

THE CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE.

AUGUST, 1834.

Religious Communications.

IN BENEVOLENT CONTRIBUTIONS WE SERVE GOD WITH HIS OWN.

A Charity Sermon.

1 CHRON. xxix. 14, last clause.—The whole verse is thus—“But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort?—for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.”

These are the words of David, king of Israel, “the man after God’s own heart.” He had purposed to build the temple of Jehovah at Jerusalem, that the ark of his covenant might no longer abide in a tent, but occupy a permanent place of deposit;—a structure which, by its magnificence and costliness, might be a standing and striking monument of the devotion of the nation to Jehovah the God of Israel; and by its spaciousness and accommodations, might enable both the priests and the people to perform the service of the sanctuary in the most perfect and agreeable manner. This was a work which, for a long time, lay near the heart of David. He was commended of God “in that he had it in his heart,” but was expressly forbidden to carry it into effect himself; and as expressly commanded to commit it to his son and successor Solomon. David—possessing a temper wholly unlike what we sometimes witness in zealous men, who seem to be but little desirous that good should be done, if it be not done by themselves—David determined that if he could not be a principal and conspicuous agent in this business, he would, at least, be an humble under-workman—If he might not be permitted to build the house, he would employ himself in gathering and preparing the materials. In this employment, accordingly, he engaged with activity and effect. Having made many preparations, for a length of time, when he drew toward the close of life, he completed them by a great and noble effort. He assembled together all the men of rank, authority, influence and wealth, in his kingdom; made to them a solemn and affecting address on the subject; and charged Solomon in their presence to go forward with the work, and them to assist him in it. But he did not content himself with making a persuasive and pious speech. He set them an example of munificence, by giving of his own private property three thousand talents of gold, and seven thousand talents of refined silver. This example had—what such examples will usually have—a very powerful effect. All who beheld it seemed to catch the spirit of liberality; and donations to a surprising amount were freely and cheerfully made. The heart of the good old monarch appears to have been so gladdened and melted by this event, that he could not restrain his

For the Christian Advocate.

THE PURITAN DIVINES; in a Letter to the Rev. Dr. Ashbel Green, from Rev. Thomas B. Balch.

Warrenton, July 15th, 1834.

Rev. and Dear Sir,—Several works written by Puritan divines, have lately been republished in this country. This fact is mentioned, not because it is my intention to notice these works individually and in detail, but because a few striking features sometimes recall to memory a whole family. They will, at least, furnish the ground-work of a few general remarks on that class of divines, to whom we have given the name of Puritan, some of whom lived a considerable time after those to whom, as a term of reproach, the epithet *Puritan* was first attached.

The time is fresh in my recollection, when the Presbyterian church was tranquil. This tranquillity has given way, of late years, to serious agitation. This agitation is ascribed by many, to those who have departed from the standards of doctrine, originally established in the church. Our standards were intended to promote unity of opinion, among all who minister in the same ecclesiastical connexion; and this unity is certainly desirable, provided it be not that *unity of error*, for which Jesuits contend, and which is enforced by the screws of the Inquisition. It is urged on the other hand, that an apostacy from the standards, is the thing to be proved; and that shades of difference may exist even with a strong attachment to the bonds of union. In this state of things, my attention has been drawn to the writings of the Puritans; and after renewed acquaintance with these records, I presume to appear as their humble advocate.

The Puritan divines have not been without enemies in our own times. On the list of these enemies may be found the Bishop of Salisbury, who has acquitted himself towards them as a kind of historical Hogarth. Butler and Southey, Clarendon and Hume, have tried to hold them up to ridicule. But fiery churchmen, sceptical philosophers, and vacillating religionists, may deride these holy men. All this will only strengthen that affection which glows in the hearts of their admirers. The same treatment has been lavished on the Scottish Covenanters; but Old Mortality visited their tombs, to render palpable the rude rhymes, in which their martyrdom was recorded. The same humble office it is my wish to perform for the Puritan divines; though the sound of my chisel is not likely to be heard in the present din of the church. The Westminster Assembly of Divines was composed of Puritans, and a comparison of the doctrines and views of Puritans with the writers of the present day, will show who have adhered to, and who have departed from, the creed of our church.

The Reformation so auspiciously begun in the reign of Henry VIII., turned out to be incomplete. Its promoters, in lopping off the branches from the Upas tree of Popery, felt too much sympathy for its roots. They might have been awed by its antiquity; but a tree which overshadowed Europe with the stillness of spiritual death, and which discharged nothing besides venom, from all its extended and complicated branches, as well as from all its fluted leaves, ought not to have been spared because of its age. England at that time needed the shoulder of the Scottish reformer to heave Popery from its foundations. Many wished the Reformation to have been more radical, and this desire was increased by the dispersion of reformers, under the persecutions of the bloody Mary, into foreign cities. Upon their return, in the reign of

Elizabeth, the Puritans began to show themselves, in considerable numbers, as a consequence of the more profound Reformation they had witnessed abroad. The Puritans were desirous of peace, but Laud subsequently attempted to revive discarded rites, and bring back from the chambers of Papal imagery, the moth-eaten vestments of a lazy priesthood. At this, thousands revolted, and the act of uniformity did not extirpate this resistance to the exactions of power. This act deprived numerous ministers of their parishes, whose places were supplied by men devoid of seriousness—men who, in the costume of huntsmen, demoralized the rural districts of England, by the revels of the chase. But though power had thus placed its hermetical seal on the *tongue* of spiritual eloquence, it could not reduce into submission the *pens* of the Puritans; and if the press had given us nothing but the writings of these men, we should still be under immense obligations to the discoverer of the art of printing.

This may be a suitable place, in which to notice an objection lately urged against these divines by an eloquent writer. In reviewing the incidents which took place in the times of Milton, he remarks that the Puritan writers tasked their minds on subjects beyond the reach of the human intellect. This statement is equivalent to saying, that the Puritans might have written on politics or science, but that an Infinite Creator is not a proper object of contemplation for the limited mind of man. The same objection might be urged to men of science, especially where the love of science amounts to a passion, as it did with such men as Galileo, Davy, Pennant, and Buffon. In the exercise of mind, these men met with objects which baffled all its researches. Notwithstanding the many plants and herbs which have fallen under the notice of man, it is probable that the hand of industrious research may one day lift the curtain, behind which hundreds more are concealed. Linnæus, when he taught at Hammarly, distributed his pupils into bands, and ordered a bugle to be sounded by the pioneer of each company, when a flower before unknown should be taken captive. We doubt not, that many a future student of nature, is destined to sound his bugle, betokening that the bounds of discovery are enlarged. Addison, in some of his serious papers, expatiates on the fact, that all the objects of nature involve the mind in speculations on *infinity*. Especially when we survey the skies redolent in wonders, are our powers lost in astonishment. We behold comets, constellations, and moons, and the sun who comes every morning like an eastern shepherd to disperse his planetary flock. He watches them as they wind all day on distant fields of space, and then leads them into their evening fold. In contemplating these magnificent orbs, Milton speaks with his usual enthusiasm of unsphering the spirit of Plato; but the Puritan divines remembered not the spirit of Plato. They sought to commune with the fountain of all existence, and to unsphere Him who, "because the children were partakers of flesh and blood, likewise took part of the same, that he through death might destroy Him that had the power of death."

The following summary will include some of the points of the Puritan theology. Man was created pure—he fell under a covenant of works—his posterity did not eat the forbidden fruit, but the guilt or penal consequences of their representative were imputed—that all men thus fell by the deed of one man—that the world, by the first transgression, became unequivocally ruined—that every descendant of Adam is by nature totally depraved—that sin consists in a destitution

of original righteousness, and a want of conformity to the law, as well as in a violation of the law—that the human will is not partially, but unreservedly hostile to holiness—that men are passive in the *act* of regeneration—that our Saviour atoned for all who repent and believe—that repentance and faith are wrought by the Holy Spirit—that the Spirit is a sovereign agent—that repentance in the creature is not the fountain of election, but election the fountain of repentance—that the obedience of saints is imperfect, but that the righteousness of the Saviour, imputed to them, is complete. In this scheme of doctrine, the mass of reformers united. The Westminster Assembly of Divines, and the Synod of Dort, affixed to it their respective seals; and it is no where more ably defended, than by Witsius in his *Œconomy of the Covenants*. It took root by the lake of Lemman, spread through the cantons of Switzerland and among the universities of Holland. It prevailed from the Highlands of Scotland to the Tweed, ascended into the palace of Lambeth, and sat down a welcome guest in the chair of Canterbury. The above sentiments are diamond points in the Puritan system. When we take up their works we look for their appearance as we look for the stars in the clear sky of evening.

It is not my intention to enter into any elaborate defence of this scheme of doctrine—much less is it my design to charge any of my brethren with dereliction in fulfilling their ordination vows. No one has made me the keeper of their conscience, but if their faith materially varies from that of the Puritans, it also varies from the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms. It would be gratifying to my own feelings to write this communication with the same spirit of meekness which dictated many of the papers of Addison. In fact, we shall find a sufficient defence of this Puritan theology, in the writings to which we are giving a cursory examination. The Puritan divines took great pains to illustrate the covenant of works, and to place this part of the divine administration in a commanding attitude before the people. The covenant of works was equal. Let a man of plain understanding read the account of its institution, given in Genesis, and it is impossible for him to draw any other conclusion than that a sublime moral transaction is detailed. If a command be given, a caveat stated, the types and symbols of a covenant marked out, a penalty threatened, we immediately infer, that all this cannot be a useless ceremony. But the book of Genesis is not the only portion of the Bible from whence we derive the federal relations sustained by Adam. The outline of the covenant of works may be found there, but when Paul wrote his Epistle to the Romans, this faint outline had waxed into a circle of perfect brightness. Nothing in Plutarch has been so much admired as his parallels; and nothing in Paul interests us so deeply as his comparison of the first and second Adam. He traces the points of resemblance and discrepancy with the hand of an inspired master. The first Adam failed in his integrity. The second in his temptation foiled the tempter, and Milton makes the action of Paradise Regained to turn on this event, because the Messiah bore that protracted trial in his representative character. The first Adam was made a living soul, but the second became a quickening spirit, to the moral death which had been introduced. In the first, all die, in the second, all shall be raised from the dead, and the saints be made alive to a felicity as lasting as the being of God himself.

But what advantage, it is asked, can arise from insisting frequently on the covenant of works. To this we reply, that nothing else can

account for universal death, display the nature of original sin, and strip men of an apology for transgression. Wicked men often plead that in their original formation they were created with propensities which impel them to sin. This position the covenant of works denies. It shows that in his *original* formation man was sinless; and that he fell from his *original* state by the defection of his federal head and representative.

It is important to ascertain what views were held by the Puritan divines, of the ability of sinners to comply with the overtures of the gospel, for this is another point on which the ministers of our church are divided. This ability is preached at present without limitation, by a certain class. The basis on which the doctrine rests is—That it would be unjust in our Creator to give a law or a command, provided there were no ability in the creature to comply with that command. To this the Puritans reply—It would be unjust to give man, *in a state of innocence*, a law which he had not power to keep, or a covenant which he had not ability to observe. But, according to their views, the fall of man changes the grounds on which the creature originally stood; and they think it not easy to tell how the depravity of man can take away the rights of the lawgiver. That the moral law ought to be kept, is held by all, unless it be denied by the followers of Tobias Crisp. But we deny the power, even of renewed persons, to render perfect obedience to the moral law—how much more strongly may we then deny the ability of sinners to render a perfect obedience to this law. Even the perfection for which Wesley and Fletcher contended was not perfect obedience to the law. In short, the perfection for which they contended, is the common attainment of all Christians. But it is supposed that a distinction ought to be taken between natural and moral ability. If by natural ability be meant that man is an intellectual being, capable of knowing the Divine will, and has all the natural faculties necessary to obedience, then the Puritan divines held this distinction. This distinction is mentioned by as sound a divine as Dr. Witherspoon, and enlarged on by as eloquent a preacher as Dr. Kollock. But the *intellectual* ability of sinners ought to be used to shed light on their *moral* inability. If not employed in this way, it may inspire false views, and our preaching may become like the chameleon. It may first take its hue from this innocent distinction, but presently it may change its colour into *moral ability*, and this moral ability may return continually upon the people, like a repeating decimal. Small errors may soon become great. From a few fractions we may extract a whole number, and from small errors we may take a whole one, which as it comes up from the process of addition, may bear on its front the name of Legion. Of the truth of this remark, the Rev. Edward Irving, of London, furnishes a striking exemplification. When this man appeared he excited an overpowering interest. The dukes of the British empire attended on his ministry; and what was a still greater honour, the troubadours of England convened to hear this singular personage. Campbell came from Sydenham, Coleridge from Hempstead, Southey from Keswick, Wordsworth from Grassmere, Montgomery from Sheffield, and stood round the preacher. But the preacher began to speak contemptuously of the catechisms of the Scottish church, and now he

“Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven,
As make the angels weep.”

But to return to the Puritan divines. They did not believe in the moral ability of sinners. They laid it down as an axiom, that one genuine conversion was worth a thousand spurious conversions. They did not suppose any person to be soundly converted unless he felt his *moral helplessness*, and to such an extent that he should seek and experience the agency of a sovereign life-giving Spirit. They did believe that the doctrine of moral ability was so much flattery addressed to the impenitent. That fallen men were not endowed with power to do all that God demands; and that repentance is not the easiest of all duties. They aimed to apply the law, not to human sympathies, but to the conscience, that they might produce genuine conviction. But now some imagine that giving correct views of the moral condition of man, will prevent the success of the gospel. To show the erroneousness of this statement, it is only necessary to select a few facts. Brainerd held the Puritan theology. He states that his heart rose in sinful rebellion against the imputation of Adam's transgression. But Brainerd not only became practically pious, and preached what he felt, but was a successful missionary, and the model after which succeeding missionaries have copied. His example influenced Henry Martyn in the University of Cambridge, and in the gardens of Shiraz. Vanderkemp in Africa, and Swartz in India did not proclaim man to be powerful enough for his own conversion. President Edwards was a successful preacher; and although he held the distinction between natural and moral ability, he never taught that men may convert themselves, without the supernatural agency of the Holy Spirit. No—Let it not be forgotten that Jonathan Edwards was *practically* a Puritan in his theology.

But in speaking of success based on the maintaining of the moral inability of man, it would not be right to pass over that success which has followed Moravian missionaries. Of the Moravians or *Unitas Fratrum*, the following statements may be made with safety. They preach the spiritual *impotency* of men. They never permit their minds to be beguiled by novelty into deviations from what they deem revealed truth. They are never anxious that the church should advance one step, provided purity is to be sacrificed by the advancement. They are little concerned about the pomp of numbers; and in adding to the church, they would require the same proofs of piety from a German nobleman, an Egyptian pacha, or a Turkish sultan, as from a Caribbee. They not only begin their missions with circumspection, but continue them with a holy jealousy. In a few of their attempts, they have been defeated; but for the most part, difficulties have vanished before their holy zeal. They have awakened the hum of moral industry among the lazy Kraals of Africa; they have warmed into spiritual life the Greenlander, buried in his hut of ice; and have bound the rose of Sharon on the groves of West Indian bondsmen. The secret of Moravian success, lies in a simple dependence on the ministration of the Spirit.

We are aware of the objections which have been urged against our being passive in regeneration. We have seen some strictures on this doctrine by our brother, Dr. Cox, who, like Ulysses, has been journeying abroad. We know that this friend of ours can bear a good natured remark; and his getting into a ship and crossing the water to be taught *abolition*, does seem to us Virginians a little like the Knight of La Mancha getting into his enchanted boat. Nevertheless, for the intellectual powers of the doctor, we entertain high respect. His natural talents also have been improved by commendable industry. We

have seen too, more than once, from under his own sign manual, that the system of Theology, inculcated by the Rev. Thomas Scott, Rector of Aston Sandford, was a system which met his unqualified approbation. Yet Scott taught that because man is passive in the *act of regeneration*, it does not necessarily follow that he is passive in the *means*. In these man is active, and no preachers are so pungent in inciting sinners to the use of means, as those who believe that *awakened* sinners are *passive* in the new birth. We think it can be shown, that Russell, the author of the *Seven Sermons*, Alleine, who wrote *The Alarm*, and Baxter, who wrote *The Call*, held that a sinful man cannot regenerate himself; but we shall wait a long time, before we shall hear three more such appeals, as they made to men "dead in trespasses and sins."

(To be concluded in our next.)

Literary and Philosophical Intelligence, etc.

Simple Remedy for the Asiatic Cholera.
—PROFESSOR OERTEL, of Ansbach, (Germany) cures the Cholera extensively with cold water. He some time ago published a pamphlet on the subject, dedicated to the King of Prussia, who presented him with a gold medal. Among other things contained therein, is the following:—

"The most severe fasting—much drinking of cold water—much washing with cold water. In short, a complete inundation of the whole human body with cold water, both inwardly and outwardly!

"If those persons which the Cholera has swept away at St. Petersburg, had been (at the commencement of the disease) washed and rubbed well with water, then dried, laid in a bed, and plenty of cold water administered for drink; what (inquires Professor Oertel) would have been the consequence? If there exists a remedy against the effects of this fatal disease, it is positive and singly *cold fresh water!*—courageously, properly, and perseveringly applied. Therefore, on such constitutions that apply cold water plentifully, both inwardly and outwardly, the Cholera will and can have no effect.

"If that does not help, nothing else can. The fresh water does not give a cold; it only creates a momentary chill, and produces thereupon warmth, evaporation, and even perspiration; it does not drive anything into the body, but expels it; it does not oppress the vital faculties, but promotes the ordinary discharges of the skin, and invigorates the whole nervous system; it penetrates the most minute vessels of the human body without irritation, only so much as to produce an equilibrium of the blood and other succulent fluids. It prevents and disperses inflammations, swellings, ulcers, lameness, weakness, and pains. Where now is ano-

ther human specific of equal power and effect?"

Shame enough that it has to be told to certain persons in this enlightened day! And at the conclusion, the Professor solicits in particular,—

"First, all practitioners of medicine, after having in vain applied all their artful remedies, to try this *one and only sure* remedy, (which nature has given us) in order that their otherwise organic well patients are not left to suffer and die of nervous, scarlet, and other fevers, and of inflammations of the brain, lungs, and bowels, as is the case in many instances.

"Secondly, requesting all governments to establish this safe and uniform cold water cure, and to charge all doctors and other persons therewith, thereby commencing a necessary reform of the present uncertain remedies of the faculty of physic.

"PROFESSOR OERTEL,
"Of Germany."

Thunder Storms.—These remarks are intended to throw some light on the phenomena of thunder storms, which are most frequent at this season of the year; and in order to proceed understandingly, two things are necessary to be understood. First, it is one of the fundamental principles of electricity, that all bodies contain it in proportion to the quantity of surface which they have, and not in proportion to the quantity of matter. This being understood, we proceed to the next, which is the expansion that water undergoes in passing from its natural state to vapour or steam, which is 1728 to 1, or a square inch of water becomes a cubic foot of steam. From the foregoing remarks it will be evident, that as soon as the vapour in the cloud begins to condense and fall

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CHRIST A ROCK.

1 Cor. x. 4.—“For they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ.”

By figurative representations some of the most important instructions of divine revelation are communicated. Under the typical dispensation of Moses especially, there was scarcely any public act, occurrence or institution, which did not import more than at first appeared; and while it served some obvious present purpose, did not point also to some more remote and hidden, but yet more spiritual and important object or end. This spiritual signification of the ancient Jewish symbols, though it was often perceived, and was highly beneficial to the believing Israelites, was not intended merely, nor perhaps principally, for their benefit. It is under the gospel dispensation that the intention of all the types is most clearly unfolded; so that by viewing them in retrospect, and with the advantage derived from the light of the gospel, more may be discovered by a Christian than could be known to a Jew. To aid us in this useful investigation, the inspired writers of the New Testament often become our teachers and guides. They frequently advert to the Hebrew scriptures for the illustration and enforcement of what they deliver: and thus by a kind of double revelation, the wisdom of God is most conspicuously displayed, the faith of believers most powerfully confirmed, the beauty of sacred truth most engagingly exhibited, and its whole design most fully accomplished. Among innumerable passages which show the truth of this representation, the text is one of the most striking.

The apostle labours in the context to excite a holy circumspection in the Corinthian Christians, lest slighting or misimproving their peculiar privileges, they should lose the blessings which these privileges were calculated to convey. With this view, he points their attention, both for encouragement and warning, to the history of the people of Israel under the conduct of Moses in the wilderness. Speaking, in this connexion, of the miraculous supply of water which followed them on their journey, he denominates it “spiritual drink;” and then to explain the reason of his giving it this appellation, he says—“For they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ.” By a figure of speech, too frequent in its use and too obvious in its import to be misapprehended, the people are here said to have drunk of the *rock* that followed them, instead of the *water* which flowed from it; and

stance that the Presbytery of Lewes were disposed of in this very manner. Nor are we by any means certain that the Presbytery of Wilmington are gratified, or even contented, with their new connexion. But the most glaring part of the inconsistency lies in the Assembly detaching two Presbyteries from the Synod of Philadelphia, with evidence enough before them that in the way they were doing this, they were acting contrary to the mind of the Synod—Thus declaring by this notable act, that what was wrong in the Synod of Philadelphia, was right when done by the Assembly in forming the Synod of Delaware, and favouring an elective affinity Presbytery.

