

A
P R O C E S S
IN THE
TRANSILVANIA PRESBYTERY, &c.

CONTAINING :

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|--|---|
| 1st. The charges, depositions and defence in which the defendant is led occasionally to handle the much debated subject of psalmody. | 4th. His belief, and that of his people, concerning the articles of faith, contended between the reformed associate Synod ; and the Synod of New York and Philadelphia. |
| 2d. His reasons for declining, any farther connections with the body to which he belonged. | 5th. An appendix on a late performance of the Rev. Mr. John Black of Marsh creek, Pennsylvania. |
| 3d. His present plan of proceeding, with the pastoral charge. | |

BY ADAM RANKIN, PASTOR, AT LEXINGTON :
KENTUCKY.

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TO THE ASSOCIATE REFORMED SINOD OF
PHILADELPHIA.

REVEREND FATHERS,

I present you with the event of a sore and tedious trial I have endured in defence of principles you have much recommended; and by exemplary virtues, have contributed much to establish and defend.

That the chief shepherd may comfort, and confirm your minds in the truth, and crown your laudable efforts, far above, and beyond all that we can ask or think.

Is the prayer of, Sirs,

Your much obliged, and

obedient humble servant,

ADAM RANKIN.

January 1, 1793.

William Jonstons bio

INTRODUCTION.

Book

Merry Jonstons sub 29 M 188

CANDID READER,

IT grieves me not a little, that my first address should present you with a trite subject of debate. But I hope the Peruser will, in charity believe, the Author's intention was not to commend himself, but to secure the honours of truth, and give his friends somewhat to answer those, who glory in appearance, and not in heart. For that which could not be effected by the combined forces of hell and earth, in the days when our fathers witnessed valiently for the truth, and sealed it with their blood, is peaceably yielded up by the luke-warm professors of the present age.

In the two last centuries, the witnesses for truth had to hold the objects of divine faith, in opposition to the more gross and contradictory precepts and traditions of men, imposed upon them by the church of Rome; and enforced with all the terrors that enraged superstition, or satanical art, could invent. Since that period, and particularly in the present age, the great enemy of the church, hath assumed a milder appearance. Finding the human mind, too much enlightened for receiving the more gross absurdities of the Roman church; or rather discovering from experience, that the blood of the Martyrs was the seed of the church; and that the more she was oppressed by open violence, the more she grew; betook himself to more secret fraud, in attempting to deceive the simple and unwary, by leading their minds, and calling their attention; not indeed, to the oracles of truth; but to that which bears so much resemblance, and carries such an

apparent air of true godliness, as that if it were possible, would deceive the very Elect. How far the enemy have succeeded in this attempt, every one who is not a stranger in Israel, must know. *The Lord hath poured upon us, the spirit of deep sleep; and hath closed our eyes; our prophets, rulers and seers hath he covered. The vision of all, (particularly that portion of the sacred oracles, entitled the book of Isaiah,) is become unto us, as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, read this, I pray thee: he honestly replies, I cannot, for it is sealed.** It is sealed up under the types and shadows of old testament worship, and jewish ceremonies, that I can discover no beauty in it: nor any suitableness to the more glorious or conomy of the gospel church. What then must be done? The book is delivered to him, that is not learned, with repeated supplications, saying, read this, I pray thee: the case is equally bad, as before; he saith I cannot: for I am not learned. Neither the one nor the other, have had their spiritual eyes opened, to behold the beauty of holiness, in those heavenly songs. Deplorable case! There is no alternative; the sacred word must be discarded, and a faint imitation of human art, bearing no proportion to the divine original, substituted in its place. Wearied with the unadorned simplicity of divine instruction, men become enamoured with their own inventions, and the natural eye, beholding no beauty in those things which can only be spiritually discerned: it is not to be wondered at, that we fall in love with those things, which are adapted to our natural perceptions. Deeply impressed with the sin of departing from the means of worship, appointed by divine authority: and knowing the terrors of the Lord, against those who violate his laws, despise his ordinances, or corrupt his worship, we zeal-

* Isaiah, xxix.

lously attempted to persuade men, and boldly withstood them to their face : believing such an innovation, on the comely order of Christ's house, to have a direct tendency to corrupt our worship, and shake the foundation of our faith. I used every exertion in my power, if possible, to stop the growing evil ; but every effort proved abortive, in contending earnestly, for this article of faith delivered to the saints. Instead of redress, my mother's sons were angry, and their wrath waxed hot ; and when they could find no just ground of accusation against me, concerning the kingdom ; they watched for my private halting. Calumnies were spread, and accusations brought against a minister of Christ, without any regard to the rules of his house.

Being thus hardly dealt with, and meeting with such opposition from my brethren, in the defence of truth, and the practice of what I believed to be duty : I was at last, when all hopes of comfortable or safe communication failed me, shut up to the necessity of declining any farther connection with them, and having protested against their proceedings withdrew. And as I had no hope of redress, from a superior judicature in that church ; I found myself obliged to make my appeal to the world, for the justness of my cause, and the rectitude of my conduct : hoping the reader will give me an impartial hearing. while I lay before him the following statement of facts, and present plan of our procedure.

In order to make the reader understand me— I shall begin at the first commencement of the affair, and present unto him, the plan of presbytery, from their first engagement in the business. Finding a rumour among the people, occasioned by the subject of debate. they appointed a committee to sit at Lexington in November, 1761 to take in the complaints of the people, and form

them into charges ; which accordingly was done. And in April, 1792, they cited the accused, to their bar—where the following charges were exhibited against him, as will be seen in their order.

118. CHARGE—"Whereas, Mr. Rankin debarb from the table of the Lord, all persons who acquiesce in Dr. Watts' preface." It is given in as farther part of the charge, by Samuel Blair, that Mr. Rankin said, the Doctor's preface and psalms were all one. A. & B. witnesses. A. being sworn, testifieth, "That at Mount Sion meeting-house, Mr. Rankin being asked, whether Dr. Watts' psalms and preface were all of a piece or words to that purport—Mr. Rankin answered, that the preface set forth what was to follow."

Also B. testified the above.

Defendant. As to the former part, I shall answer hereafter—and as to the latter, I pass it by, as idle, trifling and futile.

2d. Charge—"Mr. Rankin affirmed, that Mr. Rice, is of the opinion that Dr Watts denies the eternal existence of the Son of God." Witnesses, A. & B. Here the accuser knowing it to be a lie, sagaciously concealed his name, and the witnesses summoned, refused to prove the charge and the slander fell upon the committee.

3d. Charge—"Mr. Rankin said, that Mr. Samuel Shanon, is a man of erroneous principle—a dangerous man, and hoped he would not come within the bounds of his people. Given in by Colonel Patterson." Witness, A.

The defendant denies the assertion. The accuser can find but one witness: He cannot have his oath. Then the committee is censurable, for receiving, *an accusation against an elder, at the mouth of one witness**. Moreover it is to be observed, that this saying should have been delivered seven years ago; of which the accused never heard a syllable, till Presbytery appointed the aforesaid committee, to enquire for accusations.

* First Tim. v. 19.

4th. Charge.—Mr. Samuel Blair, presented a letter to the Presbytery testifying, “That, Mr. Rankin charges the body of presbyterian divines with blasphemy and deism.” The said Blair undertakes to support said charges by A. B. C. D. E. F. G. A. being sworn, testifieth, “That Mr. Rankin, at Mount Sion meeting-house, soon after his return from the northward in 1789, charged Dr. Watts, with holding there was a contrast between the old and new testaments; and that he denied the eternal sonship of Jesus Christ; and, that his friends to the northward, were of the same opinion.”

B. being sworn, testifieth, “That Mr. Rankin, at Mount Sion meeting-house, soon after his return from the northward, in the year of 1789, publicly charged Dr. Watts, with holding a contrast between the old and new testaments; and that he denied the eternal sonship of Jesus Christ: which Mr. Rankin, looked upon as blasphemy and deism, and his friends were of the same opinion.”

The other deponents, swore as above.

Deft. That Dr. Watts maintains that there is a contrast between the old and new testaments, is evident from his preface. For in his second sentence, he says. “The gospel brings us nearer the heavenly state than all the former dispensations of God among men.” This, is implicitly maintaining, that the gospel was never preached in any dispensation of God, before the fulness of time. But the absurdity of this, appears, if we look into the perfect law. The apostle is labouring with the Jews, to accept the gospel; and alarms them, by the example of their obstinate fathers—to whom God swore in his wrath, they should not enter into his rest: for, if you despised the same things, that they despise, you must expect, to meet the
 § Heb. iv. 12.

same expulſion: for, unto us was the goſpel preached, as well as unto them. The apoſtle takes it for granted, they all acknowledge the goſpel was preached to their fathers; and they were damned for their unbelief. But we have it poſitively aſſerted in as many words, preached before the goſpel unto Abraham †. In thee ſhall all nations be bleſſed. But if the Doctor has got any other goſpel, than that, which was preached to Abraham; I alledge he is under a very dangerous miſtake concerning his nearneſs to the heavenly ſtate ‡. I marvel, that you ſo ſoon removed from him that called you unto another goſpel, which is not another—but there be ſome that trouble you, and would pervert the goſpel of Chriſt. But tho' we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other goſpel, than that we have preached unto you, LET HIM BE ACCURSED. And as we ſaid before, ſo ſay we now again; if any man, preach any other goſpel unto you, than that we have received, LET HIM BE ACCURSED. This is not a very heavenly ſtate. But if you be Chriſt's, then are you Abraham's ſeed, and heirs according to the promiſe.

The Doctor proceeds to obſerve: "There is a dull indifference; a negligent and thoughtleſs air, that ſits on the face of the whole aſſembly, while the psalm is on their lips; which might tempt a charitable obſerver, to ſuſpect the fervency of their inward religion, and that the very action, which ſhould elevate us to the moſt delightful divine ſenſations, doth not only flattens our devotion, but too often awaken ours regret, and touches all the ſprings of uneaſineſs within us." But, ſurely no tender conſcience would charge the ſpirit of God, with being the author of this hypocrify. But the Doctor is very bold—and ſays. "I have been long convinced, the occaſion of this evil, ariſes from the matter and words given by

† Gal. i. 6. 7. 8. ‡ Gal. v. 8.

the holy spirit—to which we confine all our songs.” And boldly charges the spirit, with falsehood. “Some of them are almost opposite to the spirit of the gospel.” If we have not proven he holds a contrast between the precepts : we have shewn, he maintains it is almost opposite. But he is approaching the point he means to introduce. The next sentence, he says, “It is foreign to the state of the new testament.” Now you observe, he has got another gospel—not the same kind, but almost opposite : not pertinent, but foreign ; but as to circumstances, says he, widely different. I know not, that the matter and words of God, which contain the doctrine of life must change, with our circumstances. If he means by our circumstances, our state of nature, and the steps of regeneration—I think, we stand upon a par with our fathers : but if he means, the present mode of our information, I acknowledge a change. But they present all the same objects of faith, and cannot be foreign—save to the *carnal mind, which cannot discern spiritual things : for if our gospel be hid, it is hid from them that are lost.* But to understand this, more minutely, you will please to observe a few things concerning the tenor of the scriptures. The first book, presents the care of God, in the birth of nations—the second, presents the vine of the gospel, in the seed of Abraham. To whom, in process of time, he exhibited a most tremendous promulgation of the moral law—attended with so terrible a sight, that Israel trembled, Moses quaked, and Sinai mountain shook, for he rode on a cherub with flames, and coals of fire, his pavilion dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies, attended with thunders, lightings and a dreadful sound of the trumpet exceeding loud.

He spake all the words of the law, and wrote them on tables of stone—sanctioned, with *curse*

is he that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them. This inflexible, flaming ministration of death, among other purposes, was designed to shew the exceeding sinfulness of sin—and shut up to the faith of the gospel, which it is true was manifested in the first dispensation, under types and shadows, which served as a schoolmaster to lead, the law condemned victims to the vicarious sacrifice. But suppose they were but a created glory, which had no glory, when compared with the glory they represented, as all other means are but poor, weak, and beggarly, compared with Christ. They were the most lively similitudes, the field of nature could afford, and was a door of communication, made effectual to salvation. It is true, we are not debtors to do the whole law of Moses, but we are in duty bound to read the whole and see the parallel between the type, and the anti-type—and if we have turned to the Lord, as Moses did when he went into the temple, there is neither a veil on our hearts, nor the law; but with the believing Jews, we will find the ceremonies well calculated to illustrate the objects of faith. Let us for example, examine the paschal lamb. *It must be without blemish, to denote his perfection: a male of the first year, to denote his being the first born of every spiritual birth: taken out from among the sheep or the goats—to signify, his being chosen, from among the people: to be kept until the fourteenth day of the same month, to denote the time of his apprehension. And the whole assembly of the congregation, shall kill it in the evening—to signify, the anti-type is slain by his own people: he must not only lay down his life for them—but lay down his life by them. And they shall take of the blood, and strike it upon the two side posts, and on the upper door post of the house, wherein they shall eat it. That they who receive him, have power to become the sons of God:*

and if sons made free from condemnation. *They must eat it in the night* ; to point at our dark state by nature : *roast with fire* ; to point out the torture he endured : *and unleavened bread* ; to signify sincerity : *and bitter hearts*, to point out repentance. *Eat not of it raw nor sodden at all with water* : they must not go about to establish a righteousness of their own ; they must accept him, in the way he has proposed. *But roast with fire, his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof*—you must accept him, in all his offices : nothing shall remain until the morning—you must not procrastinate until the morning of the great day—you must hear his voice to-day : *for that, which remaineth untill the morning shall be burnt with fire*—to signify, they, who do not accept the gospel, in the accepted time, must meet him, a consuming fire in the last day. *They must eat it with their loins girded*—because, they are sojourners : *their shoes on their feet*—because, they must, through many tribulations, enter the promised inheritance : *and their staff in their hands*—to signify, their dependance ; and in haste, to point out the ardour of their affections. It is called, *the Lords passover* ; for he is the author, and finisher of our salvation : he favoured them, when he smote the Egyptians. And many such lessons, they were daily receiving of which we have a small specimen. It is true, we have not many written comments, upon this significant mode of instruction : but they had Moses and the prophets—and above all, the spirit of Christ : the rock in the wilderness ; which was a abundantly sufficient to explain all things to them, and make their contempned little, more than our boasted much, without it. For it produced men of that age, of which we can present no parallel. The favourites were filled with the fulness of God ; rooted, and grounded in love. Behold a cloud of witnesses ! in the eleventh to the

Hebrews. And undoubtedly, it requires the same power of a supernatural spirit, to effect regeneration now, as it did with them. And had we the eye of Omniscience, we would find the impartial eye of justice, equally distributing his favours among his children, in every age. And though least in the kingdom of Heaven, was greater than John, and John greater than all the prophets born of women: it did not signify greater attainments of the glory of God, nor of the knowledge of divinity, or practical piety: but simply of telling glad news concerning *the desire of all nations*.—The prophet said he would come—John said he had come—the least, in the kingdom of heaven, could say it is finished. But will any alledge, the least heir of righteousness, understood more of God, than Moses, Daniel, or Job.

