dual upon earth, who are either born without shame, as Captain Cook affirms the nations of Otaheite to be; or to be wholly unblamable, both in their tempers and actions, as Captain Wilson affirms the nations of Pelew to be.

5. I do not say that either Captain Wilson or his historian designed, by this publication, to strike at the root of the Christian revelation, by showing that it was grounded on a palpable falsehood, namely, the fall of man; but I say again, that if their account be true, if mankind are faultless by nature, naturally endued with light to see all necessary truth, and with strength to follow it,—that smooth sophister Reynal is in the right; revelation is a mere fable; we can do perfectly well without it: Witness Lee Boo, Abba Thulle, and all his subjects; nay, witness all Captain Wilson's crew, (except one, who happened to give his fellow a bloody nose,) and we may seriously say, with a great man, "Indeed I do not see that we have much (or any) need of Jesus Christ."

6. I cannot, therefore, but earnestly advise all those who still believe the Scriptures to be of God, to beware of this, and all other books of this kind, which either affirm or insinuate that there are any Heathens in the world who, like the supposed nations of the Pelew Islands, are unblamable by nature; since, if there be any such, all revelation is needless, and the Christian revelation utterly false.

JOHN WESLEY.

PECKHAM,
December 30, 1789.

THOUGHTS

UPON

BARON MONTESQUIEU'S "SPIRIT OF LAWS"

[PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1781.]

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1. As some of my friends desire I would give them my thoughts on "The Spirit of Laws," I do it willingly, and in the plainest manner I can; that, if I am wrong, I may be

the sooner set right. I undertook the reading of it with huge expectation, hoping to find an invaluable treasure; as the author is seldom spoken of, but as the Phœnix of the age, a prodigy of understanding; and the book is everywhere spoken of as the highest effort of genius that ever was. Accordingly, as late as it has appeared in an English dress, it is already come to the eleventh edition; and who knows but in a few years more it may come to the two-and-twentieth?

2. Yet I cannot but observe, that in several places the translator does not seem to understand the original; that there is, in the last London edition, a great number of typographical errors; and that, not in a few places, either the translator or the printer has made absolute nonsense.

3. But whence is it that such a multitude of people so hugely admire, and highly applaud, this treatise? Perhaps nine in ten of them do this because others do: They follow the cry without why or wherefore: They follow one another, like a flock of sheep; they run on, because many run before them. It is quite the fashion; and who would be out of the fashion? As well be out of the world. Not that one half of these have read the book over; nor does one in ten of them understand it. But it is enough that "every one commends it; and why should not I too?" especially as he seems greatly to admire himself, and upon occasion to commend himself too; though in a modest, decent way; not in that fulsome manner which is common among modern writers.

4. Others admire him because of his vast learning, testified by the numerous books he refers to; and yet others, because he is no bigot to Christianity, because he is a free and liberal thinker. I doubt whether many gentlemen do not admire him on this account more than on all the others put together; and the rather, because he does not openly attack the religion of his country, but wraps up in the most neat and decent language the remarks which strike at the root of it.

5. But it cannot be denied that he deserves our commendation upon several accounts. He has an extremely fine imagination, and no small degree of understanding. His style is lively, and, even under the disadvantage of a translation, terse and elegant. Add to this, that he has many

remarks which I suppose are perfectly his own; at least, I never remember to have seen them in any either ancient or modern writer. Now, when all these things are considered, is it any wonder that he should be received with so high and general applause?

6. "Why, then, do not you concur with the general voice? Why do not you pay him the same admiration?" Without any preface or apology, I will tell you my reasons; and then let you or any candid man judge whether they are not sufficient.

I do not greatly admire him, (1.) Because so large a part of his book, I believe little less than half of it, is dry, dull, unaffecting, and unentertaining; at least, to all but Frenchmen. What have I or any Briton to do with the petty changes in the French government? What have we to do with a long, tedious detail of the old, obsolete, feudal laws? Over and above that we cannot find any use therein, that the knowledge of these things answers no one reasonable purpose, it touches none of the passions; it gives no pleasure, no entertainment, to a thinking mind. It is heavy and tedious to the last degree. It is as insipid as the Travels of Thomas Coryat.

7. I do not admire him, (2.) Because I think he makes very many remarks that are not just; and because he gives us many assertions which are not true. But all these he pronounces as *ex cathedrâ*, with an air of infallibility; as though he were the Dictator not only of France, but of Europe; as though he expected all men to bow before him.

8. But what I least of all admire is, his laying hold on every opportunity to depreciate the inspired writers; Moses, in particular. Indeed, here his prudence and decency seem to fail him; and he speaks of the Jewish Lawgiver with as little respect or reserve as he would of Lycurgus, Romulus, or Numa Pompilius.

9. These are some of the reflections which readily occurred to me from a cursory reading of this celebrated author. I add but one more: What is the meaning of his title-page? I am afraid of stumbling at the threshold. What does he mean by "the Spirit of Laws?" After reading the whole book, I really do not know. The words give me no idea at all; and the more I study, the less I comprehend them. The author never defines them at all. I verily believe he

did not comprehend them himself. I believe he had no clear or determinate ideas affixed to those words. And was he not likely, when he set out with his head in a mist, to go on in a wonderful manner? Other talents he undoubtedly had; but two he wanted,—religion and logic. Therefore, he ought to be read warily by those who are not well grounded in both.

10. Upon the whole, I think Baron Montesquieu was wholly unworthy of the violent encomiums which have been bestowed upon him. I think he excelled in imagination, but not in judgment, any more than in solid learning. I think, in a word, that he was a child to Monsieur Pascal, Father Malebranche, or Mr. Locke.

LETTER

TO

THE REVEREND MR. FURLY.

DEAR SIR, LIVERPOOL, *July* 15, 1764.

I HAVE had many thoughts since we parted, on the subject of our late conversation. I send you them just as they occur. "What is it that constitutes a good style?" Perspicuity, purity, propriety, strength, and easiness, joined together. When any one of these is wanting, it is not a good style. Dr. Middleton's style wants easiness: It is stiff to a high degree. And stiffness in writing is full as great a fault as stiffness in behaviour. It is a blemish hardly to be excused, much less to be imitated. He is pedantic. "It is pedantry," says the great Lord Boyle, "to use a hard word, where an easier will serve." Now, this the Doctor continually does, and that of set purpose. His style is abundantly too artificial: *Artis est celare artem;** but his art glares in every sentence. He continually says, "Observe how fine I speak:" Whereas, a good speaker

* It is the perfection of art to conceal itself.—EDIT.

seems to forget he speaks at all. His full round curls naturally put one in mind of Sir Cloudesley Shovel's peruke, that "eternal buckle takes in Parian stone." Yet this very fault may appear a beauty to you, because you are apt to halt on the same foot. There is a stiffness both in your carriage and speech, and something of it in your very familiarity. But for this very reason you should be jealous of yourself, and guard against your natural infirmity. If you imitate any writers, let it be South, Atterbury, or Swift, in whom all the properties of a good writer meet. I was myself once much fonder of Prior than Pope; as I did not then know that stiffness was a fault. But what in all Prior can equal, for beauty of style, some of the first lines that Pope ever published?—

> "Poets themselves must die, like those they sung,
> Deaf the praised ear, and mute the tuneful tongue;
> E'en he whose heart now melts in tender lays,
> Shall shortly want the generous tear he pays.
> Then from his eyes thy much-loved form shall part;
> And the last pang shall tear thee from his heart:
> Life's idle business at one gasp be o'er,
> The Muse forgot, and thou beloved no more."

Here is style! How clear, how pure, proper, strong; and yet how amazingly easy! This crowns all; no stiffness, no hard words; no apparent art, no affectation; all is natural, and therefore consummately beautiful. Go thou and write likewise. As for me, I never think of my style at all; but just set down the words that come first. Only when I transcribe anything for the press, then I think it my duty to see every phrase be clear, pure, and proper. Conciseness (which is now, as it were, natural to me) brings *quantum sufficit* of strength. If, after all, I observe any stiff expression, I throw it out, neck and shoulders.

Clearness in particular is necessary for you and me; because we are to instruct people of the lowest understanding. Therefore we, above all, if we think with the wise, yet must speak with the vulgar. We should constantly use the most common, little, easy words (so they are pure and proper) which our language affords. When I had been a member of the University about ten years, I wrote and talked much as you do now. But when I talked to plain people in the castle, or the town, I observed they gaped and stared. This quickly obliged me to alter my style, and

adopt the language of those I spoke to. And yet there is a dignity in this simplicity, which is not disagreeable to those of the highest rank.

I advise you sacredly to abstain from reading any stiff writer. A by-stander sees more than those that play the game. Your style is much hurt already. Indeed, something might be said, if you were a learned infidel, writing for money or reputation. But that is not the case: You are a Christian Minister, speaking and writing to save souls. Have this end always in your eye, and you will never designedly use any hard word. Use all the sense, learning, and time you have; forgetting yourself, and remembering only, those are the souls for whom Christ died; heirs of a happy or miserable eternity!

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother,

JOHN WESLEY.

THOUGHTS

ON

THE CHARACTER AND WRITINGS OF MR. PRIOR.

[PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1782.]

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1. A VERY ingenious writer has lately given us a particular account of the character and Works of Mr. Prior. But it was not likely to be a just one, as he formed it chiefly on the testimony of very suspicious witnesses; I mean, Mr. Pope and Mr. Spence. I object both to one and the other. They depreciated him to exalt themselves. They viewed him with no friendly eye; looking upon him (particularly Mr. Pope) as a rival; whom, therefore, they rejoiced to depress.

2. Mr. Pope gives it as his opinion, that he was fit only to make verses. What can be more unjust? He was fit for transactions of the most difficult and delicate nature. Accordingly, he was entrusted with them at Paris, and acquitted himself to the full satisfaction of his employers.

He was really fit for everything; for writing, either in verse or prose; for conversation, and for either public or private business.

3. But Mr. Spence says, "His life was irregular, negligent, and sensual. He descended to the meanest company. The woman with whom he cohabited was a despicable drab of the lowest species. One of his wenches, perhaps Chloe, stole his plate, and ran away with it."

I do not believe one word of this: Although I was often in his neighbourhood, I never heard a word of it before. It carries no face of probability. Would Bishop Atterbury have kept up an acquaintance with a man of such a character? Would that accomplished nobleman, the then Earl of Oxford, have given him a place even in his friendship? I am well assured, my eldest brother would have had no acquaintance with him, had he been such a wretch as Mr. Spence describes.

4. Others say, his Chloe was ideal. I know the contrary. I have heard my eldest brother say her name was Miss Taylor; that he knew her well; and that she once came to him (in Dean's Yard, Westminster) purposely to ask his advice. She told him, "Sir, I know not what to do. Mr. Prior makes large professions of his love; but he never offers me marriage." My brother advised her to bring the matter to a point at once. She went directly to Mr. Prior, and asked him plainly, "Do you intend to marry me, or no?" He said many soft and pretty things; on which she said, "Sir, in refusing to answer, you *do* answer. I will see you no more." And she did see him no more to the day of his death. But afterwards she spent many hours, standing and weeping at his tomb in Westminster Abbey.

5. As to his writings, I cannot but think Mr. Prior had not only more learning, but a stronger natural understanding, than Mr. Pope. But this is the less observable, because Mr. Prior always wrote *currente calamo*,* having little time to correct anything; whereas Mr. Pope laboured every line, and polished it with the utmost exactness. Prior's praise is by no means that of correctness. He has many unpolished, hasty, half-formed lines, which he would not (or did not) take the pains to correct. I can therefore by no means subscribe to that sentence, "What he obtains above mediocrity seems

* With a rapid pen.—EDIT.

to be the effort of struggle and travail." Surely, no. What he frequently obtains, as far above Pope's "Messiah," as that is above Quarles's "Emblems," seems to be the effort of a genius not inferior in strength to any beside Milton. But "his words are put by constraint into their places, where they do their duty, but do it sullenly." Nay, I reply, most of his words are as natural and unconstrained, as even those of Waller; though they would certainly have done their duty better, had he taken more pains with them. "He extends his sense from one couplet to another; but without success." I think, with great success. I will give the first instance that occurs to my memory:—

> "Happiness, object of that waking dream,
> Which we call life, mistaking; fugitive theme
> Of my pursuing verse; ideal shade,
> Notional good, by fancy only made,
> And by tradition nursed; fallacious fire,
> Whose dancing beams mislead our fond desire;
> Cause of our care, and error of our mind!
> O hadst thou ever been by Heaven design'd
> For Adam and his mortal race, the boon
> Entire had been reserved for Solomon."

Were ever lines extended from couplet to couplet with more success than these? Is there any constraint here? What lines can flow more free, more easy, more natural?

6. But "his numbers commonly want ease, airiness, lightness, and facility." I cannot possibly be of this opinion. Wherever this is proper, as in all his tales, and in "Alma," his numbers have certainly the greatest airiness, lightness, and facility. Nay, "but even what is smooth is not soft." No? What do you think of "The Lady's Looking-Glass?" (to take one instance out of fifty.) Where will you show me any softer numbers than these?—

> "Celia and I the other day
> Walk'd o'er the sand-hills to the sea:
> The setting sun adorn'd the coast,
> His beams entire, his fierceness lost;
> And on the bosom of the deep
> The waves lay only not asleep.
> The nymph did like the scene appear,
> Serenely pleasant, calmly fair:
> Soft fell her words, as flew the air."

In truth, the general fault of Prior's poetry is this: It is not too much, but too little, laboured. Pope filed and

polished every line; Prior set his words down as fast as he could write, and scarce polished any of them with any accuracy, at least only here and there. And the reason is plain: Pope lived by his writings; Prior did not. And again: Pope was a man of much leisure; Prior a man of much business.

7. But to descend from generals to particulars: His tales are certainly the best told of any in the English tongue. And it matters not, whether they were ever told before or no. They never were in the English language. I instance only in two of them,—"The Lady's Looking-Glass," (mentioned before,) and "The English Padlock." In both the diction is pure, terse, easy, and elegant, in the highest degree. And the moral both of one and the other may be of excellent use; particularly that of the latter:—

> "Be to her virtues very kind;
> Be to her faults a little blind;
> Let all her ways be unconfined,
> And clap your padlock—on her mind."

8. But "his amorous effusions have neither gallantry nor tenderness. They are the dull exercises of one trying to be amorous by dint of study. When he tries to act the lover, his thoughts are unaffecting and remote. In his amorous pedantry he exhibits the College."

Surely, never was anything more distant from the truth! "Neither gallantry, nor tenderness!" For gallantry, I know not well what it means. But never man wrote with more tenderness. Witness the preface to "Henry and Emma," with the whole inimitable poem: Witness the story of "Abraham." Are these "the dull exercises of one trying to be amorous by dint of study?" Are the thoughts in these "unaffecting and remote?" yea, "amorous pedantry of a College?" O no! They are the genuine language of the heart. "Unaffecting!" So far from it, that I know not what man of sensibility can read them without tears.

9. But it is said, "'Henry and Emma' is a dull and tedious dialogue, which excites neither esteem for the man, nor tenderness for the woman." Does it not? Then I know not with what eyes, or with what heart, a man must read it. "Dull and tedious!" See how Doctors differ! One who was no bad poet himself, and no bad judge of poetry, describing love, says,—

"The' immortal glories of the nut-brown maid
Emblazon'd lively on his shield appear;"

and always spoke of this very poem as one of the finest in the English language.

10. However, "'Alma' never had a plan, nor any drift or design." The drift and design of it is tolerably plain. It is a strong satire on that self-conceited tribe of men, who pretend to philosophize upon everything, natural or spiritual. It keenly exposes those who continually obtrude their own systems upon the world, and pretend to account for everything. His design is, if possible, to make these men less wise in their own conceit, by showing them how plausibly a man may defend the oddest system that can be conceived; and he intermixes many admirable reflections, and closes with a very striking conclusion; which points out, where one would least expect it, that "all is vanity."

11. The strangest sentence of all is that which is passed upon "Solomon:" "It wants the power of engaging attention. Tediousness is the most fatal of all faults. The tediousness of this poem"—Did any one ever discern it before? I should as soon think of tediousness in the second or sixth Æneid! So far from it, that if I dip in any of the three books, I scarce know where to leave off. No! This poem does not "want the power of engaging the attention" of any that have a taste for poetry; that have a taste for the strongest sense expressed in some of the finest verses that ever appeared in the English tongue.

I cite but one passage for all. It stands in the first book:—

"Now, when my mind has all the world survey'd,
And found that nothing by itself was made;
When thought has raised itself by just degrees,
From valleys crown'd with flowers, and hills with trees,—
From all the living that four-footed rove
Along the shore, the meadow, or the grove;
From all that can with fins or feathers fly
Through the aërial or the watery sky;
From the poor reptile with a reasoning soul,
That miserable master of the whole;
From this great object of the body's eye,
This fair half-round, this ample azure sky,
Terribly large and wonderfully bright,
With stars unnumber'd and unmeasured light;
From essences unseen, celestial names,
Enlightening spirits, ministerial flames,

Angels, dominions, potentates, and thrones,
All that in each degree the name of creature owns;—
Lift we our reason to that sovereign Cause,
Who bless'd the whole with life, and bounded it with laws;
Who forth from nothing call'd this comely frame,
His will and act, his word and work, the same;
To whom a thousand years are but a day,
Who bade the light her genial beams display,
And set the Moon, and taught the Sun his way;
Who, waking Time, his creature, from the source
Primeval, order'd his predestined course;
Himself, as in the hollow of his hand,
Holding obedient to his high command
The deep abyss, the long-continued store,
Where months, and days, and hours, and minutes pour
Their floating parts, and thenceforth are no more.
This Alpha and Omega, First and Last,
Who like the potter in a mould has cast
The world's great frame, commanding it to be
Such as the eyes of sense or reason see;
Yet, if he wills, may change or spoil the whole;
May take yon beauteous, mystic, starry roll,
And burn it, like an useless parchment scroll;
May from its basis in one moment pour
This melted earth
Like liquid metal, and like burning ore;
Who sole in power, at the beginning said,
'Let sea, and air, and earth, and heaven be made,
And it was so;' and when he shall ordain
In other sort, has but to speak again,
And they shall be no more: Of this great theme,
This glorious, hallow'd, everlasting name,
This God, I would discourse."

12. Now, what has Mr. