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ART. I.—*A Discourse on the Moral Tendencies and Results of Human History*, delivered before the Society of Alumni in Yale College, on Wednesday, August 16, 1843. By Horace Bushnell. Published by request of the Society. New Haven, 1843.

It is proper to explain for what reason we make this speech the subject of a review, and with painful endeavour attempt to resuscitate and bring again into notice what, to judge by the usual fate of such productions, Time something like two years since should have put into his wallet as alms for Oblivion. Indignation perhaps may be kindled in some breast respectful for the dead, and surprise in others, that in the case of such an evident "relictum," such a ghost as a speech becomes when disembodied of speaker, audience, and elocution, we should seek

"To offer it the show of violence;
For that 'tis as the air, invulnerable."

It should indeed have been permitted to die where it fell,

"Troje sub mœnibus altis
. . . . ubi tot Simois correpta sub undis
Scuta virum galeasque et fortia corpora volvit."

But since it was taken up, we must believe by no friendly deities, and driven on a hostile shore, it is incumbent on us to say that for our own part we notice it, first, for the double cause of

heresies that covers the land of the puritans, not forgetting to take into the account the philosophism of the speech before us. The New England Theology has stood now almost a hundred years, and did its representatives meet in their ancient seat to see the majestic century-plant flower in such a blossom as this ! The stalk is still flourishing and what it may yet bring forth, it is impossible to guess. But this discourse may teach us something, perhaps, of what we are to expect from a system that had its origin in opinions too much like "another gospel," although its teachers seemed indeed scarcely less than angels of God.

At all events, the New Divinity has thus far exhibited "a law of progress" well illustrated, in the able champion of that notion, to whose speech we fear we have done more than justice and given less than its deserts, to be an "ever learning without ever being able to come to the knowledge of the truth."

ART. II.—*The History of the Rise and Progress and Principles of the Relief Church ; embracing Notice of the other Religious Denominations in Scotland.* By the Rev. Gavin Struthers, D.D. Anderston, Glasgow. 1843.

IN some former numbers of this work, we have given not only an account of the religious establishment of the Presbyterian church in Scotland, but also of the Seceders, the largest body of dissenters from the established Church. But we have, hitherto, taken no notice of the Relief Church, always respectable, but now grown to be a considerable denomination ; so that they number several presbyteries, which are united under the government of a synod. Two reasons may be assigned for our not noticing this orthodox body of dissenters : the first is, that they have never attempted to form churches in America in their connexion, as both sections of the seceders did, while separate ; and the other, and principal reason, was, that we never could lay hands upon any satisfactory account of their origin, principles and progress. But that desideratum is now

supplied by the history of Dr. Struthers, which we have perused with much satisfaction, as finding in it the very information which we had long sought, respecting many things in the ecclesiastical history of the various Presbyterian sects in Scotland. And we are free to confess, that, from some things which we read in the "Edinburgh Witness," we had taken up some prejudice against the author of this "History;" but after an attentive perusal of the work, all our unfavourable impressions have been removed. We have seldom met with a narrative of the origin and progress of a sect, by a leading member of it, written with more candour and liberality. Another consideration which has had its weight with us in bringing this Presbyterian body prominently before our readers, is the fact, that their principles are in more exact harmony with those of the Presbyterian church, in these United States, than any branch of the Presbyterian church in Scotland; not excepting even the "Free Church," for which we entertain a high respect. The Relief Church has no desire for a religious establishment, on any terms. And they differ from every sect of the Seceders, in not imposing the national covenants upon their people, and not insisting on such rigid terms of communion as were established by both bodies of the Seceders; and which, as far as we are informed, are still retained by the United Secession Church; although it is gratifying to learn, that the Seceders of Scotland have advanced much farther in laying aside their narrow, bigoted system, than their brethren in this country. Indeed, if we have been rightly informed, the Associate Seceding church in this country have dissolved all connexion with the United Secession Church of Scotland.

We have been much interested in this history of the rise and progress of the Relief Church, and as the work is not likely to be re-printed in this country, nor often exposed to sale, we think that most of our subscribers will be gratified to have a condensed narrative of the principal facts prepared for them.

As the Rev. Thomas Gillespie, was the founder of the Relief Church, it will be proper to begin with some account of him. He was born at a village near Edinburgh, in the year 1708. His father was a farmer and overseer, and Thomas, the only son of a second marriage. His father died when he was a child; but he had the care and pious example of a mo-

ther who was continually solicitous for the salvation of her only child. But he manifested very little concern about religion until he was about twenty years of age, when his mother had the opportunity to introduce him to the Rev. Thomas Boston, minister of Etterick, whose earnest and solemn conversation with the young man, left a deep and indelible impression on his mind.

Gillespie now turned his thoughts to preparation for the holy ministry; but, during his studies, he was subject to severe conflicts and many discouragements, arising from the view of his own imperfections, and from a tinge of melancholy which seems to have been constitutional. He had also much experience of the wiles and assaults of the wicked one; so that he seems to have been led in a way of experience which served to train him to be a sympathizing and watchful guide to such of Zion's pilgrims as travel the same road. He was not left destitute of sweet communications of his Father's love; his course, like that of most, was made up of lights and shades, though darkness and sorrow were more common than seasons of light and comfort.

Before he had finished his studies at the university of Edinburgh, his mother had left the established church, and had attached herself to the Seceders. And by her advice, in the last year of his course, he went and enrolled his name as a student of divinity under the Rev. M. Wilson, of Perth, whom the Seceders had appointed their theological professor. But he felt it to be his duty to judge for himself, in regard to his religious course and connexions; and, therefore, he entered into a free conversation with the professor, in regard to the principles of the Seceders, and what would be expected of him as a student. In this case, he manifested both his conscientiousness and his decision of character; for being dissatisfied with what he heard, he withdrew from the Divinity Hall, after a residence of only ten days. He seemed now to be excluded from all hope of entering the ministry; for he had openly separated himself from the established church, and from the Seceders. Being thus shut up at home, he determined to go to England; and having received ample testimonials, he went and put himself under the care of the Rev. Dr. Doddridge, of Northampton, where he finished his theological

studies. And after the usual trials was licensed to preach the gospel, on the 30th of October, 1740, being thirty-two years of age. And on the 22d day of the following January, was ordained, but not as the pastor of any particular church, but as minister at large. Soon after this, Gillespie returned to Scotland, bringing with him warm recommendations from Dr. Doddridge, the Rev. Job Orton, and other dissenting ministers in England. Upon his return to Scotland, he connected himself with the established church, and was presented to the parish of Carnock by Col. Erskine; soon afterwards, he received a call from the people. The certificate of his ordination in England was laid before the presbytery of Dumfermline, and sustained. The parish of Carnock is small, situated within five miles of Dumfermline, and contains about six hundred inhabitants. It had enjoyed the pastoral labours of some excellent men, particularly the Rev. James Hogg, who died in 1734, having been their faithful minister for thirty-five years. The Rev. Dr. Erskine, grandson of the patron of Carnock, in his memoir of Mr. Gillespie, informs us, that when he subscribed the Confession of Faith, he made an exception to that part which speaks of the power of the civil magistrate in spiritual matters. At that time, the presbyteries were not very rigid in exacting a full conformity to every article of the confession in taking the subscription of candidates. Accordingly, we find a number of instances of exceptions being made to particular doctrines; and yet the candidate was received.