But having viewed the foundation of their faith, laid in Zion, in the days of Moses, Joshua, and the judges: let us examine the superstructure; and we shall find, the prophets and the apostles, all built on the same foundation—and that we, who in time past, were far off, whom the Lord called—are only grafted, in that same good olive; and made *fellow citizens of the former saints, and of the household of God*. That they without us, could not be made perfect; in whom all the building, is fitly framed together, groweth unto a holy temple, in the Lord. In whom we also are builded together, for an habitation for God, through the spirit. Now you observe, this spirit of the new testament, was given by Jesus, sealed and applied by his spirit, to the fathers—and produced as great divines, as ever walked in the light of his countenance since that time. To evidence this: let us examine the depths of their discoveries, which they appeared to practise. David wrote a system of divinity, having all the articles contained in the word of God, from Genesis, to the Revelations. I assert this, in op-

position to Soame Jenyns' deistical system : falsely called, his internal view, of the evidence of christianity. Maintaining, "That Jesus Christ, in the book called the New Testament, has given us a system of morals, entirely new : both with respect to the object and doctrine; not only infinitely superior, but altogether unlike any thing that ever entered the mind of man." My proposition is established from the infallible oracle ; and his will fall of course, and his blinded adherents with him—of whom there are not a few pretended spiritual guides. Paul tells us what was the object of his faith, positively *. *But this I confess unto you, that after the way, which they call heresy—so worship I the God of my fathers ; believing all things which are written in the law, and the prophets—that is the ten commandments, and the character, and doctrine of Jesus.* But lest any should say, he had a new gospel besides : we have his positive assertion, when he makes his defence before Agrippa †. *I have continued unto this day, witnessing unto small and great, saying none other things than those, which the prophets, and Moses did say, should come.* And tho' he taught none other doctrine, than Moses and the prophets : he tells us, in his appeal to the church, in Miletus : *I have kept nothing back, that was profitable unto you—for I have not shuned to declare unto you, the whole counsel of God.* Now if he declared unto us the whole counsel of God—he preached all that Christ and the other apostles taught—for he kept back nothing that was profitable—yet says he—*I taught no other doctrine than Moses and the prophets.* Now, where did Soame Jenyns, Watts and our modern divines find a new gospel ? Not within the word of God, but without. Nor is it another gospel, but only a subversion of ours. But the system given by the sweet psalmist of Israel (seeing it is

* Acts, xxiv. 14. † Acts, xxvi. 22.

contained in this canon) would not suit the modern christians. It is widely different, and altogether foreign, and almost opposite to the spirit of the new gospel. This I make no doubt of—for if men should form a new Bible, as they have formed a new gospel, they would make it hold forth a new spirit—granting licentious indulgence, and a little more plain to be understood. And why not their own psalms? That they may sing with the understanding independently, with a spirit they have at command. Yea, I aver, there is not one article of faith and practice contained in the whole word of God, but is perspicuously in David's epitome of the Bible—and the summary of God's providences, concerning his church, to give the greater sanction to the whole. And sure the church of Christ, have sufficient warrant to celebrate his praise in the words of David, and Asaph, including the words of Heman and Moses, for they made them their own, by adopting them into the book of Psalms, and setting their names to the whole. But we prove it again in Paul's epistle to the Colossians. Let the word of Christ dwell richly in you, in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, which signify doctrine pared down into poetry—and hymns, which signify providences moulded in poetic stile—and spiritual songs, which signify, practical exercise, fitted for singing. Originally answering to Mismorum, Tehelim and Shirim, the three names of David's psalm book. Thus we conclude, the ancient saints built upon the same foundation of the apostles—*Christ Jesus, their chief corner stone.* And the man who cannot discern, this foundation called the body of Christ, in assaying to communicate, in the Lord's supper, *must eat and drink judgment to himself*†. And had not I a sufficient warrant, to debar such from the ta-

† 1 Cor. xi. 29.

ble of the Lord? And here, I acquit myself of the first charge, according to promise *.

But as our Doctor approaches nearer the point in hand, he introduces it with saying, "Hence it comes to pass, that when spiritual affections are excited within us, and our souls are raised a little above this earth, in the begining of a psalm, we are checked on a sudden, in our ascent towards heaven, by some expression, most suited to the days of carnal ordinances: and fit only to be sung in a wordly sanctuary." Now because this sentence, is as exceedingly dangerous, as it is grossly erroneous: the reader will bear with me while I attempt to strip of its false gloss.

First. We shall enquire, who raises these spiritual affections. It is the mere creature man, by a strenuous exertion of all his nervous system—fabricating vague, interpretations of sacred things—swelling the imagination, to an eminent conceit of high attainments, that he can say, *stand off for I am holier than thou? I am not like you publican: I have done so, and so—I have never transgressed his commandments at any time; at least for so many years: for all these I have kept, from my youth up. I think little wonder that such devotion, should meet with a sudden check from the word of God: for there is not a line there, to suit his taste †. Behold all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks; walk, in the light of your fire, and in the sparks which you have kindled: this shall ye have of my hand: ye shall lie down in sorrow.* But is it the power of Jesus Christ, by his word and spirit, who raises spiritual affections within us? No doubt the kingdom of God, is come unto us, whatever opposition we meet with, from our unruly tempers (for evil is present with us): surely, there will be no repulsion, on Gods side—neither in his

* See page 5. † Isaiah, l. 11.

spirit, or word. *The words of God are pure—his law is perfect, and makes wise the simple. And all scripture is given, by inspiration of God—and is profitable, for doctrine for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness—that the man of God, may be perfect, thoroughly furnished, unto all good works.*

But, the fallacy of this deistical system, will appear the more absurd, if we observe with what art he attempts to deceive his reader. This sudden repulse from heaven, is charged upon some expression, most suitable to the days of carnal ordinances—and fit only, to be sung in a worldly sanctuary. The passage alluded to is in the Epistle to the Hebrews *. I will grant to my antagonist, *Jesus has obtained a more excellent ministry—by how much also, he is a mediator, of a better covenant, or dispensation, which was established upon better promises †. The first was not faultless, because it did not give so manifest a view of the propitiation, as when he had been actually exhibited ‡. The new, being a brighter manifestation, made the first old, and so is ready to vanish away. It is a fainter light, and was appointed for no other purpose, but to give light, and is nowhere opposed to that light, however far it tends to elucidate it. Wherefore, it can never darken our sight of the Saviour—and this is the apostles reasoning, in the very verse alluded to, then, or at that time, verily—for it cannot, be called in question. The first, had also ordinances of divine service—it pointed at all the substances, of things hoped for—it was the same, for substance and nature, as the second: and by the application of the spirit, was as effectual to salvation, and the exceeding eternal weight of glory, as any means that ever followed. But it must be granted, it was attended in its outward court, by a*

* Heb. ix. † Heb. viii. 6. ‡ Heb. viii. 13.

worldly *sanctuary*—that is, by exhibitions from natural things, called carnal ordinances: because flesh and blood was ordained, to be offered, as a type of Christ's flesh and blood. Now, can any man in his senses boldly assert, that every sentence in David's psalms, that, in any measure alludes to those types or figures, which were made at that time effectual to salvation—has a natural tendency to debar an ascent to heaven, and darken the believers sight of God his saviour: merely because the vail is taken away, by the coming of Christ: and we behold the parallel between the type, and the anti-type, with the greater perspicuity. Thus, the two sister churches are formed in one spirit, in Christ, their alone head, and by a sweet coalition, join to celebrate the honours of their victorious conqueror: shouting, grace, grace from the foundation, to the cap-stone—this to a peaceful lover of truth, presents an increasing weight of glory.

But our Doctor of Divinity, has not this, as his only charge, against the works of the holy Ghost. He comes on, to maintain a contrast between the precepts of morality. Now modes of instruction, are subject to variation, though he must be an absurd tutor, that makes use of any means, which would darken the sight of his pupil. To use contradictory means, to obtain the same end, must be deemed an absurdity in teaching divinity. That, which stands in contrast with laws of morality: that eternal law of righteousness, is justly deemed iniquity, that abominable thing, which the Lord hates. But all this is laid at wisdom's gate—and if so, God makes laws, to violate laws: or dispenses in this case with that, which, is the unalterable rule of righteousness, in every other instance.

Says our Doctor, "While we are kindling into divine love, by the mediations of the lov-

ing kindness of God, and the multitude of his tender mercies—within a few verses some dreadful curse against men, is proposed to our lips; *that God would add iniquity unto their iniquity, nor let them come into his righteousness: but blot them out of the book of the living**. WHICH IS SO CONTRARY TO THE NEW COMMANDMENT, OF LOVING OUR ENEMIES." This is so mysterious a contradiction, that our Divine can give no solution, but referring it, to the spirit of prophetic vengeance: and then, as he makes it an iniquity, he lays it upon the spirit. There is such a compound of absurdities, it requires time to unfold them.

First. It is supposed, that in his new gospel, Christ had destroyed the law and the prophets.

Secondly. That there is nothing to kindle love, but meditations of the loving kindness of God, and the multitude of his tender mercies.

And lastly. That every sentence of penalty pronounced against the finally impenitent, is contrary to the new commandment. But, without aggravating his unutterable incongruity, we propose to shew, the spirit just when he speaks—and clear, when he judges. The Redeemer, in union with his consort, who are fellow sufferers, in many respects: and who shall be, fellow judges †, is in this psalm, representing to his church, the sufferings he endured, for her redemption—and that, *she must take up her cross ‡, and fill up the remainder: to give ocular demonstration, of the truth of godliness, for the conviction of some, and a testimony, against others.* But, that she might learn of him, where to divert her call, in time of trouble—he makes his address to God his father. *Reproach, hath broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness.* This points at the wrath

* Psalms, lxi. 27. † Psalms, xxii.

‡ Gal. vi. 14. Heb. xi. 26. 2 Tim. ii.

of God, and man that he endured—*his soul is exceeding sorrowful. They gave me gall for my meat, and in my thirst, they gave me vinegar to drink.* Thus he spoke in the preterite tense—because, he was a lamb slain from the foundation of the world—and was literally fulfilled with us*. *Let their table become a snare, before them; and that, which should have been for their welfare; let it become a trap: let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see; and make their loins, continually to shake.* These supposed iniquitous imprecations, the improver of David's psalms (as if the workmanship of the holy spirit, was imperfect, and needed his assistance, in refining) has discarded. But this, is his infirmity, and was never required at his hand. *I did not command it, neither entered it into my mind.* But the passage receives credit from the Apostle, in his Epistle to the Romans†. *And David saith, let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling block, and a recompense unto them. Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back always.* Nor is it the least mollified, when fulfilled, with all its dread realities: for they stumbled, at that stumbling stone—and God has never opened their eyes, until this day*. *Pour out thine indignation upon him, and let thy wrathful anger take hold upon him.* This is fulfilled, in the Epistle to the Thessalonians‡. *Let their habitations be desolate, and let none dwell in their tents*§. For it is written in the book of Psalms—*let his habitation be desolate*||. For they persecuted him, whom thou hast smitten, they talk to the grief of those, whom thou hast wounded. This speaks directly of Christ, in union with his Church; the first, in the singular number, him; the second, in the plural, these**. *Add iniquity*

* Psalms, lxi. 22. 23. § Rom. xi. 9. 10.

† Psalms, lxi. 24. ‡ 1 Thess. ii. 16

|| Acts, i. 20. ** Psalms, lxi. 26.

to their iniquity—and let them not come, into thy righteousness. This was not a spirit of avenging wrath in David, against his personal enemies—but a dreadful truth, fulfilled, as you have it recorded, in the Epistle to the Romans*. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, to the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies. This is adding iniquity to iniquity; for it is actually said, the rest were blinded: for in the same verse, they did not attain that they sought for; therefore, let them not come into his righteousness—let them be blotted out of the book of the living. This is the inseparable consequence of the former. Thus we find, what Doctor Watts says, is contrary to the precepts of the new commandment, is found to receive credit, in the New Testament. It must then appear, our Divine has another gospel still, or misconstrues, the one we have; for it is manifest, he understood not the new commandment. All the law is fulfilled, in one word: thou shalt love thy neighbour, as thyself. This is spiritual, and includes the center, foundation and cape stone of the whole. Now, holiness is love, to pure objects; and it would be impossible for God to love an unholy being, otherwise, than viewing him through the mediator; and see his own likeness in the fulfilment of all morality. God only requires us to love as he did; be ye holy as I am holy; that is, with a love of benevolence, a love of beneficence, and a love of complacency: these, God pours upon those, whom he hath chosen: but all others are hated of him. Jacob have I loved; but Esau have I hated. But if pronouncing inevitable judgments of God, against the impenitent, be contrary, to the new commandment, how do we find the apostles breathe the same denunciation? *If any man, love not the*

* Rom. i. 24. § Rom. xi. 7.

*Lord Jesus, let him be Anathema Marantha, id est. Let him stand accursed, till the Lord shall come to judgment. Alexander the copper-smith, did me much harm : the Lord reward him according to his works. Again, he says, I would they were cut off who trouble you. But carnal minds, often do not distinguish between the righteous judgments of God, which Christ himself, hath spoken, by the prophets ; and cursing our neighbour, for personal affronts. How shall such expect to sit with Christ, in judgment, and pass sentence, against angels and men ? But one word serves as a solution, for all. By the new commandment, is understood, the moral precepts, as they respect, God and man. And is the law of Moses and the prophets ; of which there shall in no wise pass away, one jot or tittle, but all be fulfilled. By way of eminence, it is termed, a new commandment ; because, it is not subject to grow old. This is a Hebrew expression : for that which waxeth old, is ready to perish. But this is all the law and the prophets ; thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself *. As it is our act, we are to be possessed of a love of benevolence and beneficence, to all men—but especially, to the household of faith. But as to a love of complacency, it is impossible for God, or christian, to exercise towards a sinner in his wickedness. And, when they become notorious opponents to the interest of Christ's church, he will make interest against them. And so did his prophets†. Wot you not, what the scripture saith of Elias, how he maketh intercession to God, against Israel ? Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars ; and I am left alone ; and they seek my life. We do not find his intercession offensive—but he is comforted, with information, of a goodly number, who were reserved under the election of Grace, and the rest were*

* Lev. xix. 18. † Rom. xi. 12.

blinded. Such language was common to the apostles, as we mentioned before. *Alexander the copper-smith, did me much harm—the Lord reward him according to his deeds. And I would they were cut off who trouble you, &c.*

I humbly conceive, there is nothing found among the children of God, more acceptable, than to live so godly, as to be like God, to such a degree, that the reproaches cast on God, will fall on them—and to be so much one, with Christ, that their wills are made one. *I hate them with a perfect hatred, that enemies are to thee.* But, to be so much more merciful than God, that they durst not repeat the words of Christ—because he cannot curse whom he curses : but they must love and pray, for the finally impenitent, is to be as much overly merciful, as they are *overly righteous*, in their zeal without knowledge : when they wonder in their own counsels, and go about to establish a righteousness of their own ; and will not submit to the righteousness of Christ. But an easy solution may be given, for all this party zeal. It is to be feared, they do not belong to the number of the godly and the intercession is made against themselves—and like the chief priests and pharisees, they perceive he spake of them : wherefore they sought to lay hands on him||. Read the promise to the godly in this world, and that which is to come, in the hundred and twelfth psalm—and observe how the wicked will take it. In the last verse, *the wicked shall see it, and be grieved : he shall gnash with his teeth and melt away.* But again, it is disgracing their beloved idols. Their hearts and souls are centered on the gratification, of their beloved lusts : and if you put forth your hand, and touch them, *they will curse you to your face* : wickedly suggesting God, is like themselves, and approves their sin. But the defendant asserted, that holding a contrast between the moral precepts, is blasphem-

|| Math. xxi. 45.

mons and deistical. This in a certain qualified, sense, I maintain : but as we are about to treat so deep, and mysterious a point of divinity, our words should be few and well chosen, and yet explicit—lest we wound the feelings of many tender and conscientious children, and should appear censorious, in passing judgment. The word blasphemy, is derived from *blaptein phemen*, and signifies, by ignominious treatment, either in word or deed, to injure, the authority, or influence of another. Now this iniquity is aggravated, in proportion to our information, and the dignity of the person defamed. If there is no proportion between the defamer and the defamed—there is no iniquity committed. E. G. When Christ said to the fig tree ; *let no fruit grow on thee* : which his disciples justly called cursing—and it withered, and died : it was done with perfect innocence : because, there was no proportion between Christ, and the fig tree—and therefore, he had perfect authority, to do with it as he would. When God speaks of the destruction of wicked Sennacherib*. *Behold I will send a blast upon him, and I will cause him to, fall by the sword in his own land.* There was no iniquity in this—for there was no proportion between the persons. Or when a person, has forfeited all right to his existence, and justly exposed himself, to the penalties of the law, for authority to speak, or act against him, so as to injure his power, or influence—this reproach is innocent, in the persons who denounce the sentence. *Cursed be Canaan, for a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.* Cursed be he that confirmeth not, all the words of this law to do them—and all the people shall say, amen†. This defaming is innocent. But if we reproach a superior, the iniquity is proportioned to our knowledge, and the dignity of the per-

* *Isai.* xxxvii. 7. † *Deut.* xxvii. 26.

to be defamed*. *He that curseth father or mother, shall surely die†. Thou shalt not revile the God's, nor curse, the ruler of thy people : which is termed blasphemy in the first book of Kings. || Thou didst blaspheme God and the King. But still it is more heinous to reproach the providence of God, as Israel did† : Ye murmured in your tents, and said, because the Lord hated us, he brought us forth out of the land of Egypt, to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites, to destroy us ; for which, the wrath of God waxed hot ; and he swore, they should not enter into his rest. David terms such conduct, blasphemy. But it is still more heinous, when the blasphemy is levelled at the means of grace. This is termed the name of God : because, by this he made himself known. James, speaking of the rich, says, do they not blaspheme that worthy name, by which ye are called? A juster record is not found in the word of God, than, that rich men, think it beneath them, to honour the means of grace. But every degree of contempt, on his ordinance, or faithful servants, is blasphemy indirectly against him. He that despiseth you, despiseth me ; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.*

But of all the ordinances of God, there is none administered, with a purity in any measure proportioned to the written word. For all scripture is given by inspiration. *The words of the Lord are pure words ; as silver tried in a furnace of earth seven times.*

It is recorded of the beast of Rome, characterized by seven heads, that during his reign, he was wont to blaspheme‡. *And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name,*

* Exod. xxi. 17. § Exod. xxii. 28.

|| 1 Kings, xxi. 10. † Deut. i. 27.

