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"In Doctrine shewing uncorruptness."
"Beware ye of the Leaven of the Pharisees, which is Hypocrisy."

GOD'S INTEREST IN HIS PEOPLE.

"Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; he hath prepared for them a city." Heb. vi. 16.

GOD has a peculiar people in the world, in whom he is *interested*, though these are few in number. Satan is called the God of this world; and indeed is so, in regard to the greater part of the world. But there is a select company, who are in, but not of the world; a people of a peculiar character, who are strangers and pilgrims in the earth; whose heads and hearts are towards a better country. Their peculiar privilege is, that "God is not ashamed to be called their God." More is implied than is said. God, who is the God of the whole earth, is their God in a peculiar manner, by a special *COVENANT-RELATION*; and he will own it before all the world, however they be despised by them. They are savingly interested in him, and he is *peculiarly interested* in them. As they are not ashamed to be called his people, unless it be for this, that they do not look more like him; so he is not ashamed to be called their God.

He is not ashamed of them, as the Greek text bears expressly, as men sometimes are of their relations because of their scandalous character, and as our Lord says, he will be ashamed of some, so as that he will not own them, Mark viii. 38. The reason of this is intimated in the text, in the particle *wherefore*, which leads us back to the character of those who are indeed God's people, exemplified in Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, and Jacob, ver. 13, 16. The sum of it lies here: That upon the faith of God's promise of a better world, they forsook this world, and went through it even to the grave, as persons not come to the place where they expected and desired to settle. Wherefore, since they forsook this world for God, and trusted him for a better inheritance to themselves, and upon the faith of his promise, were easy in all their wanderings and hardships, God is not ashamed of them to be called their God: Exodus iii. 6. "I am," said he, "the God of thy Father, the God of Abraham,

the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." In these steps all the true children of Abraham walk.

He is not ashamed on his own part, to be called their God; as men are ashamed, when they have no suitable entertainment to give those who have left all others for them, and depend entirely upon them. For he has prepared for them a city. These patriarchs dwelt in tents, and went from land to land at God's call; but a city, even the New Jerusalem, heaven itself, was prepared for them by their God: a city suitable to his dignity; a city, the like of which all the world could not have furnished them. He is not ashamed to be called his people's God, whatever hardships they suffer for his sake; for he has enough to make up their losses, ready for them.

He would reckon it a stain on his honour, that any of them should be losers at his hand; if he should not fully answer the trust they put in him; if he did not give them as good, nay, better than the best thing which they ever were denied for his sake."

How mean soever the believer's lot be; whatever they want, they have him for their God: "And I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." The patriarchs had a wandering life of it in the world, were always pilgrims and strangers, they could never count themselves at home, while here below. But whatever they wanted, they had a God in Christ for their own God. O! ye who are coming away from Lebanon, forsaking this world for God, breathing and panting for the better world, assure yourselves, he is your God, by this good token, that the heart of man will never in this case loose one foot till it has another fastened, never quit the present world till it be possessed of a God to fill up its room. It will never let go the hold the one hand has of this world, till it has a believing hold of Christ with the other. Hence, believing is compared to buying, where the man will not part with his money, till the commodity, which for the time is better to him than money, is made over to him. So, though ye were reduced to this, that ye could not tell carnal Israel's tale. "I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, mine oil and my drink;" yet ye may tell David's tale, which is a far better one; "The Lord is my rock and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower."

God takes such a pleasure in them, and puts such an honour on them, that though the world should cast out their name as evil, he surnames himself by them, and brings their name into his. Hundreds of times, the expressions, "The Lord thy God," "The Lord your God," occur in scripture, applied to God with respect to his people. Yea, he bears up their name in his, when they are dead gone out of the world, since they still live unto him: "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." This is a memorial of them that will last, when the monuments and marble tombs will to keep the memory of the wicked from rotting.

He allows them to call him their own God: "And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord, and my God." They can say this, how little soever they have in the world which they can call theirs. Why should they not call him by his own name? The Lord their God is the name he has taken to himself; a plain indication of his being pleased to be called by this name.

God allows them to depend on him as their God, and to improve their relation to him for all which they need; whoever casts them off, or refuses to help them, God will never put off his people with names, without the things signified by these names. If he is called their God, he will own his name in effect and reality; and indeed be a God to them, to all the intents and purposes of the covenant: "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant; to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee." They may look for all which they need from him, and are welcome to the fulness of God: whatever their case requires, this God will be all in all to to them. Hence the expectation of faith: "When my father and mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up."

He will own himself to be their God before the world, whoever disown them. He is content that strangers call him by this name, as Nebuchadnezzar did, Dan iii. 29. and Darius, vi. 16. He puts marks of his respect and relation to them upon them before the world, so that the world shall be obliged to take notice of his owning them: "Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee." If their corruptions will not suffer them to acknowledge so much, yet their consciences shall not get it refused. Hence David prays, "Shew me a token for good, that they which hate me may see and be ashamed, because thou Lord hath holpen me, and comforted me."

He reckons it his honour to be their God, even though men should be ashamed to come near them. Accordingly we find him call them his glory: "And I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory." And in 2 Cor. viii. 23. they are called the glory of Christ. He glories in his special interest in them. "My vineyard, which is mine, is before me: thou, O Solomon, must have a thousand, and those that keep the fruit thereof two hundred."

He enables his people to embrace him in the covenant, for their all, in opposition to the world, and all that is therein, which shows a nobleness of spirit in them, the certain product of his own Spirit; "There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.' "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth that I desire besides thee." There are two gifts made to every one of us; God says, "I will be thy God," the world says, 'I will be thy God.' Most men fall in with the world's offer, and all men naturally incline this way,

But these noble souls being partakers of the divine nature, pour contempt on the clay idol, God's rival, refusing it, and honour him by believing and embracing his gift; so that when the Lord says in the gospel, to any of his, "I will be thy God," the soul echoes back again, 'Then thou art mine, my God, my portion; I take possession upon the credit of thine own offer; "I cried unto thee, O Lord; I said, Thou art my refuge, and my portion in the land of the living." Thus he is not ashamed to be called their God.

Thus they quit the world's certainty for divine hope, and trust him for an unseen portion to themselves, as preferable to all that the world can afford, believing he will glorify his all-sufficiency and his faithfulness in the promise, laying all their weight upon them, "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded, that what he had promised he was able to perform." Such a trust they have in God, else they would never forsake the world; for plain it is, according to the measure of the belief of a better world to one's self, so is their forsaking the present. And since they thus honourably trust him for their all, he is not ashamed to be called their God.

They can take up with nothing less than God for their portion, by which they discover a peculiar elevation of spirit, the effect of divine grace: "Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ." They can no longer feed with the prodigal upon the husks of the empty creation. Their soul's cry is, 'Give me a God in Christ, or else I die.' All the world, nay, a thousand worlds, cannot fill up his room: "Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave; the coals are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame." And so they press forward through temptations, and the greatest danger which the world can lay before them, to hold him as their portion, and to come to the full enjoyment of him. "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it; if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be condemned." So he is not ashamed to be called their God, because they thus love and desire him.

In their way and walk, they are of a distinguished character from the men of the world, Phil. iii. 18—21. They dare not take the way of the world, their souls hate it, as being opposite to the manners of the country to which they are going. Therefore they are *non-conformists* to the world, in so far as it is disconformed to the way of the Lord.

Hence we see, that carnal worldings are none of those whose God the Lord is. Those whose hearts are not loosed from the present evil world, are not brought within the bond of the covenant, and have no right to stand before the Lord. He would

be ashamed to be called their God, who make the clay idol their God. I offer two evidences of this disposition. When it is the world, and not God himself, which has the chief room in men's hearts and affections; "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Consider what it is, whether God or the world, which your hearts do most desire, and are most set upon. What it is your chief joy lies in, in the enjoyment of God, or the enjoyment of the world. Whether your chief sorrow arises from crosses in the world, or from sin that offends God, or from the hidings of his face?—When the heart can never rest in God, but must still have the rest in the creature; or no rest for it at all; and so the man's life of comfort just depends on the smiles or frowns of the present world, not upon the having or wanting the favour of God, his smiles or frowns. Perhaps the man might find a rest betwixt God and the world, but no rest of the heart in God alone.

Hence see, believers having weighed all things, have forsaken the world for God, and fixed their desires on him and the better world, intent to be there whatever their lot in this world be; and to enjoy God in Christ as their God and portion, however small their portion be of this worlds good things; they may be sure God is their God, and he will own it, though, by reason of the weakness of their faith, they have much ado to plead it.

Our God is content to take in outcasts; "The Lord doth build up Jerusalem; he gathereth the outcasts of Israel." Never do any seek after a God in Christ for their God in earnest, till he first seeks them, then they see there is no satisfaction for them to be had in the creature. Thus they find they need God. The gospel discovers God in Christ, and grace determines him the choice.

B.

ITHIEL TO AGUR, ON REGENERATION.

THE vast importance of this subject requires from those who desire to promote a scriptural statement of it, that all arguments, with their proofs and inferences, be deduced from the divine source of information only. The human mind is so fertile of ideas upon all subjects that come under its cognizance, that were it not for that true standard of spiritual knowledge, (as revealed to the heart by the immediate instructions of its author,) the favored recipients of d vine grace, would—by the winds of doctrine which now appear to have gathered together, and encreased to a woeful hurricane of error—and by the cunningly devised fables of men void of godliness—be tost to and fro upon the broad sea of profession; and delu ed into the belief of lying vanities, which please the imagination, flatter the judgment, but deceive the soul.

Now as Agur appears equally displeased with my language, as he is with my opinion, I will confine myself, while running over his papers, as much as possible, to a scriptural definition of the

sentiment already advanced, with others, which it may be necessary to obtrude upon his notice.

To arrive at just conclusions concerning regeneration, it certainly must be of the first importance, to be acquainted with the true situation of man before God. Agur has well said, when he took up the words of the prophet and wrote, "Every part of nature, is full of *wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores*:" but he has not said enough; he has not given us the whole account. Isaiah saith, "From the sole of the foot even unto the head, *there is no soundness in it*; but wounds, &c." This is something more,—much more, than being wounded, and bruised, and sore.

And a proof that he has not described a faithful portrait of the fallen estate, is given in this expression; "If a piece of white cloth be dipt in mire, it becomes completely filthy; but the cloth is not the mire, nor the mire the cloth."

Man by nature being totally ruined, as the scriptures in innumerable instances most clearly state, this figure of Agur's does not comprehend the whole of the painful truth. Man not merely became polluted and defiled, and thereby rendered himself unfit to claim the regard of his pure, and infinitely holy Creator; but the fall was so great, that he *destroyed himself*. He was not only wounded, but crushed,—not only bruised, but broken. And though the description given above, well alludes to one effect of his fall, yet to give the utmost stretch to the idea, (and the strongest language affords but a weak sketch of the true representation,) it might rather be asserted, that as cloth having passed through the flame, retains nothing more than the form of its former texture, so man possesses but the form of his primeval glory and sufficiency. Adam when he fell, not only became obnoxious to divine purity, because of his polluted condition, (as alluded to by the piece of cloth,) but he lost the *power* of acting acceptably to God. The desires of his soul were no longer in unison with the divine will, but were all enveloped in guilt and rebellion. He had no other master than Satan, and could receive as wages for his dutiful obedience, nothing less than death.