But we are not yet quite at the end of the unconstitutional and preposterous doings of the Assembly in the matter under consideration. The act of the Synod of Philadelphia; namely, forming two Presbyteries by the dividing line of Market street—would not have taken place when it did, perhaps never, if the Assembly's affinity Presbytery had not been first amalgamated with the body from which it had been severed. The proceedings of the Synod in this business were in fact, and were intended to be considered, as so many parts of *one continuous act*. That act the Assembly set aside as unconstitutional—Then surely they set aside the formation of the Synod's second Presbytery; namely, that to the north of Market street. But this Presbytery is declared by the Assembly to still exist. By whose act then does it exist? By the act of the Assembly, and by that alone; for the Synod, we assuredly know, never intended to divide the Presbytery of Philadelphia, but as a sequel to the previous amalgamation, which was the basis of the whole procedure. The Assembly, therefore, have formed *two* Presbyteries in Philadelphia—Or perhaps we ought rather to say *three*; for the complaint and appeal which were sustained, set forth distinctly, that the Synod had left the old mother Presbytery in a state of complete annihilation; and as she still exists, her resuscitation must, according to what is asserted in the sustained appeal and complaint, be attributed to the powerful interposition and act of the Assembly—No greater mistake could be committed by our readers, than to believe that we have any pleasure in this exposure of the absurd and illegal proceedings of the highest judicatory of our church. We grieve over them, and we blush and are ashamed in presenting them to the public; and nothing should have induced us to do it, but a solemn conviction of the necessity which exists that the Presbyterian church should see the danger which impends, of an entire subversion of its principles, and prostration of its constitutional order.

(To be continued.)

THE PURITAN DIVINES.

Concluded from p. 375.

In examining the Puritan Divines, we cannot help remarking how the oblation of Calvary, the offices of the Saviour, the majesty of the law, and the obedience of the Surety are held up to view. We shall say nothing of the *extent* of the atonement, save that these good men avoided all loose expressions, and all terms of bold defiance. Men like Owen could not but stand appalled, at the sentiment that atonement was made *in the same sense* for all mankind; because this would

show an unwillingness on the part of the Spirit to apply the atonement, and carry out the benevolent designs of the Agent who atoned. Waving this subject then, we remark, that this oblation on Calvary was never absent from Puritan ministrations. They looked on it as furnishing pardon to the sinful, balm to the afflicted, justification to the guilty, and holiness to the unclean. They placed before their hearers a mirror, and they reared the hill of Calvary so that the crown of thorns, the reed, the spear, the Roman soldiery and the image of the disconsolate mother of Jesus, were thrown in continued waves of reflection on the people. In the same reflection, the orb of day was included, changing his orange hue into sackcloth, that he might shade the scene, and fill the mountain with twilight, while it was as yet but the meridian hour.

The Puritan Divines examined all the titles given to Jesus in the Bible, with the minutest care. The author of *Horæ Solitariæ* did not look into this subject more thoroughly than the humblest of these men; and the offices of the Redeemer came under their daily meditation.

But one of the most conspicuous truths in the theology of which we are speaking, is the doctrine of imputed righteousness. These men took enlarged views of the law. But to the claims of the law they opposed, as the refuge of the penitent sinner, the great truth, that the Lawgiver was made under the law. The perfect obedience of the Saviour was just what the law required, of all and each descendant of Adam. Measured by this standard, all flesh stands condemned. It is clear that the *life* of the Saviour must be connected with our salvation, otherwise he might have been put to death at his first manifestation. But his life illustrated the law, and showed the sinless obedience which it required. On that perfect obedience, the penitent sinner relies, and thus receives a righteousness commensurate with legal claims. This statement contains the essence of that imputed righteousness, for which the Puritans contended; and from which Usher of Armagh, Leighton of St. Andrews, and the judicious Hooker, did not dissent. This is what they meant by the garments of salvation and the robe of praise. This course of preaching they believed would humble the sinner, and show him that his salvation flows from the grace of God, without the least pretension to merit on the part of the subject of grace—Perhaps there is not a better specimen of this kind of theology than “Sibbs’s Bruised Reed,” or his sermon from the text—“Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, though he was rich, yet for your sakes became poor”—In the ear of all their people, they made grace, rich grace, a familiar sound; and they spake much of the *riches of grace*.

The theology, of which an imperfect outline has been given, is not without some characteristics which ought to be stated. The first quality by which it is distinguished is, *its accordance with the Scriptures*. There never were more devoted students of the Bible than the Puritan Divines. They were not remarkable for *variety* of attainments. But many of them read the Bible in Greek, and some of them in the Hebrew. They had a facility in applying events in history, and sentiments in the Latin and Grecian poets, to spiritual truths. This is remarkably exemplified in the commentary of Matthew Henry. But they were *men of one book*. They were led every day by the Scriptures to Tabor, where they witnessed the transfiguration of their Lord; or to Gethsemane, where they beheld him prostrate before divine justice, receiving on his person some preliminary sparks from the mouth of that indignant fur-

nance; or to Calvary, where they saw him slain; or to Olivet, from whence he went back to the glory which he had with the Father, before the world began.

This theology has the additional recommendation of being *ancient*. If it be scriptural, it is as ancient as the inspired records. The reformation was not intended to disclose new truths, but to revive truths which had been hidden from the eyes of men by papal delusion. The Puritan Divines did not seek for novelties in religion. A fondness for novelty is the characteristic of children, but these men were far from being children. Belzoni mentions that when he stood among the ruins of Thebes, he felt as if the city had been inhabited by giants; and when we stand among the works of the Puritans, we cannot escape the impression that they were reared by men of gigantic spiritual stature.

Nothing can be more *simple* than this theology. Philosophy has often spoiled the simplicity of truth. Even the most eloquent of the church fathers, have not been exempt from the folly of making religion a compound. The fruit which is indigenous to religion, is delicious to the taste; but when the tree is engrafted all round with the buds and scions of a false philosophy, the genuine fruit becomes difficult of access.

