

BF1531

.C28

1827

BF1531

.C28

1827

e.1, Main

Wester, Nicholas

Prof

THE LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF
NORTH CAROLINA



ENDOWED BY THE
DIALECTIC AND PHILANTHROPIC
SOCIETIES

BF1531
.C28
1827

441

BF 1531


28

7

**THE UNIVERSITY OF
NORTH CAROLINA
LIBRARY**



**PRESENTED BY THE
WILLIAM A. WHITAKER
FOUNDATION**



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2014

AML

BF1531

.c28

1827

AN
ESSAY
ON
EVIL SPIRITS;

OR,
REASONS TO PROVE THEIR EXISTENCE:

IN
Opposition to a Lecture,

DELIVERED

BY THE REV. N. T. HEINEKEN,

In the Unitarian Chapel, Bradford.

—*—
BY WILLIAM CARLISLE.

—*—
THIRD EDITION, ENLARGED AND CORRECTED.

“God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.”
—2 Pet ii. 4.

“And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.”—Jude 6th ver.

“The good and evil of eternity are too ponderous for the wings of wit: the mind sinks under them in passive helplessness, content with calm belief and humble adoration.”—Johnson.

London :

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR;

AND SOLD BY HAMILTON, ADAMS, AND CO. PATERNOS-
TER-ROW; T. INKERSLEY, BRADFORD; HARDCASTLE,
AND SPINK, LEEDS; WALKER, HALIFAX; NICHOLS,
WAKEFIELD; KEMP, HUDDERSFIELD; WILSON,
KNARESBRO'; AND ALL OTHER BOOKSELLERS.

—o—
1827.

THE
LAW
OF
WILLS
AND
TESTAMENTS
AS
AMENDED BY THE ACT
OF 1853

ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL.

Printed by T. WALKER, Halifax.

TO
THE LADIES AND GENTLEMEN
OF
BRADFORD,
THE
FOLLOWING WORK IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,
AS
A SMALL EXPRESSION OF
GRATITUDE,
FOR
THEIR KIND AND LIBERAL SUPPORT,
BY
THE AUTHOR.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

PHILOSOPHY

1911

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS

1911

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS

PHILOSOPHY

1911

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS

1911

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS

PREFACE.

IN these days of fanciful innovation, and bold impiety, Scriptural Doctrines are abused and perverted on the one hand, by the extravagance of folly and enthusiasm ; and are insulted on the other, by the scoffs of Socinians. They are ridiculed as a vague and visionary scheme, which finds its origin only in the wild imaginations of men. Notwithstanding the contempt and ridicule which are continually poured from the lips of opposers, the author avows himself a believer in all the peculiar and essential doctrines of the Gospel ; and his intention in publishing this essay is, to defend these doctrines against the injudicious evasions, wild reveries, bombastical assertions, and sarcastical animadversions, of those men who would rob Christianity of its glory, blast our hopes, and make this world one vast scene of misery and chaos.

In this controversy, the author sincerely desires truth to have its full weight. He contends for no human creeds or explications whatever ; they may

be right, or they may be wrong ; infallibility is not stamped upon any human creed whatever ; consequently none ever pretended to infallibility, but the absurd system of Popery. Suffer the author to add, that it is his firm opinion, that the articles, liturgy, and homilies, of the established Church, approach nearer to divine inspiration than any other human system ever extant.

Notwithstanding the superior excellency of this divine establishment, and although the author can, consistent with his own conscience declare, that there is not one point of Christian Doctrine inculcated by it, but what is fully supported by the infallible testimony of revelation ; yet it is only human, or, in other words, the compilers of this most excellent system of rules and doctrines, were only fallible ; therefore, no man can appeal to it or any other, and confidently say, "*Thus saith the Lord.*" The highest that can be said of any human creed, however excellent, is, that it is a stream from the great fountain or source of all truth ; and a fountain must for ever excel its streams. Therefore, the author is determined to make the Scripture, the great fountain of infallible truth, the grand standard of his faith and practice, and its sacred decisions the universal authority on which he will build every part of that system unto which he gives his assent ; and he would have Mr. Heineken, and his Socinian brethren, to recollect, that he attacks them because he believes

they are blinded by prejudice and plunged into error—because he believes that the system of Socinianism is false, and derogatory to the Son of God; injurious to Society at large; dangerous in the extreme to all who embrace it; and in its nature absurd to such a degree, as to render it disgusting to every sensible man.

There is no doubt but the genuine truths of Christianity will ultimately prevail: God will vindicate his own cause. The powers of darkness have long attempted to subvert the whole system of Divine truth; but they have not prevailed, nor is it to be apprehended they ever will. The Great Head of the Church is shaking the nations, and is about to purge his floor; the gold, silver, and precious stones, shall abide the day of trial; but the chaff will be blown away; the wood, hay, and stubble, shall be burnt up; all superstitious rites shall be subverted; but the word of the Lord shall endure for ever; his counsels shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure. Here then the author rests his faith. Antichrist may fall, superstitious observances may cease, religious establishments may tumble into ruins, empires and kingdoms may be overturned, princes and governors may be dethroned, the great men of the earth may take part with the enemies of truth, error and delusion may run like wild-fire, unbelievers may rage, and *would-be* philosophers imagine a vain thing; yea, all nature may sink into a perfect non-

entity ; the solid rocks may be dissolved ; the vast mountains on our globe may disappear and be not ; the most invulnerable of all material substances—in a word, all the stupendous orbs which garnish the heavens, may vanish like shadows, die like the shrill echo, and be no more ; but the Bible shall arise out of its present obscurity, and being stripped of all human appendages, shall universally be had in honour, while the enemies of evangelical religion shall be confounded world without end. Yea,

“ They shall pass away like the baseless fabric of a vision,
 “ And leave not a wreck behind.”

While all those solemn realities of the Gospel shall survive

“ The wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds.”

The reader will be pleased to observe that though the term UNITARIAN is generally used in this Essay, yet it is used gratuitously ; for the body so designated have no more right to it than the Trinitarians. The author would not have used it but for a certain friend, whom he highly esteems for his piety and benevolence, who said he would use the term Unitarian instead of Socinian, as they called themselves by that name. The reason why the author would not concede to them in the term Unitarian, is, because they have chosen it expressly to intimate that they, among Christians exclusively, hold the existence of one God, and that Trinitarians

hold the existence of more Gods than one; an imputation which they well know every person who believes in the Divine Trinity, rejects with abhorrence.

Again, in arguing with Trinitarians, they generally endeavour to prove that the Scriptures, in a great variety of passages, assert that there is but one God; and when they have proved this point, viz. the Divine Unity, they triumph and consider the dispute as ended, and their antagonist overthrown. In this way they insinuate to their readers, that Trinitarians hold the existence of more Gods than one, and that all their arguments are intended to support this doctrine. Whereas, every Unitarian knows perfectly well that the *unity of God*, is as entirely and as avowedly holden by those who believe in the ever blessed and adorable Trinity, as by himself, that none of their arguments are directed against it, and that this point of Christian Doctrine has never been, and never can be in debate between him and them, so long as the unity of God is equally holden by both parties. That the doctrine of the Trinity involves or infers the existence of more Gods than one, every Unitarian has a right to prove, and may with perfect fairness prove, if he can. But to say that Trinitarians believe in the existence of more Gods than one, and to treat them as if they thus believed, when it is perfectly well known that every Trinitarian disclaims such belief with indignation, is

conduct, which, in my opinion, admits of no justification. Every Trinitarian with the strictest propriety may say, "THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD, AND HIS NAME ONE."

The author went to hear Mr. Heineken deliver a Lecture, in which he endeavoured to prove the non-existence of an evil spirit, called the Devil, or Satan. His mind was much wounded to see so many Atheists and Deists; and likewise a great number of men and women, who, in their simplicity and ignorance, drank in his disgusting heterodoxy, not knowing that it was more dangerous than a draught of the essence of hemlock. The author made two or three remarks, and determined to oppose him.—When Mr. Heineken heard of his intention, he very candidly came forward, and made him an offer of his Sermon, which the author read with the utmost candour; yet he must confess that what is contained in it, is contrary to every principle of philosophy, and the plain language of the Scriptures. But he is not warranted in commenting on his own observations. Such as they are, he commits them to the world, and earnestly recommends them to the candour and attention of those to whom he now appeals. There perhaps is much in this essay that will be grating in the ears of the hypercritic, who can derive a sort of flimsy pleasure from labouring to pry into the deepest recesses of grammatical accuracy. However he would observe, that his present circum-

stances forbid him being critically nice respecting this in the present essay.

Should this work, through the divine blessing, prove beneficial to society in general, or should any of those who have fallen a victim to the powerful darts of sophistry, be drawn from those labyrinths of absurdity, or others be prevented from falling into the same snare, his intention in writing it will be realized. It is the first time that he ever attempted to assume the character of an author, and without dedication or patron, he abandons this essay to its ultimate fate.

Dudley-Hill, near Bradford, }
January 14, 1825. } S



PREFACE

TO THE

SECOND EDITION.*

It is with great pleasure and gratitude to the enlightened public, for their kind and liberal support which they have afforded the author, that he sits down to write the following short preface. As a Second Edition of this work is just going to make its appearance in the world, so soon after the first, is, to the author, a matter of astonishment, and thankfulness to the religious world, as it is only four months since the first edition made its appearance; and notwithstanding the many defects which were scattered through its pages, yet the author has received many testimonies of approbation, which have removed that suspense under which he laboured, relative to its fate. As the author was unknown to the departments of literature, he could not but be anxious to know its destiny. He waited the issue, with a mind fluctuating in doubt, whether the

* The reader will please to observe, that the Preface to the First Edition as it now stands, is considerably altered.

arguments which he advanced, in order to prove the existence of evil spirits, would have the same weight, and appear with the same cogency and clearness to the mind of every reader, as to his. He was sensible, that neither he nor Mr. HEINEKEN, could influence or deceive the judgment of an enlightened public.

With these views, the first edition made its appearance, and its reception far exceeded his most sanguine expectations. The demand for it at present, is great; therefore, he judges it necessary to publish another edition, under the patronage of a generous public. There are many persons who have interested themselves in the publication of this little work, whose names would gratify his feelings to publish, but it is a liberty which he dare not take; it is to these, in particular, and the religious world in general, that the author is indebted for a patronage so liberal and great; and which he trusts he will never forget, so long as gratitude is capable of warming his heart.

Though the author has had the advantage of correcting the first edition, yet, he has not the vanity to suppose that the second is perfect; there are many defects and inaccuracies, which he humbly hopes the candid reader will pardon and overlook.

November 7th, 1825.

CONTENTS.

CHAP. I.

PAGE.

Miscellaneous Observations 13

CHAP. II.

The Introduction of Moral Evil considered .. 29

CHAP. III.

The Names given to Satan in the Scripture,
explained 49

CHAP. IV.

Demoniacal Possessions ; or, Reasons for their
Credibility, according to the New Testament 59

CHAP V.

A more direct Reply to the Lecture. 101

CHAPTER I

SECTION I

1. The first part of the book is devoted to a general survey of the subject.

SECTION II

2. The second part of the book is devoted to a detailed examination of the subject.

SECTION III

3. The third part of the book is devoted to a critical analysis of the subject.

SECTION IV

4. The fourth part of the book is devoted to a summary of the subject.

SECTION V

5. The fifth part of the book is devoted to a conclusion of the subject.

AN

ESSAY ON EVIL SPIRITS.

CHAP. I.

Miscellaneous Observations.

NOTWITHSTANDING the light of Evangelical truth, which shines with a brilliancy not to be equalled by mid-day splendour, yet, it is amazing to think what ignorance and superstition remain: what darkness, more intense than midnight gloom! How true are the words of the prophet, that darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people; for infidelity is stalking abroad with its ugly features, spreading its contagion and infusing its poison, exulting in the most ridiculous chimeras, and carried away with the most bewildered enthusiasm. Notwithstanding the blackness and darkness of infidelity, Mr. Heineken stands in a situation ten thousand times more awful; for when I take into consideration the destructive consequence of his prin-

principles, they appear fraught with results the most alarming, and consequences the most fatal. They lead the unhappy victim, who becomes fettered and entangled with them, into a delusion superlatively awful; and hurry him, under a garb of the most fantastical hypocrisy, to the verge of eternal ruin. As a proof of what I have asserted, I would have Mr. Heineken to observe, that there are many persons, some of whom I am acquainted with, and others of whom I have been informed, who were, a little while ago, strongly attached to the Christian faith; but by means of attending his lectures, their attachment has been destroyed, and they are now wandering in the dark regions of infidelity, and upon his principles are defending that preposterous system of Scepticism. This proves the assertion of Bishop Warburton, where he says, that Unitarianism "is a sort of infidelity in disguise;" or, as Mr. Wilberforce represents it, "a sort of half-way house from nominal orthodoxy to absolute infidelity;" or, as Mrs. Barbauld is said to have called it, "Christianity in the frigid zone." Now I would ask Mr. Heineken to tell me, what good has resulted from his preaching? I know of none: I have pointed him out an evil, and one of a serious nature; "and if he which converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death,"* what must be the consequences of that preacher's labour, which leads only

* James iv. 20.

to death. It is strikingly evident to every sound reasoner, that Unitarianism leads to the grossest errors, and plunges its unhappy devotees into a vortex of unfounded theories. What is there in the gospel to recommend it, and render it a subject worthy of a Divine revelation, when all its peculiar and essential doctrines are taken away? I must confess, that the arguments which the Unitarians have made use of in order to support their system, and the miserable subterfuges which they have resorted to, have done more towards convincing me that their system is a destructive jargon, than all the mighty series of reasoning which has been advanced against them. Seldom are they at a loss for a gloss, or an evasion, in aiming at the accomplishment of their object. If they meet with a passage whose indubitable reading, and whose obvious plain meaning, is such as every unbiassed man would pronounce favourable to any of those doctrines which they so unreasonably despise, they are ready with ample stores of metaphorical, enigmatical, and idiomatical forms of interpretation; and stubborn must be that text which will not yield to one or other of their modes of treatment. Thus they explain away the obvious import of the Bible, and thereby forsake the paths of reason and Scripture, and wander into the visionary regions of dogmatical enthusiasm, which destroys the transcendent grandeur and glory of the sacred pages.

According to the principle of Unitarianism, our inquiry is not to be, what is the plain and obvious meaning of the writers of the Scriptures, agreeably to the ordinary and established rules of interpretation ; but is it possible to understand their words otherwise ? Men may talk of *prejudice*, but I can conceive of few prejudices more strong or more deceitful than that which is involved in such a principle. It is surely a very suspicious circumstance as to the foundation on which any system rests, when its abettors feel it necessary formally to warn their readers “*to be on their guard against what is called the natural signification of words and phrases*”*. This is ignorance with a witness ! it opens the flood-gate of error, and truth is lost in the ocean of absurdity ; for if we reject the natural signification of words and phrases, we must for ever wander in the barren fields of speculation and uncertainty. Here they slide into an error which violates every sentiment of propriety, and converts the plain and unadorned language of the Scriptures into a useless and unnatural pleonasm ; and those doctrines which the writers have inculcated with so much emphasis, they unnerve and paralyze, and with false glosses and wild evasions, destroy all point and emphasis, evaporate all its spirit, and freeze every syllable of it to very ice. It is difficult to maintain a Scripture controversy with the

* Read Belsham’s *Calm Enquiry*, pages 4, 5.

class of speculators I am now opposing, for two reasons. First, they will say *any thing* rather than give up their *pre-conceived opinions*. That their opinions are merely preconceived, any person may easily discern, who examines their writings with any degree of attention. To prove that they will say *any thing*, I need only refer the reader to two assertions made by two of their most learned advocates, relative to the innocence and purity of our Lord Jesus Christ. One of them speaks of him as "*fallible and peccable*;" and the other says, we have "*no sufficient data by which to determine whether during his private, as well as public life, he was free from sin or not; and that is to us a matter of no material consequence.*"* But what saith the Scriptures:—"To the law and to the testimony; if we speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in us." If we examine both Testaments, we shall invariably find that they represent Jesus Christ as a holy and innocent character, without the least iota of impurity or inherent depravity. Hence, says the Apostle—"Such an high-priest became us, who is *holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high-priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins and then for the people's.*"† "He did *no sin*, neither was guile found in his mouth." "Ye are redeemed with the

* Priestley and Belsham. † Heb. vii. 26, 27.

precious blood of Christ, as of a *lamb, without blemish and without spot.*”* “He was manifested to take away our sins; and *in him is on sin.*”† Are not these declarations sufficient to satisfy every mind that feels itself bound by the authority of the Scriptures? If Jesus Christ contained within himself the least inherent depravity, or committed the slightest evil, all these Scripture designations of him must be considered as the mere rhapsody of admiration, or the unmeaning bombast of eulogy. It perhaps is of no material consequence to the frozen-hearted Unitarian, whether Christ was a sinner or not; but to every sound Christian, it is a matter of the greatest importance; for if Jesus Christ was a sinner, or an unholy being, the whole system of Christianity tumbles into ruins.

The second reason why it is extremely difficult to maintain a process of Scriptural reasoning with these men, is, that the notions which they entertain respecting the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, are so very vague, futile, and undefined.

“The Scriptures,” says one of their most eminent writers, “were written without any particular inspiration, by men who wrote according to the best of their knowledge, and who, from circumstances, could not be mistaken with regard to the *greater facts* of which they were properly *witnesses*; but,

* 1 Peter ii. 22. i. 19. † 1 John 3—5.

(like other men subject to prejudice) might be liable to adopt a hasty and ill-grounded opinion concerning things which did not fall within the compass of their own knowledge, and which had no connection with any thing that was so. We ought all of us, therefore, to consider ourselves fully at liberty to examine, with the greatest rigour, both the reasonings of the writers, and the facts of which we find any account in their writings; that, judging by the rules of just criticism, we may distinguish what may be depended on from what may not.”*

“I like the honesty of this avowal,” (says a learned critic,) “but I presume you will agree with me in thinking, that *Deism* ought to have been the profession of him who makes it.” Every one must at once perceive, that according to this view of the Scriptures, there is nothing certain in them. And if we deny the infallibility of the Holy Scriptures, and look upon them as the fallible productions of men, all our hopes of arriving at truth must be totally eclipsed, and the bright prospects of futurity be overspread with blackness and darkness for ever. Therefore, the reasoning of those men who deny that the writers of both Testaments were constantly under infallible guidance, is a dangerous error; the most animating doctrines of the gospel are left entirely uncertain—a ground is laid for heart-rending doubts and fearful anticipations, which no-

* Prlestley’s History of Early Opinions, vol. iv. p. 5.

thing can remove, but a firm persuasion that the sacred writers wrote their histories under the immediate agency and superintendence of the Divine Spirit. The same writer, in speaking of the Arian opinion, that the world was formed by Jesus Christ as a subordinate agent of the Father, has these words: "Now, as it is not pretended that there are any miracles adapted to prove that Christ made and supports the world, I do not see that we are under any obligation to believe it, merely because it was an opinion held by an apostle."*

Dr. Priestley made no scruple "to call the apostle St. Paul an inconclusive reasoner."† "Neither I," says he to Dr. Price, "nor I presume yourself, believe implicitly every thing which is advanced by any writer in the Old or New Testament. I believe them to have been men, and therefore fallible." And again: "That the books of Scripture were written by particular divine inspiration, is a thing to which the writers themselves make no pretensions." But let the Apostles speak for themselves: "But there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gos-

* Priestley's History of Early Opinions, p. 63.

† Priestley's Corruptions of Christianity, vol. ii. p. 370

pel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not.* And again he says, "And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."† Now, reader, judge for yourself. Can the gospel, which was inculcated by the Apostle, be both a revelation from God, and at the same time, the *fallible* production of men? Impossible! If we deny the universal inspiration of the Scriptures, we involve ourselves in a dilemma from which we cannot easily extricate ourselves. But the writer to whom I have all along referred, goes farther than this in one of his letters to Dr. Price, relative to the pre-existence of Jesus Christ, and says, "I would not build an article of faith of such magnitude, on the correction of John's recollection and representation of our Lord's language: and so strange and incredible does the hypothesis of a pre-existent state appear, that, sooner than admit it, I would suppose the whole verse to be an *interpolation*, or that the old apostle dictated one thing, and

* Gal. i. 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 20. † 1 Cor. ii. 4, 5.

his *amanuensis* wrote another.”* Hence, it appears, that Dr. Priestley would believe any thing however monstrous, rather than the plain and obvious meaning of the words of Scripture. Although all the writers of this class may not reject, in terms equally unqualified, the inspiration of the sacred Scriptures, yet they are all characterized by the same homogeneal laxity, relative to this important point. Another of them says, that “Peter speaks according to the conception of the Jews, when he says, Prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost ;” and adds, “the prophets may have delivered the offspring of their own brains as divine revelation.” And another says, “what have we to do with the New Testament, when it contradicts the light of nature ?” I ask, where does the Scripture contradict *reason* ; for I suppose that is what he means by the *light of nature*. There are many doctrines contained in the Scripture, which are necessarily *above reason* ; but it does not follow that they are *contrary* to it. Mr. Belsham says, that “Paul in his Epistles, introduces many *harsh* and uncommon figures.”† Again, he says, “The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews indulges himself in an *ingenious*, but *forced* and *fanciful* analogy.”‡ Nay, he goes farther than this, for he

* Priestley’s Letters to Dr. Price, page 58.

† Mr. Belsham’s Calm Inquiry, p. 19. ‡ Ibid, p. 19.

says, that "our *Lord* sometimes uses metaphors of the most *obscure* and *offensive kind*."*

I hope these quotations are sufficient to shew how vague and undefined are the opinions of this class of men respecting the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures: for if we give up their universal inspiration, we must look upon them as a *mixed compound*. And how am I to distinguish between that which is inspired, and that which is not? Here is a foundation for doubting; by this our confidence is at once destroyed; the mind is carried into the cold regions of barren speculation, and is lost in the great vortex of infidelity. This is a subject of importance, and one which ought to be carefully studied by every Christian, in order that he may render a reason for the hope that is in him.

That the Scriptures were written by plenary inspiration, is a doctrine that has been believed through successive ages, and has remained impregnable to all the shafts of impious ridicule, and unshaken by the bolder artillery of blasphemous invective. "Some men," says a learned author, "have adopted very strange and dangerous notions, respecting the inspiration of the Scriptures. Dr. Priestley denies that they were written by a particular divine inspiration; and asserts, that the writers, though men of the greatest probity, were fallible, and have actually committed mistakes in their narrations and

* Ibid. p. 18.

their reasonings. But this man and his followers, find it their interest to weaken and set aside the authority of the Scriptures, as they have adopted a system of religion from which all the distinguishing doctrines of revelation are excluded. Others consider the Scriptures as inspired in those places where they profess to deliver the Word of God; but in other places, especially in the historical part, they ascribe to them only the same authority which is due to the writings of well-informed and upright men. But as this distinction is perfectly arbitrary, having no foundation in any thing said by the sacred writers themselves, so it is liable to very material objections: it represents our Lord and his Apostles, when they spoke of the Old Testament, as having attested, without any exception or limitation, a number of books as divinely inspired, while some of them were partly, and some were almost entirely human compositions: it supposes the writers of both Testaments to have profanely mixed their own productions with the dictates of the Spirit, and to have passed the unhallowed compound on the world as genuine. In fact, by denying that they were constantly under infallible guidance, it leaves us utterly at a loss to know when we should or should not believe them. If they could blend their own stories with the revelations made to them, how can I be certain that they have not on some occasions published in the name of God, sentiments of their

own, to which they were desirous to gain credit and authority? Who will assure me of their perfect fidelity in drawing a line of distinction between the divine and the human parts of their writings? The denial of the plenary inspiration of the Scripture, tends to unsettle the foundation of our faith, involves us in doubt and perplexity, and leaves us no other method of ascertaining how much we should believe, but an appeal to reason. But when reason is invested with the authority of a judge, not only is revelation dishonoured, and its author insulted, but the end for which it was given is completely defeated."

Hence it is certain, that to suppose that the sacred pages are partly divine and partly human, is an exitious error, for it leaves us entirely in doubt which to believe as divinely inspired. The mind is carried into barren climes of confusion and uncertainty, and instead of arriving at truth, gives up its pursuit as a painful and unprofitable research. The denial of the *full* or *complete* inspiration of the Scriptures, opens a door for infidelity, which all the energies of those who deny the fact will never be able to shut. And instead of the Scriptures being a solid foundation, upon which to build our faith, there can be no firm ground of trust placed in them, no settled hope, no permanent consolation—timidity and gloom must inhabit every bosom, and render life, in many instances, a burthen.

Some, perhaps, may ask, why are the opinions of the Unitarians so loose relative to this important point?—the answer is obvious: because the Unitarians know, if they should admit that the Scriptures were written by plenary inspiration, their system would be swept away with an eternal sweep. “It is ever in vain that man essays to pierce the unfathomable arcana of the skies. By his limited faculties, and superficial ken, the deep things of eternity are not to be scanned.” The brightest seraph that encircles the throne of the Invisible, or the highest order of possible intelligence, could never make known one single counsel or purpose of the divine mind, unless it had been previously revealed. Nay, sooner could finite comprehend infinite, and the less incircle the greater, or a part contain the whole, of which itself is but a part, than that the unfathomed counsels of Deity could be known but by a revelation from himself.

Reader, whoever you are, or by whatever name you are called, unless you admit of the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, you have no resting place for thought, but are in danger of falling a prey to the wiles of sophistry, and the imposing influence of high pretensions to learning and candour. There are many arguments which I might advert to in order to prove that the Scriptures were written by plenary inspiration, not to mention the power of working miracles, or the fulfilments of prophecy,

which speaks their origin divine. And be it known, that they who reject the authority of the Scripture, reject a part of the purest philosophy which ever occupied the pens of writers, and truth which is more immutable than nature itself. I would observe, that if you take away the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, and look upon the writers as fallible, and liable to err while they wrote the sacred pages—I would ask, how I am to know the truth of any doctrine, or to what must I appeal? If I appeal to the Scriptures, how do I know but those very parts unto which I make my appeal, are only fallible productions of erring mortals? Hence, it is evident, if we deny the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, we must for ever wander in the great wilderness of uncertainty, and at last end in the dismal quicksand of infidelity. The Scripture, as an inspired whole, is my glory; for when I read my Bible, I admire its native energy and unadorned phrase: in its didactic parts, what simplicity, artlessness, candour, and sincerity; in the prophetic, what beauty and impressiveness; and, in its sublime, how eminently just and lovely. In a word, the Scripture language is remarkable for its sublimity. Each writer is distinguished for peculiar beauties; but the general style of all may be characterized as strong, animated, and impressive. Its ornaments are derived, not from an accumulation of epithets or laboured harmony, but from the real

grandeur of its imagery, and the majestic force of its expression. It is varied with striking propriety, and enlivened with quick, but easy transitions. Its sudden burst of eloquence, its earnest warmth, its affecting exhortations and appeals, afford very interesting proof of that lively impression and inspired conviction, under which the writers wrote and spake, and which enabled them, among a people not distinguished for genius, to surpass, in every variety of composition, the most admired productions of pagan antiquity. Is there any book in the world, so perfectly adapted to all capacities, that contains such sublime and exalted precepts, conveyed in such an artless and intelligible strain, and that can be read with such pleasure and advantage, by the lettered sage, or the unlettered peasant?

CHAP. II.

The Introduction of Moral Evil considered.

IT is self-evident, that there is *moral* and *physical* evil in the world. And various have been the theories which men have adopted, in order to account for its introduction. Some have endeavoured to account for its introduction by iron-handed fate and destiny; consequently, they have made God the author of all the evil in the world. While others, not less absurd, ascribe its origin to bad example, and a corrupt education. It is the last opinion which I shall endeavour to confute, as it is adopted by this class of men, who are *falsely* designated "*rational Christians.*"

I am inclined to think, that Mr. H., as an individual, believes that we were created by God; and this being admitted, he cannot deny that the power which created all things, must be the general Parent of the universe; and that this great, exalted, and incomprehensible Being, is perfection itself, in all uncreated, original, necessary, and never ceasing extremes. In fine, what we conceive of God, is an assemblage of all possible perfection, abstracted from all possible moral evil. It is to this great and exalted being we now turn our attention, and

ask, of what nature and essential properties did he create man? It is infallibly certain, that that Being who is infinitely holy, and contains within himself an unchangeable hatred to evil, could not but create man in a state of moral rectitude. According to every conception we can form of the wisdom and goodness of the Deity, as well as according to the most express and unequivocal language of Scripture—"God made man upright." For to say that God created him morally evil, is to charge God with the turpitude of every bad action, and to destroy those attributes which are essential to his nature and existence. Therefore, "God created man in his own likeness, in the image of God created he him;" and that image, saith the apostle, consists in righteousness and true holiness.

Again, man was not only created without the least iota of inherent depravity, but he was furnished with a clear and sagacious mind, with reason bright and strong, and possessed transcendent qualifications for the most elevated happiness. But that he might be accountable, he was necessarily created *free*; and that he might never forget that he was under the cognizance and dominion of a moral Governor, a *test* of obedience was set before him. And in this respect, God did not deal worse with man than with other creatures; he pointed out to them their respective *laws* by instinct; but as man was designed to be a distinguished link in the great

chain of being, God entered into a covenant with him, and gave him a *law*, not only as a test of obedience, but as a proof of dependence, and as an incitement to gratitude. This law was easy to be obeyed, because it was plain to be understood. The greater the injunction, the more severity would have appeared, and the more circumscribed must have been human liberty; but God, on the present occasion, reduced the discharge of moral obligation to a single point, promising life on obedience, and threatening death on transgression. But what were the conditions on which these great events were suspended? They follow—"Of every tree in the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."* The cavil about this fruit being an object of temptation, is almost too absurd to deserve a specific notice; for surely no being can be out of the reach of temptation but God alone. He that is *essentially*, is only *unchangeably*, good. I am well aware that not only infidels, but this class of men which I am opposing, cry out in the language of impious ridicule against this part of Sacred History; and, say they, "God cannot be supposed to have condemned mankind for the mere eating of an apple." This, however, is not the language of reason and common sense,

* Gen. ii. 17.

but of partiality and prejudice. The phraseology here adopted is absolutely false and absurd. It intimates that God was influenced in his condemnation of our first parents, by a resentment excited only by the value which he fixed on the forbidden fruit. As the value of the fruit was in a sense nothing, they therefore conclude that God could not prize it so much, as to be angry at the transgression, much less to inflict so dreadful a punishment on the transgressor. Were the principle just, on which they profess to argue, I would readily admit it, as would every other sensible man. But the principle itself has no connection with the subject; the argument founded upon it is therefore without the least foundation. Such views of God as these, are not taught in the history, nor in any part of the sacred record. The Scriptures universally declare that our first parents were condemned, because they disobeyed their Maker, revolted from his authority, and rebelled against his government. The fruit, whatever it was, was plainly of no value to him, at whose bidding suns lighted up their fires, systems rolled to fulfil his pleasure, and who could in a moment call into existence a world, or a million of worlds, with all their magnificent furniture. The guilt of our first parents lay solely in rebelling against God, or in eating of that fruit in opposition to his command, and for this they were condemned and punished.

Again, we are informed that the *Serpent*, or *Tempter*, who had fallen from his dignity and glory, into a state of degradation and misery, envying the happiness of our first parents, premeditated their ruin; and with all the craft and subtlety imaginable, accosted the general parents of mankind, and by reason of his cunning and falsehood, he prevailed with this happy and innocent pair to rebel against their Maker, and to sin against his infinite Majesty. Thus they fell from their original and happy state, and, according to the constitution of things, "brought death into the world, and all our woe." By this means the first man was stripped of his original righteousness, and became the subject of *moral* and *physical* evil.

Should it be asked, what are moral and physical evil? I answer, that moral evil is not only the practice of sin, but a *never failing tendency* to it, which is *inherent depravity*, or that *principle of corruption* which *inheres* in the *constitution* of every moral being in the world. And that *physical evil* is not only those pains and diseases which are incidental to the human system, but all those dreadful evils and calamities that follow in such rapid succession in this lower world, even all "the ills that flesh is heir to."

But still it is asked, from whence arises this *evil principle*, or how came it to exist? I answer, that it is a self-evident truth, that there cannot be an

effect without a cause, and that the cause of this effect is the violation of the law of God. For the very mention of moral evil pre-supposes a deviation from moral rectitude, and till that took place, there could *never* be an *evil principle*. It is a contradiction in terms to suppose an evil principle to *propel* when it *was* not, or to *act* before it had an *existence*. The inquiry now renews itself—How can a holy principle violate the law of God, or commit an unholy action? I suppose the inquirer means by the term *principle*, that never-failing tendency to equity and uprightness, which inhered in the constitution of man previously to the introduction of moral evil. A holy principle could not commit an unholy action, or the least evil whatever, AS EVIL. To suppose this, would be to suppose an impossibility, and a downright contradiction. For it would be to suppose a principle to act diametrically opposite to its nature. Yet, at the same time I would observe, that man, as a moral being, must be *free* to act, for free-agency arises necessarily from the nature of man. Again, man as a finite creature was not only *mutable*, but likewise liable to be *deceived*. For *immutability* and *infallibility* are infinite perfections; therefore they could never exist in a finite creature. From these premises we conclude, that our first parents, though holy, were fallible, and that they were deceived into the commission of an act of disobedience, through the supposition of some

supposed good, without the least idea or apprehension of any evil whatever. For if there be a law of nature, which there is, they could never choose evil for its own sake. Wherefore, man as a holy being, violated a holy law, through the supposition of some supposed or fancied good, without the least idea of any evil whatever, AS EVIL. For a holy principle could not propel to the commission of an unholy action, neither could an evil principle act before it had an existence. Therefore, the violation of the law of God, is the cause of which moral evil is an effect; and physical evil follows as a just punishment for such violation and rebellion.

This view is fully corroborated by Scripture and reason; for Satan, the arch deceiver of mankind, said to our first parents, “*For God doth know, that as soon as you have eaten of this fruit, you will be benefited by it, for your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be AS GODS.*”* As much as if *Satan* had said, Such is the efficacy and virtue of this tree, that by eating of it, your minds will be more illuminated, and you will be filled with divine knowledge like your Maker. And when the guilty culprits were going through a process of strict examination before their Maker, Eve expressly said “*the Serpent beguiled me.*”† The apostle St. Paul, in his second Epistle to the Corinthians,‡ alludes to

* Gen. iii. 5.

† Ibid. iii. 13.

‡ 2 Cor. xi. 3.

the same subject: "I fear, lest by any means as the *Serpent beguiled* Eve through his *subtilty*, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." And when writing to his son Timothy, he said, "The woman being *deceived*, was in the transgression."* Thus both Testaments agree in establishing the opinion given above. And again, to those who examine the nature of moral beings, their secret springs of action, and the physical modes and operations of intellect, it will appear evident, that no external *force* can *compel* the will to choose any thing but under the notion of comparative *goodness*; therefore reason and Scripture fully harmonize, and the Mosaic account of the introduction of moral evil into this world, stands upon a firm and immutable basis, which defies all opposition, from whatever quarter it may come; and the hopes of every orthodox Christian are built upon an invulnerable foundation, which has stood firm and secure from the commencement of time to the present day, and will remain steadfast as long as eternity endures. Amidst the fluctuations and changes of political principle, this remains unchanged. "Christianity," says Dr. Paley, "hath travelled through dark and turbulent ages; nevertheless, it came out of the cloud and the storm such in substance as it entered in." And in spite of the

* 1 Tim. ii. 14.

blasphemous invective poured from the pens and lips of Infidels, and the activity with which the anti-christian dogmas, and disgustful heterodoxy of Unitarianism are propagated, truth will rise triumphant, and they will all be confounded.

It will perhaps be said, "That if we admit that our first parents were deceived, either by the subtlety of an agent, or by the plausibility of a certain motive, their guilt shrinks to almost a nonentity, and their punishment bears no proportion to their crime." Although such an objection may seem plausible, I conceive it to be entirely founded upon an erroneous idea, relative to the speciousness of the motive which induced them to act, without taking into consideration the *evil nature of the means*. For if the temptation, or the motive which induced them thus to act, had been ten thousand times more plausible, they ought not to have complied with such inducement, so long as its tendency led to a violation of a positive injunction, given to them by their sovereign benefactor. Suppose the present king were to give to one of his subjects a positive command, founded upon reason, and agreeable to the nature and circumstances of the individual to whom it was given, threatening him with the most severe punishment in case of violation; and, *vice versa*, if he obeyed, he would confer upon him every privilege and blessing which his realm would afford. Now, if the individual were to suffer himself to be

deceived, either by the specious reasoning of an intelligent agent, or the mere inducement of a certain motive, so as to violate the command of his majesty, would he not be guilty of downright rebellion, and would it not be just that the threatened penalty should take place? Whatever are the motives and inducements by which we act and pursue our various projects, we ought never to overlook the means, under any pretext that may be suggested, but connect the means and the benefit to be obtained together. Should an object present itself to our view, the obtaining of which would be of great personal advantage, yet, at the same time, if this object cannot be obtained without violating either the law of God, or the laws of our country, or that rule of reciprocal justice, "whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them;" we ought, as rational beings, to give up the pursuit of such an object, however plausible and good it may appear, abstracted from the means by which it is to be obtained. Therefore, whatever were the motive, whatever were the agent, which tempted our first parents, they ought, with invincible firmness, to have repelled the temptation, and adhered firmly to the command given to them by the God of the universe.

Again, the rebellion of the first man against his Maker, was a sin so universal in its nature, as to involve mankind in its guilt in all ages of the world.

The account which is given in the Scripture, is grounded on the relation which all men have to Adam as their natural head. Adam, in his pristine perfection, had the privilege of immortality, but by him "sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." An hereditary corruption is transmitted to all that naturally descend from him. It is the universal and unchangeable law of nature, that every thing produces its like, not only in regard of the same nature that is propagated from one individual to another, without a change of the species, but in respect of the qualities with which that nature is eminently affected. As it is natural, so it is universal—"Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" That is, how can a righteous person be born of a sinner? The answer is peremptory—not one. The fountain was poisoned in Adam, and all the streams partake of the infection.

"Can filthy dross produce a golden beam,

"Or poison'd springs a salutif'rous stream?"

But, the Unitarians say in opposition to all this—"We admit the fact of the great, though not universal wickedness that prevails in the world, but we cannot assent to what you give as the *Natural History* of it. We do not think it inseparable from man's *present* nature, but an accidental acquisition; we do not ascribe it to the influence of an heredi-

tary taint, but conceive it to be the effect of imitation and custom, of acquired habit, of corrupt example, of injudicious tuition." "This, by the way," says Dr. Gregory, "is only saying in other words, that depravity is the effect of depravity. Let us, however, examine the matter a little more closely. The vile passions may in some be the result of improper tuition, or of imitation, I have no inclination to deny; but they cannot always be referred to such an origin. How often do we see children in their veriest infancy, exhibit strong and unquestionable indications of boisterous tempers, of obstinacy, or impatience. How often do children of the most pious parents, who are so brought up, as during the first six or seven years of their lives never to witness any species of crime, any instance of ingratitude, of falsehood, or deception, or any indulgence in irascible passions, furnish painful proofs that they can be deceivers, wilful liars, ungrateful, passionate, malignant, and unforgiving? These instances, I will venture to say, occur very frequently, when it is impossible to ascribe them to imitation. But suppose the contrary were admitted, the *opposers* of the *scriptural doctrines* would gain nothing by the concession; for of whom could a child acquire iniquity by imitation, but of some one that was born before him? and whom did that person imitate but some one born before him? and where must this series terminate? If you say any

where short of the first man, you have to account for the remarkable phenomenon of sin making its first inroad at the identical time, and fixing upon the identical person you have selected, and this will be found infinitely more difficult, than extending the series to the great progenitors of the human race. Besides, does not the very circumstance of an aptitude to imitate evil, and rather to imitate evil than good, indicate something like that hereditary taint which is brought forward to contravene and supersede? Can an inherent tendency to imitate evil, an undeviating propensity to slide into vice, (unless the strong hand of moral discipline, or the suasive influence of Divine grace prevents,) be fairly or rationally ascribed to any thing less than such a cause as that with which the BIBLE makes us acquainted?" If good and evil were but mere accidents of the mind, then we might rationally expect to find as many morally good as morally evil; but both Scripture and facts repulse this conclusion. Now, as the human heart tends universally to evil, and as there are none but what are contaminated, there cannot be a more cogent proof than that some evil principle predominates. Bad example may influence the present generation of men, but it could not influence where it was not, nor act before it had a beginning, and there was a time when bad example was not. As moral evil, therefore, must have been introduced, and have existed

prior to bad example, bad example could not be the *primary cause* of moral evil. Mr. H. can no more account for the introduction of moral evil into this world, than for those phenomena of nature, which lie beyond the confines of human perception. He denies the account which is given in the sacred Scriptures, therefore he is obliged to wander upon a pathless ocean of uncertainty, confined in the barren precincts of speculation, and liable to fall a victim to the imposing influence of anti-christian dogmatism.

Again, it is maintained by some, "that evil is *necessary*, and that we can have no knowledge of good but by contrasting it with its opposite." It is an unquestionable fact, that in the natural world, physical reverses frequently give a colouring to each other; and it is equally true, that in the moral history of our species, the splendour of virtuous actions is rendered more eminent by the deepness of those shades with which these actions are contrasted. "It will be readily admitted, that no satisfactory reason can be drawn from pure abstract principle, why such reverses should seem necessary to give distinctness to each other. But the fact is indisputable, and it may be traced without difficulty to the present state of our mental constitution. There can be no doubt whatever, that every good, whether natural, moral, intellectual, or spiritual, is capable in itself of shining by its own inherent

brilliancy. It would be nothing short of a severe reflection on the infinitely wise Creator to suppose, that he has given being to excellencies which could only be rendered distinctly visible by the physical reverses of themselves. According to such a constitution of things, even natural good would be indebted for the brightest display of its lustre, to natural evil; but how any thing can be considered as a natural evil, which is essentially necessary to the developement of natural good, is a problem which we cannot solve, without impeaching the source of Infinite Wisdom.

If from natural good and evil, we turn our attention to that which is moral, the atmosphere with which we are encircled becomes still more dense, and we find the clouds of confusion gathering round us in every direction, and presenting us with darkness which we cannot pierce. To say that moral evil is necessary to unfold in all its beauty the utmost perfection of moral good, is to destroy the essence of vice; and, in an alembic of mental chemistry, to transmute it into virtue. To assert that the existence of vice is necessary to that of virtue, or, that the display of the former is necessary to that of the latter, is a solecism in language, and is little less than a contradiction in terms. If natural and moral good were incapable of shining by their own intrinsic lustre, reason would compel us to infer, that each is defective in its own nature; and from this inference

we could scarcely draw any conclusion which would not amount to an impeachment of the Author of both. We can by no means suppose, that glorified spirits in heaven, (whether we consider them as natives of the celestial region, or as taken from our terrestrial abode,) can stand in need of such an unnatural aid, to make them sensible of the value and importance of felicity. And if moral evil had not debased the human intellect, and, in its moral consequences, disorganized the system of nature, we have no more reason to suppose, that evil in any form, would have been either absolutely or relatively necessary, to give us the instructions which we are now compelled to learn from it in our present state, than that it is necessary in heaven. The only rational inference which we can draw from the whole amounts to this, that in the same proportion as we find the existence of evil in any form necessary to make us sensible of the value of good, we behold evidences of our degeneracy, both as to its extent and its degree.

The soul influenced by divine grace, and raised from a death of sin to a life of righteousness, will be taught to rise above this chequered state of things, to lay hold on the spiritual good of which it is called to partake, and to behold its beauty by its native light.*

Again, some will ask—"Why did not God pre-

* Imperial Magazine.

vent the introduction of evil? Was it because he could not? If he could not, where is his infinite power? And if he could, seeing that he did not, where is his holiness and goodness?" To which I answer, what God can do, or what he cannot do, I dare not pretend to say. Yet, at the same time, I may venture to affirm, without fear of contradiction, that God could not prevent the introduction of evil consistent with his moral government and the nature of man. As for infinite power, it is out of the question. Man, as a moral agent, must be free to act, consequently he was capable of a law. Therefore, the government that was necessary for God to exercise over him, was a *moral* government, which government consists of laws, promises, threatenings, rewards, and punishments. Infinite power could have prevented the introduction of evil, by depriving him of his will; or it could have interfered on the occasion. But had God, in order to prevent man from violating his command, taken away the liberty of his will, or interfered on the occasion, he would likewise have destroyed the foundation of all virtue, and the very nature of man.

It was necessary that man should first be placed in a state of trial; before he was confirmed in his happiness. Had he obeyed to the end of his probation, he would no doubt have been raised to an unchangeable state; his innocence and obedience would have been crowned with perseverance. The per-

mission of the fall, does not reflect on God's unspotted providence; for the law which he gave to direct man, the terrible threatnings annexed to warn him, proves his irreconcilable hatred to evil. Neither does it tarnish the Divine purity or holiness; for man was made upright, he had no inherent corruption to betray him, he had power to resist the strongest temptation. In this situation, he was removed far from death and disease, sorrow and fear; he was formed for endless improvement. His mind, like that of the angels, was capable of continual expansion, refinement, and elevation; and his life, of perpetual exaltation in usefulness and honour. The tempter did only allure, he could not compel; his powers are so limited, that he cannot fasten an immediate, much less an irresistible impression on the will. Therefore, a resolute negative would have made him victorious. Nor does it tarnish the rich goodness of God, because he bestowed on man every qualification relative to his perseverance; and it is unjust and unreasonable to judge of the value of a benefit, by the ungrateful abuse of the receiver, and not from its own nature. The evil of sin man has brought upon himself, and therefore it ought not to be imputed to any defect in the Divine goodness. A state of trial presupposes a liability to sin, and it cannot be proved that it is inconsistent with the Divine goodness of God, to place his rational creatures in a state of trial.

Though Adam wilfully forfeited the favour of God, and lost his original righteousness, and incurred the just displeasure of an offended God; thus ruined and helpless, God laid help on one that is mighty. Here, the wisdom and goodness of the Deity shines with amazing lustre, in as much as that he hath overruled the sin of Adam for good; and wonderfully devised a plan, that man, by repentance and faith in the atonement, may be emancipated from this scene of trouble, and translated to the realms of bliss, then—

“ Blooming Eden withers in his sight,
Death gives him more than was in Eden lost.”