‡ Rev. xiii. 6.

and his tabernacle. Therefore, to blaspheme the word of God, is more criminal, than to blaspheme his ordinances, or any of his officers. But, that this is not only possible, but probable, observe the direction Paul gives Titus*, *that the aged women should teach the young women, to be chaste keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands—that the word of God be not blasphemed.* Now I affirm, that for any to say, that any thing dictated by the spirit of God, in the old testament, is opposite to the spirit of the new, is blasphemous—for both testaments were dictated by the same spirit, and cannot be opposite to each other. Nothing is a stronger support for deism, than to set the word of God, at odds against itself. To break the harmony of the scriptures, is, to reproach them—and to reproach the word of God, is to blaspheme it—and all such ignorant and bold blasphemers, and revilers of the word of God, are justly condemned by it: and so had no right of admission to the Lord's table.

But secondly. I maintain, it is deistical. All that ever a deist required, to destroy divine revelation, was to divide it against itself: and to make it appear, there was a contrast in it: knowing, *a house divided against itself, must fall.* And as there is not a more important doctrine in the word of God, than the precepts of morality, to hold a difference, is the boldest step of deism.

To supplant the word of God, by traditions of men, is beyond contradiction, deistical; which properly signifies, the heresy of those, who deny revealed religion. Therefore, I lay down this proposition, which I propose to demonstrate, That Dr. Watts' proposed mode of worship, partakes of the heresy of those, who deny revealed religion. The Doctor says, in his large

* Tit. ii. 4. 5.

preface : "That if a wise man should lead the devotion, he would never make use of more than four or five and twenty select pieces of David's psalms, suppose the whole hundred and fifty lay before him. And that of twenty four different versions, with which he was well acquainted, he thinks he excelled them all, in keeping at the greatest distance from the original." As if he detested every thing that partook of the nature of inspiration—and many other such like execrable hints. This, I maintain is deistical. Is it not renouncing the worship performed by revealed precepts?

The natural consequence will serve for a comment, and amount to invincible proof: for when ever the word is made void by human precepts, which will ever be the case, when they are suffered to supplant it, the force and fire of principle will be extinguished. The soul will be launched into an unlimited ocean. The most sublime means simply considered, will have no power of government, and the mind must be tossed by every fervile wind, and consequently perish in the abyss of eternal ruin. At first it broke off from the root, by the force of carnal reason, objecting against some seeming difficulties arising from divers dispensations—But rejecting the counsel of God, because to them unintelligible, they foundered all in the depths of misery. Therefore, it was, that notwithstanding this idolatry is so copiously prohibited, in the second commandment, the scribes and lawyers, who were ambitious of *the praises of men*, at the expence of divine revelation, and the souls of their fellows, fabricated forms and precepts, for the people—and enjoined it upon them, as if they had a divine warrant, for their practice. Hence we observe, when the chief shepherd came, he found his church replenished, with these soul ruining corruptions.—

And before he could proceed to do any one thing to purpose, he is necessitated, in his first sermon on the mount, to fulfil the prediction of his harbinger, John—*he shall baptise you, with the Holy Ghost—whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor; and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff, with unquenchable fire, viz.* These false glosses and traditions of men, which rendered the word of none effect. He removes five false glosses and an absolute tradition.

1st. They had taught, murder was confined to wilful manslaughter, or the killing a person with malice propense. But he taught, it extended to anger and sarcasms—and that to say, *thou fool* endangered hell-fire.

2d. That adultery could not be committed, but by the basest act—forgetting Job's covenant. But he let them know, that the lustful eye should be plucked out, or both eyes should be cast into hell-fire.

3d. That what was suffered for the hardness of their hearts, was an excuse for their sin—but both the hard heart and the wicked action, was their iniquity. As they had been told by the prophet Malachi: *I hate putting away, saith the Lord.*

4th. They had a tradition from their rabbies, that they should not forswear themselves; as if they might swear as often as they would, and by what they pleased, if they performed their vows. But he let them know, they should not swear by any thing except the name of the Lord, and should never take that in vain.

5th. They were wont to misconstrue the laws of Moses, concerning the penalties of murder. Ye have heard it hath been said, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth—this was never a

* Math. v. § Job, xxxi. 1.

law in Israel, that if one man smote out the eye or tooth of his neighbour, that he had a right to rise, and smite out the eye or tooth of his antagonist. But, it was left to the determination of judges, in case of murder, to take life for life; which was every eye for every eye, and every tooth for every tooth, which was only an explicit mode of presenting the equity of the law.

Lastly. They had an absolute tradition. *Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.* This was never an injunction, nor divine precept contained in the word of God. Love was the fulfilling of the whole law. Nay, instead of hating our enemy, the law of Moses enjoined mercy to an enemy's ox or ass. If thou meet thine enemy's ass or his ox, going astray, thou shalt surely bring him back to him again. If thou see the ass of him that hateth you, lying under his burden, and wouldst forbear to help him, (that is, if your inclination would prompt you to let him suffer, you, instead of gratifying that malice, have my divine command for it) thou shalt help with him. *Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart: thou shalt not in any wise, rebuke thy neighbour and not suffer sin upon him,* (though our moderns call this charity, to suffer sin upon them, and flatter them in it too, which is as gross an interpretation of the word charity, as any thing Christ found in his church, when he came to purge his floor, and burn the chaff of Jewish traditions, with unquenchable fire). Thou shalt not avenge or bear any grudge against the children of thy people. *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.* This is equal to the golden rule, do unto all men, as you would they would do unto you. It was grossly wicked, to charge the spirit of God with giving such precepts of malice, when they were not suffered to use cruelty, to the smallest

animal. If a bird's nest chance to be before thee in the way, in any tree, or on the ground—whether they be young ones, or eggs, and the dam be sitting upon the young, or upon the eggs, thou shalt not take the dam with the young; but thou shalt let the dam go, and take the young to thee, that thou mayest prolong thy days. If God does not in this place take care for birds, of which not one can fall to the ground, without his fatherly care, he surely intends by it, to illustrate that benign spirit, which is essential to the children of his kingdom—and to which, the blessing of long life, is promised.

Objection. Does not the sweet psalmist of Israel declare, I hate them with a perfect hatred—I count them mine enemies*?

Answer. This mode of detaching and wresting scripture, from its natural socket, is the direct way that sinners frame principles to their own destruction. Examine the context, verse 19, *surely, thou wilt slay the wicked, O God: depart from me, therefore, ye bloody men: since temporal judgments, and eternal ruin, is the portion of wicked men: since they keep instruments of cruelty in their habitations. Oh! my soul, come thou not, into their secret, unto their assembly; my honour, be thou not united: for they speak against thee wickedly, and take thy name in vain—as I cannot set, nor endure any wicked thing to be before my eyes. I must hate the works of them that turn aside, lest it cleave unto me, verse 21, do not I hate them, (that is their spirit or practice), O Lord, that hate thee? For it is true, I hate and deny myself, as to my depraved nature—therefore it is, I am grieved with those that rise up against thee. All this is expressing his love to holiness, and aversion to sin. I hate them, viz. that body of sin that appears visible about them,*

* Psalms, cxxxix.

with a perfect hatred : I count them mine enemies : their company is pernicious. And certainly this is perfectly consistent with the New Testament*. If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. Having purged his church from these errors, in principle, he proceeds in the next chapter, to discover their errors, in practice : for when they had established a religion of their own, in order to give it the more weighty sanction, they effected excessive zeal, and were offensively ostentatious, and censoriously wicked, against all, who would not bow down to their imitation they had set up†. And as the Redeemer knew, it was incompatible with the spirit of his kingdom, he must declare the truths of God, concerning this matter. I, therefore, refer the reader to the passage, while I make a few observations. They gloried much in their wealth, and their charity, and when they gave their amls, they sounded a trumpet before them in the synagogues, and in the streets that they might have glory of men. With this I cannot charge the present age. Query. Is it want of charity, or secrecy, that prevents the left hand from knowing what the right hand doth ? And when they prayed, they loved to stand, in the synagogues, and the streets, that they might be seen of men. As to this hypocrisy, we have new modifications—though they enter their closets, and pray in secret, they straightway come and proclaimed on the house tops, all their experience. Not that they may be seen of men—but that the world shall hear, and know, that they have all the religion****. No doubt but they are the people, and wisdom shall die with them. I said they are God's, for they have made them laws, and de-

* Luke, xiv 26. † Mark. vii. 4i

mand sanctions : but they shall die like men.— They used vain repetitions, like the heathen, and thought they should be heard, for their much speaking. Perhaps they took to, unorganized meetings, in large societies—and bawling, and crying aloud, *Lord, Lord*, as if their God was asleep, or on a journey, or busied in talking. *Be not ye, therefore, like unto them, for your father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.* They were detestable in their fasts, making a sad countenance, distorting, or disfiguring their faces—that they might appear unto men, to be exceedingly tortured in mind, or mortified in spirit : that they might give the greater sanction to their teachers, and the new laws they had set up to themselves, in his sanctuary : and to be esteemed excessive holiness, to the Lord. *Verily they shall receive the greater damnation.* Their eye was evil, their light was darkness. How great shall their eternal darkness be ? They were awfully censorious, for altho' they had a beam in their own eye, and never saw one ray of pure morality—they pretended, they could see a mote in a brother's eye. Thou hypocrite, first cast the beam out of thine own eye, and then thou shalt see clearly, to cast the mote out of thy brother's eye

Many of these hypocrites shall come to him with the same spirit, they live, saying, *Lord, Lord*, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils, and have eat and drunk in thy presence, on sacramental occasions, and in thy name have done many wonderful things. These shall not enter his kingdom : but those who have done the will of his father—they are only those, who have heard his saying and done them—that build the house upon a rock that cannot be shaken.

But these sacrilegious robbers, who teach the

fear of God, by the precepts of men—defile his house—the place of the soles of his feet, where he dwells, even his holy name, by their whoredoms; in their setting up their threshold by his thresholds, and their post by his posts: making a wall between him and them—they have even defiled his holy name, by their abominations, which they have committed, and for this cause, God consumed them in his anger*.

Now, if we will examine the Evangelist †, we will find him contending for his authority against this practice, with the rabbies and pharisees, where traditions originated. There was a fraternity of them, who from a high conceit of their superior sagacity, termed themselves rabbies, masters and fathers—and were wont to construct new precepts, consonant to their heterogeneous systems, and bind these heavy burdens, grievous to be borne, and lay them on mens' shoulders: but they themselves, will not move them, with one of their fingers. All this work they do, to be seen of men, and to be called rabbi, rabbi; but my disciples, to whom I commit the government of my people, you must not be like them, nor ever assume the province God has reserved in his own power. It belongs to you to be like Moses, faithful as a servant, in the mysteries committed to your trust, without lording over the conscience of men: for one is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren, standing upon a perfect level, subjects of my laws. And ye my people, I have a word to you—call no man your father, upon earth, in point of constructing laws, for your worship.

If even my disciples, should assume that prerogative, pass it by with contempt, and I shall bear you innocent—for one is your father, which is in heaven, and all the teachers and the taught are

* Ezek. xliii. 8. † Math. xxiii. 8. 9. 12.

children. Neither be ye called masters—for one is your master, even Christ. All men know, this was not dissolving the relationship of master and servant, in servile connections. But in point of laying heavy burdens, upon the consciences of men—called by the apostles, traditions, which you find severely reprimanded, in the seventh of Mark, &c. as subversive of all divine authority, and dilannulling the power of revealed religion. The sum of what we have offered, is, that Jesus Christ, treated the false glosses, traditions, and precepts of men, as ridiculous, and pernicious to the purity of divine government, and tenets that denied the scripture authority—and therefore deistical. From what has been said, the following conclusion is self-evident: that as Doctor Watts, has assumed the liberty of dictating what men shall actually and audibly say to God, in their praises, opposing his precepts to divine authority, and preferring his compositions to the inspired oracles, which are the alone objects of saving faith—surely I was justifiable in saying, such sentiments partake of the heresy of those who deny revealed religion, and therefore deistical. Without faith it is impossible to please God—and he that doubteth is damned: but human compositions are not the proper grounds for a divine faith, and ought never to be substituted in the place of the infallible word. And for any man, or set of men, to treat such a precious portion of it as David's psalms are, with reproach and contempt in saying, “except four or five & twenty select pieces, a wise man would not condescend to make use of”—is certainly an indignity done to the words of truth and soberness which cannot be too severely censured. But for doing so, presbytery passed sentence of condemnation against me.

Now by way of corollary, I make this solemn protest unto the world, founded on sufficient au-

thority, that except God shall, in mercy, turn us back unto the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself, being the chief corner stone, the place where the church stood, in the days of her purity; when she sealed the truth with her blood §, we shall inevitably entail infidelity and irreligion upon ourselves, and our posterity. Such manifest departure from divine institutions, and such contempt of the word of God as we are chargeable with, cannot fail to bring down the vengeance of Omnipotence on our guilty heads. But men will say, this is bigotry, and nothing else than the censorious language of prejudiced minds. Let us then look into the perfect law of liberty, and behold the verdict of honouring wisdom. Our elder sister the Jewish church fell thro' unbelief, and we stand but by faith, in the divine testimony. Now if we loose our faith, in the word, which is laid aside, or rendered of none effect, where we receive human compositions in its place, and give the latter a preference, to the former—shall not we be in danger, of losing a supreme regard to the whole of revelation, and become so fond of our own inventions, that we shall at last, loose all standing, on the sacred word which ought ever to be, the alone foundation of our hope : and when God in righteous judgment, leaves us thus to wander, in our own counsels, what must we expect, but that the vials of his wrath, if mercy prevent not, shall be poured out upon us until we are consumed ? But such as discern these things, and mourn over them, as

§ You will please to observe, an excellent clue to find a pure creed to the analogy of faith, in the system left us on record, by the covenanted church of Scotland—which, without contradiction, was, as to time and circumstances, most accurately described by the prophets Daniel and John.

the evil omens, of our times—or endeavours faithfully to testify against them, are held in derision: they are men wondered at, are censured as narrow minded bigots, or blinded enthusiasts: Yet my prayers shall be, in their calamity, hoping for better things and things, which accompany their salvation, tho' we thus speak—for, since I speak against them, I do earnestly remember them still; therefore, my bowels were troubled for them, for my heart's desire is, that they might be saved; and for whom, I could wish myself, were accursed from Christ, if my excommunication, would tend to their restoration—and for whom, I have spent the prime of my days, in arduous incessant labour; for which I have received the retribution of persecution—for so much the more I have loved them, I have been hated by them. But my hope is, that many brethren in the Lord, will wax confident by my bonds; and be much more bold to speak the word without fear.

But we proceed to the fifth charge; which is as follows.

"I do charge Mr. Rankin, with pretending to an immediate revelation from heaven, in a dream which determined him, not to use Doctor Watts' psalms and hymns." Given in by Samuel Blair. Witness, A. There is but one witness—he refuses to attend presbytery; and has publicly denied the assertion.

The defendant solemnly declares, he opposed human psalmody from ever he entered the ministry, publicly and privately, for many months before ever he dreamed about the subject: and therefore, a subsequent dream could not be the cause of a prior determination not to use Doctor Watts' psalms. But lest it should be said, that I wish to deny any truth, I shall now narrate the dream, and the circumstances. On my way from Augusta, with my family, in the year 1784,

I came to the vicinity of Nolachucky, where I found the people in an uproar, about the present defections in the church, and much disposed to slander each other. I informed the people that during my stay, I would hear no defamatory reports; and would preach without discrimination, where I should be invited; conscious, this was the most direct way, to be useful and pass through with security: and as I received a general invitation, in compliance with Mr. Doakes' request, I went to his house the preceding eve who entertained me with long narrations of an extraordinary revival he had in his congregation. Repeatedly giving credit to the new modes, which gave me to believe, he would insist on me to adopt the new practice. This put me to deep concern, in these, my more unexperienced juvenile years: for I feared to wound the feelings of his people, if their religion was genuine, and disturb him in his elysium, and pull down his displeasure upon me. On the other hand, I durst not wound my own conscience, and forfeit the favour of heaven, by a wilful act. Agitated with these thoughts I went to rest—about the dawn of the morning, in slumber, I saw in vision, a water arise out of the earth, and run flush on the surface, a small distance, and sink again; and on the one side was written, in large characters, *if thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth, by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents**. And on the other side was written, *ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls†*. Of these cogitations, I leave the world to make what improvement they please: tho' they never should have had them, if my confidants had not betrayed me. But for farther information, on the subject of dreams, I refer my readers

* Solom. Song, i. 8. † Jerem. vi. 16.

to the Rev. John Newton's third letter. All I shall say on the subject, is, that I believe the scriptures to be the only and sufficient rule, both for faith and practice, to every christian, in every circumstance ; and that we have no warrant from the word of God, to look for, or expect intimations of his will, in an extraordinary way on any occasion : nevertheless, as God has no where limited his sovereign dealings with his creatures, we have reason to believe, that ever since the canon of scripture was compleated, God has given intimations of things to his favorites, in an extraordinary way. But for any person to be governed in any instance, by extraordinary impressions of any kind, independent of the word and providence of God, is certainly very dangerous, and never to be justified. Finally, whatever impression I was under in the above instance, or whatever influence such dream had upon me, I utterly deny, I was governed by it, in that or any other instance. The word of God was, is, and I hope ever will be, my unerring rule in all my deportment ; at least I am sure it ever ought to be so. These are my fixed principles, which I am neither ashamed nor afraid to avow ; and the world may charge me with enthusiasm, if they will. I might have added what I have openly acknowledged before ; that if God gives any intimations of his will, in an extraordinary way, it must be only to the person himself, and he ought never to divulge it to the world, in no other sense than, that he appears to be well directed in his deportment, as none but he can have any thing to do with it ; and, if ever there has been any thing of this nature with me, whether real, or imaginary, I was exceeding wrong in making any discovery of it, to any that would exhibit it to the world.

6th. Charge. "He said, that the divine. Being, had raised him up as an instrument, to over-

throw the use of Dr. Watts' psalmody in the church—and, that he would live to see the day that he himself would do it". Given in by the aforesaid Samuel Blair. Witness A. Who swore to the above.

Deft. Presbytery receives this accusation, at the mouth of one witness. However, A. had been in my eye, as a father; we had been bosom confidants from my childhood, and often entrusted each other, with the secrets of our several cases of conscience. I thought that what my friend knew, nobody knew. I never charged him to secrecy; confident his wisdom, prudence, and pious regard he had to the cause of our common Lord, was a sufficient guard against the smallest evil consequence. I had never knew of any cause why my confident should betray me. He had paid me his last friendly visit, and in courtesy, I walked with him about one half mile from my house, and spoke by the way in our usual freedom, but never told him one word about my dream; not, but that I would have told him had I been led to the subject: for I could have entrusted far more with him. But the conversation turned upon the times, where there was somewhat of a diversity in sentiment; but it had never broke his relation to me as his pastor; nor did I suppose it would ever interfere, in our christian friendship. I believed him to be so tender, conscious, and capable of perception, that I was sure I would convince him. Now, I do not charge him with absolute falsehood, much less of perjury. But I think, my friend much mistook the spirit of my assertion, which was simply this: confident of the infallibility of my cause, I said, I believed God had brought me into the world, for this very cause, to defend his word against the infidelity of the times, which was introduced, by the present mode of human psalmody; and that I no-

thing doubted, but that he would succeed my labour, and I should live to see the success of it. I grant it was a strong expression, but uttered to my friend, the lively feelings of faith in God, and his word—believing, I should not be left to labour in vain, and bring forth for nought. But I aver, I never used the barefaced expression, that I myself would do it. This language is not pertinent, for earth worms—nor do I ever remember to have felt myself, to be of such consequence to the world. But it is easy to account for his using that mode of expression, when put in the form of an accusation, and speaking of an other person. Nor do I believe, my friend ever did it as treachery—but happened to rehearse the conversation, so that it came to the aforesaid Samuel Blair, who made it his business, to rake up all reports he heard of, and lay them into presbytery, whether true or false. Which I have sufficient reason to believe, was in compliance, with some of the members of the general assembly, who lived in Philadelphia, but are now no more. Because they published the plan, while I was in Philadelphia, and sent it in a letter, by a gentleman in Lexington, to Mr. Rice. *Servant of servants shalt thou be, unto thy brethren.*

7th Charge.—“I charge Mr. Rankin, with saying, every thing of importance, was always beforehand revealed to him.” Given in by Col. Robert Patterson. Witness A.

Defendant. Here is another accusation, received at the mouth of one witness—who swears as follows.

A. Being sworn, testifieth. “That Mr. Rankin, after his return from presbytery, in the old settlement, where he was called to answer a charge exhibited against him—he asked Mr. Rankin, how matters went? Mr. Rankin, answered very well. But, that he knew before he

Went away—for every thing of importance, was always before-hand revealed to him.”

Deft. This word, should have been spoken seven years ago; and the deponent says, upon oath, he does not remember, that what was said upon that occasion, was the least offensive to him, and did not remember, that the accused should have used the word revealed, but something that imported as much: which the clerk*, insisted upon setting down, because it imported that much—knowing, that unless he had the word, he would fail to prove the charge.

The defendant is willing to be qualified, he never used the expression with the man—for if it had been a truth, it ought to have been a secret—and he is perfectly sure, he never entrusted him with any kind of a secret. I think what happened was to this purport: upon his asking me, how matters went at presbytery, very well said I—but that, I knew before I went away. The reason of this confidence was, that I was conscious of innocence, and that for envy they had accused me—and, that if I was present, I could defend myself from injury in this accusation, as I had done formerly. For before I was half a year a preacher, the Rev. Messrs. Cummins Balsh and Doake, brought their several accusations against me, concerning psalmody—and I as well knew the aforesaid gentlemen would fail in their present attempt. Confident that all these persecutions should work together for good, I was in nothing terrified by an adversary. Moreover, what was delivered, was more than one half jest, as was natural upon meeting, and was nothing akin to a subject so serious, as to talk about an extraordinary revelation. Nevertheless, A. still continued in communion with me—nor did I ever hear a word about it, till Robert Patterson

* T. T. § viz. Cummins, Balsh and Doake.

son laid it before presbytery. Oh ! that they had learned what that scripture meant. *Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer, among thy people.*

8th Charge.—“When a day was appointed to choose elders, Mr. Rankin refused to proceed to the choice—because, he said it had not yet been revealed to him it was necessary.” Given in by Samuel Blair. Witnesses, A. and B. A. being sworn, testifieth, “That Mr. Rankin appointed a day for choosing elders, and when the day came, Mr. Rankin refused to proceed in the business of the day, because he said the expediency of it had not as yet been revealed to him; or words to that amount.”

B. being sworn, testifieth, “That Mr. Rankin appointed a day for choosing elders; and when the day came, he declined proceeding in the business, and among other reasons for so doing, gave one, that it had not been yet revealed to him, that it was necessary—and one other reason, that where the session was large, it generally destroyed the influence of the head of the session, or words to that amount.”

William Galloway, Richard Steel, and David Logan, elders, being sworn, testify, “That they do not recollect, that they knew of any person being offended at any thing that Mr. Rankin said, on that day appointed for choosing elders; nor do they remember, that Mr. Rankin said any thing, from which it could be inferred that he was directed in any of his conduct, by extraordinary revelation.”

Deft. It must be very remarkable, if I said any thing so grossly out of the way, that no person in a large assembly, ever heard a syllable, from which any thing could be inferred of that kind, but those two men, who were party con-

* Levit. xix. 16.

turned in all other reports; as it is remarkable, that of two large congregations, there should be so many things offensive to three or four persons, and the rest never receive any thing displeasing. I am sure there can be but little weight in the depositions, when they, themselves, say it was only some words to that amount. And they tell us, likewise, that there were other reasons assigned, and if but one, it was sufficient to decline the business of the day. But now, I shall publish the reasons of the offence. Mr. Blair had been appointed a deacon some years before; and we, as a session, alledged it was office sufficient for him. Mr. Patterson had been spoken to by myself and some others, concerning accepting the office of an elder: he utterly refused; and said, he was so involved in land-suits, he thought it would not be for the credit of religion. After this, the business of augmenting the session, was declined for some years; and in the interim Mr. Patterson had been found in several unhappy ecclesiastical debates, and gave some cause to believe, he would not be a steady friend to our society; but from his former objection against serving, we thought there would be no danger of his being elected; and while we, as a session, had these two barriers against Blair and Patterson coming into the session, we thought good to appoint a day for electing elders. When the report spread out, Mr. Blair informed me, he wished to throw up his office as a deacon, and gave me to know by some plain hints, he would rather be elected as an elder. And word came to our ears by what authority I know not, that Patterson would serve, if chosen. Session met, and had a conference on that subject. We were all alarmed, if either Patterson or Blair, or both should be elected, that the peace of the congregation was over; and we concluded, let it look

as it would, it was better for us to decline the collection, and put the people off with some excuse, not telling the real reason. Patterson and Blair suspected the reasons were, that they might be kept out; and they were perfectly right. And this easily accounts for bad hearing and bad rehearsing. But, I deny the assertion in the charge.

9th Charge. —“Mr. Rankin is charged by report, with calling Doctor Watts’ psalms the rebels of the king of heaven.” Witness A and B, A. being sworn, testifieth, “that Mr. Rankin said, to the northward, at the Lord’s table, he saw it spread over from one end to the other, with (he thinks the expression, but not certain) the rebels of the word of God”.

B. the deponent saith, upon oath, “he understood the expression used by Mr. Rankin to him, to be the rebels of the word of God.”

David Logan and William Rankin, deponents, say, “That they understood the expression to be, rivals of the word of God.” Deft. I acknowledge I said, when in Philadelphia, I saw the Lord’s table covered with the rivals of divine revelation. It was customary in that place, for the people to have their hymn-books in their hands, instead of their bibles, to save the clerk from giving out the lines, and when the communicants came to the table, they brought their imitations* with them, and spread them down upon the table, like so many children at a singing school. And certainly these occupied the place of the word of God, in the most solemn ordinance under the sun. Now surely the objects of faith were removed, by the teachers—and the precepts of men adopted in their room—which I conceive to be supplanting, or rivalling the precepts of God. Thus they defiled his house, with their abominations.

* Our images.

When I delivered my defence, against all the above charges, and desired presbytery, to shew me, wherein I had trespassed any precept, in the word of God—or given any just cause of offence, to any of my fellows—and I would make all acknowledgements, the church could require. Mr. Crawford spake with great venom, and said he could prove me guilty of absolute falsehood, and that he could never enjoy communion with me, 'till I would acknowledge myself guilty of lying. Upon this, I informed presbytery, Mr. Crawford, should be sworn, to tell all he knew of me. Upon which, Mr. Crawford said, he was exceeding sorry to divulge a secret, I had entrusted him with : and he acknowledged, I had enjoined him to secrecy, and likewise said, he had kept it as a secret, from the day I had told him (which was seven years past) until the present time. But after some minutes had elapsed, and he had time to cast his eyes around, and observe, that there were some present there, who could testify, the contrary—and were perfectly acquainted, with the duplicity of his conduct : he then retracted, and swallowed back his former sentence, and said I kept it, as a secret from the time, I had received it, until I heard it was known to others.

Now the secret had been commonly talked of for some years past. Sweet is the blessing of impartiality in witness bearing : the depositions will bear examinations and repetitions, and never deface the comely features of truth and righteousness. But if otherwise, a man is in danger of falling into the pit he digs for another. See the lot of Hamon.

The whole of the crime was : I was weak enough to relate, to some confidants, some of my secret exercises : wherein, I had frequently ta-
 § Esth. vii. 10.

ken warning in some remarkable dreams—which I would not have divulged for a thousand worlds, had I mistrusted the fidelity of my confidants.

For notwithstanding, that the most eminent servants of Jesus Christ, have, are, and shall be, subject to influence, by remarkable impressions in dreams, when they never would dare to say, they had the extraordinary inspiration of the prophets and apostles. I am confident, these exercises, are purely for themselves, and ought not to be cast before swine. For even the most enlightened children of God, who never experienced this peculiar mode of sovereign instruction, and much more, the profane, will trample them under their feet.

Now two years before this, I had with many tears, in the most humble terms, publicly acknowledged, before presbytery, and in my congregation, that I was exceedingly sorry, I had ever divulged any thing that had come to the world, which so much exposed the cause. I begged their forgiveness, promised an amendment, and plead the commandment of our Lord. That we should forgive our repenting brother, if it should be, *seventy times seven*. And though it was all the trespass I had ever to acknowledge, which cost me a blush, it could not be forgiven. Mr. Crawford has sworn to divulge all the secrets he knew about this matter—and though so enraged at, I know not what, that he could not keep from crossing his own words—he is received by a presbytery, to be (and that by a vote of the majority) an accuser, and a witness to his own accusation—and to sit down and judge me on the spot—and to pass the sentence, that I should be deposed from all my ministerial offices forever, without any liberty of an appeal. And when he said all he had to say, he never mentioned any thing that contradicted the spirit of my

defence—as was justly observed by the spectators, of whom, there were about two hundred present.

I shall trouble the reader with the whole, and a few remarks, though sorry I am, to impose upon his patience; but, as it is a criterion, on which I am condemned, I must keep nothing back. Mr. James Crawford, deponent, saith, “that he invited Mr. Rankin to assist him in administering the sacrament of the Lord’s supper. That on the Friday before the sacrament, Mr. Rankin gave him to know, that he could not come to the sacrament, if Doctor Watts’ psalms and hymns were used, he could not join in communion. Said deponent saith, he returned for answer, that it was the mind of the session, that the request could not be complied with—and accordingly Mr. Rankin did not attend the sacrament. In conversation some time after in Lexington, said deponent saith, that Mr. Rankin told him, that having prayed for direction, it was made known to him, in a dream; the interpretation of which was made known to him, with the fullest certainty, when he awoke, that he should not attend the sacrament of the supper. That he saw in his dream, the sacrament of the Lord’s supper administered, by said deponent, and the great, or whole dependence, was laid on Watts’ psalms; that Watts’ hymns were included in the representation of the psalms. That in all matters of consequence, he was under an extraordinary divine direction; and that in consequence of such direction, he moved to, and settled in this country. The deponent saith, that he is not to be understood as affirming, that the above is literally in the words of Mr. Rankin—but that his words fully communicated the same ideas with the above said; the deponent saith farther, that Mr. Rankin gave him to know, that the use of Doctor Watts’ psalms would be laid aside in the church—a

knowledge of this, he obtained in the same extraordinary way as above. And he being asked by the deponent, when this should come to pass, he would not fix the time.

Deft. I grant, Mr. Crawford invited me to assist him—and I went not. I shall now honestly tell the reasons why. It was a time of sore affliction in my family—about two weeks before, I had buried my son, and in three days after, the house was all but consumed over our heads while asleep: at the same time, our small grain was blasted with mildew, and the prime of our stock suddenly died—and above all, the enemy who wished to supplant me, had, by crafty instruments divided my congregation, about moving the meeting-house into town—so that I had lost all hopes of living in my present habitation. All this trouble I had at once—and in the mean time, was invited by Mr. Rice to assist in administering the sacrament. I went at his request, nothing doubting, but it was my duty: upon my arrival, I met with more to trouble me, than all I experienced before. For, in opposition to all the intreaties I could use with Mr. Rice, he would make use of that mode of worship, which was an abomination to my soul. I must either join him in communion, or publicly refuse. This crushed me out of measure, and above strength. So that, between trouble for this, and my own conscience upbraiding me, with what doest thou here—I was dumb and darst not attempt to preach upon the occasion. When I came home, I sent a very affectionate letter to Mr. Crawford, who, I still be-

§ An exact copy of Mr. Crawford's incoherent deposition, including the representation of stupidity, ignorance and nonsense wrapped together in passion. This observation was not made by the author, but by a man of letters.

loved, had some relics of friendship—presenting my trouble of mind, and my impossibility of joining him in communion, unless he would tolerate me in the use of David's psalms. His reply was, he could not give up his christian privilege for communion with one. Now I assure the world, that this was the principal reason, why I did not go. Upon meeting with Mr. Crawford, whose peace and friendship I still wished to enjoy; I thought meet by way of mollifying matters, to make mention of some secret conscientious exercise, and among others, made mention of a remarkable dream I had, concerning him, in the administration of the supper. That the chief of all their zeal was, to sing their new psalms, and that they appeared to have forgot that Christ was to be commemorated upon the occasion: and that this, in conjunction with what I had known, had tended to rivet my former convictions—and that it was impossible for me to go, should he give me his house full of gold, contrary to the dictate of conscience. *For we can do nothing against the truth.* The accuser, deponent and judge, who condemned me before trial, say likewise "That in all matters of consequence, I was under extraordinary divine direction: but would not be understood, that the above, is literally in the words of Mr. Rankin." And here, he saved himself of absolute perjury; because I did not utter them; but in all cases of importance, I never acted upon uncertainty, but generally laboured to know, that it was the will of heaven, before I acted—and though I often knew, that by the mind being led in sleep or waking, to some scripture passage, to know my duty, it did not mount up to extraordinary divine direction: but was only a blessing common to christians, that he would guide us by his spirit unto all truth, and clearly teach sinners the way, in which they should go,

is promised in the word of God*. But I must plead the excuse of ignorance, for my antagonist; for I alledge he is not acquainted with the difference, to be directed by the word and spirit of God, into all duty. A blessing common to all believers, who wait for his law. But to give new laws and ordinances, in addition to the scripture injunction, sealed by miracles, is divine inspiration or extraordinary direction, and this is what our moderns need, to give sanction to the present novels.

N. B. It is remarkable that what I said upon that occasion, was so far from giving offence, that Mr. Crawford said, he had often taken warning in dreams himself, as many worthy divines had done before us. And came since unsent for, and joined me in communion. What is man?

P. S. Is page 27 and 28 consistent?

Answer. I acknowledge that in consequence of a dream, I moved to, and settled in this country. And yet whatever influence a dream may have had upon me, I utterly deny I was governed by it. A simple dream, abstractly considered, had never the least impression. But if a dream is sanctioned, with a number of incontestible evidences from scripture, providence, the dictates of reason or conscience, the dream serves only as a vehicle to transfer the mind to a field of evidences unreallised, but when duly considered, are conclusive and cogent. The dream evanishes like the cloud in the wilderness, and leaves the mind in all its rational powers, to be governed by his word and providence.

* John, xvi. 13. xiv. 26. Psalms, xvi. 7. xviii. 3. xxii. 8.

THE SECOND PART.

I Come now to the solemn crisis of separation.— Here, I am conscious of the most intricate difficulty : for having received unfriendly treatment, and lest my mind should be prepossessed, I durst not divulge my own views or feelings— sensible, they will be still more liable to suspicion of partiality, among the most judicious and candid readers : knowing that wherever the reader contracts this apprehension, he will scarce give credit to real facts—and this will render the work abortive. And still impressed with a weightier objection, found in a divine précept— thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people ; and render not evil for evil : and all this exemplified by our Lord himself—when he was reviled, reviled not again : and when he had suffered (though he had civil and divine law : and above all the power of God, in his favour) he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judges righteously. Impressed with these things, were it not that I regarded the public interest, and am forced to be accountable to the church, for my public exhibitions, with great pleasure, would I omit the present publication. But tho' Jesus reviled not, he gave us a plain narrative of facts, making intercessions to his father, they should be forgiven. From this example, with prayer to God that my reader and I, may be duly influenced with the same spirit, I propose candidly (as God may enable me) to mention a few reasons for declining the body of my pastoral fathers, in whose bosom I have been cherished, from the rud-er steps of infancy.

Tho' prepossessed in their favour, by all the force of natural ties, education, custom and obligations

of gratitude, I was fully convinced, there was several defections among us. But one appeared to lie more alarming at the root, while others strike at the branches. Sensible these would render the tree unfruitful, I used every effort in my power, to check the growing evil. When I measured my success, by the equity of my cause, and the righteousness, superintending providence, my hopes were sanguine, and lifted me above my infirmities, and the torrent of opposition. But when I measured by the fruit of my labour, I lost sight of my former confidence—I concluded, I had laboured in vain, and spent my strength for naught: for my exertions grieved the spirit of my brethren: they received them, as tho' I was arrogant, vainglorious, and wished to become conspicuous at their expense—as tho' I would lord over them, and all the sinod of New York, and Philadelphia. I conceived it was vain to contend with presbytery. I then concluded, I would fight with none neither, great or small, save the general assembly only. Expecting, I would either receive or communicate, some light on the subject—or at least hear what they could offer in their defence. Accordingly in May, 1789, I addressed the body, with all the power I was able, and humbly desired they would either answer my arguments, or produce some reasons, for what the sinod had done. It could not be obtained, and I was forced to return, with little more to comfort, than, that I had faithfully acquitted myself, and would leave the event to God. But the truths delivered, had greatly offended—and measures were concerted, to invalidate my influence. Letters came to the Transylvania presbytery, to bring about the process, which was executed. And now I begin to be weaned from my mother, and seek comfort elsewhere. I saw there was little prospect of utility at home, so many by

came prejudiced, I believed presbytery was determined. I thought my absence might tend to mollify them. Jacob fled from the face of his brother, until his anger would be turned away. I had an inclination to make further improvements in divinity, and accomplish a study, I had been long in quest of. Upon which I exiled myself a year in London, entirely devoted to the most intense study. When I returned I found matters as they now appear, to my reader. All things were grown ripe for a separation--and presbytery helped to such desirable steps, as made all things evident, to the sensible and conscientious.

But, that our moderation may appear to all men--and that what was done, was not without a cause, you will observe what we have to offer.

1st We shall make a few remarks on what was judicially done by the synod; in which they have left us, a brief specimen of their spiritual discernment.

Their psalm book is intitled, in their first page, psalms carefully suited to the christian worship of the United States of America. Query. Is there a christian worship in the United States, which would be unlawful to practise elsewhere? "Being an improvement of the old version of David's psalms." That, I do deny: in the first place, it is not a version of David's psalms at all.

The author calls it only an imitation, and he was nearly as far from the truth: for I durst hardly say, there is the faintest resemblance. And now to say it is an improvement of the version, when it is merely a human composition, entirely new, and its principal excellency is its distance from the scripture*. Strange, for doctors of divinity! It is acknowledged by the best judges of the sacred text, "That, the book of
* Watts' long preface,

psalms in its original dress, is one of the most elevated and sublime compositions that are to be found in any language. It has been often lamented, that so much of the piety, dignity and poetic excellency of the original has been lost, in all the attempts that have been yet made, to give us a literal translation of it in english verse". These were the sentiments of the ancients. They grieved and lamented, that they were detained by translations, so far from the piety, dignity, and spiritual excellency of the original. Did our divines by their improvements, help to a nearer and more accurate translation? No. But Rehoboam like, they answered the sufferers roughly—and forsook the old mens' counsel that they had given—and spake to them after the counsel of the young men—saying, my father made your yoke heavy, and i will add to your yoke—my father chastised you with whips—but i will chastise you with scorpions. For say they, "many christians have also wished to see the substance of this excellent collection, clothed in language more adapted to the brighter discoveries of the gospel, and the state of the christian worship, that they may be sung with understanding and devotion: and thereby, contribute to the elevation and improvement, of the christian temper. This has been happily executed, by the learned and pious Doctor Watts." Now you will observe what the moderas desired, is granted and approved of by the synod. Instead of a literal translation, they desired the substance. This suggests the idea, which is ratified by the doctor, that there are many thousands of lines which had no substance, or in other words, which were never designed for the gospel day. "And cloathed in language more adapted to the brighter discoveries of the gospel." This idea has deceived thousands of the simple and unwary, though in itself an absur-

dity. When the limner lays the ground work to perfection, and elucidates the whole by the secondary touches of his hand, filling up the remainder with divers colours, does he erase and eject a great part of the groundwork, to make it more adapted to the brighter discoveries? Nay, his last operations commend the former, to the eye of the beholder. Not, that it is made better in reality, but that its excellency is made more perspicuous. Just so did the wisdom of God, commend the former objects of faith, by the additional illustrations, when all things written in the book of psalms, were accurately fulfilled. But if you destroy the ground work, you destroy the whole, and highly affront the author, who left the canon compleat, when he sealed it with, amen—with testifying, that if any man shall add unto those things, God shall add unto him, the plagues that are written in this book. If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take his part, out of the book of life. “And suited to the state of christian worship.” This as it stands here, in opposition to the worship of ancient believers in Christ, who followed and obeyed his doctrine, which is ever the same for nature—as it accords with gross doctrine, now received by modern divines, who maintain, that the old testament saints, were prompted to their morality, purely from temporal considerations of rewards and punishments. That they never believed in the resurrection of the dead, or life eternal. And offer this, for argument, that life and immortality is brought to light, through the gospel—as if they never enjoyed the gospel before the coming of Christ—and the old testament saints, never prayed in the name of the person of Christ. And after this, for proof, that hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name. As if the church of

Christ, from the begining of the world, were all limited to the narrow views of his disciples : from whose eyes, these things were much hid for a little season, who no doubt believed in a surety—suppose they might have had doubts, whether he was the person, and had asked nothing in his name, compared with what they did after. However, I do not charge the assembly with, holding this error, how far soever, its advocates may make use of it—but believe, it was not happily expressed. “That they may be sung with understanding and devotion.” This is equally exceptionable—and has been handled to gross purposes. Must the objects of faith, contained in divine revelation, be expunged, and human testimonies adapted, to accommodate the natural man, who cannot discern the things which are spiritual? When Christ himself treated with such, he tells his disciples, why he spake in parables : because, to them it was given, to know the mysteries of the kingdom : but to those without, it was not given. For he says, in them was fulfilled, the prophecy of Isaias, which faith, by hearing you shall hear, and shall not understand ; and seeing, ye shall see, and shall not perceive. But if our divines wish to constitute a church of such, I would chouse to absent myself, and take part with those, who sing with the spirit—and where we have the spirit, we shall have the understanding also. *For the spiritual man judges all things, and where the spirit is, there is liberty.* But what would it avail me, to be zealously affected, if not well? To walk in my own counsel, if blinded to the things, *that are freely given of God? in the light of mine own sparks, if I must lie down in sorrow?* But it is added, “With devotion.” I find this word but once in scripture, and there it is applied, in similar case. For as I passed by, I beheld your devotions*—

* Acts, xvii. 23.

I found an altar, to the unknown God: *whom, therefore, you ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.* If it means here dedicating ourselves to God, I am sure it is *not done according to order*. And if God made a breach, in Israel, because the ark was carried on a cart, instead of the priest's shoulders, very likely he will (as he has done already) make a greater breach in our Israel; when we go a whoring in our inventions, and we may be devoted, instead of enjoying devotion. "And hereby contribute to the elevation and improvement of the christian temper." Query. Whether will an elevation and improvement of our temper, effected by the word and spirit of God, or Dr. Watts's composition, contribute most to the likeness of Christ our divine model? Judge ye, "This has been happily executed, by the pious and learned Dr. Watts." Had they expunged the word happily, and adopted its opposite, we would have given more credit to their testimony. "And the psalms which he, omitted have been supplied by Mr. Barlow." If the sinod means that Mr. Barlow made some more of the same kind, to fill up the number of one hundred and fifty, I do not question it. But, that he supplied all the pieces of psalms, that Dr. Watts left out, I do absolutely maintain, is a manifest falsehood. For I do aver, there is not one of David's psalms, put in by them both. Only examine the hundred and ninth, and that of thirty one verses of infallible inspiration, you will only find three and one half, that bears the appearance of an imitation itself. There are two others made, which stand opposed to the doctrine contained in the whole psalm. This is horrid out of measure. To drop the remainder, which was an authentic representation of God's great decrees, concerning the inevitable perdition of Judas, and those that

1 Chron. xv. 13.

took part with him in the same impenitent rebellion: for whom, the Redeemer never prayed nor died. And for him, to turn the curses into blessings, as if all the law and the prophets were converted. Now, that all the representatives of the church in America, should give sanction to the absurdity, is truly a phenomenon. But this is only a specimen—for the general tenor of the whole book is upon this absurd plan. And Mr. Barlow has not supplied, what Doctor Watts left out—and the sinod are found to violate the ninth commandment. Though it may be, that those he put in, are nearly in the same spirit and stile: for none but those of the same spirit, would give sanction to the deed—and it is likely, the speech might bewray him to be his disciple. It is said in the close, “that all local references which are found in Doctor Watts’ imitation, have been carefully altered, so as to render the composition better adapted to every country.” This is a strange alteration. It was said in the front page, “They were carefully suited to the christian worship in the United States of America.” Again it is called “an imitation.” Can an imitation excel the thing imitated? Can any, make the likeness of God, to excel himself? No more can they make the image of his word, to excel his word—and if it did not excel the thing imitated, why should it have the preference? If David’s psalms were never designed for matter of praise in the church of Christ, it was horrid imposition, to make the likeness of that which was wrong—and allow the churches under their care, to make use of them.” Sure, this is plain and undeniable as an axiom; yet is drunk in by millions without hesitation. Nevertheless, my prayer is to God, that they may be saved.