The year of Mr. Gillespie's settlement in Scotland, was one of great religious excitement. It was the year in which Mr. Whitefield was invited to come to Scotland, by the Erskines. When he arrived at Edinburgh, he was earnestly urged by Mr. Webster to preach in that city, but he determined to let the Seceders have the first offer of his services in the pulpit, as they had given him the first invitation. He accordingly hastened to Dumfermline, and was cordially received by Ralph Erskine, in whose meeting house he preached to an attentive audience. He then returned to Edinburgh, contrary to the wishes of the Seceders. Ralph Erskine, however, accompanied him, and even went with him into the pulpit of the parish church of Canongate. But when he met the Associate Presbytery, though pleased with the venerable appearance of the ministers,

he would not be persuaded to accede to their narrow, exclusive system; therefore, a grievous disruption took place between Whitefield and the Seceders; so that from that time they became his most bitter enemies. Gillespie, it is true, had nothing to do personally with the affairs of the Seceders, but he was on the ground at the time, and took a deep and lively interest in the revival which had commenced, and was so greatly promoted by Mr. Whitefield's labours. This revival or religious awakening, was most remarkable at Kylsith and Cambuslang, where Mr. McCulloch and Mr. Robe, of the established church, were ministers. Gillespie was the intimate friend of Robe, and laboured with him faithfully, in promoting the good work. This, Mr. Robe acknowledges with gratitude, in his "Narrative," saying "But of all others, the Rev. Thomas Gillespie, minister of Carnock, was a most remarkable *God's send* to me. He came to me on Monday before the Lord's Supper was given in the congregation, and stayed ten days. Both of us had as much work among the distressed as kept us constantly busy from morning to night." He is repeatedly mentioned in other parts of the "Narrative." One day, while he was preaching, there was a great outcry in the church. He had opportunity while attending here to become acquainted with Mr. Whitefield, and of hearing him preach, and it is scarcely necessary to add, that he greatly admired this extraordinary preacher, who for pulpit eloquence has not had his equal in modern times. On his return to his own parish, Mr. Gillespie published an account of the revival, with a defence of it, as a genuine work of God. The different views of this extraordinary awakening, taken by the Erskines, and by Gillespie, separated them at a greater distance from one another than before. The condemnatory act of the Seceders, in which they condemned the whole, as the delusion of the devil, was published on the 15th of July, and Gillespie's "Attestation," on the 20th of the same month.

His views of the freedom of the church from all interference of the civil authorities, were far in advance of his age. Indeed, we see nothing in them different from those generally entertained in this country. He considered patronage, not only as a grievance, but as an anti-christian usurpation; and defended

in the fullest manner, the right of every congregation to choose its own pastor.

In his doctrinal opinions, Gillespie was a stanch Calvinist, and a great admirer of the writings of Boston, the elder, who was his spiritual father. He maintained, that it was the duty of all to whom the offers of the gospel were made, instantly to repent and believe. And although he was so warm an admirer of Mr. Whitefield, he could see his faults, and lamented his errors in regard to immediate revelations. On this subject he wrote to President Edwards, with whom he kept up a correspondence. In these letters to our distinguished countryman, he lays open his heart with unusual candour, and describes his various conflicts and temptations, from which it is apparent, that he was a truly pious and deeply exercised man. He had, however, a nervous temperament, which subjected him to a great variety of unpleasant feelings, and greatly modified his religious exercises.

After the revolution of 1688, the Presbyterians of Scotland enjoyed a season of high prosperity. The offensive laws of patronage were so modified, as to be no longer intolerable. But in 1712, through various corrupt and sinister influences which were brought to bear on the Parliament, this liberty was taken away, and the rights of patrons fully restored. This was so oppressive to the whole church, that they ceased not to remonstrate and petition against the law, as an infraction of the articles of union between the two nations. No remedy, however, was obtained; but the intrusion of ministers against the wishes of the great body of the people, was so unpopular, that for a number of years, the law of patronage was not strictly enforced. During this period of the church's liberty and external prosperity, there had been going on an unhappy declension in regard to purity of doctrine and the encouragement of vital piety. In 1732, the breach took place, by which some of Scotland's most able and evangelical ministers were separated from the established church; and all attempts to induce the Seceders to return to the church, proved ineffectual.

Mr. Gillespie, the founder of the Relief Church, was a member of the Presbytery of Dumfermline, which had always been opposed to the intrusion of ministers. But the Gene-

ral Assembly having determined that a certain candidate who had been presented to a vacant parish, should be inducted, notwithstanding the opposition of all the elders and a large majority of the people, the presbytery could not, as they solemnly declared, with a good conscience, be instrumental in the intrusion of a minister upon a reclaiming people. They therefore refused to obey the order of the Assembly. At this time, the Assembly was governed by Dr. Robertson and his friends, who were determined to enforce obedience to the authority of the church. Accordingly, at the meeting in May, 1751, the Presbytery of Dumfermline were peremptorily ordered to meet in the vacant parish, on the Thursday of the same week, and induct the presentee into the vacant church. And, as they wished to bring the refractory members under discipline if they should still persist in their disobedience, made it necessary for five ministers to be present at the appointed meeting, to constitute a quorum. The usual quorum was altered, on this occasion,*because it was known, that there were three ministers, members of the presbytery, who were willing to comply with the order of the Assembly. On the day appointed, these three attended, but no more, therefore, no business could be transacted, as the Assembly had required five to be present to form a quorum. The disobedient members were called before the Assembly, and having offered certain papers containing their reasons for continuing disobedient, it was resolved, that one of their number should be solemnly deposed from the office of the ministry; and when the vote was taken, Mr. Gillespie was selected as the victim. On which, the moderator, Patrick Cuming, D. D., pronounced from the chair, after prayer had been made for divine direction, the following sentence of deposition: "The General Assembly did, and hereby do, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the sole king and head of the church, and by the power and authority committed by him to them, depose you, Mr. Thomas Gillespie, minister of Carnock, from the office of the holy ministry, prohibiting and discharging you to exercise the same, or any part thereof, within this church, in all time coming; and the Assembly did, and do hereby declare the parish of Carnock vacant, from and after the day and date of this sentence."