By virtue of the redemption of Christ, the whole immense and eternal kingdom of Jehovah assumes a new aspect, and God is seen by his intelligent creatures in new manifestations of beauty, glory, and loveliness. O, goodness, truly divine! Mighty love! Love that glowed in the bosom of God from eternity! Our salvation by Christ is the product of God's eternal thoughts—“ He was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.”* What astonishing goodness is it, that God, who is the end of all things, should become the means of our salvation. What is so worthy of admiration, as that the Judge of heaven and earth should be condemned by the guilty—that he should leave his throne in heaven to be nailed to the cross—that the Prince of life should taste death? Infinite love!

* Acts ii. 23.

which is as admirable as saving! "Love that passeth knowledge." Well might an inspired apostle cry out in an ecstasy—"O, the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."* In our redemption by Christ, human nature is advanced to the highest pitch of dignity and glory. In the person of Christ, it is risen far beyond the confines of our mental perception; but, thanks be to God, this we know, that every humble and pious Christian "shall be like him, for they shall see him as he is," "and be with him in glory." There the mercy of God, the most perfect of his attributes, and the consummation of his excellence, will be made known more fully; and those things, "into which the angels desire to look," will be unfolded in all their mysterious and awful grandeur. Throughout never-ending ages, virtuous minds will be enlarged with knowledge, exalted in happiness, and improved in dignity; and their affections and praises become more refined and elevated, in a rapid and regular succession. When the revolutions which now measure time shall be swallowed up in an unchangeable eternity, the saints of the Most High shall be for ever with their Lord. Hence, it is evident, that the glory of the redeemed as far exceeds the felicity of Adam in the highest state of his pristine vigour and perfection, as heaven is above the fading beauty of this terrestrial world.

* Rom. xi. 33.

CHAP. III.

The Names given to Satan in the Scripture, explained.

BEFORE I enter on the consideration of this subject, it will be proper to observe, that the Unitarians deny the *existence* of *angels*, whether good or bad. Now, if there are no angels in existence, it is absolutely impossible that there can be a supernatural evil being, or *Devil*. If the existence of angels is incredible, it must be for one of the following reasons:—

1st. That the nature of things disprove their existence, or contains some evidence which renders it highly improbable: or,

2d. That it is not sufficiently revealed in the Scripture, so as to command our belief.

1st. It is not inconsistent with the nature of things, but highly probable, that there are in existence *pure immaterial spirits*, or *angels*. As God is a pure Spirit, and delights in the contemplation of his own manner of existence, it is far more reasonable to suppose that he would create beings as much like himself as possible, than that he should create beings compounded of matter and spirit, such as we

are. Suppose, for instance, that we were totally unacquainted with the existence of either angels or men, pure spirits would seem more likely to be a part of the creation of God, than spirits united to bodies, beings wholly rational, than beings partly rational, and partly animal.

In creating man, a new mystery is presented to our contemplation, viz. the union of soul and body, so accomplished as to constitute but one percipient being. Should the Unitarians object, and say—"we avoid this difficulty, by denying the existence of an immaterial soul in man." But this, by the bye, is only introducing to our view a ten times greater and more perplexing difficulty, an hypothesis so mysterious, as to be no other than a gross absurdity and contradiction in terms: viz. the doctrine of *cogitative*, or *thinking matter*; for we might as well talk of a *square circle*, or a *part* being greater than the *whole*, of which itself is but a part, as to suppose, that *that* which is *simple* and *indivisible*, to be a *property* of that which is *compound*.

Hence, it is highly probable, from reason and analogy, that there are pure immaterial spirits, or angels, in existence. For, as in the visible material world, we see no chasms, but a continued series of things descending in the scale of being from man by easy gradations; so we have reason to think it suitable to the magnificent design of the great Architect of the universe, that the species of creatures

should ascend by the same gentle gradations above us. And as we are much more remote from God, than we are from the lowest state of corporeal existence; so it is not improbable that there are far more kinds of spiritual existences than of embodied beings beneath us. Hence, we may conceive that there are in existence various orders of angelic natures.

The declarations of the Bible, relative to the existence of angels, are as numerous and express as language will admit. And it is truly astonishing, that any person should profess to receive the Scriptures as a Divine revelation, and yet at the same time deny their existence. A few passages I hope will be sufficient to settle this point beyond contradiction. Jesus Christ said unto Peter—“Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?”* that is, more than seventy-two thousand; and the Psalmist declares, that “the chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels;”† these are indefinite numbers, used to express a very large one. Again he exclaims—“Bless the Lord, ye his angels, who excel in strength.”‡ When the Saviour of mankind became incarnate, *Gabriel* announced his birth to *Zacharias* and to *Mary*. An *angel* also proclaimed “glad tidings of great joy” to the shepherds of *Bethlehem*; and a

* Matt. xxvi. 53. † Psalm lxxviii. 17. ‡ ciii. 20.

“multitude of the heavenly host praised God” on the same occasion, in the noblest anthem ever heard in this lower world, and sang—“Glory to God in the highest ! and on earth, peace, good-will towards men.”* An *angel* rolled away the stone from the sepulchre of Christ—“His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow ; and for fear of him, the keepers became as dead men.”† “I saw,” says St. John, “another mighty *angel* come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire.”‡ From hence, it is evident, that there are pure spirits or angels, in existence. “And before any one is so arrogant as to conclude that *no Devil* exists, he should first ascertain the improbability, and impossibility of his existence ; but in order to this, it is absolutely necessary for him to comprehend the various links in the ascending chain of possible existences, to developé the realities of the unknown world, to prove that angels were not free agents ; or, if they were free agents, (which we have reason to believe,) in order to support the baseless hypothesis of *no Devil*, it must be proved, that they never, in a single instance, violated that compact, which, considering them as free agents, must necessarily

* See Second Chapter of Luke. † Matt. xxviii. 2, 3, 4.

‡ Rev. x. 1.

exist between them and the Father of all spirits. But who are capable of fathoming this infinite, this bottomless abyss? Where shall we begin? The moment we attempt it we are lost! We enter a region in which an impenetrable cloud every where encircles us! we gaze and grope! but all is dark! all is unknown, and enveloped in the deepest mystery.

Now, consonant with these remarks, is it reasonable to conclude, that no Devil exists? Certainly not. Ignorance, and our inability to comprehend a fact, can never form a just, a philosophical basis, on which to build our conclusions, and rest the fabric of our faith. No, the only rational inference, under such circumstances, would be, that not being able to demonstrate the existence of the Devil, we have no right to conclude that he does exist; but this would not at all sanction the conclusion that he does not exist; because, this would be building the edifice of our knowledge on the very basis of ignorance, which is replete with absurdity. But, if we take the Scripture for our guide, and build the fabric of our speculations on the sure basis of eternal truth, we may, without involving ourselves in the painful drudgery of unprofitable research, easily discover the important doctrine of lapsed intelligencies, or existing Devils; a doctrine, which, if disbelieved, will open a door to infidelity, which all the energies of those who deny the fact, will never be able to shut. The term, *Devil*, is used in the Bible in almost innumer-

able instances, and it is to the Bible alone that we must trace the true origin of the doctrine of *Devils*; for how, or where, or when, should any one dream of such a doctrine as this, a doctrine so universally received, unless it were of Divine inspiration? The Bible makes known to us, that which philosophy could never develop; and I feel no hesitation in saying, that unless we admit infernal agency to be a Scripture doctrine, we can make no manner of sense of many of its parts; but it must be a complication of absurdities, a jumble of contradictions."

And I may further add, that as philosophers by means of microscopes, have discovered to us vast tribes of insects in various parts of nature, which before were totally unknown to us; so, Revelation may discover to us myriads of spirits, which, without such aid, would have escaped our notice. And it is as reasonable to suppose Revelation to be as proper a mean of discovering invisible spiritual beings in one case, as optical instruments are for the discovery of minute corporeal ones in the other.

The names given to the arch-enemy of the human race in the Sacred Scriptures, are taken from the part he acts, and the different characters he assumes in the work of injuring the souls of men. It must not, however, be denied, that the names given to the Arch-deceiver, have sometimes ambiguous meanings. *Satan*, for instance, signifies an *adversary*

among men and *good angels*, as well as among *evil spirits*. Peter was a *Satan*, (that is, an adversary,) to our Lord.* And the unbelieving Jews, the *Satan* or *adversary*, who hindered St. Paul's return to Thessalonica.† But though we find an ambiguity in the terms that are given to the enemy of mankind; yet, it would be an absurd and unwarranted conclusion, from such premises, to deny the existence of evil spirits. When he opposes the people of God as far as he can, he is called *Satan*, which signifies an *adversary*; one who stands in the way, or stops the progress of another. When he works all the evil that he can by himself, or by his servants, in the church, or in the world, he is called *Belial*; which signifies one without yoke, or one who is not profitable to any, or without the Most High. When he endeavours to devour, he is called a *roaring lion*, in consequence of his fury and desperation. When he is represented as standing in the presence of God, accusing and condemning the best of men as far as he can, he is called the *accuser* of the brethren, or the *Devil*, which signifies a *slanderer*, or *calumniator*; and when he acts as the destroyer, executing just vengeance upon the souls and bodies of the wicked, he is called *Abaddon*, that is, the destroyer; and when he acts as the deceiver of men in general, he is called the old *Serpent* which de-

* Matt. xvi. 23.

† 1 Thess. ii. 18,

ceiveth the world. And as he acted the subtle part of the cunning deceiver at first, he is called the *Serpent*. He is called a *great and red Dragon*, not only in respect of his great strength, and bloody cruelty against the saints; but because of the poisonous nature of those principles which he is endeavouring to propagate, either by his own immediate agency, or that of his servants. He is called the *old Serpent*, meaning that serpent which of old at the beginning deceived our first parents, and is still deceiving the world. He is styled the *Tempter*, which is his constant practice. He bribes some with profit, and allures others with pleasure. He is surprisingly subtle, his strength is great, but not *omnipotent*; his malice is deadly, his activity and perseverance are equal to his enmity, and he has a great number of demons at his command.

Again, the Apostle St Paul, in his Second Epistle to the Corinthians, calls *Satan* “*the God of this world*;” because he sways his sceptre in the hearts of the children of disobedience. And our Saviour styles him, “*a prince*,” in the 12th chapter of St. John’s Gospel—“Now shall the *Prince* of this world be cast out.” That is, *Satan*, the ruler and god of this world, shall be dethroned from that empire which he has so long usurped over the minds of men, and especially over the heathen nations. And again, Jesus saith—“the *Prince* of this world cometh and hath nothing in me.” By which ex-

pression he informed his disciples, that *Satan*, the *Prince* of the *apostate* world, was coming to encounter him; not only by the most dismal suggestions and allurements, but by raising a storm, which would terminate in his death. Nevertheless, "he hath nothing in me;" no guilt whatever to accuse me of, no inward corruption or inherent depravity to take part in, or to follow his temptations, as the needle does the attraction of the magnet.

The Apostle styles him—"the *Prince* of the power of the air."* Not because he has power to raise the wind, as some have supposed, for he could not cause the wind to blow down the house in which Job's children were feasting, until God gave him permission. But because he is the prince, or chief of those demons whose residence is in the air. He is called "*spiritual wickedness* in high places." "For," says the Apostle, we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against *spiritual wickedness* in high places;" or, as the margin more literally reads, *wicked spirits* in heavenly places †

The meaning of the Apostle plainly appears to be this:—We have not only to contend against our own fears and passions, and a whole host of persecutors, but we have to maintain a perpetual war with

* Eph. ii. 2. † Eph. vi. 12.

enemies more powerful "*than flesh and blood*;" even with invisible and formidable principalities and powers, who are the rulers and cause of that darkness and ignorance which is so predominant in the world. And such is the power and malignity of those enemies, that they even enter into our public and private places of devotion, in order, if possible, to obstruct our worship, and draw our attention from God. Hence, the Apostle styles them, "*wicked spirits in heavenly places*." That this is the proper meaning of this passage, will be still more evident, when it is considered, that the Apostle points out these enemies, in order to prove to the Ephesians the necessity of putting on the whole armour of God, that they might be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.* May God grant that both the author and reader of this essay, may comply with the injunction of the Apostle, and put on the whole armour of God, that we may be able to stand firm in the Lord, and in the power of his might; and, at last, when our warfare is accomplished, we may be translated to the realms of eternal bliss.

* Eph. vi. 13.

CHAP. IV.

Demoniacal Possessions; or, Reasons to prove their Reality according to the New Testament.

IT has been a subject of dispute for many centuries, whether the demoniacs, mentioned in the gospel, were really possessed with infernal spirits, or demons, or whether they were only persons afflicted with natural distempers. Those who contend for the latter opinion, suppose that the expressions—possessed with the Devil—casting out Devils, are only an accomodation to vulgar opinion, and that the persons said to be possessed, were only *mad* or *lunatic*, or persons subject to *epilepsy*. Thus they have explained away the account given in the gospel concerning these demoniacs. I have never had the opportunity of examining one complete treatise against the opinion of real possessions, except one written by *Hugh Farmer*, which was put into my hands by a kind friend. And I candidly confess, that it is a learned and ingenious production; and the more I read it, the more I am convinced of the truth of the two following lines:—

“I know the learned can, with ease,

“Twist words and meanings as they please.”

Neither have I had the pleasure to read one single work in favour of real possessions ; consequently, my mind is not biassed by the specious reasoning of any individual. I have met with various remarks on the subject in the course of my reading, and probably some of them may appear in this chapter. The plain, unadulterated language of the Scripture, or the account which is given of possessions in the gospel, are more convincing to me, that the demoniacs were really possessed with *evil supernatural demons*, than all the learning and sophistry which have been summoned into action, in order to disprove and evade the simple and unvarnished narration given of possessions in the evangelic history. I am firmly persuaded, that the representation of the demoniacs in the gospel history, together with their condition, cannot be fairly accounted for, but upon the principle of real possessions. And I would ask the opposers of this scriptural doctrine, what language would they use, in order to express real possessions ? Can any doctrine be better attested ? Are not the expressions of the Evangelist as plain and forcible as language will admit ? Why, then, should any man endeavour to expunge from the Scriptures a doctrine so clearly and positively contained in them ? The modes of reasoning made use of by these men to evade the truth of the gospel history, are not only dangerous in the extreme, but superlatively absurd ;

they tend to destroy the certainty of all language, and the unlearned, or uninformed reader, is at once carried into boundless regions of *mere allegory* and *figure*, and, like a pilot without anchor and without compass, founders upon a dismal ocean of uncertainty and confusion. And not only so, but upon the same principle, we may easily explain away every other doctrine contained in the Bible; and thus, in an alembic of mental chemistry, transmute all these heart-cheering doctrines of Christianity into mere shadows, and thereby deprive the humble, sin-sick soul, of all his hope, leaving him to perish in despair.

I shall, in the first place, point out a few of those reasons which induce me to believe in real possessions.

First. Casting out Devils is frequently spoken of as a thing different from the healing of diseases. Hence, it is said of Jesus, that "his fame went throughout all Syria, and they brought unto him all such people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those that were possessed with Devils, and those which were *lunatic*, and those that had the *palsy*, and he healed them."* "When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were *possessed with Devils*: and he cast out the *spirits* with his word, and healed all that were sick."† And it appears still more evident, from

* Matt. iv. 24.

† Matt. viii. 16.

the commission which Christ gave to his apostles, that the demoniacs were literally possessed with infernal and invisible demons. For, says he—"Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, *cast out Devils*, freely ye have received, freely give."* Now, how absurd is it to suppose, that Jesus Christ would say to his apostles, *cast out Devils*, if there were no such beings in existence, or such a thing as real possessions. If the opinions of our opponents be correct, we must look upon Jesus Christ as an ignorant novice, or else a downright impostor. "But let God be true, and every man a liar," who attempts to pervert the plain declarations of his word. "And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with *Devils*."† "Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over *all Devils*, and to cure diseases."‡ From hence it is evident, that our Lord and his Apostles considered casting out Devils as distinct and separate from the healing of diseases; and that casting out demons was one prominent feature in the Apostles' mission, when they went forth to unfurl the banners of the cross, and to proclaim to a ruined world the redemption of Christ.

Secondly. The sacred writers express themselves

* Matt. x. 8. † Mark i. 32. ‡ Luke ix. 1.

in such terms, as seem undeniably to imply their own persuasion of the fact; and that the distemper of these deplorable sufferers, was owing to the influence of some personal agents wholly distinct from themselves, and these no other than unclean, infernal spirits. For, says the historian—"The Devils besought him, saying, if thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine."* "As they went out, behold, they brought to him a dumb man possessed with a Devil. And when the Devil was cast out, the dumb spake; and the multitudes marvelled, saying, it was never so seen in Israel. But the Pharisees said, he casteth out Devils through the Prince of the Devils."† "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."‡ Thus it is evident, that the Evangelists believed in real possessions: otherwise, they must be considered as unfaithful historians, to declare as facts the expelling of demons when no such thing ever took place. But if we suppose them constantly under infallible guidance, the opinion of those who deny real possessions leads to the grossest absurdity and contradiction. For it supposes them to be under infallible guidance, and not under infallible guidance, at the same time.

Thirdly. Our Saviour himself in the actual cure

* Matt. viii. 31. † Matt. ix. 32, 33, 34. ‡ Mark ix. 26.

of these demoniacs, and in his treatment of them, plainly appears to have looked upon them as not only nominally, but really such. The Devils besought him, saying—"If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine. And he said unto them, Go." He speaks not to the man, but to some other conscious being possessing and acting upon him. "And Jesus rebuked him, (that is, the unclean spirit,) saying, hold thy peace, and come out of him." "And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many Devils, and suffered not the Devils to speak, because they knew him." "And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God. And he straitly charged them that they should not make him known."* "And Devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, thou art Christ the Son of God. And he rebuked them, and suffered them not to speak : for they knew that he was Christ.†

Fourthly. The denial of real possessions makes the gospel history to be a complication of absurdities, and renders it absolutely impossible to make any sense of many of its parts. For instance, the account which is given by St. Luke concerning the ejection of a demon. Now, read the word *disease*, instead of the word *Devil*, and the absurdity of such

* Mark iii. 11, 12.

† Luke iv. 41.

an opinion appears in its true light ; and the folly of those who are so absurd as to depart from the line of divine truth, is at once exhibited to public contempt. “And in the synagogue there was a man which had a spirit of an *unclean disease*, and the *unclean disease* cried out with a loud voice, Let us alone, what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth ? Art thou come to destroy us ? I, the *unclean disease*, know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked the *unclean disease*, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the *unclean disease* had thrown him down in the midst, he (the *unclean disease*) came out of him, and *hurt him not*. And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this ; for with authority and power he commandeth the *unclean diseases*, and they come out.”*

“It is well known,” says Dr. Doddridge, “that a late learned and ingenious writer has revived the notion, long since maintained by Mr. Joseph Mede and Dr. Bekker, that these supposed demoniacs were only lunatics, or epileptics : but, on the most impartial perusal of what has passed between him and his learned antagonists, I am fully convinced that there is no sufficient reason for departing from the received interpretation ; and I should think this story alone a convincing proof on the side of it.

* Luke iv. 33—36.

It is most incredible that an evangelist should have been left to inscribe this man's disorder to the spirit of an *unclean demon*, if it were only lunacy, or the falling sickness; or, that a physician of common sense should speak of it as a memorable circumstance, that such a distemper did not hurt a man by leaving him."—Again, our Lord represents an evil spirit or demon, after being cast out, as walking through desert places seeking rest and finding none. But supply the word *disease* instead of *spirit*, and the language of Jesus Christ becomes not only altogether unintelligible, but absolutely absurd. For instance, when the unclean spirit, or rather, according to the hypothesis of our opponents, the *unclean disease*, is gone out of a man, he (he *unclean disease*) walketh through dry places seeking rest, and findeth none. Then the *unclean disease* saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when the *unclean disease* is come, he findeth it empty, sweepeth and garneth. Then goeth the *unclean disease* and taketh with himself *seven** *other diseases* more wicked than himself; and they, *i. e. eight diseases*, enter in and dwell there.†

* If the word *seven* be understood as denoting perfection, the words *seven other spirits*, mean a great number; therefore, according to the principles of those who deny the reality of possessions, this unclean disease took a great number of diseases more wicked than himself.

† See Matt, xii. 43—45

Thus it is evident, that if the opinions of these men who deny real possessions be correct, Jesus Christ, instead of speaking as never man spake, hath used language which amounts to nothing more than a mass of the most incoherent and ridiculous jargon. But if we understand the words of Christ as a faithful *representation* of what had previously taken place, his language on this occasion is intelligible and consistent with the general tenor of the gospel history. Thus it is evident that our adorable Redeemer considered passions as real; otherwise, he would never have adopted the mode of expression made use of on this occasion.

II. A reply to the objections against this literal interpretation of these and similar expressions.

Objection 1st.—Mr. Heineken says, “In order as much as possible to narrow the ground of our present inquiry, it will be proper to observe, that in almost all these passages of Scripture, where men are described as possessed, our translators have injudiciously employed the term *Devil*, instead of *Demon*, which is the true meaning of the original word; and this circumstance has given rise to a very mistaken notion.”

This is only an assertion without the least shadow of proof brought to support it; and I would have Mr. H. to observe, that an assertion proves nothing without it be substantiated either by positive facts, or upon the principles of sound reason and argu-

ment : therefore, it would be just to pass it over in silence. But as assertions and misrepresentations are generally considered by "*rational Christians*" as strong weapons to attack their assailants with, I shall therefore endeavour to prove to be false, the assertion made in the above quotation. Mr. Heineken ought to have proved that the translation of the term *Devil* instead of *Demon*, was the cause of the opinion that there are in existence supernatural evil spirits, or Demons, or that it led to the notion that the demoniacs were literally possessed. The demoniacs are frequently said to be possessed with *unclean spirits* ; and it is also said in the history of these deplorable sufferers, that they brought unto Jesus Christ "many that were possessed with *Devils*, and he cast out the *spirits* with his word." Here, observe, the term *spirit*, is used as synonymous with *Devil*. But suppose the word *Devil* had never been employed by our translators, would the opinion of real possessions never have had an existence ? I defy Mr. Heineken, or any other of his Unitarian brethren to prove, that one single individual believed in the existence of the *Devil*, or in the reality of possessions, merely because our translators have used the term *Devil*, instead of *Demon*. Neither does the term *Devil* injure the sense of the sacred texts, nor does it convey a meaning which the writers did not intend. Substitute the word *Demon* instead of *Devil*, and the

sense remains exactly the same: for instance, "They brought unto him many that were possessed with *Demons*." Christ said to his Apostles—"cast out *Demons*." Thus, it is evident, that if the word Devil had never been used, the doctrine of possessions would have been the same. Mr. Heineken further adds—"that it was a current opinion among the Jews, who seem to have adopted it from the Egyptians and other nations, that there was an actual transmigration of the soul, and that the spirits of the dead, both good and bad, had power to enter the bosoms of the living, and either to impart their good qualities, or to inflict torments both of body and of mind, by the influence of their bad dispositions." And he again adds, that "having very indistinct ideas of a future state, they imagined disembodied spirits were flitting about in the regions of space; and that they were all under the direction of a governing spirit, whom they termed *Belzeebub*, the prince of the *Demons*." Although the Egyptians, together with Pythagoras and his followers, believed and taught the doctrine of the transmigration of the soul; and though a great part of the heathens worshipped confessedly the ghosts of departed heroes, conquerors, potentates, and the inventors of the fine arts, whom popular superstition, after disguising their history with fables and absurdities, blindly deified. Yet it was the opinion both of Jews and Heathens, that the air was full of spirits,

a superior order of beings between men and God. These, the Greeks termed Demons, (knowing ones) and the Romans, Genii. Hesiod roundly affirms, that—

“ Millions of spiritual creatures walk
The earth unseen.”

Hence, it is probable, says an able writer on this subject, arose the numerous tales about the exploits of their demi-gods. Hence, their Satyrs, Fauns, Nymphs of every kind, wherewith they supposed both the sea and the land to be filled. Some of these Demons or Genii, the Heathens supposed to be kind and benevolent, delighting in doing good ; others, to be malicious and cruel, delighting in doing evil. Of the former, seems to have been the celebrated demon of Socrates, concerning which so many and various conjectures have been made in succeeding ages. “ This gives me notice,” said he, “ every morning, of any evil which will befall me that day.”—“ My demon,” said he, “ did not give me notice this morning of any evil that was to befall me to-day ; therefore I cannot regard as any evil, my being condemned to die.” Undoubtedly, says Mr. Wesley, it was some spiritual being : probably one of the ministering spirits.* “ The Jews, in the *Pirk Avoth*,” (says a learned author,) “ teach, that from the earth to the firmament all things were

* Sermon on Hebrews i. 14.

full of these companies and rulers ; and that there was a prince over them, who was called *the governor of this world*, that is, the darkness of it." This agrees with the opinion of the ancient Fathers, concerning whom St. Jerome says, "this is the opinion of the Doctors—that the air which divides between the earth and heaven, is full of contrary powers." It would probably be difficult to discover with certainty, from what is said in the Gospels concerning possessions, whether the demons were conceived to be the ghosts of wicked men deceased, or lapsed angels. It is plain they were conceived to be malignant spirits. They are exhibited as the causes of the most direful calamities to the unhappy persons whom they possessed—dumbness, deafness, madness, palsy, epilepsy, and the like. The descriptive titles given them always denote that they were wicked supernatural spirits. They are frequently called *unclean spirits*, either, because of their personal dispositions, or, because of the effects which they produced. They are represented as conscious that they are doomed to misery and torments, though their punishment be delayed for a while. When our Saviour was in the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two men possessed with *Devils*, or *Demons*, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no man might pass by that way. Into these two men a legion of *Devils* had entered ; and, behold, 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*? We see here, that those Demons expected more grievous torment than they had ever yet felt; that they mentioned the *time* appointed for the completion of their torment; and, as the season fixed on for this is the *great day*, they therefore expostulated with him about the time of it—art thou come to torment us *before* the time? And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep, into the abyss; by which expositors understand the place of torment.* The state of endless misery, to which Christ will sentence all wicked persons at his second coming, is called, “everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels;”† which seems to imply, that the arch-apostate and his angels are not in this punishment; that it is *prepared* for them, and they are reserved unto it, and that at the appointed time, they shall be cast into it. We read—“And the Devil that deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night, for ever and ever. And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heavens fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God: and the books were open-

* Matt. viii. 29, and Luke viii. 31. † Matt. xxv. 41.

ed : and another book was opened, which is the book of life : and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."* Here we see, that when the dead, small and great, shall stand before God, and be judged by him, the Devil, together with the beast and the false prophet, shall be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone. And again—"Thou believest that there is one God ; thou doest well : the *Devils also believe and tremble.*"† From hence it appears, that when the Apostle is representing the Devils as believing in the existence of God, he at the same time represents them as trembling at the fearful expectation of some future misery which would be inflicted upon them. These passages evidently intimate, that their complete torment is yet to come, and that they are looking forward with the most dismal forebodings for their final destiny, the thought of which makes them tremble.

That the Jews were afterwards led into idolatry and superstition by other nations, is evident from their own history. But that they believed in the doctrine of the transmigration of the soul, remains to be proved. We find no mention in the Scripture of such a doctrine ever being held by them. Besides, the doctrine of transmigration was contrary to the general tenor of their own Scriptures. The Apostle St. Paul, in one of his letters to Timothy, said, that

* Rev. xx. 10—12.

† James ii. xix.

from a child he had known those Scriptures, and that they were able to make him wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. From hence it follows, that the Jews with these Scriptures in their hands, could not be so ignorant of a future state, as Mr. Heineken would have us believe. Besides, it is well known that the Jews had the strongest attachment to the Old Testament Scriptures, and continue to have even to this day. That the Jewish Rabbies incorporated into their Targums many absurdities, I do not deny; but that the doctrine of the transmigration of the soul was either taught or believed by them, does not appear to me to be probable; for the Jews thought their title to heaven absolutely certain, because they were the offspring of faithful Abraham; therefore, John the Baptist said unto them, "Think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham."*

Jesus Christ himself laid the axe at the very root of such a doctrine as the transmigration of the soul, in his narrative of the rich man and Lazarus. He informs us, "that Lazarus died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said,

* Matt. iii. 9.

Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed; so that they which would pass from hence to you, cannot, neither can they pass to us that would come from thence.* Now, had the doctrine of transmigration been a prevailing opinion of the Jews, they would have said to Jesus Christ, that what he had been relating concerning these two men was not true; for that their spirits "were flitting about in the regions of space," and sometimes entering the bosoms of mankind. Even the thief upon the cross used language quite opposite to such a belief as this; for says he—"Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom."† Now, had he believed in transmigration, he would have said, Lord, let my spirit and thine travel together in the boundless regions of eternal space; or, let our souls enter the bosoms of men and women together: thus, it is evident, that the belief in the doctrine of transmigration was not generally believed among the Jews.‡

* Luke xvi.

† Luke xxiii. 42.

‡ I do not mean that the doctrine of transmigration was held by none of the Jews, for many I believe were led into this opinion; what I contend for is, that it was not a general, or prevailing opinion.

In the quotation already made from Mr. Heineken's lecture, he tells us, that departed spirits were supposed to be under the direction of a governing spirit, whom they termed *Beelzebub*, the prince of the Demons, or departed spirits. In another part of his lecture, he says—"Beelzebub has also been considered as descriptive of this being (that is, of Satan) but it was the name of one of the imaginary Pagan Deities, and implied no particular qualities, either good or bad." Now, is it not as reasonable to suppose, that the Jews called Satan, *Beelzebub*, for a certain reason, probably best known to themselves ; as that the Heathens should designate the supposed prince, or chief of departed spirits, by that name. For the sake of argument, we will grant Mr. Heineken what he contends for, viz. that *Beelzebub* was only the name of a large image, whom the Ekronites worshipped as a God. One of those passages in which the term *Beelzebub* occur, is in St. Mark's Gospel, third chapter and twenty-second verse : "And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem, said ; He HATH *Beelzebub*, and by the Prince of the devils casteth he out devils." Now, according to the opinion of Mr. Heineken, the meaning of this passage appears to be this :—he hath the god of Ekron, and by the prince of the gods of Ekron, he casteth out gods of Ekron ; or, he hath an heathen deity, and by the prince of heathen deities, he casteth out heathen deities. An absurdity too glaring

to be admitted by any man, except one who is blinded by prejudice, or determined to believe any thing, however monstrous, rather than give up his preconceived opinions: for it is making an image, which consists of nothing but inanimate matter, to be the "cause and the effect, the agent and the patient, the moving principle and the thing moved: but I refrain from drawing the absurd, the unphilosophic conclusion, and humbly think, that the doctrine of Devils is as clearly depicted, as any other truth in the whole Bible; and as all that has been advanced against it is mere hypothesis, unsupported by argument, and unauthorized by Scripture, I hope, like the bursting bubble on the passing stream, it will soon evaporate into empty air." Mr. Heineken ought to have told us how this god came from Ekron to the place where Christ then was. We have yet to learn whether he travelled, or he was born upon angels' wings!—And likewise, he ought to have told us how it was possible for Christ to become possessed with this image. Baalzebub, properly signifies *the lord of flies*, an idol or deity of the Ekronites. How this idol came to obtain this name, I know not. Some commentators suppose, that this god was called Baal-Shamaim, or the lord of heaven; but that the Jews by way of contempt, gave him the name of Baalzebub; but others, with greater reason, suppose that he was styled the god of flies by his votaries, because he de-

fended people from the flies, a troublesome and destructive insect in some hot countries; in like manner, as the Eleans worshipped Hercules under the appellation of the *fly-chaser*. And Pliny is of opinion, that the name of Achor, the god invoked at Cyrene against flies, came from Accaron, or Ekron, the city where Baalzebub was worshipped, and where he had a famous temple. Ahaziah, king of Israel, having fallen from the terrace of his house into a lower room, and being dangerously hurt, sent to consult this deity, to know if he should be cured of his wounds.*

The Ekronites, says Dr. Macknight—"being near neighbours to the Jews, the great veneration which they had for this idol, made him the object both of the horror and detestation of the devout worshippers of the true God. Accordingly, to express in what detestation they held him, they appropriated his name to the most hateful being in the universe, calling the Devil, or the prince of the evil angels, *Beelzebub*." Dr. Doddridge says, "the title in the Greek, is *Beelzebub*, which signifies, *The lord of a dunghill*."—And a learned and ancient author in his notes on the first chapter of the second of Kings, says, that this idol or deity was known by the name of the *filthy god*, because of the stench and filth with which those heathen temples were infected. Hence, this name was given to the

* 2 Kings i.

apostate fiend, not only to denote that he was the most filthy and corrupt of fallen demons, but to denote the filthiness and corruptness of those principles which he is endeavouring to instil into the bosoms of mankind. It is certain, from the answer which our Lord gave to the Pharisees, when they said—"This fellow doth not cast out Devils, but by Beelzebub, the prince of the Devils;"* that they meant to stigmatize Jesus Christ with having a confederacy with this great apostate; hence, says he, "How can Satan cast out Satan?" "And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand"† As much as if he had said, if Satan rise up to the subversion of his own cause and interest, he is divided, and it follows as a necessary consequence, that his kingdom cannot stand, but is sure to come to a speedy desolation.

Objection 2d. Mr. Heineken says, that "Jesus Christ and his apostles, it should be remembered, were born in Judea, and educated as Jews, and therefore very naturally reasoned with their countrymen in many cases on their own principles, and where no very important points of Christian doctrine were immediately involved, employed the common and popular language, in order to convey their sentiments to their hearers."

This might account for general expressions, such as Demoniacs, or being possessed of the Devil;

* Matt. xii. 24.

† Mark iii. 23, 24.

but not for the manner in which the Evangelists have related the dispossession of the Demons, who would not have expatiated and enlarged upon the notion, if they had not been satisfied that it had its foundation in truth. "The more enlightened cannot always avoid the use of metaphorical modes of expression ; which, though founded upon error, yet have been so established in language by the influence of custom, that they cannot be suddenly dismissed. But in descriptions of characters, in the narration of facts, and in the laying down of systems of doctrines, we require different rules to be observed. Should any person, in compliance with popular opinions, talk in serious language of the existence, dispositions, declarations, and actions, of a race of beings whom he knew to have no existence, we surely could not praise him for his ingenuity ; we must suppose him to be either exulting in irony over the weak credulity of those around him, or taking advantage of their weakness, with the dishonesty and selfish views of an impostor. And if he himself should pretend to any connection with this imaginary system of beings, and should claim in consequence of his connection with them, particular honours from his contemporaries, whatever might be the dignity of his character in all other respects, nobody could hesitate to brand him as an impostor. In this light we must regard the conduct of our Saviour and his apostles, if the idea of demoniacal

possessions were to be considered as *merely* a vulgar error. They talked and acted as if they believed that evil spirits had actually entered into those who were brought to them as possessed with Devils, and as if those spirits had actually been expelled by their authority out of the unhappy persons whom they had possessed. They demanded too, that their authority and declarations should be believed, in consequence of their performing such mighty works, and thus triumphing over the powers of hell.* Besides, if we should suppose that our Lord in curing these diseases, and his disciples in writing the history of his cures, used the vulgar language, or conceded to popular superstition; yet this will not account for the possessed persons speaking in the manner related of them by the Evangelists. The demoniacs, it is probable, might, while under the influence of outrageous insanity, fancy themselves to be possessed: yea, they might even personate the demons; but is it possible they should even feign a dread of being tormented "*before the time*;" they might have expostulated with Jesus Christ, asking him why he came to disturb or torment them; but it is not probable, that mere maniacs should even look forward to a certain period when their destiny would be completed, with the most dismal torments, and then reason with Christ about the unreasonableness of coming to torment them before that time.

* See Martindale's Dictionary, Article Demoniac.

But should it be said, that the demoniacs might express a dread of being relieved from the possession, and beg of Christ not to restore them to their natural state; this is absolutely improbable; but be this as it may, what shall we think of the man mentioned in Luke iv. 33, who had a spirit of an *unclean Devil*. This person was neither *lunatic* nor *mad*; for the distemper under which he laboured was an *epilepsy*, as is plain from verse 35, where we are told that the spirit *convulsed* him.*

This, Mr. Heineken will not deny; but he will deny that the distemper arose from any agency of evil spirits. Now, I would ask, if there was nothing in the case but an *epilepsy*, arising from natural causes, how came the demoniac to cry out, saying, "*Let us alone, what have we to do with thee, Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us?*" Can it be imagined that this person, while in his right mind, would be unwilling to be cured of his disease, or, that he should express a dread at the very thought of being relieved from sickness to health, from the most excruciating torture, to perfect ease and vigour? To suppose this, is to suppose a self-evident absurdity; and a man that can thus think, gives evident proof that he is himself possessed, or is a maniac. Suppose that the man was strongly tinctured with the opinions of his country, and

* See Doddridge's Family Expositor.

really imagined himself possessed with the Devil, is it reasonable to think, that, being in his right senses, he would dread the ejection of the Devil, and look upon it as his own destruction? From hence it follows, as a necessary consequence, that this man was literally possessed with an evil, supernatural spirit, or demon. Mr. Heineken says—“Where no very *important point* of Christian doctrine was immediately involved, they employed the common and popular language.” From hence it follows, that Mr. H. believes, that the doctrine of possessions is an unimportant point of Christian doctrine, and the belief in real possession an harmless error. Now, how does this agree with the division of his Lecture, where he says—“I shall proceed in the third place to shew, that the supposed interference of an evil being would be hostile to the Divine perfections, and utterly subversive of the Divine government.” And in another place he says—“Nor is the belief in the existence of an evil spirit less hostile to the sublime attribute of Divine wisdom.” Thus it is evident, that he is at war with himself; and if the belief in the interference of evil spirits be hostile to the Divine perfections, and utterly subversive of the Divine government, the doctrine of possession is a most important point of Christian doctrine. How does this agree with the characters of Christ and his apostles, that they should not only concede the people in an opinion

that is hostile to the Divine perfections, and utterly subversive of the Divine government, but even countenance it themselves. Here, observe, the point of Mr. H's spear is turned against himself, and he falls by his own weapon. Surely, Jesus Christ ought to have told the people that there was no such a thing as real possession ; yea, he should expressly have said, that there were no such beings in existence as evil spirits, if the belief in real possession, or in the existence of evil spirits, was subversive of the Divine government. And again, in the latter part of the objection he says, that Christ and his apostles adopted "the common and popular language, in order to convey their sentiments to their hearers." That the language of a country must contain many allusions to the popular opinions, I do not deny. Yet it does not follow as a necessary consequence, that Jesus Christ, consistently with goodness, could use phrases which alluded to such popular opinions as were false, and especially if they had a pernicious tendency ; for instance, to use Mr. Heineken's own words, if they led to an opinion which is "hostile to the Divine perfections, and subversive of the Divine government." Besides, there was no necessity for Jesus to adopt the vulgar language of the people. For it is agreed on all hands, that the Jewish language afforded abundance of expressions, whereby the truth of the fact might have been clearly expressed, if there had been no

real possession. They had proper names for every distemper incident to the human system. Epilepsy, lunacy, and madness, are diseases which have more particularly obtained the name of demoniacism; yet, these distempers are as often designated by their proper names as by the figurative name of demoniacism. Why is not this language made use of in every cure, if it had been intended by way of accommodation to vulgar notions! From hence it follows, that the Jewish language was such, that our Lord could have expressed himself in terms perfectly free from error; therefore, it is inconsistent with the perfection of his character, to suppose that he would use this mode of expression, when he knew that the vulgar would be confirmed by it in their delusions. Whatever reasons may be shewn why our Lord adopted the common phraseology of the people, cannot be urged with regard to the Evangelists, who wrote the history of our Lord's miraculous cures, when they knew that their histories were to last throughout succeeding generations. Now, if they understood the real nature of possessions, they ought to have assigned a reason why they adopted modes of expression which could not fail to lead their readers into a most hurtful and delusive error. Mr. H. attempts to solve this difficulty, by saying, "That Jesus Christ and his Apostles were born in Judea, and educated as Jews, and therefore very naturally reasoned with their

countrymen on their own principles." I hope that Mr. H. will not say that the Spirit of God was born in Judea, or subject to Jewish prejudice; therefore this error must be reconciled with the notion of their inspiration. For surely it is a matter of the greatest importance, and worthy of the interference of the Divine Spirit, if the belief in the existence of evil spirits is "subversive of the Divine government."

If Christ promised to his disciples, that when they were brought before kings and governors for his sake, it should be given them in that same hour that the Spirit of their Father would speak in them,* it is fully as credible, that they would be assisted in the same manner when they wrote the history of our Lord's miracles and cures, especially as the record was to last through all ages, and to be a rule of faith to all the nations of the earth. And again, Jesus said to his disciples, that—"When the Spirit of truth is come, he shall guide you into all truth." From hence it follows, that the doctrine of real possession is true, otherwise the Spirit of God has not only suffered them to remain in an error, but to write a positive falsehood; and in consequence of which, others have been led into the same erroneous notion. Besides, to suppose that the Evangelists were left to follow the dictates of

* Matt. x, 19, 20; Luke xii. 11, 12.

Jewish prejudice, while they composed their histories, is a reflection upon the Scriptures, which at once annihilates their authority. "Again," says Mr. Heincken, "to have engaged in controversy on every doubtful subject of enquiry, would have been foreign, and even hostile, to the main purposes of their office, have involved them in perpetual litigations, and have weakened the influence of their more important labours."

But is this a sufficient vindication of him who came to bear witness of the TRUTH? Is he not emphatically styled "*the light of the world?*" therefore to have acted consistently with his character, he ought to have said, as he did on other occasions, "*Ye do greatly err,*" there is no such thing as being possessed with the Devil, it is only a natural disorder of an extraordinary kind. Besides, how does this agree with another zealous advocate for Unitarianism, who boldly asserts—"That Jesus and his Apostles pursued one direct course, *in opposition to long-established opinions, and regardless and fearless of consequences, leaving them to God.*" And another says it is the opinion of the Unitarians, that Jesus Christ, "by the *force of his doctrines and example, saves men from ignorance and superstition.*" Thus it is evident, that the Unitarians are at war with themselves; and such is the absurdity and contradiction of the Unitarian's creed, that, in order to support any part of it, they are obliged to

annihilate all the rest. Again, says Mr. Heineken, "they prudently left the notion of possessions as they found it." Now, if it was an act of prudence for Jesus Christ and his Apostles to leave the people in error and superstition, continually tormented with a fantastic dread of evil spirits, surely it is the greatest imprudence in Mr. H. not to follow this example, when, according to his own opinion, it is a prudent one. But this is such a notion or prudence as I have yet to learn.

I read Mr. H.'s lecture with astonishment. Sometimes he says, the supposed interference of evil spirits is subversive of the Divine government ; at others, he calls such an opinion an almost blasphemous notion ; but here he supposes it an act of prudence in Christ and his Apostles, to leave the people in the possession of an error, which, according to his opinion, leads to the most serious consequences. Such are the *inconsistencies* of this all-searching, all-discerning, all-knowing philosopher ! Again, says he—"Although for the especial purpose of establishing their authority, Jesus Christ and his Apostles were endowed with a supernatural power over the diseases of the body and the mind ; yet, it by no means follows as a necessary consequence, that they were themselves *acquainted* with the *real causes* of the calamities they removed." This is a sweeping declaration, and not less contradictory than other assertions in this

lecture. For, if Jesus Christ and his apostles did not know the real nature of possession, they could not adopt the popular language of the times by way of accommodation. Does not such language as this cast a reflection on our Lord and his Apostles? Is it not evident from this supposition, that Mr. Heineken fancies that he is in possession of more wisdom and knowledge than was the lot of our adorable Redeemer, and the first heralds of salvation. He of whom it is so often said—“*Whence had this man this wisdom?*” But Mr. Heineken, without a blush, can suppose, that that Divine personage, whom the Apostle styles “the brightness of his Father’s glory, and the express image of his person,” was such a simpleton as not to know a physical disease from a diabolical possession. “Thus situated, (says Mr. Heineken,) it would be very natural for them to use the common language of the times.” This is one of Mr. H.’s wonderful discoveries: first, to suppose them unacquainted with the real nature of possessions, then it follows as a necessary consequence, that they must adopt the common language of the times in which they lived. This opinion is absolutely absurd, if we consider Jesus Christ to be God and man in one person; but Mr. H. will deny this, notwithstanding he acknowledges that Christ and his Apostles were endowed with supernatural power to cure disease, both of the body and of the mind. Now, is it not as reasonable to suppose, that by

this power, (which is no other than the Spirit of God,) they were not only able to cure, but even to know the real nature of these diseases. For it is not only inconsistent with reason and common sense, but derogatory to the wisdom and goodness of God, to suppose that he would suffer Jesus Christ and his disciples, to attribute these direful calamities to the agency of beings which had no existence. Again, says Mr. H. "Did any, whilst under the influence of outrageous insanity, utter *incoherent speeches*, and fancy themselves to be inhabited by a legion of demons? they were treated as if they were possessed; and so they would probably have been in the present day; for it would be folly to reason philosophically with a madman." It is certain, that the demoniacs were believed to be really possessed with evil spirits. Now, if Jesus Christ and his disciples were ignorant of the real nature of possessions, it was morally impossible for them to reason philosophically either with a madman, or with one in his right mind. Neither could they use these modes of expression relative to the demoniacs in a figurative sense. Can any man in his right mind believe, that any physical disease could give this certain knowledge of Christ, or that any disease, epilepsy, or any thing else, could thus talk, and say—"Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." Instead of the demoniacs uttering "*incoherent speeches*," as Mr. H. intimates, they dis-

played a degree of knowledge which is not surpassed even by the Apostles themselves. "When Jesus came into the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying—Whom do men say that I the Son of man am! And they said—Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, 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 Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."* Now if the people did not know the true character of Jesus when in their right minds, is it reasonable to believe that a mere madman, while under the influence of outrageous insanity, could ever point out the true character of our blessed Redeemer. Yea, if the Apostle Peter did not know the real character of Christ by the mere exercise of his own natural understanding, is it not absurd to suppose, that a mere maniac could ever arrive at this knowledge? One of the demoniacs styles him—"Thou Son of the Most High." Now, the title *Most High* is given to the Supreme Being by the writers of the Old Testament, in order to distinguish him from all other gods. Thus it is evident, that the demo-

* Matt. xvi. 13—17.

niacs acknowledged Christ in the divinity of his character, which Mr. H. so unreasonably denies.

