

A letter to William Wilberforce, Esq. on the subject of his late publication [entitled "A practical view of the prevailing religious system"] / By Gilbert Wakefield.

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A
LETTER

TO

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, Esq.

(Price Two Shillings.)



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A
LETTER
TO
WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, Esq.
ON THE SUBJECT
OF HIS LATE PUBLICATION.

By *GILBERT WAKEFIELD, B. A.*
LATE FELLOW OF JESUS-COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

Beware of false prophets!—Ye shall know them by their
fruits. *JESUS.*

Ye blind guides! which strain out a gnat, and swallow a
camel. *IDEM.*

—— Nefas illic fetum jugulare capellæ;
Carnibus humanis vesci licet.—In mare nemo
Hunc abicit, sævâ dignum verâque Charybdi? —
Tam vacui capitis populum Phæaca putavit?
JUVENAL.

THE SECOND EDITION,
ENLARGED AND CORRECTED.

L O N D O N:
PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR, BY A. HAMILTON;
AND SOLD BY I. CUTHELL, MIDDLE-ROW,
HOLBORN.

1797.

LETTER

WILLIAM WILBURN FORCE, ESQ.

ON THE SUBJECT

OF HIS LATE PURSUIT.

BY GILBERT WAKEFIELD, B.A.
LATE TELLOW OF TRINITY-COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

Persons of false propensities—Ye shall know them by their
fruits. Jesus.
Ye blind guides! which strain out a gnat, and swallow a
camel. Jesus.

Notwithstanding the above quotations
Candidus humbly refers to the
Honest which have appeared in the
Times and which are published by
Messrs. G. and J. W. Smith.

THE SECOND EDITION.

ENLARGED AND CORRECTED.

LONDON.

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR BY A. HARRIS,

AND SOLD BY A. COTTELL, STATIONER,

NO. 11, ST. MARK'S LANE.

1797.

A
LETTER

TO

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

SIR!

THE privilege, which you have claimed and employed, of addressing “the higher and middle classes of this country” on the religious system “of professed Christians, contrasted with real Christianity,” cannot be grudged with consistency, in application to yourself, from one, according to the vulgar acceptation of those words, neither in the *high* nor *middle* class, but in the very *lowest order* of the community, in which we live. Your attention to religious subjects, in the midst of a corrupt and faithless generation, is regarded with more honour and approbation by none of your warmest friends than by your opponent: nor, I believe, have your thoughts, since we were contemporaries once

B

at

at Cambridge, and before that period, been more intensely occupied in the same speculations and pursuits, than mine. Our conclusions, however, from these diligent researches prove not only different, but in many points totally contradictory: yet, (for I am disposed to pay no futile compliments and to sacrifice no self-applause, at the expence of conviction and sincerity, though ready to concede in your favour all that can possibly be true) I presume your purposes and affections to have been equally pure, equally zealous, and equally dispassionate, with my own. Perhaps, in consequence of your elaborate publication, which, from the peculiar situation and character of it's author, is likely to engage a considerable portion of popular attention, it may be a circumstance not altogether unimportant to some of our fellow-citizens, nor absolutely unworthy of your own regard, to contemplate some prominent particulars of our disagreement, and the grounds on which we differ.

But, Sir! my leading motive to this public and free address had it's origin in that countenance, which the favourable opinion of
your

your character, very generally entertained, as a sincere and pious Christian, has reflected on the political conduct of those statesmen, whose views you have promoted with eagerness and constancy; and whose interests you have interwoven with your own. It becomes on this account, I am persuaded, a consideration of no mean concernment to Englishmen at large to be supplied with some measure of determination, whether one, thus sanctified in the estimation of his countrymen, — thus assuming the dignified office of a religious censor in society, — be indeed entitled to this large tribute of admiration, and illuminated with that knowledge of his subject, which has a claim to ensure his precepts a reverend acceptance with his disciples. That reasonable postulatum too, I apprehend, is no less pertinent to the subject of Christianity, than to topics of philology and taste; founded on a requisite alliance between magisterial animadversion and personal accomplishment:

Let such teach others, who themselves excell;
And censure freely, who have written well,

It was my primary intention to examine your publication in detail; but this object I

soon abandoned, as tedious, from the prolixity of your effusions; as unprofitable, from their wildness; as impracticable, from their indistinction. Your fundamental principles are, in my judgement, so essentially erroneous, your whole conception of the Gospel so absolutely incompatible with the undisputed conduct and with the unequivocal dictates of CHRIST himself, as to render such a specific discussion of your sentiments an undertaking of inextricable and hopeless perplexity. Every avenue to conviction, by which such arguments, as have been deemed effectual with rational enquirers, might be expected to approach, is obstructed by fantastical prepossessions, by visionary feelings, by an experimental perception of truth, not explicable on the known elements of vulgar reasoning, and only intelligible to the happy illuminated devotee:

Φωνάτα συνετοῖσιν* εἰς
Δε το παν, ἑρμηνεῶν
Χατίζει—.

Your ear alone the mystic sounds can gain;
Plebeians listen still, and still, in vain.

Among this *vulgar herd* of unenlightened
sluggish catechumens I profess my name also.
—Suffer us, therefore, in the prosecution of
this

this subject, to adopt a method of argumentation better suited to our scantier knowledge and our gross conceptions: and, if we prove at once mistaken and presumptuous, let your superior illuminations, with charitable interposition, repress our arrogance, and confute our errors.

I. My first object, then, shall be an attempt to delineate some striking features of genuine Christianity, according to my notion of that pure, sublime, and simple institution: not by a deduction from imaginary theories, but from indisputable premises; namely,

1. The *conduct* and *character* of our Saviour himself: and,

2. From his *precepts*.

At this equitable arbitration, yourself, I trust, will feel no inclination to demur.

II. I shall take the liberty of bringing the question home to your own "life and bonom." I shall venture to examine your public conduct in the crucible of these criterions; well

well aware at the same time, from the multiplicity and critical nature of the topics, which so comprehensive an excursion will involve, of the delicacy and danger of my project from the baffled malignity of a despairing and flagitious faction; who have riveted their power against the public voice by the most extensive bribery, and malignant calumnies; who are prepared to hazard their own lives with the fortunes of royalty and the constitution in an attempt to maintain their stations by the anarchy of military despotism.

I. 1. I shall attempt a delineation of the sincere Christian gospel by a few capital strokes from the practice of our Lord himself.

You will readily allow me, that his example is propounded in the scriptures as a model of imitation for all his followers. *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me: (Mat. xi. 29.) Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: (Philipp. ii. 5.) Christ also suffered for us; leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: (1 Pet. ii. 21.) He, that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk,*
even

even as he walked: (1 John, ii. 6.) We conclude, then, from these and other explicit declarations, that, in the proportion of our approximation to the life of Christ, will our advances be towards the transcendental excellence of evangelical perfection. Indeed, one previous proposition, not applicable to himself, must be presumed with relation to his disciples, as the passport to *life eternal*: (John, xvii. 3.) That, in addition to a common belief of one true God, his brethren acknowledge himself also to be the *anointed servant* of Jehovah, (Acts, iv. 27.) the long-expected Messiah of the Jews, (John, iv. 25, 26.) *who died, and was buried, and rose again on the third day*, (1 Cor. xv. 3, 4.) that he might *deliver us from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God*: (Rom. viii. 21.) With this single exception only, the life of Christ must be considered as a complete exemplar for the zealous emulation of his votaries.

Now, a most comprehensive summary of our Lord's practical virtues is exhibited in one short, but emphatic, sentence of his apostle

apostle Peter; (Acts, x. 38.) *Who went about,*
DOING GOOD.

If some of our modern fanatics have conceived accurately of gospel-truth, the epitome of our Saviour's excellence should have been circumscribed by very different lines of character; by a copious display of *comfortable illuminations, powerful conversions, secret influences, lookings unto God*, or some equivalent impressions; provided only, that the things themselves were equally unintelligible and undefinable: the wild phantoms of despicable ignorance, and besotted superstition. No, Sir! the sublime representation of consummate excellence is depicted in full beauty, and in matchless proportion, by five words only of simplicity and soberness: HE WENT ABOUT, DOING GOOD. The relief of human misery in all its varieties and complications of distress, the reformation of the vicious, the instruction of the ignorant, the confirmation of the virtuous, the consolation of the meek, the encouragement of the docile, the generous and indignant reprobation of demure hypocrisy with sharp untempered expression; —

these godlike purposes, as the sole means of personal happiness, by fulfilling the will of *his Father* and *our Father*, of *his God* and *our God*, (John, xx. 17.) through active benevolence to the workmanship of the Creator, was the grand rule of conduct to the Man of Nazareth; the sole occupation of his thoughts, the unceasing employment of his time, the devoted purpose of his life. Hear the divine declarations of this unequalled preceptor of mankind on the point before us. *My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work:* (John, iv. 34.) *I was daily with you in the temple teaching:* (Luke, xiv. 49.) *To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth:* (John, xviii. 37.) To him *positive beneficence*, and positive beneficence alone, invigorated and incited by pure principles of action, was the test of merit, and the genuine characteristic of Christian sanctity. *Feelings*, and *visions*, and *experiences*, and inexplicable *grace*, unaccompanied by services to men, and unauthenticated by such services, is a vile jargon, unknown to the Saviour of mankind,

and unrecorded in the oracles of truth. The Gospel abhors appearances without realities ; it acknowledges no faith as a meritorious operation of the heart or intellect, but the faith exemplified and substantiated by the vitality of works. We are commanded to raise upon our *faith* a noble superstructure of *virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, charity* ; (2 Pet. i. 5—8.)—of all the personal and relative duties of humanity ; if we wish to prove ourselves the followers and *friends* of Christ, (John, xv. 4.) not in *word* only, but in *deed* and in *truth*. The virtues and graces of the Gospel, like those of its illustrious proclaimer, are activity and exercise ; not torpid influences, and indolent sensations : no stagnant pool of devotional mummeries, of insipid mysticism, that cumbers the ground, and pollutes the atmosphere ; but a salubrious expansion of *living waters*, dispersing health, animation, and fertility, through the earth ; and *springing up into everlasting life* : (John, iv. 10. 14.)