Mr. Gillespie heard the sentence with a very becoming meekness and gravity" and said, "Moderator, I desire to receive the sentence of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, pronounced against me, with real concern, and awful impressions of the divine conduct, in it: but I rejoice, that to me it is given in behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." The meek and solemn manner in which these words were spoken, produced a sensible effect on the minds of the Assembly. Indeed, the major part of the members had not entered heartily into the arbitrary proceedings against this excellent man; for when the vote for his deposition was taken, while no more than fifty-six members voted, one hundred and two did not vote at all. Perhaps, the Church of Scotland did not contain a more honest and sincere member. The very day on which he was deposed, Gillespie went home to Carnock. He submitted peaceably to the sentence, and immediately relinquished all the emoluments of the legal establishment. In all the surrounding country, indignation rose to its highest pitch; and on the morning of the Sabbath, an immense multitude assembled at Carnock. Gillespie, however refused to enter the church and would not even suffer the bell to be rung, but repaired to the open fields, and took for his text 1 Cor. ix. 10, "Necessity is laid upon me, yea woe is me if I preach not the gospel." And went on to preach the gospel, without making any allusion to the manner in which he had been treated by the Assembly.

Many conjectures have been made, as to the reason why the Assembly selected Gillespie as the scape-goat, for the presbytery. Some have said it was because he was the moderator of the presbytery, directed to ordain Mr. Richardson; but this was not the fact. Mr. Gillespie had no part assigned him in the prescribed service. Sir H. Moncrieff seems to ascribe it to the inferiority of his talents. "He was," says he, "one of the most upright men of his time. He was equally zealous and faithful in his pastoral duties, and his private life was irreproachable. His talents were certainly underrated by those who marked him out among his brethern as the most eligible victim of a disobedience, in which so many were associated."

But the true reason is given in the minutes of the Assembly, where it is said, that a censure was inflicted on him, "adequate

to repeated acts of disobedience, tenaciously adhered to, when at the bar." And the next year, when his case was finally decided, the Commission issued an order, that no man ordained by the English Dissenters should hereafter be received as a member of the established Church of Scotland.

The dominant party in the Assembly, had by the deposition of Gillespie, gained a great victory; and they were well disposed to triumph. Dr. Cuming, the moderator, congratulated the Assembly, and so did the royal commissioner, on the occasion. But among the body of the people, and especially the friends of liberty, the feeling was far different. When Whitefield heard it, he said sarcastically, "I wish Mr. Gillespie joy. The Pope has turned Presbyterian. How blind is Satan! What does he gain by casting out Christ's servants? I expect great good will come out of these confusions. Mr. Gillespie will do more good now in a week, than in a year, before."

Having received his ordination from the Dissenters in England, he felt that the act of deposition, could go no farther than to disqualify him from ministering in the Church of Scotland. He therefore went on, as has been said, to preach in the churchyard of Carnock; but he was soon driven from this spot; therefore, he removed to a little holm near a mill, but from this he was also expelled; so that finally he had to collect the people on the high way. But no external inconveniences could deter multitudes from attending on his ministry. He uttered no complaints or denunciations against his persecutors, but went on quietly and faithfully, to preach the gospel of Christ.

Mr. Gillespie and his people seem to have experienced the same oppression and the same difficulties, as are the lot of the Free Church of Scotland, at the present day. As winter approached, they found it necessary to look out for some place of meeting, where they might be sheltered from the inclemency of the weather. His congregation, therefore, now grown large by the accession of many persons, who not only sympathized in his sufferings, but agreed with him in his views of the liberty of the church of Christ, determined to purchase a house to be used as a church, during the life of Mr. Gillespie; for at this time no idea seems to have been entertained of forming a new sect. The house procured was in Dumfermline; but all the elders of the parish of Carnock, except one, went with

him to his new place of worship; and out of respect to him, the presbytery appointed no supplies for his old parish church.

The friends of Gillespie, throughout Scotland, were not idle, but were determined to use every lawful effort to get the sentence of deposition removed, at the next meeting of the General Assembly. Many meetings were therefore held, and many pamphlets published, besides paragraphs in the public prints, in which the injustice and cruelty of the proceedings against him were strongly and ably represented, by some of the ablest writers in the country. But the friends of the dominant party in the Assembly, were not backward in coming forward to defend the acts of the supreme judicatory of the church; and it cannot be denied, that they argued in a very plausible manner, in favour of the course pursued, toward Mr. Gillespie. They insisted, that if obedience to the will of the majority were not enforced, there would be no government at all, and every man would do what was right in his own eyes. It was with respect to the proceedings of the Moderates toward Gillespie, that Dr. Witherspoon wrote his severe satire, entitled, "ECCLIASTICAL CHARACTERISTICS." In this work, the author gives particular directions how the character of a *moderate*, in the Church of Scotland, could be obtained. President Edwards, as we have seen, was a correspondent of Gillespie, and seems to have esteemed him very highly, and considered the true ground of his deposition, a radical dislike to evangelical doctrine and pious ministers. He therefore, sent him a tender and affectionate letter, written too at the very time of his own troubles.

Great interest was felt in relation to the approaching Assembly. Both parties were on the alert, in using their best efforts to send up commissioners, who would favour, respectively, their side, in this controversy. When the Assembly of 1753 sat down, the popular or evangelical party, had decidedly the majority, and victory seemed certain. The first trial of strength was in the choice of a moderator, which resulted in the election of Dr. Webster, of Edinburgh, a warm friend of the Dumfermlinc presbytery, and of Gillespie. The king's commissioner, the earl of Leven, in his introductory speech to the Assembly, laid down, in the most positive and peremptory manner, such arbitrary principles, as were exactly suited to vin-

dicating the proceedings of the preceding Assembly. This speech delivered authoritatively, as expressing the sentiments of the king and his government, had a powerful effect on the minds of many, who were more afraid of incurring the displeasure of the high commissioner, than of doing an act of injustice to a fellow-minister. Many declined voting; and when the question was put, whether the sentence of deposition should be removed from Mr. Gillespie, it was carried in the negative, by a majority of only three votes. This was a very unexpected issue, after a whole year's agitation; and after having obtained a clear majority in the choice of a moderator. It led people to say, that the throne was higher than the moderator's chair. The sentence of Gillespie's deposition was confirmed. "This sentence," says our author, "was cold as iron and sharp as steel."