“With these observations,” says Mr. H. “I shall pass over all these passages of Scripture, in which the afflicted are said to have been possessed by *demons*; for this word ought, in all cases, to have been employed by our translators instead of the word *Devil*; and it would then very plainly appear, that such passages have no actual bearing on the present question.” With what propriety Mr. H. can say such passages have no actual bearing on the present question, I am at a loss to determine, unless these passages are an insuperable bar to his progress in denying the existence of a supernatural evil being, whom we call the Devil, or Satan. The term *demon*, signifies a spirit, whether good or bad; and though the heathens generally used it in a good sense, yet they sometimes used it in an evil one. They had evil demons as well as good. “But when no bad quality is ascribed to the demon or demons spoken of, and nothing affirmed that implies it, the acceptation of the term in Pagan writers, is generally favourable.” If there had been nothing more to urge in favour of real possessions than the mere name *Devil*, or *demon*, I should think the contrary opinion not so improbable. But when I find mention made of the number of demons in particular possessions, their actions particularly distinguished from those of the man possessed, I cannot but ad-

mit that they were really possessed. And I am firmly persuaded, that we must either admit of real possessions, or else give up the Divine authority of the gospel history. For the gospel expressly asserts real possession, and our Lord and his apostles never once told the people that there was no such thing; but, on the contrary, countenanced the common and prevailing opinion. Therefore, I shall take it for granted, that the demoniacs were literally possessed, until Mr. H. brings forward some proof to the contrary. He has hitherto advanced nothing but dogmatical assertions, which are as contradictory as they are false.

It is maintained by those who deny the common opinion, that “the *Devil* was only a name for *epilepsy*, *lunacy*, or *madness*.” But I want clear proof of this; and I assert, contrary to Mr. Mede, that the sentence—“He hath a Devil, and is mad,”* are not synonymous expressions, any more than he hath a fever, and is mad, are so. To be mad, is often the consequence of a violent fever, but this is no proof that they are synonymous terms, and mean one and the same thing. It is reasonable to suppose, that every one possessed of a demon grew lunatic or mad, and at intervals might have fits, and be more than ordinarily affected, which might be the reason why the demoniacs are said to be lunatic, or mad; but still this is no proof that *being*

* John x. 20.

possessed, and *lunacy*, or *madness*, were synonymous terms, or mean one and the same thing. They are quite different disorders, though the latter, perhaps, was generally, if not always, the consequence of the former. But it is farther alledged, "that madness and lunacy may be accounted for by natural and secondary causes." It is very true; but this is no reason for believing that they may not sometimes be owing to preternatural ones; thus, a fever may be cured by natural means, but it no way follows that it may not have been cured by the efficacy of a miraculous power, exerted for that purpose. And as nothing is more easy to be imagined, than that our Saviour should be able to assign the instance of such a preternatural agency, may we not take his word for a plain matter of fact?

Mr. Farmer says, that "the miracle wrought upon the demoniacs, is often described in the same terms as that wrought upon the diseased, terms that necessarily imply their having previously laboured under a real distemper." St. Matthew says, equally concerning demoniacs, lunatics, and paralytics, "He HEALED them." What then? Does the term *healing* always imply a bodily disorder, or such a disorder of mind as proceeds from natural causes? This Mr. Farmer dare not assert, firm as his brow is for *allegory* and *figure*. We find it applied to *unwholesome waters*, to *sin*, and to *outward temporal calamities*; therefore this argument proves

nothing. And as the demoniacs laboured under various diseases, which were thought to have been inflicted by the agency of evil spirits, the Evangelists, by simply saying that they were *healed* or *cured*, was a certain proof that the demons were dislodged. Besides, they mention the dispossession of the demons in contradistinction to the healing of diseases; hence, it is said of Christ, that "He cast out the *spirits* with his word, and HEALED ALL THAT WERE SICK." Now, this language is nothing but unintelligible jargon, on the supposition that the demoniacs were only labouring under natural diseases.

Again, the account which is given of the Demoniacs of Gadara, and the ridiculous and miserable subterfuges which have been resorted to by those who deny the common opinion, is a convincing proof to me in favour of real possession. It is said of one of those Demoniacs, that "no man could bind him, NO not with *chains*."* But Mr. Farmer says,— "That the ancients *perhaps*, were less skilful than the moderns, in the methods of confining such unhappy persons." This is at best only an improbable supposition; for who can suppose, (unless he has an hypothesis to support by it,) that the ancients were such idiots as not to be able to confine with chains a mere maniac. Besides, why should the Evangelist point out this circumstance with so much

* Mark v. 3.

emphasis, if the reason why he could not be bound, was owing to the deficiency of wisdom in the people. It is further said, that out of this deplorable sufferer, our Lord dislodged a Legion of Devils; and that he permitted them to go into a herd of swine, which was feeding upon the mountain, in consequence of which, the whole herd (which was about two thousand) ran violently down a steep place and were choked in the sea. But Dr. Lardner and Mr. Mede, strenuously contend in opposition to reason and Scripture, that this herd of swine was driven into the sea by the joint assistance of two raging madmen. Is it not a pity that men of learning should ever suffer themselves to be led into such absurdities; and is it not a strong proof in favour of real possessions, when those who deny the fact are obliged to resort to such miserable shifts. I hesitate not to say, that it was impossible, not for two, but for twenty such madmen, however fierce, to put so vast a number of swine as two thousand into motion in an instant, and to cause them all to rush with violence down a precipice into the sea; for it is well known, that swine are the worst of tame animals to be driven. Besides, it does not appear from the history, that the men ever fell upon the swine, or made any attempt to drive them into the sea; nay, the history positively refers their destruction to a different cause; for we are expressly told, that the Devils went into the herd of swine.

“Now there is a great deal of difference between the *Devils going into* a thing, and a man *following after* or driving it. Moreover, if this legion of demons, were nothing more than a raging madman or two, and if these demons entered into the swine, as we are assured they did, then these madmen entered into the swine. Now, it remains for them to explain, how these madmen *got out* of themselves, and how they *got into* the swine. Such are the absurdities which men unavoidably run into, who wish to be wise above what is written. Neither is the supposition, that the demoniacs only laboured under a natural disease less absurd; for if there was nothing more than a *bodily disease*, we must view the subject of it as afflicted with a legion of diseases at one time, that is, about *five thousand*; that the diseases were possessed of the gift of speech; for it is said, they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep. There is one thing more which ought not to be overlooked. When our Lord had commanded the unclean spirit, or rather the *unclean disease*, to come out of the man, the reply which was made was—“What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God Most High? I beseech thee torment me not.” If we consider this to be the language of the afflicted person without diabolical influence, we are totally unable to make any sense of the passage; and if we view it as the language of a disease, it appears more absurd

still. Mr. Farmer supposes, that it was the disease of the man that was transferred into the swine ; and he further supposes, that the answer which one of the demoniacs gave Christ, *viz.* my name is *Legion*, was only the incoherent dogmas of a mere mad-man ! Hence, he fancies he evades the absurdity of supposing a legion of diseases to inhabit the bosom of a man at one time. For the sake of argument, we will grant Mr. Farmer what he contends for, *viz.* that this demoniac was only mad. Now one would almost be persuaded, that Mr. Farmer believed that the disease was *infinitely divisible*, for at any rate, this disease must have been divided into two thousand parts, in order to affect the whole herd. Now, suppose it possible, that a disease thus divided, would cause two thousand swine to go raging mad. Is it possible for a man to believe, in his right mind, that the injection of the two thousandth part of a disease into each of them, would make them to go raging mad in an instant, and in a moment cause them to rush with violence into the sea. If it was only the mere disorder of a man which caused them to go mad, how is it that they should run with one accord into the sea ? Why did not they run in all directions, and thus squander themselves all over the plain, tearing in pieces every thing that came in their way ? Mr. Farmer has only rejected one absurdity to take up another. I shall conclude this chapter with a few remarks upon the

permission given to the devils when cast out of the man to go into the herd of swine.

1st. It was not derogatory to the honour of our Saviour's character, since it is one of the very usual methods of God's moral government, to awaken sinners to repentance by alarming events.

2d. Nor was it unjust in Jesus, since it is evident he acted not in his own personal character as a private member of society, but by a special divine commission and authority, and the miraculousness of the fact, is a satisfactory attestation to the innocence of it. Had the herd gone mad of themselves, as we say, no one would have thought of assigning the event as an objection against Divine Providence; nor do we find that the Gadarenes ever made the least objection of this sort against our Saviour's conduct.

3d. It proved, in the most convincing manner, the reality of diabolical agency; for, says Dr. Doddridge, "it was self-evident that a herd of swine could not be confederates in any fraud: their death, therefore, in this destructive circumstance, was ten thousand times a greater blessing to mankind, than if they had been slain for food as was intended." And Dr. Macknight judiciously observes, that Jesus Christ "permitted the Devils to enter into the swine, not only because he knew it would render the miracle more public, but, BECAUSE IT WOULD PROVE THE REALITY OF THE POSSESSION, and make men understand both how great the power of

evil spirits is, and how terrible the effects of their malice would be, if they were not restrained.* For no sooner was the permission granted, than the keepers who were with the swine, and the disciples who were at a distance, beheld to their great astonishment, the whole herd running furiously down the mountain, and leaping from the tops of the rocks into the sea, where they were drowned to the number of two thousand, while the possessed furious mad men became all of a sudden weak and composed, having recovered the entire use of their reason; the first exercise of which, doubtless, would lead them to an high admiration of his goodness, who had delivered them from the oppression of the Devil." "The whole history teaches us to rely on the providence of God, and not to live in fear of evil spirits. They are under the strictest restraint and cannot hurt us without the divine permission." With these remarks I leave the reader to judge for himself, and may God give his blessing.

* Dr. Jortin says, "that evil spirits had more influence over the bodies of men at that time, that the power of Jesus Christ over sin and Satan might be manifested in expelling them and putting them to open shame, and thus even make them unwilling witnesses of the truth of his gospel. Thus, men beheld the vile nature and the terrible force of these apostate spirits, and at the same time the superior power and goodness of the Saviour of the world who delivered miserable men from such dreadful enemies."

CHAP. V.

A more direct Reply to the Lecture.

THE first passage of Scripture which contain a reference to the subject in debate, is in the Book of Genesis, 3d chapter and 1st verse—"Now the *serpent* was more subtle than any beast of the field." Perhaps no part of the sacred history has so much perplexed the Unitarians, as this now under consideration, in order to explain it agreeably with the hypothesis of no *Devil*. The method which some have taken, in order to evade the force of the narrative, supposes that the *Serpent* is a *personification of moral evil*. To which I reply, that according to this mode of interpretation, the 14th verse of the same chapter ought to be paraphrased thus:—
And thou *mōral evil*, art cursed above all *cattle*, and above *every beast* of the *field*; and thou, *moral evil*, upon *thy belly* shalt thou go, and *dust* shalt thou eat all the days of *thy life*. Therefore, such an hypothesis as this, carries its own refutation, and the bare mention of it is sufficient to expose it. While others consider the *whole* to be an *allegory*: then we have not only an *allegorical serpent*, but

an *allegorical* tree, bearing *allegorical* fruit, and an *allegorical* garden, an *allegorical* woman, formed *allegorically* out of an *allegorical* man, who partook of the fruit of an *allegorical* tree, and thereby became subject to an *allegorical* death ; but God, by an act of infinite love and goodness to this *allegorical* man, redeemed him by an *allegorical* redemption—in a word, an *allegorical world*. I should not have troubled the reader with such dogmas as these, had it not been to give a specimen of the criticism of those men, who can bestow such high compliments upon themselves, and the *rationality* of their religion. But Mr. H. is well aware of the absurdity of such interpretations as these ; and being unable to find out an explication more plausible, he therefore, in order to extricate himself from this dilemma, rejects the *whole* narrative from *his* *creed*. “The history of the fall,” says Mr. H. “is a *mere tradition*, and a tradition of a *most corrupt* kind ; totally inconsistent with itself ; founded on false principles ; and having no pretension whatever to a divine revelation. And he again adds, “that what has been called the Mosaic history of the creation, is a *mere fable*.” In a word, he rejects the *whole* Pentateuch, as *fabulous* and *false*. The inspiration of Leviticus and Deuteronomy, he positively denies in the present Lecture, which is now under review. It is a matter of very suspicious circumstance, as to the truth of any

system, which, in order to support it, obliges its devotees to such preposterous means. By this means, a system, however *absurd*, might be supported. "The genuineness of the Pentateuch may be inferred from the universal concurrence of all antiquity. The rival kingdoms of Judea and Israel, the hostile sects of Jews and Samaritans, and every denomination of early Christians, received the Pentateuch as unquestionably written by *Moses*. It is also mentioned and referred to by many Heathen authors, in a manner, which shews it plainly to have been the general and undisputed opinion of the pagan world, that this book was the work of the Jewish Legislator." But why refer to the universal opinion of antiquity, to prove the *inspiration* of the *Pentateuch*, and the reality of its author, when infallible proof is at hand. In the New Testament, the writings of the Law, or Pentateuch, are expressly ascribed to Moses. "We have found him, of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write;"* and in a variety of passages in the Gospels, Acts, and Epistles, Moses is evidently considered as the author of the Pentateuch; and every one of the five books is quoted, as written by him. The inspiration of the Pentateuch is infallibly proved by JESUS CHRIST. For he calls the words of Exodus, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy, the words of GOD himself. For God commanded, saying,

* John i. 45.

“Honour thy Father and thy Mother.”* Hence, it is certain from revelation, that Moses wrote the Pentateuch by the immediate inspiration of God.

Notwithstanding Mr. H.’s inability to explain the Mosaic history, consistently with his own system, he has endeavoured to prove, that an invisible supernatural evil Being is not contained in the narrative, or that the history fails to prove such a Being, supposing it to be true. But what are the reasons which Mr. H. brings forward? They are as follow:—“We *will*, for the sake of argument, *suppose* this history to be *true*; and what would it then prove—that a natural animal, whom some ingenious men have supposed to have been a walking snake, others a satyr, others an ape, and others a winged seraph, conversed with Eve, and excited her to disobedience; but if our credulity could carry us to the belief of this as a matter of fact, even such a fact would be very far from demonstrating the existence of an invisible malignant being, possessed of almost divine attributes; and indeed, the history itself, (*supposing it to be true*) proves, that this tempter must have been some animal, whose nature and properties were well known; because it is said to have been wiser than all the beasts of the field, but for its offence, deprived of its erect form,

* Matt. xv. 4, to which, compare Ex. xx. 12. Lev. xix. 3. Deut. v. 16.

and condemned to creep on the ground, together with its posterity, ever afterwards, so that it certainly could not have possessed any thing like **UBIQUITY.**" Wonderful reasoning! admirable philosophy! What has all this bombast proved? That a natural animal does not *fill all space.* Wonderful deduction!—a deduction, that a man possessed of common sense would blush to have drawn. Surely it is not necessary for the tempter to be **OMNIPRESENT,** in order to render him **SUPERNATURAL.** Mr. H. has reasoned on the supposition, that the tempter was only a *mere animal*; whereas this supposition is absolutely false, and he contradicts himself; for, says he, "in the Book of Genesis, *we read* that Eve was tempted to disobey the divine command, by an *evil being,* in the *form* of a *serpent.*" And Mr. H. knew very well, that not one of those divines to whom he has alluded, thought that the tempter was a mere animal in the abstract. That Divines have trifled with this part of sacred history, I readily grant; yet it does not follow, that it is not true, or that there is not an *evil being.* The history itself evidently supposes, that the tempter was something more than a mere animal—"I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; **IT,** (that is Christ) shall bruise thy head, and **THOU,** (that is the tempter) shall bruise his heel." This verse is significant of the whole plan of redemption—and

to *bruise the head*, means a *total and final* overthrow; but who could be so foolish as to suppose, that the sacred historian meant that Christ should bruise the head of a *mere animal*, and give it a total and final overthrow. We are told that Eve was deceived and tempted to transgress the law of God, by an agent who could speak and reason, called by Moses the Serpent; because of the craft and subtilty he exhibited in the seduction of our first parents, which he saith was more subtle than any beast of the field. But a beast of the field, how subtle or sagacious soever, could not speak and reason. Who then was the agent that deceived Eve? St. Paul speaks of this deceiver in the same manner as Moses—"I fear, lest by any means, as the Serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."* The apostle did not suppose that the Corinthians might be corrupted by the subtlety of an *irrational creature*; consequently, he did not suppose that Eve was deceived by a *mere animal*. Hence, it is evident, that it was the Devil, or Satan, an evil supernatural spirit, which tempted Eve.

Again, says Mr. H. "In the book of Leviticus, (xvii. 7.) it is said, that the Israelites shall no more offer their sacrifices to *Devils*. Now, even supposing this book to have been written by *Divine*

* 2 Cor. xi. 3.

authority, this passage proves nothing, because this word should have been translated *goats*, or hairy animals; and, therefore, plainly refers to the religious rites of the surrounding Idolators." Having already proved the inspiration of the Pentateuch, I shall only observe in passing, had the book of Leviticus not been at war with his creed, he would not have denied its authority. He supposes that this passage proves nothing, because the word rendered *Devils*, ought to have been translated *goats*, whereas the fact is quite the reverse, for *idolatry*, is worshipping the Devil; and although the children of Israel did not directly or intentionally worship him, yet they did by *construction* or *consequence*, because the *Devil* is the author of idolatry, and is eminently served and honoured by it.

We read, 2 Sam. xxiv. 1, there was one that moved David against Israel to say—"Go, number Israel and Judah." This, we are told, 1 Chron. xxi. 1, was *Satan*. But the Unitarians say, it was not a supernatural being, but "one of David's counsellors, who first started and advised the project." They say—"It is reasonable to think this, because *Satan* means an *adversary*." Supposing this to have been the case, it is as reasonable to think that the Devil put it into the heart of his counsellors, as well as into the heart of Judas, to betray our blessed Saviour: so that the Devil had a principal hand in the affair. Therefore this plea,

that it was one of David's counsellors, is of no advantage to them. But I say it is not reasonable to suppose this; for the sacred historian is very particular in telling us the names of David's counsellors, and such as had a principal hand in matters of state during his reign, and we have the names of persons concerned in matters of much less importance than this left on record. Had it, therefore, been one of his counsellors, that put him upon numbering the people, we should in all probability have heard somewhat of him from David himself, or from Joab, or from the historian; but we hear nothing of him from David's command, Joab's remonstrance, or the historian's account. It is, therefore, reasonable to suppose, that this conjecture is false, and without any foundation at all. Consequently, I shall take it for granted, that it was an evil supernatural spirit which influenced and prompted David to number the children of Israel, contrary to the will of God. Again says Mr. Heineken—"An evil spirit is said to have been sent by the Lord: the expression clearly relates to an unhappy disposition of mind and contentious temper; it would be blasphemous to suppose, that God would employ such a being as *that* called the *Devil*, as the agent of his sovereign will." But is it any more blasphemous, than to suppose, that God would employ an unhappy disposition of mind and contentious temper as the agent of his sovereign will? Surely the Su-

preme Being may employ whatever agent he thinks proper in the execution of his purposes; he may either commission an angel, or let loose a Devil. They are only instruments in his hands, and under his direction and controul.

“To consider the Book of Job (says he) in any other light than as an *allegory*, would be to give up all title to common sense.” On the contrary, he that can suppose that Job was a *fictitious* being, and his book a *fable*, must give up all title as a believer in Divine revelation, and appropriate to himself the designation of *infidel*. That Job was a *real*, and not a *fictitious* character, may be inferred from the manner in which he is mentioned by the prophet Ezekiel and St. James—“Though these *three men*, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver *but* their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord God.”* As Noah and Daniel were unquestionably real characters, we must conclude the same of Job. If Job were not a *real* intelligent being, why did the inspired prophet class him with Noah and Daniel, and positively *call them three men*, and not only so, but repeated it *thrice*, as if to guard against any mistake of his name? From hence it is evident, that the inspired prophet considered him as a real character. To suppose that Job was only an imaginary being, is to suppose that

* Ezek. xiv. 14.

the prophet repeated a positive falsehood and absurdity. "Behold, (says St. James,) we count them happy that endure: ye have heard of the *patience of Job*, and have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy."* But adopt Mr. H.'s opinion, and the language of the Apostle would read thus—Ye have heard of the patience of a *fictitious being*, and have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy. But to whom? *A fictitious being!* Astonishing chimera! No person could ever believe, unless he were biassed by the most invincible prejudice, that the inspired Apostle would refer to an imaginary character as an example of patience, or in proof of the mercy of God.

Mr. H. has, by mere evasion, endeavoured to convert the whole into an *allegory*. Now we must observe, that the allusions with which we meet in Scripture, are allusions to *real facts*, and to *real beings*. The writers of the Sacred Scriptures neither did, nor could invent, consistent with their inspiration, *imaginary beings*, either for the exercise of their genius, or the amusement of their readers. Such a conduct would but ill become those who were commissioned to instruct mankind in *things spiritual*. If, therefore, we should grant that the first chapter of Job is an allegory, still we

* James v. 11.

should maintain, that all its allusions are founded in facts, and that the *poetical* mention of *Satan* in such a book, would be a proof of his existence. Mankind have invented superstitions enough, without receiving addition to them from those Scriptures which are intended for the destruction of error, and the diffusion of divine truth. So far is the Book of Job from "*darkening* counsel by words *without knowledge*," that in that book the practice is reprov-
 ed.* There is no ground for the supposition that the book of Job is an allegory. "It is an exposition of what actually took place, couched in such terms as will best convey the truth to human minds." In what terms would Mr. H. describe the transactions of the *invisible* world, if he rejects such as are used in the chapter in question? "Have these Socinians, who suppose their *souls* to be nothing but *organized matter*, refined and spiritualized their ideas, so as to speak of spiritual things in any other manner than after the *manner of men*?" The Scriptures speak of God after the manner of men, condescending to our capacities, in order to suit the revelation of his will and providence to our apprehensions. And shall we reject those parts of sacred truth, and look upon them as *fabulous* and *absurd*, because God, out of his infinite love and goodness to mankind, has been pleased, so far as

* Job xxx. 8.

was *necessary*, to condescend to speak of himself; and the dispensations of his providence, in a method the best adapted to convey to our minds the truth of those solemn realities, which is the subject of the counsels of the unseen world? “*God forbid;*” rather let us adore such amazing condescension; and with implicit confidence receive his word, as able to make us wise unto salvation, through faith in the atonement.

“Again, in the 109th Psalm, (says Mr. H) “and also in the book of Ezekiel, *Satan* is spoken of as standing at the right hand of the *righteous*; the WRITERS evidently refer to temporal enemies, and especially those who opposed the reformation of the Jewish Church.” I have not been able to find the passage in Ezekiel, which Mr. H. has alluded to, and I believe there is not such a passage in the Bible; consequently, I am not able to point out its meaning. But the expression in the Psalms, in question, we will examine for a moment. The whole verse reads thus—“*Set thou a wicked man over him; and let Satan stand at his right hand.*”* Now, leaving the passage which Mr. H. says is in Ezekiel, out of the question—is it consistent with truth for him to say, that “*Satan* is spoken of as standing at the right hand of the *righteous*,” when there is not such a sentence in the Psalms, nor any

* Psalm cix. 6.

thing said that will justify such a sentence being drawn as an inference. The fact is, Mr. H. has conjured up this sentence, not only to suit his own purpose, but in order that he might with more ease, evade the force of the sacred text. The meaning of this passage appears to be this:—Set thou a wicked man over him, to be as cruel to him, as he hath been to others; and not only so, but let Satan stand at his right hand; or, the adversary shall stand at his right hand—that is, an evil spirit shall molest, vex, and trouble him in all his affairs; or rather, shall accuse and torment him. This Psalm is prophetic, and evidently refers to the enemies of Christ. And if David spake this in reference to Doeg or *Ahithophel*, it was only as they were types of Judas—at least the Holy Ghost intended it of him, and the persecutors of the Messiah;* of whom, this whole paragraph to the end of verse 19th is a prophecy. And it is unquestionably certain, that this Psalm does not refer to the reformation of the Jewish church, as Mr. H. supposes. David composed this Psalm, either when he was persecuted by Saul, and calumniated by Doeg,† or, at the time of Absalom's rebellion, but whether, I know not. In one part of it he refers to the traitor, Abithophel, who, in a fit of despair, went out and hanged himself,‡ in which last cir-

* Acts i. 20. † 1. Sam. xxvi. 19. ‡ 2 Sam. xvii.

cumstance he exactly typified Judas, who, without all question, was prophetically intended in this psalm, for so an inspired Apostle expounds it;* including, however, the persecuting Jews, against whom the Psalmist denounces the most dreadful judgments. From hence, it is certain, that Mr. H. has perverted the passage in question, for the Psalmist evidently alludes to the enemies of the Messiah, who would be troubled and tormented by an evil spirit, as a just punishment for their crimes, in betraying and crucifying the Lord of life and glory.

“ Here 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,
 Delusion, strong as hell, shall bind him fast.”

Again we read, that Zechariah saw in a vision, “ Joshua, the high-priest, standing before the angel of the Lord, and *Satan* standing at his right hand to resist him.”† The *Devil* here stands charged by the prophet as resisting Joshua. The Unitarians contend, that “ under the person of *Satan*, were represented Tatnai and Shether-boznai, and other enemies of the Jews, who vehemently opposed the designs of Joshua, about restoring the temple.” Suppose it was Tatnai and Shether-boznai, and other enemies of the Jews, that is here represented as resisting Joshua, still it remains for them to

* Acts i. 20. † Zecl. iii. 1.

prove, that *Satan*, emphatically so called, or the Devil, did not put them on to resist him; for, whether it was *Satan*, the *apostate*, that resisted Joshua, or, that he made use of Tatnai and Shether-boznai as his instruments and agents. the charge still recoils upon himself, and the existence of a Devil is proved. There is no doubt but that Satan endeavoured to prevent the rebuilding of the temple by every possible means; not only by exciting Tatnai and Shether-boznai, and other enemies of the Jewish nation, but by himself endeavouring to divert their attention from such a purpose, or by presenting to their minds the most insurmountable difficulties, in order to discourage them; and likewise by every allurements which was in his power to suggest. And lastly observe, that Joshua, the great high-priest, in his prophetic vision, stands as the representative of the whole Jewish nation; and in like manner, *Satan*, the great apostate foe, stands as the representative of the whole army of opposers, whether spiritual or natural.

Again, says Mr. H. "In the gospels, Jesus Christ is said to have been tempted, or tried, by *Diabolos*, the *accuser* or *calumniator*; but this is evidently a scenical representation of what passed in his own mind, during his retirement from the world, previously to his entrance on his public ministry; we may clearly infer from the account which is given, that he had retreated to an uninhabited part of the

country, where, like John the Baptist, he *subsisted on the wild fruits of the earth.*" But we want proof of this. The Scripture asserts, that he fasted forty days. If Jesus Christ subsisted on the wild fruits of the earth, why is it said—"And in those days he did *eat nothing*; and when they were ended, he afterwards *hungered.*"* And that "Angels came and ministered unto him"† Mr. H.'s comment contradicts the text. He makes no mention of the *Spirit*, because it is against his creed; but, however, the Unitarians generally suppose, that he was led by his own thoughts: but Scripture positively declares, that Jesus, being full of the *Holy Ghost*, returned from Jordan and was led up of the SPIRIT!—"not his own thoughts." One of the Evangelists, in order to signify the strength of the impulse, expresses it thus—"Immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness." Mr. H. says, to meditate on his exalted plans; but the Scripture says, "to be tempted of the *Devil.*" The Evangelist names four times the *Devil* as the tempter, and Mr. H. knows that it means a *slanderer*, and he has not been able to find a place where the word is used, except where it is applied to some REAL BEING. Hence, it is declared, that he was tempted by *Diabolos*, the *accuser* or *calumniator*, which certainly implies a real being. He further adds,

* Luke iv. 2. † Matt. iv. 11; Mark i. 13.

that Jesus Christ was tempted “by the suggestions of an *ambition* which was *natural* to the human bosom.” Astonishing! but how does he prove this? Was there any thing in the conduct of Jesus, or is there any thing said in the Scripture, to warrant such an assertion? May it not be said with propriety that HE

“Pretends to take the Christian’s part,
But stabs his Sovereign to the heart.”

Mr. H. has attributed to this Divine Personage, inherent depravity, “an ambition that was *natural*.” If it was natural, it was inherent; and if our adorable Redeemer contained within himself the least *iota* of depravity, the whole system of Christianity tumbles into ruins, and the bright prospect of futurity is covered with a dire eclipse. An expression this, which is enough to cut the finest fibres that ever concreted the hearts of true and genuine Christians. But Mr. H. goes on to say, that while Jesus was “under the influence of these, (that is, the suggestions of ambition,) and conscious of the supernatural gifts with which he was endowed, he was *tempted* to make an ostentatious display of his miraculous powers, and to employ them for the purposes of self-interest and aggrandisement.” But by whom was he *tempted*? It removes not the difficulty, by saying, that it was the suggestions of worldly pride and ambition; for this is only an asser-

tion without the least shadow of proof for its support. Neither does it evade the force of the text, by saying, "that it was a visionary representation;" for the Evangelist declares, that he was tempted by the *slanderer*, or *calumniator*, meaning some *real being*. Again, says he, "Although he might have been rewarded with the glory of the kingdoms of the earth, by paying his homage to the principles of *worldly pride* and *ambition*, yet he could not have been the CAPTAIN OF OUR SALVATION." Why does he call Jesus Christ "the Captain of our Salvation." In order that he may give him a more desperate thrust; like an army that retreats, in order to give the enemy a more dismal attack. The Unitarians deny that the death of Christ was a propitiatory sacrifice for sin, and they look upon the doctrine of redemption, through his blood, as an entire mistake. Mr. Belsham maintains, that "we are totally ignorant of the place where he resides, and the occupations in which he is engaged; and, consequently, that there can be no gratitude for favours now received, or of confidence in his future interposition on our behalf."* But the Scripture speaks in a very different

* Is it not astonishing, that Mr. Belsham should profess to be a Christian minister? How different are the views which he entertains concerning Jesus, the great atoning sacrifice, than those entertained by the first heralds of salvation. Without a blush, he tells us, that "*we are totally ignorant of the place where he resides.*" But, an inspired Apostle tells us, that "Christ is not entered

strain; and thanks be to God, we are not left to follow these *blind guides*, on whose hearts the light of Divine Truth has never shone. To the law and

into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; BUT INTO HEAVEN ITSELF, NOW TO APPEAR IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD FOR US." Mr. Belsham further adds, that we are likewise totally ignorant of "*the occupations in which he is engaged.*" But, the same Apostle, *viz.* Paul, filled with the power of God, and his heart glowing with love to his Divine master, asks, "Who is he that condemneth?—It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the RIGHT HAND OF GOD, WHO ALSO MAKETH INTERCESSION FOR US." The Scriptures abound with declarations concerning Christ, pointing him out as our Mediator, Advocate, and Intercessor; In a word, as our Prophet, Priest, and King. But this refined Deist, first declares his ignorance of Jesus Christ, and then concludes "*that there can be no gratitude for favours now received, or of confidence in his future interposition on our behalf.*" Suffer me to ask, is this Christianity? I am persuaded that every candid and impartial reader will answer, NO. No, this is not our island goddess, bearing the mountain freshness on her cheek, and scattering the valley's bounty from her hand—known by the lights that herald her fair presence, the peaceful virtues that attend her path, and the long blaze of glory that lingers in her train;" it is a demon in disguise, hiding the bloody symbols of its purpose under the sacred and glorious name of Christianity.

The Apostle St. Paul declares, "If any man LOVE NOT THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, let him be ANATHEMA MARANATHA;" but Mr. Belsham says, that there can be no gratitude for favours now received from Christ." Therefore Mr. Belsham does not love him. The Apostle Peter says, "UNTO THEM WHICH BELIEVE HE IS

to the testimony. The Apostle Peter tells us, that God hath exalted Jesus "with his right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance

PRECIOUS ;" but Mr. Belsham receives no favours from him, therefore, he has no cause of gratitude ; hence, he is an unbeliever. Again, an inspired Apostle tells us, "IF ANY MAN HAVE NOT THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST HE IS NONE OF HIS." Now, as Mr. Belsham knows not "*where he resides,*" nor "*the occupations in which he is engaged,*" and, consequently, he has no gratitude, because he receives no favours from him, it necessarily follows, that Mr. Belsham has not the "SPIRIT OF CHRIST, and therefore HE IS NONE OF HIS." The Apostle Peter exhorts those to whom he wrote, to "BE SOBER, AND HOPE TO THE END, FOR THE GRACE THAT IS TO BE BROUGHT UNTO YOU AT THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST." The same Apostle says in another place to the suffering people of God, "But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that, when HIS GLORY SHALL BE REVEALED, YE MAY BE GLAD ALSO WITH EXCEEDING JOY." And Jesus Christ says himself, "Behold I come quickly, and MY REWARD IS WITH ME, TO GIVE TO EVERY MAN AS HIS WORK SHALL BE." But as Mr. Belsham has no confidence in his future interposition in his behalf, he certainly does not take his religion from the Bible. Therefore he is not a Christian Minister ; and, "When he (CHRIST) shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe," he will have neither lot nor part in the matter, but must be banished from the presence of God, and from the glory of his power. Well might Mrs. Barbauld call Unitarianism "CHRISTIANITY IN THE FRIGID ZONE," for in that region, the Son of righteousness has never risen, therefore it is blasted with an eternal frost.

to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.”* And the Apostle Paul says—“Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”† And again, “He is able also to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.”‡ And the Apostle St. John tells us, that “we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”|| Is it not then a thing most wonderful, that these men should pretend to take their religion from the Bible. The Unitarians never, with animation, display the love of Christ in our redemption. They call him our Saviour occasionally. They propose him as an example, but when do they make him the foundation of our hope, speak of him as the only name through which we must be saved—treat largely on his character and offices, and dwell with animation on his redeeming love? When does Mr. H. urge his audience to flee to him, and depend on him for life and salvation? Therefore, to call Jesus Christ “the Cap-

* Acts v. 31. † Heb. xii. 1, 2. ‡ Heb. vii. 25.

|| 1 John ii. 1, 2.

tain of our Salvation," and at the same time to deny his atonement, is the most unaccountable rhapsody, and a violation of every principle of propriety. Again, says Mr. H. "Although he thus had it in his power to have become rich, yet, for our sakes, he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich; and thus did he deny himself, and became of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant. In this way we may very rationally explain the history." How these two misapplied passages can serve as a key to explain this part of our Lord's history, I am at a loss to determine. These two passages are an evident proof that our Lord was more than human, or that he was truly Divine, though they have been miserably perverted by the false reasoning of these men. Without entering into any particular discussion relative to the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, I shall only, in passing, make a few remarks on those Scripture truths, in order to shew the absurdity of this wild chimerist, in thus perverting the sacred truths of the gospel. Now, I would ask, when was he rich *as a man*? When was he born in a stable, and laid in a manger? When he said—"The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head?" At what time was he rich, and how did he become poor? The answer which the Unitarians generally give to these and similar questions is—"He never became

poor." The original word does not denote his passing from an antecedent state of opulence, to a subsequent state of poverty, but his living in poverty, although he was at the same time rich. "While he was rich, yet for our sakes he lived in poverty." "If, for a moment, (says a learned author,) overlooking his criticisms, you require, how was this? How was it, that, although rich, he lived in poverty? The reply is—'He was rich in miraculous powers, which it was at his own option to employ for his own benefit.' Miraculous powers, which it was at his own option to employ for his own benefit!! What a strange supposition is this! What! a prophet of the Most High, with miraculous, that is, with Almighty power, at his own disposal, to use as he may incline, for promoting his own wealth, and honour, and aggrandizement! Divine power transferred to a creature! Subjected to the will and pleasure of a mere man, 'a fallible and peccable man.' Such transference of Divine power, I would, in the first place remark, is a natural impossibility. The might which effects the miracles resides in God alone. It never can belong to the creature; and residing as it must in God alone, it can never be exerted to gratify the will of a creature, who would pervert it to a selfish purpose, or to any purpose different from that which he is commissioned to accomplish, and for the accomplishment and vindication of which alone, the interpo-

sition of the power is pledged. The contrary supposition is pregnant with consequences the most serious and fatal. It destroys the certainty of the evidence of miracles, and thus subverts one of the main pillars on which the truth of Christianity rests. Meantime, consider how full it is of beauty and of force, when referred to him, who, although rich as the Great Creator and Sovereign Proprietor of the universe, became poor in the assumption of our nature, making no use in that nature of those riches, which were all his own, but ‘humbling himself, and becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.’ This is grace indeed! Grace that shall be the theme, the worthy theme of everlasting song!”

“ Kind bowels yearning in the eternal Son,
 “ He left his Father’s court, his heav’nly throne ;
 “ Aside he threw his most divine array,
 “ And wrapt his Godhead in a veil of clay.”

“ But if we consider” (says Mr. H.) “ this trial as arising from the *natural suggestions of worldly ambition*, all the difficulties immediately vanish.” And he further adds, that this view is “ fully illustrated by every subsequent action of his life.”—Is it not astonishing, that Mr. H. should profess to be a follower of Jesus Christ? When did he discover the least proof of worldly “pride and ambition”—was it when he washed his disciples’ feet,

or when he agonized in the garden, or when he hung upon the cross? In what part of his life did worldly pride and ambition ever appear? Is not this a plain proof, that Mr. H. denies the "Lord that bought him? He supposes that "all the *difficulties immediately vanish,*" by supposing, that after Jesus Christ had received miraculous power, he was tempted by an innate principle of worldly ambition. But this opinion, instead of removing the difficulties, only increases them, and makes the history of our Lord's temptation ten thousand times more mysterious. Besides, this opinion is at variance with the whole tenor of Scripture, and every action of his life; it degrades his character, and destroys the foundation of all our hope. Neither does this hypothesis in the least explain the tragedy; for the Scripture says, he was tempted by the *Devil*, or the calumniator; not worldly ambition. Did worldly ambition lead Christ into the wilderness?—did worldly pride carry him upon the battlements of the temple?—did worldly ambition take him "up into an exceeding high mountain?—was it worldly pride that said, if thou wilt fall down and worship me, I will give thee all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them?—was it for maintaining a struggle with worldly pride and ambition, that caused the heavenly messengers to wing their flight to minister unto him?—But I refrain from drawing the absurd, the unphilosophic conclusion, and will pass on to

notice the objections which Mr. H. has brought against the literal interpretation. They are as follow :—“ If we follow the common notion, we shall find it full of absurdities and contradictions, carried about from place to place through the air, by the power of an evil Being, whose supposed empire in the world he came to destroy ; enticed by offers and promises, which he must have well known this Being could not fulfil ; placed in circumstances which were impossible ; and urged to prostrate himself before, and to pay divine honours to one, whom he knew to be the most malignant enemy, both of himself, and of the benevolent Being, whose work he came to perform ; how could such circumstances (even supposing them possible) have afforded a momentary trial to his virtue ?”

In the first place, I remark, that there is no necessity to suppose that Satan flew with our Saviour through the air. Although it is said that the Devil set him upon the pinnacle of the temple, he did not do it by flying through the air with him, as Mr. H. intimates ; but by going up with him to the roof of one of the cloisters, where the people were at liberty to walk, and by assisting him in getting up upon the battlements thereof.

2ndly. The common interpretation is not so full of absurdities, as Mr. H. supposes. The objections which he has advanced, fall with equal weight upon his own hypothesis. The strength of Mr. H.'s ob-

jection in the supposition, that Jesus Christ knew, or was well acquainted, with the character of the tempter. But did he not know likewise, that dreadful nature of worldly pride and ambition; how it eclipsed in a moment all the splendour, virtue, and dignity, of angels, and overcast in a moment, all their beautiful and eternal prospects; or did he not know that pride and ambition were the principal causes of all the misery in the world? And by reason of it, kingdoms have been desolated, and conquerors, and warriors, whilst under its dazzling fervour, have delighted in war and in blood. And is not pride and ambition hostile to God's moral government, and subversive of the whole kingdom of divine grace? Is not pride placed among that black catalogue of evils, which Christ came to destroy? Hence, he has denounced against that principle the most dreadful woes; therefore, (to retort Mr. H.'s question upon himself, I would ask,) how could pride and ambition "afford a momentary trial to his virtue?"—Mr. H. has attributed to the Saviour of mankind, a *Devil*, without a substance; and an *evil principle* walking about, without a *real Being* in which to inhere. An absurdity too glaring to be admitted by any reasonable man.*

* Query, would Mr. H. and his Unitarian Brethren, find that principle of *pride* and *ambition*, SO OBSERVABLE in the human bosom, if they were discussing the question of the *depravity of human nature*?—Here they find it observable in JESUS CHRIST.

Again, as Adam had been overcome by Satan, it is reasonable to suppose, that Jesus Christ, the second Adam, should have a personal conflict, in order that he might demonstrate his power over the apostate foe. It is plain from the history itself, that the contest was a pre-concerted design, a measure approved by heaven, and subservient to the grand design in which our Saviour was engaged in rescuing mankind from the power of *Satan*. Probably the Devil transformed himself into an angel of light, hoping thereby the better to deceive him.

The Divinity of our Lord was also *quiescent*, and that he overcame him by virtue of the Spirit, which was given him. Thus he suffered being tempted, that he might afford suitable help to us when we were tempted. It is agreed by most orthodox divines, (says Dr. Whitby,) that the Divinity in Christ was so *quiescent* for the space of thirty years, as to afford no specimen of its residence in him; why might it not be *quiescent* also in those things which had a particular reference to his prophetic office, and also in those parts of his life, which are set forth as an example, in order that we should follow his steps. Therefore, Jesus Christ, as man, endured and overcame the allurements of *Satan* by the sole energy of the Divine Spirit.

The Rev. Rowland Hill, in his *Village Dialogues*, has treated the impious folly of represent-

ing scriptural realities as mere *figures*, with that pointed irony which cannot fail to produce the effects he intended. He introduces one of his dialogists, Mr. Wisehead, as saying, "We cannot believe that there is any such a thing as the Holy Ghost; nor can we believe there is any such thing as the Holy Spirit. Consequently, we have nothing to do with the abstruse notion of regeneration, or, as it is called, the work of the Spirit. We believe that such sort of expressions are to be taken as *oriental figures*, or as tropical language, and that it only means a good disposition. We therefore deny the doctrine of original sin, as there is quite as much virtue as vice in the world; and we have no doubt at all, as to the Devil, that he is entirely a fabulous character; and as to what is said concerning those who were possessed of the Devils, it were irrational to suppose, that it could mean any thing further, than that '*they were mad, or had hysterical fits;*' and as the existence of angels, though there are *frequent allusions* to it in the New Testament—'Yet it is a doctrine that *cannot be proved, or made probable, FROM THE LIGHT OF NATURE;* and what have we to do with the New Testament, while it contradicts the light of nature? Notwithstanding therefore the *allusion*, we choose to say, 'this is no where taught as a doctrine of revelation.' A judicious Christian, therefore, will discard it from his creed, and that not only as a

groundless, but a useless and pernicious tenet, which tends to diminish our regard to the Omniscient, Omnipotent, and Omnipresent God, and to excite superstitious respect to, and unreasonable expectations from, imaginary and fictitious beings.* When therefore we hear how Jesus was tempted in the wilderness, it was (for we always talk very rationally in our way.) only an *allusion* to a *fictitious* being; and the proper and most rational meaning is, that he was fighting with some good and bad thoughts, which alternately possessed him; but such were the *eastern metaphors and oriental figures*, then in use."

To these considerate replies, then, Sir, might it not have sounded still more *rational*, had you made it out that he was fighting with two *eastern metaphors or oriental figures*; that when the angel spake to Zacharias about the birth of John, the forerunner of our Lord, he should not have said—'I am Gabriel,' but, 'I am an oriental figure, and that it was nothing but an oriental figure that spake to Mary on the same subject?' And that eastern metaphors, or oriental figures, appeared unto the shepherds, and sung—'Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, and good will towards men.' And then, again, that our Lord had another meeting of these eastern metaphors, and oriental figures in the Mount of Transfiguration; that an eastern meta-

* Belsham's Caution, p. 21.

phor opened the prison in which Peter was confined ; and that an oriental figure knocked off his fetters ? That Paul was converted at the sight of these Eastern metaphors ? That Stephen saw somewhat of the same sort before he was stoned ? And that an eastern metaphor stood by Paul when nearly shipwrecked ? And if these be not enough, I could give you further lucubrations on your RATIONAL way of explaining these eastern metaphors."

Mr. Hill adds, "the Socinians suppose they have a right to take these preposterous liberties on this subject, because these spiritual existences are described as being powers and virtues." Therefore, they are not real existences, but figurative allusions. We will produce a few passages where the real existence of such spirits is positively mentioned, and then we shall see how far common sense will befriend them in their *rational religion*.

Beelzebub, the prince of the Devils—the prince of the *eastern metaphors*.—Unto which of the angels, (*oriental figures*) said he, at any time 'this day have I begotten thee.' Let all the angels of God (*eastern metaphors*) worship him.—Our Lord cast out a whole legion of *eastern metaphors* from the man among the tombs, and the same set of *eastern metaphors* drove the swine into the sea. Whether they be thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers—all *tropical language*, only *eastern metaphors*. Christ spoiled principalities and pow-

ers: he spoiled *eastern metaphors* and *oriental figures*. The ministering spirits sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation, these are also to be understood as *nonentities*, or *oriental figures*. The angels (*oriental figures*) who kept not their first estate. There was fire prepared for the Devil and his angels (for an *eastern metaphor* and his *oriental figures*) But enough of this, I had not troubled the reader with so much, on a supposition so absurd, had it not been to give a fair specimen of the wisdom of those who can bestow such high compliments on themselves, and on the *rationality* of their religion."

In the parable of the tares and the wheat, an evil supernatural being is plainly declared to exist. In answer to those questions relative to the tares growing up with the wheat, He, (that is, Christ) said unto them, an enemy hath done this. But when he explained this parable to his disciples, he said, that this enemy was the Devil, or the *accuser*, a supernatural evil being, who is either the direct or the indirect cause of all wickedness. That this is the proper import of the word *Devil* in this place, may be inferred from the parable itself. For after Jesus had addressed the multitude in parables, his disciples came unto him, saying, "declare unto us the parables of the tares of the field." Then he began and explained unto them the proper import of this parable. Now, can any reason-

able person for a moment suppose, that Christ would deceive his beloved disciples by using a word which implies *a real being*. Why did he not say that this enemy was a "*corrupt principle*," rather than a *Devil*. And this will appear still more clear, when it is considered that he had laid aside his parabolical language, and was teaching his disciples in private the great truths contained in this parable. Therefore it is reasonable to suppose that he would use language the most proper and easy to be understood, and particularly when they were so much perplexed about the tares, and the enemy that sowed them; therefore, it casts a reflection on our Lord to suppose that he would tell them, "that the tares were the children of the EVIL ONE, and the enemy that sowed them was the DEVIL, if there was NO EVIL ONE OR DEVIL in existence.

When he explained to his disciples the parable of the sower, he said, "Now, the parable is this: the seed is the word of God; those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the *Devil* and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved."* Mark says, "that *Satan* cometh immediately." And Matthew, "then cometh the wicked one." The Devil is said to come and take away the word from this sort of hearers, not because he has power to rob men of their religious impressions by any immediate acts,

* Luke viii. 11, 12.

but because they expose themselves through carelessness to the whole force of the temptations which he lays in their way.

Note lastly, that Mr. H.'s mode of explanation is only an evasion, overlooking the first class of hearers, which are said to be like seed sown by the way side, and substituting in their room those which are compared to seed falling among thorns, and likewise by paying no regard to the proper explanation of those parables as given by our Lord. He acknowledges that the enemy that sowed the tares, was the "*accuser, or the adversary.*" "But he evades the proper import of these terms by a positive falsehood: for says he, "Our Lord plainly declares that these expressions, as well as those of the good and bad seed, were figurative illustrations." Where does he say so? Not in the parables, nor in any other place. I have already observed, that our Lord in the explanation of those parables to his disciples, had laid aside his parabolical language. As a proof of this we would observe, that after Jesus had delivered the parable of the sower, his disciples came and said unto him, "Why speakest thou unto them in parables?" The import of the question is this—Why is it, when thou speakest unto us, thou doest it without a parable, thou talkest to us in plain language; when thou preachest unto us the gospel of the kingdom, it is without the aid of parabolic language; why is it, then, that

thou speakest unto us in plain terms, but to the ignorant multitude in parables?" He answered and said unto them, "Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given."* As much as if he had said, my speaking to the multitude in parables need be no obstacle to you, for should I say any thing which you do not fully comprehend, you have only to ask me and I will give you proper information. "For it is given unto you to know the mystery† of the kingdom." As love and sincerity give the first impetus to all your inquiries after truth, you are thereby prepared to hear and receive my doctrines when delivered in their plainest and simplest manner possible, but to the rest of the multitude *it is not given*; that is, such is their pride, avarice, hypocrisy, and unbelief, that if I were to deliver my doctrines to them as I do to you, it would have the most injurious tendency; instead of proving to them the savour of life unto life, it would only increase their prejudice, exasperate their minds, and thereby prove to them the savour of death unto death—therefore I speak unto them in parables. Hence, it is certain that our Lord neither said nor did explain these parables in a figu-

* Matt. xiii. 10, 11.

† A mystery, in the scriptural use of the term, signifies a subject in religion, in which we can know nothing, *except by revelation*, and nothing more than is revealed.

rative sense, and that the *Devil* and the *wicked one* are terms which properly signify an evil supernatural being.

Mr. H. further adds, "that the enemy which opposed itself to the upright, was the God of this world; which, in another place, he (*Christ*) calls the mammon of unrighteousness, or that spirit of pride, avarice, and ambition, by which bad men are governed." Here, observe, he makes the phrase "*mammon of unrighteousness,*" and the "*spirit of pride, avarice and ambition,*" to be synonymous, and mean one and the same thing. What an absurdity! The sentence occurs in St. Luke's gospel, xvi. chap. 9 ver. "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail they may receive you into everlasting habitations." That is, endeavour to make yourselves sure friends of those riches which may not improperly be called the unrighteous or deceitful *mammon* (as so little confidence can be reposed in them,) *that when you fail, and die out of this world, they may receive you into everlasting habitations, and you may for ever enjoy the reward of your pious charity and love in an everlasting friendship with all those truly worthy persons who have been relieved by it.** The contrary supposition is pregnant with absurdity and contradiction. For instance, can any reasonable

* See Doddridge, Macknight, and Scatt, on the place.

man, for a moment, suppose that Jesus Christ would say to his beloved disciples, "Make to yourselves friends with the *spirit of pride, avarice, and ambition*, that when you fail (die) they (the *spirit of pride, avarice, and ambition*,) may receive you into everlasting habitations?" What! corrupt and evil principles in the eternal regions above! What! will corrupt principles hail the heirs of salvation welcome in the atmosphere of unsullied bliss and purity!! A man that will thus pervert the gospel of Christ ought to be suspected of every thing he saith.

In the 25th chap of St. Matthew's gospel and 44th verse, we read of the condemnation and punishment of the *Devil*. When our Lord alludes to the final destiny of wicked men, he says, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, *prepared for the Devil and his angels*." Thus has he pointed out the antecedent sin of the *Devil* and his angels, and the punishment prepared for *them*, in contradistinction to those *men* who are doomed to share one common destiny. Hence it is evident, that there is a *supernatural evil being*, called the *Devil* and *Satan*, who is distinguished from *men* on the one hand, and from *mere abstract principles* on the other. Mr. H. supposes that the expression, the *Devil* and his angels, "refers to the persecuting *Jews* and *Pagans*," which is a chimera so absurd, that it scarcely deserves a notice. The paragraph

out of which this verse is taken, evidently refers to the judgment of the great day. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say to those on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. But to those on the left, he shall say, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, *prepared for the Devil and his angels.*"* In this paragraph our Lord has exhibited to our view the solemn and awful process of the great day. The righteous are hailed welcome to the realms of eternal bliss, and to a kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world; while the wicked are consigned to irreversible misery, *prepared for whom?* not for MAN, but for the *Devil and his angels.* Therefore, if man became a sharer in this punishment, it is by being *self-fitted* for destruction, or by his wilful rebellion against the Most High, and rejection of the gospel of Christ. But adopt Mr. H.'s view of this passage, and the language of Jesus Christ on this occasion becomes unintelligible jargon: for according to the

* See Matt. xxv,

explanation which he has given of the verse in question, it would read thus: Depart from me, ye cursed, into LONG ENDURING PUNISHMENT, prepared for the JEW and his PAGANS. Mr. H. without the least iota of proof, either from reason or scripture, supposes that the punishments, which in this chapter are said to be inflicted on the wicked, are only "*natural calamities*," and that the day of judgment here alluded to, only refers to "the separation of true Christians from the corrupters of truth and righteousness, who would thus suffer the consequence of their own violence." Such is the verbosity of this all knowing philosopher! How he reconciles this hypothesis with the last verse of this chapter I know not,—"*And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.*" Now, if the opinion of Mr. H. be correct, the meaning of this verse is this, to use *his own words*, that "the persecuting Jews and Pagans, together with their emissaries, who would, in consequence of their own schemes of pride and ambition, be, for a long series of years, involved in the most terrible *natural calamities*." And he further adds, that this "appears evidently to be the day of judgment which is here and in many other places spoken of." Consequently, the last clause of this verse, instead of alluding to the final glorification of the righteous, only refers to temporal blessings, which would be conferred on them for a long

series of years for their virtuous actions; therefore it is evident that he robs the Scripture of all its intrinsic excellence and glory. I appeal to every impartial inquirer after truth, whether ever there was a greater absurdity ever propagated in the whole system of Popery. It is unquestionably certain, that Mr. H. and his Unitarian brethren, when endeavouring to support their system from the Bible, instead of considering the current language of Scripture, comparing it with itself, and thus making it its own interpreter, do generally strive to confound and perplex the ignorant and unwary, by selecting and playing upon a few isolated passages.

In the 8th chapter of St John's gospel and 44th verse, Jesus Christ said to his enemies, "Ye are of your father the Devil, and the lusts of your father you will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." As to the proper meaning of this verse, there can be but one opinion entertained by all those who receive the truth in the love of it. The language of this passages is altogether unintelligible, on the supposition that there is not in existence an evil supernatural being. But Mr. H. has a key that will almost suit every lock. Should it be asked, what is this key? I answer, it is the word EVIDENT, which he almost brings forward on

every occasion, as a sufficient proof to establish every proposition. The fact is, it is almost the only sure source that he has left, for reason and Scripture have proclaimed an eternal war against him. He tells us, that "the whole conversation on this occasion is EVIDENTLY a personification of that wicked and persecuting spirit, which had for ages been so prevalent in the world." He further adds, "On another occasion, he (Christ) beautifully exemplified this wicked and murderous spirit in his parable of the VINEYARD. But let his language to the Jews, on this occasion, be understood literally, and it would convey an absurd falsehood; for he would positively have asserted that the Jews were the descendants of a *supernatural evil spirit*, although he knew that they, as well as himself, were the lineal posterity of the righteous Abraham." I candidly and honestly confess, that I was struck with astonishment, and could scarcely believe my own eyes, when I first read this part of Mr. H.'s lecture. I got my Bible, and found every one of the parables of the vineyard—I read them over and over again, and I could not find that the parables of the vineyard had the most distant bearing on the subject in question. How Mr. H. could, in the face of a large congregation, conjure up such a barefaced misrepresentation, I am at a loss to determine, unless he was worse than mad, and thought every body else fools. I am but

"A plain, blunt man, speak directly on."

How Mr. H. explains any one of the parables of the vineyard consistent with this part of his lecture, would surpass the comprehension of the wisest sage that ever lived on the face of animated nature. Certain I am, that if we were to understand all the parables of the vineyard literally, it would be impossible to fix such a meaning upon them as that given by Mr. H., without we had a purpose to serve by it, and were determined to have our point, like him, at the sacrifice of truth and reason.

“ Thus men go wrong, with an ingenious skill,
 Bend the straight rule to their own crooked will ;
 And, with a clear and shining lamp supplied,
 First put it out, then take it for a guide :
 Halting on crutches of unequal size,
 One leg by truth supported, one by lies,
 They sidle to the goal with awkward pace,
 Secure of nothing—but to loose the race !”

When the disciples of Christ returned to inform him of their success, they told him in joyful surprise, that “ even the Devils are subject unto us through thy name.” He said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.”* I saw him on his first transgressiou, when he was hurled from the transparent regions of unsullied bliss and happiness, to live in an atmosphere of misery and woe, and well remember how immediate and dreadful was his ruin.

* Luke x. 17, 18.

“ ————— Him, the Almighty power
 Hurl'd headlong, flaming, from th' ethereal sky.
 With hideous ruin and combustion, down
 To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
 In adamantinè chains and penal fire,
 Who durst defy the Omnipotent to arms.”

And I also foresee in spirit, that renewed, swift, and irresistible victory, which shall be accomplished by the preaching of the gospel, when Satan, the prince of the demons, shall be dethroned from his usurped dominion on earth, with the idolatrous worship which he has devised to establish ; so that your casting out devils is only an emblem of a far more and decisive victory, when all rebel powers shall be subjugated, and the gospel shall wing its way to the ends of the earth. “ Satan being spoiled of his dominions, may be said to fall from heaven.” So of the fall of the king of Babylon, the prophet says, “ How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer !” Of the fall of the colleague of Antonius, Cicero says, “ Thou hast pulled him down from heaven.” “ And when Pompey was overthrown, he is said to have fallen from the stars.”

The Apostle St. Paul said to those to whom he wrote, “ that God would bruise Satan under their feet shortly.”* Thus assuring them that God, the author of all their blessings, whether spiritual or temporal, would speedily bruise the great enemy of

* Romans xvi. 20.

mankind and all his agents, under their feet, and thereby give them, and every true believer, an entire and final victory.

The Devil manages his mode of attack with deep subtilty and invidious cunning. Hence, says the Apostle, "*Lest Satan should get an advantage of us,*" that is, that we may not be overreached by Satan. The Apostle adds, "*for we are not ignorant of his devices.*"* The term *devices*, signify his machinations, far fetches, and contrivances. These devices are called by the same Apostle, "*the wiles of the Devil,*"† which signifies his crafty, artful methods to deceive. These fraudulent methods are also called the "*snare of the Devil.*" This snare the Devil lays with all the cunning of which he is master, in order to catch and entangle the souls of men. "It is, says Bishop Taylor, "by the mercy of God we have the quietness of a moment, for if the Devil's chains were taken off, he would make our beds a terror, our tables to be a snare, our sleep fantastic, lustful, and illusive, and every sense should have an object of delight and danger, an hyena to kiss, and to perish in its embraces."

The Apostle Paul, in his second epistle to the Corinthians, says, "*Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.*"‡ It is certain, from the

* 2 Cor. ii. 11. † Eph. vi. 11. ‡ 2 Cor. xi. 14.

connexion in which this verse stands, that the Apostle alludes to the chief or head of the apostate demons. The reason why he informs them of this species of imposture, which is carried on by this arch-deceiver, was owing to certain false teachers, who had crept into the church, and by reason of their splendid eloquence and high pretensions to sanctity and sublimity of devotion, deceived their deluded followers. The Apostle designates these false teachers, "*deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ.* And then he adds, *And no marvel,* for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works." The drift of the Apostle's reasoning is this: you need not wonder, or be astonished, at such wicked men as these being so specious in their appearance and pretensions, for even Satan, their master, often disguises himself, and tempts the true followers of Christ in the form of a heavenly messenger, instead of appearing as the prince of darkness. Therefore, if Satan, the head and ringleader of all impostures and false teachers, thus transforms himself, it is reasonable, and only what we may naturally expect, that his ministers should transform themselves into the ministers of righteousness. Mr. H. supposes, without any show of reason, that the Apostle only "refers

to some leading character among those Judaizing teachers, who violently opposed his apostolic labours, and endeavoured again to bring the Christian Churches under bondage to the ceremonial law." The fact is, that it does not appear that these false Apostles were Judaizing teachers, or that they ever attempted to re-establish the ceremonial law. "For," says Mr. Locke, "if subjection to the Jewish rites had been that which the Apostle was so zealous against, he would have spoken more plainly and warmly, as we see in the epistle to the Galatians, and not have touched it only, by the bye, slightly, in a doubtful expression. Besides, it is plain, that no such thing was yet attempted openly, only St. Paul was afraid of it." "Conviction and steadiness of principle," says Dr. Beattie, "is that which gives dignity, uniformity, and spirit, to the human conduct, and without which our happiness can neither be lasting nor sincere. It constitutes, as it were, the vital stamina of a great and manly character; whereas scepticism betrays a sickly understanding, and a levity of mind, from which nothing can be expected but inconsistency and folly."

"The bookful blockhead, ignorantly read
With loads of learned lumber in his head."

The existence of a supernatural evil being has been believed in all ages, by the wisest and best of men that ever graced the republic of letters with

their learning, adorned the Christian Church with their piety, or benefited the world with their labours.

The same Apostle informs the Thessalonians, that he would gladly have come to Thessalonica "once and again;" but Satan, by raising a storm of persecution, hindered him.* The Apostle certainly alluded to temporal enemies; but as Dr. Whithy judiciously observes, "they who obstruct the progress of the gospel, and persecute the promoters of it, are the ministers of Satan, and therefore bear his name." The Apostle, in his second epistle to this people, warns them of an approaching evil, which would befall the Church by reason of one whom he demoninates the "*man of sin,*" the "*son of perdition,* whose coming is after the working of SATAN, with all power and signs, and lying wonders."† We shall not stay to enquire whom the Apostle meant by the "*son of perdition,*" or whether he meant (which is probable) a succession of individuals, who would be governed by the same dispositions, and induced by the same motives. One thing is certain, that this diabolical person would gain his object by force, and deep subtilty, lying miracles, and every kind of imposture, which human ingenuity and satanical cunning were able to invent. Mr. H. tells us, that "the wicked spoken of, whose cunning is described as after the

* 1 Thes. ii. 18. † 2 Thes. ii. 3, 9.

working of *Satan*, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, is an evident reference to some of the ecclesiastical oppressors, who would, at a future time, domineer over the Church." But he has overlooked the doctrine in question; he has left us to learn who this SATAN is, whose working this ecclesiastical oppressor is described as coming after. Therefore I shall take it for granted, that the Apostle alludes to that infernal spirit, which is called elsewhere, the Devil and Satan, who is the great deceiver of mankind, and the author of all delusions. This opinion is supported by the same Apostle, who said to his son Timothy, "That in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils."* Thus, the Apostle informs Timothy, that in the latter days some would depart from the true faith of the gospel, and that this apostacy would be effected by false teachers, who would hearken to seducing spirits, and consequently preach those doctrines which are divided and suggested by devils or demons.

He also informs him, that he had delivered Hymenius and Alexander unto *Satan*: † that is, he had openly excommunicated and cast them out of the Church of Christ into the visible kingdom of Satan, that they might learn not to blaspheme.

The Apostle, in describing the characteristic

* 1 Tim. iv. 1. † 1 Tim. i. 20.

marks of a scriptural Bishop, says, he must “*Not be a novice, lest, being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the Devil.*”* Here I think it is clearly intimated, that pride was the first spring of the defection, fall, and ruin, of the Devil. Not a *novice*, that is, he must not be a new convert to Christianity, or a new plant in the garden of the Church; and he gives this reason for it—lest, being puffed up with pride on account of his being promoted to such an high station, he fall into the condemnation of the Devil. This reason certainly implies, that pride was the Devil’s first and chief sin, or his affecting some spiritual highness beyond the bounds of God’s will. Why does the Apostle make use of the condemnation of the Devil, to deter from pride, if that were not the cause of his apostacy, and the sin for which he was condemned of God?

He likewise observes, that “*some are already turned aside after Satan.*”† “The converting men to the Christian faith,” says Dr. Whitby. “being the turning them from Satan unto God.” The casting off the faith may well be styled, “*the turning aside after Satan.*”

The Apostle has pointed out in his second epistle to his beloved Timothy, how a Christian minister ought to conduct himself to those who had fallen

* 1 Tim. iii. 6. † 2 Tim. ii. 26.

into the snare of the Devil, or "*who are taken captive by him at his will.*" The word rendered *taken captive,*" says a learned author, "was originally taken from *fishing, fowling, or hunting,* and signified *to catch the prey alive,* by way of opposition to *killing* it. Hence, it was transferred to other things, and here should be rendered *caught alive.*" "According to this sense of the word," says Dr. Macknight, "it is used by the Apostle with great propriety. For the purpose of the Devil's ensnaring men, being to kill them. The servant of God who takes the wicked alive out of his snare, saves their lives, by giving them an opportunity of escaping and returning to God."

"In Hebrews ii. 14," says Mr. H. "the *accuser* is said to have the power of *death,* which clearly refers to the strict requisitions and fatal denunciations of the Jewish law, which, in the same passage, the Apostle declares Jesus Christ came to abolish, in order to free men from that fear of death, by which they were all their life-time made subject unto bondage." Mr. H. thinks this is *clear,* but for what reason? because he supposes that the "staunchest advocates for the existence of an evil being will hardly venture to maintain, that LIFE AND DEATH were ever at his disposal." Life and death are at the complete disposal of God, who rules the armies of heaven, and amongst the inhabitants of the earth, and therefore life and death were never at the disposal

of the Jewish law. "For," says the Apostle, "the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life."* And again, "if there had been a law-giver which could have given life, verily righteousness would have been by the law"† Now, if Mr. H thinks it a sufficient reason that the Apostle did not mean an evil being, because the staunchest advocates for his existence would hardly venture to affirm that *life and death* were at his disposal; it is equally as good a reason, that he did not mean, by the term *Devil*, the Jewish law; for I think that the staunchest advocates against the existence of an evil being, would hardly venture to maintain that life and death were ever at the disposal of this law. Besides, I know not for what purpose he has conjured up the word *Life*; for certain it is, that it has no connexion with the subject; for if the Apostle meant the Jewish law, and that that law could have given life, why should Jesus Christ have come to abolish it? Therefore, that system, which depends upon such miserable subterfuges as this for its support, is a bad system, and stands upon a tottering foundation. Besides, the decalogue, or moral law, is not abolished, but is in full force now, and will be to the end of time; it is only the ceremonial law which Jesus Christ has put away, by the sacrifice of himself. Hence, says the Apostle, "*For by one offering he hath perfected*

* 2 Cor. iii. 6. † Gal. iii. 21.

for ever them that are sanctified."* And likewise observe, that salvation was as much by faith under the Old Testament dispensation as it is now; and by reason of this faith in the atonement of Christ, which was pointed out to them by promises, types, and shadows, many of the Old Testament saints were delivered from this fear of death. If the Apostle meant by the term *Devil*, or *Accuser*, the Jewish law, then none could be kept subject to this bondage but those who were under this law; consequently, the whole Gentile nations were exempt from this fear of death. But certainly the Apostle had the pious Gentiles in view, who were enslaved by the fears of death, because they lived without any written revelation from God; therefore they had not that bright assurance of the pardon of sin, nor that bright hope of a blessed immortality. The reasoning of the Apostle is as follows:—"Forasmuch then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself *likewise took part of the same;*" that is, as the children were partakers of human nature, so Christ voluntarily condescended to partake of the same, in order that he might stand in the nearest relation to them, and be rendered capable of suffering and dying, *that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil;*" that by his death in the flesh, he

* Heb. x. 14.

might frustrate the malicious contrivance of him who first introduced death into the world, that is, the Devil. The Devil's intention in tempting our first parents was to destroy them, and thereby to put an end to the human species. This Satanical design the Son of God frustrated, and rendered ineffectual, by assuming our nature, and dying as a sacrifice for sin. The sentence, "*Him that had the power of death,*" means a power that is usurped by guile; and the Apostle evidently alludes to that era when Satan, by an exertion of this power deceived our first parents, and, consequently, brought death on all mankind. Hence, he is called a "*murderer from the beginning.*" But Christ, by his atonement and resurrection, would remove the baneful effect of this power, and "deliver them, who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage; when one common salvation was preached to both Jew and Gentile, and the copious influence of the Spirit was poured upon all the nations of the earth." "*For verily he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham;*"* or, as the margin renders it, "*he taketh not hold of angels, but of the seed of Abraham he taketh hold.*" Here the Apostle represents the apostate angels, and mankind, as it were, falling from an eminence; but our merciful high-priest is represented as catching

* Heb. ii. 14—16.

hold of his falling creature, man, in order to bring him back to his former inheritance, while he leaves the rebellious angels to fall lower and lower; as on them he taketh not hold. The reason of this difference probably is, because they rebelled presumptuously against God without a tempter, while the first parents of mankind sinned only by the invidious cunning of another.

“On the subject of temptation,” (says Mr. H.) we have the authority of the Apostle James for maintaining, that every man is tempted when he is ‘drawn away by his own lust and enticed.’ It is generally believed by the most learned men that ever graced the republic of letters, that the Apostle, by the sentence ‘*being drawn away by his own lust and enticed,*’* alludes to the drawing of fish out of a river with a baited hook. Therefore, the meaning of the Apostle is this, that the corrupt desires of our nature prompt us to seize the bait which Satan throws in our way; so we are drawn out of the line of duty, as the fish is drawn out of the water by the delusive morsel that covers the hook. Therefore, instead of this verse being a support for Mr. H. it makes completely against him. The Apostle St. Peter says,—“*Your adversary, the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour.*”† Here, observe, it is not whom he WILL,

* James i. 14.

† 1 Pet. v. 8.

but whom he MAY devour : were his power as great, as his malice, he would, no doubt, destroy every true Christian from off the face of the earth. Whatever power he may be possessed of, he is not invulnerable, nor irresistible. He may be strong, but not OMNIPOTENT. He may be cunning, but he is not OMNISCIENT. He walks about, therefore he is not OMNIPRESENT. He is under the divine controul, and in his warfare with human beings, the advantage is graciously allowed to man. Satan's dominion on the earth is hastening to a close. Therefore he is of great wrath, because his time is short on the earth. Infinite wisdom gives us instructions in the Scriptures of Sacred Truth, and if we abide by them, and follow the direction of the Holy Spirit, we shall never be deceived. Almighty power, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is given to every true believer in Christ, enables him to be more than conqueror in conflict with Satan on any ground, at any time it is his privilege to triumph

“ On even ground against our moral foe.”

This verse with the two following, Mr. H. took for his text ; and he tells us that the expressions in these verses, evidently relate “ *to the persecuting Jews and Pagans.*” Suppose that the expression, your adversary, the Devil, alludes to the persecuting Jews and Pagans, does it follow that there is no Devil, or that the Devil did not excite them thus

to oppose the people of God. The word DEVOUR, Dr. Macknight translates SWALLOW UP. "So the word literally signifies, being used concerning solids as well as liquids. It strongly expresses the insatiable rage of the enemy of mankind, to hinder their salvation, and the danger we are in from his devices. For he sometimes attacks the people of God in person, though not visible; and sometimes by his ministers, the other evil spirits, who are in league with him; and sometimes by wicked men, his subjects, whom he instigates to tempt them by the terror of persecution." The same Apostle says, in his second epistle—"For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them unto chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment."* Now, sin is a relative term, and supposes a rule or law of which it is a breach: for, says the Apostle, "Where no law is, there is no transgression."† And though that particular law which they transgressed be not revealed, it must be a positive one, or that of nature; if the law of nature, it is the same as the moral law, so far as it agrees with the angelical spiritual nature; and requires Divine worship, and other duties resulting from the relation of creatures to God their Creator. And supposing the law which they transgressed to be a positive one, they could not violate it without transgressing the law of nature. But a question

* 2 Pet. ii. 4.

† Rom. iv. 15.

naturally arises, how could pure and exalted beings violate any law? Supposing we were not able to give any definite answer to this question, would it follow that they never sinned? Certainly not, because our ignorance can never alter facts. Nothing is more unaccountable than the motives and causes of action of free agents; when any being is at liberty to act as it will, no other reason need be required for its actions but its own will. They who are at liberty to sin, may sin, whatever be the motives that induced them to it; and to enquire what is that motive, is to enquire what motive may determine a free agent, that is, an agent which may determine itself upon any ground or motive. Immutability is an infinite perfection, therefore it could not inhere in a finite creature, however exalted in the scale of being. But how perfect and excellent soever any creatures are, they may be supposed to admire their own perfections and excellencies, and, by degrees, to neglect to acknowledge God, till they end in downright rebellion against him. And it is most agreeable to Scripture, that pride, or affecting some spiritual greatness above their station, was the cause of the fall of the angels; and those perfections, which might secure them against every other temptation, might be the cause of this. But though they sinned, God spared them not, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them unto chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment. Neither will he

spare any other persevering sinner who violates his law and rebels against his government.*

The apostate angels in their state of degradation and misery, retain the same disposition as when they first rebelled against their Creator. They sinned without remorse: we never read of the least compunction in them, but meet with many proofs of their fixed malignity against God and all goodness. Hence, says the Apostle, "*the Devil sinneth from the beginning.*"† He does not say, he sinneth

* On what occasion soever pride first shewed itself, it seems to have been the leading sin of the angels, who, admiring and valuing themselves too much on account of the excellence of their nature, and the height of their station, came at length to entertain so little respect for their Creator and Sovereign, as to be guilty of downright rebellion and apostacy. But here observe, as creatures of this lower world, it becomes us to speak and write with reverence on this subject, for the moment the mind is carried to the contemplation of the fall of angels, that very moment it enters a region where all to us is mystery and unknown; for where God is silent, all the conjectures of men are vain. Therefore, we wish to carry this subject no further than we are supported by the word of God. And here, we may observe, that Christianity passes over in silence, what forms no part of its design, which was not to teach men science, and gratify the unhallowed curiosities of men, but Divinity, faith, and morality.

"Through worlds unnumbered, though the God be known,
'Tis ours to trace him only in our own."

† 1 John iii. 8.

AT the beginning, though that be true; but, *he sinneth from the beginning*, that is, sinning is his and all the host of evil spirits, continual practice, and has been ever since their rebellion. But Mr. H. tells us that the words used here, “are an evident personification of bad and good dispositions of the mind, and the wicked are called the children of the *accuser* or *adversary*; in exactly the SAME SENSE as on another occasion, he that committeth *sin* is the *servant of sin*; and the righteous are called the children of GOD in the SAME SENSE, although in a different degree with Christ, who was styled the SON of GOD, on account of his exalted goodness.” This is a sweeping declaration, which leads us at once into a self-evident absurdity, viz. to believe that *sin* has an *independent existence*, or it robs us of our God, and leads us to suppose that that BEING, whose existence is *necessary* and *independent*, only exists in a relative manner. We will examine for a moment, the modes of expression made use of in this question. The expression, “*he that committeth sin is the servant of sin*,”* is the language of Christ, and evidently means one *who habitually practices sin*. That *sin* has only a *relative* existence may be inferred from the expression itself; for, if its existence were positive and independent, it would be absurd to say, he that

* John viii. 34.

committeth or practises sin; and it would be absolutely impossible to attach to this expression of Christ any definite idea. That sin has in itself a positive and independent existence, I believe no one will venture to affirm; therefore it can have no more than a relative being, and can exist no longer than those beings continue to exist which are capable of moral actions. For, if all moral agents were once annihilated, it would be an absurdity too gross to be imposed upon the mind of man, to suppose that sin, in this case, could have any kind of existence. As, therefore, sin has not in itself any kind of positive existence, we must look to moral agents for all the being which it can possibly possess. And although sin is, in a moral point of view, nothing more than the sinful thoughts and actions of moral agents, physically capable of a better conduct, yet so far can it extend its baneful influence in its effects and consequences, as to derange the whole human system.

2ndly. “*He that committeth sin is of the Devil;*” * that is, he that lives habitually in the practices of sin belongs to the family of the Devil; and as a proof of this the Apostle adds, “*for the Devil sinneth from the beginning,*” that is, from the time of his apostacy in heaven. Now, how absurd it would be to say, he that *committeth or transgresseth,*

* 1 John iii. 8.

the Devil, is of the Devil; and it is equally as absurd to say, *that sin sinneth from the beginning*, for sin has only a relative being, and depends on moral agents for its existence, and therefore it could never act independently of these moral agents. Therefore, to suppose that it was sin that sinneth from the beginning, leads us to believe a self-evident contradiction, viz. that sin is dependent, and not dependent at the same time, or that sin acts independently, although it has at the same time no independent existence.

3rdly. The righteous are called the children or servants of God, because they habitually serve, honour, and obey him. Now, it would be absolute nonsense to say, he that *committeth* or *transgresseth* God, is the servant of God. Therefore I conclude, that God and Satan have a positive and independent existence, while sin has only a relative being; and the man that committeth sin is the servant of sin, or he is a slave to those actions which he commits. Surely, Mr. H. will not say, that God has no independent and personal existence. Why, then, has he classed him with sin, without he meant to say he had no real being; or, that sin, had a positive and independent existence. It is evident, that no absurdity is too great for this KNOWING ONE to adopt!

It is awful and affecting to consider, that the fallen angels are our inveterate enemies. The

Scriptures attribute to the Devil, all the various degrees of malice; such as indignation, wrath, envy, and hatred. Malice is the Devil's character and disposition:—it is this which excites him to all mischief, and of breathing after all kinds of wickedness. Hence, he is styled **THE WICKED ONE**, which denotes a special wickedness. God is called by the Prophets, **THE HOLY ONE**, because he is infinitely and altogether holy.—So the Devil, because he is the most malicious, envious, and wicked being that exists, is called the wicked one.

The Apostle Jude tells us, that the "*angels kept not their first estate.*" Though the angels were created holy, and without the least inherent depravity, yet they were mutable; and, indeed, mutability is essential to a creature, considered as such; it is God's prerogative alone to be unchangeable; none but he can be naturally free from change. The angels that fell were not fixed in a state of unalterable purity and happiness; and as responsible beings, they were left to the freedom of their own choice. Jesus Christ tells us, they "*abode not in the truth;*" and the Apostle says they kept not their first estate: the meaning of the Apostle is this—that a certain number of angelic beings, who were possessed of all those physical energies which are essential to moral agents, kept not their first estate;

* John viii. 44.

or, they retained not their original purity ; therefore, “*they left their own habitation,*” that is, they gave up their *office* or *station*, which was assigned them by their Sovereign Creator ; therefore, he cast them out of his celestial mansion, and “*reserved* them in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day.” Should it be said how can Satan and his host range up and down the earth, and at the same time be confined in CHAINS ? We answer, that CHAINS is a metaphorical expression, which denotes, that they have no more power to escape the present punishment which is inflicted upon them, than a man who is strongly bound with iron chains. Therefore, these chains do not denote their being confined to a certain place, but that wherever they go they carry their punishment with them.

The same Apostle informs us of a contest which took place between an archangel, and the head or chief of apostate demons : “ Yet, Michael, the archangel, when contending with the Devil, (he disputed about the body of Moses,) durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.” Now a good angel would not be the *adversary* of Michael. A good angel would not dispute with this archangel, and contend about the body of Moses. To a good angel, Michael would not say, “*the Lord rebuke thee ;*” therefore these words of the Apostle afford a direct and posi-

tive proof of the existence of a supernatural evil being. In the Apocalypse we are informed that "*there was war in heaven;*" that is, the gospel kingdom, which in many places in Scripture is called the KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon fought, and his angels, and prevailed not; neither were their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.* Michael signifies, *who is like God*, and therefore may fitly represent Christ; and the Devil, or Satan, is here styled the *great dragon*, which term is emblematical of his great strength and bloody cruelty against the church. The former employed as his instruments in this war, Christian Magistrates, faithful ministers, and true believers, as well as angels, which he sent forth as ministering spirits to those heirs of salvation; while the latter fought by persecuting emperors, idolatrous priests, and heathen philosophers; this conflict ended in the total defeat of Satan's army, when the opposers of the kingdom of the Messiah were spoiled of their dominion and power, which is intimated by the expression, "*he was cast out into the earth.*" This alludes to a time when the Christian Church emerged by a resolute struggle from a state of captivity and bondage, when

* Rev. xii. 7, 8, 9.

she conquered her enemies, dethroned them of their dominion and power: then was Satan cast down from his dignity as God and prince of this world. Here, observe, this victory is not ascribed to the sword of war, but to the merit and efficacy of the atoning sacrifice of Christ, by faith in his blood, and a bold and holy profession of his gospel. Hence, it is said, "they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of the testimony, and they loved not their lives unto death."

Mr. H. has made a great flourish about the absurdity of a literal interpretation of two passages, and then concludes, that there is no Devil, because it would be absurd to interpret those passages literally: we will examine them for a moment. Our Lord said unto Peter, "get thee behind me, *Satan*;" literally, get thee behind me, thou *adversary*. Now, the question is, who was this adversary? We answer, Peter. "Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a *Devil*;" literally, have I not chosen you twelve, that is, some time ago; but in the present tense, one of you is a *calumniator*. Who was this *calumniator*? We answer, Judas. We read that Jesus was tempted of the *Devil*; literally, the *accuser* or *calumniator*: but who was this *accuser* or *calumniator*? We answer, an evil supernatural being. Hence, it is certain, that we do not slide into any absurdity, by interpreting these passages literally. And if Mr. H. could find ten thousand

more passages, where the term *Devil*, or Satan, were applied to human beings, it would not follow that there was not an evil supernatural being, or *spiritual Devil* or hellish Satan.

Should it be asked, how can a *finite* being tempt persons in different places at one time? We answer, 1st.—That the *Devil* has many demons under his direction. 2nd.—That we do not precisely know what relation spirit has to place. 3rd.—That we are not sure that evil spirits may not produce effects, which often remain when those spirits are no longer immediately present. We know that a moral principle once imbibed, often produces effects for a long period after the departure of the person from whom it has been imbibed.

Mr. H. calls the opinion that there is in existence an evil being, "*an absurd and frightful notion.*" Now, it must be obvious to every attentive reader of these quotations which I have made from Mr. H.'s Lecture, that he believes in an EVIL PRINCIPLE, which is as bad, nay, worse than the Devil; for this evil principle found its way into the bosom of Jesus Christ, which none of the advocates for the existence of an evil being dare venture to affirm. It is the property of error to be *inconsistent*. When the degeneracy of human nature is to be denied, the Unitarians will acknowledge no *evil principle*; but when the Devil is to be destroyed, his GHOST haunts his murderers in the form of an EVIL PRINCIPLE.

which corrupted the pious heart of Eve, and fermented the pious mind of Christ. What Devil that ever was invented, could be worse than this EVIL PRINCIPLE?

“In a subject so abstruse in its nature as the present, in the investigation of which the mind is carried into unknown regions, we must expect that mystery will set a boundary to all human reason, a boundary that we can never pass; and unless we implicitly believe the Bible, we must for ever wander in darkness.”

“Abstracted from revelation, we can neither account for the existence or non-existence of the Devil, for the following obvious reason :—The existence of all spirits is beyond our comprehension, above our nature; and whenever we, on the principles of natural reason, can account for their existence, then it must necessarily cease to be supernatural; and in attempting to make that to be natural, which we admit to be supernatural, we attempt to explain that which we admit to be inexplicable. The rules of duty dictate, that we should divest our minds of prejudice to look into our Bibles; and when this is done, we shall soon discover that the doctrine of Devils is no bug-bear; that hell itself is an eternal and indestructible reality, a receptacle PREPARED FOR THE DEVIL AND HIS ANGELS.”

To assert that God would be unjust if he suffered his temporal creatures to be tempted by a super-

natural evil being, is the most unaccountable folly. For what does any man know of the justice of that Being, who fills immensity with his presence, before whom angels stand confounded? Can any man by searching find out God, or trace the unfathomed counsels of Deity? If any finite creature could comprehend this great and exalted Being, and trace his infinite modes of action, he must cease to be infinite; for finite can never fathom infinite, nor the less encircle the greater. How far the justice of God may permit man to be tempted before he approximates towards injustice, lies beyond the confines of human comprehension to determine. For what does any one know of the justice and government of God? Can any one trace infinite relations, or view completely the amazing chain of causes and effects? Does it lie within the reach of human understanding to comprehend all the possible forms which justice can assume, and the diversified instances in which it can display itself? Is it possible for any finite creature to see the close connexion that exists between time and the immense ocean of eternity? Is it possible for the highest order of created intelligence to penetrate all contingencies—all certainties—all probabilities—all realities—all causes and effects—traverse the unbounded and illimitable regions of space, and survey the close connexion that exists in the great chain of intelligent and unbounded being? If not, no one has a right

to conclude that God is unjust in suffering his rational creatures to be tempted by any evil being, or that it is inconsistent with his moral government.

Mr. H. tells us, that “the supposed existence of an evil being contradicts every rational notion of the Divine power, for this power must of necessity be imperfect, if there is a corrupter busily at work in the universe.” He might with as good a show of reason have said, that the power of God is imperfect, because he permitted superstitious bigots to quench their thirst in the blood of the martyrs. We have to contend with our own natural passions, the prevalence of surrounding example, the stigma and insults of malignant enemies; but does it follow that God is deficient in power, because he suffers all these enemies to unite together, in order to stop our progress in the ways of piety and virtue. The Apostle tells us, that some of the ancient worthies “had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings; yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented.”* But did any of these sufferers ever complain that the power of God was imperfect? No: they rather said, with good old Elisha—“Fear not, for they that be with us are more than they that be with

* Heb. xi. 36, 37.

them." God may suffer us to be tempted by our enemies for a while, but when our warfare is accomplished, he will avenge us of our adversaries, and bless us with an eternal peace.

Infinite power can do every thing that does not imply a contradiction. He could, with infinite ease, annihilate the revolving sphere in which we live, and destroy the entity of all created existences in a moment. Whatever depends upon infinite power for its accomplishment, except it imply a contradiction, can be effected.

Modern infidels, and particularly that implacable character, RICHARD CARLILE, have done much of late to propagate the opinion that matter is *eternal*, and that it can never be *destroyed*. In passing, I would observe, that if we admit matter to be eternal, we must admit many self-evident absurdities; and that it can be destroyed, is neither impossible, contradictory, nor absurd. If there be in existence an infinite power, it is possible for matter to be destroyed, unless we suppose matter to be more than infinite, which is an absurd contradiction.

"Nor is the belief in the existence of an evil spirit," says Mr. H. "less hostile to the sublime attribute of Divine wisdom." Is it possible to imagine, that he, whose knowledge is perfect and universal, could have *devised* a method for the trial of human virtue, which subverts the first principle of morality?" Here observe, that this part of Mr.

H.'s reasoning is founded upon a false principle, viz. that God has *devised*, or *invented*, the Devil to tempt his children, merely to try their virtue; therefore, the superstructure that is built on this absurd principle, must be false. It would have been equally as good logic if he had said, that God created every persecuting sinner, and every other temptation, merely to try the virtue of his people. The true state of the case may be illustrated by two or three examples:—1st. When Joseph's brethren sold him to the Ishmaelites, it was a voluntary action on their part, and though God permitted it, he did not *devise* it; but he so overruled this free and voluntary action for good, as to make it the very means of advancing Joseph next to the throne of Pharaoh, and of saving the whole family of Israel alive.

2nd. When David voluntarily and courageously engaged in contest with Goliath, God made this spontaneous and free action subservient to the interest of this young son of Jesse, and the very means of advancing him to the throne of Israel.

3rd. And when the enemies of the Messiah crucified and put him to death, such was the wisdom of God, that he overruled it for good, and though it was a free act on their part, yet God effected the redemption of the world by it. And though Satan may voluntarily tempt the true followers of Christ, such is the wisdom of God, that he makes these very

temptations subservient to the interest and advancement of the Messiah's kingdom.

Nor is it inconsistent with the Divine goodness ; for Satan can only tempt or allure, he cannot COMPEL. And every true disciple of Jesus may ask, with an inspired Apostle, " Who shall separate us from the love of Christ—shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Nor can Satan prevent any one from coming to Christ ; man is a free agent, and cannot be compelled. Satan may tempt or allure, but IN VAIN, if man be determined by the grace of God to come. And be it remembered, that a sinner had better contend with the allurements of Satan, with the Spirit of God to support him, than have to contend *merely* with his own passions, without the Spirit of God to assist him.

" Some dream, that they can silence when they will

" The storm of passion, and say—' *peace be still ;*'

" But, ' *thus far and no farther,*' when addressed

" To the wild waves, or wilder human breast,

" Implies authority, that never can,

" That never ought to be the lot of man."

Therefore, [the] orthodox Christian, though he may have to contend against the temptations of the Devil, yet with the Spirit of God to assist him, he stands upon a more firm and sure basis, than any Unitarian who has to contend against an evil principle, without the Spirit of the living God to support him.

“ Bound on a voyage of awful length,
 “ And dangers little known ;
 “ A stranger to superior strength,
 “ Man vainly trusts his own.
 “ But ours alone can ne’er prevail,
 “ To reach this distant coast ;
 “ The breath of heav’n must swell the sail,
 “ Or all the toil is lost.”

Mr. H. tells us towards the close of his lecture, “ that natural light and natural darkness cannot possibly be so much at variance, as the cotemporary existence of good and evil PRINCIPLE in the moral world !” Having already met with so many contradictions, misrepresentations, and absurdities, in Mr. H.’s lecture, my mind is prepared for the reception of this. The attentive reader will remember, that Mr. H. has often acknowledged the existence of a good and evil *principle* ; and he has endeavoured to explain many passages of Scripture, by saying its language was evidently a personification of good and bad principles ; yea, he acknowledges a good and bad principle to have heaved the

bosom of Jesus Christ, at one and the same time. But here this CONSISTENT reasoner tells us, that light and darkness are not more opposed to each other, than the cotemporary existence of a good and bad principle. If we trace this assertion to its ultimate tendency, it is not only at variance with every part of his lecture, but it annihilates at one stroke, all the evil that exists in the world; or else, every principle of virtue and moral goodness, that exists in the universe. Therefore, if we should admit the wild chimeras of these men, we should at once be led into the bewildering vortex of absurdity, and involve ourselves amidst rhapsody and confusion.

Whether the present essay, like the bursting bubbles on the passing stream, will expire, or it will pass on to ages yet to come, which its author can never reach, are points, which events alone can decide.

The author of this essay returns his warmest thanks to his numerous, and highly-respectable list of subscribers, for their kind patronage. If the work should not ENTIRELY meet with their approbation, he begs them to keep the words of Burns in mind.—

“An’ ablins, when IT winna stan’ the test,

“Wink hard, an’ say, ‘THE CHAP HAS DONE HIS BEST.’”

Or the generous maxim of Pope.—

“To err, is human—to forgive, divine.”

The author hopes it will be a sufficient apology

for this long delay of publishing, to say, that when he had got the work ready for the press, and a certain portion printed, he found that he had more written than two volumes would contain; consequently, he was obliged to take it home and abridge it: and be it remembered, that his family depends upon his hand labour for its support; consequently, his time was limited, and he had to write the work over again, at a time when he should have been asleep; and in addition to which delay, it has been detained a long time in the press, for which delay, the author is sorry: and likewise he hopes, that the candid and impartial reader will ever bear in mind, that the author has not had the advantages of a liberal education. From an early period of his existence, he was convinced of the depravity of human nature, and the necessity of salvation by faith in the atonement; consequently, he was led to seek redemption through the merits and efficacy of Christ's death, and to cast off all dependance upon any thing he could do or suffer: and the author is of the same opinion, that salvation is of grace, from first to last; and he trusts that in a little while, he will have to sing with the redeemed above, that ever-blessed anthem, "Not unto us, but unto thy name be all the praise."

Should there be any thing said in this essay, which the reader may think harsh and severe, the author hopes he will attribute it to the heat of con-

troversy, and not to any malicious design which the author has against Mr. H. As touching Mr. H.'s moral character, the author highly esteems him; and he candidly and honestly confesses, that as a benevolent and moral character, Mr. H. is worthy of being set forth as an example; and firmly believes, that in acts of charity and kindness, he is exceeded by none, if equalled by many. Notwithstanding Mr. H.'s amiable and unimpeachable character, as it respects morality, such is the dreadful nature of his religious principles, that were his morals ten thousand times more excellent, they would not stand in equilibrium against the evil tendency of these principles. And so long as Mr. H. entertains these principles, though the author may esteem him as a benevolent character, yet he cannot concede to him the term of Christian Minister. It is Mr. H.'s religious principles, and those alone, that these pages are directed against, and how far the author has succeeded in his endeavours to confute these principles, is left for the candid and impartial reader to determine. May the God of all grace, and the giver of all our blessings, grant that the reader and author, may at last meet in the mansions of the blessed, and sing together, through a never-ending eternity, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive honour, and glory, and blessing, for ever and ever." Amen.



Faint, illegible text, possibly bleed-through from the reverse side of the page. The text is arranged in several lines and is mostly obscured by the paper's texture and some staining.

Second section of faint, illegible text, continuing from the first section. The text is also mostly obscured by the paper's texture and some staining.

Third section of faint, illegible text, located at the bottom of the page. The text is mostly obscured by the paper's texture and some staining.