2. But in the *precepts* of our Lord we shall find a more circumstantial configuration of the Christian character ; and, if possible,

scarcely a less interesting and important picture, than in his life: a life, publicly displayed on the theatre of human action, but a mere particle of time.

Ostendunt terris hunc tantum fata, neque ultra
Esse finunt. Nimium vobis Romana propago
Visa potens, Superi! propria hæc si dona fuissent.

1. For the first instance of the moral institutions of the Gospel, Jesus hath there taught us the *perfectibility* of human nature, beyond any assignable limits of progressive virtue. This most sublime doctrine, which the unlearned arrogance of modern philosophy has usurped as it's own discovery, though it stood on record, as openly promulgated eighteen centuries ago by the carpenter's son of Galilee, is laid down with unquestionable precision in the following comprehensive exhortation: *Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father, which is in heaven, is perfect*: (Matt. v. 48.) The same conclusion is deducible from a parallel injunction of the apostle Paul, with equal clearness; an injunction, founded on our intellectual resemblance to the universal parent of our race. *Be ye, therefore, followers of God, as dear children*: (Eph. v. 1.)

To this effect also will amount by reasonable inference that admonitory invitation of the writer to the Hebrews: *Therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection: (vi. 1.)*

By these perspicuous positions of scriptural authority are decidedly confuted those frivolous and profligate maxims of some modern advocates for corruption in ecclesiastical and political establishments, who endeavour to reconcile the credulous, the timid, the illiterate, and unreflecting, to their abject systems of conformity, upon this ignominious pretence; That the generality of mankind has always been, and always must continue, depraved and ignorant: that we, extravagant reformers! indulge a vain theory, when we expatiate on the practicability of a form of government and a general constitution of civil discipline, which shall meliorate, beyond all competition with our degraded condition at this moment, the moral and intellectual character of the species: which shall exalt, by gradual improvement, the denizens of this terrestrial habitation to a spiritualised state of purity *little lower than the angels: (Heb. ii. 9.)*

Unless,

Unless, however, *the signs of the time* deceive me, these days of *restitution* and *refreshment*, (Acts, iii. 20, 21.) after so calamitous a period of supine ignorance, passive thralldom, and slavish debasement of all that is noble and generous in man, have commenced their glorious career with rapid strides, and are marching with an acceleration, which no tyranny can impede, from their goal in our vicinity, to the precincts of the universe.

ferrea primum
Definit, ac toto surgit gens aurea mundo.

Our age of Iron wanes with quick decay;
And man exulting hails his Golden day.

2. *Peace and reconciliation*, in their most extensive import, whether of man to God or to his fellow; universal and unbounded love, not circumscribed by incidental discriminations of country, colour, or opinion;—these endearing principles, of a vigorous renovating quality, are inculcated in every page of the Gospel, with affectionate sollicitude and unwearied importunity. *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you*; (John, xiv. 27.) was among the last admonitions of our most amiable master, (*who spake as never man spake*;

spake; John, vii. 46.) to his disconsolate disciples before that consummation of magnanimity and benevolence, his voluntary suspension on the cross. But it were superfluous to investigate through the scriptures of the New Testament a multitude of texts in corroboration of this acknowledged doctrine of Christianity, whose herald is emphatically styled THE PRINCE OF PEACE: (Isaiah, ix. 6.) All those precepts of mutual forbearance and soft affection, exhibited under such impressive figures and animated phraseology from Matthew, v. 38—48. which exceed, in native sublimity and simple elegance, the moral lessons of every other sage and instructor, in whatever time or country, among the most accomplished nations of antiquity, beyond all pretensions of comparison;—those precepts, I say, directly and explicitly infer PACIFIC PRINCIPLES, universal and unqualified, to be of the very essence of the Gospel, and an indispensable constitution of Christianity. There is one passage, however, so eminently pertinent and energetic, of such awful denunciation against the MAN OF BLOOD, that I should deem myself inexcusable for withholding it from my readers on this occasion.

And

And behold, Simon Peter stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and smote the high-priest's servant, and cut off his ear. Then said Jesus unto Peter: Put up thy sword into it's place. The cup, which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? ALL THEY, THAT TAKE THE SWORD, SHALL PERISH BY THE SWORD: (Matt. xxvi. 51, 52. John, xviii. 10, 11.) A truth, ripe for completion in our day.

But we shall have an opportunity of dwelling more particularly on this topic in the sequel; and I therefore only observe in passing, what delectable Christians peradventure they must be, and what a precious Christianity beyond all controversy they must profess, who can in any possible manner or degree, under any supposable circumstances whatsoever, co-operate with the military executions of WAR and MURDER on their species!

Αφρητωρ, αθεμιστος, απροστιος, εστιν εκεινος,
 'Ος πολεμω εργαται.—HOMER, Il. ix. 63.

Curs'd is the man, and void of law and right,
 Unworthy property, unworthy light,
 Unfit for public rule, or private care,
 That WRETCH, that MONSTER, WHO DELIGHTS
 IN WAR:

Whose

Whose lust is MURDER, and whose horrid joy,
To TEAR HIS COUNTRY, AND HIS KIND DESTROY.

POPE.

“ Oh ! my foul ! come not thou into their
“ secret : unto their assembly, mine honour !
“ be not thou united. Woe is me, that I
“ sojourn in Mesech ; that I dwell in the
“ tents of Kedar ! My foul hath long dwelt
“ with him that hateth peace. I am for
“ peace ; but, when I speak, they are for
“ war :” (Gen. xlix. 6. Psalm, cxx. 5, 6.)

3. After a conscientious performance of our duty, after a life in the main conformable to the dictates of the Gospel, and habitually devoted to the will of God, the precepts of Christ authorise in his followers a degree of manly confidence in the goodness and promises of their divine master ; notwithstanding some occasional violations of determined purpose ; some transient deviations from a general rectitude of course. These irregularities are too frequent, alas ! and too flagrant with the most circumspect among us in the present flagitious constitution of society, and amidst the enormous depravities of civil governments : under an un-
towardliness

towardliness of circumstances, that leaves but a simple possibility for the lowest orders of the people to emerge from the abject condition of beasts of burden ; whilst their intellectual and moral capacities are neglected, debased, and prostituted, to the vile projects of their taskmasters, and their natural and religious privileges are trampled in the dust. In this view, *eternal life* is stipulated to us on a performance of *the commandments*, and a proportionate communication of our substance, after our ability, to the necessities of our poorer brethren : (Matt. xix. 16—22.) *To do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God*, (Micah, vi. 8.) is all that is *required* of us by *the Lord* ; is made a sure condition of his present favour and future recompence. *Him, that cometh to me*, says our Master himself, *I will in no wise cast out* : (John, vi. 37.) From these and a copious variety of other passages, which it were superfluous to collect, or enumerate, for readers conversant in the scriptures, to whom alone our appeal is made, this conclusion is abundantly deducible : That, though we are, indeed, in the scriptural expression, *unprofitable servants*, (Luke, xvii. 10.) of no supposeable benefit to our master ;

without any previous and original claim on his bounty ; indebted to his mercies for our life, our faculties, our opportunities, and all our enjoyments : still, as he was graciously pleased to receive us into covenant, and has engaged his protection and reward by certain stipulations proposed on his part and performed on our's ; — since, moreover, the very essence of his nature is spontaneous beneficence, and a fatherly affection to the creatures of his hand ; — since we are persuaded, on the surest grounds of conviction, from the suggestions of reason and from the documents of revelation, that he will not be *extreme to mark what is done amiss* : upon these principles, I say, men, whose conduct has been generally irreproachable and under the guidance of Gospel principles, may look up with assurance to their Maker, and expect remuneration at his hands : To form a conclusion different from this, is to change the benevolent Parent of mankind into a harsh exactor of his dues, *reaping where he did not sow, and gathering where he had not scattered* ; (Matt. xxv. 24.) is to transform our divine master into an inconsistent and delusive mocker of expectation ; invests him with qualities, which would render

even a fellow-creature odious in our eyes ; converts, in short, the whole evangelical system into a scheme of absurdity and contradiction, and belies our primary, unalterable, and clear perceptions of truth and justice. What are we to think, then, of that despicable cant, that hypocritical humility, of some modern religionists, which leads them to speak of themselves, after a life conscientiously devoted, according to their own views of scripture, to the will of God, as the most miserable and abandoned of sinners ? Yet this, Sir ! is the *whining piety*, the slavish superstition, of yourself and your adherents. *But we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but we have received the spirit of adoption ; whereby we cry, Abba, Father !* (Rom. viii. 15.) There is indeed no *fear* (1 John, iv. 18.) in the true believer : he acquiesces, a calm expectant ! in humble confidence, and with more than *trembling hopes*, knowing that what God has promised, he will perform : in a holy composure of spirit, patient, tranquil, and resigned ; not with the hesitating apprehensions of a *servant*, but with the chearful assurance of a *son*, and a *joint-heir with Christ*, (Gal. iv. 7. Rom. viii. 17.)

that he shall finally *lay hold on eternal life*: (1 Tim. vi. 19.) Paul indeed styled himself *the chief of sinners*: (1 Tim. i. 15.) And well he might. Consider the case attentively. He had *persecuted, bound, and imprisoned*, with blind zeal and unrelenting rancour, his fellow-countrymen, for a mere *difference of opinion*; for presuming to employ the inprescriptible privilege of rationality in judging and acting for themselves: nay, more; he had glutted his eyes, and defiled his hands, with the dying agonies and the righteous blood of the proto-martyr Stephen! (Acts, vii. 58. xxii. 20. xxvi. 10, 11.) Surely, surely, WILLIAM PITT, with his sanguinary fraternity, whom you *love*, Mr. Wilberforce! and his despotic administration, which you *support*, and are become in consequence a partaker of their monstrous guilt;—surely these *regular* statesmen, I say, will be numbered with the last imitators of persecuting *Saul*, with the last perpetrators of such unspeakable atrocities, such inexpressible crimes, as these!!! *I saw under the altar the souls of them, that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony, which they held; and they cried with a loud voice, saying: How long, O Lord! holy and*

and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? (Rev. vi. 9. 10.)

4. Though I am not solicitous to specify every characteristic doctrine of Christianity, or aim at the difficult attempt of illustrating all it's excellencies, with a circumstantial copiousness unnecessary on this occasion; yet in addressing you, Sir! it will in no wise be impertinent to observe, that the religion of Jesus is a system, not of *ceremonies*, but of *services*. Anxious scruples, (Matt. xxiii. 23. 25.) ostentatious formalities, (verr. 5. 14. 28.) demure grimace, (vi. 16.) *long babbling prayers*, and indeed all but *private prayers*, (ver. 5—9.) fastings, and similar austerities, are discountenanced, or condemned, by express declarations of the Gospel. Such formalities, in fact, are wholly inconsistent with a genuine profession of our religion in *spirit* and in *truth*; (John, iv. 23, 24.) with this sublime refined scheme of mental worship and internal purity. Our devotional constitution of soul, our silent principle of duty, is neither invigorated nor improved by the inspection of man, who looketh on the outward appearance only,

only, but by the consciousness of HIS eye, *who looketh on the heart* : (1 Sam. xvi. 7.) As far as we find our affections warmed and our practice benefited by ritual performances, we are furnished with a criterion of our imperfect advances in the true Christian character, and our inadequate conceptions of the powers of the Gospel: Ceremonial observances are the *milk* suited to *babes* in Christ : Heb. v. 12, 13. When we arrive at the *full stature* of perfect manhood, (Eph. iv. 13.) when our senses, from exercise and experience, shall be able to *discern between good and evil*; we may expect to relish the *strong meat* of Christianity, and shall venture to *put away these childish things* : (Heb. v. 14. 1 Cor. xiii. 11.)

5. Ecclesiastical oppression, religious impositions, persecutions, and civil Tyranny, in all the shapes of that horrid fiend, are diametrically opposite to the liberal spirit of the Christian discipline, and are most expressly and energetically condemned by it. No modes of conviction, beyond the gentle process of calm persuasion and rational appeal, are authorised by the gospel of Jesus Christ. *He,*
that

that hath ears to hear, let him hear ; (Matt. xiii. 9.) was the uniform maxim of the generous founder of our religion. He allowed no *masters*, no *rabbis*, no *fathers*, upon earth ; (Matt. xxiii. 7—11.) no lordly interferences of councils or synods, of emperors or popes, of parliaments or prelates, or even royal *defenders of the faith* ! with his supreme and sole authority in that spiritual dominion over the minds and consciences of his subjects. No high-priest of mere mortal ordination can rush with impunity into this sanctuary of the heart. Every species of church establishment, all human formularies of religious doctrine, all compulsory subscriptions to creeds, and articles, and canons, that contemptible trumpery of ignorant, lazy, mercenary, and impudent ecclesiastics ! are a direct profanation of the sanctity of the Gospel, a profligate usurpation on the unalienable rights of private judgement, and an audacious rebellion against the sovereignty of the sole commissioned legislator of Jehovah. *No foundation can any man lay, beyond what is already laid, Jesus the Christ :* (1 Cor. iii. 11.) Neither *gold*, nor *silver*, nor *precious stones*, and much less those baser materials of *wood*, *hay*, and *strubble*,

stubble, laid on this foundation by flavish churchmen, the despicable engines of civil tyranny! will be long endured in connexion with that spotless and simple principle, which abhors all secular and carnal contact.

Non tamen ulla magis præsens fortuna laborum est,
 Quam si quis potuit ferro rescindere summum
 Ulceris os: alitur vitium, vivitque tegendo,
 Dum medicas adhibere manus ad vulnera pastor
 Abnegat, aut meliora deos sedet omnia poscens.

Such antichristian phantoms of our *dreary sky*, I have no doubt, will soon vanish, with the beasts of darkness, before the piercing beams of Liberty and Science. *The night is far spent: the day is at hand:* (Rom. xiii. 12.) *The Lord* will presently consume these dark *iniquities*, this *delusion*, and these *lies* of *Satan*, with the spirit of his mouth; and destroy them with the brightness of his coming: (2 Theff. ii. 7—12.) In the mean time, however, if these men *trouble* us, and *pervert* the *gospel* of *Christ*; if they *preach* any other *gospel*, than that delivered in the scriptures; if they *teach*, for *doctrines*, the *commandments* of *men*;—an authority, paramount and antecedent to all incidental regulations or connexions
 with

with local governments, commands us to *re-ject* them: (Gal. vii. 10. Matt. xv. 9.)

But some passages of the Christian volume are, in relation to this subject of religious domination and persecution, so eminently sublime and beautiful, as to merit distinct recital and ocular exhibition in these pages.

“ Another parable put he forth unto them,
 “ saying: The kingdom of heaven is likened
 “ unto a man, which sowed good seed in his
 “ field: but, while men slept, his enemy
 “ came and sowed tares among the wheat,
 “ and went his way. But, when the blade
 “ was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then
 “ appeared the tares also. So the servants of
 “ the householder came and said unto him:
 “ Sir! didst thou not sow good seed in thy
 “ field? Whence then hath it tares? He
 “ said unto them: An enemy hath done this.
 “ The servants said unto him: WILT THOU
 “ THEN, THAT WE GO AND GATHER THEM
 “ UP? But he said: NAY; LEST, WHILE YE
 “ GATHER UP THE TARES, YE ROOT UP
 “ ALSO THE WHEAT WITH THEM. LET
 “ BOTH GROW TOGETHER UNTIL THE HAR-

“ VEST : and, in the time of harvest, I will say
 “ to the reapers, gather ye together first the
 “ tares, and bind them in bundles to burn
 “ them ; but gather the wheat into my barn : ”
 (Matt. xiii. 24—31.)

You see here, Sir ! a dictate of consummate wisdom, transcribed, to prevent misapprehension and disregard, as it were, with a sun-beam ; a most engaging piece of parabolic history, prohibitory of all interposition with the moral and religious sentiments of individuals ; sentiments, not cognizable indeed at the bar of a human judicature :—a precept of anticipation and foresight, directly levelled against intolerant churchmen and despotic legislators, who blend penalties, restrictions, punishments, civil disabilities, or secular interferences of any kind, with the spiritual interests of the Gospel.

But, to dwell a little longer on this momentous topic ;

————— *juvat usque morari,*
Et conferre gradum :

we are here presented with a divine prescription, which neither dulness can misinterpret,

terpret, sophistry confound, nor artifice evade.
 But, "No;" says the church of England,
 with all the hierarchical insolence of Papal
 usurpation: "You cannot learn the Gospel
 " from the scriptures only; you must not ex-
 " pect to find it *there*. I will tell you where
 " pure Christianity is to be contemplated in
 " it's perfection; namely, in my *articles* and
 " *canons*: and, if you want besides a most
 " perspicuous interpretation of them, you
 " must have recourse by all means to that
 " goodly manual and most pregnant epitome
 " of sound doctrine, the ATHANASIAN
 " CREED!!! Moreover, if your obstinacy
 " and stupidity be so deplorably incurable,
 " as to refuse acceptance of all these incom-
 " prehensible blessings at my hands, and
 " hesitate at the verity of their contents also,
 " you shall not only, WITHOUT DOUBT, PE-
 " RISH EVERLASTINGLY, (which is a trifle)
 " but be debarred from all the *good things*
 " of Church and State; all those *fat fops*
 " and *savoury meats*, that are reserved for
 " such obedient children, as love me, and
 " his *Majesty's ministry* for the time being, in
 " sincerity."

Another passage of the New Testament, not less observable and impressive, occurs in the Acts of the Apostles, chap. v. ver. 34—41. which it were unpardonable to suppress or abridge; replete as it is with singular magnanimity and intrinsic wisdom, and of universal reference to all discussion, civil or religious.

“ Then stood there up one in the council,
 “ a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the
 “ law, had in reputation among all the peo-
 “ ple; and commanded to put the Apostles
 “ forth a little space, and said unto them:
 “ Ye men of Israel! take heed to yourselves
 “ what ye intend to do as touching these men.
 “ For before these days rose up Theudas,
 “ boasting himself to be somebody; to whom
 “ a number of men, about four hundred,
 “ joined themselves: who was slain, and all,
 “ as many as obeyed him, were scattered,
 “ and brought to nought.

“ After this man rose up Judas of Galilee,
 “ in the days of the taxing; and drew away
 “ much people after him. He also perished;
 “ and

“ and all, even as many as obeyed him, were
 “ dispersed.

“ And now I say unto you, REFRAIN FROM
 “ THESE MEN, AND LET THEM ALONE :
 “ for, if this counsel, or this work, be of
 “ men, it will come to nought ; but, if it
 “ be of God, ye cannot overthrow it : lest
 “ haply ye be found to fight even against
 “ God. And to him they agreed.”

Can you tell me, Sir ! what senatorial decision ever exceeded, for manly candour, for judicious discrimination, for plain unsophisticated sense, this admirable suggestion of the Jewish doctor ? The collective annals of human intellect and genius have not registered a transaction, more declaratory of honest intention, more honourable to the spirit of moderation and sound policy, than that before us. Such, indeed, will ever be the uniform language of ingenuous men, warped by no selfish considerations, unbiassed by lucrative expectancies, conscious of a rectitude of purpose, and engaged in the conscientious support of a righteous system. *For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh*

to

to the light, lest his deeds should be convicted: but he, that doeth truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God: (John iii. 20, 21.)

Κλεπτων γαρ ἡ νυξ, τηςδ' αληθειας το φως.

THIEVES court the night, but Truth defies the sun.

Now the decisions of modern *Judges* and *Attornies-General* would be couched, I trow, in language very dissimilar to that of the Israelitish sage; and something, perhaps, in the style of the following gracious expostulation:

“ Culprit! we would have you to under-
 “ stand, that our government, of which we
 “ are the disinterested servants, is an abso-
 “ lutely good government; and we will not
 “ suffer any man to speculate upon it, nor in-
 “ dulse himself in the vain hope of mending
 “ what the King, who can do no wrong, and
 “ the *wisdom of parliament*, have so often de-
 “ clared to be, actual Perfection. *We* know
 “ it to be so by *experimental sympathy*: the
 “ gross and ignorant multitude are no judges
 “ of such delicate questions. Sir! you have
 “ been guilty of an unpardonable offence in
 “ discussing these mysteries in what you call a
 “ rational

“ rational way, and truly ! in endeavouring
 “ to mislead your countrymen, amidst the
 “ enjoyment of *unknown* happiness and pro-
 “ sperity. This species of outrage and pro-
 “ fanation, Sir ! in men, whose only duty is
 “ obedience, must not be endured with im-
 “ punity. Sir ! to be brief with you, we will
 “ illuminate your understanding, and confer
 “ true benefit on the community, by giving
 “ you full opportunity of meditating more
 “ maturely on this subject, in an inaccessible
 “ *bastile*, or during a *fourteen years’ slavery*
 “ among thieves and cut-throats at *Botany*
 “ *Bay.*”

Even the *public orator*, at Cambridge, and
 that *arch-hypocrite*, your fellow-traveller, Mr.
 Wilberforce ! will not deny this process to
 be a most efficacious method of conviction and
 reformation ; extremely proper to be adopted
 in the *existing circumstances* by a *regular go-*
vernment, under the prosperous auspices of our
 immaculate and heaven-born prime-minister !
 who, happily for his own country and man-
 kind ! at length, acquiesces in the *uncorrupt*
 decisions of the legislature, and has long dis-
 abused himself of those silly notions of re-
 formation,

formation, which once deluded the immaturity of his understanding !

If our most reverend and right reverend prelates with the wise senators of the lower House should hear a grave preacher descanting upon the cruel persecutions, which the first Christians endured ; and how their small society soon dilated itself under oppression and severity through the habitable globe ; they would acknowledge themselves convinced by the statement of the orator, and would clearly discern the extreme folly of coercive measures in that instance : not aware, in the mean time, because of that judicial blindness, which accompanies a mind under the dominion of habitual depravity, that they were pursuing the very measures, which their own unperverted judgement had deliberately condemned in a case absolutely correspondent in all it's parts.

6. But to proceed, and conclude this division of my subject, by the most important of all topics in the present crisis of affairs. The CHRISTIAN RELIGION then, I say, is a system of EQUALITY, in the most rigorous and extensive

tenfive acceptation of that term. It is vain to palliate, as it is impoffible to deny, in my opinion, this inevitable and plain conclufion. That univerfality and diffufion of benevolence, which teach the votaries of the Gofpel to embrace collective man with the arms of brotherly affection, is incompatible with every fpecies of hereditary political diftinction; is irreconcilable with every degree of ariftocratical fuperiority. The selfishnefs, the intolerance, the peculiar depravity, more or lefs infeparable, through the unalterable connexion of caufe and effect, even from the moft gentle and amiable natures; — thefe fruits, I fay, of educational fingularities in Nobility, generally fpeaking, can no more unite with the meek, unaffuming, condefcending, and affociating qualities of evangelic love, than the heterogeneous materials of the prophetic image, (Dan. ii. 43.) the *iron* and the *clay*, could incorporate with each other. I am fimply adverting here to the univerfal and undeniable tendencies of things; nor would I be underftood to fuppofe, that the moft fublime virtues and moft endearing benevolent affections may not fubfift in the fphere of exalted ranks. I af- fert merely, that the education of thefe higher

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claffes,

classes, their early habits and modes of life, their affluent expectations, are a grievous stumbling-block in their way ; and *must* impede in some degree the freedom of their progress in running the race of Virtue and Immortality. Sure I am, that a day will come, and is even now at the door of some European nations, when the clouds of vulgar superstition and the mists of infantile prejudice, that encumber and pollute the atmosphere of social life, whilst they intercept the intellectual prospects of the mind, will be purged from our horizon ; when a clear sky will shed it's unfullied splendours and benign influences on the human race :

circumfusa repente
Scindit se nubes, et in æthera purgat apertum.

Then such monstrous solecisms in religion and reason, as established churches, hereditary distinctions and immunities, &c. &c. will only exist in the records of antiquated history, as awful monuments of the wickedness, infatuation, and calamities of mankind.

But observe, Sir ! with what earnestness and pathos, the lessons of humility, of reciprocal

procal service, of the meekest condescension, of the kindest sympathy, and of undistinguishing philanthropy, are inculcated on his disciples by the benevolent Saviour of the world; who displayed in his own person an example of modesty and mildness, utterly subversive of all usurped domination and transmitted privilege.

“ And there was also a strife among his
 “ disciples, which of them should be account-
 “ ed the greatest. But Jesus said unto them :
 “ Ye know, that the kings of the Gentiles
 “ exercise lordship over them ; and they that
 “ are great, exercise authority upon them.
 “ But it shall not be so among you ; but,
 “ whosoever will be great among you, let him
 “ be your minister ; and, whosoever will be
 “ chief among you, let him be your servant.
 “ Even as the Son of Man came not to be
 “ ministered unto, but to minister ; and to
 “ give his life a ransom for many :” (Matt.
 xx. 25—29. Luke xxii. 24.—28.)

Impartiality, however, and a love for the true principles of fair criticism, call upon me to declare, that the latter sentence is exhibited

with a very material transposition of phrase, and variety of readings, in some MS copies of the New Testament, belonging to the Imperial library at Vienna, and other royal repositories, that might be mentioned, if a scrupulous detail of such minutiae were expedient on this occasion :

In western clime there is a town,
To those that dwell therein well known;
Therefore, there needs no more be said here :
We unto them refer our reader.
For brevity is very good,
When w' are, or are not, understood.

Indeed, the variations here spoken of are delineated in *red* ink, which betrays the hand of a modern interpolator; and stand as follows :

“ Even as the *kings of the isles* came not to
“ minister, but to be ministered unto ; and to
“ give *the* life of many *myriads* a ransom for
“ *their own pleasure.*”

Sir ! I leave you, and your ministerial partisans, assisted by *the wisdom of Parliament*, to balance the respective excellence of these
read-

readings, to settle these curious aberrations of flumbering transcribers, and to point out the sources of their mistake :

Non nostrum inter vos tantas componere lites.

Again : — “ So, after Jesus had washed
 “ their feet, and had taken his garments, and
 “ was set down again, he said unto them :
 “ Know ye, what I have done unto you ? Ye
 “ call me Master and Lord : and ye say well ;
 “ for so I am. If I then, your Lord and
 “ Master, have washed your feet, ye also
 “ ought to wash one another’s feet. For I
 “ have given you an example, that ye should
 “ do as I have done to you. Verily, verily,
 “ I say unto you, The servant is not greater
 “ than his lord ; neither he, that is sent,
 “ greater than he that sent him. If ye know
 “ these things, happy are ye, if ye do them : ”
 (John, xiii. 12 — 18.)

But I shall not multiply quotations in support of a proposition, loudly proclaimed and indubitably demonstrated, by every action of our Saviour’s life, and every precept of his tongue. I conclude then, that the pure spirit of
 the

the Gospel, operative through the whole mass of the creation, is the life of every man alike ; that it comprehends, and should pervade every professor, from *the beggar on the dunghill*, (1 Sam. ii. 8.) to the monarch *that sitteth on his throne* : (Exod. xi. 5.) It is altogether frivolous and inapplicable, or universally and undistinguishably pertinent : it is nothing, or the most important of all things possible.

II. I am now arrived, Sir ! at the concluding division of my subject ; of less general moment and application, it is true ; but, beyond all controversy, of no inconsiderable concernment to yourself. You will be weighed in *my* balance, and found materially wanting. That balance, indeed, is not the *even* and unerring *balance* (Job, xxxi. 6.) of the sanctuary ; but the balance of a weak and fallible fellow-creature : of one, however, who has watched some days and some nights in the sober investigation of scripture truth, and has sacrificed many a hecatomb of social comfort and secular emolument on her altar : whose judgement, therefore, has some authority, and is entitled to some respect. I believe you from my soul to be well-intentioned, un-

assuming,

assuming, and uninfluenced by worldly motives; but under the dangerous dominion of superstitious and puerile prepossessions. Under this conviction, I have frequently stood forth as your apologist, in opposition to those harsher adversaries, who could find no solution of your strange political demeanour, but in depravity of heart: a supposition, which in all cases, where no sinister views are visible, forces itself with extreme reluctance on my breast. No: your ingenuous nature has been abused by insidious and selfish profligates; who, destitute of worth themselves, have been eager to prostitute your virtues and reputation to their own interest or popularity. I believe you to be actuated, like the Israëlites of the apostle's days, with *a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge*: (Rom. x. 2.) You are exempt too, I hope and would willingly persuade myself, from that overweening influence of fanatical impressions, which, beneath the specious semblance of humility and self-annihilation, inflates, with a most dangerous infusion of sanctimonious contemptuousness and Pharisaic pride, that class of Christians, among which you rank.

1. To proceed, therefore, in my plan.— You will recollect, Sir! that the volume, which we so justly love,—those *holy scriptures*, *that are able to make us wise unto salvation*, (2 Tim. iii. 15.) has furnished it's readers with a touch-stone, at which we may try our faith, whether it be adulterate, or pure. The words of our Lord's favourite disciple will possibly recur to memory on this occasion: *If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God*: (John, vii. 17.) Concerning your own knowledge of this doctrine, with respect to your own soundness in the faith, few scruples, I dare say, have broken in of late years upon the tranquillity of your acquiescence. Your fellow traveller, to whom I have before alluded in these pages, whose foul hypocrisy and dark malignity, though unsuspected by yourself, are *practically* known to me; that impostor, I say, has contributed to confirm you in a gloomy system of evangelical fanaticism, which he derides as much as any man in theory, and contemns openly and avowedly, beyond all others, in his conduct. The remarks, Sir! which I am proceeding to subjoin, will assist your determination with respect to the uncorruptness of
of

of your religious creed, infinitely better than the suggestions of that subtle sycophant and deceiver, on the principles of my unexceptionable authority just quoted from the book of life.

2. In relation to your *private character* and social manners, I have been favoured with no opportunities of experimental knowledge. I feel myself, however, entirely disposed to believe you here so far irreproachable and praiseworthy, as the egregious puerility of your religious fancies will allow. Your *public character* alone, abundantly conspicuous, from the elevation of your position, to the whole community, will constitute the basis of my enquiries and conclusions; and this is so strongly marked by actions of most decisive quality, as to admit, I should suppose, on a full and fair statement, no possible diversity of sentence with rational and dispassionate enquirers.

In one word, Sir ! to launch at once into the middle of my subject, you stand impeached, in a most awful day of trial, at the bar of Religion, Reason, and Humanity, of that high

crime and misdemeanour, — a long, and uniform, and ardent support, in your political capacity, of that *right honourable* gentleman, WILLIAM PITT. Here pause a moment, I beseech you! *you*, who love the Gospel; *you*, who glory in a crucified Redeemer! Endeavour to frame, before you proceed, some conception of the direful pregnancy, the multitudinous dependencies, of this short and simple proposition: “The *friend* of “WILLIAM PITT.” — You will *obtain mercy*, I trust; *because* you have acted *ignorantly, in unbelief*: (1 Tim. i. 13.) You are not, you cannot be, perfectly aware, I am persuaded, of the immeasurable enormities comprised in that zealous and powerful co-operation with such a minister: or the bare contemplation of the circumstance would astound and petrify your soul.

Adspice: namque omnem, quæ nunc, obducta tuenti,
Mortales hebetat visus tibi, et humida circum
Caligat, nubem eripiam.

Turn your eyes hitherward, whilst I develop the horrid texture of wickedness extreme, and calamity unexampled: — contemplate, if you can, with a calm survey, the frightful spectacle:

tacle :— trace the black embroidery, and the thick *characters of bell*, that are wrought in such sanguine colours, with such awful and living portraiture, on the ample bosom of it's folds and drapery.

Quanquam animus meminisse horret, luctuque refugit,
Incipiam.

3. *You* well remember, Mr. Wilberforce ! that this WILLIAM PITT, who has lost *his* memory, profest himself, at the commencement of his parliamentary career, a most strenuous advocate for reform in the representation of the people ; as the only radical cure, that could be devised, for the multifarious and flagrant corruptions of our government. His words, I am informed, are tantamount to the following declaration ; or, in truth, accurately the same with these :
“ Without a reformation in Parliament, nei-
“ ther the liberty of the subject can be pre-
“ served, nor can we expect to have a wise,
“ virtuous, or disinterested administration.”

“ Well ! ” you would reply : “ My friend
“ continues in this sentiment : he is still an
“ advocate for reformation in the represen-
“ tative

“ tative body of this kingdom.” Observe then, Sir ! I entreat you, to what alternative by this fond credulity you are reduced. You must either accept with implicit acquiescence the unsupported assertion of the stripling statesman, and obstinately resist the clearest demonstrations of undisputed fact in the maturity of his public life : or assign some adequate reason for his present supineness on the subject of this measure.

I must remind you, Sir ! that, during his administration, this man has created, including his reverend progeny of prelates and the exaltations of inferior nobility to higher titles, nearly one half, I believe, of the peerage of this realm.—Mark this diligently : and cease to wonder, that *Sir Brook Boothby* has styled our present house of lords, “ *New creatures* “ of the *minister*, and *old valets* of the *king* ; “ courtly lawyers, and a courtly hierarchy.”

Further.—It is most notorious, and what no effrontery, I think, can gainsay, that the representatives of the people during the same period have numbered amongst them in large proportion a description of men, more immediately

diately and essentially under the influence of the minister from their mercantile character, incomparably beyond the example of any former period that can be specified. With reason, therefore, has the same elegant, but satiric, pen, characterised this *honourable* assembly, as composed “ of placemen, pensioners, hungry expectants, India delinquents, and every other description of ministerial dependants ; kennelled like hounds, and crouching for employment : representatives, representing nothing but their own personal interest.”

It were a superfluous scrupulosity to extend our researches further in prosecution of the point in question. Detestable surely must be that audacity, which refuses to acknowledge, —deplorable that sottishness, which is unable to perceive, —the absolute irreconcilability of such a conduct with such professions. No, Sir ! This was the lure holden out by a young grey-beard in imposture to entrap popular simplicity ; a simplicity, irrationally seduced by boastful promises, superficial loquacity, and a precipitate presumption of hereditary virtues. The public attachment was effectually secured,
even

even to an excess of enthusiastic fondness and admiration. His disinterested partisans, however, have been long disenchanting of their fond delirium ; they have been sobered for many years from the intoxicating fumes of his magic cup : but alas !

Nil sibi legatum præter plorare, suisque :

unavailing remorse is their only consolation now ; and the bitterness of self-condemnation, too justly merited by such groundless and immoderate credulity ! their sole reward. *Reformation* is erased for ever from the tablet ; and *Revolution* is written in it's place. *Dabit Deus his quoque finem.*

For my own part, whether from a singular propensity of penetration into human character with some success, or from superior opportunities of experimental observation, I never found myself at any period of my life mistaken in my judgement of that man. His disdainful aspect, and supercilious demeanour, when a contemporary youth at Cambridge ; the self-opiniated dictatorial complexion of his first speeches in public life ; the prematurity of his oratorical exhibitions ;—all these striking

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ing peculiarities were sufficient indications, to my mind at least, that “all was false and “hollow ;” a gaudy structure, destitute of foundation and stability ; the blossoms of wisdom and of virtue, without the root : and, *because they had no root, they are withered away.*

Quasi solstitialis herba, paullisper fuit :
Repente exortus est, repentino occidit.

This frail solstitial flower, one transient day
Saw spread it's verdure, blossom, and decay.

Ye sons of Cam ! in whose hearts this golden idol (but a mere wooden log to me) has been long set up and worshipped ; your eyes have often seen a fit emblem for this object of your profane adoration on the bosom of that *wizard stream*, which *washes the hallowed feet* of our *Alma Mater !*

(O ! name for ever sad, for ever dear !)

Your eyes have noticed a plant, expanding it's broad foliage and stately flower on the surface of the waters ; but have found, on closer inspection, that “the stem, by which it receives “nourishment and support, was slender as a “thread.”

This, Sir ! is the man, the grand exemplar
of

of systematical corruption, and the sworn foe to all reformati^ons whatsoever ; —

————— quantum mutatus ab illo
Hectore !

whose measures you have promoted with cordial concurrence, with a confidence unlimited, and with the powerful influence of your reputation, amidst an inconsistency of conduct, to which it seems impossible for any intellect above the mere imbecillity of idiotism to have been the dupe. You have admired, loved, and revered this minister, with *the mark of the beast*, with all the unequivocal characters of apostasy and perfidy, deeply engraven *on his forehead*. But this, I suppose, is one of *your* extraordinary methods of

LOOKING UNTO JESUS !

4. You proved yourself the staunch coadjutor of this incomparable guardian of our liberties, civil and religious, in his opposition to a repeal of the *Test-laws* and penal statutes in behalf of the Protestant-dissenters from the Church establishment. When the delegates from that body waited on the minister with

an explanation of their intended proposition to Parliament, and a solicitation of his support, this *complicated monster*, this *Amphisbæna* dire, left an impresson upon them at their first interview, significant of an intended patronage of their petition. There is no misrepresentation, Sir! no exaggeration, in this statement. My informants are the eye and ear witnesses of this transaction. Whether he were sincere at that time, and were afterwards diverted from his purpose by motives of interest and ambition; or even then were biaſſed by the countervailing influence of his habitual duplicity; I take not upon me to decide. The fact only is incontestable: that his subsequent exertions on this question were diametrically opposed to a previous expectation, excited by his looks, and words, and demeanour, in men not likely to deceive themselves, and incapable of deceiving others.

You likewise, Mr. Wilberforce! seemed originally inclined to favour these petitioners, before the engine of priestcraft and political cajolery had been played on your simplicity; but you speedily recovered your steps from this incidental deviation into rectitude. You

are conscious, that what I am going to affirm, is truth. You, good creature ! dutiful son of orthodoxy ! pious nursling of our dear Mother-Church ! you were smitten forsooth ! with a holy compunction of spirit, lest the repeal of these laws, and the consequent removal of civil disabilities, should prove ultimately prejudicial to the interests of the hierarchical establishment in these kingdoms, and overset the *Thirty-nine* Articles ; that impregnable bulwark of our faith ! Your understanding was seized, I must presume, with a momentary oblivion of a most emphatical lesson in our Scriptures ; or your theological preceptors, it is possible, had neglected the proper interpretation of that important passage. Suffer me to recall the words to your remembrance, and to accompany them with a few notes of illustration, as we pass.

“ And *Jesus* said unto *his disciples* : But
 “ whom say ye that I am ? And Simon Peter
 “ answered, and said : Thou art the Christ,
 “ the son of the living God. And Jesus answered,
 “ and said unto him : Blessed art thou,
 “ Simon Bar-Jona ! for flesh and blood hath
 “ not revealed it unto thee, but my Father
 “ which

“ which is in heaven. And I say also unto
 “ thee: That thou art Peter; and upon this
 “ rock I will build my Church; and the
 “ gates of hell shall not prevail against it:”
 (Matt. xvi. 15—19.)

Now observe, Sir! what momentous and fundamental principles of Christianity are enveloped in this short dialogue between our Master and his apostle. You cannot employ with a brighter prospect of edification a few moments of your time, than by concentrating your attention to an evolution of these principles.

We are here taught, upon no less evidence than the declaration of our Lord himself;—
 1. that the badge of communion with the Gospel is a simple acknowledgement, that *Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God*: or, in other words, that Jesus of Nazareth was the promised Messiah of the Israelites, delegated by God for the redemption of mankind from ignorance, and sin, and death.

Now, Sir! I demand of you, I demand of the whole priesthood and prelacy of this land,

by what authority ye presume to superinduce other conditions of Christian fellowship upon this single postulatam of your Saviour? On what plea of reason have ye taken upon you to deprive any man of the unalienable birth-right of equal citizenship, because he refuses acceptance of your forgeries and impositions; your creeds, your articles, your canons, and summaries of faith? Who commissioned this self-created dictator in spiritual concerns, this *man of sin*, this *son of perdition*, thus to lord it over *God's heritage*; — thus, by such impious *exaltation* of his power, to invade a divine prerogative, and usurp a throne even *in the temple of God* himself? (2 Thess. ii. 3. 4. 1 Pet. v. 3.) But possibly this rebellion against the sole legislation of Jehovah, and the supremacy of Christ in his own kingdom, may be another of *your* modes of

LOOKING UNTO JESUS!

2. You may remark further from this passage, so pregnant with Gospel truth! that the revelation of genuine Christianity, and its profession in simplicity and purity, are detached
from

from all intercourse with *flesh and blood*: that is, human principles, worldly motives, civil power, temporal policy, are as dissonant from the spirituality of our religion, as unconnected with that vital operation of intrinsic agency, as unaccording with those invisible influences of the intellect and heart,—as *light with darkness*; as *Christ with Belial*: (2 Cor. vi. 14, 15.)

God never made his work for man to mend.

Your ecclesiastical institutions, Sir! are in reality a most offensive abomination in contrast with the *sweet savours* of Gospel incense: they constitute the most prominent feature in that antichristian tyranny, on which the word of prophecy has denounced most exemplary vengeance; a vengeance, that is now at length awaking from a *slumber* (2 Pet. ii. 3.) of ages, and rousing all its energies into action. The victims, indeed, after the usual procedure in great national judgements, enjoy themselves with heedless security, as in a perfect calm: like the antediluvian generation of Noah's day, "they eat, they drink, they buy, they sell, they plant, they build:" (Luke, xvii. 28.) they continue their career
of

of supineness and deception, of prodigality and insolence, of venality and cruel persecution, in conjunction with their state-ally, though a dreadful specimen of similar infatuation, so recently exhibited in a neighbouring country, is staring them in the face.

But that two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more !

3. Finally, Sir ! Christ has advertised us, in this passage, of the perpetual permanency of his Church, founded on that adamantine profession of his Messiahship : *The gates of hell* (or rather, of the *grave* ; i. e. mortality and destruction) *shall not prevail against it.*

Go now, and suppose this mighty fabric, *whose contriver and builder is God* (Heb. xi. 10.) *Omnipotent* ; whose foundations repose on the immutability of Truth ; whose compartments are coextensive with the globe ; whose battlements transcend the skies :—go now, and imagine this vast edifice tottering from its center by the assaults of non-conformists and unbelievers : call loudly for your Church and her rotten props ; summon your king, your minister, and bishops, with all the names of
hierarchical

hierarchical distinction, (*a great multitude, which no man can number*, Rev. vii. 9.) to put out their fingers, before it lie prostrate in the dust !

I cannot excuse this species of folly, Sir ! in you, who have devoted yourself to heavenly meditation and a painful study of the scriptures. *Mr. Pitt's* conduct in this respect is susceptible of much more palpable extenuation. Spiritual musings and *sober love-feasts* form no part of his enjoyments and occupations. *Gallio careth for none of these things* : (Acts, xviii. 17.) The principles of *civil liberty*, he has forgotten ; those of *religious*, he never knew. I could readily prevail upon myself, if all else were well, to obliterate at once, with the rasure of forgetfulness, this transgression from the long and crowded catalogue of his offences. Compared with his other crimes, such hostility to an equal participation of religious privileges is no more than one barren spot in a wide and dreary wilderness : a mere volcanic eruption amidst the conflagration of the universe !

5. We are now ascending a much higher step on the ladder of political atrocities ; to which I shall raise you, Sir ! from the vantage-ground of a few preliminary observations.

TRUTH, Sir ! is the most meritorious pursuit, the very noblest acquisition, of an intellectual and moral creature : the blossom of Happiness, and the root of Virtue. To this purpose is that fine remark of Plutarch : Ουθεν ανθρωπω λαβειν μειζον, ου χαριζεσθαι Θεω σεμνοτερον, αληθειας : “ Man can receive no “ blessing of greater worth, God can bestow “ none more venerable, than TRUTH.” But how, Sir ! is *Truth* to be discovered, whether evangelical, moral, philosophical, or political, but by diligent and unrestrained investigation ; by the full and free application of human intellect ? Tell me, then ; Is not that man a rebel against Reason, against Truth, Humanity, and God ; are not those laws, I do not say, absurd and wicked, but absolutely void, and antecedently incapable of observance without an actual profanation of the divine will ; — which presume to circumscribe, or fetter, much more to destroy and *punish*, this fundamental

mental criterion of rationality — this first duty of intellectual existence?

———— cunctis undamque, auramque, patentem.

If the government of any country answer all the purposes of it's institution in rendering the people happy, men will not be *argued* out of their feelings and common-sense by the fanciful exaggerations of a repining scribbler: but if, again, the rulers of a nation become despotic and unmerciful, devoted to their own purposes of speculation and ambition; that writer deserves well of his fellow-citizens and mankind at large, who attempts by reason and argument to destroy a constitution, which exists only to retard the providential intentions of universal happiness to the human race.

We are here engaged, however, in a threadbare topic; and I hasten my application of it to your case. I shall, therefore, but just stay to mention the *fruitlessness* of such impotent restrictions; or rather their direct tendency to promote the very purpose, which they are endeavouring to impede. The rays of knowledge may indeed be partially intercepted

for a time, and broken, by the obliquity of legal interposition; but the parent luminary still pursues, unretarded, his progress through the skies, to invigorate and illumine universal Nature.

Now permit me, Sir! to direct your attention towards the illustrious achievements of your redoubtable hero in this department of transgression.

1. The freedom of public discussion has been abridged by sanguinary statutes virtually incompatible with the verbal compact between the subjects and their principal *servant* (Rom. xiii. 3.) the chief magistrate of this realm, the *creature* (αυθρωπίνη ΚΤΙΣΕΙ, 1 Pet. ii. 13.) of our hands: a compact, ratified by a public and solemn oath at the time of his conditional investiture with his delegated office.

2. Many of our fellow-citizens have been punished by severe and arbitrary fines, by long and cruel imprisonments, by banishment to the extremities of the earth among *heathen* savages, under very trying circumstances of calamity

calamity in a sudden transition from the liberal enjoyments of a literary life to dark loathsome dungeons, — to disease, and chains, and famine, and desolation: their spotless fame has been exposed to the slanders and obloquy of their countrymen from false calumnies, pretended plots, and unsubstantiated accusations of regal murder: they have been tried for their lives like the meanest felons, and impeached of the blackest political crimes, under the impressions of strong public prejudice; and, when pronounced innocent by their peers, in spite of all the machinations of diabolical malice and the foul exertions of mercenary lawyers in this work of blood, they have been dismissed, after a tedious imprisonment and exorbitant expences, arising from the iniquities of office, without the smallest retribution for these flagrant injuries, which indeed no retribution could compensate, on the part of their unrelenting persecutors.

These are but cursory gleanings from a full harvest, a small selection from the multitudinous enormities of that grand national impostor, WILLIAM PITT!

Τι πρῶτον, τι δ' ἔπειτα, τι δ' ὑστάτιον, καταλέξω;

these are but a slight specimen of his infernal manœuvres against some of the most valuable and accomplished members in society, FOR TREADING IN HIS OWN STEPS! (observe this, *Mr. Wilberforce!*) for attempting the *same reformation* of abuses by the *same means*; namely, by a melioration of the representative body in the Commons' house of Parliament: an object, which raised himself to power and popularity. — Such have hitherto been the contrary fortunes of these reformers!

Ille crucem scelesis pretium tulit, hic diadema.

These o'er the sea to savage deserts roam;
This deluges the world with blood at home.

Perhaps a dire reverse of doom is unfolding from the bosom of futurity: yet I wish, that not a hair may perish from the heads of the authors of our miseries! May they rather live to expiate during this existence their dreadful crimes in the bitterness of remorse; and may their *future days be one whole contrition* for their sins!

Now, Sir! in this monstrous mass of guilt unparalleled, you, as the abettor and accessory of this Minister, are entitled to some share;
nay,

may, must in reason be deemed a principal participant. The patronage and support, of such men as you, has enabled this *child of perdition* to run with impunity and success his long race of hardened apostasy and ferocious persecution. Yet you still adhere to your associate ! You still repose upon his humanity and virtues an unreserved confidence, as if he were a second *Titus*, the delight, the pride, the ornament, of human nature ! And this, peradventure, is *your* third method of

LOOKING UNTO JESUS !

6. Finally, Sir ! you have seconded, justified, and encouraged our wordy warrior, in that most tremendous of all measures, *The war with France* :

Oh ! write it not, my Hand !—The name appears
Already written :—wash it out, my Tears !

a war, originally projected upon fictitious and absurd pretences, against every obvious dictate of religion, of reason, and sound policy ; a war, prosecuted with barbarian ferocity, amidst the perpetual admonitions of miscarriage, and the unceasing expostulations of
the

the wise and good ; a war, accompanied with a complication of calamity and a devastation of the human species, prodigious beyond all examples in the records of mortality, since the first revolution of the sun. Even *your* guilt, Sir ! as an approver only and subordinate promoter of this most nefarious of all possible undertakings, is great and terrible indeed ! I am sure, for my own part, that I would not exchange conditions with you, under the circumstance of that horrible atrocity, unrepented and unannealed by remorse and reparation, by the sighs of a broken heart, and tears of blood—for all the honours and riches, that kings and potentates could bestow. Yet this, it is possible, may be another of *your* ways of

LOOKING UNTO JESUS !

And in this place, Sir ! permit me to direct your eyes upon an emblematical exhibition, which has suggested itself to my fancy, during it's occupation on the present subject.

In the front of this *ideal* picture, you may observe a prodigious pile of carcases, maimed, bruised, mangled, and gored with many wounds. From the foot of this Alp of car-

nage, you discern streams of blood issuing with strong eruption, and cutting channels for themselves in every direction through the country. On all sides, at various distances, are discovered a variety of ghastly forms, as if they had just escaped beyond hope from that mass of slain, looking back with a mixture of horror and exultation on their slaughtered companions: some, deprived of their limbs, and others writhing with the tortures of horrid wounds. In the West, are presented to your view vast multitudes withering and sinking with the blast of death in pestilential climates; weltering on the shore, or floating on the ocean. Through the whole painting are dispersed ruined towns, wasted fields, ships and villages in flames. The intervening spaces are diversified with groups of disconsolate widows and helpless orphans, decrepit fires and hoary matrons, bereft of their only comfort; beating their breasts, and rending the skies with groans and lamentations.

At one corner of the piece, you may see brethren of malignant aspect, armed against brethren, and assailing each other with implacable

placable ferocity: abetted and assisted in their unnatural hostilities by a band of ruffians, just landed from their ships; whom their drefs and ensigns proclaim the inhabitants of another country.

Above, in the regions of the sky, darkened with clouds and deformed by tempests, you may discover a portentous grieffy fiend, scattering around him firebrands and death, with famine, pestilence, and war, attendant on his nod; in dark Divan with his foul assessors, the partners of his mischiefs, besmeared with the blood of human sacrifice, and *grinning horribly a ghastly smile*, to see the successful operation of their devilish purposes. In a remote corner of the picture, rays of light are seen gradually darting from the horizon: you behold them strike the souls of those aërial dæmons with consternation and dismay; with *horrible imaginings* of their own destruction in the speedy dissolution of their empire. —

But your friend engaged in this war, truly, in behalf of *Religion, Humanity, and regular Governments!*

I. By

1. By the pretence of this motive of *religion*, it should seem, that your copy of the Gospels prescribes, as an admirable specific for reforming the manners of the world, and as the true medium of *doing God service*, (John, xvi. 2.) the cutting of men's throats by a legion of brutal mercenaries trained for the purpose, and legalized to the trade of slaughter!—By this too we may be led to conclude, that the *Jesus*, to whom you *look*, came into the world, *not to save men's lives, but to DESTROY them*: (Luke, ix. 56.) By this, in short, we might reasonably presume, from the piety and sanctity of your doctrines and your life, that a trivial monosyllable has slipped, from the carelessness of copyists, out of one commandment in the decalogue, as exhibited in *your Bible*, where you have been accustomed to read it thus:

THOU SHALT COMMIT MURDER!

2. In the next place, the interests of *humanity*, beyond all possibility of contradiction, are admirably forwarded and secured by the conversion of men into something much worse than *brutes*:—

Indica tigris agit rabidâ cum tigride pacem
Perpetuam; sævis inter se convenit urtis;

Perpetual bonds of amity endear

Tigress to tigress, shaggy bear to bear:—

(Mr. OWEN.)

into *fiends* and *devils*, gorged with the flesh and blood of their fellow-men. But, what is the guilt of the poor ignorant hungry offenders, compared with that of those *sinner*s, their employers and instigators; of *whom* YOU are CHIEF? (1 Tim. i. 15.) Not much more, in a fair estimate, than that of the passive bayonet, to the hand which thrusts it to the heart.—OH! Sir! are not the words of Peter too applicable to conduct such as your's? *Thou hast neither part, nor lot, in this matter; for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent, therefore, of this thy wickedness; and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thy heart may be forgiven thee: for I perceive, that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.* (Acts, viii. 21—24.)

Surely the rankest *heathenism* is incomparably preferable to so base a species of *Christianity* as this.

3. And, beyond all peradventure, politician PITT! and Rabbi WILBERFORCE! *regular government* is admirably consulted by the propagation of alarms and terrors, by the fabrication of plots and treasons, by the fomentation of suspicion and malevolence; *by setting a man at variance against his father*, and transforming *his own household* into his greatest foes; (Matt. x. 35, 36.) by arming the more profligate portion of society *with swords and slaves* against the other. We may venture to mix also in this never-failing *recipe*, this perfect *panacea*, for social *regularity* and national *composure*, a few lighter ingredients, such as taxes, bankruptcies, a scarcity of corn, and such an exorbitant increase in the expence of common necessaries, as render a decent maintenance of ourselves and families in the lower orders of life extremely difficult, and to some impracticable. But this accumulation of anxiety and distress, these scenes of misery, derived purely from the profligacy of our rulers, in lieu of a prosperity, never equalled by any nation under heaven, within our reach, may be possibly one of the religious consequences, Sir! that result from *your* singular mode of

LOOKING UNTO JESUS!

4. But lastly, that I may not bewilder myself with a theme of inexhaustible calamity, to the prime actors in which, (you, I mean, *Mr. Wilberforce!* with your friend Moloch, and his companions, —

———— horrid crew! besmear'd with blood
Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears ;)

no bitterness of invective, in my conscientious opinion, can possibly do justice ; — whose villainies and cruelty transcend in their effects, on a fair comparison of the respective cases, all that fable has transmitted, all that history records, of the most merciless savages of antiquity : — to avoid bewilderment, I say, amidst such a multiplicity of topics, (for time would fail me, should I attempt to speak at large) I shall only solicit your attention to one consideration more, and then dismiss you to your beads and prayer-book, to divide with your favourite minister in parliament on questions of persecution, tyranny, and bloodshed ; after a few farewell reflections, and a short lesson of advice.

Your heaven-born friend, amongst the
number of his pious meditations on the means
of

of restoring a *regular government* to France, happily devised the god-like scheme of subduing the inhabitants of that populous empire to religion, humanity, and laws, by the summary discipline of FAMINE. Gracious parent of the universe! who *givest to the beast his food, and feedest the young ravens, when they cry*; (Pfalm, cxlvii. 9.) *who openest thy hand, and all thy creatures are filled with good*; (civ. 28.) *who art kind to the unthankful, and the evil*; (Luke, vi. 35.) *who makest thy sun to rise on the wicked and on the good, and sendest rain on the just and on the unjust*; (Matt. v. 45.) who hast expressly commanded us, by the mouth of thy dear Son, *to love our enemies, to bless them that curse us, and to pray for our despiteful persecutors*, (ver. 43, 44.) that we may merit the endearing appellation of thy *children*:—were it previously conceiveable, that beings in the *human shape divine*, with the same life-current circulating in their veins, heirs to the same infirmities of the flesh, and joint-partakers of mortal feelings and affections—could calmly contrive, deliberately pursue, and audaciously avow, this scheme of pre-eminent atrocity; a scheme, that beggars all capacities of language,

guage, and sets every power of calculation at defiance? — In this guilt also, you, Mr. Wilberforce! have made yourself, by silent acquiescence and subsequent support of the horrid perpetrators, a detestable associate. *Guilt*, did I say? This may be, on the contrary, with *you*, for aught I can discover, some peculiarly edifying mode of

LOOKING UNTO JESUS!

And now, Sir! let me take the liberty of proposing a simple question for your solution: — Upon a review of the preceding picture of your compeers, coloured from the life with the pencil of disinterested truth, will you prefer *loyal Christian Englishmen*, of the described complexion, to the people so extravagantly reviled by them, I mean *rebellious French atheists*; or not? Suppose we assist our decision on this point by descending from general competition to a specific instance. Whether of the twain, for example, do you most approve and reverence; *Buonaparte*, (late the fond object of my solicitude day and night;

————— πολλὰς μὲν ἄπνυχας νυκτὰς ἰαυόν,

Ἡμάτα δ' αἱματοευντα' —————

but

but now, with his unrivalled companions of the war, my consolation and my triumph!) BUONAPARTE, I say, or EDMUND BURKE? The one, a prodigy beyond compare in eloquence and genius; but a fiend in malignity, and insatiable of human blood;

Shutting the gates of mercy on mankind:

the other, in the very midst of victories, which eclipse even the achievements of that unrivalled Carthaginian, preferring one civic crown, for the preservation of a single citizen from death, to the melancholy glory, that could result from a thousand triumphs of a conqueror, wading through floods of slaughter to his reward!

Are we, Sir! in the place of God to scrutinize the *hidden man of the heart*, and to decide on principles, where no public profession of them has been uttered? No: the external act, by which alone society can be benefited or impaired, is in most cases the only standard whereby our determinations on character must be regulated. Your faith and mine, on what I deem the fundamental points of revelation, is probably not very different: but I can suggest

gest to my own mind a variety of exculpatory reasons, in heedlessness, fashionable levity, secular dissipation, an immoderate conceit of superior discernment, fundamental defects of education, neglect of adequate information and laborious enquiry, a perpetual exposure of gross depravity and puerile superstition in professing Christians, with other obstacles and discouragements, as probable sources of the unbelieving propensities of the present day. *Shew me thy faith by thy works*; (James, ii. 18.) and I am satisfied: I want no more. *Godwin's Political Justice* I read with pleasure and improvement; with admiration of the philosophical composure, the temperate but vigorous ratiocination, the perspicuous energetic style, the clear discernment, and the unreserved investigation, of it's author.—I differ, perhaps, in many points; but I confess, that I love such men, and wish ardently that they were not only *almost*, but *altogether*, such as I myself am: (Acts, xxvi. 29.) *Qui tales sunt, utinam essent nostri!* When, on the other hand, I take up your publication, my predominant feelings are those of disgust, abhorrence, and indignation. I expect with such principles an exemplary purity of conduct.—

I con-

I contrast your professions with your life; your faith with your works; holy lectures with *blood-guiltiness*; the follower of JESUS with the friend and advocate of PITT. And can you wish a more compleat definition of irreconcilable antipathy, than the contents of the last clause; or a more ample vindication of my sensations on the perusal of your book? In fact, Christians, like you, Mr. Wilberforce! ignorant *what spirit ye are of*, prove a more fruitful source of atheism and infidelity, than all other causes put together; formalists, as ye are, of devout sentiments and sanctified demeanour, but accomplices in enormities shocking to human feelings; *whited sepulchres, beautiful on the outside, but full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness*; (Matt. xxiii. 27.) having a *form of godliness, but without the power*; (2 Tim. iii. 5.) *professing, in short, to know God, but in deeds denying him; abominable, disobedient, and to every good work reprobate*: (Tit. i. 16.)

I am aware, Sir! that this sentence on you will be thought exceedingly intemperate and harsh by men of dull sensations and of no zeal even for gospel truth: but, *what I have written, I have written*; and have exhibited at the same time my vouchers for writing thus, from

the unerring book of life, in the preceding pages. My words are, in reality, *the words of truth and soberness*: (Acts, xxvi. 25.) they will stand the test of Reason and the Scriptures; though Festus, perhaps, and his crew of mercenary parasites, or lukewarm worldlings, may think me *mad*. I shall acknowledge the contents, with the exultation of conscious rectitude, “in the hour of death, and in the day of judgement.” According to my own conceptions of the subject under contemplation, I have assigned “proper words to their proper places.” If the language be deemed in any respect too harsh and pointed, it must be so deemed with reference only to the feelings of the censurer; for I could find no adequate image of my own sensations in any other phraseology. *Out of the abundance of my heart my mouth hath spoken.* If crimes of the deepest dye under the colour of Christian sanctity can be stigmatised, in the judgement of some readers, by any terms of reproach more than commensurate to their deserts, I grudge no man the enjoyment of this opinion; but, amidst the invectives of foes, and the remonstrances of friends, continue to retain my own, and silently transfer from myself, on deliberate and deep

con-

conviction, the disproportion in this case to some erroneous principle of action in my objectors. The genuine correspondences of words and things, and the reality of moral distinctions, will still subsist, in spite of the prudery, the fastidiousness, the constitutional inanimation or mistaken candour of mankind ; and will neither be confounded, nor disrespected, with impunity. The practical benefits of my procedure I could illustrate by various examples of notoriety, if required. Thomas Paine, for instance, will answer Bishop Watson's pamphlet ; but, I predict, will never venture a reply to mine. Wounded pride and conscious profligacy have set their seal upon his tongue. To have written otherwise, on the present occasion, were to me slavish timidity from selfish motives, a mean treachery to my conviction, an impious rebellion against truth, a sacrilegious indifference to every thing venerable, dear, and sacred ; to every thing praiseworthy, and of *good report*. That awful declaration of our Lord is ever present in these conjunctures to my mind. *Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory*

of his Father with the holy angels: (Mark, viii. 38.)

—————Civis erat, qui libera posset
Verba animi proferre, et vitam impendere vero!

This species of plain-dealing, this application of *sharp rebuke*, recommended in cases of extreme malignancy by the spirited apostle, (Tit. i. 13.) is unpalatable and exceptionable to those alone, whose insipidity of nature leads them to prefer disease with indolence to remedy with exertion; who mistake *earnestness* for *passion*; who are influenced by selfish considerations of fame or interest; who are afraid of drawing the attention of an opponent, or the public, to a free discussion of their own characters. No supposeable case of iniquity can be less ambiguous, than that upon which I have ventured to decide. You know, Sir! who vented their indignation without restraint against the *Scribes*, the *Lawyers*, and the *Pharisees*; who, again and again, without a possibility of assurance beyond the demonstration of open facts, pronounced that depraved generation, VIPERS, FOOLS, and HYPOCRITES.

Finally,

Finally, Sir ! be persuaded by me,

——— *fas est et ab hoste doceri*,—

though indeed no enemy, to commence, and this instantly, a serious, resolute, and laborious scrutiny into that religious creed, which you have imbibed from your nurse and *grand-mother*: (2 Tim. i. 5.) Take my word for it, some material articles of your faith are nothing better than a *profane and old-wives' fable*: (1 Tim. iv. 7.) *Sweet and bitter water* (James, iii. 11.) cannot bubble at the same time from *the same spring*. Apostasy, falshood, treachery, venality, rapacity, corruption, persecution, cruelty, military despotism, the destruction of human happiness, a boundless lust of devastation, the deliberate murder of many myriads, and, amidst oceans of blood, an insatiable thirst for more ; — all these things must be laudable in themselves, and pleasing in the sight of God, or your religion, which suffers you to be an accomplice and abettor of these crimes, must be a scheme of impiety and lyes, entitled only to universal execration, and ripe for vengeance. *Consider of it ; take advice ; and speak your mind*: (Judges, xix. 30.)

With

With the sincerest desire for your speedy conversion to a sounder Christianity, for an unfeigned repentance, and effectual amendment, I subscribe myself, Sir !

Your hearty well-wisher,

GILBERT WAKEFIELD.

Hackney, June 12th,

1797.

I HAVE taken advantage of a vacant page to annex a character of Mr. Pitt from a late speech of MAJOR CARTWRIGHT to the inhabitants of Boston: nor do I recollect ever to have seen a finer specimen of vigorous and simple eloquence, than this effusion of that invaluable patriot.

“Of this same *Mr. Pitt* I must take a little more notice. He formerly told you what I now tell you. He told you, it was not safe to trust implicitly in any Minister, or any man; but in your Constitution, and in your own Rights. In my own hearing, he has eloquently mourned over the decay and corruption in the representative part of our Government, and pathetically described the thousand evils flowing from that source; quoting his illustrious Father, and other grave and wise Statesmen, as agreeing with him in a belief, that, without a Reform in that particular, there was for this Nation no salvation. To him, perhaps, it was reserved, both to give, and to fulfil, a dreadful prophecy! With this quondam Reformer, whom I was then disposed to hail as a political Messiah, as the destined Saviour

Saviour of his Country, it was once in particular my fortune to dip in the same dish, and to drink of the same cup, as an humble disciple ; — and to join him in a solemn declaration to the Public, that, ‘ without a Parliamentary Reformation, neither the Liberties of the Nation can be preserved, nor the permanence of a wise and virtuous Administration secured.’ What, then, must be my feelings, when I have lived to see this man a *Judas* — the basest of all apostates — selling his Country to the very Faction, whose corruptions he had exposed, for the proud station of Prime Minister ; — building the permanency of his own wicked Administration on *doubly fortifying that Faction in the strong-holds of power* ; and, in cold blood, and by false accusations, *attempting to take away the lives of men*, whose steady fidelity to the People, and whose perseverance in the cause of Reform, was so great a contrast and reproach to his own treachery !”

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