Gillespie was blamed by many, friendly to his cause, because he did not send up an earnest supplication to the General Assembly to have the sentence removed. In a long and candid letter to a friend, in Glasgow, he gives the reasons of the course which he had pursued.

It has commonly been said, that Gillespie was a dissenter from the Church of Scotland, against his will. This, however, was not true, in the sense in which it was commonly understood. He would have been glad to remain in the church, if he could have done so with a good conscience; but he always insisted, that the Assembly had imposed on him as a term of communion, the performance of an act which he could not perform with a good conscience; and they had deposed him for not complying with their arbitrary order.

Being now excluded, and there being no other body which he thought he could consistently join, he determined to stand alone, until Providence should open some way for fellowship with other ministers, on what he believed to be Christian principles. He differed widely from other dissenters in the country, as it regarded the terms of Christian communion. And though, at one time, he was much tinctured with independent principles, he came afterwards to approve entirely, the Presbyterian system of church government; yet, he was what may be called a moderate Presbyterian. He could not brook the exercise of a high, arbitrary power, in the church; and his

followers have ever maintained the same principles; for the Relief synod has ever been mild and lenient, in the exercise of church power, even to a fault. The first time he administered the Lord's Supper after his exclusion, he announced this liberal sentiment, "I hold communion with all who visibly hold the head, and with such only." He dreaded, therefore, the error and bigotry into which the Seceders had fallen; for he did not pretend to excommunicate the established church, or any body of dissenters, but adhered to the scriptural simple principle, announced above. He had probably imbibed these liberal sentiments in Dr. Doddridge's academy, at Northampton; and they were no doubt confirmed by his acquaintance with Mr. Whitefield, whom he greatly admired.

In the administration of the Lord's Supper it has long been the custom, in Scotland, of having preaching four days, usually Thursday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday. To perform all these services could not but be onerous to one man, therefore assistance was always provided; and when any minister assisted another he expected the same aid from him, at his own communion. Mr. Gillespie did attempt to procure assistance from the established church, but it was refused; on the ground that he was deposed from the ministry. From the dissenters, of any denomination, he could not expect any help; as they had fenced themselves around with such rigid terms of communion, that they were at liberty to hold ministerial fellowship with none holding the principles which Gillespie had avowed. He was obliged, therefore, to go through the services of the four days without any assistance. At the commencement of the solemnity, he begged that God's people would be earnest in their prayers at a throne of grace, that the grace of God might be sufficient for him. What Whitefield remarked, was now verified, that this affair would bring Gillespie into notice. His church was now crowded. A general feeling of sympathy for him was manifest; and some of the most respectable persons in Dumfermline, attended his ministry. And at his regular seasons of communion, many pious people from Glasgow, Edinburgh, and other places around, flocked to his church. And his principles of catholic communion, led him to reject none who could bring the requisite tes-

timonials of character and standing. These seasons were literally feasts of love. Dr. Erskine, who was born in that parish, says, "He took the whole service on himself, which he did thirteen times, in about five or six years; preaching every time, no less than nine sermons; and exhorting seven or eight tables, besides a variety of private work. This is the more surprising, as he thought it criminal to serve the Lord with what cost him nothing; and, therefore, at this busy period, he continued to write all his sermons and all his exhortations at the tables, fully and distinctly." He excelled in serving tables, because he excelled in experimental preaching. As he was apt not to spare himself at the table-service, he was often so exhausted as to be almost unfit for the evening sermon; wherefore, his brother Thomas, from Edinburgh, was accustomed to sit immediately behind him, and give him a hint to spare himself. Such a caution was indispensable. His frame was not adequate to the labour of such continuous speaking. On one occasion, he altogether broke down; but he soon rallied and went on with the services. He received much comfort and encouragement, during this period, from the correspondence of President Edwards; some of whose interesting letters are inserted in the work under review.

The first minister who joined himself to Mr. Gillespie, as agreeing perfectly with him in his views of Church government, and religious establishments, was the Rev. Thomas Boston of Jedburg, the son of the well known Boston of Ettrick, author of the "Fourfold State," and many other valuable works. The father had been greatly dissatisfied with the proceedings of the General Assembly in the affair of professor Simson; and judging the censure passed upon him to be altogether inadequate, he had the firmness to stand alone in protesting against the proceedings. And also in regard to the "Marrow of Modern Divinity," which he had found very useful to himself, and to which he had appended notes, he was much offended with the censure passed on it by the Assembly. By all these things, and also the course pursued by the ruling party in relation to the settlement of ministers, Boston's mind was much alienated from the established church of Scotland; and if he had not been taken away by death, it is very probable that he would have himself become a dissenter. His son

having been educated in the principles of his father, it is not surprising that he was induced to leave the established church. The circumstances of his separation were these. For sixteen years he was minister of Ettrick, as successor to his father. From this parish he was translated to Ognam. About this time he published his father's sermon on Schism, which had been written to oppose the error of the MacMillanites, who excluded all from communion who did not acknowledge the binding obligation of acknowledging the Solemn League and Covenant. The son, however, published it evidently against the principles, now avowed by the Seeders, in regard to communion; they having separated from each other on account of a difference of opinion, respecting the burgesses's oath, and having, in fact, excommunicated each other.

In the year 1755, the people of Jedburgh, which was near Oxnam, having become vacant, had their attention strongly directed to Mr. Boston. The patronage of this parish was in the crown, but the earl of Lothian, who disliked Boston, had the disposal of it. The elders of the church adopted a strong measure; they entered into a solemn compact, that they would not receive any man as a minister, but one acceptable to the people; and engaged to stand by one another, at all risks, in maintaining the ground which they had taken. This compact, however, was of little avail to prevent the presentment of a minister, who, though a worthy man, was not their choice, for they had set their hearts on having Boston. The case went up to the Assembly; but, in the meantime, Mr. Bonar, the person presented received an invitation to Perth, which he accepted. The case of the people became worse, for now a man was presented far more disagreeable to them than Mr. Bonar. The heritors, and many of the people, though not a majority, voted in favour of Mr. Bonar; but the whole people, five only excepted, were opposed to Mr. Douglass, the person now presented. The presbytery refused to act in the intrusion of a man so universally disliked, but the General Assembly of 1757, directed the commission to carry their resolution into effect; whereupon, the congregation, being determined not to submit, began to meditate a separation from the established church, and sent a committee to consult with Mr. Boston on the subject. His mind was fully prepared for such a course;

for he seemed to have come to the conclusion, that Christian liberty was extinct in the established church, and he was not a man to be intimidated by a regard to temporalities, or a fear of consequences, he therefore agreed to cast in his lot with a people, who appeared to be so much attached to him, and willing to forego so many advantages to enjoy his ministry.

Immediately, the people took measures to erect a house of worship; and great zeal and liberality were manifested by the congregation. It was determined to assume the ground occupied by the English dissenters, among whom Boston had received a part of his education.

Boston suffered much abuse from almost every quarter, for his part in this secession; and it was represented as a mercenary scheme, for at Oxnam his salary amounted to no more than £90, whereas, the people of Jedburgh gave him a bond, subscribed by the most respectable people of the place, promising him £120, for his ministerial labours. But if he had remained in the established church he might have received much more, for no minister in Scotland was more popular among evangelical Christians. Indeed, he must have had great preaching gifts, for the Rev. Mr. Bogue has said, that of all the preachers he had ever heard, after Whitefield, Boston was the most powerful.

He found some difficulty in separating himself from the established church, in an orderly way. He sent in to the presbytery of Jedburg, to which he belonged, a paper, demitting his office, as minister of the parish of Oxnam; but except the elder from Jedburg, not a member voted for accepting his dismission. He read a long defence of his conduct, and declared his determination not to be subject any longer to the judicatories of the Church of Scotland. The presbytery still refused to accept his demission of his office. But this did not retard his settlement over the congregation at Jedburg. On the 9th of December, 1757, he was inducted into the new church, built for him. There were, at least, two thousand people present, on the occasion, including the magistrates, and all the principal families of Jedburg. In conducting this business, the services of a Mr. McKenzie, a dissenting minister, from England, were obtained. Every thing was conducted in a very decent, orderly, and solemn manner, according to rules prescribed

by Boston himself; which afterwards became precedents for regulating similar matters, in the Relief Church. This Mr. McKenzie was on his way to organize an Independent church, and it was a temptation to Mr. Boston to connect himself with this denomination; but he preferred the Presbyterian government, and determined to stand alone for the present. After his induction into his new house of worship, crowds of people attended his ministry, some of whom came from a great distance; but the surrounding congregations poured in upon him in great numbers. The presbytery at length accepted his demission, and the church at Oxnam was declared vacant. The synod of Merse and Tevoitdale, to which he had belonged, referred the whole matter to the General Assembly, that the weight of its authority might be interposed in the infliction of a severe censure. Boston, therefore, received a summons to appear before the General Assembly, and answer for his conduct. But he knew better than to appear before the court of a church, all whose judicatories he had deliberately renounced. When the case came before the Assembly, after a preamble, in which they give a statement of his course, they came to the following resolution: "That he should be incapable of receiving or accepting a presentation or call to any congregation or parish, in this church, without the special allowance of some future General Assembly, and the General Assembly does prohibit the ministers of the church from employing him to preach or perform any ministerial offices for them, unless some future Assembly shall see cause to take off this prohibition."

The first time Boston dispensed the sacrament, the concourse of people was immense. His very name was precious among the pious people of Scotland. His eloquence was of the very first order. When a pious man makes voluntary sacrifices for conscience sake, or becomes the object of persecution by the ruling powers, he always is a favourite with the multitude. The town of Jedburg, on occasion of this first administration of the Lord's Supper, by Boston, was crowded with people from Edinburgh, from beyond the Forth, from the fertile vale of the Merse, and from the upland districts of the west, where both father and son had laboured with so much acceptance. On account of the multitude of people, and agreeably to the

custom of that time, the ordinance was administered out of doors. The site chosen for the meeting was a little holm, on the bank of the Jed, called ANA. It was as if art and nature had combined to fit the place for the purpose to which it was that day to be devoted. The communion tables, covered with linen as white as snow, extended in two long parallel lines. The day also was fine; the sun shed down his sweet lustre from a forenoon sky, without a cloud. The little vale was filled, like the area of an immense cathedral. There was no bustle, but a calm solemnity, becoming the sacred day, and the simple solemn service in which they were engaged. When Mr. Boston, accompanied by his elders, approached the stand prepared for him, every head was uncovered. The wide dome of heaven spread over his head, so that he could not but feel that he was worshipping in a nobler temple, than was ever constructed by the hands of men. The smiles of his gracious Master evidently sustained him in the arduous services of the day. The sacrament of the ANA is one which children then unborn, have learned to talk of with rapture; and the stranger is still taken to the spot where Boston and his people first pledged their love to each other, over the memorials of a bleeding Saviour. The general impression made on the minds of the people in favour of religious liberty was very deep, and its influence was felt far and wide, through Scotland. At his next communion, Boston invited Gillespie to be with him and assist him. Their circumstances were so similar that it is no wonder they sympathized with each other. Gillespie, however, did not arrive on Saturday, retarded by the badness of the roads; and on the morning of the Sabbath, he did not appear until Mr. Boston had commenced the service. In the presence of the great congregation, he gave his brother a most cordial greeting. Gillespie, who had so long stood alone, without ministerial communion with any one, was greatly affected, on the occasion; and during the whole action sermon, which was preached by the pastor, his tears did not cease to flow. A friendship formed in these circumstances, must have possessed a strength and tenderness, not easily conceived by those who have never been placed in a similar situation. From this time, these two devoted and eminent servants of Jesus Christ went forward in delightful harmony, in extending liberty to the

Christian people, and affording relief to oppressed parishes; although they did not constitute themselves into a presbytery till three years afterwards.

The third congregation which attached itself to this new society was that of Colingsburgh. The occasion was, the presentment of a certain Dr. John Chalmers, by the patron, the earl of Balcarras. This minister was much disliked by the elders and the great majority of the parishioners. His settlement was therefore strongly opposed, and the people were supported by the presbytery of St. Andrews, and the synod of Fife. These courts refused to carry into effect the translation, in the face of a reclaiming congregation. An appeal was taken from their judgment to the Commission of the Assembly, in November, 1759, which sustained the call, and enjoined the presbytery to carry the translation into effect. The remonstrances of the people were entirely disregarded. On this occasion, Dr. Witherspoon delivered one of his most cutting speeches; "but," says the historian, "with all his teeth he was merely biting a pill." The Doctor said, "For a probationer to adhere to a presentation, notwithstanding the opposition of the people, there may be some excuse, but for a settled minister, not only to act this part, but to excel all that ever were before him, in a bold and insolent contempt of the people, as plainly appears in Dr. Chalmers' case, is such conduct, that I shall have a worse opinion of the General Assembly than I have at present, if they do not openly express their indignation at such indecency of behaviour. In the history of the church, we find no character more odious, or more unclerical, if I may speak so, than ambition and open solicitation of ecclesiastical preferment. Moderator, it is not only the people of the parish, or those of lower rank, but many of all stations whom we shall offend, if we order this settlement. They are led by such things to treat, and they often do treat with derision, a minister's concern for his unfitness, and affirm that it is no more than a desire for a comfortable benefice and a salary for life. I shall be sorry to see the day, when by resembling them in practice, we shall learn from England to leave the people and the work altogether out of the act, and so call our charges, no more *parishes* but *livings*."

The people of Colingsburgh immediately determined, that Dr.

Chalmers should not be forced upon them, they, therefore, set about building a meeting house for themselves; in which they were encouraged by Boston and Gillespie. Having completed their building, the next thing was to obtain a suitable minister. They had very little chance of getting one to suit them in Scotland, they therefore, turned their attention to England, and gave an invitation to the Rev. John Scott, a dissenting minister of Hexham, England; and upon his declining to come, they called the Rev. Thomas Colier, who was a native of Fife. He accepted their call, and was inducted into office by Mr. Boston and Mr. Gillespie, and a deputation of elders from their churches. On this occasion Mr. Boston preached from 1 Cor. xi. 2. In the evening of the same day, the three ministers and an elder from each congregation met, and constituted a presbytery, to which they gave the name of the Presbytery of Relief. In their book, they entered at large, an account of the origin of each of the congregations, and the reason of the separation of the ministers from the established church. This extended minute is important, to show the true principles on which the Relief Presbytery was constituted, concerning which several gross mistakes have been made, by writers in giving the origin of the body.

It may seem strange that Boston and Gillespie did not cast in their lot with the Seceders, who were now grown to be a large body; but, about this time, the Seceders were split into two contending parties. Besides, the views of the men who formed the Relief Presbytery concerning the terms of communion, were entirely different from the narrow views of the Seceders.

The Relief Presbytery being now formed, it became a refuge for such congregations as felt themselves oppressed by the operation of the law of patronage; or rather by the action of the General Assembly and their commission under that law. The congregation of Logie, Stirlingshire, was the first which applied to be received by the presbytery. This congregation had set their hearts on Mr. Cruden; while another, exceedingly disliked by the majority of the people, was threatened to be forced upon them. And next, Blair-Logie, was received. This small, but thriving village, manifested much spirit and liberality in building a house, and providing for the support of a minister. The

person whom they invited to take charge of them, was the Rev. John Warden, late minister of Cuderston, in South Britain. He was esteemed to be eminently pious; but the church did not long enjoy his labours; for he sickened and died in a few months after his settlement. The next accession to the presbytery of Relief, was a portion of the congregation of Auchternuty. A certain Mr. Mutter being presented by the patron, was forced on the congregation reclaiming, by the authority of the General Assembly; a large part of the people withdrew, built a meeting house for themselves, and gave a call to the Rev. John Scott, the gentleman before invited to Colingsburgh, who accepted their invitation, and was installed as their pastor, in connexion with the Relief Presbytery.

In the same year, Bellshill, in the parish of Bothwell, was added to the presbytery. The Rev. James Baillie had been presented to this parish, contrary to the nearly unanimous remonstrance of the people; only eight persons having signed his call. The new congregation gave a call to Mr. Alexander Simpson, a licentiate of the established church, who joined the Relief presbytery, and was by them ordained over this church, October 17, 1763. But he did not escape censure, for process against him was instituted by his presbytery, and it was determined that "he was incapable of receiving any presentation or call from any church in the establishment. Mr. Simpson was a clear, sound, evangelical preacher, who, in the pulpit, often wept over lost souls. His sentiments on the subject of Christian communion, were more liberal than were common at that time. While his communions were held in the open air, great multitudes attended on those solemn occasions.

But the most important accession to the Relief presbytery, took place in 1765, when the first Relief Church was constituted in the city of Edinburgh. The origin of this church was the forcible settlement of Dr. Drysdale in the place of Dr. Hyndman, deceased. At first, they had some thoughts of joining with the Seceders; but a long letter from Mr. Gillespie, who had been consulted, turned the scale in favour of the Relief Church. They met with some difficulties in obtaining a site for their church, but when these were overcome, and the building erected, they gave a call to the Rev. James Baine, one of the ministers of the High church of Paisley; who had

been first privately consulted, and his disposition found to be favourable to their wishes. Mr. Baine accepted the call, the form of which was different from what was usual; it was drawn up by himself, and gave a very prominent place to the principles of free communion. This call became afterwards a model, agreeably to which, calls in the Relief Church were framed. Mr. Baine was the son of a respectable clergyman, had received a thorough education, and was a highly popular minister, who sided with the evangelical party, in the church of Scotland. After being settled for a few years in a retired parish, he was translated to the high church of Paisley, where he was colleague with the Rev. Dr. Witherspoon. A dispute arose about the election of a clerk of General Session, which the magistrates claimed as their right, but which Mr. Baine insisted properly belonged to the church. In this controversy, Dr. Witherspoon took part with the magistrates. The whole community were enlisted in the dispute. It was first canvassed in the church courts, and then in the Court of Sessions. In both, the decision was against Baine, and in favour of the magistrates. From this time, he was dissatisfied with the establishment, and was highly indignant at the manner in which Mr. Gillespie had been treated by the Assembly. He was received by the Relief Presbytery immediately after his resignation of his place, at Paisley. This accession to the Relief presbytery added much to their strength and respectability, for he was considered the most popular and pleasing preacher, at that time, in Scotland; and so sweet and melodious was his voice, that he received the denomination of the "Swan of the West."

His case, in regular course, came up before the General Assembly, at whose bar he was cited to appear. This he did not decline, and insisted on having a regular libel or charge tabled against him; but Dr. Robertson, who governed that body, determined to make short work of it, and taking his letter of demission, on that part of it, in which he says, he had joined another church, formed a resolution, which was adopted by the Assembly, in which it is declared, that he was incapable of receiving any call or presentment from any parish, and all ministers are prohibited from receiving or employing him in any ministerial service, or admitting him to the communion

of the church. Baine was not the man to be easily intimidated or put down. He published a very cutting and severe review of the proceedings of the Assembly, in his case. As might be expected, Mr. Baine carried with him much of the sympathy of the best people in Scotland. The proceedings against him were considered harsh and tyrannical; and the cause of the Relief Church was benefitted rather than injured by the severity of the censures passed upon him.

Campbelton, in the county of Argyle, where the Gaelic language is spoken, after long altercation and considerable division, concluded to join the Relief Church, which gave it a footing among the highlands of Scotland.

And in the year 1766, a disaffected party in Glasgow, by a vote, determined to apply to be admitted into the Relief Presbytery; on which occasion Mr. Baine preached from Gen. iii. 15. The commencement of this church was auspicious; but their prospects were clouded by the course pursued in obtaining a minister. The majority of the people had their hearts fixed on Mr. Boston, and although the presbytery endeavoured to turn their attention to another, they would persevere, until at last Mr. Boston, who was in very bad health, was induced to visit Glasgow. The congregation observing how feeble his health was, resolved, that it would be inexpedient to call a person who would need an assistant from the very beginning. This was very mortifying to Mr. Boston, who had put himself to great trouble to visit them. But his best friends were of opinion, that it was unwise in a person in his state of health, to give any encouragement to a proposal for a translation to a charge so important. Boston, however, was so little sensible of his own infirmities, that he was not a little offended with Baine and Gillespie for intermeddling with a matter in which, he said, they had no concern.

The congregation now presented a call to Mr. Cruden, of Logic, who was accordingly translated to Glasgow, and for some time his preaching was very popular, and his audiences crowded; but though a good man, and an impressive preacher, Mr. Cruden did not possess the talents requisite for such a station; and after a while did not give the same satisfaction which he did at first.

From this time, new accessions became more and more fre-

quent; so that the Relief Presbytery had congregations in Cuparfife, in Dalkeith, Falkirk, Kilsyth, &c.; all which places were supplied with ministers; among whom were the Rev. Messrs. Monteith, Neill, Bonnar, Hutchinson, Boston, jr., and Graham. And thus far every thing went prosperously with the Relief Presbytery; sentiments in favour of the liberty of Christian people, were more prevalent, and the prospects of the society were very promising; especially, as the progress of the Seceders had been retarded in their bitter controversies, and uncharitable excommunication of one another. The friends of the establishment began to be alarmed; for by means of the Relief Church, an effectual remedy had been provided against the arbitrary acts of the General Assembly, in relation to patronage. But this prosperity, and these fair prospects of increase were soon obscured by internal dissensions, by which the body was not only agitated, but rent in pieces. Although the Relief Presbytery was constituted on the principles of free communion, among all visible Christians, and these principles were incorporated into the call commonly presented, according to the formula drawn up by Mr. Baine; yet notwithstanding, some of the people were not yet divested of the bigotry in which they had been educated, therefore, the parish of Dunse, of which Mr. Monteith was pastor, were grievously offended with their minister, because he had gone to assist the Rev. Mr. Murray, an independent minister, at Newcastle. The matter was brought up formally before the presbytery, who gave it as their opinion, that there was nothing censurable in Mr. Monteith's conduct. But the chief occasion of dissension in the body was, the case of the Rev. Mr. Pirie, of Abernethy, who produced much disturbance in the three rival denominations; the Burghers, Antiburghers, and Relief. He was no ordinary man. Perhaps Scotland has not produced a more able theological writer. He was brought up among the Antiburghers, and when young was zealous for the covenants. He received license with a view to a mission to America; but on the plea of ill health, declined the appointment. He was now appointed by the synod, professor of Moral Philosophy, in their theological hall. But his pupils began to affect a high degree of refinement in moral science, and he openly advocated the principles of Lord Kaimes, in his *Essay on Liberty and Neces-*

sity. On which account he was censured by the synod, and laid under the "lesser excommunication." This induced him to examine the whole subject of church power, and to publish his views to the world. He also took up the subject of "covenanting," on which he published an essay, which had a great effect in disengaging the Scottish mind from an enslaving tradition. He had, after being excommunicated by the Anti-burghers, been received by the Burgher synod. But as soon as it was known that he was the author of this essay, he was accused by an elder, of heresy, under seventeen specifications. The presbytery found him guilty, on several of the counts; upon which he appealed to the synod, who were disposed to deal kindly with him, and were for sending the case back to the presbytery for reconsideration, but he refused; and immediately declined their authority, and gave in his demission, as a Burgher; his congregation, however, clave to him, and he continued to be their minister.

In 1769, Mr. Pirie published "A Review of the Principles and Conduct of the Seceders," in which he clearly brought out those sentiments more recently adopted by the Secession. He strongly insisted on the propriety of a complete separation between church and State; and maintained with great force of argument, that Christians in spiritual matters, owed allegiance to no king but Christ. His talents drew attention to his publications, and the keenness of the edge which he gave to his remarks, made him to be dreaded by his opponents.

When Pirie was proposed as a member of the Relief Presbytery, an unhappy division arose among the members, respecting his reception. The congregation of Blair-Logie, being vacant, the people were earnest to have Mr. Pirie, and voted a call for him, which, however, was rejected by the presbytery; although the majority of the ministers were in his favour, it was carried against him by the elders. The people, however, were not to be frustrated in enjoying the labours of the man of their choice. And, though connected with no religious denomination, he commenced his labours among them on the 19th of August, 1770. There was, no doubt, great irregularity in these proceedings; but some of the members of the presbytery were so much attached to Mr. Pirie, that they resolved to recognize him as a minister; accordingly Mr. Simp-

son assisted him in the administration of the sacrament, at Blair-Logie. And not only so, he invited Mr. Pirie to preach in his pulpit. But Mr. Simpson's people not approving of the irregular and divisive course pursued by their pastor, locked the door of the church against Mr. Pirie, who preached, notwithstanding, from a window, to a considerable number of people. Mr. Simpson, who was absent, on his return, was so incensed at the course pursued by his people, that he immediately resigned his charge; which in the heat of the moment was accepted by the people. The congregation of Dunse having become vacant by the removal of Mr. Monteith, Mr. Simpson received a unanimous call to that charge, which he accepted. Mr. Pirie continued to serve the congregation of Blair-Logie, and had the influence to propagate his opinions respecting the nature of Christ's kingdom, extensively; especially, among students of theology, in the Seceding bodies. He applied again to be received into the Relief Presbytery, and was again rejected; upon which he left Blair-Logie, and went to Newburgh, and the congregation of Blair-Logie were received again under the care of the presbytery.

The congregation of Colingsburgh being vacant by the death of Mr. Cober, they gave a call to a certain James Cowan, who, though brought up among the Seceders, left them to attend Divinity Hall in the established church, after which he went into England, and was licensed by a dissenting association; and on his return to Scotland, received a call from the congregation in Colingsburgh.

The controversy in the Relief Presbytery respecting Mr. Pirie had the effect of dividing the body into two presbyteries, as they had no tribunal to which they could refer their disputes, for a decision. One of these was called the Eastern, the other the Western presbytery of Relief. But in May, 1772, the two presbyteries held a meeting of consultation in Edinburgh, and agreed to meet next year in a synodical capacity. Accordingly, on the 26th of May, 1773, the Relief Synod met, and Mr. Baine was chosen moderator. But the ministers, although externally united again, were not very harmonious in their views and feelings. Cowan and Cruden were strongly opposed to the principle of free communion, as it had been acted upon by some of the members of the Relief Pres-

bytery ; and at this meeting of the synod, a question was brought by them before the synod, "whether it was right to hold ministerial and Christian communion with those of the Episcopalian and Independent persuasion ; and with such as are unsound in the essentials of the Christian faith." With regard to the last, the synod were unanimous, that their principles did not allow them to hold communion with such. But on the other question the synod was divided, and when it was put to the vote, a majority appeared in favour of the lawfulness of such communion. And the same decision was made at the next meeting of the synod, unanimsly, "that it is agreeable to the word of God and their principles, occasionally to hold communion with those of the Episcopal and Independent persuasion, who are visible saints." This principle being so contrary to the modern principles of the Church of Scotland, and to the avowed principles of both bodies of Seceders, made a great noise through the country. To stem the current which was setting in from all quarters against the synod, the Rev. Neill Anderson published a discourse on the nature of Christian communion, in which he endeavoured to cast oil on the troubled waters, and to vindicate the principles of catholic communion on the authority of Christ. A warm controversy now arose on the terms of Christian communion. The Seceders were very zealous in their opposition to the principle adopted by the Relief Synod ; and the Rev. James Ramsay, Antiburgher minister of Glasgow, published a discourse, entitled, "The Relief Scheme considered." This pamphlet is ably and acrimoniously written, in which the most ruinous consequences are charged upon the "Scheme," and the synod is severely censured on several other grounds. The person who now came forward in defence of the Relief Synod, was the Rev. Patrick Hutchison, pastor of the Relief Church of St. Ninians. He had been brought up among the Antiburghers, and studied for the ministry in that Church, but before he was licensed his views changed, and he joined the Relief Church. Hutchison had a strong, discriminating mind, and was an open hearted, candid, religious man ; a firm friend of civil and religious liberty, and preached and wrote with great eloquence. Though his pamphlet was intended as an answer to Ramsay, with much good sense and no small tact,

he took a pretty comprehensive field of discussion. His motto, which he said expressed the principles of the Relief Church, was borrowed from Witsius, "In necessariis, unitas; in non-necessariis, libertas; in utroque, charitas." But the controversy was not confined to these leading writers; pamphlet after pamphlet issued from the press, the titles of which it would be tedious to mention. In the midst of this controversy, Hutchison found time to bring out an important volume, entitled "Messiah's Kingdom," in which he explained fully his views of the nature of the Christian church, and its relation to civil government. The sentiments expressed are very much the same as those now almost universally entertained by the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.

Mr. Cowan, settled at Colingsburgh, gave much trouble to the synod; and at length he was separated from them; and his people were divided into two parts; the majority cleaved to him, the minority to the synod. He, however, did not long continue; for during the summer of 1794, his debility under which he had laboured for some time, increased upon him, and he was released from his labours. Mr. Gillespie, the father of the Relief Church, was for a long time so infirm that he could not attend any of the judicatories of the church. He died in the year 1774.

The Glasgow church having become vacant, the people presented a call to Mr. Bell of Jedburg, but the synod refused to translate him; whereupon he went in opposition to their decision. This important church was thus separated, as well as their minister, from the synod. And for many years they stood alone, and none of the ministers of the synod held any ministerial communion with Bell; but in the year 1783, Bell and his people were received again into fellowship; but not until they publicly confessed their error, and their sorrow for the irregular course pursued by them. About the year 1776, another presbytery, which took the name of Dysart, was added to the Relief Synod.

The Rev. Mr. Baine, after a ministry of sixty years, departed this life Jan. 17, 1790, in the eightieth year of his age. He may, on many accounts, be considered the most distinguished minister connected with the Relief Church. "His judgment was clear, his acquirements as a scholar and as a

theologian of the very first order. Few men of his day wrote the English language with so much neatness and purity. His printed sermons and pamphlets are models of clear, chaste, and graceful writing. About the time of Baine's death, a dispute arose in the Relief Church about Psalmody, occasioned by an attempt to introduce some hymns into public worship, but the effort was not successful."

The history of the Relief Church after this period, presents nothing of a very interesting kind; and our limits do not admit of our pursuing the subject any further. The author appears to have executed his work with fidelity, candour, and ability; and the volume contains much interesting information not relating immediately to the Relief Church.

ART. III.—*Essays on the Formation and Publication of Opinions; and on other subjects.* London: John Green, 121 Newgate street.

IF we are not in any case accountable for our opinions, it would seem impossible to vindicate the Christian religion. Its divine author has said, "If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins." Surely, if it is unreasonable in all cases to blame or censure a man for his opinions or belief, such language cannot be justified. It may be said, that the belief to which the gospel refers, is not merely a conviction of the head, but also a sentiment of the heart. Supposing this to be true, as no doubt it is, yet if we may, without incurring guilt, consider the personage who uttered this remarkable language as a hypocrite and impostor, we may certainly be excused from believing in him in any sense whatever. If such an opinion of his character can be justified, that opinion must of necessity justify sentiments of aversion to him. There is no middle ground, therefore, between the position that men are in some cases at least, accountable for their opinions, and the rejection of one of the great fundamental principles of revelation.

A different view of this subject must, however, have been taken by some professing Christians, with whom it is a favourite maxim that we are in no case responsible for our belief; or,