

Farther observations on demoniac possession, and animadversions on some of the curious arts of superstition / [James Heaton].

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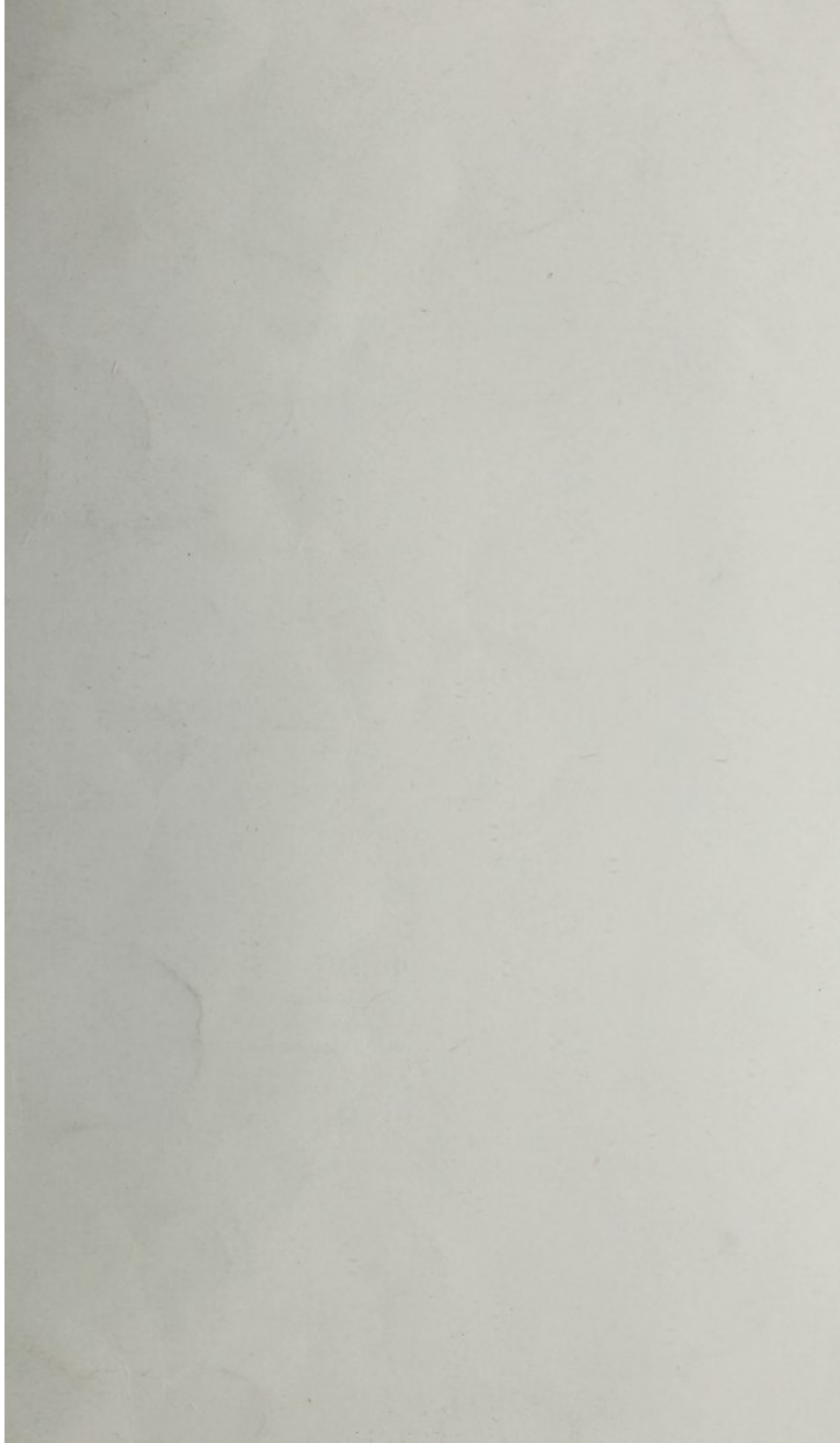
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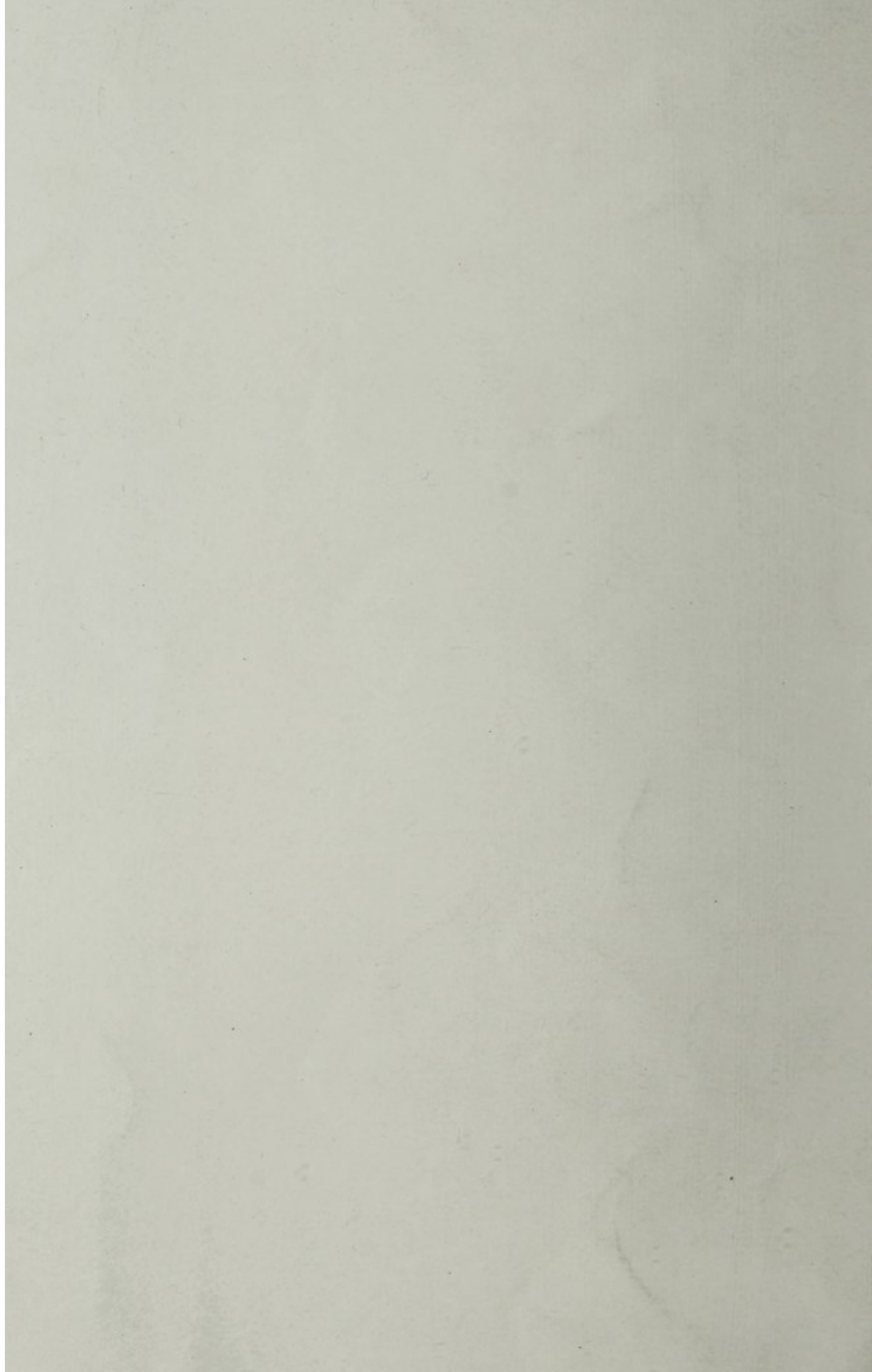
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FARTHER
OBSERVATIONS
ON
Demoniac Possession,
AND
ANIMADVERSIONS
ON
SOME OF THE CURIOUS ARTS
OF
Superstition,
&c.

BY JAMES HEATON.

“Flee from idolatry. I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say.” *St. Paul, 1 Cor. x. 15.*

“Many of them which used curious arts, brought their books together, and burned them before all men.” *Acts xix.*

“Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh unto God, and he will draw nigh unto you.” *St. James.*

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FARTHER OBSERVATIONS,

&c.

IN a former part of this work, some recent, decided cases of witchcraft have been noticed; and their nature, it has been intimated, is *essentially* the same as that of demoniac possession; differing only in the *circumstance* of the evil spirit having a human accomplice to urge and aid him in the case of affliction by witchcraft. That demoniac possession may be the effect of superstitious arts, Bishop J. Taylor gives an intimation in his Life of Christ; he says: "Near the city of Gadara there were many sepulchres in the hollowness of rocks, where the dead were buried, and where many superstitious persons used Memphitic and Thessalic rites, invoking evil spirits; insomuch that at the instant of our Saviour's arrival in the country, there met him two possessed with devils from these tombs, exceeding fierce, and so had been long, insomuch that no man durst pass that way." p. 235.

It may be difficult, if not impossible, in some instances of demoniac affliction, to distinguish whether they are cases of witchcraft or only possession. And for any purpose of real utility, on the christian mode of relief, that distinction may be quite needless.

When the astrological practice of physic is employed, the distinction is of some consequence, because, the magical doctor, or the patient's friends, or both, must use the same art against the witch as the witch does against the patient, and with painful success too, before a cure can be effected. But those who would rather be christians than practice witchcraft, should confine themselves to what God allows and has engaged to bless. To christians, therefore, the enquiry whether a demoniac is bewitched, or only possessed, may be a matter of *curiosity*, but not of necessity or utility; and the propriety of pursuing it as some have done, is very questionable. Whatever baleful influence witchcraft may have, and particularly so as technically distinguished from *sorcery*, which implies the use of drugs under the vicious corruption of magical incantation, that influence must be of a spiritual nature. A person bewitched is, therefore, in most cases of the kind, a person possessed; and if the evil spirit can be subdued and expelled, all the power of witchcraft is therefore completely disannulled. And according to this principle, "Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, nor divination against Israel." Numb. xxiii. 23. He that has the faith of Christ which saves him from sin, has the power which vanquishes all the arts of evil spirits.

Though specious evidence of a human accomplice in cases of diabolic affliction may be obtained from afflicting demons, yet as they are such liars that their testimony would bring discredit on the truth itself, our best plan is, like Christ and his Apostles, not to receive their witness. Our Saviour's command to his disciples is, "*Cast out devils,*" not *consult them*. They are well known to be, as their name imports, *false accusers*, slanderers, and they are cunning murderers in principle and practice. If in any thing they are true, it is but to betray.

In J. E's. case the parents endeavoured with success to remove from their boy's mind the impression which the evil spirit had made upon it, that an old woman had employed evil arts against him. They knew that the most secret crimes were committed before the face of the Lord, who says, "Vengeance belongeth unto me and I will repay it." They sought and found deliverance in Christ Jesus for their son, and would not cherish a wish to bring evil on a fellow creature, nor trouble their own minds with harbouring painful suspicions of her guilt. Prudently to seek to know all that, and only that, which is justifiable and beneficial, becomes the temperate zeal of sound philosophy, and the peaceful wisdom of genuine christianity. There is both judgment and mercy with God. Dealers in the black art of witchcraft have sometimes seen the error of their way, have repented, and found mercy. Manesseh, King of Judah, practiced and patronized witchcraft, as much as any sorcerer that ever disgraced a throne; yet he was brought to repentance. 2 Chron. iii. 20. At Ephesus, where Satan had his seat in splendour, among his magicians, there were many who practiced the diabolical arts, brought to the knowledge of the truth by the preaching of the apostles. Acts, xix. 17. 20. And Justin Martyr says, "We who devoted ourselves to magic arts now consecrate ourselves entirely to God." Certainly, therefore, it is more becoming a christian to seek salvation from Christ Jesus, and do that which he authorizes, and may be a probable means of bringing others to know and practice righteousness, than to imitate a witch and become like her in using the *black art*.

Evil spirits will very readily inform against some human beings as their accomplices in crimes, and some who have not properly considered their character, have admitted their evidence, of a neighbour's

being a witch; and on that vile evidence, or their own *suspicions*, which may have been of the same origin, the credulous, according to traditionary reports, have harrassed a neighbour's life away, and probably deserved hanging for the murder. To act thus in zeal against witchcraft, is to act as certainly and as fatally under the influence of the wicked one as witches and sorcerers themselves. He that committeth murder is of the devil.

Though the testimony of an evil spirit is despicable, I do not say that it is impossible to obtain sufficient proof of guilt to justify legal executions for the crime of witchcraft. If I did, I should reproach my Maker; who, while he was King in Israel, enacted the statute, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." Ex. xxii. 18. When it is certainly known that there was a malicious and professed intention to take away a neighbour's life, and that means were actually used to accomplish the murderous purpose, and they have been known to take effect; I should deem that evidence sufficient, in a legal way, to justify the requisition of *life for life*. It does not impeach the justice and equity of the proceeding, whatever be the *means* by which the criminal has committed the murder, whether it be by mechanical or military, by chemical or by magical art.* However, I am no lawyer; I

* The term *witchcraft*, is used in scriptures with so extensive a meaning as to include the various arts of superstition, as divination, fortune-telling, charming, &c. &c. The government of Israel was a Theocracy; God was the supreme magistrate; and all these practices are wicked oppositions to his government and authority; and, therefore, though the witch hurts no man's body or property, the divining, charming, fortune-telling witch was condemned by the same authority that doomed the false prophet and blasphemer to death. A variety of sixpenny pamphlets that encourage the study and teach some of the arts of divination, fortune-telling, spells, charming, &c. are published in London, and are always on sale in most towns in the country. These are bought chiefly by young women; these females will be

write only as a christian, to shew how the evil influence of satanic agency may be righteously and effectually resisted, and how those who are possessed may, and ought to be, delivered.

But in order to oppose this evil influence and relieve the sufferer, it may be desirable to know by what symptoms we may be able to distinguish whether a *supposed* demoniac be really possessed of an evil spirit or not. The writer has very sensibly felt the want of such instruction, so have many others; and should the reader ever be providentially called to examine a case of the kind, as the writer has been, he will be thankful for a few observations on

SOME DISTINGUISHING MARKS OF DEMONIAC POSSESSION.

Cases of possession may in several respects much resemble some physical disorders, especially lunacy, and epilepsy; yet there must be an evident difference, or they could not be distinguished with certainty. And we must naturally expect, that in a case of diabolic possession there will be the appearance of *voluntary wickedness*. The apparent physical disease may be intended partly to cover the real cause of the paroxysms; and the appearance of voluntary wickedness, so very consistent with the nature of the evil spirit, may be designed to procure the assistance

the nursing mothers of the future generation, and will perpetuate the abominable superstitions which God condemns as the vile practice of witchcraft. It is dangerous to play with curious arts that lead to so much evil. Many of these persons see no evil in them, but they should be apprized of it; and like the converted magicians they would burn their books. I mean such books as "Fairburn's Wheel of Fortune," The Dream Book, The Female Astrologer, The Modern Fortune-Teller, &c. &c. They are in their principle a diabolical imposition on the human mind, and a provoking insult to the authority of God.

of human beings to hasten by corporeal punishments the miserable sufferer's death.

It is reasonable to expect, that a preternatural affliction will betray itself to the prudent examiner, by some preternatural symptoms or circumstances. And without much danger of error we may conclude, that preternatural effects must have a preternatural cause. The certain knowledge of the cause will direct us to the proper mode of relief. Against spiritual oppression we must seek spiritual assistance, and every christian may know assuredly that if he needs help against the oppressive power of evil spirits, he may obtain it, when he seeks it as he ought, from "the Lord God Omnipotent."

In cases of demoniac possession we may expect to discover perternatural horror, abilities, knowledge, sufferings, or propensities. *Preternatural horror*, or an involuntary dread of any thing sacred or devotional, is a common symptom of demoniac possession. Evil spirits cannot well bear to be faithfully reminded of him who bruised the serpent's head. It galls the pride of Lucifer to receive his deadly wound from him that was crucified; he trembles at the remembrance of the awful majesty of Christ Jesus, and is horror-struck at the prospect of those judgments which the avenger of injured man will pour down upon his guilty head. By reminding the evil spirits of Christ Jesus and his judgments, the ancient christians put demoniacs into intolerable agony. The presence of Christ Jesus, while he went about doing good, excited these horrors in demoniacs. They cried out saying, "What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?" Math. viii. 29. Mark. i. 23. 26. So when the apostles adjured them, the "unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many

that were possessed with them. Acts, viii. 7. The primitive Fathers frequently testify the same fact, and I have frequently observed this symptom, and often excited it with merely mental rebukes in the name of Christ. And certainly no uncommon share of ingenuity is requisite to make such an experiment, to complete satisfaction. A man that uses but a moderate share of common sense, can neither mistake nor be imposed upon in such a trial as this.

Preternatural abilities will sometimes be manifest in demoniacs. The one called *Legion* was so preternaturally strong that "no man could bind him, no not with chains. Because he had often been bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him." Mark, v. 3. 4. This latter circumstance intimates also preternatural *ferocity* acquired by demoniac possession. There are various ways in which ability may be shewn, and therefore we are not to expect that it will be confined to muscular energy, or always appear in any one way. Good sense must determine whether or not the supposed superhuman actions performed by the suspected demoniac, be physically possible to the patient in disease or health.

Preternatural *knowledge* is another symptom of possession. This idea is contained in the name *demoniac*: for *demon* signifies a *knowing one*. Many demoniacs have had a superhuman power to understand, and some even to *speak* languages which they had never learned. Melanchthon mentions several particular cases. The one which was under my own examination illustrated the manner in which a demoniac, in his paroxysms of possession, may understand what is addressed to him in any language whatever, because the spirit discovers the thoughts applied

without the sound of words or form of signs. The Pythonic damsel spoken of in the Acts, xvi. 16. had a *spirit of divination*, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying, that is, discovering and telling things by the evil spirit which possessed her. The devil is very proud of his superhuman wisdom; by this he catches men.

In examining a supposed demoniac, the trial should be made during the fits, because it is not the patient himself, but the evil spirit which possesses him, that discovers this mental resistance, while the patient himself may sometimes have his own mental powers so perverted or restrained as to know nothing of what is going forward. But let no man *consult* the demon, and lay himself under obligation to his wisdom; for that would be to fall into the snare of the devil. He who knows how to resist the devil in temptation, may know how to rebuke a demon in possession; or he may consult the former part of this work where the subject is exemplified.

Preternatural sufferings are another symptom of demoniac possession. By evil spiritual agency, pains are sometimes inflicted on the sufferer, as by "the invisible whips of evil demons," or visible only to the patient, while the effects evince the reality of the powerful cause upon the body as well as the mind, and demonstrate, that the oppressed creature suffers in reality as well as in imagination. These sufferings *vary* much at different times. At one time they resemble natural diseases, at another are horribly unnatural, and again ridiculous and disgusting; they are comical, they are terrible, often such as would defy imagination or description. Sometimes they cease in an instant, leaving the patient free from any symptom of disordered health or mind; and again the sufferings return with violence as suddenly as they depart.

ed : just as though the evil spirit delighted to puzzle and mock all medical skill, while like a cruel cat he sports with his trembling prey. Sometimes the patient's volition and other mental faculties are so overpowered and perverted, that he toils and sweats like a hurried horse under a burden, and groans and screams as from the lashes of a whip. He assumes the behaviour of various animals in chase, or play, or distress, as though Nebuchadnezzar's doom was fulfilled in him. "Let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him." Dan. iv. 16.

Preternatural *propensities* will sometimes indicate demoniac possession. Demoniacs frequently attempt to destroy themselves; and are sometimes taken in such strange fits, and in such dangerous and peculiar circumstances as are evidently selected by the tyrannizing evil spirit's malicious design to kill the patient, in such a way as that his death might seem to be the effect of accident. "Oft times," said the father of a child possessed of an evil spirit, "it hath cast him into the fire, and into the water, to destroy him." Mark, ix. 22. Of the demoniac, *Legion*, it is observed, that "always night and day he was in the mountains and in the tombs, crying and cutting himself with stones." Mark, v. 5. Nothing can be more agreeable to the evil spirit who was "a murderer from the beginning," and nothing more opposed to nature, or the will and law of the God of nature, than self-destruction. And it is questionable, and worthy of more consideration than can be given to it in this place, whether such cases of murder and self-destruction as are generally acknowledged to be *unnatural* and *diabolical*, are not perpetrated in paroxysms of real diabolic frenzy or *demoniac possession*, rather than in fits of mere physical derangement of the mental powers. Brutes, generally, destroy each other; but I never read of any, except the swine that were pos-

essed of devils, that destroyed themselves. Math. viii. 31, 32. Self-preservation is the first law of nature, and it is universal. Destruction began with Satan.

These are some of the symptoms which strongly indicate satanic influence; and which, if carefully attended to, will assist us to discover whether a supposed demoniac is really possessed or not. There may be some cases of diabolic affliction, or possession, which may elude our enquiries; but where the above criteria are evident on careful examination, particularly if the preternatural involuntary horror can be manifestly excited by a mere secret mental resistance, I should think the proof of possession satisfactory. If the experimenter is prudent, imposition is impossible; and if he is attentive, he cannot mistake.

THE MISERY OF DEMONIAIC POSSESSION.

The great affliction which a case of demoniac possession is to a family, can hardly be described or conceived. "How doleful a thing must it be," says Dr. Lightfoot, "when that body which should be the temple of the Holy Ghost, should become the very local cage and bodily habitation of Satan; when the members were actuated and used by the devil, as if he had been the very soul that did animate the body; when man's greatest enemy should so apparently dwell within him; and when he either carried the devil, or the devil him, whithersoever he went." [Harmony, Mark i. 23]

"Before the fall," says the eloquent Dr. Bates, "the unclean spirit was incorporated with the serpent, but now with man himself. He seizes on the external organs and internal faculties, and rules him at his pleasure. In the time of Christ, great numbers were possessed: for the devil perceiving the ruin of his kingdom approaching, would extend the limits of it here;

and by the perfect possessing of sinners, begin their torment, which is one act of his principality. *The case of those persons was most compassionate.* For in that close fight the soul was disarmed of its defensive weapons, being hindered in a great measure of the free use of its faculties. Whereas in other temptations, he works by outward objects at a distance ; here he makes a violent assault on both parts. *It is the true anticipation of hell,* for the possessed person is not exempted from suffering the privilege of death, nor enjoys the free power of doing the effect of life. Now the ejecting of this enemy was above the force of any human means ; no material applications had any power over immaterial spirits. But our Saviour, by a word, commanded them forth of their garrisons." Harmony of Divine Attributes, chap. 20.

When a family is troubled but with one member that is "oppressed of the devil," it is a season of sore trial of patience, and strong temptation to sin. Frequently they can have but little rest, night or day. The poor demoniac is perpetually liable to be suddenly taken by the evil spirit and thrown into fits the most dangerous, distressing, and horrible. Sometimes he is so furious as to require several persons to hold him, though but a child, to prevent his doing injury to himself or others. The anguish of parents in the common afflictions of their children, in the order of divine providence, is too keenly felt to be adequately described ; but affliction from diabolic agency has peculiar aggravations. Great danger attends it, and death is terrible in any shape ; but more especially, when under the management or immediate infliction of "him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil." Heb. ii. 14. Let those who never wept and groaned under such a burden of distress, not despise those who have ; but be thankful to God for their preservation, *lest they also be tempted.* It is as great a mercy to be pre-

served from affliction, as to be delivered from it, though it is seldom as sensibly felt, or as gratefully acknowledged.

The holy gospels briefly record a little of the parents' distress when Satan sorely oppressed their children. The woman of Canaan told Christ Jesus her tale of woe, and implored his pity in a few words with many tears. "Have mercy upon me, O Lord, thou son of David, my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." Math. xv. 22. Another account as recorded by several Evangelists, will more fully show the child's suffering and the parents' grief.

"And behold there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and he cried out, saying, Lord, I have brought to thee my son, which has a dumb spirit: I beseech thee look upon my son; for he is my only child; have mercy on my son, for he is lunatic and sore vexed. For often times he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water; and lo! a spirit taketh him, and wheresoever he taketh him, he suddenly crieth out, and it teareth him, that he foameth again, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away, and bruising him hardly departeth from him. And I brought him to thy disciples that they should cast him out, and they could not cure him. '*Bring thy son hither to me,*' said Jesus. And they brought him. And as he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down and tare him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed foaming. '*If thou canst do any thing,*' said the father, '*have compassion on us and help us.*' Jesus said, '*If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.*' And straightway the father of the child cried out and said with tears, '*Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief.*' When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, the devil, saying unto him, '*Thou*

dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee come out of him, and enter no more into him; And the spirit cried and rent him sore, and came out of him; and he was as one dead, insomuch that many said 'he is dead.' But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and healed the child. And the child was cured from that very hour. And he delivered him again to his father." Compare Math. xvii. 14. 21. Mark, ix. 14. 32. Luke, ix. 37. 45.

Observe the amiable conduct of "the Son of God," towards these oppressed people; the holy, compassionate Jesus, in whom we all hope for mercy! Did *He* scorn their sorrows and ridicule their tears? Did he despise their prayers and chuckle at their groans? Did he call their bitter affliction artful wickedness, and their heart-rending tale of woe an imposition on credulity? Did he recommend the sorrowful mother to punish her grievously oppressed daughter, or the weeping father to *horse-whip* his demonized son? Did he spurn their application for help, and leave the parents and their children to the oppression of the devil? Did he cry out, "these are vulgar errors of imagination! go and learn philosophy of the sadduces?" Ah! no! The merciful and faithful high priest of our profession, Christ Jesus, who left us an example that we should tread in his steps, compassionated their distress; blamed nothing but the unbelief of his disciples, which made the stubborn demon invincible. He expelled the evil spirits, relieved the suffering demoniacs, dried up the tears of their parents, filled their hearts with consolation, and their mouths with praise.

Human nature is the same in all ages; pain and grief, and temptation, and diabolic oppression, are as hard to be endured as ever. Many a father, and many a mother, have wept and groaned and prayed in similar

circumstances in our own times. I know what I have witnessed. I can never forget it. In such cases of distress the broken-hearted parent is ready to run to the ends of the earth for relief; several remedies are recommended, and there is great danger in such a time of peculiar trial and temptation, lest a forbidden remedy should be resorted to, which is more *sinful* than the disease is oppressive, which while it releases the body, enchains the soul in guilty superstition, and exposes the family to the displeasure of God.

THE VARIOUS MODES OF RELIEF CONSIDERED.

In what manner persons afflicted by evil agency should be treated or relieved, is an enquiry of great importance, not only to the patients themselves, nor merely to the families and friends of such sufferers. It is a question in which the religious and the heathen, the infidel and the christian, the vulgar and the learned world are concerned. They have all concerned themselves with it one way or other, more or less. The concern is wider still, heaven and hell are interested in it. From such very different sources we must expect very different advice; therefore, "Prove all things, and hold fast that which is good." To obtain relief in cases of demoniac possession, some have applied to the learned in medicine, some to the learned in the dark arts and mysteries of hell, and some have applied to the Son of God, who for this purpose was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil, and some have thought advisable a mode of treatment different from all these. Among all these very different modes of treatment it must be of some consequence to know what is best to be done? Or rather, what *ought* and what *ought not* to be done? The question involves the *morality* of the remedies; the duty or sin; our innocence or guilt in their use.

This makes the consideration of general concern, for he that is ignorant may perhaps be entangled in guilt before he is aware of it. In one way of trying to get rid of the evil we may be cruel, in another innocent, but useless; a third method may be holy and successful, and a fourth involves us in the practice of those pagan superstitions and diabolic arts, which are sacredly declared to be "an abomination to the Lord."

Mr. Woolston's advice is *cruel*; he intimates that when the patient becomes troublesome and dangerous it may be best to "dispatch him" and thus relieve ourselves from his terrible interruptions. Speaking of Legion and his fellow demoniac, he says "What shall we say to the case of the demoniacs in the country of the Gaderens, and that vast number of devils which to the destruction of other men's property be permitted to enter into the herd of swine? If they were so exceedingly fierce and outrageous that *no fetters nor chains could hold them*, nor any passenger go that way without being in danger of his life, it certainly would have been more adviseable *to have dispatched them*."* More adviseable to have dispatched the demoniacs, than to have permitted the devils to destroy the swine!! It is well when those who disapprove of what the wisdom of God has done, are candid enough to state what they think would have been better. This enables one to compare, perhaps I ought to say *contrast* Christ and his adversaries. Had the benevolent Jesus, "who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of

* See "A Fair State of the Controversy between Mr. Woolston and his adversaries: containing the substance of what he asserts in his *Six Discourses* against the *Literal Sense* of our blessed Saviour's miracles; and what Bishop Gibson, Bishop Chandler, Bishop Smallbrook, Bishop Sherlock, Dr. Pearce, Dr. Rogers, Mr. Stebbing, Mr. Chandler, Mr. Lardner, Mr. Ray, &c. have advanced against him, by the Rev. Thomas Stackhouse." Sect. V.

the devil," *dispatched*—the supposition is *horrible*,—had Mr. W. with his greater regard for swine than men, been permitted to rival the Divine Philanthropist, and to *dispatch* all those troublesome demoniacs whom Jesus Christ delivered, how widely different would have been the awful work? Mankind would have had a bloody executioner instead of a bleeding Saviour; humanity would have been made still more inhuman, and hell instead of heaven would have triumphed. Satan, instead of having a crushing foe to dread, would have had a faithful ally to hail. His dispatching the demoniacs would have been an acceptable sacrifice to the old murderer who delights in cruelty, blood, and death. *Horse-whipping*, or any other mode of torturing the possessed, which is on a similar principle, will only make the patient worse, till it amounts to the same thing, and is done so effectually as to *dispatch* him.

We plain people, with due respect to all those great and learned men, "whose eyes are opened, and are become as *Gods*, knowing good and evil," and who rebuke our childish confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ, our Divine Teacher, we cordially thank them for honestly telling us how they would act with those whom satan oppressed; because comparing their *wisdom* with Christ's compassion, confirms our love to him who bare our sins and carried our sorrows: we bid such cruel philosophers good night, and commit poor demoniacs to his mercy who said, "I am not come to destroy men's lives but to save them."

The regular practice of Physic, highly improved as it is in our day, by an extensive acquaintance with kindred sciences and arts, is one of the greatest blessings a kind providence has bestowed on the human family, perpetually liable to affliction and death. "A wise Physician is the boon of heaven." But excellent

and important as is the art of healing, it has its limits; and it can be no dishonor to a medical man that he cannot perform impossibilities, yet it must be particularly grievous to him to have all his anxious efforts baffled, while his patient is apparently first ill of one complaint, and then of another, and then of none, and again in agonies: and yet no decided derangement of the animal functions can be perceived, and no remedy can produce a good effect. This has been the case, the effects of medicine have been fairly and skilfully tried, till great ability has been exhausted, and physician, surgeon, parent, and patient, have all been weary together. The *Materia Medica* affords no remedy for one that is "grievously vexed with a devil."

THE SCRIPTURAL MODE OF EXPELLING DEMONS.

The Scriptural mode of relief for such as are "vexed with unclean spirits," or "possessed of the devil," is frequently described, exemplified, and in every case of necessity, authorized in the New Testament. From our Lord's instructions to his disciples, and from their practice, we learn that the christian mode of relieving the possessed, to make it successful against *all kinds of devils*, requires four things: viz. fasting, prayer, faith, and adjuration in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. And whoever attends to these four things as he ought is sure to succeed. The conflict may be great, but the victory will be sure to all who persevere. And whenever there is a case of diabolic possession satisfactorily discovered, who is to be forbidden to attempt the rescue of an immortal soul? sceptics may wrangle, infidels may laugh, and pharisees may blaspheme, but for what any of them can prove to the contrary, every man when he is tempted, or his neighbour is possessed, has a divine right to fast and

pray, to believe and adjure in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and thus to triumph over the common enemy of God and man. No man has, no apostle ever had, any authority to prohibit a fellow-creature's using this divinely appointed mode of relief. The captain of our salvation has given power by a general command to his disciples to *cast out devils*. Nothing contrary to this ever dropped from his lips, or has been recorded by those who wrote by inspiration. Christ Jesus never blamed the use of the power to cast out devils in his name: he always encouraged it. The apostles once wished to restrict the use of that power to themselves. John said to Jesus, "Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and *we forbid* him, because he followeth not us." But Jesus said, "*Forbid him not*; for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me." Mark, ix. 39. In our Lord's opinion, therefore, it has a good effect on any man to cast out a devil in his name, and this he assigns as a reason why *no man should be forbidden*.

In the holy scriptures we are very plainly taught the proper form of adjuration. When our Lord expelled an evil spirit he said, "Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee come out of him, and enter no more into him." Mark, ix. 25. And when the apostle of the Gentiles expelled the demon from the Pythonic damsel at Philippi, he said to the spirit, "*I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her*, and he came out the same hour." Acts. xvi. 18.—What divine authority! The powers of darkness fear and fly at the almighty word or name of Jesus Christ. What sacred simplicity is here! This is the *Christian mode* of casting out devils by the spirit of God, altogether worthy of him who used and authorized it for the relief of poor miserable demoniacs.

If some who profess themselves the only christian church, have corrupted this practice, and mingled with it, if not substituted for it, the most disgusting and abominable magical exorcisms, let *them* bear the responsibility and punishment. But let not protestants confound any particle of scriptural christianity with catholic corruption, lest they should contemn and reject the precious with the vile. Let them who are favoured with the scriptures, learn to *prove all things, and hold fast that which is good.*

The scriptural mode of casting out devils by the spirit of God in the name of Jesus Christ, *differs not essentially*, from the method which every real christian uses to resist the devil in his common *temptations*. The words or thoughts may be different according to different circumstances, but the principles of both are exactly the same. It is the same satanic agency, the same evil spirit which assaults in temptation and domineers in possession: it is the same divine power, the same Holy Spirit which assists assaulted man and repels the enemy in both temptation and possession: it is the same Almighty Redeemer in whose name divine assistance is communicated, to vanquish the enemy and relieve man in both cases: it is the same holy exercise of prayer and faith which thus obtains the heavenly help, to subdue the power of evil spirits, to relieve the tempted and to rescue the possessed. The same sure word of God gives the same full direction and authority in both cases; and the necessity and the end are the same in both temptation and possession, which is the salvation of the human soul from the power of an evil spirit. And we may add, that this method of conquering our ghostly foe, is the *only one*, which we can righteously depend upon for the salvation of God. No objection therefore can be brought against this scriptural method of casting out an evil spirit in case of possession, but what will

apply with equal force against the same method of resisting an evil spirit in a case of temptation.

To expel evil demons, as the holy scriptures direct us to do it, in the name of Christ, is to overcome evil with good, and according to our Lord's own reasoning, when he forbade a prohibition of the practice, has not an evil but a *good tendency*. It tends not only to the salvation of the poor sufferer, and the relief of his distressed relatives, but also to the edification in holiness of all that are concerned in such a work of spiritual power and mercy. The illustration of truth, the confusion of satan and dissolution of his kingdom, the glory of God and the happiness of man, are the legitimate consequences of such a scriptural, devout, and faithful application to the immediate power of God, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But it should be observed that if the performance of such a good work, naturally may prevent a man from *committing* moral evil, it has frequently exposed men to the *suffering* of the greatest material evil.—satan provoked by defeat, and driven by expulsion from his possession, to study vengeance, exerts himself, and calls his host to war against his adversary in a more extensive way of temptation, and if possible, persecution. And so completely may satan blind those whom he excites, that they may applaud their own wisdom and piety for opposing those who have opposed him. "Whoever killeth you will think he doeth God service," said Jesus to his disciples.—Those, therefore, who rouse the wrath of hell by the expulsion of a demon, should temper their joys of conquest with vigilant preparation for future conflicts with the same enemy on some other ground. The vilest slanders that ever attacked the character of Jesus, were darted from the envenomed lips of the pharisees, when they heard that he had cast out a devil. Math.

xii. 24. When the apostle Paul was so "shamefully entreated at Philippi," it was in consequence of his having expelled the demon out of the damsel that had brought her masters much gain by soothsaying. Acts, xvi. 19. When Trajan threatened the christians that they should be persecuted unless they would choose to worship the devil, and fear obliged all such as lived religiously to sacrifice or die; Ignatius, as a brave soldier of Jesus Christ, led the way to judgment and to death. "If because I am a trouble to those evil spirits," he said to the Emperor, "you call me wicked, with reference to them I confess the charge: for having Christ within me, the heavenly King, I dissolve all the snares of the devil." — "Although the whole force of demons and such kind of spirits are subjected to us," says Tertullian, (Apol. c. 27.) "yet like other rebellious slaves, their fear is mixed with contumacy, and it is their meat and drink to be hurting those whom otherwise they are afraid of." See also, Eusebius's Life of Constantine, c. 49, 52.

"It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his Lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household!" When the enemy has been overpowered in one place, he has generally rallied his forces, and in a new guise with deeper wiles, made an attack in another. And as long as "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience," has any alliance with the bad passions of men, those who run into the front of the battle, and who "spoil his goods," or recover his captives, must expect his fiery darts. Mortified pride will hiss in ridicule, and exasperated hatred will sting in contempt. Whoever, therefore, assaults such an enemy should turn an undaunted face, keep on his armour, and go on to conquer. The man of God is perfectly safe, while he fears none but God.

THE SCRIPTURAL MODE OF CHRISTIAN
EXPULSION CORRUPTED BY PAPAL
SUPERSTITIONS.

The method of dealing with demoniacs in the Church of Rome, may be considered as an awful contrast to the authorized scriptural manner of casting out devils, exemplified in the practice of Jesus Christ, his immediate followers, and the primitive christians. I shall lay an account of this practice before the reader, extracted from the works of Bishop J. Taylor. *Polemical Discourses*, fol. 3d. Ed. p. 333, &c. *Dissuasive from Popery*, Part 1. Chap. 2. Sect. 10.

“ There is in the Church of Rome a horrible impiety taught and practiced, which so far as it goes must needs destroy that part of holy life which consists in the holiness of our prayers; and is indeed a conjuration of evils, of such evils of which in the whole world a society of christians should be least suspected; we mean the infinite superstitions and incantations, or charms used by their priests in their exorcising possessed persons, and conjuring of devils.

There was an Ecclesiastical Book called *Ordo Baptizandi cum modo Visitandi*, printed at Venice, A. D. 1575, in which there were damnable and diabolical charms, insomuch that the Spanish Inquisitors in their Expurgatory Index, printed at Madrid, A. D. 1612, commanded, ‘ *that all that Luciferian Exorcism be blotted out.*’ But whoever looks into the ‘ *Treasure of Exorcisms and Horrible Conjurings,*’ (for that is the very title of the book printed at Colen, A. D. 1608) shall find many as horrid things, and not censured by any inquisitors, as yet so far as we have ever read or heard. Nay that very *Luciferian*, or Devilish Exorcism, is reprinted at Lyons, A. D. 1614, in the *Institutio Baptizandi*, which was restored by the Decree

of the Council of Trent. So that though it was forbidden in *Spain*, it was allowed in *France*. But as bad as that are allowed every where in the Church of *Rome*. The most famous and of most public use is ‘*The Treasure of Exorcisms*,’ of which we but now made mention; the *Roman Ritual*, the *Manual of Exorcisms*, printed at Antwerp, A. D. 1626, with approbation of the Bishop, and privilege of the Archdukes; the *Pastorals* of several Churches, especially that of *Ruræmund*; and especially the *Flagellum Dæmonum*, the Devil’s Whip, by Father *Hierom Mengus*, a Friar minor; which the Clergy of Orleans used in the exorcising of *Martha Brosser*, A. D. 1599, the story whereof is in the Epistles of Cardinal D’Ossat, and the history of the excellent *Thuanus*.

“ Now from these Books, especially this last, we shall represent their manner of casting out devils.

“ First they are to try the devil by holy-water, incense, sulphur, rue, which from thence, as we suppose, came to be called *herb of grace*, and especially *St. John’s wort*, which, therefore, they call *devil’s flight*, for so Pope Alexander the first promised and commanded the Priests to use it for the sanctifying and pacifying the people, and driving away the snares of the devil. And to this it were well if the Exorcist would rail upon, mock, and jeer the devil; for he cannot endure a witty and a sharp taunt, and loves jeering and railing no more than he loves holy-water.

“ Next to this the Exorcist may ask the devil some questions; What is his name? How many of them there are? For what cause and at what time he entered? And for his own learning, by what persons he can be cast out? And by what saint adjured? Who are his particular enemies in heaven? And who in hell? By what words he can be most afflicted? — He

may also ask him by what covenant or what charm he came there, and by what he is to be released? Then he may call *Lucifer* to help him and to torment that spirit. Next to this, the Exorcist is cunningly to get out of the devil the confession of some article of faith, for the edification of the standers by (whom he may by this means convince of the truth of transubstantiation, the reality of purgatory, or the value of indulgences) and command him to knock his head three times against the ground, in adoration of the Holy Trinity. But let him take heed what relics he apply to the devil; for if the relics be counterfeit, the devil will be too hard for him. However, let the Exorcising Priest be sure to bless his pottage, his meat, his ointment, his herbs; and then also he may use some schedules, or little rolls of paper containing in them holy words; but he must be sure to be exercised and skilful in all things that belong to the conjuring of the devil. These are the preparatory documents, which when he hath observed them let him fall to his prayers.

“Now for the prayers, they also are publicly described in their offices before cited; and are as follow:

“The Priest ties his stole about the neck of the possessed with three knots, and says, ‘O ye abominable rebels against God, I conjure you spirits, and adjure you, I call, I constrain, I call out, I contend, I contest, wherever you are in this man, by the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, [*then he makes three crosses*] by the most powerful name, Heloy, the strong and admirable, I exorcise you, and adjure you, and command you, by the power I have, that you incontinently hear the words of my conjuring, and perceive yourselves overcome, and command you not to depart without licence, and so I bind you with this stole of

jocundity; in the name of the Father, † Son, † and Holy Ghost, † Amen.

“ Then he makes two-and-thirty crosses more, and calls over one-and-thirty names of God, in Hebrew and Greek, and some in Latin, signifying the same names, and the two-and-thirtieth is by the sign of the cross, praying God to deliver them from their enemies. Then follow more prayers, and more adjurations, and more conjurations (for they are greatly different) and aspersions of holy-water, and showings of the cross, and signings with it.

“ Then they adjure the devil (in case the names of God will not do it) by St. Mary, and St. Ann, by St. Michael, and St. Gabriel, by Raphael, and all Angels and Arch-Angels, by the Patriarchs and by the Prophets, and by his own infirmity, by the Apostles and by the Martyrs. [After all this if the devil will not come out,] The Exorcist must rail at the devil, and say over again the names of God, and then ask him questions, and read over the sequences of the gospels; and after that tell him that he hath power over him, for he can transubstantiate bread into Christ's body; and then conjure him again, and call him d—d devil, unclean spirit, and as bad as he can call him; and so pray God to cast him out of the man's mouth and nose, lips and teeth, jaws and cheeks, eyes and forehead, eye-brows and eye-lids, his feet and his members, his marrow and his bones, and must reckon up every part of his body. And if he will not go out yet, there is no help but he must choose till the third Exorcism: in which, besides many prayers and conjurations in other words to the same purpose, the Exorcist must speak louder, and tell the devil his own, and threaten him terribly, and conjure him again, and say over him about twenty or thirty names or titles of Christ, and forbid the devil to go any whither

but to the centre of the world, and must damn him eternally to the central flames of hell, and to be tormented worse than Lucifer himself, for his daring to resist so many great names. And if he will not now obey, let him take fire and brimstone, and make a fume, whether the possessed will or no, until the devil tells you all his mind in what you ask him: [*The liver of Tobias's Fish were a rare thing here, but that is not to be had for love or money.*] And after this he conjures him again by some of the names of God, and by the merits, and all the good things which can be spoken or thought of the most blessed Virgin, and by all her names and titles, which he must reckon, one-and-forty in number, together with her epithets, making so many, and by these he must cast him headlong into hell.

“But if the devil be stubborn, there is a fourth, a fifth, and a sixth Exorcism; and then he conjures the earth, the water, and the fire, to make them of his party, and commands them not to harbour such villainous spirits, and commands hell to hear him, and obey his word, and conjures all the spirits in hell to take that spirit to themselves. [But if this chance to fail,] He must take the picture of the devil and write his name over the head of it, and conjure the fire to burn it most horribly and hastily. After this, sprinkle more holy-water, and take sulphur, galbanum, assafoetida, aristolochia, rue, St. John's wort; all which being distinctly blessed, the Exorcist must hold the devil's picture over the fire, and adjure the devil to hear him; and then he must not spare him but tell him all his faults, and give him all his names, and anathematize him, and curse not only him but Lucifer too, and Beelzebub, and Satan, and Astaroth, and Behemot, and Beherit, and altogether; and then pray once more, and so throw the devil's picture into the fire, and then insult in a long form of crowing over him, which is there set down.

“And now after all if he will not go out, there is a seventh Exorcism for him, with new ceremonies.

“He must show him the consecrated Host in the pix, pointing at it with his finger, and then conjure him again, and rail at him once more; to which purpose there is a very fine form taken out of *Prierius*, and set down in the *Flagellum Dæmonum*; and then let the Exorcist pronounce sentence against the devil, and give him his oath, and then a commandment to go out of the several parts of his body, always taking care that at no hand he remain in the upper parts.

“Then is the devil’s cue to come out, if he have a mind to it, (for that must always be supposed;) and then follows the thanksgivings.”

“This is the manner of their devotion, described for the use of Exorcists; in which is such a heap of folly, madness, superstition, blasphemy, and ridiculous guises, and *playings with the devil*, that if any among us should use such things, he would be in danger of being tried at the next Assizes for a witch or a conjurer. However, certain it is, whatever the devil loses by pretending to obey the Exorcist, he gains more by this horrible debauchery of christianity. There needs no confutation of it, the impiety is visible and tangible; and it is sufficient to have told the story.”

If we are shocked and disgusted at this specimen of Roman Catholic corruption, which our venerable Bishop has given us, let us be thankful that we have free access to the pure word of God; and not forget, that after all, Roman Catholics are our brethren, we have the same nature prone to error and to sin; and are subject to temptation from the same deceiver that has perverted them. All the corruptions in the world

and in the church have but one origin, a departure from divine instruction; and should we start with them into a neglect, or contempt, or abuse of the word of God, we may, in our own wisdom, strike out to ourselves another path of sin, and be as fatally deluded and corrupted as they.

“ Hear the just law—the judgment of the skies !

“ He that hates truth shall be the dupe of lies :

“ And he that *will* be cheated, to the last

“ Delusions strong as hell shall bind him fast.”

COWPER.

Christians, like the Jews of old, have more light and grace to abuse, and richer blessings to corrupt than have been intrusted to their pagan neighbours, and when christians adopt the pagan, superstitious brats of diabolical magic, they make themselves two-fold more the imps of hell than ever pagans could. The guilty abominations above described are little less than superdiabolical.

There is one remark of the eloquent Bishop which here deserves particular attention, and that is, “ Whatever the devil loses by pretending to obey the Exorcist, he gains more by this horrible debauchery of christianity.” This remark may be partially applicable to the use of all magical incantations whatever, which are employed by protestants; which are, alas! too often used on similar occasions. Those who remove devils out of demoniacs in this way, do not, properly speaking, *expel* them, but they compromise with them, and on these “ conditions of peace,” whether among pagans or christians, papists or protestants, Satan gains more by marching off with his spiritual bribes, in all the honours of war, than he could gain by simply keeping possession.

“ The people which in Popedom are possessed of the devil,” says Martin Luther, the author of the

Reformation, "are not rid of him by such arts, words, or gestures, as their charmers use: the devil suffereth not himself to be driven out with slight words; as 'come out thou unclean spirit,' &c. for those charmers mean it not earnestly. The power of God must effect it; and one must not venture his life thereupon, in that the devil terrifieth him with great anguish of heart, for without fears and frightings it will not be accomplished. When the woman with the bloody issue touched the hem of Christ's garment, he said, '*I perceive that virtue is gone out of me.*' Luke viii. Likewise when he intended to awaken Lazarus from the dead, he '*groaned in spirit and was troubled.*' John xi. The devil is driven out either by the prayers of the whole church, so that they all join in prayers together, which are so strong and powerful that they even pierce the clouds; or else he that driveth out the wicked enemy must be highly enlightened, and must have *a strong and steadfast courage, and be certain of the cause.*" Table Talk, p. 339.

Good Bishop Latimer, who in 1555 was burnt in the Roman Catholic fire at Oxford, because he would enlighten England, gives a somewhat similar view of the subject in his sermon on the Christian Armour, from Eph. vi. 10,—12. He says:

"When St. Paul saith that we must fight against rulers, he describeth unto us the great power that the devil hath; for what is mightier than rulers and potentates? Therefore to the intent that we might perceive his mighty power, he named him by that name, to that end to make us earnest to put on the armour, and take the weapons which God hath appointed for us, else we shall soon have an overthrow, if we will take such weapons as the devil shall appoint us, as he hath done in times past; for what a trust and confidence have we had in holy-water, and holy-bread;

also in ringing holy bells, and such fooleries? But it was good sport for the devil, he could laugh at our foolishness, yea, and order the matter so, to keep us in the same error. For we read in stories that at some times the devil went away from some men because of the holy-water, as though that holy-water had such strength and power that he could not abide it. O crafty devil! he went away not for fear of the holy-water, but because he would maintain men in error and foolishness; and no doubt it was the devil's teaching, the using of this holy-water."

It is hardly necessary to state, that in the Church of Rome, every new-born infant is *supposed* to be possessed of the devil, and before baptism the priest uses a form of Exorcism, composed of certain words, prayers, and actions, for driving away the supposed devil out of the child. The priest is to blow in the face of the child after the form of a cross, saying, *Go out of him Satan, &c.* All this disgusting, sanctimonious trumpery of magical conjuration in "the mother and mistress of all churches," as the Church of Rome declares herself to be, or "the mother of abominations, drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus," as some protestants declare her to be, is enough to cause the way of truth to be evil spoken of. Superstition is the counterfeit of religion which seducers use to impose upon the unwary, and it is very possible that thinking men in the warmth of their zeal against imposition, may incautiously suspect, condemn, and reject, some parts of genuine christianity.

If some have been mistaken, and others deceived, we should be the more careful to find out the truth, and to keep it. There is no sober-mindedness in reeling from one extreme of opinion to another.— Sound wisdom will walk steadily in the narrow path

of truth as marked out by the conspicuous lines of inspiration. The God of infinite wisdom knows best all the possible wants of his creatures, and for the multifarious mental necessities of mankind in different nations and ages he has made ample provision in the Holy Scriptures. Those uncomely parts, as we may perhaps esteem them, of that sacred book, have more abundant comeliness and importance in the sight of those who *need them* for their instruction, conviction, correction, or edification in righteousness, though we, through a tincture of vain philosophy, may become *ashamed* of them, as savouring of superstition. But, "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works," the Bible liberally supports his attack upon those learned and vulgar superstitions, astrology, divination, witchcraft, sorcery, charming, &c. &c. which shroud the pagan world in mental darkness, and blind the minds and corrupt the hearts of thousands in England and other christian countries.

That evil spirits tempt and oppress, and occasionally *possess* human beings, either as associated with the black arts of witchcraft or not, is evident beyond the possibility of refutation, if not of sober contradiction; that salvation from such tyranny is devoutly to be wished, no one can deny; and that the New Testament offers such a salvation, and gives a general authority, and commands to cast out devils, every reader may know. But if this gracious mode of relief is discarded, and if the modern christians fear or blush to stir up the gift of God which is in them, and to snatch the souls whom Satan may possess from that devouring lion's jaws,—“as the shepherd taketh out of the mouth of the lion two legs or a piece of an ear,”—there remains another mode of relief from demoniac possession to be considered: a mode which many protestant professing christians have lately used, as

the only one they knew. It was their going back to *Egypt* rather than to *Rome*, to obtain what may be called the Pagan mode of relief, by what is professionally called,

THE ASTROLOGICAL PRACTICE OF PHYSIC.

The Astrological Practice of Physic is a relic and a main part of ancient PAGAN SUPERSTITION. And it must be confessed that there are some very powerful temptations, which persons in tribulation feel, and urge as justifying reasons why they should seek help from the professors of the "Curious Arts," and "Occult Sciences." The intolerable affliction of diabolic possession, the inefficiency of medical aid, and the unbelief, or despair of help in Christ Jesus, and the christian church, seem to reduce the awful case to a kind of *necessity*, that they should seek help elsewhere, and get it where and how they can.

Besides all this, there is what may be considered as the granted permission of some of "the learned men." But what sort of learning that is, whence its origin, and what its tendency, that can wilfully confound divine revelation with pagan superstition, and charge infinite wisdom with folly, because it testifies the truth of demoniac possession, and often rebukes the sin of witchcraft, &c. may well deserve its possessor's jealous scrutiny. Human wisdom has often been opposed to divine testimony and instruction; and when great philosophers and leading characters have been weary of heavenly tuition, and become wise above what is written by inspiration of God, the world has always been the worse for it. "For vain man would be wise," and when he does not like to be taught of God, and spurns the wisdom from above, he learns *the wisdom from beneath*. For a very extensive proof of this the reader is referred to the first

chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and Dr. Macknight's Commentary on the Place. Men rise in their own conceit as they fall from sound wisdom and discretion, and when their "eyes are opened" by "the father of lies," and deistical philosophy, they become "as Gods, knowing good and evil;" assert their independence of divine instruction, and in their learned nescience, exclude both God and the devil from having any thing to do with either the bodies or souls of men. If we may believe them, God's authority is no greater than their own, and "hell is empty and all the devils are here," and there are none others, or none worse than what we *see*. According to this wisdom, the consolations of the Holy Ghost, or the temptations of the devil, are only the workings of the human mind, all *imagination*, and man is God and devil all himself! has little to hope and nothing to fear beyond the contact of his senses, and the duration of his three-score years and ten! But the writer is no convert to such wisdom; and he would whisper the sacred caution to the reader, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." Col. ii. 8.

If the astrological or magical practice of physic has no real diabolical influence, nothing to do with evil agency; if witchcraft and all such superstitious practices are nothing more than "vulgar errors of imagination," and if, according to Mr. Hume's opinion, these things are best treated with *neglect*;—if these sacredly condemned "abominations to the Lord" are in reality nothing more than mere trifling unfashionable follies, vulgar nonsense, silly notions, &c. that it is beneath the wisdom and philosophy of sensible men seriously to notice such low foibles,—why then (God and his bible apart) *they are no crimes*, and follies must have their fashions. If learned men can prove that

superstitious magical practices, are only vulgar foibles, and vulgar men can prove that by their use deep things can be learned, and intolerable afflictions can be removed, then between them both, what God abhors and has often punished, is made to appear at the worst, but a comical, silly thing, and often a great advantage to men. So, between the learned and the vulgar, God is contradicted and blasphemed, and the old serpent is dressed up as a benevolent "old gentleman," to be the stage merry-andrew of the fashionable, the very spice of their poetry and wit; and to be revered and consulted by the vulgar as their prophet and doctor, if not their *God*. If wise and learned men, as they know how, forbid careful instruction and serious reproof on the subject of diabolical superstitions in the present day, they, in effect, sanction the practice. "Silence gives consent," and studied connivance will pass for a licence. And if they will jocosely fire their literary squibs to harrass and make ridiculous those men of God, who in the name of their master, and on the authority of his word, and after the example of his most faithful servants, declare these pagan superstitions and diabolical practices, are "an abomination to the Lord,"—then the British Dewallahs of conjurers, diviners, and magical doctors, may be thronged with English pagan-christians, consulting with Chaldean arts, if not worshipping with pagan reverence, fear, and hope, "the host of heaven,"—the Hebrew Abaddon,—the Greek APOLLON,—the—plain English—Devil. Rev. ix. 11.

The unscriptural manner in which these subjects have been treated, the ingenious transfer of contempt from these wicked delusions to those persons who know the fact and would reprove the sin, and the blushing total silence of the sacred ministry on the subject of these disgraceful, heaven-insulting crimes, may be considered as one cause why there is at this

day, even among professing christians, so much of *Paganism in England*.

The specious professions of astrological doctors is another reason why their superstitious practices are employed. The black art can wear a white surplice; Satan can transform himself into an angel of light, and his ministers, the magicians, can, and often do, appear to be *good men*. They are proverbially, and with the consent of antiquity, "wise men."—Professionally they are *philosophical doctors*, and they have such *learning* as is confessedly not known among whom they call *drug-doctors*. The regular medical man uses *material medicines*, but the astrological doctor goes far beyond the *Materia Medica*, and employs any parts of the *Occult Sciences* or magical arts which may assist him to understand or remove the complaint of his patients. They go far deeper into the dark, occult arts than most medical men dare venture even to look, and are almost deep as hell in science and in guilt. They are *wise* indeed in wisdom from beneath.

The astrological doctors profess to have spiritual and *divine help*. And certain it is, whether we believe it or not, that some occult spiritual help they have; but what divinity, what spirit that is which exerts its influence in connection with astrological divination and magical incantations, it may be useful to consider. Some of those who practice the evil arts do not know the real nature of that spiritual and occult influence which their occult sciences and magical ceremonies engage in their service. They may be as unconcious of the diabolical nature of it as the heathen were that the demon gods they worshipped were devils: and both alike may think the influence attending them is divine. For this is Satan's grand design to be taken for and treated as the true God. The astrological

doctor may be as ignorant of, and as unconcerned about, the sinfulness of his art and practices, as any other man who "knows not God, and obeys not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." The over-reaching tradesman or the gambling gentleman may thank God for his *good luck*, and modishly curse the stars for his bad; the magical doctor may do the same, and claim as good a right to his own good opinion of himself; and on account of his being a *wise man*, the vulgar will as soon believe him to be a righteous man.

The astrological doctors declare themselves to be the *only* persons who in these days have the knowledge and power to heal them that are oppressed of the devil, to cast out evil spirits, and to remove all those maladies which are occasioned by spiritual agency, as possession, witchcraft, &c. 'How can any doctor,' says Mr. B. in his *Astrological Practice of Physic*, 'cure such distempers when ignorant of the cause; for witchcraft or sorcery can now no way be discovered nor yet cured, but by the way of astrology, except a miracle be wrought. It is true God can do what he pleaseth, but I never knew or heard of any man that was cured (since the Apostles' times) that was bewitched, any other way than by the *astrological* way of physick. And tis a great mercy that God is pleased to raise up and give knowledge to mortal men to do it. For although the affliction cometh from the devil and his instruments, which we commonly call evil or *takes*, yet the cure cometh by and through God's blessing upon the honest industry of *Astrologers* and *Philosophers*, who are the only men acquainted with this kind of cure. Wherefore the patient's friends *must of necessity* repair to such as are well skilled in the *astrological* and *philosophical* way of cure.'

This is a genuine specimen of the specious profession of astrological doctors, and is at the same time,

a pretty good comment on the apocryphal book of Tobit, which lies skulking between the Old and New Testaments to dishonour them both, and teach unwary protestants, as it did the deluded Jews, the practice of Chaldean superstitious magic, and diabolical conjurations. Many may be ready to spurn at such a profession who have no temptation to hearken to it; but will the afflicted, untaught poor, whose souls are overwhelmed within them, given up by medical men, abandoned perhaps as impostors by religious men, and left in their calamity to catch at any reed, and be led away by any tempter, will such people be in no danger of hearkening and being persuaded? Will not they embrace the *philosophical way of cure*? Facts are stubborn things, many have done so in the nineteenth century of christianity, in this very land of ministers and bibles: and in the simplicity of their hearts have many of them been as thankful for the success of the fumes of the astrological drugs, and other magical practices, as Tobias was for the smoke of the fishes' liver. So does the old serpent still beguile the simple! If shutting the eyes and ears and lips against the invincible evidence of such facts would have any tendency to annihilate the evil, the writer would gladly be blind and deaf and dumb to it all; but if revelation be a better guide than a vain philosophy, he must think that to show "christians" the *sin* of such practices is the best way to prevent their applying to them in times of temptation. And if we can prove to them, there is a better way which heaven has appointed for relief in such cases, we may be satisfied they will renounce the evil and choose the good.

The success of the astrological practice of physic is another reason why many have lately applied to the professors of this "philosophical way of cure."— This also is too evident to be *disproved*. Facts are

not to give way to prejudices, vulgar or philosophical. This success I have known in some cases, and have often heard it pleaded to urge the necessity and propriety of employing magical doctors. *Success* in undertakings is not always a proof of their righteousness, because there may be *success* attending actions even the most criminal. But, if to attain the end is all the care, and the quality of the means is disregarded, success may be a powerful temptation. Doctors as much as any men are at liberty to select their own means, so they do but accomplish the desired end, and successful practice in that profession is a powerful recommendation. Here the magical doctor has the undue advantage. Men of any standing in this profession can detail their cases of cure, and produce their vouchers from those that were under their care. And it is easy to perceive what powerful arguments these must be to persuade the oppressed of Satan to employ astrological doctors and magical arts to obtain relief. That the astrological doctor should succeed in removing very grievous afflictions, when Surgeons and Physicians could neither comprehend the cause nor mitigate the symptoms, tends not a little to the establishment of his credit, the increase of his business, and the honour of his arts.

Another argument used to vindicate the employment of magical doctors, is that "if good is done to the patient, those who employ the professor of astrological physic are *not responsible* for the means he uses, and the ceremonies he advises, while they implicitly follow his directions as they would the advice of any other medical man." Thus Ahab might have reasoned while the execrable Jezebel procured for him the much desired vineyard of Neboth by her wicked arts. But he that allows the use of means which are an abomination to the Lord to procure him any fancied or real good, may expect to hear

some thunder clap of divine rebuke as well as Ahab. 1 King xxiii. "The receiver is as bad as the thief," and if good things may be procured by robbery, will the ill-gotten good be accompanied with a blessing or a curse? There is justice due to God as well as man, and whatever a man would enjoy let him seek it righteously; for if we do evil that good may come, our damnation is just. Rom. iii. 8.

When we take into consideration the severity of the affliction occasioned by evil agency, the inefficiency of medical aid, the neglect and contempt with which such suffering people are treated, the imposing professions of astrological doctors, and their success in well known cases, and the supposed necessity, and veniable nature of the superstitious arts, is it at all surprizing that even some religious people should employ them? We may add to all this the want of suitable instruction on this unpleasant subject, the powerful inward temptations they are liable to feel, and the blinding nature of popular ignorance, vulgar prejudices, and satanic temptations,—all these things collected together seem enough to deceive, if it be possible, *the very elect*.

The astrological practice of physic, as its name imports, is a combination of astrology with medicine. This description, however, includes but a part of the present practice which is understood by the term.—For it is, in fact, a combination of several parts of superstitious or diabolical magic with the use of drugs, and is, therefore, a species of *sorcery*, according to the *scriptural* and *popular* sense of that word.

The professors of this complex art are vulgarly called *Conjurers*, on account of their influence over spirits which torment in witchcraft or possession; *wise men*, because of the knowledge they obtain by

divination, &c.; and *white-witches*, on account of their ability to counteract the influence of those who maliciously afflict their patients, through the agency of evil spirits acting in connection with their use of the same magical or astrological arts. These professors dislike the title *white-witch*, and they *technically* apply that term to those who as they state, are *confederate* with the *black*; that is the *malicious* ones, who use the same arts to afflict, and cure only by combination with the other, and ceasing to afflict; and they call themselves *astrological or philosophical doctors*. As the success of these professors, in some cases, depends entirely on the *magical* department of their practice, they are, therefore, properly enough designated by the title of *magical doctors*. As they also practice *judicial astrology*, and are vulgarly said to rule the planets, (which, by the bye, are wickedly supposed to rule the world) they are frequently consulted and employed to *divine* in cases of loss of property, and in matters of superstitious curiosity, as to future fortune, and are therefore often called *fortune-tellers*.

In the New Testament some such persons are described as, *they that used curious arts*. Ephesus was peculiarly famous for the study and practice of such superstitions. But "the finger of God" which sanctioned the ministry of Paul in Ephesus, was as evidently distinct from magical agency, and as triumphant over it, as when it accompanied Moses in Egypt. As Simon Magus wished to purchase of Peter the power to give the Holy Ghost; so some of the *magical exorcists* attempted to rival or imitate Paul, in casting out evil spirits by the name of Jesus. "They took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits, the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, 'we adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth.' And the evil spirit answered and said, 'Jesus I know, and Paul I know,

but who are ye.' The devil knew them well enough that they were his own vassals, and he did not like that *they* should tell *him* of Jesus or of Paul: therefore he would chastise them for their impudence. "And the man in whom the evil spirit was, leapt on them and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of the house naked and wounded. And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was manifested. And many that believed came and confessed, and shewed their deeds. Many also of them which used CURIOUS ARTS brought their books together and burned them before all men. Acts, xix. 11,—19. See Dr. A. Clarke's Commentary on the Place.

"They that used curious arts;" that is, says Dr. Whitby, "*arts of magic.*" That this is the import of the word (*perierga* rendered *curious arts*) Grotius and Dr. Hammond prove from the account that Irenius (L. 1. C. 20.) gives us of the disciples of Simon Magus that 'they used *love-charms*, and *philtres*, and all other *curious arts.*' For Porphyry (De Abst. l. 2. Sect. 42.) speaking of the magicians saith, 'they by these evil spirits make their *philtres* and *love-charms*;' and it seems to have had this signification, because the '*magi*,' as Origen saith, (Contra Celsum, c. viii. p. 418.) 'were *curiously* employed about searching into the names, the forms, the powers, the actions, the incantations of demons; whereas a life free from these *curiosities* is acceptable to God, and the Lord Christ would leave to be vexed with unclean spirits him that is thus *curious* about the names of demons, and seeks after ways of incanting them.' Hence the books that were brought to be burnt are by the Fathers styled *books of sorcery*. Nor is it to be wondered that these arts should abound at Ephesus, where Plutarch (Vita Alexand. p. 666) speaks of *magicians conversing*;

that city being so famous for *sorcery*, and *inchantments of demons*, that the magical words used to that effect were stiled *Ephesian Letters*; and Plutarch tells us that the magicians bid them who were possessed with devils to read and recite the *Ephesian Letters*." See also Parkhurst on the word, *perierga*.

Such arts as these are frequently represented to be the practice of knavery on credulity. This is bad enough, and with respect to some professors of the magic arts undoubtedly *true* enough. But there are some astrologers who have no knavish design to impose on others what they do not believe themselves; and who have no wish to deprive their neighbours unjustly of their property. There are imposing knaves of most professions, and there are professors of astrology who, in the common sense of the word, are not *dishonest* men. And if they impose upon others it is because they are first deceived themselves. To detest these superstitious practices as a species of knavery, is one way for sensible men to guard themselves from their baleful influence; but this view of the subject is not altogether correct. Some people obtain what they esteem as great advantages, if not blessings, from such professors, and therefore cheerfully and gratefully reward their services, defend and recommend them to others. — It is necessary, therefore, to take another view of the subject.

The evil of these arts will be best understood when they are considered in the light of divine revelation. There are many who from certain knowledge can contradict and refute what some learned men say of the magical arts; who if they knew what *God* has said of them would reject them with abhorrence. Astrological arts have a principle of iniquity in them far greater than that of mere knavish trick, and its moral turpitude can never be fairly calculated

unless God is taken into the account, and the spiritual and eternal interests of men. They are a diabolical attack on the sovereignty of God, a treacherous plot against the divine government, counsel, and worship, by seducing the people from their allegiance to God, to a contempt of his word and authority. In some such light as this, divine justice has viewed these practices, and executed his vengeance on kings and people, and nations that have been guilty of them. Knavishly tricking people out of a little of their property, though very provoking, is nothing when compared with the seduction and ruin of their immortal souls. The universal God, and "father of the spirits of all flesh," will shower down fiercer flames of vengeance on those monsters of guilt who spiritually and eternally murder his children, than on these petty knaves who only steal their cash. To seduce the children of men from their heavenly father's service and protection, and lead them into the very track of their adversary the devil, who walketh about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour, is an iniquity too great to be slightly punished, and is the business of those superstitious evil arts now under consideration.

The professors of astrological physic, &c. seldom know the evil of their art; it blinds their conscience while it professes to open their eyes. It is a kind of wisdom such as ruined the world. Fair as the forbidden fruit which grew in Paradise; it is an alluring bait recommended by the same spirit as that which beguiled Eve, and with the same intention too—the sinner's death. A little consideration on the origin and history, the nature, bearings, and tendency of the astrological practice of physic, &c. in the light of revelation, may serve to convince us, that the arts practiced under that title are most conscientiously to be avoided, by all who fear the vengeance, or hope for the mercy of God.

Astrology, and all its retinue of superstitious arts, though now very old fashioned, are not of *vulgar* origin. They were the courtly arts and sciences of many of the first and most learned nations on the face of the earth; important parts of "the wisdom from beneath," highly esteemed among men, by which kings, philosophers, and demons, have opposed the wisdom, authority, and grace of God, and drawn away men from his counsel, service, and worship. They have done this by proclaiming the divinity of the stars, and by instituting divination to supply the place of the word of God, and by substituting in the place of his divine majesty and worship, all the classical trumpery and diabolical rabble of obscene goddesses, drunken and abominable gods, incarnate devils, and hellish demons, with all their filthy, despicable, and bloody services. These were all under the counsel, sanction, and influence of that old professor and teacher of impious wisdom, their father,—the devil. Altogether forming the most learned, crafty, extensive, powerful, popular, and destructive system of diabolical imposition that has ever been practiced on poor vulgar people, who form the great mass of mankind.

Though divine wisdom and benevolence shine with peculiar glory on this greatly favoured Island, and are hence reflected round the world, yet there are awful remains of these ancient superstitions of Canaan, Egypt, and Babylon, still crawling, hissing, and stinging, among poor vulgar Britons. And for these wicked and "vulgar" superstitions we are indebted under "the old serpent," to his obsequious brood of ancient and royal personages who cherished them in their guilty bosoms, and patronized with their royal favour and influence those who were most deeply learned in the arts and sciences of the infernal world. These great, and learned, and noble, and

wise men, did not like to retain the true God in their knowledge, nor did they think it safe or prudent to teach what they knew of him to the vulgar, and therefore, in *their wisdom*, they taught superstitions, instead of true religion, and led the poor ignorant multitudes to worship evil demons instead of the good God. Thus "idolatry and witchcraft" are classed together in the word of God because they were brats of the same origin, and are generally found together in actual operation. Astrology, which is a superstitious, idolatrous, and diabolical corruption of astronomy, has been one of the most popular parts of that evil wisdom by which men have scientifically held communion with the infernal world, and has answered the double purpose of an important introduction and splendid guise of the whole body of satanic sciences and arts and institutions: and by these the truth, and grace, and government of God have always been opposed.

When the Lord sent Moses and Aaron to the court of Pharaoh, to demand in his name the liberty of his oppressed people, and accredited their mission with miracles, Pharaoh called for the *wise men* and sorcerers, the honourable chaplains of his majesty, to assist him to contend with the true God. Ex. vii. 11. When Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, was troubled with a dream, he commanded to call for the magicians, the astrologers, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans.* Dan. ii. 2. The apostate kings of Israel and Judah imitated them. They forsook the God of their fathers and "did according to all the abominations of the nations which the Lord cast out before the children of Israel." 1 Kings, xiv. 24. They ordained idolatrous priests that "burned incense unto Baal, to the sun, to the moon, and to the planets, and to all the hosts of heaven." 2 Kings, xxiii. 5.

* See Stanley's Chaldaic Philosophy: Part xv.

Of these superstitious kings, Manasseh is the most remarkable. "He did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, like unto the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.—He worshipped all *the host of heaven*, and served them.—He caused his children to pass through the fire,* he observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizzards: He wrought much evil in the sight of the Lord to provoke him to anger. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 2. &c. Berosus, a learned priest of Belus, at Babylon, introduced the Chaldaic learning into Greece, and the refined Grecians were deep in superstitious guilt. The learned and polite Romans were much addicted to superstitious arts;† and several times they raised persecutions against the apostles and the christians because they successfully opposed their

* There is some probability in the opinion, that the ancient and still prevalent horrible superstition of sacrificing young infants was first dictated by astrology. An old French writer on this subject, who seems a friend to astrology, says: "As concerning the planet Saturn, the ancient Hebrews stood in great dread of it; because they observed that those that were born under the dominion of this star were melancholic and sickly.—And this is the reason that the *Chaldeans*, who gave themselves over to the worship of many false Gods, observing that this star was very hurtful to them, thought good, by some sacrifice or other, to render it more propitious and favourable to them.—And there being no other sacrifice more proper for it than that whereon it so often shows its sad effects, that is to say, newborn children, they began to sacrifice of these to this planet under the name of Moloch, i. e. a king; because it reigned imperiously over men: or rather showed itself a tyrant over them, by afflicting them with diseases, and a thousand other disasters, at its own pleasure, as tyrants used to do. And this is confirmed also by that other name of *Baal*, by which the idol of this star was likewise called, which signifies *Master* or *Lord*. And my opinion is, that from hence it is that the *Greeks* and *Latins* have taken occasion to invent the fable of Saturn's eating his own children." Gafferel's Curiosities, concerning the Talismanical Sculpture of the Persians, &c.

† See Horace Epode, 5. Ovid's Metam. B. 7. Virgil's Pharmacutria Ec. 8.

diabolical superstitions. Acts, xvi. 16,—24. Christianity was opposed by magicians among the Romans, as Judaism was among the Egyptians. As Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so did Simon Magus, Elymas, and the fraternity of magicians, in the days of the apostles and primitive christians, resist the truth. Acts, xiii. 12.

“It is notorious” says Justin Martyr, Apol. c. 34. “that after Christ’s ascension into heaven, the same wicked spirits furnished out a set of men who gave out themselves to be gods, yet were you (Romans) so far from punishing such villains, that you did them the greatest honour. For Simon a certain Samaritan, of the village of Gitthon, who in Claudius Cæsar’s time, by his magical arts with the powers of darkness, did such wonderful feats in the imperial city of *Rome*, that he gained the reputation of a god, and accordingly is honoured by you, like your other gods with a statue erected on Tiber, between the two bridges, with this Latin inscription, *Simoni Deo Sancto*. To Simon the holy God.” The same author mentions several others who “set on work by the same demons, imposed on many by the same magic arts.—And yet all this sort of men go by the name of christians, just like the philosophers, who though they differ never so much in principles, yet take upon them the common name of philosophers.”

Thus Satan has laboured to corrupt and destroy christianity itself, with the same superstitions by which he has darkened and corrupted the pagan world, and he has prevailed with many who have borne the sacred name of christians, to practice and employ these infernal arts. Even the Holy See has been contaminated with these abominations, and wicked popes of Rome, like apostate kings of Judah, have practiced some of the most infernal parts of

superstitious magic.* Divine revelation and true religion have always openly rebuked all diabolical superstitions, as well as their younger brother infidel philosophy, and much of the blood of christians has been shed because of their successful opposition to evil arts and evil spirits, who had fortified themselves in high places, in schools and temples, palaces and thrones.†

The diabolical arts and contemptible pagan superstitions, the horrible, foolish, and wicked wisdom now called *vulgar errors*, &c. came from the potentates, priests, philosophers, and poets, down to the vulgar and their children. It was Jeroboam's *wicked policy to teach Israel to sin*, and to establish the worship of the golden calves, as the religion of the state, to keep the people in his possession. For the same reason, St. Augustine thinks the gentle princes enjoined idolatry. "The politic and wise men," he says, "did especially endeavour to nousel their people in this illusive manner, and to make them not only worshippers but even imitators of the devils that delighted to delude them. For even as devils cannot possess any but such as they have deceived, so unjust and devil-like princes persuaded their people to their own vain inventions, under the name of religion, thereby to bind their affections the firmer to their service, and so to keep them under their sovereignties. *And what ignorant and weak man can avoid the charms of both princes and devils?*" City of God, B. 4. D. 32. Thus the multitudes have been imposed upon by their governors, and diabolical superstition came from the greatest to the least, till all the world has been covered with

* See Platina's History of the Popes. Life of Miltiades p. 49. Damasus, p. 62. Sylvester, p. 194.

† See Eusebius's Life of Constantine, C. 50,—52.

gross darkness, the most gloomy, superstitious horrors, and the shadow of death. The religion of heaven has taken an opposite direction, it ascends from "the least to the greatest." The God of mercy and the friend of the poor abhorred the superstitious and diabolical delusions of princes, who imposed their abominations on their subjects. Then he sent "the Carpenter's son," with his humble band of fishermen, to turn "the world upside down," and fill the dark places of the earth with the light of the glorious gospel of the blessed God. The poor, ignorant, vulgar, have in ancient times been defrauded by wicked statesmen, philosophers, and poets, who concealed from them the truth of God, and taught in its stead their own superstitious delusions. Even Socrates consulted the devilish oracle at Delphos, and Plato his disciple taught "It is not safe to discover the parent of the universe to the vulgar." See Dr. Mac-knight, on Rom. 1. and Cor. 1.

"Maximus Tyrius in the conclusion of his first Dissertation, expresseth himself thus, 'If you are too weak to contemplate the Father and Maker of all things, it is sufficient for you at present to behold the works and to worship his progeny, [the things which proceed from him] which are many and of various kinds; not merely as the Bæotian poet mentions; for there are not only *thirty thousand Gods* the sons and friends of God, but their number is not to be comprehended: and *such in heaven are the stars, in æther demons.*' Thus were the objects of worship multiplied by the philosophers themselves to an amazing degree: whilst at the same time, under a pretence of the most exalted notions of the Supreme Being, they declined speaking of him, or of the worship due to him, to the people. They alleged, that the vulgar were unable to form any conception of an invisible Deity, and looked upon that to be nothing

which they could not see or perceive by their senses ; that therefore the worshipping of the things of nature, and the inferior deities, was the only way to keep the people from running into Atheism. On the same foundation they pleaded for and recommended the worship of images." Dr. Leland's Advantage and Necessity of the Christian Revelation. Vol. 1. p. 337.

So much has been done by heathen philosophers, unfaithful prophets, and corrupt christians, to keep the human race ignorant of the true God and his pure worship, and to make them infidels or idolaters, or both, that there is scarcely a nation to be found where the corruption of superstition is either unknown or purged away. If, therefore, some obscure Britons still remain under the veil and influence of these pagan delusions, (and thousands there are) their ignorance has a claim on British christian benevolence. Paganism in England is as provoking to God as paganism in Asia or Africa ; and if our charity be without partiality or without hypocrisy, pagan superstitions at home will excite our zeal and commiseration, as well as the same evils in Hindostan. God has given many portions of his inspired word on purpose to check the practice of these superstitions which princes and philosophers have in ancient times imposed upon the vulgar. To steal the word of God, and conceal it like a thief, for merely one's own private use, or with a baser design to impose the more effectually our own inventions on the ignorant, is embezzling the public property which the king of heaven has deposited in the hands of his stewards to relieve the necessities of a perishing world. Such withholding the truth of God in unrighteousness, is an awful breach of trust in either a heathen philosopher, a Jewish prophet, a Roman pontiff, or a protestant christian. Surely the blood of those who have been destroyed for lack of knowledge will be required of

those who thus embezzle the truth of salvation. It is required of stewards that a man be found faithful; and the great apostle of the Gentiles has set them all who are intrusted with the truth, a fair example, in saying to the Ephesians, "I take you to record, this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." Acts, xx. 26, 27.

The astrological practice of physic, according to its present use, includes several of those evil arts which are expressly and repeatedly prohibited in the Holy Bible, and declared to be, with all that practice them, *an abomination to the Lord*. Deut. xviii.

It is, in its essential principles, as well as in its origin, a system of *idolatry*. It rejects the true God and his all-wise providence from that supreme dominion which, as sovereign of the universe, he exercises over his creatures, and requires every human being to acknowledge, and ascribes a governing influence over the moral actions of men to "the host of heaven." Some of these shining Chaldean gods, or as they are now termed *lords*, it would teach us, are benevolent, and others malevolent, and others are good or evil according to their situation or conjunction with their neighbour planets. Thus even the astrologer's gods become good or evil according to the company they keep. This Chaldean astrology devotes children as soon as they are born to the influence of these benevolent or malevolent lords, according as these good or ill-tempered ever-varying creatures are supposed to take their turns to rule in the affairs of men. Each planet is allowed his share of human beings, as they are scientifically cast on his mercy or wrath, by their entrance into the world at the calculated times of their dominion. They are ever after the benefactors or tyrants of the human being,

and according to their good or evil aspects cheer the life or embitter the existence and death of the human being. Such paganism there is in England! and many "christians" have been so mistaken or decoyed as to be found at its altars!

This system of scientific paganism removes from man that moral responsibility which his Creator imperiously requires him to consider and acknowledge. It stupifies the soul against the consciousness of guilt, and transfers the blame of bad conduct from wicked men, to planetary influence, and ultimately to God himself. It is as cunningly contrived to rob God of his reputation, as of his authority, and teaches man to place his confidence in planetary *imposition* instead of the wisdom, power, and goodness of his Creator. It is an ingenious device to keep men from the knowledge, fear, service, and enjoyment of the Most High. "Oh Wickedness," exclaims Tertullian, "men think it needless to seek God, because they presume we are actuated by an immutable decree of the stars."

Idolatry of any kind is a provoking insult to the Lord of Hosts. He is a jealous God, and, therefore, he will not suffer such treasonable conspiracies against his holy government to escape his righteous indignation. A scheme so deeply laid as astrology is to ensnare the confidence and passions of men, betrays to every well instructed mind its subtile author with his cloven foot. The more the light of revelation is thrown upon this subject, and the more it is scrutinized, the more evidently it will appear that the devil is at the bottom of all such impositions.

The astrological practice of physic is a real kind of diabolical *divination* by "the host of heaven."—And thus, as Tertullian says, "Evil spirits juggle men out of the knowledge of the true God by the

delusions of divination." One of the first things the astrological doctor does, when applied to for a person bewitched or possessed, is to draw the horoscope, i. e. a scheme to show the situations of the planets, stars, &c. at the *time of enquiry*.

