of God's mind and will, in the Holy Scripture; and that miraculous evidence by which he sealed and attested it; for all Scripture is given by inspiration of God; and all those miraculous testimonies we have to the truth and divinity of Scripture are from the Holy Spirit, and, upon that account, are called the demonstration of the Spirit; so that all the light we receive from Scripture, and all the evidence we have that that light is divine, we derive originally from the Holy Spirit. But besides this external illumination of the Holy Spirit, there is also an *internal* one, which consists in impressing that external light and evidence of Scripture upon our understandings, whereby we are enabled more clearly to apprehend; and more effectually to believe it. For though the divine Spirit doth not (at least in the ordinary course of his operation)

illuminate our minds with any new truths, or new evidences of truth, but only presents to our minds those old and primitive truths and evidences which he at first revealed and gave to the world; yet there is no doubt but he still continues not only to suggest them both to our minds, but to urge and repeat them with that importunity, and thereby to imprint them with that clearness and efficacy, as that if we do not thro' a *wicked* prejudice against them, wilfully divert our minds from them to vain and sinful objects.—So that our knowledge and belief of divine things, so far as they are saving and effectual to our renovation, are the fruits and products of this internal illumination." Dr. Scott.

“Without illumination from the Spirit of God, he shall not be able rightly to discern it; that strait is the gate which opens an entry into heaven; and that he cannot, by force of his own natural strength, without new power given him from above, and the secret influences of God's Holy Spirit, adding force and energy to his own endeavours, force his way through it. Conscious therefore of his own weakness, he will acknowledge the necessity of God's grace; and being ready to sink through his own natural weight, unless supported by foreign help, he will cry out with St. Peter, Save me, Lord, or else I perish.”
Bishop Smalridge.

P. 58.

P. 58. " They (Methodists) contend that justification by faith only, in the eleventh of the 39 Articles, signifies justification by means of a direct and supernatural knowledge of it. To prevent confusion in our ideas upon this subject, it should always be remembered that the death of Christ is the only meritorious cause of our justification, for no work of ours can be sufficiently perfect for that purpose : but there are certain conditions required from us, which, by the assistance of the grace of God, we must perform, or the merits of Christ will be of no service to us: These are faith and repentance, or good works, which are required throughout the whole gospel, as the indispensable conditions of justification: It is always in our own power, through the grace of God, to add to our faith, virtue, &c. And whenever we sincerely, though still imperfectly, perform the conditions required from us, the merits of Christ will certainly be effectual to reconcile us to God. It is for this reason that the Apostles sometimes attribute our justification to works, as where St. Paul says, the doers of the law shall be justified. In many other places the cause and conditions of our justification are clearly distinguished. What St. Paul means by our being justified by faith only, appears now clear beyond a doubt; and it is equally clear that

he and St. James do not contradict each other. St. Paul speaks of the meritorious cause of our justification, which is the blood of Christ; and St. James of the conditions, which are faith and good works, not faith alone, says he, for without works it is dead."

Here is indeed a

“ Monstrum, horrendum, informe, ingens; cui lumen ademptum.”

Such doctrine as this is not to be found in the word of God; nor is it to be found either in any part of the Homilies, Articles, &c. &c. In both one and the other authorities referred to, we are represented as *naturally* dead in trespasses and sins, and notwithstanding what the Objector says of good works being the condition of restoration, &c. we are assured by the Reformers to the contrary,—that all (in the essential sense,) are unacceptable, until we are able to believe in God with that faith which is of the operation of the Holy Spirit. Until we are thus changed from nature to grace, our good works are not truly pleasing to God. “ Faith giveth life to the soul, and they be as much dead to God that lack faith, as they be to the world, whose bodies lack souls. Without faith all that is done of us, is but dead before God, although the work seems never so gay and glorious before men. Even as the picture

ture graven and painted, is but a dead representation of the thing itself, and is without life, or any manner of moving: so be the works of all unfaithful persons before God. They do appear to be lively works, and indeed they be but dead, not availing to the everlasting life." St. Augustine.

" We must set no good works before faith, nor think that before faith a man may do any good works, for such works, although they seem unto men to be praise-worthy, yet indeed they be but vain, and not allowed before God. They be as the course of an horse that runneth out of the way, which taketh great labour, but to no purpose." Ibid.

" You shall find many which have not the true faith, and be not of the flock of Christ, and yet (as it appeareth) they flourish in good works of mercy: you shall find them full of pity, compassion, and given to justice, and yet for all that they have no fruit of their works; because the chief work lacketh. For when the Jews asked of Christ what they should do to work good works; he answered, This is the work of God, to believe in him whom he sent: so that he calleth faith the work of God. And as soon as a man hath faith, anon he shall flourish in good works." St. Chrysostom.

" For

“ For as men that be very men indeed, first have life, and after be nourished : so must our faith in Christ go before, and after be nourished with good works. And life may be without nourishment, but nourishment cannot be without life.” 1 P. Hom. G. W.

From these most excellent selections, we see there is no ground in them for the Objector's doctrine. The passage introduced from the Romans has nothing to do with the point in hand. It has an entire reference to the retributions of the last day, which might have been clearly seen, had the smallest attention been paid to the context. The word justified there means finally acquitted and rewarded. St. Paul speaks of that justification which arises from a living faith. Being justified, says he, by faith, we have peace with God. By grace are ye saved through faith.— St. James insists on such as had obtained this faith to prove it by their works. His epistle is an antidote against antinomianism, and plainly proves, without becoming works the faith of professors was dead and vain. For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. James ii. 26.

P. 66. “ We have now done with the words of our church, and shall proceed to examine a few texts of Scripture, on which the Methodists rely

rely most for the support of their doctrine. The third of the third chapter of St. John is frequently introduced with great solemnity. Verrily I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. They contend that being born again, are only other words for having received the direct witness of the spirit, by means of new and infallible senses. We might prove the metempsychosis of Pythagoras from this text with as much plausibility."

In the 12th page of the Objector's pamphlet, he declares concerning that person Mr. W. represents as an *almost Christian*, "That there is not so perfect a character drawn in the Bible, except one."—Now Nicodemus was such a character, a man of most amiable qualities, a most excellent moral character: Yet Christ says to him, You must be born again. Here was a ruler and a teacher, yet his conceptions of regeneration were very absurd. Our Lord cannot here mean any outward reformation of life; but an inward change from all sinfulness to all holiness. The operations of the spirit on our hearts, our Saviour compares to the wind, and the Objector says for a wonder (some fit of orthodoxy having seized on him) "though the effects of wind be very perceivable, yet the wind itself is invisible, we do not see it in its progress; in like manner the

the fruits and effects, which the spirit produces in our lives and minds, are very perceivable, but the spirit itself escapes our senses, we do not certainly know the manner of his operation." Did ever Mr. W. speak more plainly on the point than this? The penitent finding himself a sinner,—that no morality can save him,—by reflection, through grace, his mind is discovered to be in a state of darkness and misery; by a farther examination, conviction encreases,—he prays for power to believe in Jesus Christ—he receives it—he perceives the alteration in his mind—his guilt is removed, and according to the Objector's own words " finds a removal from a state of nature and wrath, to a state of grace, and a death unto sin, and a new life unto righteousness."

P. 68. " He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself. What witness? Is it an immediate revelation of his salvation? Nothing is more foreign to the Apostle's subject. Every one not wilfully blind will acknowledge, that it is the witness which God testified of his Son. God testified of his Son by voices from Heaven, by prophecies fulfilled, by miracles, by raising him from the dead, by various gifts of the Holy Ghost, and by the excellence of his doctrines."

That

That this doctrine is inorthodox—that it has nothing to do with the passage now before us, will appear to every man that is not a determined infidel.—For,

“ All things are yellow to the jaundic'd eye.”

Since the creation of the world, did ever one Commentator so explain this text? Mr. Burkitt on the passage, says, “ The person that believes on Christ as the Son of God, and the true Messiah, is safe, having the testimony of God the Father without him, and the testimony of the Holy Spirit within him. An ingenuous mind may argue for God against the Atheist; for Christ against the Socinian, and for the outward testimony of the spirit of Christ against the Deist; and he himself be no real christian: but no person can well display this inward testimony of Christ in the soul, without the *experience of it.*”

“ The second way by which the spirit of God witnesseth with our spirit, that we are the sons of God, is by enlightening and strengthening the eyes of our mind, as occasion requires, to discover those gracious fruits and effects which God hath wrought in us.” Bishop Bull.

P. 71. “ But farther, as all parties must admit, that St. Paul would not teach a false and absurd doctrine, there is direct proof from the
text

text itself, that he does not refer therein to a direct witness. If he had done so, what would his question be? Know ye not your own selves, that ye have intuitive knowlege of Christ, except ye be reprobates? Now Mr. W. will confess, that no man whatsoever has constantly an intuitive knowlege of Christ. When we consider the infirmity of man's nature, the rest, and other means requisite for preserving life, and the avocations unavoidable in such a world as this; it will appear impossible, that a man could for any length of time support an intuitive knowlege of Christ, or exist under it. But the Apostle's question would imply, that every man who has not this direct witness, must be a reprobate; consequently the most perfect man in the world, as he must be often and for a considerable portion of his time, a reprobate. If he should obtain frequent revelations of Christ, he must be a Saint and a reprobate by alternate starts; and if he dies insensible, or with no intuitive knowlege of Christ, he dies a reprobate, and is lost for ever."

What pains are taken here to establish the idea that God has taken his flight for ever from the earth, and after all his providences to establish the Spirit's dispensation, has left us to learn all and every thing from external evidences, which

Deists

Deists combat with great success, and in some measure become irresistible in their arguments, if the internal and better evidences are not rationally stood by. Respecting the above passage so cruelly tortured, I beg leave to mention the ideas of an eminent Commentator: Know ye not your own selves. " It implies both the folly and the unreasonableness of the neglect of the duty, and also the possibility and easiness of knowing whether Christ be in us, or not, upon a due and diligent enquiry, whether we have experienced the quickening and transforming power of Christ in our hearts and lives." I would ask, does the soul sleep when the body sleeps? Is the soul incapable of enjoyment when the external senses are closed? The very Heathens believed.

Hupna apo tôn theôn. — That dreams were from Jove. Christ says to the true believer, Lo, I am with you always even to the end of the world. Perhaps we shall be told that *always*, means from morning to night, or during the space of the natural day. Many of the antients believed.—*Omnia plena Jovis.*

Ouden Theôn aneu. Nothing is without Deity.

The confining all the benefits of religion to the small period our Saviour was present in the world in his incarnation:—the causing us to rest in the
K
dry

dry deductions of miracles so long since performed:—the attempt to cause us to believe that the enjoyments of internal religion were peculiar to the Apostles and a few more, throw such contempt on the proceedings of the Almighty God, as are impossible to be described. “ Let your soul receive the Deity, as your blood does the air; for the influences of the one are no less vital than the other. This correspondence is very practicable; for there is an ambient omnipresent spirit, which lies as open and pervious to your mind, as the air you breathe does to your lungs. But then you must remember to be disposed to draw it.” Antoninus.

“ If this gracious gift of Heaven should be denied, because it is not to be found to dwell with the wicked, I answer, that men may as well deny the existence of the dew, because it is not often found upon clods and filth, nor even upon grafs, trampled with polluted feet. Let the grace of God be considered as having some analogy, some resemblance to the dew of Heaven; the dew of Heaven, which falls alike upon all objects below it, as the grace of God doth upon all mankind, but resteth not on things defiled. Purity abideth not with pollution.” D. Delany.

P. 72. “ If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his. That is, if any man
have

have not a christian disposition, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, he cannot belong to him. All the observations on the preceding text, are alike applicable to this: but we may add here another observation, the force of which Methodists will not readily obviate. We are assured in Scripture that he that committeth sin is of the Devil, and that all men are subject to his temptation. If now to belong to Christ, and to be under the influence of his grace, it be necessary to have direct knowlege of him; then to belong to the Devil, and to be under his influence, we must have a sight of him also.—Therefore, to preserve consistence, they should add this article to their Creed, that every man who committeth sin has a sight of the Devil.”

According to the explanation elsewhere given, disposition and dispensation are synonymous,—and of consequence the free-thinking system once more nakedly appears. A writer of note on this passage says, “ All sincere Christians have the spirit of Christ, they have him for the blessing of conversion, they have him for the benefit of communion. He dwells in them by his sanctifying impressions, powerful assistances, quickening and comforting influences. He pours in both the oil of grace, and also the oil of joy and gladness into their hearts.”

The writers of the Homily for Whitsunday, say, on this passage, "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Also in the words following, we have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father. "Hereby it is evident and plain to all men, that the Holy Ghost was given, not only to the Apostles, but also to the whole body of Christ's congregation, although not in like form and majesty as he came down at the feast of Pentecost."

As for pride, Saint Gregory saith, it is the root of all mischief. And St. Augustine's judgment is this, that it maketh men Devils. Our Saviour says, by their fruits ye shall know them; so that by this plain and simple rule, we in general may know who belongs to either master. The writers of the abovementioned Homily in speaking of the iniquities of the Popes say, "But as the Lion is known by his claws, so let us learn to know these men by their deeds. What shall we say of him that made the noble King Dandalus to be tied by the neck with a chain, and to lye flat down before his table, there to knaw bones like a dog? Shall we think he had God's Holy Spirit within him, and not rather the spirit of the Devil? Such a tyrant was Pope Clement the first? What shall we say of him that proudly

proudly and contemptuously trode Frederick the Emperor under his feet, applying the verse of the Psalm unto himself: 'Thou shalt go upon the lion and the adder, the young lion and the dragon thou shalt tread under thy foot?' Shall we say he had God's Holy Spirit within him, and not rather the spirit of the Devil? Such a tyrant was Pope Alexander the third. But to conclude and make an end, ye shall briefly take this short lesson, wheresoever ye find the spirit of arrogancy and pride, the spirit of envy, hatred, contention, cruelty, murder, extortion, witchcraft, necromancy, &c. assure yourselves that there is the spirit of the Devil, and not of God, albeit they pretend outwardly to the world never so much holiness." 2 P. H. W.

P. 73. "Hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the spirit which he hath given us. And hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us his spirit. Any unbiaſſed person who will read the third and fourth chapters of St. John's epistle, where those verses occur, will be satisfied that the spirit in those verses, means the spirit or disposition or dispensation of love."

The whole passage shews in the most clear manner the privilege of the believer. His abiding in us certainly implies residence and continu-

ance, settlement and fixedness of abode; there a man dwells where he constantly resides. And hereby we know he abideth in us, by the spirit which he hath given us. Thus it is evident, that the Spirit of God bestowed on us in his sanctifying gifts and saving grace, is an evident sign of God's dwelling in us, and we in him.

P. 76. "Who hath also sealed us, and given us the earnest of the spirit in our hearts. The two sacraments are in general a seal and earnest of the spirit; they are outward and visible signs of an inward and spiritual grace. (To this explanation of the sacraments I have no objection.) Then follows a large quotation from 1 Cor. i. 5, 7. and then explains it thus, "Here is a particular enumeration of many extraordinary manifestations of the spirit, most of which, singly, constituted a sufficient seal and earnest of the spirit to christians in the Apostles days, that all the promises of God in Christ are Yea, and in him Amen."

I would ask, has the sealing in the text any thing to do with the sacraments? Can any man in his senses think so? Bishop Taylor says, "From holiness we have the best instruction. For that which we are taught by the Holy Spirit of God, this new nature, this vital principle within us, it is that which is worth our learning :
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not vain and empty, idle and insignificant notions, in which, when you have laboured till your eyes are fixt in their orbs, and your flesh unfixed from your bones, you are no better and no wiser. If the Spirit of God be your teacher, he will teach you such truths as will make you know and love God, and become like to him, and enjoy him for ever, by passing from similitude to union and eternal fruition." By their being sealed is implied the high estimation of the believers: it implies their safety and security: it implies secrecy and privacy. It is the new name that none knoweth but he that receiveth it. Finally, it means, that the graces of the spirit which sanctify us, do also witness and seal to us the assurance of God's love and special favour in Christ.

P. 78. " Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. This is a very favourite text with the Methodists, and yet it proves by itself, that faith neither is nor can be an immediate perception of any revelation. The word faith from the Greek *πίστις*, signifies belief, persuasion; this is the general acceptance of it in scripture. It is indeed often used for the object of our belief, that is, the gospel at large; but that it is no where used for evidence without any deduction of reason, will be allowed by all who assent to a self-evident proposition."

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The faith that is mentioned here, although not directly the faith that justifies, yet undoubtedly it includes it, for faith justifies only as it refers to and depends on Christ. The explanation of the Greek *πιστις α πειθηδ, persuadeo*, is quite to the point, for this faith is a persuasion, which a man hath, that God for Christ's sake has forgiven his sin. That we are to be saved by faith, and not by worldly wisdom, or the deductions of reason from the external evidences of christianity, is the doctrine of God's word. After a man has experienced the effects of faith,—the gift of God to them that truly repent, he may then exercise his reason in looking to the supernatural change upon his heart, occasioned not by dry reason or logical deductions, but by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.

Page 79. " Faith in the original is called *elpizomenōn hupothesis*, which is translated, substance of things hoped for, but in the margin *hypothesis*, is translated ground or confidence. The marginal reading is in every respect consistent, while the other contains a contradiction. The substance of a thing is the thing itself: if therefore faith be the substance of things hoped for, then faith and the things hoped for must be identically the same, which is manifestly impossible. The things hoped for

for are still in the womb of time, such as the calling in of the Jews, and universal prevalence of the gospel, and a resurrection to life."

The words are only applicable to gospel believers, who having already cast their anchor within the vail,—having found him of whom Moses and the prophets wrote, can say with Isaiah, Oh Lord, I will praise thee, &c. It is to them that faith is the substance of things hoped for, that is, a confident and firm expectation of the good things which God has promised, giving the good things hoped for (dwelling with God for ever, seeing Him even as he is,) a real substance in their minds and souls.

P. 81. " Faith is the evidence of things not seen. The word *elenchos*, which we read evidence, is not to be met with in any other place in the Bible; we must therefore judge from the text itself, whether it means the things themselves which bear evidence, or the evidence and conviction produced in our minds; for the word will bear either of these interpretations."

The whole connection of the passage plainly shews, that there is no such thing hinted at by the Apostle, as the Objector would fondly impose upon us. The Apostle is shewing that a living, operative faith, has been of the same quality through all ages, serving as a sacred ground of
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divine favour to all them that enjoyed it. The word *elenchos* bears several meanings. Argumentum est inficitæ. Isocrat. in Archid. experiri, experimento probare. Apud Plut. in Apol. criminatio. indicium criminis. Synes. de infom. demonstratio.

The blessed Saviour promised his Holy Spirit *elenchein*, to convince the world to the end of time. "God in mercy doth grant to us the virtue of his Holy Spirit; who first opening our hearts, so as to let in and apprehend the light of divine truth, then, by representation of proper arguments, persuading our reason to embrace it, begetteth divine knowledge, wisdom, and faith in our minds." Dr. Barrow.

It is by faith produced in this way, that it becomes an evidence of things not seen,—by which they see the face of the Father reconciled through Jesus Christ.

P. 88. "To give knowlege of salvation to his people by the remission of their sins. There is nothing in those words. but the superficial sound, which can answer the purpose of Methodists."

They answer a better purpose than a superficial sound, for they prove that this forerunner of Christ was to preach the gospel doctrine of salvation through Jesus by faith in him. "The knowlege

knowledge of salvation which he was to give to God's people was, that Christ would be the author of eternal salvation to them that should believe in him, and by the power received in their conversion, obey him ever after in righteousness and holiness of life."

P. 91. "And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come; if they shall fall away, &c. The powers of the world to come, is translated in such a manner as will be apt to mislead injudicious readers. They may imagine that it refers to the state of the righteous in heaven, and therefore that spiritual senses, and a sight of God, which are a part of the powers of that future time, may be here implied: Whereas the time alluded to is the Gospel age, and not that which is to follow the resurrection. The words in the original are *του μελλοντος αιωνος* of the future age; by which expression the Gospel age is characterised in the Septuagint version of Isaiah."

This criticism on the place does not seem greatly to help injudicious readers to a right meaning of the passage. The definition of the Gospel age from the Septuagint version of Isaiah is very proper. But that *ho mellonaiōn*, having commenced in the Apostle's days, it must be some other age or world he refers to, namely first
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of the kingdom of God within them, and then of the kingdom of glory in the world to come. "As every child that is naturally born, first sees the light, then receives and tastes proper nourishment, and partakes of the things of this world; in like manner, the Apostle (comparing spiritual things with spiritual things) speaks of one born of the spirit, as seeing the light, tasting the sweetness, and partaking of the things of the world to come."

P. 98. "For the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned. When Methodists are beaten from one post to another, and find that every other ground is uptenable, they take their last stand behind this text."

When were Methodists beaten from one post to another? By what author? At what time? Although this wanted some proof, there is not a word. The Objector in this, and many more of his sketches, puts me in mind of Alnaschar the Persian glass-man, humorously mentioned by the Spectator.

"From hence he says, 1 Cor. ii. 14. the things of the Spirit of God, which the natural man receiveth not, are the doctrines of the Gospel, and particularly the preaching of the Cross.
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It appears also, that the natural man is the person to whom the Gospel and the doctrines of Christ crucified is foolishness, who expected to see the mysteries of the Gospel proved by eloquent and learned discourses upon principles of natural religion, independent on all miraculous attestations of the Spirit. It is equally plain that the spiritual man is the person to whom the doctrines of Christ crucified is so far from being a scandal or foolishness, that he sees in it the wonderful power and wisdom of God."

If the Scriptures be the criterion of truth, the natural man may come up to the Objector's description of a spiritual man, and after all be a natural man still. He may acknowledge the whole plan of the Gospel. The miracles that were wrought in the primitive days of the church,—present outward evidences,—be moral, and in the mean time be a natural man. The natural man is every person who has not the Spirit, who has no other way of obtaining knowlege, but by his senses and natural understanding. He does not understand or conceive the things of the Spirit,—the things revealed by the Spirit of God, whether relating to his nature or his kingdom. For they are foolishness to him. He is so far from understanding, that he utterly despises them. Neither can he know them: As he has not the

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will, so neither has he the power: because they are spiritually discerned;—they can only be discovered by the aid of that Spirit, and by those spiritual senses, which he has not. So says Bishop Taylor; “There is an inward sweetness and deliciousness in divine truth, which no sensual mind can taste or relish. The *psuchikos aner*, the natural man savours not the things of God. Corrupt passions and terrene affections are apt, of their own nature, to disturb all serene thoughts, to precipitate our judgments, and warp our understandings. It was a good maxim of the old Jewish writers, that the Holy Spirit dwells not in earthly passions. Divinity is not so well perceived by a subtle wit, as by pure sensation.”

P. 100. “Faith (says Mr. W.) is that divine evidence whereby the spiritual man discerneth God and the things of God. Which things are not perceivable by eyes of flesh, or by any of our natural senses or faculties. Accordingly he calls faith the spiritual eye, ear, palate, and feeling of the soul. This doctrine is so curious, that few persons will think he intends to teach them literally, unless they see it farther corroborated by his own words. He writes in the same appeal, It is certainly necessary that you have senses capable of discerning objects of this kind: not those only which are called natural senses;—but spiritual senses

senses, exercised to discern spiritual good and evil. It is necessary that you have a new class of senses opened in your soul, not depending on organs of flesh and blood, to be the evidence of things not seen, as your bodily senses are of visible things; to be the avenues to the invisible world. . . And till you have these internal senses, you can have no apprehension of divine things, no idea of them at all;—nor consequently, 'till then can you either judge truly or reason justly concerning them; seeing your reason has no ground whereon to stand, no materials to work upon.—As you cannot reason concerning colours, if you have no material sight:—so you cannot reason concerning spiritual things, if you have no spiritual sight; because all your ideas received by your outward senses are of a different kind,—yea, far more different from those received by faith or internal sensation, than the idea of colour from that of sound. Thus he sets up a spiritual tyranny over our consciences, more haughty and unlimited than that of the Pope. The Pope denies that any one ought to exercise his private reason in opposition to his church, and Mr. W. says, that without spiritual senses we cannot reason concerning divine things, nor have any idea of them at all; that we are more incapable of discerning spiritual good and


evil, than a blind man is of discerning colours."

Well did our Saviour say of the Scribes and Pharisees, they would not enter in themselves, nor would they suffer others, as far as their interest could reach, to enter into the enjoyment of real religion, by a living faith in God. They strain at gnats, and swallow camels. The Holy Scriptures, as I have proved before, declare we were originally formed in the image of God,—that God breathed into man the breath of life. *Alterum nobis cum diis, alterum cum belluis commune est. Sallust. Bel. Catilin.* The one is of an animal, the other of a divine nature. By sin, man lost the life of God from his soul. In the moment he broke the commandment of God, he died. Though the image of God was lost from the soul, the soul being immortal could not become mortal; yet it suffered infinitely by the transgression. All the passions were thrown into disorder. Man became like the wreck of a former magnificent palace. By this means he became *atheos*, an Atheist. In our doctrine of regeneration, by means of a living faith, we insist not on new powers to be added to the soul, passions, faculties, &c. But as I have represented, man by nature dead in trespasses and in sins,—his passions and powers through the injury of the fall

fall in a state of torpor, ruin and death, 'tis by the operations of *conviction*, and a lively faith in God, that the soul is restored in any measure to the image of God. The remembrance of sin becomes grievous, and the burthen intolerable to be borne: like the dying Israelites in the wilderness looking to the brazen serpent, he simply looks to the Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of the world, and finds salvation in his name. Instead of misery and disturbed passions, he feels the peace of God that passeth all understanding. Strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their *senses* exercised to discern both good and evil. Heb. v. 14.

The Objector attempts to make Mr. W. appear more tyrannical than the pope, for declaring we cannot reason on spiritual things without spiritual senses. He may with equal justice blame Him who spoke as man never spoke, and all orthodox ministers from time immemorial. Our Saviour lays down faith as the grand means of receiving mercy from God. If thou hast faith. Canst thou believe? Thy faith hath saved thee. O woman, great is thy faith, &c. He never says, you have excellently attended the means of grace, you have been very just, regular, well-behaved, you have believed the external signs,

and miraculous attestations, &c.; go in peace, and I will make up the rest.

By the smallest attention to the word of God, we may perceive that there are enjoyments specified to be the believer's portion, that cannot be enjoyed by animal senses. And it is not until he that is the resurrection and the life, moves upon the human mind, that they enjoy this ability, capacitating them for such fruitions as are peculiar to those who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but the Spirit; by which Spirit they are made new creatures; old things are passed away, and now are they light in the Lord. Well, therefore has Mr. W. described the believer as a new creature, with spiritual senses.—That there is as great a difference between death and life, as between a believer and an unbeliever. David talked of seeing God in the sanctuary. Psal. lxxiii. 2. Look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be saved. Then shall they look upon Him whom they have pierced, and mourn. My sheep hear my voice and follow me. John x. 27. The voice of my beloved, &c. Cant. ii. 8. Wisdom uttereth her voice, and calls aloud. He that  of the truth heareth my voice. John xviii. 37. Whoso keepeth the commandment shall feel no evil thing. Eccclus. viii. 5. That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel

feel after him. Acts xvii. 27. Sweet are thy words to my taste. Ps. cxix. 103. And his fruit was sweet to my taste. Cant. ii. 3. And have tasted of the heavenly gift. Heb. vi. 4. Have tasted that the Lord is gracious. 1 Peter ii. 3. Because of the favour of thy good ointments, thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee. Cant. i. 3. Now, I ask, have these Scriptures, as above quoted, any meaning? If they have, do they come under the enjoyment of our animal senses? Or are they to be obtained, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost?

“Ye are wise, O ye great wits, while ye spend yourselves in curious questions and learned extravagancies, ye shall find one touch of Christ worth more to your souls than all your deep and laborious disquisitions. In vain shall ye seek for this in your books, if you miss it in your bosoms. If you know all things, and cannot say, I know whom I have believed, you have but knowlege enough to know yourselves completely miserable. The deep mysteries of godliness, which, to the great *clerks* of the world, are a book clasped and sealed up, lie open before him, (the pious and devout man,) fair and legible, and while those book-men know whom they have heard of, he knows whom he hath believed.” Bishop Hall.

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“ The truth of christianity, is the Spirit of God living and working in it; and when this Spirit is not the life of it, there the outward form is but like the carcase of a departed soul. But the true saving faith, at the same time that it informs the understanding, influences the will and affections; it enlighteneth the eyes of the heart.” Dr. Ridley.

“ For when our reason is raised up by the Spirit of Christ, it is turned quickly into experience; when our faith relies upon the principles of Christ, it is changed into *vision*; and so long as we know God only in the *ways of men*, by contentious learning, by arguing and dispute, we see nothing but the shadow of him, and in that shadow we meet with many dark appearances, little certainty, and much conjecture; but when we know him *logó apophantikó, galéné noerá*, with the eyes of holiness and the instruction of gracious experiences, with a quiet spirit and the peace of enjoyment, then we shall hear what we never heard, and see what our eyes never saw; then the mysteries of godliness shall be open unto us, and clear as the windows of the morning; and this is rarely well expressed by the Apostle. If we stand up from the dead, and awake from sleep, then Christ shall give us light.” Bishop Taylor.

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“ The humble and devout christian being thus satisfied of the necessity of God’s grace, both from his own experience and from the Scriptures, and being assured of the vital influences of this spirit from the promises made unto him in the Gospel, will not be over curious to enquire into the secret and inconceivable manner of its operation. He will choose rather to *feel* these influences, than to understand and explain them, and will not doubt of that power, which, though he cannot give an account of as to the manner of its working, he plainly perceives to be great and marvellous from its mighty and wonderful effects :——When, while the voice of God’s minister preaching the saving truths of the Gospel sounds in his ears, he is sensible of *an inward voice* speaking with greater force and efficacy to his soul, to his understanding, and to his heart ;
Bishop Smalridge.

P. III. “ Mr. W. endeavours to extricate himself from many inconsistencies, by making a distinction between the conditions of present and final justification. This evasion requires little notice, as it is entirely a gospel of his own invention. The Scriptures say not a word respecting any such distinction ; but the same conditions are mentioned throughout, as they are in the two places just recited.” Acts x. 34, 35. Rom. ii. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10.

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The Holy Bible represents unto us a fourfold justification. The first is, *initial*, in order to clear the justice, as well as to magnify the mercy of God. By which all that die in a state of non-age before they come to know the difference between good and evil, whether bond or free, African or European, Asiatic or American, are taken to glory. As in Adam all have died, so in Christ Jesus all are made alive.

The 2d, is a gracious act of God, whereby he pardons and accepts penitent and returning sinners, (rejecting all trust in the arm of flesh, or good works) on account of Christ's righteousness imputed to them, and received by faith, Rom. v. 16. 18.

3d. The justification of believers is manifested and declared to the world, by the good works of believers, James ii. 21, 25.

4th. Justification by the evidence of good works at the great day. It must be clear to every person of an ordinary understanding, that there is a very great difference between the conditions of the last mentioned, and the second in order. The one is an act of God's free mercy, whereby he the just God justifies the ungodly,—ungodly to the very moment of this work being accomplished; the entire condition, faith. The other is justification at the great bar, through the evidence (that

that shall be produced. Who will render unto every man according to his deeds, &c. *Deeds* then will be the rule to direct the Sovereign Disposer in the management of rewards and punishments. "But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For, by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned. Matt. xii. 36. 37. Whose end shall be according to their works. 2 Cor. xi. 15. Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, &c. they rest, and their works do follow them, Rev. xiv. 13. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungred and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Matt. xxv. 34. 35. 36. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad, 2 Cor. v. 10.

P. 113. "No church ever professed Mr. W.'s idea of faith, nor even any set of enthusiasts

asts in any age of christianity, until the present. It was the extent of the boast of all former enthusiasts, that they felt sensibly in them the operation of the Spirit, &c.—Spiritual senses were never heard of amongst them, unless they were used figuratively.”

It has been the general charge of infidels through every age of the world, that the Christian religion,—the love of Jesus in the heart, has been a novel thing. This was the way in the time of Justin Martyr, Polycarp, Arnobius, Ireneus, &c. who wrote the most excellent apologies in clearing the christian doctrines from this charge. Even after Christianity had been settled for some hundreds of years in the world, and was become the prevailing religion, yet this charge still continued. Thus Julian the Emperor, writing to the people of Alexandria, wondered they would suffer these despisers of the religion of their country to be in any place amongst them, and calls christianity the new doctrine that had been preached to the world. Thus of old, they were blamed as the causes of all public calamities,—that for their sakes, vengeance did so often remarkably haunt the Roman empire. If the city be besieged, (says Tertullian) if any thing happens ill in the fields, in the garrisons, in the islands, presently they cry out, 'tis because

cause of the Christians : If the Tiber overflows the walls : if the Nile do not (as 'tis wont) overflow the fields : If the Heaven do not keep its accustomed course : If an earthquake happens : If a famine, or a plague, presently the cry is, away with the christians to the lions. They told the most shocking lyes of them, that they worshipped the sun, the cross, an afs's head, &c. Thus the Objector represents the Methodists as the most cruel monsters that ever lived, worse than the Gnostics, Montanists, Saints of the Roman calendar, in short that no enthusiast in any age, ever came up to their ideas of holiness.— That spiritual senses were never heard of amongst them yet (by the bye) he tells us former enthusiasts boasted that they felt sensibly within them the operation of the Holy Spirit. The ideas of religion as entertained by Mr. W. and the Methodists, were entertained by the Apostles, and Primitive Christians, the Albigenes, Picards, Waldenses, the Reformers, &c. &c.

P. 114. " To such extravagance may men proceed who despise the helm of reason, and constantly provoke their imagination to its utmost stretch. They may even believe that Scripture countenances them in this; for they will never be at a loss for a gospel to their mind, while they explain it by their experience. Yet the serious lo-

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vers of truth and God's word, need not be discouraged. The axe appears laid to the root of superstition in the kingdoms of the earth, and we may be assured, that a like fate is preparing for enthusiasm."

If by superstition, the Objector means an affectionate regard of pastors for their flocks, watching over them, teaching them, visiting them, setting before them a proper example, I fully accede to what he says, as being proved *ipso facto*.

If by enthusiasm the Objector means such barefaced deism as is palmed on us by him, for real gospel,—namely, that we may through external evidences—moral transactions—believing in former miraculous attestations, &c. come to such a situation, "as repentance shall seem unnecessary for any bad action committed, for any good one omitted, or for any remissness whatsoever in the performance of duty."—If by such doctrines as these he means enthusiasm, I do believe a dreadful fate is awaiting it. The Almighty has of late given some evidences of displeasure against infidelity. And a greater infidelity there is not, than denying the vitals of his holy religion. He will ere long arise terribly glorious. He sees that too frequently,

"The hungry sheep look up and are not fed."

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I am persuaded, if we would be cajoled into the Objector's ideas of religion, we might spend all our lives, like the unfortunate Ixion, who attempting to embrace Juno, found nothing but a cloud. Or like Æneas's endeavours to embrace the ghost of his deceased wife.

“ Ter conatus ibi colla dare brachia circum,
Ter frustra comprehensa manus effugit imago.”

But blessed be God, that his holy Scriptures are free for all ! That whilst Scribes and Pharisees make them only a Talmud, a Legend,—a history of what was, we may experience them to be the power of God, and that in them are still contained the WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE !

F I N I S.