When regenerated by God the Spirit, he received, as do all his sons, when made partakers of the divine nature,—a principle of holiness—the life of God—the gift of grace; which under the figure of a new heart, exercised its new functions; and as its nature is in direct opposition to the carnal nature, its pursuits are necessarily contrary.

The former seeks as its own, that which is above; while the latter, that which is beneath. *This*, if its possessor be unregenerated by the power and grace of God, runs rioting for felicity with the prodigal among this world's husks; *that* being of kindred spirit with its divine author, finds its only resting place in communion with God the Father, and his dear Son in Jesus Christ, by the instruction and illuminating influence of the Holy Ghost. One finds

only joy in acquaintance with things that are heavenly; the other aspire to things that are no higher.

Agur has said on page 140, "The natural man, *so long as he remains in his natural state*, is a stranger to the things of God;" but the truth is, the Adam nature of the believer, ever is a stranger to that which is spiritual; as much so after regeneration as before. Again, he says, "The carnal mind *while under the sole dominion of carnality* is enmity against God;" so also is it after the man is renewed by grace.

The apostle is not speaking of unregenerate characters only, when he says, *the carnal mind is enmity against God*; but of believers in Christ also; for they in their Adam nature, are not subject to the law in its spirituality, *neither indeed can be.* We are plainly informed by our Lord; "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, but that which is born of the Spirit is *Spirit.*" The new-birth therefore, as it consists of a new principle of life, must necessarily produce new affections, new desires, new motives, &c. The faculties of nature will without doubt die with the body; they will be found, when the close of this state of existence arrives, to have performed the whole of their allotted service, and to be of no further advantage to the present possessor. But the soul rid of these fleshly incumbrances, will launch forth into eternal felicity, unshackled by the *old faculties*, and free in the performance of all those spiritual exercises which sweetly spring forth from the new man of the heart,—the divine nature implanted during the time-state of being, within.

Agur argues that the natural faculties are regenerated; but our Lord in conversation with Nicodemus appears to hold no such notion: for he saith, "*Ye must be born again.*" Jesus doth not say to him, your natural intellects must be *expanded*; so that by obtaining a more enlarged scope of knowledge, he might arrive at a state of spiritual-mindedness. Neither doth he say, that by a superior exercise of the natural faculties, Nicodemus might attain to the privilege. Far from it. Such advice as this, would have been contrary to the whole plan his infinite wisdom had pursued in the instruction of his people.

Again, he argues: "If new affections are given, they must be purely spiritual, aspiring after spiritual things only; and then the apostle's exhortation, not to set those affections on things on the earth, is useless!" But can Agur suppose the apostle, when expressing the great privilege of the church in these words, "*Set your affections on things above, &c.*" means to infer that it was in the power of the Collossian believers, or any other, to perform that spiritual act? Surely, he cannot. Paul himself, though an apostle of Christ, has given a variety of proofs, that it was not even within his own ability, to effect so desirable a purpose.

Then speaking "of the regeneration of the soul, and the conversion of the body," this writer records some of the *moral effects*,

which appear in the outward walk and conduct. But what have these, (which in their own place, in the mutual commerce between man and man, are, of all things most desirable,)—what have these to do with the spiritual fruits of the Holy Ghost's work in the soul?

These may be all zealously copied by hypocrites: and are so, to the dishonour and rebuke of thousands, in this day of universal profession. And what better appearance will such make, in *the great day of the Lord*, for all these things? These, with all beside, who die in a state of nature, *will not*, in that tremendous day, *be able to stand.*

The last observation, which demands notice here, is this, "The phrase, *new faculties*, appears fraught with absurdity, tending only to confirm infidels in their opposition to the religion of the Son of God." That it tends *only* to confirm infidels, is denied; but that infidels, under whatsoever name they may be hid, should take advantage of any truth of the gospel to cover their own unbelief, is not remarkable, since our Lord has repeatedly dropt such expressions as these, concerning such characters; *Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand, and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive.* The apostle Peter says, of his '*beloved brother Paul*,' that he had written in his epistles, some things hard to be understood, *which* (he adds, 2 Eph. iii. 16) *many wrest unto their own destruction.*

But surely, the apostles were not accountable for the improper use made of the glorious truths of the gospel, they proclaimed by the enemies to vital godliness? Neither are the servants of Christ now. The apostles in their day did, and the faithful ministers of the Lord Jesus in every age of the church, could and even in our dark days do, take to record the whole of their hearers, whether lovers of Christ or enemies to him, and say; *We are pure from the blood of all men; for we have not shunned to declare unto you, all the counsel of God.*

I hope Agur will bear with me till I have noticed his second paper; having turned back to his first, by way of reference, I found much to reply to, in addition to my former observations; hope to conclude my Remarks next month.

ITHIEL.

ON THE DIVINE VERACITY.

WHATEVER we attempt by argument to prove, there is a necessary implication that the subject is questionable. If I should attempt to prove to a man who could see, that the sun shone at noon day, he would laugh me to scorn. If I discovered a man looking at the moon, and admiring its refined silvery light, and I should attempt to prove to him that he saw the moon, he would think me mad. The one knows that the sun shines; and the other that he

sees the moon. These things are known by intuition—they are self-evident; and therefore to attempt to prove them would cover the person doing so with contempt. If I were to attempt to prove that God is true, I should not only be guilty of as much folly as in the two former cases, but the attempt would be blasphemous. That God is true, is a self-evident proposition. God stands alone in all his attributes—We dare not approach—clouds and darkness, preserve his glories from the touch of man. Indeed the thought of attemping to prove God to be true, is so shocking, that we tremble, when we merely name the subject. The mere mention of either of the divine perfections fills the temple of God in heaven, with shouts of adoration Angels and perfected saints, when the incommunicable name of God is spoken, or either of his attributes proclaimed, know that their service is single, they veil their faces and adore. I turn again to the observation of proving God to be true; but I am obliged to flee from the thought, horror struck, and confounded. Heavenly Father! forgive what thou seest wrong in the precedeing ideas; and may they have the effect desired, in the inferences intended to be shown from them.

But we pa s on to consider the consequences to saints and sinners of God being true; and the effect such a consideration ought to have on the minds of each.

The saint appears before the view of Deity as clothed in the righteousness and pardoned by the blood of the Saviour. He stands before him like Joshua the high-priest, thus arrayed. One consequence of this is, that though all the threatenings, against sin and sinners, contained in the word of God be true, and therefore sure to be accomplished, they cannot touch him—they have been endured and carried for by him that glorious Mediator, who places himself between the offended Deity, and the offending creature, and lays his hand on both. And another consequence of this, is that all the promises can reach to, and have their accomplishment in him. Consider how large a portion this is. It contains every thing he needs for this life of a temporal and spiritual nature, with eternal life and glory hereafter. Temporal, spiritual, and eternal blessings, are made sure to him, through the obedience unto death of Christ, even if God had not promised them; for by that means alone, all things are his, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are his;" for this reason, that he is Christ's, and Christ is God's. Therefore, the promises were not made as a grant of the blessings, for they were granted, by the gift of God's dear Son; but they were given as a promulgation or declaration of them, and for the encouragement, comfort, and joy of his children, that their faith and hope might be in God.

I conceive that the considerate promise of a pious man, is esteemed to be equal, or more than equal to the oath of one, who has no

conscience of his ways—I consider, that the word of an angel, is far more to be relied on, than the oath of the holiest of men. It will be found that the oath of an angel, begets in our minds, a certainty, which we never dispute—Who ever questions the absolute certainty of the future accomplishment of that oath, which saint John heard the angel, who stood upon the sea, and upon the earth, with his hand lifted to heaven, swear by him, that liveth forever, as to the termination of time? Yet the oath of an angel, of the highest archangel, or the united oaths of the whole host of heaven, is not by a thousand, a million, an infinity of degrees, so sacred, as the *naked* word of the Eternal. But, suppose this awful, and blessed one, were to confirm his word by an oath, what ought to be our veneration for it? Not being able to swear by a greater, when he swears, he swears by himself—that is, he pledges his attributes, his glory, and his existence to the truth, of what he says. Brethren, this is a trembling height to which we have carried our thoughts. One is led to weep at the idea, that such a description of the condescending, or goodness of God, should be named, or even thought on without retaining reverence in our souls. Every step which the Holy One takes in letting forth his glories to us, should so move on our immortal spirits, as to beget at every movement in the same proportion humility and respect. Lord what is man! We need mourn over the most humble knee we ever bent in the worship of thee. The contemplation of our sinfulness is insupportable—Have mercy on us, and save us through him, who always, in our nature, beholds with thy approbation, thy cloudless countenance in glory. Our place is, and should ever be felt to be, at the lowest possible point of degradation, and self-renunciation. If the mention of that gracious name, is enough to enrapture the mind of the seraph that stands nearest thy throne, of one who never fell, in surprise, consternation, and praise, What effect should it have on a rebellious and fallen creature, whom thou hast redeemed at such a price, and for whose encouragement, thou hast opened so much of this delivering condescension and grace.

But let us, my fellow-believer, expatiate a little, on the dreadful sin of unbelief. A God in Christ, has spoken thus, and thus, for our comfort, encouragement, and establishment in faith. Now if it be a blasphemy, to attempt to prove his truth, what must it be to doubt it? If it be so high an offence to doubt in the least degree his *word*, what must it be to entertain even an instantaneous doubt of his *OATH*! Will you fear that a pious man will deceive you, when he has given the word of his verity, that he will not? Will you fear his oath? Will you mistrust the word or oath of an angel, of an archangel, of the whole company of heaven combined? This you might do, though cruel, and shameless would be the conduct, and not sin, by an unlimited degree of comparison half so much, as to fear for an instant the word of God—but if you fear his oath! Oh! what a weighty, overburthened sin you commit. What, shall he

be perjured! (let me speak it with a cry of horror) Shall he forfeit his attributes, his glory, his existence! Vanish thou earth at the thought, gather blackness, and pass away ye heavens at the idea, and be consumed all ye hosts of the upper world, at the name of such a thing. My fellow-christian, see the evil of unbelief. Not all the sins you could commit, can be like this. Ah! for the future whatever may be your feelings, not only dare to believe, but tremble to disbelieve. Have a care of this crime, this crime of crimes. Lie down quietly in Christ, as the promises of the immutable God, for grace, and strength, and holiness, and every good here, and glory hereafter, are made to thee in him; and tremble for a moment to discredit, that all the good he has spoken to thee of, he will grant. Inquire of him for these things, and wrestle hard for their enjoyment, but never doubt their enjoyment. When we thus believe we enter into rest, the rest of faith as it is written—"For we, which have believed, do enter into rest." The rest of faith, is a happy prelude to that future rest of glory, which remaineth for the people of God. This rest of faith will make us rest quietly on the bed of death, while we fall asleep in Jesus.