Further—No theology with which we are acquainted has been so *productive of good works*. The Puritan Divines were men of prayer. Self-examination and watchfulness over their motives, formed much of their employment. It should not be forgotten that Franke, the founder of the orphan house at Halle, held this system. Nor ought it to be forgotten that the same system was the creed of Howard, the philanthropist. Aitkin, a Unitarian, published a life of Howard, from which work it is impossible to tell the sources from whence his actions arose, or the ultimate object to which they were directed. We should as soon take up the book to discover the sources of the Nile, or the termination of the Niger. But the recent life of the Philanthropist, compiled from his own journals, leaves no doubt as to the truths which he believed. We might here expatiate on the deeds of this excellent man. But we should be rebuked by the eulogium passed on him, by Edmund Burke, the most splendid of British statesmen.

This theology is moreover the basis of a *sound experience*. Religion is intended to sweeten our tempers and chasten our affections. This theology does indeed contain some bitter buds, but when once crushed by the hand of grace, they are transformed into fragrant flowers. It is often alleged, that the Puritan Divines were gloomy and formal. This point of character, however, was more the product of the external circumstances in which they were placed than of their theology. They were hunted down by prelates and courtiers, and they would have been above the infirmities of our common nature, if they had not at times displayed a gloomy demeanour. But this was not the habit of their minds. If an unction of heavenly enjoyment is to be found any where, it is in the writings of Flavel, Howe, Goodwin, Calamy and Charnock. The mind of Flavel particularly seems to have been absorbed in heavenly and delightful contemplations. The man of letters is apt to associate with Devonshire the remembrance of Gay, Gifford, and Sir Joshua Reynolds. He thinks how often these distinguished men crossed its brooks, and were sheltered in its myrtle valleys. The same associations we indulge about the Puritan Divine of Dartmouth; and we always feel more holy by visiting his haunts, even in thought.

Such works as Scougal's *Life of God in the Soul of Man*, Doddridge's *Rise and Progress*, Guthrie's *Trial of a Saving Interest in Christ*, Aline on the Promises, Ambrose's *Looking unto Jesus*, Romaine's *Walk of Faith*, Erskine's *Sacramental Sermons*, the *Lives of Brown of Haddington*, of Boston and Halyburton, leave on the heart of the Christian, a savoury experience. These works are all legitimate fruits of Puritan theology. They contain the manna of the wilderness, the balm of Gilead, the honey of the rock, the grapes of Eshcol, the clusters of Engedi, the wells of salvation, the milk and wine of Canaan, far sweeter to the Christian than the nectar of Chios.

This theology is furthermore consistent with *good taste*. We admit that the writers of whom we speak did not cultivate style. Their manner is antique, and the titles of their sermons are often quaint. But this does not injure them with any who prefer substance to sound. The Puritan Divines left to writers of a different class, the work of refining the English language. But Puritan theology has now and then appeared in the drapery of polite writing. Drummond, of Hawthornden, was an anticovenanter, but in his poem called the *Flowers of Sion*, this theology prevails. The same may be said of Fletcher's *Purple Island*, of the hymns of Sir Henry Wotton, of Grahame's *Sabbath*, of Pollock's *Course of Time*, and of all the serious letters of Cowper. At one time Milton embraced this theology, in all its length and breadth; and indeed Dr. Channing has not yet proved the genuineness of the *Treatise on Christian Doctrine*. The style of Bates, though not so cornucopian as that of Jeremy Taylor, is far more chaste. The style of Baxter is full of impassioned zeal. He was a voluminous writer, and the most of his works have disappeared; but his *Reformed Pastor*, his *Saints' Rest*, and *Call to the Unconverted*, men will not permit to die—works in which he was employed in

Scattering from his pictured urn
Thoughts that breathe and words that burn.

But Bunyan has fairly won the palm of genius, among the Puritan Divines. Literary men have been slow to acknowledge his merits, with the exception of Johnson and Cowper. Dr. Beattie, in his *Elements of Moral Science*, calls the *Pilgrim's Progress* a vulgar Calvinistic allegory; but the works of the Bard of Lawrence Kirk, will not live quite so long as the allegory he condemns. Southey has lately published a *Life of Bunyan*, containing an apology for his dreary imprisonment of twelve years. The author of the *Pilgrim* has often been accused of plagiarism, but Milton was charged with the same thing; and Dr. Adam Clarke, with his muck-rake, has collected a batch of works; and traced through these works, as he imagined, the hint of *Pilgrim's Progress*. Now we do not believe it would have been discreditable to Bunyan, if he had taken the hint of his work from previous authors, for where is the human work that is not produced in this way. But Dr. Clarke must have been extravagantly fond of resemblances, to have found any analogy in *Pilgrim's Progress* to the bevy of works he has mentioned, for we will venture to express a decided opinion and belief, that the Bedford Prisoner had never seen one of them in his life. The truth is, that he took the hint of his immortal allegory from the Bible alone. When cast into prison he took with him a copy of the Scriptures, and could he have foreseen the consequences, he might have said to his persecutors—"as for you, ye think evil against me, but God means it unto good."

A prison has more than once been the resting-place of genius. When a captive in Windsor castle, James 1st of Scotland wrote several productions. Tasso was employed in the same way in the cells of Ferrara. The bodies, but not the minds of Sir Walter Raleigh and De Foe, were in duress. Dr. Dodd and Montgomery, wrote *Prison Thoughts*, if indeed the prison thoughts ascribed to Dodd be genuine. It was the Bible, which gave to the imagination of Bunyan that oriental cast which is so conspicuous in his work, for he was not acquainted with Persian legends, Arabian poetry, or the muses of Greece; but he daily read a book which spoke of patriarchs going far and wide on pilgrimage, surrounded by all the objects peculiar to eastern lands, reclining under oaks, pausing at the brink of wells, holding converse with shepherds, or at prayer beneath the palm-tree. He read of a whole nation setting out on pilgrimage to the land of promise. He marked their encampments, their dangers and straights, the manna which fed them, their deliverance at the sea, their passage by Sinai, the pillar of cloud by day and fire by night, and their entrance into the land of rest. Wrought upon by such objects, he planned a work in which the characters are as well sustained, as the characters in the *Iliad* of Homer. He placed his easel deep in the foundations of his prison, and stretched his canvass on its walls, and drew the *City of Destruction*, the *Slough of Despond*, the *Burning Mountain of Arabia*, the *Valley of Humiliation*, the *Enchanted Castle*, the *Delectable Mountains*, the *Land of Beulah*, the *River of Death*, and the *Spires of that City*, in the turning of whose harmonious gates we lose the footstep of the pilgrim. This allegory is the milky way of Puritan theology; and as all Italy at one time procured professors to expound the writings of Dante, so should the Christian world procure interpreters for the pilgrim of Bunyan.

The inquiry is indeed important, whether the theology of the Puritans has been abandoned by the Presbyterian Church? Has that which our fathers considered sweet, become sour to the taste of their children? Perhaps an answer to this question might give a controversial cast to this letter, and it is unpleasant to dispute with brethren for whom we cherish cordial esteem. This much however we can say, without fear of successful contradiction, that new discoveries will not be likely to bring us a better system. The French academy once instituted a comparison between ancient and modern mind in architecture, painting, and poetry; according to their decision, antiquity bore away the palm. Modern discoveries are not intended to alter the nature of revelation. The same Being who inspired the Scriptures, had an agency in modern inventions. He removed the film from the eye of Columbus. His hand, though unseen, sustained the telescope of Galileo. He opened the volume of his works to Newton, and closed the book when the child-like sage had conned his lesson. He watched the feeblest preliminary attempts to discover the art of printing, an art by which he intended to blacken the triple crown of the man of sin. But all this took place in his providence, and not in the agency of that inspiration by which holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. We therefore conclude, that if the Puritan theology was true two hundred years ago, it is equally true at the present time. We are equally sure that no benefit will arise by exchanging it for the system taught by Fletcher and Wesley. Some who believe that a change has taken place, attribute the change to the writings of these men. Fletcher was a good man, ardent and impassioned as a writer, but considerably

defective as a logician. Wesley was a man great in action. He had in his head what phrenology calls the organ of marvellousness, which appears from just opening his journals. He made the intellectual labours of other men tributary to his designs, but there is little originality in his own works; nor is it reasonable to believe that he could have wrought a revolution in minds superior to his own. Wesley was the grandson of a Puritan divine, and it is more probable that he was indebted to Puritan theology for much that was good in his own views, than that he should have produced a change in our system. In addition to this, Calvinism sprung up every where under his own eye, crossing his path, and meeting him at every corner of his *circuitous* pilgrimage. He could not crush it in Hervey and Whitfield, at Oxford, he could not extinguish it in Toplady, in Hill, in the countess of Huntingdon, and in Berridge. He could not prevent its taking root in the valleys, and suspending its fruits among the mountains of Wales; and if the living lion could not rend it to pieces, it may surely survive the lion when dead. The followers of Wesley claim for him the credit of having effected all the good that has been done for the last hundred years. He wrote a few pages about slavery; therefore he abolished the slave trade. He distributed a few Bibles; therefore he originated the Bible society. He instructed some orphan children; therefore he established Sunday schools. He preached against intemperance; therefore he is the parent of the temperance cause.

But let me repeat the question—is there danger that the Presbyterian church is about to prove recreant, to truth she has maintained so long? Then this church has a solemn duty to perform. It will be her duty to employ evangelists, who will support the claims of her pastors to the confidence of the people. Some men, from constitutional temperament, become restive. They relinquish their charges, supposing that they constitute a sphere of action too confined for their efforts. These ministers are apt to speak much of moral power, of the sacrifices they have made, of the latent and unemployed resources of the church, of the indolence of pastors, and of the small number attached to the communion. All this, and more, is frequently the effect of pure motives, and yet how often does it prove silently injurious, by inspiring among the people a fondness for incessant excitement. In this way, a love of favourite terms has been introduced. *Submission* has supplanted the old fashioned word called *repentance*, and acting in the view of motives, has taken the place of that Spirit, without whom there is nothing holy. But I forbear; for no consideration would induce me to wound the feelings of my brethren.

The Presbyterian church, furthermore, must put down unauthorized hymns. It is not our belief, that Christians ought to be confined to the Psalms of David. The example of apostles and primitive Christians, would seem to allow of some latitude in this particular. But the church may settle her standards, and proclaim her laws. If at the same time she give away the power of authorizing her hymnology, she might as well not have proclaimed her laws. The Presbyterian church has long been flooded with sonnets, which materially affect the former venerable air of her worship. We expect to witness soon the introduction of Lord Byron's Hebrew Melodies, or Moore's Sacred Ballads, or Bowring's Vesper Hymns. Perhaps we may feel better disposed towards Lord Byron than formerly, since after examining all systems of religion, he declares that his researches ended in his becoming a *moderate Presbyterian*. There are few men whom we vene-

rate more than Dr. Watts, though some of his hymns nothing would induce me to employ in public worship. He was possessed of great talents, and a soul lowly as the violet. It is impossible to suppress one's indignation at Pope's half-formed intention of putting him into the *Dunciad*—knowing him to have been the master of Pope in every thing, except the mere art of constructing rhyme. The arrow of disease reached him at the moment of his consecration to the ministry, so that he not only became a priest, but a victim deeply stricken for the service of the temple. Decked in cypress leaves, he was led back into partial retirement, where, amid rural sounds and shades, provided by the courtesy of Sir Thomas Abney, he indited cheerful hymns for the afflicted, and triumphant odes for the dying. Now those cypress leaves are turned into a garland of amaranth, and the cloud in which he lived on earth, is transformed into a tabernacle of orange coloured light, in which he offers the incense of praise.

In addition to her psalmody, the Presbyterian church must attend to her religious newspapers and periodicals. In connexion with this remark, it becomes me* to say, that the paper in which I wish this letter to appear, has been ably conducted—it has been a blessing to the church. By sound discussion of interesting points, by drawing into light the forgotten treasures of theology, by sketches of the lives of holy men, the influence of religious periodicals may be salutary. But it is clear that some of them have engendered a morbid desire after nothing but excitement.

In addition to the things already mentioned, the church must at least somewhat extend the period marked out for the preparation of young men for the ministry. Some candidates do not study even the period allotted by the requisitions of the standards of the church. They say that the state of the world calls aloud for *action*—forgetting that if they go into that world unprepared, it will not be much mended by their presence. Even before they come into public view, young men often think that they have made important discoveries in theology. It is indeed a pleasing sight, when candidates are assembled with teachable tempers around the chair of theological instruction. The walks of the lyceum, the groves of the academy, the porch of Zeno, the garden of Epicurus, the lawns of Hammasby, could furnish no sight so delightful. But the pupils of Plato, carried to that sage many a useless pebble, and the disciples of Linnæus, many a worthless shrub.

Finally—The church must immediately introduce her catechisms into all Sunday schools which are under her control. If these things be done, peace may be restored, and a reaction take place; otherwise, our simple rules and weighty doctrines may disappear. But if a defeated general advised his countrymen never to despair of the republic, surely Christians ought not to despair of the church. The Sibylline books were supposed to contain the fate of the Roman government, and the destiny of the Presbyterian church is intimately connected with her standards. The law that he should not pass for a citizen, who was not a citizen, gave rise to the Roman social war, in which the Sibylline oracles were burnt. Should it ever become necessary to make a law that he should not pass for a Presbyterian, who is not a Presbyterian, it might give rise to an ecclesiastical contest in which

* Whether it becomes the editor to publish, what his friend thinks it becomes him to say, may bear a question. On the whole, we have concluded *for uncc*, to follow the fashion, and let a friend praise us in our own pages.

our standards may be consumed. But the Romans re-collected their oracles, and we will collect again the costly leaves of our standards, and ask for them the same price we asked at first, which is, a conscientious belief of what they contain—that price ought to be freely given. The taking of our ordination engagements, was the most solemn transaction of our lives. The coronation oaths of kings dwindle into insignificance, before the pledge we have given

Inviolable and sacred to preserve
The ordinance of Heaven.

To that church in whose service we are engaged, of whose bread we have partaken, and whose raiment we have worn, our hearts are still attached—bound to it by cords of silk, which are interspersed and strengthened by links of gold. By these cords our hearts are drawn away into scenes of the deepest interest: our affection for this church glows not with the dim light of the fixed star, but with the intenseness of the brightest planet that steeps itself in the ocean of the sun. In the midnight of the church, we know there is a Power that can disperse the deepest gloom and reveal a firmament of glory. In that firmament, are permanent stars flashing the light of truth, and constellations of bright evangelical doctrine, like that held forth by the Scottish Covenanters and the Puritan divines—pleading with dumb eloquence for the retention in its purity of the true gospel system; and although a threatening comet may for a while glare, and shoot across this firmament, we recollect that the same Power which has permitted its appearance, can send it away on a pilgrimage of centuries in duration.

I remain, Rev. and dear Sir,

Your brother in Christian bonds,

THOMAS B. BALCH.

Literary and Philosophical Intelligence, etc.

Eruption of Mount Vesuvius.—The following letter of the 1st ult. from Naples, gives further particulars of the eruption of Vesuvius:

“Mount Vesuvius has been for several days in a state of great activity again, and last night it exhibited some of the most brilliant phenomena ever witnessed, the crater sending forth the finest eruptions seen for many years, which rising in succession one after the other, gave the idea of immense rockets. The quantity of ignited stones thrown up from the mountain exceeded that of the eruption of May last. Dr. Forster, who has been here making accurate observations on this splendid phenomenon, assures us that it affected the thermometer several degrees, at a distance of three or four miles. He found the average temperature during the night to exceed 78 degrees of Fahrenheit, and observed that at midnight the mercury stood at 82 degrees, the wind being E. N. E.—The smoke fills the bay at times, but the most remarkable circumstance is the cumulous cloud perpetually seen above the smoke. Dr. Forster thinks he has disco-

vered, by historical researches, that the largest eruptions of this mountain, as well as of Etna, have preceded the approach of large comets to the sun; and if so, the circumstances that Halley's comet is expected towards the close of the year, would induce us to expect a still more magnificent spectacle, as the intensity of the volcanic action increases.”

Comet.—The Halley Comet is now visible in the east, near the constellation Taurus. At this time its distance from the earth is forty millions of miles. On the 13th Sept. it will be only twenty-two millions of miles distant; and from this will become brilliant.

In the latter part of September it will enter the Twins, and on the 1st of October will reach within six millions of miles of us, the fore feet of the Great Bear, where it no more sets. At this its brilliance and apparent magnitude will have arrived at the highest degree. On the 6th October it will stand nearest the earth—only three and a half millions of miles distant.

3 H

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