But let us examine their act for this practice, and see if it carries consistency and reason with

It ; for scripture authority is not to be looked for.
May 16, 1757.

"The Sinod did allow and do hereby allow, that Doctor Watts' imitation of David's psalms, as revised by the Rev. Mr. Barlow, to be sung in the Churches under their care. That they are, at the same time, far from disapproving of Rouse's version, commonly called the old psalms, in those who were in the use of them, and choose to continue : but are of the opinion, that either may be used by the churches, as each congregation may judge for their peace and edification. And do therefore, highly disapprove, of severe and unchristian censures being passed on either the said systems of psalms."

Upon this unwarrantable institution, let us make some candid remarks.

First, "They allow this imitation to be sung by the churches under their care : that is decently intimating, that those who shall not see fit to obey their allowing, shall not be under their care. And this is reasonable : for it could not be expected they would beg the privilege. "But they are at the same time, far from disallowing of Rouse's version." Can any man in his senses believe this ? When the very author asserts, it must be acknowledged, that more than one thousand lines of them, were never designed for a gospel day : that they always spoil their devotion of mere necessity : and many other such gross representations of the sacred institution. Is it possible when one is set up in opposition to the other, that, to approve of the one, is far from disapproving the other ? If two men have a just and warm debate, and you approve of the one, do you not condemn the other ? Can any man serve two masters ; will he not despise one.

But, they are taking indirect measures to please all parties : that is, healing the wounds slightly,

as if they desired the praise of men. But for all these things, God will bring them into judgment, when they must render an account of their stewardship. They say, "commonly called the old psalms." This is an unjust epithet, and signifies as much, as if they were obsolete: *For that which decayeth and waxeth old, is ready to vanish* §. And yet, they do not disapprove of that which they acknowledge to be out of date. Did these divines know they were spiritual, and no part of ceremonial exercise? For it was a practice in the church, before the Mosaic law was given, and shall continue through time and eternity: they would know, that neither the matter of praise nor the exercise would ever grow old. "In those who are in the use of them and choose to continue." It may be observed, that this is a secondary hint, that they have discarded David's psalms and the whole society of those, who use them. And I believe, some have felt the reality of this hint†. "But are of opinion, that either may be used by the churches as each congregation, may judge, to be most for their peace and edification." This is leaving the whole determination with the churches at last: and then the churches have not the authority of synod, for either: and the only rule left to determine the matter, is, what they may judge; first, for peace; and second, for edification. This is contrary to the wisdom that is from above; which is first pure, then peaceable‡: and then, the congregation must leave the truth to a vote of the majority—and we may not have the approbation of our own minister; but the majority must rule the minority: so that, without the consent of the pastor or the little flock, the wicked who are always most numerous, must rule the house of God, in dictating

§ Heb. viii. 13. † Rom. x. 2.

‡ James, iii. 17.

the very matter of praise. The plain English of this is: our sinod have handed down the keys of the kingdom of Heaven, to the prince of the power of darkness, that he may command the churches of Christ, at his pleasure: and since these things have been done, the face of matters appears to carry the mark of the Beast. *He has set up his ensigns in the sanctuary* ||. "And do therefore highly disapprove of severe and unchristian censures, on either of said systems of psalmody." This is begging favour with a witness. When they have by one deed, set the world in an uproar, which must take place of necessity, when they set up two systems of psalmody, for the bore of contention, they were perfectly sure, that all the world would not wander after one; and they knew, that many would; and they were as sure, that this would divide the people, as time has made the comment. Yet they beg, we will not use severe and unchristian censures. Was it, that we may not blame them for what they have unwarrantably done? For it appears, they paid very little regard to the people. For my own part, I cannot tell how high the censure must be, before it would become unchristian: except, they shew signs of repentance. If any are so disposed, *come out from among them, O my people, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and I will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons, and my daughters, saith the Lord.*

2d. But again, one of themselves, in a publication known to the principal part of them, maintain, that Christ was not the eternal son of God. And to this the Transilvania Presbytery accorded, *nemine contradicente*. They believe, there are three persons in the Godhead, and that these three, are equal: but abstract from them, their

|| Psalms, lxxiv. 3 4.

relative terms, of father and son—because they maintain, that father and son, is incompatible with equality, and so they make three distinct persons, abstracted from all relation to each other, and plunge immediately into tritheism, and stile them, first, second, and third persons—which terms, may be applied to things most unequal. And we think it equally impossible, for a first and second in all respects, to be equal, as for a father and son. They tell us, that when he is called a son, it has only a reference, to his human nature—and therefore, *that holy thing, that shall be born of thee, shall be called the son of God.* But I believe, he was never as to his human nature, more the son of God, than one of his elect, created by him. As to his human nature, he is called the son of man—but as to his divine nature, he is called the son of God. *And he shall be called the son of God, signifies no more, but that he shall be called by his most eminent character, the only beloved son, of his father's bosom: and what should he be called, but by his own name, when we speak of his divine nature?* Believers are called, the sons of God, because they are created by his word and spirit. Christ may be called the son of God, as to his human nature, from the same principle. But there is another nature in Christ, which is, the glory of his person—and this nature, is called the son of God, where human nature is not concerned. For the truth of this, let us examine the apostles reasoning with the Hebrews—where he is proving what Christ said to the Jews, and for which they were about to stone him. *I, and my father are one—bath, in these last days, spoken to by his son, by whom also, he made the worlds.* Now here is the work of creation attributed to the son: this could not be said, of his human nature, but of his divine: therefore, he is said to be the father.

§ 1 Cor. xiii. 28.

of God, as to his divine nature —and if, as to his divine nature, he must be eternal ; and so we believe, that the eternal son of God, became man, *being the brightness of his glory*. Christ's human nature, is not the brightness of his father's glory, but his divine nature. But the son is said to be the brightness of his Father's glory : therefore, it must be his divine nature, which was called his son ; and if the divine nature, is called the son, he must be the eternal son.

And the express image of his person. Though human nature is said to be created, in the likeness of God, it was never said, nor never will, a created being, be the express image of his person ; who is uncreated. This must be spoken of his divine nature : therefore, the son is said to be the express image of his person, which must be his divine nature : therefore, the divine nature, is called the son, and if a son, an eternal son.

When he had by himself, purged our sins : this could neither be said of his human nor divine nature, abstractly considered : but as to both natures, he is termed the son of God. His divine nature, which was the principal agent, is said to be the son of God. If a son, an eternal son.

Sat down, on the right hand, of the Majesty on high. This, may have a principal allusion to human nature. *Being made so much better than the angels, as he has obtained a more excellent name, than they.* This is entirely his human nature — but to prove that this human nature, was above the angelic nature, the apostle brings in a quotation, proving he had a divine nature, to give an exceeding and eternal weight of glory, to his human nature, lest he should be little in their eyes, and they should not honour the son, as they honour the Father. *For unto which of the angels, said he, at any time — thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee.* If this, had only a reference to his hu-

per-angelic created spirit, created in the womb, by the great Chekina, it was nothing so much more extraordinary, than creating the spirits of angels, or men, as would give the pre-eminence mentioned in our text: it must therefore, refer to some other nature. We conclude, from these incontestible proofs, as well as many others, he is called his son, when it could not have a reference to his human nature, but to his divine. From thence we conceive, it is not bad divinity, to say the only redeemer of God's elect, who was the eternal son of God, and became man, &c. I grant to them, *he was the beginning of the creation of God;* and that he was the first begotten of God, as to his human nature; but this was not in the order of time, but in point of preeminence; and that divine nature was sufficient to effect all things, the church enjoyed or required, prior to the fulness of time. But I am necessitated to discard the unwarrantable tradition, that Christ's human spirit, was created at the beginning of time which is a branch of doctrine, maintained by those who deny his divine sonship. *Woman why weepest thou? Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.*

But they have said things more gross, concerning him. Yet, the very same person, who denied his divine sonship, goes so far, to deny his divine nature, as to maintain he was peccable, or liable to sin. And the whole force of his argument, is drawn from the proof of the impossibility. Says he, "The devil would never have tempted him if he had been infallible." But the amount of this argument is, that Mr. Petillo, and the devil, were of one opinion, when the devil was as ignorant as himself: but, when the devil had, with every advantage that the nature of things could afford him, tried the experiment, he would neither tempt him to one thought of distrust,

pride or presumption ; *for the enemy had nothing in him.* He is not only convinced of the absurdity of the doctrine of devils ; but in process of time, he is convinced of his eternal sonship. *Thou son of God why art thou come to torment me, before the time **. The devil knew, that Christ's human nature could not torment him ; but he believed the son of God could, and would. Truly, I am sorry if our divines, must go to unclean spirits, to learn doctrine concerning our Lord's Character ; that they could not believe plain facts, made evident, by demonstration. There is not a heavenly witness, but approves, the harshness of this expression : for it is sufficient to provoke the meekest man alive, to see an idol calf, set up in the room of God's eternal son : for this is denying his divinity. For certainly, if there is a union between the human and divine nature, the human nature must be infallible. Verily, the believers of every age, must have acted faith, on a precarious object, when they believed, that *he, who travelled in the greatness of his strength, mighty to save to the uttermost,* was not able with all his power, to save himself.

3d. it is little wonder, to find professors of the presbyterian system, so grossly ignorant of the great decrees, recommend communion with methodists and baptists, which is the next error tolerated by the body, and countenanced by many members. This is publicly recommended by Mr. Petillo, the transylvania presbytery and others. Some have not barely suffered them to sit down in communion, but have employed them to preach in their pulpits. This is beyond all controversy, incompatible with divine order, presbyterian principles and discipline. Was it not a charge against Israel, for which they were sent to Babylon, *ye have set up teachers for yourselves in my sanctuary. Her priests have violated my law, and have*

* Math. viii. 29.

profaned my holy things—they have put no difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them §. Have they ever learned to practise God's condition with Jeremiah. *And if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my month: let them return unto thee; but return thou not unto them. And I will make thee unto this people, a fenced brazen wall—and they shall fight against thee—but they shall not prevail against thee: for I am with thee, to save thee, &c* †. Does their conduct accord with the advice Paul gave his son Timothy? *Lay thine hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other mens' sins: keep thyself pure, that is, not only unadvisedly ordaining them, by imposition of hands, as the presbytery of———, did with the methodist—but is receiving them without any ordination, making all their sins to become ours—which is far from keeping our selves pure and distinct. But, if this is all justifiable, why did our Redeemer, so sharply rebuke the church of Pergamus, for tolerating those, who held the doctrine of Balaam, and that of the Nicolaitans? Which things says he, I hate: and urged them to repentance, threatening them if they would not, he would fight against them, with the sword of his mouth. Can these divines, ever expect the lovely encomiums given to the church of Ephesus? I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience: how thou canst not bear them, which are evil—and hast tried them which say, they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars, and hast borne, and hast patience—and for my name's sake, hast laboured, and hast not fainted. John, in his second epistle, says to the lady, if any come unto you and bring not his doctrine, viz. the doctrine of Christ, which is, salvation by grace, and not by*

§ Ezek. xxii. 26 † Jerem. xv. 19.

works, receive him, not into your house, nor bid him, God speed ; for he that bideth him God speed, is partakers of his evil deeds. That is, neither receive them to you, nor go you to them, as spiritual fathers ; which is, countenancing them, as though we wished them good speed, in pulling down the principles, we profess to believe.—There is not a grosser absurdity, in church discipline, than out of a pretended charity, to take the erroneous in principles, which must be proportionally vile in practice, for our spiritual guides, and sit down, with their followers, in full communion. A mongrel breed was the greatest abomination. Ye shall keep my statutes : which he explains to them, by similitudes. *Thou shalt not let thy cattle gender with divers kind : thou shalt not sow thy field, with mingled seed, neither shalt a garment, mingled with woollen and linnen, come up on thee **.

I shall close this error, with one proposition. It is essential to religion, that a man believe his own principles—and that he believes every one heterodox, who differs from him in judgment. This is plain for without faith, it is impossible to please him : and he that doubteth is damned. How much more guilty must we be, if, when we know, and are convinced of an error, that we will give sanction to it, and pretend to be friends to Christ, and the truth. Where little is given, little is required. There is some palliation for those who know no better. But, where much is given, much is required. There will be no excuse for those, who knew the master's will, and did it not—but wilfully broke his commandments, and taught others to do so. They are the least in the kingdom ; for verily, he will appoint them their portion with hypocrites. But this leads to the next grievance ; that is, they licence the illite-

* Levit. xix. 19.

rate, without language, science or divinity, to preach the gospel; of which we have an example in Kentucky. I saw him licenced, without examination on divinity, as a candidate for the ministry. This is a violation of all good order; and by one act, reprobating all the laws they have made, and bound themselves to obey, by a solemn oath of fidelity, when they were put in trust with the sacred office. See Chapter 13, of the form of government, of the presbyterian church of the United States of North America. Sect. 3. "Because it is highly reproachful to religion, and dangerous to the church, to entrust the holy ministry to weak and ignorant men: the presbytery shall try each candidate, as to his knowledge of the Latin language, and of the original languages, in which the holy scriptures were written. They were to examine him on the arts and sciences: on theology, natural, and revealed—and on ecclesiastical history. &c." As this is a breach of their own received constitution, we conceive it anti-presbyterial, and by which, they avow themselves, not to be presbyterians. Against this, there stands on the minute, my dissent, and by it, wish to evince to all men, our declining such a body: for these things does not forfeit our right, to the presbyterian denomination, which we wish to maintain, on the principles and plan of the church of Scotland, exhibited in the form of government, compiled by the Westminster assembly, and received by that church, in 1647.



THE THIRD PART.

THIS leads me to the third part of this work, which was, "To present our present plan." 'Tis true, we stand at present detached from all communication with any society : an handful of children, cast upon the care of divine providence, as I intimated in my defence, when I declined farther connection with my brethren in the ministry : about one hundred spectators, who knew the whole process, and were perfectly acquainted with my standing, of a long time, received me courteously, gave me the right hand of fellowship, promising, they would stand by me : many of whom, could not join me in communion before, because of the connection, are now hearty in the cause. They proposed, we should have a meeting in a few days, and declare our principles, our present standing and what modes we should establish for bringing about a union, with some church. When met, they desired me to declare publicly, what my principles were—I informed them, that since I had entered the ministry, I never had, to my knowledge, made a single change, in any point of principle : that to the best of my knowledge, I maintained all the principles, for doctrine and discipline, of the true church of Scotland, which she maintained, in the days of her purity, between the periods 1638, and 1650. The approbation of the principles, was carried by an unanimous vote. Next, it was proposed, what measure we should adopt, for being received into a coalition with some body. Resolved, that we stand in this, our present connection, adhering to the present principles, until God, in his providence, should send us as many ministers, adhering to the present

principles, as will constitute a presbytery ; or until some body, professing our principles, will take us under their care.

Secondly, it was resolved, that in order to bring about the proposed union, we shall make the present publication, to let others know our standing and creed : and that we would endeavour to examine the creeds of others, and that we would both receive and propose offers, with those, we were convinced, were nearest our principles.

We adjourned, until the first of June, and upon meeting, we had commissioners from twelve congregations, representing five hundred families, who wished to join our communion. It was ordered by the house, that the charges exhibited by presbytery, should be read, and the defence repeated, and the judgment of the house taken, concerning them singly. The accused, in their judgment, was not censurable in any point of his conduct. The audience consisted of about three hundred, who gave evident tokens of satisfaction.—It was then ordered, that this defence, with the reasons for declining the body, and the declaration of our principles, should be drawn up, against our next meeting, to be revised, and if approved of, subscriptions to be taken for printing.



THE FOURTH PART.

On the Extent of the Gospel Offer.

WE believe, that as it respects the outward means, the ambassadors are authorised to publish, proclaim, and declare, the counsel of God, as it stands connected with our salvation; and that all, who hear the sound, have an equal and indefinite warrant, not only to embrace the means as offered to them indifferently, by which comes faith, but have a right to believe, that Christ, with all his benefits, is freely offered to them, as sinners, without ever enquiring, into the secret purposes of God, whether they are elect, or non-elect.

Upon the Origin of Reconciliation.

We believe, that notwithstanding a sinner is warranted to believe the freeness of the offer, and is possessed of free agency, to do whatsoever is consonant to his own nature, that this offer, was first proposed by God, so until his spirit, attend the means, with irresistible power, he will never discern the intrinsic value, of the things represented in sacred writ. That when this power attends any means, which can work, with or without, or contrary to means, it renders all equally effectual to salvation. Therefore it was, that the Old Testament saints, had as effectual discoveries of salvation, by faith in Christ, as any since, with all the perspicuity of the fullness of the gospel.

On the appropriating Act of Faith.

We believe, that when a sinner has received the special conviction of the brightness of God's law, as holy, just and good; that, when this law, attended with the spirit of God, is ordered aright, before his eyes; a thorough conviction of his state, by nature and practice, not only morally incapacitated, to answer any part of the holy requisitions; but exposed to all the just penalties threatened; and while these operate on the heart, as means, the spirit, by a gracious irresistible power, leads the mind, to a genuine discovery, of the characteristics, of the Lord Jesus Christ, freely offered to such in the gospel. He has then a divine warrant, to cry out in the language of appropriating faith, my Lord and my God; because, he has received an earnest of the spirit in hand, and has now an assurance, contained in the very nature of his faith, founded upon special evidence.

On the Condition of the Covenant of Grace.

A covenant consists, of terms proposed and complied with. Man brake the first terms which were legal. God proposed a second, more absolute, called a covenant of grace; in which he appointed an infallible representative from another family, who should be the people's covenant—that by this federal head, he would save his people, with an everlasting salvation. And in order to make it known to them, with the irresistible special influence of his holy spirit, to render it effectual to salvation. That the whole of this salvation might be pure and infallible, the representative is a divine person, the word and law are divine and infallible, and the spirit which makes application, is most holy; as those who are

made partakers of this gift, are born of his word and spirit pure and infallible : and it is alone grafted on those, for whom it was prepared, though others have equal natural gifts and equal outward privileges, yet they enjoy them to their condemnation, to shew, that it is of God, and according to election of grace. Hence it comes to pass, that the saving condition of this covenant, is entirely on God's part, and nothing in the creature, who is under a curse by his first revolt : a tree so corrupt, could not bring forth good fruit. But the elect by this plan, are created trees of righteousness, made after his own pleasure, grafted into the federal head, and nourished from a divine source ; thus, root and branch is good, and the fruit is good, it is grace, grace, from the foundation to the capstone. Thus we conclude, that God's saving righteousness, imputed without the deeds of the law, is the alone meritorious condition, upon which we stand approved in the sight of God. But as this privilege is only conferred on believers, who, with an open face, behold as in a glass, the glory of the Lord : and are changed into the same images, from glory to glory. Faith, is an essential gift, by which we are made partakers of this justifying righteousness ; without which, it is as impossible for us to be saved ; as without the righteousness of Christ : and therefore, it is, that some have, by way of figure, called it a condition, (as it is instrumentally) of the covenant of grace, who never viewed it as meritorious. If any thing could be meritorious on our side it would be faith : because, it is a transforming or enrapturing discovery of things hoped for, which are truly meritorious in their nature. But as none are able to work this in themselves, it must all be the gift of God, that we may be excluded from boasting, even by the law of faith.

Terms of Communion.

We believe, that faith in Christ, and evangelical repentance toward God, entitles, to privileges in the sight of God. But knowledge, profession, and a deportment consonant to the articles of the church, entitles to communion in the eyes of the church, whether the candidate is really in the possession of saving grace or not. We abhor and protest against the arrogant, sacrilegious robbers of God's province, who vainly presume, to make grace in the heart, the ecclesiastic term of communion, a matter, of which all men are as ignorant, with respect to others, as we are, to the decrees of Jupiter or Mars.

Private Baptism.

We deny, because it is intruding on the rights of the public community; and nullifies the very nature of the ordinance: for baptism is a door of admission into Christ's public visible church, entitling, to all the outward privileges of the sons of God—profitable much, every way; chiefly, because to them is committed the oracles of God. Now this body is in duty bound, by the laws of his house, to exert all due care in the tuition and government of all the members. Now, this body is imposed upon, if an individual member could be put under her care, without her consent. But as consent is essential to reception, the clandestine attempt, is a blank in reality, and an abuse of an holy ordinance. If an administrator had a warrant from the court of Heaven, to baptise an individual, as in the case of Philip and the eunuch, and then make report, that instead of the consent of the community, he had superior orders, it would behove us to submit: but, as this is not to be expected, the very nature of the ordinance, prohibits the practice.

National Covenanting.

We believe, to be a christian privilege, and upon special occasions, to be the duty of a nation, and that when a community obligate themselves, to abide by a system of well founded principles, and bring up their children accordingly. We believe the formal obligations of this covenant, to be obligatory upon their posterity, so long as the special occasion, which induced the parents to covenant, requires it, and they see the articles consonant with the analogy of faith. When this special occasion ceases, the community, may with innocence drop the form, and are bound no farther than the moral duties require—the moral obligations of which, can neither be increased nor diminished. Now, if we believe the formal obligations of a mother church, to be consonant with the analogy of faith, and the same special causes to have continued till our day—we believe, they are equally obligatory upon us. But this obligation depends, *principally*, upon the nature and state of things, abiding the same, and not upon the single act of our predecessors, who were never authorised to bind our conscience nor dispense with any one of our natural rights. Whose non-entity, is as absolute now, with respect to this world, as ours was, when they covenanted. When I said, *principally*, it was with this reserve, that in as much, as what they did for themselves and posterity, was consonant to the divine will, and as we have been privileged with their dedication, example, tuition, influence, and distinguishing privileges, it will be an aggravation to our iniquity, to undervalue their distinguishing order, in violating the just examples, and the warrantable covenanting of our fathers.

The Book Oath.

We deny, because it is unprecedented, and may lead to idolatry, and may justly offend those, for whom Christ died. We recommend that an oath should be taken, in judgment, truth, and righteousness, in the name of Almighty God, with an uplifted hand, which is sanctioned, with the most lively examples, and ought not to be done, but when need requires, and administered by legal authority.

Upon Marriage by Licence.

Seeing, under our government it is not purchasing a liberty by pecuniary rewards, further, than compensating a prothonotary, for taking bond and security, that guardians are agreed, and keeping a just register, for the credit and safety of the rising family. And as the contract is partly civil in its nature, and civil government is bound to defend the civic rights—we believe it perfectly consonant to the analogy of faith, which might be evinced from the fourth chapter of Ruth. But as it is partly social, and the parties contracting, come under mutual obligations to fulfil their relative duties, it ought to be consummated before witnesses. And as it is partly religious, every family appertaining to the church of Christ, commences a nursery, or infant society, to train up their family in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. We believe it right, that whereever a church in full order exists, that the pastor, or church officer should consecrate them, to the business assigned them, as a church of Christ, taking their obligations for the due performance of their duty.



THE FIFTH PART.

The APPENDIX.

2 Con. xi. i. 16. 23.

OPHELON eneicheſſhe mou mikrôn ti tes aphron-
Junēs : alla kai anecheſſhe mou.

*Palin lego, me tis me doxe aphrona einai : ei de
 me ge, kau has aphrona dexaſſhe me, hina mikrôn ti
 kago kauchesomai.*

Paraphronon ſalo.

Misce ſtultitiam conſiliis brevem :

Dulce eſt deſipere in laco.

HOR. Lib. 4. Ode 12.

MY indulgent reader, will bear with me, a
 little longer, while I juſt inform him, my
 preſent ſituation. Hitherto he has only read the
 unaffiſted efforts, of a young ſcribe, in the hurry
 of buſineſs, I had not a brother to conſult, in a
 ſingle point. I was convinced, as I wrote againſt
 a body of the learned world, if I conferred with
 authors, ſome of them, would impeach me with
 pilſery. I therefore, never conſulted one, for a
 ſingle idea, ſave that antiquated book called the
 Bible. When the preceding manuſcript was
 gone to the preſs, to try its fortune, and acci-
 dentally, meeting with two polemics, on the ſub-
 ject of debate, was prompted through curioſity,
 for the firſt time, to conſult them both : and nor-
 withſtanding, that my confidence was ſo ſanguine
 before, that I contemned information on either
 ſide, from the moſt learned divines ; I am ſo far
 convinced of error that I feel myſelf, in duty
 bound, to publiſh my conviction to the world =

and as they are of so late a date, I shall designate them, under the title of the

M O D E R N C R E E D.

Article 1st. I believe, when Paul exhorts to sing in *psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs*, he did not mean any system then extant—because, these were inspired, and therefore too sacred and sublime, for common people, and too obsolete, for modern taste ; but some spurious composition, to be invented after extraordinary inspiration ceased and occasionally adapted to the times. [page 6.]

2d. I believe, that I ought to exclude the Old Testament songs, both as to their matter and form—because, there is a *rich* indwelling of the word of Christ, common to our modern poets, sufficient to enable them, to furnish the church, with hymns for modern devotion. [page 6 & 12.]

3d. I believe, that the doctrines contained in the Old Testament, have ceased to be a rule of life, upon pain of circumcision. [page 7.]

4th. I believe, that if a man, has effectually proven, social and public singing to be a duty, he must deny private praise to be a divine ordinance. [page 8.]

5th. I believe, that the style of the scripture songs, is as really a prose style, to discerning observers, as that of any other parts of scripture—because, poetry consists in the chiming of words, and this chime, cannot be perceived, neither in the Hebrew nor in the translation *. [page 11 & 13.]

* See Lowth's preliminary dissertation. See also, Blairs lectures. [p. 384.] "Let any person

6th. I believe, that it is as easy to make poetry out of the ancient prosaic scripture, as the most sublime poetic diction of inspiration, formed for the very purpose—because in the one, we have scope to display the depth of all our talents, and live, when we are dead, on the breath of our admirers; while in the other, we are so immediately dependent, our name, is scarcely remembered. [page 12.]

7th. I believe, that what was commanded by God, and exemplified by his church, in spiritual exercises, is neither precept nor example to us—because, the ceremonies are abrogated. [page 13.]

8th. I believe, that I can with safety, pledge my eternal all, upon this article. That it is absolute wickedness, to sing the pious resolves of others, in obedience to a divine command, which point at the death and sufferings of Jesus Christ; unless we become debtors to do all the punctilios of the ceremonial institution. [page 16.]

9th. I believe, had any gentile offered him-

read the historical introduction to the book of Job, contained in the first and second chapters, and then go on to Job's speech, in the beginning of the third chapter, and he cannot avoid being sensible, that he passes all at once, from the region of prose, to that of poetry. Not only the poetical sentiments, and the figured stile, warn him of the change; but the cadence of the sentence, and the arrangement of the words, are sensibly altered. The change is as great as when he passes from reading Cæsar's commentaries, to read Virgil's æniad.

self to become a proselite to the Jewish faith, and entered their worshipping assembly, it would have been considered a horrid profanation*—because, the whole Jewish economy, was to keep the gentiles clear of their religion. [page 17.]

10th. I believe, that there is sufficient intimation of the divine will, for the abrogation of the book of psalms, as a system for the Christian worship—because, a modern divine, most confidentially asserts, that he has made it sufficiently plain. [page 18.]

11th. I believe, indeed, that human authorities are worse than nothing, in matters of faith and practice—because, they supplant divine government, and therefore are horrid profanations. This is to shew how consistent I am with the rest of my articles. [page 20.]

12th. I believe, that it is impossible for us to have a literal translation of the scriptures—because, it would make perfect nonsense. [page 22.]
e. g. See *Mr. Lowth's translation of Isaiah.*

13th. I believe, therefore, that since the translation of the scriptures, we have only a paraphrastic comment, of the doctrine contained, without a single object of faith in the whole. [idem.]

14th. I believe, that men who have front sufficient to assume the province, have equal authority with the sacred penman of the New Testament, to impose their opinions of scripture, upon our faith and practice—because, this will give sanction to our modern divinity. [page 2 .]

15th I believe, therefore, to conclude the
* Isaiah lvi. 3. 6. 7. 8.

whole of what has been said—seeing, I am entirely cut off from scripture precepts and forms, it is my ultimatum, to depute some poetic divine, who can highly recommend himself, from his boasted rich indwelling of the word of christ, to compose psalms for my use. [page 25.]

16th. I believe it a master piece of absurdity, to say, that grave tunes may be necessary, to represent the hearty agreement of gospel-worshippers, and to prevent temptation to heart wanderings, or distraction of mind, arising from a rude confusion of voices*. [page 29.]

17th. I believe, that the sinod of the general assembly, cannot be impeached with any anti-christian tenet, in imposing human authority—because, they have only allowed the use of human psalmody—and therefore it would be a very illiberal sentiment, and fit only for the *accuser of the brethren*, to insinuate that they would adjoin their authority, as soon as it would in safety be practicable. [page 40.]

18th. I believe a man destitute of sense—because he is able to confound my arguments, by conclusive reasoning. [page 45.]

19th. I believe, it incongruous to the modern mode of christian worship, to sing *blessed is the man, who passing through the valley of Bacca, makes it a well; the rain also, filleth the pools, &c.* Or, *who is this, that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments, from Bozrah; this that is glorious, in his apparel—travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, and mighty to save, &c.*—

* Psalms, xxxiv. 3. Isaiah, xxiii. 16. & xv. 3. Eph. v. 19.

Because, the one was fulfilled, when the pious Israelites travelled up to Jerusalem to worship; the other, in the passion of the suffering mediator, when he tabernacled with us, in the flesh— but are now no more. And as the scope of scripture phrases, must be taken literally, I believe, it dangerous, to receive them, as forms of praise, 'till I am favoured with an expurgatory index, to point out, what I am to use and what refuse. [page 55.]

20th. I believe, it improper in the simple spiritual age, in which we live; when our approach to God, is so near akin to the unembodied saints, to call upon every thing that hath breath, to declare his glory—or call to our remembrance, the various stimulus; that the antient saints were wont to use to touch their senses, when they invoked all the instruments of music, to shout his praise—because, we are become so extremely refined, that thoughts of this kind, are too gross for our purpose, and fit only to be sung, in a worldly sanctuary. [page 59.]

21st. I believe it unlawful for me to sing the joys or sorrows of another which God has left on record: for the very purpose; unless I feel the same idetical passion: & the same juncture of time—because, this can be justified, on no other principles than that of irony—The only objection I have to this is, that there never can be a psalm composed: to suit a community, until the end of time. [page 65.]

22d. I believe, that it is evidently unsuitable, that a great part of our psalmody, should consist in references and allusions, to that which is long since abolished—because all old things are done away; and all things have become new—and because, when God addressed his people, he never referred them to any thing past. [page 65.]

23d. I believe, that there is no necessity for an expurgatory index, to inform the church, psalms they should sing, and what not—because, the sinod to which I belong, have given them approbation to another version, which superceded this necessity, by rejecting the whole. [p. 67.]

24th. I believe, that inspiration was essentially necessary, in dictating a psalm for public worship, when the church was in her purity: but now, the gift of poetry is abundantly sufficient. [page 71.]

25th. I believe, that as inspired form of psalms are altogether impracticable to us, I shall reject both matter and form, and burst to rich indwelling of the word of Christ, found in the poets. [page 71 & 6.]