Oh! poor sinner, let me reason with you. If the truth of God be against you, who, or what can be for you? If you live and die unconverted, what an awful subject the truth of God must be to your soul. It seals up in certainty your endless misery. Every thing that has been before said of his truth, bears against you, and lays all the weight of his wrath upon your despairing spirit. May his grace, bless this hint to your eternal benefit,—that you may consider the state in which you stand, and the fearful denunciations of his vengeance, which from his verity is sure to be accomplished, that you may thereby be led to flee from the wrath to come, and find your refuge in him, who is the way, the truth, and the life, even in his Son Christ Jesus, that he as a true and faithful witness, for your eternal advantage, at the bar of God, may there present you unblameable, and irreproachable, and rewardable, in the sight of the Eternal forever.

June 3, 1818. MINOR.

A NOTE TO IMPARTIAL OBSERVER.

ESTEEMED FRIEND,

ON reading thy piece, on our present boasted light, page 320, of August Number, I was forcibly struck, with the justness of most of thy remarks, on the state of professors, and their ministers; but I thought that thou mightest have went further, particularly with respect to the various characters, and views of the latter; and I was confirmed in my opinion, by hearing one whose character and mode of preaching, thou didst not appear to have had in view, and who, on the onset, I shall without ceremony denominate, a noisy, and hard-working, yet Calvinistic preacher, (I mean in profession,) but

be it understood, that I have in view, not only this man, but all others, of the same stamp, who happening to read this, will I hope endeavour to mend their manners, and consider where they are, and what they are about, when they are standing between God and men, in places of worship, so that their conduct may no longer be a source of sorrow, to serious minds, or food for the ridicule of the gay, and the inconsiderate, who extend their contempt, justly *fixed upon the preacher*, unto the gospel, which affords him no support, but disdains to acknowledge him, and rather consigns him over to the boards of a play-house, or the stage of a mountebank.

The preacher which I am about to present unto thee, began his sermon in his own natural voice, and delivered a few sentences dressed in common sense, for which it soon appeared to me, he was indebted to his memory, rather than to the Spirit of God, *whom he professed to be guided by*, but soon he began to raise his voice, and had in view, as I saw, getting it up by degrees, to a very high, immoderate, and unnatural pitch, unto which, (being no doubt accustomed,) he soon brought it, fancying as I clearly perceived, that his hearers would call it powerful preaching, and consider it as power sent down from heaven, in which, with respect to some of the lower, or least discerning part of his congregation, perhaps he was not mistaken, and therefore, in some measure, he might obtain his reward; and I assure thee, Impartial Observer, that I do not magnify when I tell thee, that at times, it could scarcely be said that he spoke. He had worked himself up to such a pitch, (perhaps imagining, what evidently he wished others to believe, *namely, that it was all from God,*) that he raved, he ranted, and got so far beyond the government of reason, and any thing like the sober religion of Jesus Christ, as to be absolutely wild, (which appeared to be his element,) and the spouter of a vast deal of nonsense, a little tinctured with gospel doctrines, which could not but reject such a polluted partner; and really the poor man had at times, so exhausted, and weakened himself, that he could only wheedle, whine, and whisper; but recovery came, *by this affectation of tenderness and love*; as he and some of his ignorant hearers might think, from heaven; and a tremendous thunder-clap of unintelligibility burst forth, and what made it still the worse, was, that his voice so strained, had lost all its melody, and was no longer what nature had assigned to it, and his action became that of an actor, from a village-barn-theatre.

That the solemn silence of my mind had departed from me, will be readily admitted, and no reader will I think be surprised, when I add, my patience was exhausted; I wished myself out, but did not like to be rude, or to draw forth remarks from an assemblage of persons, which judging by their stare, appeared to contain many, as ignorant as the exhibiting holder forth himself, and a partaker with him in his coarse ungodly taste: but I confess I did not think I transgressed before God, in not laying much restraint upon my wandering thoughts, which had already come to the conclusion,

that such a bundle of affectation, and unnatural exertion, could never be sent of God; and that his thumping, clapping, and bellowing, if he had any incentive out of himself, must have been rather from beneath than from above, and therefore would not by the Holy Ghost, be made a blessing to any, but would rather be a weapon, by which Satan would prejudice the minds of sober, but unthinking persons, against the truth, although it affords no countenance to such disgusting extravagancies and surely, I thought, Impartial Observer, may, unhesitatingly lengthen his list of parsons in whom is not our boasted light, by adding all preachers of this description, and scout them, as producing offences, which will bring a woe to the world and help to accelerate the departure, or withdrawment of that light, which here and there remains among us, notwithstanding, we have so long employed our treasure, and parted with our blood, to suppress the dawn of freedom, and to preserve, support, and increase the superstition, despotism, and oppression, *which thou hast well observed*, emanated from the Mother of Harlots, that vile old hag, over whom is now suspended, one of the vials of God's wrath, and who under the name of the piercing, crooked serpent, shall, with the dragon of sea, at some future period be slain, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it, Isaiah xxvii. 1st. But the church of God shall be kept or preserved, although many individuals in it will suffer, on which account, it is called a vineyard of red wine, 2nd, 3rd verses. I am Impartial Observer, truly thine,

London, September 9, 1818. A FRIEND.

HEAVEN NEVER MORTGAGED, FORFEITED, NOR LOST BY THE SIN OF MAN.

As truth should appear disincumbered and free from the mutilating phraseology, that even some good men at times attach to it, has been the occasion of the following remarks.

The reverse of the above discordant sentiment spoils the harmony of revelation. I know it is old fashioned divinity, but it is no more a truth for all that. The author of the jubilee hymn has adopted the sentiment, and sings,

> Ye who have sold for nought
> Your heritage above;
> Shall have it back unbought—
> The gift of Jesus' love.

I suppose he alludes to Isaiah lii. 3. "Ye have sold yourselves for nought, and ye shall be redeemed without money." But if so, the mistake is in making the persons who have sold themselves, and who are to be redeemed into the inheritance mortgaged, and which must have the mortgage or forfeiture taken off, but this is a transposition of persons and things which can never consist with sound speech. The only text that I know of, or ever heard brought in sup-

port of the sentiment is, Ephesians i.14. Which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory. But this text, though it mentions an inheritance, even the saints' inheritance which is heaven, does nothing towards proving that the heavenly inheritance was ever forfeited. But, it also mentions the redemption of the purchased possession, which some take to be the same thing; but the purchased possession heaven is not redeemed for these, but these are redeemd for heaven. Heaven was never purchased for God's church, but the church of God he has purchased with his own blood. Acts xx. 28. To mortgage an inheritance, implies and supposeth, that the inheritance was at the disposal, and in the possession of the person who mortgages it prior to his mortgaging the same; I who never could call an acre of land my own, could never mortgage my inheritance, for this reason, because I had none to mortgage, and neither Adam, nor any of his posterity, though all disobedient rebels, could ever mortgage heaven for the same plain reason, because it was never at their disposal; it is generally supposed, that when Adam broke the covenant of works, that then he forfeited heaven, and eternal life, but neither of these were ever suspended upon such conditions. The heavenly inheritance was settled upon the elect, and eternal life was secured to them, before Adam was either created or fell. And what was made infallibly secure in the covenant of grace, could not be forfeited by a breach of the covenant works. And what was deposited alone in Christ, could never be lost by man, who never was once for a single moment, intrusted with it. And what was alone at the disposal of God, could not be mortgaged or signed over by man. Heaven and eternal life are favours too great for God to give as a reward of man's obedience to any law in any state. Hence as no law could be given that could give eternal life. Gal. iii. 21. "God gave it in Christ, and to Christ by promise, before the world began."

And though Adam lost all that was loseable, he never lost those. He forfeited his own life, and that of all his posterity, but not heaven and eternal life, these were secured in Christ before the fall, and remained secure for the elect in him, notwithstanding the fall, and all its dreadful consequences, and will be bestowed on them, neither as the reward of their merit, nor on the purchase of Christ's blood, but as the free gift of God; "For the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Rom. v. 21.

It is in Christ, that heaven and eternal life are settled on the saints, and through him, even through his bloodshedding, though they come actually to enjoy them both: yet Christ's blood does not purchase heaven, but purchases those souls, upon whom God has eternally settled the inheritance on high.

Some persons no doubt will deem me hypocritical, and think there is no need to split hairs on a point like this; but one error makes way for another, so what some may call a little error may

draw a great many in its train, and this is the case in reference to the point now under consideration.

For admit that heaven was forfeited by the disobedience of Adam, and then it will follow, 1st. That God's sovereign purposes were suspended upon the agency of man; 2nd. That the transactions of time had an influence on the settlements of eternity.—3rd. That the covenant of grace could not be ratified, and confirmed until the covenant of works, was made null and void. 4th. That the undertaking of Christ as Mediator could not be veiled, till Adam in his representative character, had miscarried. 5th. That till Adam had been admitted on trial, it could not be certainly ascertained, who would obtain the inheritance, or who would not, and 6th, whether those that obtained it, would obtain it as a reward of Adam-obedience, or as God's free gift. 7th. Whether there would be any need of Christ's undertaking, or whether Adam would entail eternal life upon all his posterity; nay, to be short, if heaven was left to be secured by Adam's obedience, or to be forfeited by disobedience, then till Adam had made the forfeiture, every thing remained at uncertainties, and no one point settled, it might have come to pass in the event, that Adam might have secured heaven to all, and so God could have bestowed it as a free gift upon none; and then the purpose of God, according to election, had been made void, and there had been neither an elect soul, nor a reprobate, but souls even all the human race, eternally glorified by the merit of Adam, who sees not that this sentiment then strikes at the root of every doctrine of revelation, and deranges the whole of God's plan of salvation by grace.

Some maintain that though heaven itself was not forfeited, yet our title to it was; but this I deny, for the obedience and righteousness of Adam, had he stood, would not have entitled either him or his posterity to heaven—the non-elect, never had a title to heaven, either in Adam or in the Lord Jesus, and so could not forfeit a title they never had. The elect never had any other title to heaven, than what they have in Christ, and they could never forfeit it since it was in the keeping of Christ, and not in their own; and as Christ never forfeited that title, their title was always good, and was never capable of forfeiture from eternity before, to eternity beyond time.

But as you, Sir, admit truth in a plain dress, I will venture to use a plain simile, to illustrate the point before me. Suppose I had a favourite horse, and I purchase for him, and appropriate to his use, a rich and luxuriant pasture, if he trespass on the pasture of my neighbour, he is shut up in a penfold. But has he forfeited the field I had bestowed upon him, or his own liberty, surely the latter—well, if I pay the trespass, and rest re him to his pasture again, Do I now purchase the pasture for him or his liberty to enjoy it? Surely the latter. And thus, Christ frees us from thraldrom, that we may enjoy that inheritance, which by eternal appointment, fell

to our lot as the elect of God—and redeems our liberty to enjoy the inheritance, which eternal grace prepared for our enjoyment, even from before the foundation of the world.

By sin, we had forfeited our liberty, our lives, and our souls—we had sold ourselves for nought into the hands of law and justice, sin and Satan—we had no meetness for, nor any wish, will, or desire after heaven—we knew not the way, and had no power to walk in it—we were out of the way, afar off from God, without Christ in this world—but we are redeemed from all enemies, evils and dangers too, without money—not with corruptible things, as silver, and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ—we are bought with that price, Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, he has rescued us from the hands of justice, he has reconciled us to God by his blood, he has delivered us from the power of our enemies, sin, and Satan; sin cannot reign over us, nor Satan lead us captive at his will—Christ has turned our feet into the way of peace, he has sent his Spirit to quicken, enlighten, guide, comfort, and seal us to the day of full redemption. The work is begun, which he will finish—we are in his keeping, and not our own—he is all in all, first and last in our salvation, and is bound to bring us to glory. From a feeling experience of his grace, and possessed of a good hope through grace, we rejoice in hope of the glory of God, and are constrained hereby, to give thanks to God and the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift, thanks be to God for Jesus Christ. Amen.

T. L—th—m.

Some talk of Christ's purchasing the Spirit, which sentiment, is equally objectionable in my view—the Spirit was promised to him—was largely poured upon him—is sent by him—and testifies of, and glorifies him, but Christ no more purchased the Spirit—than he purchased the Father's love.

CHRIST, THE FIRST-BORN FROM THE DEAD.

THIS expression of the apostle, appears unintelligible, unless we are taught by the Holy Spirit, to see the necessity and the advantages of the two-fold state of the Redeemer's incarnation. By the phrase *two-fold state*, I mean, a state of sin, and a state of holiness; and both of infinite magnitude and necessity.

1. *A state of sin.*—The Son of God, was born of a sinful parent. Mary was descended by lineal genealogy from Adam the first; and like all the successors of the fall, she gave proofs of doubt and opposition to the mystery of the incarnation. The Redeemer, according to the arrangement of the Father, incorporated himself with this generation; he was made of a woman, made under the law, and consequently under the curse; and though the Eternal Spirit, created the human nature of Christ, infinitely holy, in all

inherent qualifications, yet that human nature was assumedly, or rather, legally unholy, from its birth to its resurrection. Between those periods, it was subject to the pain and misery, and degradation of sin, and yet inherently without sin;—bearing our sins as the INFINITE SINNER; on behalf of the church of God; and expiating our sins as the PERFECT SUFFERER, to satisfy the justice of God.

I conceive therefore, it is indispensibly necessary to consider the Redeemer as the *sinner*, on the part of the church, through the period before stated—namely from his birth to his resurrection. It is necessay, because the scriptures consider him through the whole of that period to have been *in the flesh*; and not declared to be the Son of God with power, till the time when he rose from the grave. Till then, he was dead in trespasses and in sins for his people: *the only sinner*, legally, on whom the Deity could inflict that severity of justice which honoured his perfections; and the only wretched and miserable, yet dignified human nature, that could sustain an adequate penalty, equal to the infinite demands of a violated law. There are five methods to prove this position.

1. *By the state of Adam after the fall.*

The law follows the delinquent, and demands restitution, in whatever state he may be involved:—if rich, or holy, it justifiably takes away that portion of property, equivalent to its demand—if poor, or unholy, it takes the prisoner by the throat, and confines him in a prison till he pay the uttermost farthing. In this way the law demanded of Adam in paradise, an equalized and uniform adherence to its precepts; and it demanded the same of Adam, out of paradise. It regarded with indispensible severity, the same holy, and perfect restrictions towards our first parent, in sin as well as in holiness;—in weakness as well as in strength;—in misery as well as in happiness;—when under the displeasure of God, as when enjoying the favour of God. Hence the unavoidable conclusion, I presume, must be for the Redeemer to engage in the work of human redemption *in the condition of Adam the first after the fall.* He superseded our first parents as *the sinner;* and was made of the seed of David, *according to the flesh.*

2. *By the sufferings of Christ.*

Had he not been the sinner, instead of us, his sufferings would have been unjust; the types that predicted those sufferings, would remain quite unintelligible; and the bold confident observations of the apostles and prophets, would be liable to uncertainty or perversion. There is no justifiable cause why God, or man, should smite the innocent. No law, human, nor divine, would sanction this. The Bible is not established on such an objectionable hypothesis; neither doth the character of God warrant it. The sufferings of the scape-goat alone, as mentioned in October Number, are a sufficient argument, to shew the Deity considered the humanity of

Christ, as the legal sinner in the place of Adam the first, at every period, previous to its risen state; for every period, from the manger to the cross, found the Redeemer in a situation to be exposed to all the pain—the sorrow—the sufferings of a sinner against God;—a perfect sinner—an infinite sinner, as the representation of the church in its fallen state. If it were not so, the design, the means, and the practice of salvation by the Son of God would have been ineffectual! Christianity would become a farce; our preaching vain; and we should still remain dead in trespasses and sins.

3. *By his own confession.*

The Redeemer confesses, that antecedent to his resurrection, he was in a state of imperfection, nay in a state of sin, incalculable sin; —for, if imperfect at all—if sinful at all,—it must have been infinite imperfection,—infinite sin; inasmuch as his incarnation was of infinite origin and magnitude. He was *imperfect.*—"Tell that fox, Behold, I do cures to day and to-morrow, *and the third day I shall be perfected.*" He was the *sinner*, "Innumerable evils have compassed me about; MINE INIQUITIES have taken hold UPON ME, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of my head; therefore my heart faileth me."

4. *By the argument of Paul.*

The leading argument of the aposle to the Hebrews, is to shew the necessity of the vicarious sufferings of Christ: or Christ in the capacity of the sinner for his people. To prove this, he informs the Hebrew church of the awful situation of the Redeemer as our representative in sin; that, similar to the type, he was under the the necessity, first of making a sacrifice for HIMSELF,—and then *for* the people;—and, that this two-fold—this consolidated sacrifice, was most honorably, and satisfactorily accomplished, when he offered up himself upon the cross, when he destroyed the guilt, the condemnation, and the existence of sin; rose from the dead, and became perfect *through sufferings.*

5. *By the absence of the Father.*

Sin only can separate man from his maker. "Your iniquities have separated between you, and your God; and your sins have hid his face from you." When Adam transgressed, God withdrew, and veiled himself in clouds of impenetrable darkness; and no fellowship, nor union could continue between God and man, because sin had made an infinite disproportion between the parties.

The Redeemer, therefore, in his *first estate*, felt this, and lamented it. God the Father, separated from the man Christ Jesus, at that awful period, when the divine presence was chiefly desirable;—*almost indispensibly needful*! Creation also, as if anxious to imitate its Creator, followed the example: the sun withdrew its light;—the mountains shook, and were troubled;—*all* nature was shrouded in darkness, when this terrible—this compassionate—this *infinite sinner*, for man, experienced the bitter affliction of an absent God!

II. *A state of holiness.*

This part of our subject regards the resurrection of the Reedemer from the dead, into a newness of life, without sin; producing a new creation, for the residence and action of the believer, called the beginning of the creation of God. Sin being destroyed, by the infinite value of the punishment, inflicted on the sufferer, justice could no longer retain the royal prisoner;—the effects of transgression could no longer hold dominion over him; and the interference of the Father was executed with irresistible promptitude, in raising him from the grave.

This was necessary to shew the perfect resurrection of that humanity, which had been created by the Holy Spirit, to answer the design of our creation; but which for a season, was enveloped in the awful effects of sin, punishment, and misery, in order to destroy the enmity produced by Adam the first, and to bring in an everlasting reconciliation and union by Adam the sceond.—Hence we see the utility of the quotation at the head of this paper—" The first-born from the dead."—inasmuch as the humanity of the Redeemer, was the only human nature that had been subject to a state of mortality, and received a personal and legal discharge from guilt, condemnation, and death in this world. His anterior condition was, *in the flesh;*—his subsequent condition, was, *in the Spirit;—a perfect and holy human nature*, quickened by the Eternal Spirit, into the new creation, and raised up by the power of the Father, as " the first born from the dead."

Paul chose this two fold state of the Redeemer's incarnation, as the solid immoveable basis, for his argumentative, and dignified epistle to the Romans: " Jesus Christ our Lord made of the seed of David, *according to the flesh;*"—and declared to be the Son of God with power,—*according to the Spirit of holiness*, by the " resurrection from the dead."

Believers, here we discover the beginning of the new creation of God, and the beginning of our new creation: a change of pedigree —a translation from sin to holiness—from misery to happiness,—from death to life,—in CHRIST JESUS!—He, the first-born, holy, and incorruptible;—*Believers*, born of the Spirit *in him*: not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the WORD of God, who liveth and abideth for ever. " I am he that liveth, and was dead, and am alive for evermore." But this new creation, may more particularly engage our thoughts in some future number; in the mean time, I close, with the bold, confident, and consolatory address of our adorable representative—" *Thy dead men shall live*; TOGETHER, WITH MY DEAD BODY SHALL THEY ARISE—awake, and sing!"

MYRA.

THE RIVER—AN ALLEGORY.

THAT was a beautiful river, on the banks of which, in early day, I was accustomed to wander. And now my mind in its musings, will often carry me thither; it is truly romantic, abounding with cataracts of various descriptions—some perpendicular, and abruptly falling from the top of a rock above, to the shelf of another below—others intercepted in their descent, and foaming, impatient of opposition, dashing against the side, and following the curving course of it, winding more peaceably, though not less rapidly, to the basin beneath—others of less consequence; but from their number, claiming continual attention, and from their variety, calling forth continued admiration—some of them sliding rapidly, over the bosom of a long extended, and smooth stone, without any trouble or opposition in the progress. Here let me in imagination, as I have heretofore in reality, take my seat and admire the place—The surrounding mountains too, pushing their craggy tops into the clouds, heighten the grandeur of the scene. And here is solitude too—it is far removed from the haunts of men. The rushing noise of the nearer water, and the roar of the more distant falls, seem calculated to lead the soul into contemplations, correspondent with the effect likely to be produced by such a situation.

My attention for a while, is caught with the passing of that water. I am looking at one spot, but not a single particle of the water is for a moment stationary. I try to follow it, and carry on my vision with it for an instant, but it is quickly lost—again the effort is made, but to continue its pursuit is equally fruitless—again the attempt is tried, and again my eyes return to the spot from whence they began to move, foiled in the chase. And could I be seated here, and proceed in my present practice for the next hour, would it still baffle my endeavour? and, will it continue so for the next day—the next week—the next year—the next century—until the consummation of all things. There is a solitary sameness about the thought, that for a moment untunes, while it distracts my mind.

And as my finger fell on my arm, that I might feel in the pulsation, the motion of the stream of life, I counted one—I pursued the passing thought, till another beat effaced from my imagination the feeling of the first.—And will this momentary monitor pursue its unwearied course, through all the minutes, and hours, and days, and years, that are written for me? and then stop? What a pause!