Even this is an intimation that going to enquire of the astrologer, associates the enquirer with whatever influence is exerted; and if one of the malignant planets rules at the time, that is, if the devil can obtain leave, or exert an influence to torment or destroy the dabbler in his arts, he that goes or sends to enquire of astrology lays himself under his influence. It was *enquiry* that brought the punishment of *death* on king Saul. 1 Chron. x. 13. And W. Lilly's "first consideration" is "of the mind, when a man is stirred up in his thoughts, and hath an intent to enquire,—and of the free will, which disposes him to the very act of enquiring,—for the motion of the stars is not enough unless by the election of his will the person does actually enquire." Guide for astrologers, p. 3. This consideration should have its due weight with any man who is inclined to employ an astrologer to *divine* for him. Let him consider what influence that is by which "*he is stirred up in his thoughts to enquire,*" and let him consider too, that when divine justice is insulted by his enquiry, and grants the malignant planet, or rather the malignant devil at the bottom of the system, permission of execution, it is easy for the devil then to predict the sinner's death, and to accomplish the prediction.

The astrologer consults for the enquirer, in the case above referred to, the planetary system, to discover the nature of the complaint, and if bewitched, the person of the witch, &c. and to learn under what malignant planet (god or devil) the patient is afflicted, and therefore, what planetary influence he is to asso-

ciate with himself, the patient, and the family, by the selection of astrological remedies, and the performance of magical ceremonies. It is therefore by *the same art*, the same general influence, that such patients are magically afflicted, or magically cured, perhaps I ought to say, diabolically afflicted or diabolically cured. It is under the influence of the malevolent planets (or demons under their name) that the witch afflicts those who through *fear*, and *folly*, and *sin*, subject themselves to the diabolic power; and it is by "counteracting" their influence by that of other planets (professedly) and by the *same arts* employed, but with a different intention, that the astrological doctor works a cure.

Evil spirits, therefore, under the guise of planetary influence, keep the business of afflicting and curing, as far as they can, among themselves and their human confederates. It is evident then on what principle their knowledge is gained. "And assuredly," says Dr. H. More, "it is a pleasant spectacle to those haters and scorers of mankind, to see the noble faculties of men debased and entangled in so vile and wretched a mystery, which will avail nothing to *divination* unless these *seducing demons*, malicious deceivers, act their part in the scene." A spirit of divination is a beguiling devil, and the arts of divination are artful and scientific impositions on the understandings of the credulous.

The astrological practice of physic is a *species of witchcraft*. This "philosophical way of cure," teaches the absolute necessity of *bewitching the witch*. Hear a professor and teacher of the art. 'The patient's friends must of necessity repair to such as are well skilled in the astrological and *philosophical* way of cure, as I shall declare in order hereto. But before I proceed it will be necessary to show *how*

‘to afflict the witch, that so she may be discouraged to act any farther mischief.’ Then follow ‘Some experimental rules whereby to afflict the witch,’ &c. I need not transcribe these rules, because my design is not to teach the art, but to show my countrymen its diabolical and sinful nature. These rules are, alas! too well known in Britain, for I have known them practiced by many “christians” in England, within the last seven years!!! But let us proceed. As the witch torments the hapless object of her malice, so the astrological doctor torments her, to make her desist from using her art. This is not Satan *casting out* Satan, but Satan tormenting human beings and helping them to torment one another.— In both ways he is perfectly *consistent* with himself; in either way he exerts his influence, establishes his kingdom, and maintains his authority,—but much more effectually in both ways than in one. If we may believe those who study the occult sciences, and *practice* the magical arts, (and such are most likely to know their power) such is sometimes the virulent malice of the evil witches, that before they will desist from tormenting their victim, they will themselves die under the torturing power of the astrological doctor! This is the wonderous working of Satan, and he thus provides a delicious feast for those infernal passions which hiss and nestle in the wicked human heart; malice is glutted with a meal of misery or death, and revenge reels and triumphs in hellish drunken joy.

The common people sometimes call the astrological doctor the *good* or *white-witch*, because he cures whom the malicious or *black witches* afflict. Notwithstanding the respect which many of the country people have for their *white witch*, some learned divines have said with Purchass, in his *Pilgrim*, that “the white witch is the worst of the two.” However

men or women may deal in these black arts of witchcraft, they are included in the statute enacted by the God of Israel, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." Ex. xxii. 18.*

"Some have been made witches," says the Rev. T. Fuller, "by endeavouring to defend themselves against witchcraft: for fearing some suspected witch should hurt them, they fence themselves with the devil's shield against the devil's sword, put on his *whole armour*, beginning to use spells and charms to safeguard themselves. The art is quickly learnt, to which nothing but credulity and practice is required." Profane State. p. 367.

"Of witches there are two sorts," says the learned judicious divine, Mr. W. Perkins: "The bad witch and the good witch: for so they are commonly called. The bad witch is he or she that hath consented in league with the devil to use his help for the doing of hurt only, as to strike, and annoy the bodies of men, women, and children, and cattle, with diseases and with death itself. The good witch is he or she that by consent in a league with the devil, doth use his help for doing good only. This cannot hurt, torment, curse, or kill, but only heal and cure

* "From the severity of this law against witches, &c. we may see in what light these were viewed by Divine Justice. They were seducers of the people from their allegiance to God, on whose judgment alone they should depend; and by impiously prying into futurity, assumed an attribute of God, *the foretelling of future events*, which implied in itself, the grossest blasphemy, and tended to corrupt the minds of the people, by leading them away from God and the revelation he had made of himself. Many of the Israelites had, no doubt learnt these curious arts from their long residence among the Egyptians; and so much were the Israelites attached to them, that we find such arts in repute among them: and various practices of this kind prevailed through the whole of the Jewish History, notwithstanding the offence was capital and in all cases punished with *death*." Dr. A. Clarke, on Ex. xxii. 18.

the hurts inflicted by bad witches. For as they can do no good, but only hurt, so this can do no hurt but good only. And this is that order which the devil hath set in his kingdom, appointing to several persons their several offices and charges. And the good witch is commonly termed the *unbinding witch*.

“Now howsoever both these be evil, yet of the two, the more horrible and detestable monster is the good witch: for look, in what place soever there be bad witches, that hurt only, there also the devil hath his good ones, who are better known than the bad, being commonly called *wise men* or *wise women*.— This will appear in most places in this country. For let a man's child, friend, or cattle, be taken with some sore sickness, or strangely tormented with some rare and unknown disease, the first* thing he doth is to bethink himself and enquire after some *wise man* or some *wise woman*, and thither he sends or goes for help. When he comes he first tells them the state of the sick man: the witch then being certified of the disease, prescribeth either *charms* or *words* to be used over him, or other such counterfeit means, wherein there is no virtue, being nothing else but *the devil's sacraments*, to cause him to do the cure, if it come by witchcraft. Well, the means are received, applied and used, the sick party accordingly recovereth, and the conclusion of all is, the usual acclamation, Oh happy is the day, that ever I met with such a man or woman to help one!

“Here observe that both have a stroke in this action. The bad witch hurt him, the good healed him: but the truth is, the latter hath done him a thousand

* In this nineteenth century of christianity these pagan practices have receded a little, and the regular medical men are sometimes consulted *first*, and then, when these fail to understand or relieve the case, the magical doctor is employed.

times more harm than the former. For the one did only hurt the body, but the devil by means of the other, though he hath left the body in good plight, yet hath he laid fast hold on the soul, and by curing the body hath killed the spirit. And the party thus cured cannot say with David, *the Lord is my helper*, but "the devil is my helper," for by him he is cured. Of both these kind of witches the present law of Moses must be understood." Perkins's Works, fol. vol. 3. p. 637.

In a case of simple possession there is no witch for the magical doctor and the patient's friends to bewitch ; but there is an evil spirit to worship. And this is sometimes done by making fumes or burning incense to the devil. This practice is taught and sanctioned in real pagan, apostate Jewish, and Roman Catholic style, in the apocryphal book of Tobit. In that book, if the fact is true, the doctrine is pernicious ; Satan is transformed into an angel of light most imposingly, and magical practices have a sanctimonious appearance, to deceive, if possible, the very elect. Raphael and Asmodeus act different parts in the scene ; but the latter is a very poor devil, in comparison of the former. Asmodeus acts like what he is, and any devil may do that, but Raphael (whose name signifies *God's healer*) assumes the title, pretends to the office, and plays the part of an angel of God. Great triumph must have been in hell to see how that well meaning Jewish family were deluded by the plot. But what must be the influence of such a thing among pagan nations ? How are they to be pitied ! This is but a part ; a christian church, the Roman Catholic, has sanctioned such delusions, by adopting superstitious magic, instead of following only the counsel of inspiration. This is not all. Many protestants are still caught in the same snare. Raphael is a fine pattern for astrological magical

doctors, and some of them imitate him well. Raphael advised the smoke of a fish's liver; and Tobias "took the ashes of the perfumes, and put the heart and the liver of the fish thereupon, and made a smoke therewith," &c. The *present* magical practice selects certain herbs, with astrological science, to be burnt instead of the fish's liver. (The writer has known it practiced very lately.) The evil spirits, however, do not *always* depart when the incense is offered, sometimes they may, to give success to their own delusions.— "These demons," says Tertullian, "first inflict the malady, and then prescribe the remedy, and after the patient has used the receipt, the demon omits to afflict him, and that omission passes for a cure."— Justin Martyr gives the same account of this business of demons when he says, "*They cease to hurt that they may seem to cure.*"

The Jews in ancient days well knew the most excellent mode of relief from the troubles of evil spirits and their application to magic was inexcusable.

When king Saul had grievously sinned against the Lord in the affair of the Amalekites, Samuel faithfully rebuked him, and told him, that because he had rejected the word of the Lord, the Lord had rejected him. 1 Sam, xv. 22, 23. Soon afterwards, we read, "The spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him." c. xvi. v. 14. Josephus, says, "Strange and demoniacal disorders came upon him, and brought upon him such suffocations as were ready to choke him." Saul's servants well knew the nature of his complaint, that God permitted him to be troubled with an evil spirit.— This came upon him by *fits*, as is evident from what they said to him in the interval of his paroxysms. They recommended a skilful musician, and said, "It shall come to pass *when the evil spirit from God*

is upon thee, that he shall play with his hand and thou shalt be well." v. 16, 17. When he consented, they particularly recommended David, and they said "*The Lord is with him.*" v. 18. "And when he was come Saul was pleased with him," says Josephus, "for he charmed his passion, and was the only physician against the trouble he had from evil spirits, *whenever it was that it came upon him, and this by reciting of hymns and playing upon the harp, and bringing Saul to his right mind again.*" Antiq. B. vi. c. 8. The Sacred History says, "And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul that David took an harp and played with his hand; so Saul was refreshed and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him." 1 Sam. xvi. 23.

We well know what a spirit of pure devotion glowed in the heart of "the sweet psalmist of Israel." "The Lord was with him," and if while with his skilful hand he played on the harp, he sung the ninety-first psalm, no evil spirit could long endure the fervency of his devotion, and the powerful, spiritual strokes of his holy resistance. The suitability of that psalm on such an occasion is remarked by Bishop Patrick, who observes, "Maimonides thinks (as other of the Rabbins also do) that the psalmist hath a peculiar respect to the incursions of evil spirits." v. 5, 6. See his Commentary. Here is an instance of expelling an evil spirit with as much purity as in the apostolic times; and such conduct would expel an evil spirit in any place, or in any age of the world. David was an example worthy of imitation; his praying faith would expel demons even without his harp.

But the Jews very soon neglected this holy example, and departed from this righteous mode of resisting evil spirits, and as the papists have done

since, they used superstitious magic rather than pure and fervent devotion. Solomon himself has been suspected of being justly reprehensible for departing from his pious father's example, and giving too much countenance to magical tricks and conjurations.— Josephus says, “He composed incantations by which distempers are alleviated, and he left behind him the manner of using exorcisms, by which they drive away demons,” &c. &c. *Antiq. B. viii. c. 2.* The judicious reader will be pleased to see Mr. Whiston's note on the place. He says: “Some pretended fragments of these books of conjuration of Solomon are still extant in Fabricius's *Cod. Pseudepigr. Vet. Tes.* page 1054, though I entirely differ from Josephus in his supposal that such books and arts of Solomon were parts of that wisdom which was imparted to him by God in his younger days; they must rather have belonged to such profane but curious arts, as we find mentioned, *Acts xix. 13,—20,* and had been derived from the idolatry and superstition of his heathen wives and concubines in his old age, when he had forsaken God and God had forsaken him, and given him up to demoniacal delusions. Nor does Josephus's strange account of his root Baara (*See Wars, B. vii. c. 6. sect. 3.*) seem to be other than that of its magical use in such conjurations.”

True religion always armed its possessors with a power to overcome evil spirits; and it has always been the policy of Satan to beguile and corrupt the people of God, that they might forsake the word and spirit of the Lord, and degenerate to superstition.— Thus Josephus's root Baara, Tobit's fish's liver, and the popish holy water, and all such superstitious, magical trumpery, whereby Satan blinded the pagan nations, blasted the Jewish people, and corrupted the catholic christians, have all the same origin and tendency.

With such practices of superstition, the old serpent the devil, has deceived the world. Among ancient pagans he could be *Æsculapius* or Mars, Jupiter or Saturn. With the Jews he could be Raphael or Asmodeus, and he can serve his purpose with popish exorcisms, &c. He still can be the master of ceremonies in his own province of magical practices; the zealous patron of the white or black witch; but whether he comes as a tormenting demon or a healing angel; with the black witch or the magical doctor, his intention is always and every where the same, to deceive, to corrupt, and to destroy. Let even protestants beware.

In the astrological way of cure, the friends of the patient have generally their part to act in magical practices. They also must act on the principles, and perform the ceremonies of witchcraft, must keep "the sacraments of the devil," and assist the magical doctor to bewitch the witch, or burn incense for the evil spirit. Thus the evil spreads, and the guilt is abundantly increased by this mode of cure.

It is painful to give such a detail of these ancient astrological arts, which have deluded the pagan nations, brought down vengeance on the Israelites and Jews, corrupted even the catholic christian church, and to the present time are working deceitfully among many protestant British "christians" of different denominations. They are evil deeds that cannot bear the light of revelation to shine directly upon them. To shut our eyes upon them, and give them the advantage of our connivance and of their desired darkness and silence, may cherish their growth. "Whatsoever maketh manifest is light," and it becomes all who bear the christian name, to have no fellowship with these destructive works of darkness, but rather *reprove* them: God and his prophets have

set us the example. I have seen them lurking and poisoning in the darkness of neglected obscurity, and now drag them out to light, to show their viper fangs, that the tempted may beware. It would ill-become a watchman at his post to see such an enemy skulking and never warn the people.

By the astrological practice of physic to torment the aggressor with magical incantations, ceremonies, &c. or thus to bewitch the witch, has appeared to some as a just punishment on the evil creature. But however justly such a pest may deserve to suffer, those who seek revenge in the same criminal mode of proceeding, involve themselves also in the same punishment and guilt. If we employ Satan in our cause, we may expect he will some way and time or other make us rue our obligation; and the offended God may in justice leave us in the hands of that enemy with whom we have formed an alliance, and whose assistance we have so sinfully sought.

The astrological practice of physic includes another part of the diabolical superstitions, which is, what the scripture calls *observing times*. 2 Kings, xxi. 6. That is, an idolatrous mode of observing times in order to obtain the celestial influences to assist in the astrological incantations, and make the magical incantations, &c. more effectual.— A professor and teacher of the astrological practice of physic, when giving directions how to bewitch or torment the witches, says, “I have found by experience, that they will be grievously tormented, and ‘the more so if the moon be in scorpio, in square, or opposition to his significator when it is done.” This criminal art of observing the times when the benevolent devils or malevolent gods, among “the host of heaven,” are supposed to rule over persons and things on the face of the earth, runs through the

whole business of astrology. Enough of this may be seen in an almanack, that like the Chaldean philosophy, poisons the scientific advantages of astronomy with the superstitious and idolatrous corruptions of judicial astrology. In astrological physic drugs must be associated with planetary influence, by carefully observing the time of gathering, applying, &c. according to the planetary aspects; for magical doctors maintain that herbs may have very different, or even opposite effects according to the planetary aspects, or the supposed ruling power of the stars at the times in which the herbs are gathered and applied. So also in their impious *divinations* and idolatrous prophesying the times must be distributed into lucky and unlucky, as though the only, true, universal, eternal God of love was superseded in the government of the world and the affairs of men, by the astrologer's malignant gods or benevolent devils, which he believes inhabit those heavenly bodies that our good God has created!

The astrological practice of physic is the practice of *sorcery* according to the popular and scriptural use of that term. In *technical* language, that is, as used by magical professors, the term *sorcery* is restricted to signify the use of drugs under the influence of magical incantations, with an intention to injure some person. But like the term *witchcraft* it is used in a more general sense by other persons, and by the inspired writers, to signify the use of drugs in connection with magical ceremonies, for injury or benefit. The astrological practice of physic is, therefore, a species of *sorcery*, and as such to be conscientiously avoided by all who would escape the just judgment of God.

The system of astrology has been proved among evil spirits to be a very ingenious invention that has

admirably well answered their purpose. It is very convenient for them to have particular times appointed and rules agreed upon, by which they are to exert their influences to the utmost of their concentrated ability on every special occasion. Observing the times, when the planets are said to rule in the affairs of men, serves as a principle of general understanding and accommodation, between evil spirits and their human allies. At the same time attributing the influence to the stars serves admirably well to *deceive* all that neglect God and follow such delusions. It fixes their unsuspecting gaze on the imposing scenery of the planetary system, behind which evil spirits conceal themselves, and prepare their machinations for the gratification and destruction of all who may be allured to the theatre of such criminal science.— Devils must skulk under some covering to escape detection, and accomplish their design before man or woman suspects them. Satan was in the garb of a serpent when he played his first part; to take with the philosophers at Chaldea he garnished himself with the heavens; to impose upon others he has assumed the name of some respected dead hero; in ten thousand forms and names has this old enemy imposed upon the world, and does so to this day. Evil spirits are more than half subdued when they and their wiles are detected.

While the world was worshipping devils under various names and forms, and philosophers themselves were adoring and consulting them as gods, christianity detected and exposed them, forced them from their haunts and turned their worshippers to the living and true God. How inexcusable is it then for modern Britons, in these gospel days, to be found in the council chamber of demons, consulting the diabolical delusions of planetary aspects, trembling at reputed malevolent stars, and seeking the benevolent assistance of Jupiter,

Mercury, and devils. Why should he who knows there is a Saviour, bow like a pagan at the altar, and consult the priest of the malevolent Mars and Saturn, and thus worship the devil, to fulfil his infernal "conditions of peace," to *bribe* him to depart and suspend for a while his hostile operations? It is the duty of every christian to "renounce the devil and all his works," not to treat with him by astrology, but to take the shield of faith and the sword of the spirit, and force the enemy to retreat.

Whoever is determined to *resist*, has no reason whatever to *fear* the power of evil spirits. God has given to every man power over the enemy, and if he will but use it the victory is sure. Our Saviour "holds the powers of hell in chains," and every link is numbered. People often injure themselves by believing that devils have more power than they really possess; and there have been thousands who have imposed on credulity by proclaiming the almost omnipotence of devils, and pretending to an influence with them, and assistance from them, which however they may be devilish enough to desire, their master is not allowed to give. God permits the devil to be our *tempter*, but it is our *sinning* that makes him our *destroyer*. A few observations on this subject may be acceptable from *Archbishop Secker*. He says:

"Though the devil hath no power of his own over us, we may give him as much as we will, and become slaves and vassals to him as long as we please. In this sense his empire is very large, and on account of it the scripture calls him "the prince of the power of darkness," and even the "god of this world."— For he was and is still, in great propriety of speech, the god of many heathen nations; who instead of the righteous maker of heaven and earth, worship deities of such vile and mischievous characters, as we

justly ascribe to the evil one. And even where faith in the true Deity is professed, yet pretended arts of magic, witchcraft, conjuring, fortune-telling, and such like wicked follies, approach more or less to the same crime. For if any of the wretches guilty of these things, either have or imagine they have any communication with the devil, they plainly rebel against God, and endeavour at least to confederate with his enemy. Or if they only *pretend* a communication with him,—yet this is very inconsistent with renouncing him. And even when they do not so much as pretend it, and would make us believe that they have such extraordinary skill and power derived from more innocent sources, though they profess no respect to his person, they imitate him in one of his worst qualities, as he is *the father of lies*. And the lies of this kind are very pernicious ones. They corrupt the notions of religion; give persons unworthy opinions of God; and lead them to imagine that other beings, as the stars, or even names, as chance and fate, share with Him in the government of the world. But indeed lies of all sorts are peculiarly the works of him who was a *liar* as well as a *murderer from the beginning*, whosoever therefore allows himself in any of these things *is of his father the devil, and the lusts of his father he doeth.*” Lecture iii. on the Catechism.