26th. I believe, that my superior sagacity, is such, that no man's labour, will ever bear an examination, should he advance ten thousand arguments, in favour of truth until he implicitly yields to my assertion. [page 75.]

27th. I believe, that the Old Testament saints, expected that some divine personage, in process of time, would visit this world, but for what purpose they understood not—because all that can be adduced from scripture, in favour of their acting faith on his merits, is only a perversion of it. Examine the principal proofs the advocates can offer. The first, is the nineteenth psalm and last verse—let the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer. Now, this redeemer, had no reference to the Mediator—because, in Deut. vii. 8. God acknowledges his eternal love, and his fidelity to his oath, in the Abramatic covenant, as a reason, why he

redeemed them out of bondage. And as the last was not done for the Redeemer's sake—the first, could not be asked in his name. [page 79.]

The next proof they advance, is in the eighty fourth psalm. Behold, O God, our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed. Now this anointed had no reference to Christ, but to David, who was anointed king over Israel. Neither was there any need for the saints then, to pray in the name of Christ, for salvation could be attained another way. [page 80.]

The last is in Daniel, ix. 17. Cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary for the Lord's sake—surely, nobody except some blinded enthusiast, would adventure to say, that this was praying in the name of Jesus—because, it was impossible for the Old Testament saints, to know any thing of a Mediator: and by the same cogent reasoning, I am able to expunge all such servile prayers, in the name of a Mediator, from the Old Testament dispensation *. [page 82.]

23th. I now believe, that I am able to deny, the most essential truth in theology, and impose absolute nonsense on all the world, without ever knowing, or feeling a reason to blush. [page 84.]

29th. I believe, that a written form is as essential in prayer and preaching, as in public and social singing—because, the subject matter is the same: and that it is as essential to my christian deportment, that I should believe every thing I hear, as what I say in my address to God.

30th. I believe, that all reasoning by analogy, suppose the consequences, are ever so clearly contained in the premises, ought to be discarded; because good things may be abused. [page 86]

* Isaiah, xxviii. 16.

31st. I believe, that when God designed to instruct the elect Jews, that he used figurative speech, on purpose to conceal the things he intended to communicate, and that if he had told them nothing concerning them, they would have known much more. [page 87.]

32nd. I believe, that for God to use figurative speech, reserving the power of illumination, in his spirit, to communicate the spiritual meaning is not so happily constructed, as if he would shew us in plain terms, that all might learn the mystery, independent of any special influence.

33rd. I believe, that when Jesus said, he would speak to them no more in parables, but shew them plainly of the Father, it was not, that he would visibly exhibit before their eyes, the fulfilment of the law and the prophets; or that he would so richly pour out his spirit, as would illuminate all the dark sayings, wrapped up in the veil of Moses; but that he would use a new kind of speech, which should not be tinged with the figurative idea, like the revelation of John.

34th. I believe, had Nathan simply told David his trespasses, in plain speech, without a parable, designed to darken the sight of his iniquity, notwithstanding his interpretation, he would have received deeper conviction, and more lasting impressions: and therefore, all figurative speech, ought to be discarded: and this will serve as an expurgatory index, to all those bigots, who will sing David's psalms. [pages 89 & 100.]

35th. I believe, that the prophetic parts of scripture, are so highly figurative, the design being, to exhibit the subject under such a veil as

that nothing, save the event itself, could unfold it: therefore, it was, that the Old Testament saints, never derived the smallest possible spiritual advantage, from all the law and the prophets. [page 91.]

26th. I believe the reason why God spake so dark, was, lest men by their moral agency, should frustrate his design: or if not, their moral agency would be over ruled by the Deity, and thereby destroy their accountableness. [page 91.]

27th. I believe, that the cloud of witnesses, mentioned in the eleventh to the Hebrews, understood no more of Jesus, as a vicarious sacrifice, altho' they esteemed the reproach of Christ, greater riches, than the treasures of Egypt, than the unbelieving Jews, who rejected him entirely. [page 94.]

28th. I believe, that altho' the prediction of the event fulfilled before our eyes, is more convincing, than a continued scene of miracles; yet seeing, the prophecies are fulfilled, they ought to be discarded in our worship; and we ought to confine ourselves to the events alone. [Idem.]

29th. I believe, that the spirit of Christ, which was in the prophets, testifying the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow, was of no avail to themselves, for they received no spiritual advantage from their discoveries—but were mere machines, to prepare something for our information—because, when Christ came, the whole was made more manifest to our natural eye, than it could be to their spiritual discernment: and that it was their sinful curiosity, that they searched diligently, for that which would avail them nought. [page 97.]

40th. I believe, it is weakness, or prejudice, for any to believe, that the language of the Old and New Testament, mean the same things—because, this is the faith of ignorant and shameless people, who know no better. [page 100.]

41st. I believe, that although figures are exceedingly advantageous, to awaken and fix our attention on the subject—and likewise, are calculated to affect the passions. page 93. Yet they are exceedingly injurious to our souls—for, while we view the redeemer through the types, it will be impossible to exclude the idea of the type from the thought—and consequently destroy the uniformity of our devotion. [pages 101 & 102.]

42nd. I am persuaded, and do firmly believe, that in spite of all the bigotry and prejudice in the world in favour of antiquated forms, the foregoing arguments in favour of modern psalmody, are more than sufficient to establish the system—for mighty is truth, and shall prevail. [page 102.]

43rd. I believe, that Dr. Watts, and our modern poets, who are so abundantly furnished for that purpose, have as good authority to make songs for the church, as the prophets or apostles, of the infant and servile Jewish church, which was never under a dispensation of the spirit. [pages 103, 104 & 105.]

44th. I believe, that it was impossible for the Jews to love God as much for his moral excellency as for us to love him for the favours he has done us, in bearing our sins upon the cross—therefore, I have matter of praise, the Jews never had—and will never be confined to their songs. [Idem.]

45th. I believe, that life and immortality, and the resurrection of the dead, were never brought to light to the antient saints—and therefore, they were all Sadducees. [page 105.]

46th. I believe' that all scripture, written by Moses and the prophets, concerning the gospel scheme, come vastly short of my knowledge and attainments. (page 105.)

47th. I believe, that what I have advanced on this subject, must be true—because, I have said it, and therefore, every thing said in opposition to it, must be nonsense and falsehood. (pages 106 & 107.)

48th. I believe, that the man who has got faith enough to believe all the preceding articles, has a stronger faith, than he who believes all the canon of divine revelation.



REFLECTIONS.

Eccles. ii. 2.

RISU dico, insanus ; & de laetitia, ecquid ista facit.

LET us hear the conclusion of the whole matter. *Fear God, and keep his commandments—for this is the whole duty of man.* Let filial fear, and reverential awe, which originates in love, prompt us to perfect obedience—and so we will, surely, be blessed with peace. *For what does the Lord require of you, O man, but to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God.* But it may be suggested by some, the author of these sheets, has only been a pest to society, a stirrer up of sedition, a troubler of the people—to such I would reply in the words of Elijah to Ahab. *I am not he that troubleth Israel, but thou and thy fathers house, in that ye have forsaken the Lord, and followed after Baalim.* To keep the commandments of God, is the peace of a nation—but to forsake his precepts, is the destruction of any people. In my own defence, I assure the world, I heard the voice of a herald speaking with authority. *Now I command you brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which you have received of us.* This is not a simple permission, but a command in the name of divine authority, not to withdraw from the profanely wicked, but from every brother who departs from the divine precepts.

But to do justice to all parties: let us candidly consult the most advisable measures to establish peace in the churches: *for blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.*

They shall have peace and prosperity, who seek the peace of Zion. We are favoured with a divine counsel for the execution of this important work, endeavouring the unity of the spirit which is the bond of peace. Here a query may arise—how shall the unity of the spirit be acquired, seeing the spirits of men are so diversely exercised? The way to obtain unity of spirit, is, to endeavour for a unity of practice—and the way to obtain unity of practice, is to yield a uniform obedience to the same rules of regulation. 'Tis a mathematical axiom, that things which are equal to the same, are equal to one another. If we were all conformed to the same standard, we would be conformed to each other—then would we speak the same things, we would be of the same judgment, we would be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace would be in the midst of us. Now the way to be conformed to one rule is, to submit to the laws of one legislature. If we can find an individual, whose abilities and virtues are such, as will render him adequate for all the importance of his office, a monarchical government will be the most eligible, for secrecy, safety, and the security of the rights of the people, and to effect uniformity in the government. But if one is not adequate, we must incorporate a number, and endeavour to make the best of the worst. Now choose you whom will you serve? Who shall reign over us? Under what constitution shall we expect the greatest good, and most permanent peace? Will you accept theocracy, that is divine—or democracy, that is human? For it is impossible to have peace without the bond of unity—'tis impossible to have unity without regulation—and it is impossible to have regulation, without government placed in some body divine or politic. Why halt ye between opinions? Why look ye one upon an-

other? It is motioned we should have a theocratical government--and urged by the following arguments: he has the most undoubted right to our suffrage--because, by him we were created, *and in him we live, move, and have our being*--and to him, we are amendable for all our actions. His government is infinitely excellent, the works of his hands are verity and judgment--all his commands are sure, they stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and righteousness. His administrations are most impartial, without respect of persons. 'Tis most perfectly free, the only requisition is, to commit the government into his hands, and he will infallibly execute every wise purpose in our favour, without money, and without price. This is evident from his nature, he is perfectly independent--he can promise himself no addition to the glory of his excellency, by the work of his hands--therefore his ultimate design, or last end in our creation, must be perfectly benign--infinitely removed from all sinister purposes*. We know of no other end than the beautitude of his favorites--that he might glorify them with himself, with the glory which he had before the foundation of the world was laid. And although in all his various operations, he manifests his glory--it is not that he may acquire, for infinitude can receive no addition--but that he may communicate of his great

* Perhaps some of my readers may think me singular in this point of doctrine and call in question my orthodoxy. All I have to say is, I offer it to the world as my opinion. I do not assume the chair of infallibility. I hope to lie open to conviction, and expect my superiors in judgment will treat me with candor in handling the subject, and I shall receive his friendly efforts as a test of his love.

liberality, being, and progressive glory. For when he spake concerning his mission, and even relative to his human nature, which alone was capable of addition, (although it could receive none from the creature man) he obviates any impeachment of seeking his own glory. *He that speaketh of himself, seeketh his own glory; but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true and no unrighteousness in him**. For even the son of man came not to be ministered unto: but to minister, and give his life a ransom for many†. And although it is the duty of all men, to give the glory to God, that is due unto his name†. And though we are not our own but bought with a price; and are therefore actively bound to glorify God, with our body and spirit, which are his. This does not command us to endow him with glory he never had as if we could create additions to his divine nature, but simply require us to attribute to him, his just rights. That is, we should have such knowledge of God and ourselves, that we would never sacrilegiously essay, to assume to ourselves the province, or rights of divine nature; but ascribe to him the glory, honour and power, which was, is, and ever will be his, worlds without end. And then place ourselves in the just position of our dependance, as suppliants for his holiness, to be made partakers of a divine nature, and to be duly prompted to obedience, from a sense of the difference: and this will be to glorify him with our bodies, and spirits, which are his. And though it is the duty of all men to imitate the redeemer, in seeking the glory of God, above all things, as it is the highest object proposed to us, it is not that we may find out something to endow him with— but we should endeavour to magnify our conceptions of his eternal

* John vii. 19. § Math. xx. 28.

† Psalms xcvi. 7.

law, and make it honorable, by fulfilling all righteousness in the appointed way. He that knows most, lives nearest the spirit of the law, and ascribes most glory to God, and performs the highest act of worship: but he who knows least ascribes least, and approaches nearest the brutal species. But you must observe, that when you ascribe to God, the glory that is due to his name you only give him his due, you can make no additions—for man cannot be profitable to him—as he that is wise, may be profitable to himself. *Is it any pleasure to the almighty, that thou art righteous? Or, is it gain to him, that thou makest thy way perfect? If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? Or what receiveth he of thine hand?* When we have done all things, we are unprofitable servants. Therefore, his ultimate, or last end in our creation, rationally appears to be, the beatitude of the elect, which he would certainly effect, though it be at the expense of an infinite ransom, and the perdition of a reprobate world. These are the mirrors, in which he commends his moral excellency, which is the subject matter of all bliss. But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord. The transcendent rays of his moral excellency manifesting itself, in the face of Jesus Christ, in defence of his eternal law of righteousness, sheds forth a copious effusion of regenerating grace, procured by the Lord mediator, and applied by the holy spirit, to the elect, whose faculties become capaciated to endure an exceeding weight of glory. This is a government for glory; when perfect, it needs not the light of the sun, neither the light of the moon, for his glory shall lighten it, and the lamb is the lamp thereof; it will supercede the neces-

sity of all other governments ; it will so perfect the subjects, that one shall not need to teach another, even the greatest mystery, for they shall all know the Lord, from the least, even to the greatest—a child shall be blessed with the wisdom of a man an hundred years old ; 'tis a government which will liberate all its subjects, they shall be made free indeed ; they shall be brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God, where there shall be no restraint on their natures ; but *they shall be as the angels of God in heaven : he shall wipe away all tears from their eyes ; there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor weeping ; neither shall there be any more pain ; for the former things are passed away : the inhabitants shall not say, I am sick, neither shall they say, I am weary, tho' they bear an exceeding and eternal weight of glory.* These, with incomparably more weighty arguments, are offered in favour of theocracy. He certainly has the right of suffrage : if we do him or ourselves justice, we will set the crown upon his head ; we will put the sceptre in his hands ; we shall blow the trumpet : *God is King in all the earth ; the Lord doth reign, let the earth rejoice.* We will cry out in all our actions ; we will not have man to reign over us ; *whatsoever the Lord commands, that will we do.* Now so sure as ever we submit to his government, which is perfectly uniform in its nature, it will be productive of outward and inward conformity to the same rule : and then we will have a conformity to each other, which will surely effect unity, and unity is the bond of peace ; for great peace have they who love his law, and nothing shall offend them.

But still it may be observed, do we not all profess to worship one God and one King, and to yield obedience to his commands ? Yet we *do* *and devour one another.* Doubtless, there must be

divisions among us ; this could never take place if we were all regulated by the same precepts : we have certainly, some of us, if not all, set up Gods or new laws to ourselves. There is certainly a disobedient Achan in our camp ; divisions have swerved and soured the minds of the people, and we cannot stand before our enemies ; if lots should be cast, and the Lord should direct it to fall on the guilty, we would find there must be some aggressors from the divine institution, who have troubled our Israel : I fear we shall find it is something too black to come under an error of judgment : such as a misinterpretation of the law, or the effects of a misinformed conscience ; it is something more gross. God pleads a weighty controversy. I fear some of us have touched, tasted or handled, an accursed thing that God has forbid or never commanded. Perhaps a goodly Babylonish brilliant garment, tinselled with flowery decorations, has dazzled our eyes, and made us conclude, that obedience was not better than sacrifice. Have we not wilfully rejected the counsel of the Lord that we might establish our traditions ? This is treason, treason, high treason. Let us then enquire, who are on the Lord's side ? And who have chose their own counsels ? Who submit to divine institutions in all their deportment ? Or who to the precepts of men ? And you may with ease find the man, that violates our peace, and troubles the land, and is a mover of sedition. *Confess thy fault unto God my son, it may be the Lord may be gracious.* One thing I assure the world, and the rational must believe it, if the redeemer should again appear in person, and assume the reins of government it would be incompatible with his nature to give sanction to the present innovations, at the expence of his established institutions, and it be

hoves us stewards, to be faithful, 'till he come a
gain.

THE END.

ERRATA.

The reader will correct the following mistakes.

In page 12 line 15 for hearts read herbs.

16 16 for it is read is it.

29 24 for thou shalt not read thou
 shalt.

63 14 for be read is.

73 24 for images read image.

77 13 for polemies read polemics.