But suppose I move forward beyond the instant, when the stream of my life, and the streams which move over that rock, shall by the command of that voice, which spake all into existence, come to an immediate stop! Does duration cease when these streams cease? No! Go on bold adventurer, multiply the minutes of thy life, by millions of years, of centuries, and ask thy neighbours to assist thee in the undertaking, and let them calculate as thou dost, on the periods of their lives—and solicit the kindred spirits of thy race, all

have, or ever shall live, in all their ghostly appearance, to sit down and follow thy rule, and make their amounts as to their lives, as thou art doing; and add with thine, the whole together if thou canst? And desire all the angels in heaven, with all their wisdom, to put all their past existences together, and multiply them with their largest powers of conception, and call in the whole conclave of the upper world, that they may be incessantly employed to add to this joint amount for millions of millions of millions of years to come, and then the whole will produce a calculation infinitely short of the duration of eternity.

And after the streams of my natural life have *ceased to move*, shall I live?—And live all through all this eternity? Then what is my temporal existence compared with this?—It is a point below nothing—it is as a vapour, a shadow that immediately vanishes, altogether vanity, in respect of duration.

But is the after existence, mere existence, or an existence without consequences? No!!! If that little word be true; and true it is, as God is true. In it how much is involved. The existence is either in happiness or woe. My mind catches an immediate picture of two characters immediately after death—the one a saint, who is found in Christ—the other, one who despises so great a salvation, and brought down on himself, the righteous judgment of God. They come by the same door of death, instantly to the bar of judgment. But here their march is perfectly reversed—they are after proceeding in perfectly opposite lines—the extremes eternally encreasing—the first receiving continued accumulations of glory, as the years of unbounded eternity move on—and the other incessant accumulations of woe and agony, as the minutes, and days and years of endless duration proceeds.

My fellow sinners;—It was for your sakes, that my imagination was carried by the side of that river, of which you have read. Have you ever thought of the rapid flight of time—of your time,—and how unable you are to stop, or even to watch its floating course? Have you ever thought of the unbounded length of eternity, and the irreversible certainty of your existence in it?—I was going to say through it, but the term wrongly applies, as it never will end. And have you ever considered that in this forever, happiness or misery must be your lot? If you have not, I pray that the Holy Ghost, may infuse these things, into your mind, so as never to be obliterated—sanctify and change your hearts—lead you to the Saviour—whose blood and righteousness make the thought of death, judgment, and eternity sweet—and who will one day, if you know him, open to your immortal eyes, a view of the river of the water of life, which is clear as chrystal, and proceeds from the throne of God and the Lamb.

And my fellow believers, may a consideration of this subject, help us to carry our cares and sorrows lightly, looking not at the things which are seen, and are temporal, but at those, which are

not seen, and are eternal. Knowing that our afflictions are comparatively but for a moment, and are light, while they under the secret hand of our God, are working out for us, glory eternal in its weight, and duration—and having such a hope, may we continually long to be purified, even as God is pure. Knowing to a certainty, that we shall hereafter drink, and be eternally refreshed by that river, the streams whereof maketh glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High.

September 1, 1818. M——r.

To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.

THOUGHTS WITH RESPECT TO CHRIST REPENTING AND BELIEVING FOR HIS PEOPLE.

MR. EDITOR,

As it is much easier to *ask* questions, than to *answer* them, your correspondent J. will not expect, that an individual should give him satisfaction on all the four, which he has proposed in your Magazine for August; and therefore I shal think myself licensed, to evade those of them, which I may find myself least inclined, or qualified to elucidate: accordingly I shall select the last in the order, as the subject of my present attempt. "Did Christ repent and believe for his people? If he did not, What was the cause of his grief and sorrow?"

The question, I believe has been before your readers, in a previous number, and has been indirectly and partially answered, but as it is repeated, perhaps some further consideration may be necessary. In endeavouring a reply, I shall consider it both in a negative and positive point of view. First, then with regard to believing, it cannot be said that Christ acted for his people in a way of faith, so as to render it a matter unnecessary for *them*; or, as a correspondent in the Gospel Magazine, has heretofore observed, he did not believe for them in the same way that he died for them. Such a supposition as this, would be not only contradictory to the many scriptures which represent the people of God, as exercising faith, living by it, &c. but would be utterly repugnant to their experience in all ages. In fact, this holy principle is described, as the chief constituent of genuine religion. And of what consequence or importance would be all that Christ has performed for them, as a surety and Redeemer, if they are never brought to believe in it? Of what moment would it be to an insolvent, under arrest, supposing a friend undertakes to discharge his debts, if he is left unacquainted with the affair, and therefore still imprisoned.

Again, if Christ believed for his people, in such a point of view as this, by a parity of reason, it may as properly be said, that because he *prayed* for them, therefore to pray *themselves*, would be needless! But notwithstanding that he did petition to his Father

for them, (and we may be well assured he was heard, Heb. v. 7.) yet he spoke a parable to this end, "That *men* ought always to *pray*, and not to faint." Indeed we may carry this way of reasoning, to a climax of the most palpable absurdities, and say, he not only believed and prayed for them in this way, but that he even existed for them, performed all the functions of life, every physical movement, and mental operation for them; yea, that he really sinned for them: and thus work the subject up to the summit of all that is blasphemous.

But it may be objected, that if he suffered, obeyed, and died for them, Why may it not be admitted, that he acted for them in this respect also? if in the greater, why not in the less importance; To this I reply, that to atone for sin, was what no creature could effect, and it belonged to him, as a Mediator or surety; but believing is of a different nature, and more properly belongs to *creatures*, *as* creatures, and as sinners. It is very possible for *such*, to exercise faith, but I think utterly *impossible*, that they should expiate sin.

I will now come to consider whether it may be said, that Christ believed for his people in any sense whatever, and if he did, to state the particulars in which such a proposition may be maintained. I would, however, first observe, that as he is invariably represented in the word of God, as the *object* of his people's faith, it would be grossly absurd, to say, that in this respect, he believed for them; for then it would be saying, that he believed in himself! Neither would it be consistent, to suppose, that as his blood and righteousness are subjects on which their faith is exercised, so also with him; for, of all these, he was ultimately conscious, and needed no testimony concerning them. Now, faith is the crediting a report of a certain thing, the veracity of which is to be relied on; or to speak in the apostle's words, it "is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." If a friend promise me a favour, I believe his word to be true, and therefore expect its accomplishment. But, What had Christ to do with this, in the offices, characters, and relations he sustained; or in the work which he performed for his people, since in these respects, present realization, and internal assurance, superseded all extraneous evidence.

Having remarked this, I shall proceed to notice, briefly, in what respects it may be allowed, that he did believe, as the head of his church his body.

1st. Then, he believed the promise of his Father, with regard to his mediatorial crown and reward, after having completed the work of salvation, which he had given him to do. It is said of him, "who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despised the shame, &c."

2nd. He believed the word which his Father had pledged, to send the Holy Spirit as the comforter of his people, after his ascension.

3rd. He believed that according to his word of truth, he should see the travail of his soul, and be satisfied; that is, he should have to present his church before him without spot, and not a member thereof deficient.

4th. He believed, as the Father had told him, that all power should be given into his hands, and that he should be exalted far above all principalities and powers, and every name that can be named.

In all these particulars, I think, from the scriptures of truth, it is evident that Jesus, as Mediator and God-man believed; because, these were matters, that more immediately concerned him in his *mediatorial* capacity; while at the same time, it must be admitted, that the saints, as joint-heirs with him, are interested in the belief of them, also.

And now with regard to repentance, we have to see, how far any thing may be substantiated to support either the positive or negative side of the question. With respect to the definition* of the word, therefore, (as it is necessary some attention should be paid to this) I shall keep to the language of the Bible as I can; and think we may there find that it signifies, in a general, and extensive acceptation, a turning of the heart to God in a way of conversion, as the effect of regeneration; and is most aptly represented, by the parable of the returning prodigal.

This true repentance, implies the following things:

1st. A previous going astray, and doing that which is wrong and forbidden by the law of God. In this view, both original, and actual sin must be taken into consideration.

2nd. A totally departing from him, as the fountain of all good, and the source of all blessedness.

3rd. A seeking that happiness in other objects, which can only be derived from him. And,

Lastly, a being brought to a true sense of all this by the power of the Holy Ghost.

Now, I would ask, with what propriety it can be said, that any of these points are applicable to Christ? Did *he* ever go astray, or transgress the commandments of God? Did *he* ever leave the chief of all good, in pursuit of bliss from other sources? If he did not, then what had he to do with repentance. He had nothing to repent of. He did not regret of his covenant engagements, in behalf of his church—he did not repent of his taking her cause in hand, to bear the curse due to her transgressions, and to fulfil the law on her account; for all this, he delighted to do. But it may be said, that as he stood the substitute for his people, having their sins imputed *to him*, that he repented for it on their behalf, as well as atoned for it. To which, I remark, that this would be inconsistent with

* In a moral and metaphysical point of view, *repentance* may be simply termed an after thought; or the mind reflecting on what is past, and sorrowing that such and such things and practices, should have occurred: and this is in proportion to the good lost, and evil entailed.

wh al have just observed; for if he had repented of sin, how could it be said, that it was his meat and drink, to do his Father's will, since according to this, he would have been sorry that he should have had occasion so to have done. It was for *others* not for *himself*, that he thus expressed his willingness to obey the law. Besides, we should consider, that none but *the subjects* of sin, can, and ought to repent of it; otherwise, it would be a matter of indifference, whether it were repented for or not. It is one thing to satisfy divine justice for sin, and another to repent of it: the former belonged to one, who was God as well as man; the latter, naturally devolves upon the committer thereof; because, it is right, that the sinner should see and feel his sins, in order to prize a Saviour. It does not follow, that because sin was *imputed* to Christ, therefore, it belonged to him to repent of it: for this way of reasoning, would make him the actual sinner, instead of the sinners substitute. We should also make a distinction between the ground of repentance, and that of salvation; the former is founded on the fact of sin itself, the latter, in the sovereign pleasure of Jehovah. Therefore, to argue from the idea of federal representation, would be irrelevant to the question; for Jesus did not represent his church in the capacity of a sinner; but as a responsible surety; and his great business in the world, was to put sin away, by dying for it; because none but he *could* do it. If any of your readers should not see the scope of my argument, I will add one word more, by way of explication:—Whatever Christ did for his people, must have been effectual in answering some important end for their good: hence, he suffered, obeyed, and died for them, that they might be eternally saved; he also prayed for them in many respects, in order that they might be kept in the truth; sanctified through it, &c. (See John chap. 17.) But what purpose would have been answered in his *repenting* for them? It could not obtain pardon nor justification; neither could it in any sense, contribute to their well-being. Christ came to offer himself a sacrifice, in order to this, and what need was there then of his repentance; since it could avail nothing in this momentous concern? Now, though the same may be said of it in the sinner, yet it in the way by which he is led to see the evil of sin, and the greatness of salvation from it.