Whatever may be our opinion respecting the degree of satanic agency exerted in combination with the magical ceremonies in the astrological practice of physic, one important point must now be very evident to the candid reader, and that is, the *sinfulness* of employing it. An argument this which must prevail with him that fears God, and persuade him to avoid this evil way, as he would the path he knew to be infested with vipers and scorpions, with the hidden snares of death and hell. As there is a good way to deliverance from demoniac oppression, it evinces the

greatest *folly*, as well as wickedness, to neglect that good, and choose the evil way.

In cases of demoniac possession the astrological practice of physic affords but a lingering and uncertain mode of relief, even if there were no guilt in the use of it, and no spiritual danger attending it. When evil spirits have taken possession, though for their interest and honour, to procure the confidence, gratitude, and respect of the patient and his friends to themselves and their own arts, they will sometimes relinquish their possession for this compensation; yet, they are loath to go, and will sometimes torment for months before they will wholly depart. When they are properly opposed by christianity, though they rage furiously under the scourging power of religious resistance, they are compelled, however much against their will, to make a speedy departure. On magical principles success is not always sure. The hungry roaring lion will sometimes receive no bribe; cruel and voracious as the wolf, he will not depart from his prey. This was often the case in ancient days: magical incantations often failed. Satan would enter into no truce; would yield the howling victim no quarter, however earnestly his priests with all their Chaldean skill besought his favours. None but the christians could always succeed in expelling all kinds of demons. They, as Tertullian speaks, "declared magic to be deceit, and they were not ignorant of the cause of that deceit, who discerned wicked spirits not with a friendly, but with a hostile knowledge, and dealt with them, *not by an inviting operation, but by a resisting power.*" With that *resisting power*, in their master's name, they could always take the prey from the mighty and deliver the lawful captive.

The employment of astrological means, in cases of demoniac possession, gives encouragement to

satan's influence. It is courting his favour and operation instead of expelling him against his will. When the magical method of relief has been resorted to, as far as I am acquainted with recent cases of possession, the evil has spread for some time; so that I fear the use of these means, though productive of relief in some cases, tends greatly to encourage the cause; which again calls for the same means. Thus while the cunning deceiver draws the whole attention of people to his sport of fast-and-loose with the body of the demoniac, he rivets the chains of pagan superstition on their souls.

The disgrace brought on religion by the employment of astrological doctrine, is a consideration which will dissuade every man from its use who conscientiously respects the name and regards the honour of God. Because it not only sets the evil spirit in our estimation on equality with the true God, but even gives the wicked one and his sacraments the preference to the God of nature and grace, and all the means he has provided for certain and perfect relief in such cases of distress. Is it because there is no salvation in Christ Jesus, that the christian must go to Beelzebub the god of Ekron, or which is as bad, to astrological diviners and magical doctors to consult the stars? to learn the depths of satan, and perform the ceremonies of the infernal world? If the affliction is from evil agency, is there not a God in Heaven to whom we may pray, and in whose name we are authorized to expel evil spirits? Does not the Holy Bible teach us how to resist the devil and make him flee from us? Shall we then instead of acting as christians, go, like pagans, and offer at the altar of superstition the coins that tell us of the *grace of God*, and thus sacrifice our religion, our conscience, and our honour to the gods of paganism? And shall we thus carry the image and superscription of a christian king, and profanely de-

grade our God and our country by thus offering to "the host of Heaven" in gratitude for the help obtained from the benevolent influence of Mercury, Lucifer, and Beelzebub? If there were no salvation in God, and if He had no power to revenge the insult thus offered to his dignity and mercy, then might British christians go to the arts and gods of Canaan, Egypt, and Chaldea, for help in the time of trouble. But surely the Lord our God, who is a jealous God, and a consuming fire, will not suffer these abominations to pass unnoticed, or those who practice them to escape his wrathful indignation.

Strange afflictions are not the only cases in which the magical doctors are consulted and employed, astrological divination is resorted to by some persons when they have lost some portions of their property. Not satisfied with the exertion of diligence and prudence in the search they must employ divination to obtain knowledge, as though communion with devils was better than resignation to God. If a thief escapes human detection and punishment, for a while, there is a broad eye that watched and will expose him; there is a hand that can, and in due time will, arrest him: to the bar he must come, and receive the due reward of his evil deeds. But some men, called christians, cannot wait for the slow progress of divine justice; and they will rather themselves buy, beg, or steal knowledge from the devil, that they may have a speedy revenge, than wait in patience for the coming of the righteous Judge; and, however harsh the words may seem, they would rather run after the thief to hell, and expose their souls to all its torments, than suffer the temporal loss of a trifle, and refer the case to God, as He commands them. They also as well as the thief, are treasuring up wrath against the day of the wrath, and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God, "for vengeance belongeth unto me, and I will repay it, saith the Lord."

He that withdraws his soul from the government, and counsel, and protection of the Most High, and yields it to the imposing delusions of magical and diabolical divination, is in the direct way to lose it in eternal perdition. And what is a man profited if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? What occult science, what magic art, what divining demon, can or will teach him how to recover the loss of his soul? Surely it is more profitable for a man to suffer the loss of a little property, or to remain ignorant when God does not see it good for him to know, than by the use of forbidden arts to despise the goodness and rouse the vengeance of him that is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

The guilt of a sin is aggravated as the temptations to commit it, and the advantages to be expected from it, are well known to be diminished. There are many persons, especially young persons, who sin against God and their own souls by resorting to Astrologers, that they may divine to them, by their pagan art of judicial astrology, something of their future fortune. These people have no griefs to plead, no losses to deplore, no affliction to be removed; but they have a wanton curiosity to know what God has thought proper to conceal. "Secret things belong unto the Lord;" but these people will associate with conjuring false prophets, pagan idols, and seducing demons, to invade the divine right, and impudently to pry into what divine providence thinks proper to conceal. But such bad associates will never lead to sound wisdom. To select such evil counsellors and to renounce "the guide of our youth" is truly to *sport ourselves with our own deceivings*. It is the madness of folly to expect to invert the order of the divine government; or to expect to escape the justice, if we oppose the authority of God. The very principle which leads a person to consult the planetary influ-

ence as the disposing power of his moral conduct, of his life and death, is a rejection of God Almighty as the governor of the world; and to renounce our own reason and judgment, and sacrifice our mental powers to the abominable delusions and diabolical impositions of divination, is the greatest indignity we can offer to our own understanding. Let a young man listen to the counsel of experience, and regard the advice of paternal friendship; let him trust the wisdom and goodness of God, and be guided by his word, he will then do well and be happy.

The future part of our life, its happiness or misery, its respectability or disgrace; its continuance, the manner in which it may be spent, and even the way in which it may close, are in a very considerable degree contingent, and under our own controul. We are now in a state of moral discipline, and are on trial for eternity; our own conduct, as it may be prudent or foolish, will infallibly affect our happiness or misery. The God of heaven will give wisdom to them that ask him, and his word is an infallible guide to happiness, honour, and eternal life.

Thus saith the Lord, "He that will love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: let him eschew evil and do good; let him seek peace and ensue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous and his ears are open unto their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." 1 Pet. iii. 10,—12. Ps. xxxiv. 11,—17. God has given all the good advice that is necessary to guide us comfortably through a righteous life and a peaceful death to a glorious immortality; but if a human being despises all this, and prefers delusion to instruction, and the advice of satan to the command of God, he can have it. And the offended God of heaven may in justice

allow the father of lies to become a true prophet, and to predict the wicked enquirer's doom. When the righteous counsel, the guardian care, and divine authority of God our Saviour, are distrusted and despised, and when forbidden arts, instead of the word of the Lord, are consulted, it is just that the rejected Creator should leave the sinner to perish in his own way. Remember king Saul; he enquired, was condemned, and executed. 1 Chron. x. 13, 14.

THE SINFULNESS OF CHARMS.

There is another species of pagan superstition very common in England, which is nearly related to witchcraft and magical doctoring, and which comes under the same condemnation; I mean the use of CHARMS. The practice of charming is a genuine relict of the pagan diabolic arts. If it be a work of true benevolence to turn foreign pagans from idols, charms, and devils, to serve the living and true God; surely it is not unbecoming christian charity to be without partiality and endeavour to rescue *Britons* from the same degrading superstitions. As the serpent beguiled Eve by his subtilty, so the minds of many professing godliness, in different christian churches, are corrupted, with the practice of superstitious charming, from that simplicity of heart and purity of conduct which is due to Christ from all that bear and profess his name. Many of these do not know (and how can they except some one teach them?) that such practices are *sinful*; that they are "an abomination to the Lord," or they would no more be guilty of charming diseases than of worshipping devils.

Charms are frequently used to relieve a variety of disorders, such as burns, scalds, warts, agues, fits, tooth-ach, many afflictions of children, and some diseases among cattle. They are also used by some

to move the passions of others, and therefore called philtres or love charms.

The force of imagination, or which is the same thing, the power of the mind over the body, to induce or relieve diseases, is well known to many besides the curious in experimental philosophy.—Common sense very often applies to it, and the scriptures often remind us of it. “A merry heart doeth good like a medicine; but a broken spirit drieth the bones.” Prov. xvii. 22. Thoughts work upon the passions, and the passions materially affect the animal functions. That there is established a reciprocal influence between the mental and corporeal faculties is an indubitable fact; but how mind is united to matter and exerts its influence over it, will probably remain a secret to us all, till the mysterious compound of human nature has been analysed by death, and re-compounded by the resurrection. These great experiments may teach us with certainty the nature of a subject on which it may be utterly in vain to theorize. But a philosophical discussion of the influence of the imagination* over the body, or of mind over matter, is not properly our present business. Our design is rather to show the *sin* of that superstitious perversion of the judgment and passions of men, in that system of charming, which the Author of nature has strictly prohibited and frequently punished.

“Whatsoever actions, gestures, signs, rites, and ceremonies, are used by men or women to work wonders, having no power to effect the same, either by creation and nature, or by special appointment from God, they must all be referred to this head, and reckoned for charms.” (W. Perkins’s Works, vol. 3. p. 634.)

* See Bacon’s *Sylva Sylvarum*, Article Imagination.

The methods used in charming are frequently such as are by no means calculated to produce the desired effect. For there is often no material connection whatever of the matter of the charm with the subject to be affected by it; and sometimes no natural communication of idea whatever from the charmer to the subject of his art. And when, as in some cases, the charm is applied to the body, it is no more naturally calculated to produce the effect than the sailor's whistle is to raise the wind.

As to the *efficacy* of charms, whether it be much or little, or none at all, the *folly and wickedness* of using them are evident from other considerations.— That charms are often used without effect is very certain. They are sometimes employed to accomplish what a good agency will not, and a bad agency cannot effect. That nature, in some cases, would have brought the desired relief, had there been no charm used, is sufficiently evident; and that imagination in other cases is sufficient to account for the effects produced will be readily admitted. But that charming never produces any effect more than can be accounted for on natural principles, with all our improvement in philosophy and metaphysics, is more than I should be willing to assert, because it is more than I or any other man could possibly prove: and however positively such a doctrine may be asserted, it might be as positively contradicted with numerous cases of fact, and with the testimony of thousands who practice their use. However, it is not their *efficacy* but their *iniquity* that I wish to prove. It may become the philosopher to laugh at the extreme *folly* of charming; and the divine is equally as consistent with his character when he reproves the *sin*. Whatever may be our opinions of the efficacy of charming, certain it is that there would be no difficulty in finding thousands of people, in this enlightened nation, who would

positively declare that their warts were charmed away, and that other surprising effects were produced by the use of charms. And it would be equally easy on the other hand to prove, that charms have mocked the hopes of those who were so foolish as to trust in them.

It is well known, at least it is positively asserted and confidently believed, that there is in some cases, a power in charms, or rather, in connection with their use, which is more than natural; that there is an occult or mysterious agency which gives them effect. There is sometimes (no matter how rarely) an effect produced by charming, which the charm itself, separately considered, has no power whatever to accomplish. No more agency in itself to produce the effect, than any *ceremonies of a religious nature* are calculated to produce any good effect without the grace of God accompanying them. The efficacy therefore which is not material or natural must be *spiritual*.— We must be allowed to compare spiritual things with spiritual, because there is an evil spirit which *counterfeits* the Holy Ghost as much as possible to deceive men. The spiritual agency which produces any effect in charming, or is depended upon to produce that effect, must be either divine or diabolical. It cannot be divine, because God disowns the influence and forbids the practice. The reasonable influence is, therefore, it is *diabolical*. The correctness of this conclusion may be proved from the testimony of God himself, who classes charmers with others who practice diabolic arts, and in that connection forbids them all. Deut. xviii.

The father of lies is the father of charms, and to act under his influence in charming or in lying, is an evil which greatly degrades and injures human nature. A few observations on the nature of some popular

charms, will prove that charming is justly ranked with those practices properly called diabolical, and which bring down the wrath of God on those who do such things.

Some charms are in their nature so evidently and so utterly *contemptible*, that it is astonishing how any human beings could be persuaded to place any confidence in them, or to *use* them, but on the supposition that the evil spirit hath "blinded their minds." The very *contemptibleness* of their nature is an evidence of their diabolical origin and design. Man was made in the image of God, and his envious, proud, cunning enemy, thus befools him, and makes him that should be the happy heir of glory, the miserable "heir of everlasting shame and contempt." To despise our vulgar brethren on this account, and leave them to perish in these foolish delusions, without making one effort to bring them to wisdom and righteousness, is to join issue with the great adversary, and to begin the work of infernals, instead of imitating Jesus Christ, who had "compassion on the ignorant and them that are out of the way." It surely must be better to convince them of the sin, and to rejoice in their repentance, than to laugh at their error, and leave them to perish in the snare.

The contemptible runs through most if not all satanic institutions; it is as legibly inscribed on every species of idolatry, of the savage or refined nations, as on charms, which are in fact but a part of idolatry. The ancient prophets and primitive christians exposed the contemptible nature of the heathen gods, and their modes of worship, with their superadded filthiness, in such plain terms as only the necessity of the case could authorize. Evil spirits are just such doctors as they are gods, and the astrological practice of physic bears the contemptible stamp of

unclean spirits : in some parts it is too disgusting to be explained. Charms are some of the first parts of practical magic, and the use of them prepares the mind to proceed farther into the mystery of iniquity and the depths of satan. To employ the old murderer as our surgeon is the very quintessence of folly ; under his care we have little to hope and much to fear. He hates, and will destroy us if he can.

There is a doctrine in the science of charms which shows how their author invades the divine right, imposes on credulity, and degrades the human mind, as though it were the business and sport of that evil genius to ape the true God, and to befool his favourite creature *man* ; and that is, the requisition of *faith* in the use of charms, in order to secure their efficacy. Satan has mimicked and counterfeited the true God, as far as he possibly could, in almost every thing he has said and done. In this case he evidently imitates the doctrines of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has so frequently said, "Be it unto thee according to thy faith." On immutable truth and almighty grace a person may well ground his confidence, and justice and mercy may wisely unite to reward *the obedience of faith* in proportion to its efforts. But in the practice of charming, on what is the faith of the human being to be placed ? On a piece of rotten stick ?—putrifying flesh ?—the muttering of a charmer ?—the tricks of cunning men ?—or the benevolence of the devil ! and the veracity of the father of lies ! How maliciously does satan sport with human credulity, when he draws the confidence of man from divine truth, to his own delusions, and the souls of men from the rock of ages into the whirlpool of magical superstitions ! The poor deluded human being, at satan's instigations, forsakes the God of his salvation, trusts in a charm, grasps the reed, and perishes ;—thus he becomes the laugh of hell.

Men that will not believe and obey the Holy God of power and truth and grace, may thus mis-place his confidence on such a vain thing as a charm, and thus hope for some good from an occult agency, which, while it, perhaps, cures a wart on the finger, poisons the immortal soul. Man swallows the magical bait, and the hidden, barbed hook takes hold of his heart.

We pity poor Africans who are so befooled with their gregrees; sorry that their confidence should be so abused by their obeah men, and the father of lies, while professing christianity in Great Britain we think ourselves wiser than our sable brethren, and practice similar superstitions, in the face of the gospel sun! Where is the difference between the African gregree and the European charm? The superstitious practice is the same; but in Britain the sin is greater and the guilt more aggravated, because we have the oracles of God, which declare these things to be *an abomination to the Lord*.

Some charms have *dishonesty* in their very principle, which makes manifest to whom they belong.— To give an instance. It is recommended by popular tradition “to *steal* a little meat from a butcher’s stall, with that stolen meat touch the wart, then bury it, and as the meat decays so shall the wart.”— I have no expectation that this magical recipe will be new to any reader; it is so generally known and recommended; but I hope it will appear in a new light to some. Now is it not easy to discover in this popular charm the very principle that has brought hundreds to an untimely and disgraceful end?— Whether this instruction is of scientific, vulgar, or of diabolic origin, one thing is certain, *it recommends theft*. Whatever teaches the advantage of dishonesty and encourages the practice of robbery, must come from some enemy of God and man. It may be ob-

jected, "but this is such a *little* thing."—True it is a little thing, and so is a pistol bullet: and so is a mortal dose of poison. How small a leak will sink a ship?—how small a spark will explode a magazine, or consume a town? And how small a sin will destroy a soul? "He that contemneth small things shall fall by little and little." Eccles. xix. 1. The little acorn may become the sturdy oak, and the *seeds* of vice and superstition, if planted in human nature, will grow and bear the fruits of death.

"Oft we see a young beginner, practice little pilfering ways,
Till grown up a hardened sinner, and the gallows ends his days."

If good effects are to be anticipated from *thieving* in miniature, how much more when practiced on a larger scale? If there be a secret power that thus encourages dishonesty with his healing influences, what must that power be? Is it good or evil? Is it nature? Is it God or is it the devil? Common sense may here discern the print of a cloven foot, where the motto of the impression is *dishonesty*. Whether the crime be in magnitude or in miniature, the *principle* is the same. Thus saith the Lord Jesus: "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much." Luke xvi. 10.

On this divine principle is founded that useful maxim, which like a law of righteousness has guarded many a child in temptation, and directed his course in honesty: "*It is a sin to steal a pin.*"—"Serve the devil for a penny," says T. Taylor on Titus, ii. 10. "thou wilt be more serviceable for a pound, and augment thy labours, as he doth his wages."

In another popular charm the virtue of thankfulness is most cunningly and wickedly assaulted, and the vice of ingratitude expressly taught. The friends

of a person afflicted with fits are instructed to beg of so many persons, generally *virgins*, so many pence as will purchase a silver ring for the patient to wear, to charm away or keep off the fits. But the beggar of the pence must be careful not to say *thank you* to the givers, or express any sign of gratitude for the favour. Here again how evidently does the system of popular charms betray its cloven foot! Does not the evil genius of magic and superstition mean to signify by this, that such contributions to magical practices and pagan superstitions are due to his infernal majesty? Or does he mean by this stratagem to pollute the *minds* of those who have virtuously preserved their bodies in chastity? Or does he design, in opposition to the wisdom of God and the good sense of mankind, to teach the authority of superstition, with the importance and excellency of ingratitude? Or, are not all these evils cherished together? These corrupt principles tend very cunningly to the destruction of all goodness, and therefore of all happiness.

Any man of candour, that has patience enough and will fairly and seriously examine the nature of these popular charms, which are still so very common in our cities, towns, and villages, will readily perceive, that their origin is diabolical, their nature is sinful, and their tendency very injurious to the morals of mankind. And these are the things which many have thought were not to be *seriously* reprov'd, only to be laugh'd at. "Fools make mock of sin." It may be diversion to imps and infidels to see immortal beings, practicing such fatal errors while good men groan and angels weep to see pagans and "christians" so entangled in diabolical delusions.

Some charms make a profane and direct attack on the most sacred institution of the christian religion.

It is no uncommon thing in the art of charming to direct the friends of a patient afflicted with fits to procure if possible, a piece of silver which was given at the *sacrament* of the Lord's supper; which identical piece of money is to be made into a ring, to be worn on the finger, or to have a hole made in it, that it may be worn on the bosom of the patient. Thus the sacred offering which has been contributed in christian benevolence to the poor, and in grateful remembrance of the sacrificial death of Christ, and by the officiating priest most solemnly presented to God at his altar, is by superstition to be desecrated to the purpose of a pagan charm! A piece of diabolical magic this, which mere pagans cannot commit, aggravated with the heavy guilt of profaning the most sacred things of the true God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ. A sin which can be paralleled only by the corruptions of judaism by pagan abominations. "For the sons of Athaliah, that wicked woman, had broken up the house of God; and also, all the dedicated things of the house of the LORD, did they bestow upon Baalim." 2 Chron. xxiv. 7. What can be more insulting to the God of heaven, or more gratifying to evil spirits, than to behold these "dedicated things" thus heathenishly profaned, and desecrated to serve the purpose of a magical charm?

If we wish to justify "the wicked one" from having any thing to do with these abominations, and to palliate the guilt of such paganism in England, we may contend that these are only vulgar errors of imagination; the subjects of ridicule rather than serious rebuke. But let us be consistent with ourselves as philosophers ought to be. Then let us call robbery the error of the fingers; lies and libels, the errors of the tongue; drunkenness and gluttony, the errors of the palate; envy, hatred, and malice, the errors of the heart. Errors indeed they all are, by

whatever members or faculties committed; but let us not deceive ourselves, God is not mocked, they are criminal and sinful too, and bring down the wrath of God upon the guilty. God is a spirit, and his law is spiritual. It claims dominion over the powers of our heart and mind, as well as the members of our body. Therefore it is as much our duty to keep our "imagination" and passions, our minds and hearts, from such evil superstition, as it is to "keep our hands from picking and stealing, and our tongues from evil speaking, lying and slandering." We can feel for our own property and honour, and for our neighbour's, let us also feel for the property and honour of God. The Lord requires truth in the inward parts, as well as veracity of conversation, and honesty in dealing.

Where God our Saviour is properly known, and the word of the Lord is justly regarded, charms are cordially despised and conscientiously avoided, as the contrivances of wicked men and evil spirits. When the recaptured Africans were instructed in christianity at Sierra Leone, they publicly burnt their charms, as the Ephesian magicians did their magical books, and said as they saw them blazing in the fire, "what fools we be to trust such things as these." It is high time that the fire of christianity had consumed all the charms of Britain.

When satan has blinded the minds of men, charms are the little mock saviours on which the deluded are taught to depend for health and safety. As they are in opposition to the authority of God, and contrary to nature, and used as means of obtaining supernatural influence to heal the diseases and protect the persons of those who use them; so charms are properly a species of idolatry, and idolatry as gross as that of heathens, depending on any other piece of silver,

brass or wood, or on the influence of supernatural agency exerted in connection with their use. A poor benighted African will wear his charms upon his legs, and a poor deluded Britain will wear one on the finger, or in the bosom : and both will mutter over words to effect some supernatural works.

Charms are sometimes written, if the charmer knows how, in a learned or in unintelligible language, to give them the air of mystery. Sometimes with the initials of the names of different angels or saints, in a curiously compounded form, as the magic art directs. However different the words may be in different charms, or whether there are any words used or none, the *principle* is generally the same, which is a profane application to some spiritual agency. This has been very openly expressed in a charm which, as it illustrates the real nature of them all, may be mentioned to excite caution. The patient was directed to wear the paper charm in her bosom, and strictly charged not to examine it. But not having sufficient self-denial to restrain her curiosity, she unfolded the charm and read : "Torment her not till she's in hell."

These popular superstitious charms are on the principle, and form a part of *witchcraft*, and compose the alphabet of the black art, and whatever supernatural power accompanies their use must be *diabolical*. Whether we really gain such supernatural influence or not, does not palliate the guilt of *seeking* it. We might seek what satan could not give ; but though this may prove his weakness, it also proves our wickedness. It is not the bread which is eaten, or the wine which is drank in the holy sacrament, which gives the grace accompanying their use ; it is neither the paper nor the ink which makes believers of the scriptures wise unto salvation, but the *spiritual influence* accompanying these truths by divine cove-

nant and mercy. In Baptism it is not the water sprinkled, or the words pronounced, which benefits the soul, but the *inward and spiritual grace* which the Holy Ghost gives when properly sought. So in these diabolical ceremonies, which have been made to counterfeit divine institutions and impose upon men, the efficacy is not in the matter employed, nor merely in the imagination of such as use it, but in the agency accompanying their employment. The evil spirit may direct the deluded imagination in witchcraft, charms, &c. as well as the wicked heart that prompts the tongue in deceit and blasphemy, and the hands in robbery and murder. When *injury* is done to our persons or property, we can more readily admit the devil has a hand in it, but when he puts on his surplice and does us a little good, though it be only just enough to bait his hook, we feel reluctant to admit the operation of evil agency. Hence all the effects of charms have, by some, been attributed to mere imagination.

Witchcraft, by some, may be used in a very restricted sense to signify doing palpable mischief by magical means; but in the scriptures and by divines it is used to signify the use of magical means in general. Mr. Perkins defines it thus: "Witchcraft is a wicked art serving for the working of wonders by the assistance of the devil, so far forth as God in justice shall permit." The same author says, "A charm is a spell or verse consisting of strange words, used as a sign or watch-word to the devil to cause him to work wonders." Several forms of ancient charms, and an account of the supposed power of "mighty magic verse" may be seen in Virgil's eighth Pastoral. The Roman Poets have preserved the ancient "Egyptian poison in their golden cups" of classical literature. Popery* has sanctioned and imi-

* See Dr. H. More's *Mystery of Iniquity*, B. 1.

tated much, and abundantly increased the evil by adopting and multiplying superstitious practices; so that it is not surprizing to find that thousands of our own country people are still learning and practicing *witchcraft* in a small way, and are ignorant of the *wickedness* of their superstitions. "This must be remembered," says W. Perkins, "that by witches we understand not those only which kill and torment; but all *diviners*, *charmners*, *jugglers*, all wizards, commonly called wise men and wise women."

It will be readily admitted, that many who apply to the astrological practice of physic, who enquire of *wise men*, and who use charms, &c. do not know, or do not believe, that there is any thing so diabolical, or any thing so wicked in these practices, as has been here represented. Did they know this to be true, they would not be guilty of the sins. But ignorance and unbelief, though they may in some degree palliate the guilt, will by no means justify the sin. In ignorance and unbelief the princes of this world crucified the Lord of glory, Saul of Tarsus, like a savage wolf, worried the flock of God, and thousands hasten to eternal death.

THE WICKEDNESS AND DANGER OF SUPERSTITIOUS PRACTICES.

For the instruction and conviction of such as may be willing to receive it, we will appeal to some authorities on the subject of the sinful and diabolical nature of these superstitious practices, and their dangerous tendency.

Bishop Hopkins, in his much esteemed Exposition on the Ten Commandments, speaks thus on the second, which forbids idolatry.

“The most execrable idolatry that is, is that of entering into league and correspondence with the devil; consult and invoke him, and by any wicked arts to implore or make use of his help and assistance. And of this are those guilty in the highest degree who enter into any express compact with the devil; which is always ratified with some homage or worship given to him: And in a secondary and more low degree, those who apply themselves to seek help from such forlorn wretches, as use traditionary *charms* and *incantations*, or any vain observances, to free them from pains and diseases, or other troubles that molest them. For all those things which have not a natural efficiency to produce that effect for which they are used, may very reasonably be suspected to have been agreed on formerly between the devil and some of his especial servants, and that all the virtue they retain is only from that compact; which as it was explicit in those that made it, so it is implicit in those that use them; for they still act in the power of that first stipulation and agreement.” p. 137.

A person may use some parts of the art of witchcraft without becoming a *witch*, in the proper sense of the word; because that character implies one that by open or secret league *knowingly* and *willingly* consents to use the aid of an evil spirit.— And therefore, as Mr. W. Perkins observes, “There are to be excluded from being witches all such superstitious persons, men or women, as use charms and enchantment for the effecting of any thing upon a *superstitious and erroneous persuasion*, that the charms have virtue to do such things, *not knowing* that it is the action of the devil by these means; but thinking that God hath put virtue into them as he hath into herbs for physic. Of such persons we have, no doubt, abundance in this our land, who though they deal wickedly, and *sin grievously in using charms*, yet

because they intend not to join league with the devil, either secretly or formally, they are not to be counted witches. Nevertheless they are to be advertised in the mean time, that their state is sinful. For their present ungodly practices have prepared them already to this cursed trade. Wherefore I advise all ignorant persons to take heed and *beware of this dangerous evil, the use of charms*. For if they be once convinced in their consciences, and know that God hath given no power to such means, and yet shall use them, assuredly they do in effect, consent to the devil to be helped by him, and thereupon are joined in confederacy with him in the confidence of their own hearts, and so are become witches.

“Now let it be observed of what horrible impiety they stand guilty before God, who join in confederacy with satan. Hereby they renounce the Lord that made them, they make no more account of his favour and protection, they do quite cut themselves off from the covenant made with him in baptism, from the communion of the saints, from the true worship and service of God. And on the contrary they give themselves unto satan, as their God whom they continually fear and serve. Thus they are become the most detestable enemies to God and his people.—For this cause Samuel told Saul that *rebellion was as the sin of witchcraft*; that is, a most heinous and detestable sin in the sight of God.”

The most ancient of all writers was “Moses the man of God,” whose works display an intrinsic evidence of their divine inspiration and sanction, and will always be respected for their wisdom and truth; for their benevolence and piety; for their language, laws, and philosophy; as well as for their integrity, history, and antiquity, in proportion as they are read and understood, and as their readers increase in sound

knowledge and discretion. From Moses we learn, that the first instance of human intercourse with an evil spirit was in the garden of Eden. The first woman was the first offender, and all her posterity feel the sad effects of her crime. This diabolical commerce began with her as with most, if not all, of her sons and daughters, in *temptation*. This God permits, and men and women should be prepared to detect, resist, and overcome. Eve hearkened to the tempter who urged her to sin, but should have resisted him immediately with holy firmness. The wicked one, that great father and high priest of infidel philosophy, professed to teach knowledge. "Your eyes shall be opened;" as though God had either deceived her, or made her blind. "Ye shall be as Gods, knowing good and evil;" i. e. be independent of divine instruction and authority; all this delusive gain by infidelity and disobedience! How much this resembles the infidel philosophy of our own times! In whose language we might suspect we hear the hissing of the old serpent, the most subtil beast of the field which the Lord God had made, possessed of the most cunning evil demon that ever masked himself in man or beast to attack the innocence and happiness of human nature. The serpent beguiled Eve—she yielded to his temptations, lost her innocence, her glory, and corrupted her husband. Thus she entailed on her posterity a thousand mortal diseases, an enmity to God, a propensity to sin; a subjection to the tyrannical captivity of satan, and brought the bitter curse of death upon all the world. Therefore, "the whole creation groans and travaileth in pain together, even until now." What are the most diabolical sorceries to this? Here indeed are the seeds and principles of the diabolic arts and sciences, as well as infidel philosophy; and will not an imitation of the crimes of Eve, rejecting the same God and yielding to the same devil, still affect the

happiness, and *increase* the miseries of her posterity? All her children feel the mortal venom of the old serpent's sting; yet some of them between their infant cries and dying groans, will laugh and say, "It was all an allegory, or drama." Thus they may divert themselves till the scene changes and the principle of evil personified, or else the evil person assumes the character of the king of terrors, brandishing the poisoned dagger with which our sins have armed his malice, silences their tongues, and convinces them against their will, *the tragic tale is too true.*

Knowledge is the property and food of the mind; devils put poison in all they give; it therefore brings death. Eve feasted and died: let her children take warning. God forbids our learning the wisdom from beneath. He would not have us die the everlasting death. The knowledge he gives secures eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Every desire after property for the body or mind is not to be indulged; but some desires are rather to be mortified. As evil coveteousness may lead to *dishonesty*; so evil curiosity may lead to *divination*; both are idolatry, and exclude from the kingdom of God.

As a father dismisses from his service and his house the wicked servant that corrupts the moral principles of his children, and teaches them what is disgraceful and injurious to learn; so "the father of the spirits of all flesh" sets his face against the man or the woman who poisons the minds of his family with witchcraft, charms, divination, the wicked arts and sciences of ungodly superstition. An earthly sovereign has a political right to banish from his dominions, or even to deprive of life, the criminal traitors that conspire against his authority, and seek to introduce an enemy to govern in his place to the injury of the common-wealth. If, therefore, we ad-

mit the sovereignty of the "King of Kings, and Lord of Lords," we must allow the divine right to punish with death those who by the evil arts of superstition and witchcraft idolize an evil spirit, and teach the fear and service of the devil instead of the service of God, even though they do not, as monsters and murderers, injure or kill the bodies of their fellow creatures. It is by excluding from our reasonings the rightful dominion of God Almighty over his creatures that we infer any impropriety in the statute he enacted, *Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.*—The philosophy which does not admit *God and his rights*, is such a wisdom as devils have taught; and while it looks on witchcraft, charming, divination, astrology, &c. as a mere error of imagination, too trifling to be reprov'd, or "a beneficial fallacy," to be tolerated, and reproaches all that admit the fact and rebuke the iniquity of their practice, it becomes a kind of witchcraft in a different form, and under a different name, to accomplish the same end, the dishonour of God, and the eternal perdition of the souls of men. If there were no God, and human beings had no immortal souls, then the occult sciences and superstitious practices might include but little guilt, when they did not injure the bodies or property of men; but as men have immortal spirits, which may perish everlastingly through confidence in lies, or enjoy eternal life through the true and faithful knowledge of the true God, and of Jesus Christ whom he has sent; these abominable superstitious sciences and practices justly deserve all the severity with which they and their professors have been treated in obedience to divine authority.

To that divine authority, which, however it may have been neglected, contradicted, ridiculed, or blasphemed, will finally convince all gainsayers and judge the universe, let us make our appeal.

Thus saith the Lord: "Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I am the LORD your God." Lev. xix. 31. "The Wizards, (*yideonim*) i. e. the *wise or knowing ones*, from *yada*, to know or understand; called *wizard*, in Scotland, *wise or cunning man*, in England; and hence also the *wise woman*, the *white witch*. Not only all real dealers in familiar spirits, or necromantic or magical superstitions, are here forbidden; but also all pretenders to the knowledge of futurity, fortune-tellers, &c. &c. To attempt to know what God as not thought proper to reveal, is a sin against his wisdom, providence, and goodness. In mercy, great mercy, God has hidden the knowledge of futurity from man, and given him *hope*, in the *expectation* of future good in its place." Rev. Dr. A. Clarke on the place. "Wizards, or cunning persons," says Ainsworth, "so named of their knowledge which they pretended to have. These are joined to the *familiar spirits* aforesaid, as like unto them in sin; and both of them were to be killed by the magistrate. Lev. xx. 27." See also Bishop Patrick on the place.

The divine disapprobation and prohibition of all these superstitious, wicked arts and sciences is most fully declared in Deuteronomy, xviii. 9,—14. Thus saith the LORD: "When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you *any one* that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, *or* that useth divination, *or* an observer of times, *or* an enchanter, *or* a witch, *or* a charmer, *or* a consulter with familiar spirits, *or* a wizard, *or* a necromancer. For all that do these things *are* an abomination unto the Lord: and because of these abominations, the Lord thy God doth drive them out before thee. Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy

God. For these nations which thou shalt possess, hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners : but as for thee, the Lord thy God hath not suffered thee so to do."

On these words given by inspiration of God for our instruction or reproof, for our correction or caution, and which are profitable for the man of God, to furnish him for the good work of reproofing those of his neighbours who may commit such transgressions, it may be useful to make a few observations.

1. They contain a list of those superstitious, magical arts by which the heathen nations, in the time of Moses, held commerce with evil spirits, and provoked the Holy Spirit of God ; arts that are diabolical in their origin, their principle, their connections, their practice, and their tendency. These are all classed together by the Lord himself ; they are so much alike, and so closely related, that we cannot practice any one of them without involving ourselves in the condemnation of the whole. God forbids and condemns them all alike and altogether. These evil arts mix with each other, and are sometimes called by one name, and sometimes by another, so that it is unnecessary to distinguish their several species. "Moses uses these sundry expressions," says the Rev. J. Benson, "that he may prohibit the evil in all its forms."

2. The prevalence of these abominable superstitions among the Canaanitish nations is here asserted by divine authority. The different nations whose lands were given to the Israelites, hearkened unto observers of times, diviners, astrologers, soothsayers, &c. &c. These arts were therefore of early origin. They were of general prevalence in the time of Moses, and even in the time of Abraham there appears an allusion to them ; for God told him, "the

iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full." Gen. xv. 16. This list of their crimes shows the particular nature of their iniquities. Wicked Ham, and his own execrable son Canaan, are supposed to be the first patrons of these diabolical superstitions, and poor, wretched, miserable, devil-worshipping Africans are some of their progeny. To this day they practice the crimes of their fathers, and groan beneath their punishment and curse! Surely they have begun their hell upon earth. Horror-struck—one's soul shudders at a discovery of their crimes and woes!

“From the accounts we have of the abominations both of Egypt and Canaan, we may blush for human nature; for wherever it is without cultivation, and without the revelation of God, it is every thing that is vile in *principle*, and detestable in *practice*. Nor would any part of the habitable globe materially differ from Egypt and Canaan, had they not that rule of righteousness, the revealed LAW of God; and life and *immortality* been brought to light by the GOSPEL among them. From these accounts, for which we could easily find parallels in ancient Greece and Italy, we may see the absolute need of a divine revelation, without which, man, even in his best estate, differs little from the *brute*.”—Dr. A. Clarke on Lev. xx. 27.

3. These words of Moses expressly declare how the Holy, supreme God abhors all such diabolical superstitions. They are by Him called the “ABOMINATIONS” of those nations which divine justice must doom to extirpation. Yet many of these very *abominations* are practiced in Great Britain until this very day, in the very face of the gospel sun! Some who are called christians in Britain, will go from the sanctuary of the Lord to the Dewallahs of the conjurers, and astrologers, to the

house of the *wise man*, or the cot of the *charmer*! And some boasting of superior light and wisdom close their eyes on the diabolical nature and awful tendency of these abominable superstitions, and only laugh at what is kindling the wrath of God! but perhaps would pour contempt on any that would rebuke these evils in the name of the Lord, and laugh at both alike! But turning from a vain, murky, pseudo-philosophy to the light of the revelation, we discover these "vulgar errors of imagination" to be such hell-taught, heaven-insulting crimes, that sceptical materialism, with all its wrangling sophistry, can no more divest of their diabolical nature, than it can wash the *Ethiope* white, or sanctify the devil.

4. This portion of the Bible also reveals how God himself is affected towards those who practice the evil arts and study the occult sciences. Those who dabble in these diabolical superstitions by consulting the wise men, astrologers, and fortune-tellers; and employing the magical doctors, and charmers, &c. may see no evil in these practices, and excuse themselves, while they bring not the light of revelation to shine upon the subject. In the darkness of prejudice, and the confusion of temptation, or the vanity of false philosophy, men may laugh like modern infidels, when they ought to weep like ancient prophets, or burn with indignation like the angels of God. By studied connivance we may encourage the practice of superstition, and thus be partakers of other men's sins. But when God speaks for himself, or his faithful servants speak in his name, then we hear what is enough to make the sorcerers, diviners, charmers, and astrologers, and those who consult them, fear and tremble; for it is written, "*All that do these things are an abomination to the Lord.*"

5. Here is an express prohibition against acquiring the occult sciences and magic arts. "*Thou*

shalt not learn to do after the abominations of these nations." These were the *sciences*, the *arts*, the *learning*, the *wisdom* of idolatry, paganism, and evil spirits. And the people are positively forbidden to learn to do them, because, "all that do these things are an abomination to the LORD." Yet in defiance of all this, as there were jews, so there are "christians," that wilfully make themselves an abomination to the Lord, that risk his displeasure and vengeance, and learn to do after the abominations of those nations!!

6. God forbids the existence of such as practice these superstitions among his people. "There shall not be found among you one that useth divination, or an inchanter, or a witch, or a *charmer*," &c.—Such sinners were to be cut off, even as the false prophet that invaded the divine right of foretelling future events, and the blasphemer that libelled the divine character. Witchcraft, idolatry, and murder, are coupled together by the Old and New Testament writers; and in the ancient and modern heathen practices.

7. On account of these abominable superstitions the Canaanitish nations were delivered over by divine justice to be destroyed by the Israelites. "Because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out before thee." "And the Lord thy God will put out those nations before thee by little and little: thou mayest not consume them at once, lest the beasts of the field increase upon thee. But the LORD thy God shall deliver them unto thee, and shall destroy them with a mighty destruction, until they be destroyed." Deut. vii. 22, 23.

Some persons have, with hard speeches, objected to the divine government in this affair, as being in

their opinion unjustifiably severe. The whole of this objection, like all others against the divine government, blushes and expires, when the ways of God are understood. And as we have the means of knowledge, such arrogance and ignorance are without excuse. To condemn a man unheard is unjust and preposterous: but to condemn God unheard is impious and blasphemous. He wickedly wishes to condemn, that will not hear explanation and defence.

The universal benevolence and long-suffering of God to such sinners, proves that he can neither be unjust nor unkind. The Canaanitish nations were great sinners against their Creator and Benefactor, and therefore forfeited that life which his grace had given, and his bounty had preserved. As long as his patience endured their existence, they returned ingratitude and rebellion for his kindness; the longer he spared them the more they increased in guilt. They were *idolaters* and therefore traitors against the divine government. In the place of God they exalted his greatest enemy the devil, and *murder* was a part of their devilish religion. All the diabolical sciences and arts were their study and their practice: and "every abomination" to the Lord, "which he hateth," said Moses, "have they done unto their Gods; for even their sons and their daughters have they burnt in the fire unto their Gods." Deut. xii. 31. In spite of all the kindness heaven had shewn them, like devils incarnate, they did all they could to make their goodly land a hell! How just their extirpation! "For it was thy will, O Lord," says a pious Jew, "to destroy by the hands of our fathers, these ancient inhabitants of thy holy land, whom thou hatedst, for doing *most odious works of witchcrafts* and wicked sacrifices," &c. Wis. xii. 3. &c.

They were public examples of divine justice for the instruction and correction of other nations,

and therefore the judgments executed on them were intended to be *merciful warnings* to others. Awful and merciful as the warning was, other nations still pursued the same diabolical superstitions. To caution the Israelites especially against committing the same crimes, they were employed in the execution of the divine vengeance. This was the most likely way to teach them the dreadful end of such practices, and what they also had to fear if they committed the same sins. Yet that very people after all they had heard, and seen, and done, became guilty of the same diabolical practices, and even did worse than the nations whom the Lord drove out before them, and brought down the divine vengeance upon themselves.

EXAMPLES OF DIVINE JUSTICE IN THE DESTRUCTION OF INDIVIDUALS AND NATIONS FOR THE PRACTICES OF SUPERSTITION.

Saul, the first king of Israel, though in his prosperity he "cut off those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards out of the land," as the word of the Lord directed him, yet in his adversity he consulted the witch of Endor. His sin was punished with death. "Saul died for transgressions which he committed against the Lord, even against the word of the Lord, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit *to enquire of it*; and enquired not of the LORD, *therefore he slew him.*" 1 Chron. x. 13, 14. King Saul, therefore, was another public example of the righteous judgment of God awfully executed for neglecting the word of God and consulting a witch! In his sin and punishment this son of Israel was something like the children of Canaan.

What Saul did in his distress some of his successors did in their prosperity, from wicked cu-

riosity, or diabolical policy, and thus far exceeded him in guilt. Several of the kings of Israel and Judah studied and practiced the evil arts and sciences. Many of them "did according to all the abominations of the nations which the Lord cast out before the children of Israel." Mannasseh, we have already observed, was the most notorious among the kings for the study and practice of the evil arts. Jezebel was the most infamous of queens, her "witchcrafts, &c. were so many." 2 Kings, ix. 22. &c. Judgment overtook her: she was thrown down out of her window, trampled under the horses' feet, and devoured by dogs!!

Ahaziah, her son, walked in the way of Jezebel his mother. 1 Kings, xxii. 51,—53. He was ill, and sent to Baalzebub, the God of Ekron, to enquire of him whether he should recover? And the angel of the LORD sent the prophet Elijah to meet his messengers with this rebuke: "Is it because there is not a God in Israel that ye go to enquire of Baalzebub the God of Ekron? Now, therefore, thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but *shalt surely die.*" 2 Kings, i. So Ahaziah died for his transgression, for his contempt of the word of the Lord, and for sending to enquire of the God of Ekron. Baalzebub is called in the New Testament *the prince of devils*. Math. ix. 34. and xii. 24. Mark, iii. 32.—He was worshipped under the image of a fly, or a real one. "Baalzebub's oracle," says Mathew Henry, "was famous as that of Delphos. The sin was bad enough; giving that honour to the devil which is due to God only, which was as much done by enquiries as by sacrifice. This wickedness reigned in the heathen world, (Isa. xlvi. 12, 13.) and remains too much in the christian world, and the devil's kingdom is supported by it."

Other instances of such sins and punishments may be found in the Books of Chronicles and Kings. Individuals being punished with death, by the avenging hand of God, expressly for these sins, is but judgment in miniature, compared with the destruction of nations for the same crimes. That the Canaanitish nations were extirpated for these sins we have already learnt from the word of God. Now the Israelites well knew what God had done to the heathen, and that their fathers were commissioned to be the executioners of his justice upon the Canaanites, &c. on account of their devotion to *idolatry and witchcraft*, &c. and were themselves strictly commanded to avoid their crimes if they would escape their punishment. But they despised the holy one of Israel, and joined pagans in the worship of idols and devils.

The superstitious and diabolical arts and sciences, are the wisdom and learning of *idolatry*. By these the priests and worshippers held communion with evil spirits. The horrible, murderous cruelties of sorcery, the devil-consulting ceremonies of diviners, charmers, and astrological physicians, &c. all had a mediate or immediate reference to the *spirits* of the gods or idols, to *demons*, that is, as the scripture speaks, to *devils*. Men, beasts, birds, creeping things, imaginary beings, or their images of wood, metal, stone, or clay, &c. might be infinitely varied by the ingenuity of men, still there was one general reference in all to demons or to devils. On this principle the sacred writers speak of idolatry and ought to be understood. So our translators understood them when they wrote, *they sacrificed unto devils*. Deut. xxxii. 17. "Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils, and shed innocent blood; even the blood of their sons and daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan." Ps. cvi. 37. So the learned and great apostle of the Gentiles viewed the subject: He says,

“ We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. 1 Cor. viii. 4.— What shall I say then? that the idol is any thing? But I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to *devils* and not to God, and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils,” &c. 1 Cor. x 19,—21. It matters not by what image idolaters pay their devotions, the devil is their god.

That many philosophers of the greatest repute recommended the worship of *evil demons*, and the offering of sacrifices to them as well as to good beings the reader may see amply proved in Dr. Leland's *Necessity of the Christian Revelation*, vol. 1. p. 138.&c. “ We are assured,” says this author in another place, “ by the authority of St. Paul, that the things which the Gentiles sacrificed, they sacrificed to *demons*; and the word is generally taken in a bad sense in the sacred writings. The same thing is said by pagan authors of the best credit. Plutarch expressly asserts that many of the rites of worship, usual among the heathen, several of which he mentions, were designed to *placate and gratify evil and malignant demons*.— Porphyry, whose opposition to christianity and attachment to paganism are well known, goes so far as to pronounce Serapis the chief of the Egyptian deities, and whom the people worshipped as the highest God, to have been the prince of evil demons. That learned philosopher says, that evil demons were very desirous to have divine worship and sacrifices rendered to them: and he not only acknowledges they were worshipped, but endeavours to justify the practice, as necessary for averting their wrath, and obtaining from them worldly good things.” *ib.* p. 444. &c.

The poor ignorant Bulloms in Africa, have in this respect, the same view of the subject as we have seen the sacred writers and our translators had.

“How great the ignorance and superstitions of the Bulloms are,” says the Rev. G. R. Nylander, “struck me very much, when I saw a crowd of people assembled, offering sacrifices to a *cannon ball*, and *three decanter stoppers*, recommending themselves and their children to the favor of that evil spirit of whom the ball and stoppers were the *representatives*! They say, that when they address the ball and glass stoppers, they speak not to them, but to the *devil* that lives in the bush, (or woods).” *Missionary Register*.

The abominations of magical superstitions and cruelties are enumerated, and associated with idolatry, as we have seen by the Lord himself in Deut. xviii. He farther declares that all these were on the principles of idolatry, and even formed a part of their superstitious worship: “*For every abomination to the Lord which he hateth, have they done unto their Gods.*” Compare Deut. xii. 12, 30, 31. Chap. xviii. 9,—14. 2 Kings, xvii.—14,—18.

The Prophets of Israel frequently reminded the people of what the Lord had said to Moses, and faithfully rebuked their idolatrous and magical superstitions. The Lord, by Hosea, complains of their neglect of his word, and their idolatrous divinations. “My people ask counsel at their stocks, and their staff declareth unto them.” Chap. iv. 12. Though the Israelites had the word of God, yet instead of obeying it they chose rather to imitate their pagan neighbours. Babylon, it is well known, was the seat of magical science; and Nineveh was declared to be the “mistress of witchcrafts that selleth nations through her whoredoms, and families through her witchcrafts.” Nahum, iii. 4. The magical pollutions of the spirit, the obscene pollutions of the flesh, as well as the contemptible ceremonies, and the horrible cruelties of pagans are the natural result of consulting, and

-serving by superstition and idolatry, those cunning, malicious, unclean, and cruel demons or devils which are manifestly at the bottom of all these wicked institutions.

The Israelites had more useful learning and sacred light than the surrounding nations, and when the light which was in them became darkness, by its application to evil, how great was that darkness!—Like the richest meats capable of the rankest putrefaction, the people of Israel, when they forsook the Lord and served idols, they were more corrupt in their superstitious *abominations* than the most abandoned of the pagan nations. With incorrigible perseverance they increased their guilt, till divine justice could spare them no longer. Rejecting the divine word, and following the heathen in idolatry and witchcrafts, brought the lingering vengeance down. Take the account from an inspired writer.

“ For so it was, that the children of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God, which had brought them up out of the Land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods, and walked in the statutes of the heathen, whom the Lord cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel which they had made. And the children of Israel did secretly those things which were not right against the Lord their God, and they built them high places in all their cities, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city. And they set them up images and groves in every high hill, and under every green tree: And they burned incense in all the high places, as did the heathen whom the Lord carried away before them; and wrought wicked things to provoke the Lord to anger. For they served idols whereof the Lord had said unto them, ye shall not do this thing. Yet

the Lord testified against Israel and against Judah by all the prophets and by all the seers, saying, turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes according to all the law, which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent unto you by my servants the prophets. Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks like the neck of their fathers and did not believe in the Lord their God. They rejected his statutes and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them; and they followed vanity and became vain, and went after the heathen that were round about them, concerning whom the Lord had charged them, (Deut. xviii.) that they should not do like them. And they left all the commandments of the Lord their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal. And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used DIVINATION, and ENCHANTMENTS, and sold themselves [as the very slaves of the devil] to do evil in the sight of the Lord to provoke him to anger. Therefore the Lord was angry with Israel and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only." 2 Kings xvii. 7,—18.

The occult sciences and magic arts, in close and inseparable alliance with devil-worship, and all the pagan superstitions, so provoking to the Lord of hosts was in Israel a *national* crime, and therefore they were driven from their land, as the Canaanites were before them, and to this day, the Israelites have never been restored. A period of about 2500 years. An awful and lasting monument of God's righteous indignation against all such abominable practices!

Israel was gone into captivity under the Assyrians, to suffer for the practice of idolatry and the superstitious arts; and Judah was spared for awhile. But Judah, though favoured with some pious kings, and many faithful prophets who lamented and rebuked their diabolical superstitions, yet practiced the *same sins*, till expelled from their land by that righteous indignation which had before extirpated the Canaanites, and driven away Israel as with a whirlwind of vengeance. The true prophets of Judah were never dumb on these subjects. They knew how provoking such practices were to God and they faithfully reprov'd them. They foresaw and foretold, that God would punish the Jews also, if they sinned as the Canaanites and Israelites had done.

Isaiah lamenting the prevalence of superstition says: "Thou hast forsaken thy people, the house of Jacob, because they are replenished from the East and are *soothsayers* like unto the Philistines." Chap. ii. 6. He expostulated with them, and exhorted them to attend to the word of God and to renounce all the diabolical counsels and arts of superstition, saying:

"When they shall say unto you:
 Seek unto necromancers and wizards,
 To them that speak inwardly and that mutter:
 Should not a people seek unto their God?
 Should they seek, instead of the living, to the dead?
 Unto the command and unto the testimony let them seek:
 If they speak not according to this word
 In which there is no obscurity, [famished:
 Every one of them shall pass through the land distressed and
 And when he shall be famished and angry with himself,
 He shall curse his King and God.
 And he shall cast his eyes upwards and look down to the earth:
 And lo! distress and darkness!
 Gloom, tribulation, and accumulated darkness."

Isaiah, viii. 19.—22. Bishop Lowth's Translation.

On this place the Rev. Dr. Coke observes: "The superstitious folly of many professed christians, who

trust in *charms* and fortune-tellers, and the like, is as scandalous as sinful. If God be our God, we may always seek, and always find help in him in every time of trial."

As Moses in Deut. xviii. after forbidding to learn the superstitious sciences and practice the magic arts, immediately introduces the great prophet, which every soul should hear or be cut off from the people of God; so Isaiah, after declaring the miseries and punishments of superstition, immediately speaks of the light and blessings of christianity. How great then must be the guilt of Jews or Christians, that neglect the oracles and salvation of the true God and apply to divination, demons, and charms! The Jewish prophets threatened the vengeance of heaven, also upon the neighbouring heathen, as well as upon Judah for the same crimes. Isaiah, xix, 1,—18. Micah lived amongst the Jews at the time of Isaiah; he also threatens destruction to their cities, their *witchcrafts*, their *soothsayers*, and their *idols*; and it is added, "I will execute vengeance in anger, and fury upon the heathen, such as they have not heard." Chap, v. 10,—15. As the Israelites were gone captives to Assyria, God, by his prophets, told the Jews they should be taken captives to Babylon; but the diviners and sorcerers contradicted them. And Jeremiah said: "Hearken not to your prophets, nor to your diviners, nor to your dreamers, nor to your enchanters, nor to your sorcerers." Chap. xxvii. 9. But the people of Judah would not hearken to the true prophets of God, and "Manasseh seduced them to do more evil than did the nations whom the Lord destroyed before the children of Israel." see 2 Kings, xxi. Tradition reports of this vile professor and patron of the diabolical superstitions, that he murdered that faithful reprove of all such practices, the prophet Isaiah, by having him sawn asunder with a wooden saw.

The Jews would not hear the remonstrances of their prophets, and the Lord said "Behold! I am bringing such evil upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whosoever heareth of it, both his ears shall tingle;" and he threatened to "wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down." Still they persevered in their superstitions.

Amon, the son and successor of Manasseh, was also the imitator of his father's crimes; judgment overtook him, and he was slain in his own house.

Josiah was a righteous opposer of their superstitions. A contrast to the former kings. He found the book of the law of the Lord and he read it, and wept before the Lord. "The workers with familiar spirits and the wizards, and the images, (or teraphim, by which they divined) and the idols, and all the abominations that were spied in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, did Josiah put away, that he might perform the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the Lord." 2 Kings, xxxiii. 24.—He was gathered to his grave in peace.

"Notwithstanding the Lord turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations that Manasseh had provoked him withal."—A few more kings reigned in Jerusalem who did evil in the sight of the Lord, under whose sinful government the Jews, like the Canaanites, filled up the measure of their iniquities, and ripened into ruin. "Jehoiakim did evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his fathers had done."—"And the Lord sent against him bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon, and sent them

against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the Lord which he spake by his servants the prophets. Surely at the commandment of the Lord came this upon Judah, to remove them out of his sight, *for the sins of Manasseh* (see 2 Kings xxi. 1,—6.) according to all that he did; and also for the innocent blood which he shed." 2 Kings xxiv. 2,—4.

If the reader would have his heart melted at the conclusion of this awful story, he may read the lamentations of Jeremiah, where the weeping prophet so pathetically describes and laments the miseries which the offended God permitted to fall upon Judah and Jerusalem, to punish the sins of their heathenish superstitions.

The Chaldeans who took the Jews captive, were deep in the guilt of diabolical superstitions, and the prophets predicted their destruction also, even before their armies destroyed Jerusalem. Babylon was the chief seat where the professors of occult sciences and magic arts flourished in all the pomp of learned, noble, and diabolical superstition. Hear then how a faithful prophet foretells their punishment and rebukes their sins :

"These two things shall come upon thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection *for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments.* Thou hast trusted in thy wickedness: thou hast said none seeth me. *Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee;* and thou hast said in thy heart, I am, and none else beside me: Therefore shall evil come upon thee; thou shalt not know from whence it riseth; and mischief shall fall upon thee; thou shalt not be able to put it off: and desolation shall come upon thee

suddenly which thou shalt not know. Stand now with thine *enchantments*, and with the multitude of thy *sorceries*, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth; if so be thou shalt be able to profit, if so be thou mayest prevail. Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now the astrologers, the star-gazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee." Isaiah xlvii. 9,—13.

After all that we have read of the kings and people punished by the Lord,—Canaanites, Israelites, Jews, and Babylonians, and the history might be pursued farther, of nations that have been extirpated, scattered, or destroyed, for the study and practice of diabolical sciences, arts, and worship,—still in spite of all these tremendous warnings, there are multitudes in Great Britain who still use many of the *same superstitions*! Still the devil is consulted by various forms of divination. Like Canaan, Egypt, and Babylon, though not in our courts, yet in our cities, towns, and villages, we have the enchanters, the charmers, the astrologers, the star-gazers, the sooth-sayers, &c. professors and slaves of superstition.

Nevertheless in this we have cause for gratitude, that these crimes are not our *national* character.—As a *Nation* we recommend and love, and circulate that Holy Book of God, which contains wisdom from heaven, exposes and condemns all superstitious sciences, arts, and practices, and offers the grace of salvation by Christ Jesus to supply all the spiritual and eternal wants of men. Still however pagan superstitions are too common among us to be righteously unnoticed and unrebuked. It is more becoming the christian in any age to imitate the ancient prophets who reprov'd these abominations, than the modern sceptical philosophers who would

laugh at any that believe they ever existed. As long as the sacred writers used a pen they bore their open and faithful testimony against the diabolical sciences and arts, as appears from the writings of Moses, the man of God, to the revelations of John the divine.—“I will come near to you in judgment, and I will be a swift witness against the *sorcerers*, saith the Lord of hosts.” Mal. iii. 5. “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, says St. Paul, “which are these;—idolatry, witchcraft, &c—of which I tell you before as I have also told you in times past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” Gal. v. 19,—21. The beloved apostle John does not fail to warn the *sorcerers* with other sinners; but classes them among the worst, when he pronounces their awful doom. “The fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable and murderers, and whoremongers and *sorcerers*, and idolators, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone.”—Rev. xxi. 8. If the last words of him that speaketh from heaven are worthy of peculiar regard, then we have among the last sentences of divine revelation the *sorcerers* reminded of their awful doom. Let Jesus Christ himself be heard, and let his last words leave a deep impression on the mind.

“Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to eat of the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. But without are dogs, and *sorcerers*, and whoremongers, and murderers, and *idolators*, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. *I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches.*” Rev. xxii. 14,—16.

CONCLUSION.

Thus, Reader, we have seen how the wisdom of God has thought proper to speak on these painful subjects. Those that will not hear Moses and the prophets, Christ Jesus and the apostles, would not be persuaded though one rose from the dead to testify the same things unto them. The writer, whether believed or not, will rejoice in the testimony of a good conscience, that he has done his duty in following the best examples, to reprove those sins against God which have so often brought divine vengeance down on nations and individuals; and in directing those who are oppressed of the enemy, to seek salvation in Christ Jesus, who was manifested to destroy the works of the devil. That so many in Great Britain should still adhere to the arts and practices of paganism has been the grief of many excellent men. Quotations from two servants of the most high God, who being dead yet speak for our edification, shall close this part of our work.

The Rev. J. Benson, in his Commentary on those words of the Lord to Moses, *Neither shall ye use enchantments*, Lev. xix. 26. observes: "It was unpardonable in them, to whom were committed the oracles of God, to ask counsel of the devil. And yet worse in christians, to whom the son of God is manifested to destroy the works of the devil. For christians to have their nativities cast, or fortunes told, or use charms for the cure of diseases, is an intolerable affront to the Lord Jesus, a support to idolatry, and a reproach both to themselves and that worthy name by which they are called."

Mr. G. Herbert, the judicious, pious, and excellent Poet, in his devotions, p. 127, thus speaks and prays: "He is not wise who consults with his

enemy: then what are they who ask counsel of prognosticators, fortune tellers, conjurers, devils? Desperate fools: men who run headlong into hell. *Purge, O God, purge thy church from rebellious children, who take counsel but not from thee: from all idolatrous persons who frequently enquire of Baalzebub, as if there were no God in Israel. And if ever satan hath so far prevailed against me, as to persuade me to consult with him or his servants; or to beg or expect any good from him or them: pardon me, I pray thee, this grievous transgression, and idolatrous rebellion: and let me never fall into this great sin of witchcraft."*

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