I shall now offer a remark on the latter part of the question:—"What was the cause of his grief and sorrow?" The querist should recollect, that *repentance and sorrow*, are not synonimous terms; for though we cannot separate the former from the latter, yet not vice versa. There may be such a thing as grief or sorrow without repent nce; but I think the first-mentioned, generally attends the last. A criminal going to be executed, may experience the most poignant sorrow, that he is going to die; but might not repent of his criminalities. A man persecuted for his attachment to the cause of God, may be sorrowful, but he would have nothing to repent of

in it. Now with respect to Jesus' sorrows, I would observe, that as *sin* is the only source of all that is painful, this must be the cause of them. But be it remembered, that nothing more or less, is meant in scripture by his grief, and sorrow, than the mental and bodily sufferings which he endured, as the punishment *due* to sin; and as I have just observed, this may be easily distinguished from repentance. I could say more, but must decline.

Chard, August 18, 1818. DIMINUTUS.

To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.

ON PROGRESSIVE SANCTIFICATION.

MR. EDITOR,

OBSERVING in the last Number of your Magazine, "Some Strictures" upon my letter, "On Progressive and Bodily Sanctification," as inserted in the Number for February, by "A COTTAGER;" I beg your permission to convey a few further remarks on the subject, which I humbly submit to the consideration of your Rutland correspondent, "with all the freedom of a brother," whose lonely cot in the desert as to spiritual privileges, is not much unlike that of A Cottager, whom, yet I hope to meet ere long, in a land of plenitude and joy, where peace and unity, without any shades of difference, for evermore prevail, and Jesus is the object for ever adored, as he that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own BLOOD! To him be praise and glory ascribed for ever, and ever, Amen.

It frequently happens, that a fondness for sentiment or party, and a consequent prejudice against the opposite, betrays the mind into erroneous conclusions, and leads on to hasty expressions, which when maturely weighed by an Impartial comparison of things together, will be found unwarranted. And I am greatly mistaken, if such be not the case with many, who appear to arm themselves against the sentiment of Progressive Sanctification. It is not uncommon for people to be led astray by the sound of words, without giving themselves the trouble to search out the meaning of them, and labouring to come at the ideas they are intended to convey in the different passages of scripture wherein they are used. To charge this upon Dr. Hawker, would be highly unbecoming, because he has given us several different senses, in which the word is used in different scripture passages. But then he immediately proceeds in his reasoning upon the subject, as if the term had but ONE precise meaning, and was always to be understood, as conveying but ONE idea! To this he seems to be led, in the warmth of his zeal against a term, which he inadvertently identifies with Arminian perfection in the flesh; and for the crude notions of a few, or an obscure individual who appears to identify one thing with another, and blend things together which are distinct, passes judg-

ment on the whole body, as men "unacquainted with the plague of their own hearts". I sincerely hope, that the worthy Doctor will see cause to alter his views, and allow, that the term may be used without any such ideas as have been conceived in his mind, and that there are some who can plead for the sentiment, consistent with a knowledge of themselves. Into the same notions, on this subject, has A Cottager been led; and since he has espoused the side of Dr. H. to him shall my remarks more immediately refer, and to him, if I mistake not, the forergoing observations will apply.

First, A Cottager observes, that "I admit, and approve the Doctor's definition of the term." Page 379. And I certainly do not intend now to do otherwise, but as I have shewn how the different significations of the term will apply, to those observations I beg the reader to turn to p. 75, 78. February Number, with 311, 312. Aug. Number. I cannot, however, but regret, that A Cottager, should leave his worthy friend *in* his dilemma without at least attempting to extricate him, and employing his "no small genius" to reconcile the contradictions pointed out on page 76, for February. The Doctor's "own words," as quoted by A Cottager do not, in my poor judgment at least, make the "difficulty to vanish" away.—But I must confess myself wanting in perception, I am not however without hope, that, A Cottager will lend me his friendly aid, to help me out of the dark.

A Cottager, further observes, that "in all Dr. Hawker's writings he confines the great work of regeneration and sanctification in the present life solely to the Spirit. He has not an idea, that it was ever intended to renew the body during the time state of the church." p. 379, and argues that "the *whole man* must be the subject of regeneration, before the *whole man* can be the subject of sanctification;" and in a subsequent paragraph, it is urged from our Lord's words to Nicodemus, John iii. 6. "That no alteration whatever, is made on the *body* in regeneration. *No part of it is sanctified.* The work is on the Spirit, which (the Spirit) is wholly regenerated, justified and sanctified by the Holy Ghost." p. 380.

In this paragraph, things distinct are blended together, and some erroneous ideas are contained: I trust however, the following observations will be allowed their due weight. The quotation made from Brine, A Cottager ought to have perceived, was peculiarly intended to shew the *inconvenitness* of Dr. Hawker's conclusions, relative to the 'more generally received opinion' concerning the subject of sanctification, and regeneration. For the same purpose was Dr. Gill quoted, whom, though an acknowledged, able, and luminous writer, has "only" on this subject, (in the estimation of A Cottager) "made darkness visible, and confusion worse confounded." I am not, however, at agreement with a A Cottager here, but let us here him further; Dr. Gill is quoted, as observing, that "the whole old man is unregenerate, no part in him is regenerated, he remains untouched, and is just the same he was, only deprived of his power

and dominion—and the new man is wholly regenerate, no unregenerate part in him." Brine, "regeneration proceeds, and may be considered as the foundation and spring of conversion and sanctification, for that is the principle whence both arise." p. 381. On these two paragraphs, A Cottager reasons thus, "If regeneration must precede sanctification, and the whole *old man is unregenerated*, it is evident, before bodily sanctification can take place, bodily regeneration must be effected." I do not think A Cottager, has added much *brightness* to the light, if he have not 'made darkness visible' in his reasoning on this subject. But as much as possible to avoid prolixity, I will aim to point out the mistake of A Cottager, in two or three particulars. And 1st. The old man is identified with, and supposed to mean the human body. But this is neither the sense of scripture, or of Dr. Gill. And as I conceive many mistakes to arise, for want of duly distinguishing here; I beg to observe, that by the terms, "*old man*, and *new man*, as used in the scriptures, we are not to understand the body and the soul merely, but *sin and grace*. The former is called *old*, because of the priority of its existence, and as being from the fall; and the latter *new*, because of its subsequent date, or *after existence* in the soul to the former—and both are termed *man*, because man is the subject of them both, and both have the alternate goverment, sway, or dominion. That this is the sense of scripture, is plain from Ephes. iv. 22, 24. with Col. iii. 9, 10. For let it be observed, that these saints were still in *the body*, nor could they lawfully *put off the old man*, were this mortal body intended by the term, neither could the apostle consistently exhort them thereunto; furthermore, he could not require them, to put on the *new man*, were the immortal Spirit, thereby intended, for this was beyond their power, either to put off, or put on. But if we understand the apostle, as urging the saints at Ephesus and Colosse, to a practical conformity to the image of Christ, from the consideration, that they had already given themselves to him, in an open or public confession of his name, his language will perfectly agree with *bodily* and *progressive* sanctification, in the way I have been wont to conceive, and wish to be understood; and indeed, upon what other ground practical godliness can be enforced, or wherein it can appear, if these things be given up, I confess myself at a loss, to know or understand. But as I have shewn *how* the body is sanctified, according to Dr. Hawker's own definition of the term, I need not say more on that head, till what I have already written is refuted. See p. 77, 78. February Number, with 311, 312, August Number.

2ndly. A Cottager identifies regeneration with sanctification, and supposes an alteration to be effected in the substance, or qualities of the soul. "No alteration whatever," he says, "is made on the body in regeneration—the work is on the Spirit, which is wholly regenerated, justified, and sanctified."

3rdly. Regeneration is represented by A Cottager, under the

idea of a *renewing*." The scriptures however, set it forth in much stronger terms, as "*a creation*—a quickening from death to life—resurrection from the dead—a being born again, &c." But *renewing*, supposes this work of divine power already wrought, and is more proper to consider as a branch of sanctification; which is distinguished from regeneration thus: regeneration, is not the creation of a new *soul*, neither the imparting new *faculties*, or altering the substance of the old,) but the infusion of a new *principle* of spiritual life, instantaneously put into the soul, by the immediate energy of the Holy Spirit. That this sanctifies the subject of it radically, is freely owned and confessed; but sanctification formally and in the *active* sense of the term, denotes the *lively exercise* of those spiritual habits and graces, which, in regeneration are bestowed. And thus, I consider sanctification, as following upon regeneration, and effectual calling, and ever supposing those acts of God, in the order of nature, as preceding. Romans viii. 30.

We are not however, to forget, that to *sanctify* has different significations in the scriptures; to attach the *same* idea to the term therefore in all places, will be to mutilate, rather than explain the sacred record. "It is sometim s held forth, as a blessing from God to man," as 1 Thess. v. 23. Sometimes, as man's duty towards God. 1 Thess. iv. 3. The former, God powerfully works in us, according to the purposes of his gracious decree; the latter he justly requires of us, by the will of his holy command. When sanctification denotes the first implantation of spiritual habits, it is a mere blessing from God, in procuring, what we do not co-operate with him, but receive it from him. As it signifies the activity, or lively exercise of infused habits, and their corroboration and progress, so far we are active, but then it is as we acted upon under God, and dependently on him, for these things can never be separated."—Witsius on the Covenant. Vol. ii. p. 7.

The words of our Lord, John iii. 6. as quoted by a Cottager, p. 380, will neither support his ideas, nor invalidate the force of my observations on the subject. Observe, our Lord does not say, "Except (the Spirit") but, "except (a man be born again, &c.") A *man* who as a rational agent, is the subject of a *body*, and a *soul*.

In like manner, Paul to the Cor. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." But not as possessed of a new *soul*, as to its moral faculties, or qualities, but as possessed of a *new principle* which has its seat in the substance of the soul, and so governs the whole man. This principle is called Spirit, not because it alters the nature of the soul, but after the agent who has wrought it, and the man is hence denominated a *spiritual man*, as being a partaker of the Spirit of Christ. But of this before.

Again, the sanctification of God the Father, in Christ, ought even to be distinguished from the sanctification of the Spirit *through* Christ, as flowing from his effectual calling to be saints. 1 Cor. i. 2. Jude 1.. The former, denotes the secret will of God in the

election of a people for himself in Christ their chosen head and representative—the latter is effected by his divine *power* who works in them to will, and do his pleasure. And may not a man be complete in Christ, as his spiritual head of life and influence, who is still far from being complete for Christ, by participation of his Spirit, and conformity to his image? Is not the former the ground-work of the latter? Does not completeness for Christ, follow, upon completeness in Christ? Many more questions might be urged, but I trust, A Cottager will see, that he has not impartially considered this branch of truth at least, on all sides, and in all its ramifications. As his memory however appears to fail him, relative to the author, whence the above quotation is made, I beg to refer him to a two shilling pamphlet on the subject, by J. Stevens, York Street, St. James's, London, page 80.

There are many things in A Cottager's letter, in which I perfectly concur; and I fear I have already exceeded the limits prescribed in your Magazine. But to answer briefly, I remark, that I have no idea of the *actings* of grace, *making* a man *more holy* than before, but that they demonstrate, or make it appear more plainly, that he is the subject of an holy principle. And it ought to have been kept in view, that to sanctify, signifies to *separate*, &c. therefore a man already in the possession of a principle of holiness from Christ the head of all fulness to his body, may more decidedly *separate, (sanctify)* himself from carnal ordinances of men for the Lord's sake, and so be *more* sanctified. Upon what ground do exhortations to practical godliness proceed, if progressive sanctification be not admitted? "Be ye holy, for I am holy." How can this consist with the views of A Cottager? By whom I wish also to be informed, how far it is proper to *separate holiness* from the *acts* of the believer?

I remain, yours, to serve in the Lord,

Chatteris, Sept. 27, 1818. T. B—d.

To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.

IMPARTIAL OBSERVER'S ANSWERS TO THE 2D. 3D. AND 4TH QUESTIONS OF J. P. 335, IN AUGUST NUMBER.

MR. EDITOR,

THE first question proposed by this gentleman I have left out, because it is virtually contained with in the third. I shall begin then with the second, which amounts to this: "*Were the elect when chosen of God in Christ, viewed, and considered by him, in that pure, and sinless state, in which he was about to create them, in the first Adam, or knowing, (as he certainly did,) that they would become impure, and sinful; did he at the period alluded to, view and consider them, as thus sinful and impure?*

This question I shall answer, in conformity to some generally received sentiments, among all who profess to be Christians.

First, it is admitted by all professed Christians, that the blessed

God, conforming to his word, *(which must have been eternally in his mind,)* and also to his combined attributes, or revealed perfections, cannot, and never could, grant a single blessing, to any man considered as sinful, independent of Christ as his sin-offering, or sacrifice, and the Lord his righteousness.

Secondly. It must be admitted, that the blessing of a choice in Christ, considered in its connections or consequences, is the first, and greatest blessing, which God had to grant, or which man could receive; it being the fountain blessing, or that blessing from God, whence all his other blessings flow.

Thirdly. It should be admitted, that no one could be interested in Christ, or the work which the Father gave him to do, and which by living and dying, he on the earth completed, *(and therein became the afore-named sin-offering, or sacrifice to remove sin, and the end of the law for righteousness;)* until, or before he was chosen, viewed, and considered in him.

Fourthly, It must hence follow, that no man, or body of men, could have partook of the necessary blessing of a choice in Christ, *(that they might be interested, in the noticed justice satisfying, and wrath appeasing work of Christ; and the blessed consequences thereof;)* if they had been viewed, and considered by God the elector, at the time he elected them, as connected with, or standing in, that impure, and sinful state, into which he notwithstanding knew they would fall.

Fifthly, These things admitted, it must also be granted; that the blessed God, when he elected, or chose his people in Christ; positively must have viewed, and considered them in their pure primeval state, although he perfectly well knew, they would fall from it.

The possibility, and probability, of the blessed God viewing, and regarding his people, *at the time he chose them in Christ;* according to the pure, and sinless state, in which he was about to form them, *and not according to that impure, and sinful state, into which he saw they would fall;* is discoverable in his dealings with, or conduct towards, those angels that fell, as long as they continued in their original, sinless state; for although he undoubtedly knew, they would fall, by rebellion against him; yet he retained them, in their primeval state of glory and happiness, during the time I have alluded to, which certainly proves, that he did not regard them, in connection with that sin which he knew, they would afterwards commit.

It is I know objected, in what I have contended for; that if the Lord viewed, and regarded his people, in their original pure, and sinless state, when he bestowed upon them what I have called *their fountain blessing*, (I mean their choice, or election in Christ,) that then, he must have viewed those, on whom he did not bestow this blessing, as in the same state, and so could not act consistently in rejecting them, or in not thus favoring them also; but this is not so easily

proved, at asserted. Unquestionably on the contrary, the Lord might choose to view the latter, in connection with the sins, which he knew they would afterwards commit, notwithstanding his not having chosen to do so, with respect to the former: and the sublapsarian, who fancies that God considered the whole in their fallen state, when he chose a part in Christ, would do well to consider the consequence inferable, or deducible from this notion of theirs, which he may sufficiently gather, from what I have advanced, *respecting the impossibility of his then choosing them at all;* and by a slight consideration, *(supposing the absurdity of its possibility,)* he will discover, that what he proposes from this impracticable scheme, would not make the doctrine of election less harsh, *(supposing there was some harshness in it;)* or less offensive to the non-elect, or those who write for them, *as its effects would still be exactly the same;* and those who presume to arraign God's justice, or compassion on the one hand, would soon find (by a due exercise of consideration, and common sense,) that they would be involved, in the terrific necessity of doing it on the same ground on the other hand, as what is presumptously, and daringly pleaded, by inconsiderate men, against the superlapsarian scheme; must by considerate men be applied with equal force to the sublapsarian scheme; so that the sublapsarian flies from a possible, consistent, and certain election; into an inconsistent, and impossible one; for the purpose of flying from fancied difficulties, which (without discovering it,) they are obliged to take with them, and their flight is the offspring of rebellion, against the sovereignty of God, or his right to deal with them (his creatures) as seemeth him good.

The third question amounts to this; "*Whether if they were elected or chosen in Christ, from eternity; it must also be admitted, that they were actually justified in Christ, from eternity;* (seeing there is no condemnation, to them that are in Christ Jesus.)

Now the first of these questions may be determined, without any reference, to either of those texts, which in the most express terms, prove the affirmative; and as I do not think the readers of the Gospel Magazine, are unacquainted with such parts of scripture, I shall without refering to them, answer it from two generally received sentiments, among Christians, *respecting the blessed God*; and,

First, I apprehend, every Christian believes, that there is no new determination, or choice in God; or (in other words) that the Lord cannot choose, or determine a thing in time, which he had not chosen, or determined in eternity; *here then is eternal election.*

Secondly, To the same extent, is I conceive the belief, of God not knowing any thing in time, which he did not also know from eternity; and thence it must follow, that now knowing, and in future knowing, who shall, and who shall not be saved by him through Christ; the same things must ever have been known by him, and

certainly within such knowledge, there must have been the eterna election of those, whom he will through this appointed medium save.

We have now to enquire, "*whether being elected, or chosen in Christ from eternity; they were not in consequence justified in Christ from eternity; (that is to say, in the divine mind, where their election from eternity has exclusively been,) and whether having been here justified from eternity, this justification must not have been their actual justification?*" How any one admitting the doctrine of an eternal election in Christ, can refuse credence to the doctrine of an eternal justification in him, (that is to say in the divine mind which is the exclusive seat of justification, so well as of election,) I cannot conceive. Or How, having admitted the latter, they can dare take from its substantiability by saying, *but this is not their actualjustification*, (as though there were another justification superior, and more substantial, than that which exists in the mind, or determination of the justifier,) is what I am at a loss to account for, on any other ground, than that of deficiency, in either their comprehension or consideration. And as to this actual justification, being only a decretive one, as asserted, as my querist tells us, by a popular preacher in the Borough, it can only draw forth a smile from his opponents, who must consider it as silly as a decretive election; whilst his calling eternal juttification, *eternal nonsense*, can only excite their pity; as nonsense in the mouths of many, means a something beyond their comprehension. But perhaps, the popular gentleman, has obtained his popularity, by calling every doctrine *nonsense*, which leads us entirely off self, to the free, unmerited, everlasting purpose of God.

If indeed justification, (in the superior sense of the word,) did, like regeneration consist, in a perssonal change in the person possessing it, then most assuredly, it could not be said to have any other existence in the divine mind in eternity, than that of a decretive one, or a thing decreed, or determined to be granted, at a time appointed. But as this cannot possibly be said, of the justification I am contending for, which does not at all depend, on anything in the justified person, either before, or after, or at the time he is regenerated, and has faith given him, as the evidence thereof, no such idea of it, can possibly be entertained, by any considerate unprejudiced person.

The actual justification of the elect exists in the divine mind, and no where else, *as before hinted*, and it consists in God's accounting them free from sin, and condemnation; and perfectly conformable to all that his law requires from them; and in order to his so accounting them consistent with truth, he freely glorified his grace, (as before observed,) in choosing, and viewing them in Christ, and in transfering their sins to him, that he might be condemned for them, and free them from all liability to condemna-

tion; and his obedience to them, that thereby they might have all that to plead which the law requires.

Now all who deny the eternity, of this free unbiassed act of the divine mind, must also suppose, that he is not of one mind, although the scriptures tell us he is; but that from a mere caprice or whim, or something without himself, and within the creature, he changeth his mind; or at least, that he is the subject of new thoughts, or conclusions, respecting his elect people, although nothing has happened to be get such thoughts, *their justifying righteousness, the gift of his grace having been upon them, commensurate with the time*, (speaking after themanner of men,) *during which they have been viewed in Christ;* who had eternal credit with the Father, for bringing it in, or working it out.

But here to prevent quibbling by the enemies of this doctrine, on the ground of its doing away the principle of the elect, so well as others, being condemned by the law, &c. I grant that viewed merely in themselves, and in their natural head, the first Adam, they are condemned, &c. by the law; but viewed at the same time in Christ, *there* they are not condemned, &c. It should always be kept in mind, that the elect have two representative heads, in which they are viewed at the same time, and that the one is an antidote to the other.

As to all other justifications spoken of in scripture, (and they are very numerous, in application not only to the elect, but to their gracious head also,) It may be said, they are only manifestative, evidential or declarative justifications in different points of view, and at different times, as can easily be defined without the help of much wisdom. And their existences, at the times, and for the purposes intended, are as necessary, and certain, as the actual justification, I have been contending for.

As to whether Christ believed and repented for his people, I answer, believing and repenting are not commanded in the law, or at all encouraged by it, and as Christ was made under the law, and nothing to do but to obey it, and to endure the consequences of his people being cursed by it; I must answer this question negatively. And his grief, and sorrows, must be supposed to be the result of feelings, natural to human nature, existing in a state of poverty, and sufferings, or forseeing them at hand; as was the case, when he prayed, Father if it be possible, let this cup pass from me, nevertheless not as I will, (considered as a feeling man) but as thou wilt.

Yours, Mr. Editor,

IMPARTIAL OBSERVER.

To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.

MPARTIAL OBSERVER'S NOTE TO THE EDITOR, IN ANSWER TO THEIR NOTE TO HIM, IN OCTOBER NUMBER.

GENTLEMEN,

I HAVE sufficient confidence in your candour, to induce the belief; that you will permit me to accuse you, of having (I trust only for the moment,) departed from that impartiality *, which has been among the chief supports of the Gospel Magazine; and of having harshly reproved an old correspondent, whose frequent contributions, you once condescended, kindly to request; owing no doubt, to your not having employed time in considering, *what from that deficiency*, you have misconstrued, and condemned, in my answer to T. B—d's postscript, in a former number.

Whether I am right, or wrong, in condemning Dr. Hawker's dissent, from the doctrines contained in T. B—d's pieces; yet feeling confident that I am right, and that his opposition to this doctrine is calculated to do a vast deal of mischief, it was certainly impossible for me to condemn him, in milder terms than I did; for if I had not attributed it to infirmities natural, *(with but few exceptions,)* to the age of man; I must have ascribed it to something else, which probably would have been thought more condemnable.

With respect to myself, I merely regarded it, *as an apology for the Doctor*, and this ought to have been discovered, in my including myself, in the number subjected to the same infirmites; for it can scarcely be supposed, that I intended to degrade myself: the pride that is natural *to all men*, and from which of course I could not pretend freedom, should have been thought sufficient to prevent this.

I will now notice, (in addition to my remarks in former numbers, on the same subject,) what I imagine to be the consequences, of denying progressive sanctification, and then I am inclined to think that candour will accede a little more latitude to me, in searching out the cause of any man opposing it, whether he be a great man in the Establishment, or a greater, or a much more penetrating man, among Dissenters; such a one for example, as was our favourite Doctor Gill.—But by progressive sanctification, I wish it to be understood, (as asserted in my supplement to T. B—d's defence of it), I do not intend, a progressive diminution of that sin which is in us, or the increase of a discovered, abiding, operative principle of holiness; but only a continuance, of the sanctifying influences of the Spirit, so that the Arminian notion of it is as far from my creed, as from the Doctor's. And thus much premised I shall not hesitate, to present it as my opinion, that a denial of it,

* We cannot conceive how our *much respected friend*, should charge us even with a *shade* of partiality, when we only stated a matter of fact, and left the issue of the controversy between the parties.

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is in fact a denial, of the Spirit of God continuing to be a sanctifier, to his believing people, and of the necessity of their depending on him, *under this character*. It also contradicts the apostle, in his repre entation of God continuing to work in his regenerated people, *both to will and to do*, Phil. ii. 13. for surely if he works in them at all, *it must be holily, or sanctifyingly*.—It is a positive opposition to 2 Cor. iv. 16. and Eph. iv 23; *where the inward*, (or new man,) *or spirit of the mind, are said to be renewed, day by day*—It opposes the apostle James, who says, chap. iv 6 that God giveth *more grace*, or as Paul has it, *grace to help in every time of need*, Heb. iv. 16; or as John expresses it, chap. i. 16. *g ace for grace*; or as Peter denominates it, 2nd epistle iii. 18. *a growth in grace*; or as our Lord teacheth, *whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance*, Matt. xiii. 12. Certainly from all these texts we learn, that grace is progressively, or from time to time, communicated to the believer; and does not grace sanctify, and is not then a progressive communication of grace, *a progressive sanctification?* and is not, I ask, the denial of it, calculated to do much mischief.—May it not check the believer, in seeking after it or depending on the Spirit for enjoying it. And would, *I further ask*, the sentiment maintained by the Doctor, *of what was before unholy in our nature, being* (at once) *cleansed, and made holy*, make up for such a loss; *if this his opinion were true?* And shall his name, and talents, protect him, from all opposition, or surmise, (however innocent,) as to the cause of his opposing, these multiplied scriptural authorities; *(his doing so unwittingly, being notwithstanding admitted?)* I believe every lover of truth will answer *No*, to this question, and I flatter myself, you gentlemen, and the Doctor himself, if he reads it, will sincerely chime in with this answer; and I hope he has sufficient discernment to discover, that a reproving friend, is as much to be valued, as a praising one, and that he will at least give me credit, for having had no intention of degrading him in supposing that his error, might be attributed to the infirmities, natural with but few exceptions, to the age of man—and if he should think I meant it, for the best apology I could make for him, he will be perfectly correct.

As your October number was detained by carrier, and did not reach me until the 17th, and (the Sabbath intervening) could not be answered until the 19th, I am afraid it will not reach you in time to be inserted, in November number, which I wish for.

Gentlemen, yours sincerely,

IMPARTIAL OBSERVER.

Devon, Oct 20, 1818.

REFLECTIONS AT THE CLOSE OF THE SABBATH.

THE Lord's day—Admire oh my soul! at the gracious conduct of thy Jesus this day. He has been walking among his golden candlesticks. He has been down into his gardens. He has visited his bride. He has refreshed the souls of his friends. He has been riding forth in the chariot of his gospel. He has been entertaining his guests.

Doubtless, many jewels have been picked out of the rubbish of nature—many dead souls have been quickened—many who were afar off, have been brought nigh—many that were decided enemies to Jesus, are through rich grace displayed, become his best friends. But it has been a feasting day. The gospel table has been spread. Wisdom's maidens have brought forth the provisions of the Lord's house. They have been on the alert to accommodate Zion's travellers. The babes have been fed with the sincere milk of the word. The oil and wine of Canaan, has been brought forth to nourish and strengthen the weak and weary. Many have been fed and feasted with that bread of God, which came down from heaven, and who said, *My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.* And it is a great banquetting to a spiritual mind, when led by the Holy Spirit's influences to meditate upon the person, love, and salvation of Immanuel. When union grace, election grace, redemption grace, adoption grace,—the names or offices of Jesus employ the thoughts, it is a rich repast. It is most probable that it has also been a day of freedom. Some that were following the Lord in chains, have had their fetters broken off. Some that were in bondage to the law—are brought into the sweet liberty of the gospel. Some that were in the most abject slavery to that dreadful despot Satan, have been manifestatively redeemed. Some who had seen the enormous debts they had contracted, have been sweetly led to Jesus as the great paymaster of all his people's debts, and they have seen an all sufficiency in his merits to pay heirs. Many that have been ready to halt, have had their spiritual strength renewed, and are enabled to set out afresh. Many who have been overwhelmed with distressing doubts, and frightful fears, have had all their suspicions silenced, and frequently the great head of the church, makes it a day of freedom, by releasing his children from the body and bondage of corruption, and the troublesome tabernacle of flesh, wherein they often and most bitterly groan; and from this weary world which they are often brought into bondage by, and have placed them in his heavenly house above. And this is a joyful jubilee, to be translated from the church below, to the church above. It has also been a royal levee day. The king of heaven seated on his throne, surrounded by his officers—his messengers—his servants. Kings and priests have been introduced into his presence. He has condescended to hold conferences with them; many petitions have been presented to him, to which he has returned most gra-

cious answers—on some of his subjects he has confered honours—some of them have had their liberties enlarged—some have had their burdens alleviated—some have had their pardons sealed—some new-born subjects, his majesty has smiled upon—which has drawn out their love to him. It has been suggested to others, that all their former faults are forgotten, and they henceforward are admitted into free favour, which has filled them with astonishment and admiration; at such unexpected, unsought for, and unexampled clemency.

No wonder the servants of the Lord love to proclaim the glories and grace of this King of kings—and raise his honours high—when they are witnesses of the privileges, honours, blessings, and riches that he bestows on his subjects.

How cheering the thought, believer, that this day thy Jesus has been exalted in the gates of Zion. The saints of the most high God, have united in shouting victory! victory! through the blood of the Lamb; and every faithful minister of the gospel, have endeavoured to crown him Lord of all.

The diversified gifts of Zion's heralds, have all been employed on this great day of the feast, to set Immanuel forth. Some like the eagle, have been soaring aloft, and prying into the secrets of eternity, unfolding the counsel of peace, and explaining the sacred mysteries of the covenant of grace; others have been proclaiming the essential, mediatorial and relative glories of Immanuel; others have been led to preach him in some endearing character, or suitable relation, which has sweetly cheered the heart of some heavy laden pilgrim; some have been opening up a mine of mercy, couched under some delightful doctrine—or hid under some precious promise, whereby the bowels of the saints have been refreshed; others have been attempting to explain some intricate case of conscience—to resolve some doubt in experience—to throw some light upon a perplexed path in providence—to speak seasonably to seeking souls—to enter minutely into the cases, feelings, temptations, and discouragements, of the Lord's tried people. Some have been Boanerges, or sons of thunder, sounding an alarm in Zion—reproving in the gate—watching upon the walls—instructing the ignorant—and warning the unruly.

But lastly, many this day have enlisted under the banner of Jesus, and entered the ranks of the Lord, willing to fight his battles—march in his ways—and obey his word of command, many have entered his house heavily burdened, and have departed sweetly relieved—many have come hungring and thirsting for the bread and water of eternal life, and have been abundantly satisfied. The empty have been filled—the ignorant have been instructed—the strayed sheep reclaimed—the weak strengthened, and many that mock, are left to mock on. Many, probably this day, have despised the servants of the Lord, and the doctrines of grace—have loathed the bread of heaven—and their hearts have heaved at the

proclamation of salvation, by free grace alone—May Jesus have mercy on them, and I doubt not, Mr. Editor, you will say, Amen.

Sept. 8, 1818. JAMES.

Poetry.

LINES WRITTEN UNDER BODILY SICKNESS, AND MENTAL SORROW.

JESUS, my Saviour! 'tis thy stroke I feel,
But thou who giv'st the stroke, canst also heal:
Perhaps design'd to check my foolish heart,
Too often prone to act the worldling's part.
Oh what an earth-born nature, prone to ill,
Affections sensual, and a stubborn will;
Of mercies past forgetful, day by day,
And prone to wander, like a sheep, astray!
Oh what a sink of sin! of misery! death!
My heart conceives, and not a grain of faith;
Unable to perform the thing that's good,
A truth soon spoke, but little understood.—
Seldom in health are mercies truly seen;
We speak of mercies as we tell a dream,
Unconscious of their worth; yet would be thought
To view the hand which every mercy brought.
So Jeshurun, the lip of truth declares,
Grew fat, and kick'd with unbecoming airs;
To idols vain his foolish heart was bent,
Till rods and scourges for his good were sent,
Then to the Lord in trouble loud he cries,
While keen rebukes, and no direct supplies,
Still make him louder cry, O God awake,
And save my sinking soul for Jesus's sake.

Birmingham,
October 19, 1818. H. F.

THE SAINTS' PETITION.

LET Jesus Christ be all our theme,
His name our chief delight,
The subject of our morning song,
Our cheering thought at night.

When tempting Satan would destroy
Our comforts here below,
Lift up his ensign dipt in blood,
And foil the subtle foe.

When unbelief, Lord like a spear,
Would pierce us to the soul,
And load our minds with doubts and fears,
Do thou the point controul.

At ev'ry time, in ev'ry place,
Lord let thy Spirit shine,
Upon our poor benighted hearts,
To teach us we are thine.

Dodbrook J. J.
April 30, 1813.

SALVATION ALONE THROUGH THE BLOOD OF CHRIST.

COME sing aloud the Saviour's praise,
His bloody cross be all your theme;
His death to us his love displays,
Whose souls from death he did redeem.

He is the everlasting stone,
Which God hath chosen and reveal'd;
The Saviour and the only one
Whose name on earth from heav'n is seal'd.

Salvation! O how sweet the sound!
The joyful tidings we embrace:
Jesus, thy name alone is found
To comprehend thy wondrous grace.

While others make a foolish choice,
And thy most precious blood despise,
In thy salvation we rejoice,
Depending on thy sacrifice.

O death where is thy cruel sting,
Christ hath obtained a victory;
O saints on earth, unite and sing
With saints who dwell with Christ on high

Adore the Lamb who once was slain
To ransom us from sin to God:
In sacred zeal behold him stain
His vesture with the serpent's blood.

ERRATA.

Page 432. line 46, *for* August 23, last but one; *read* August 23 last, by one.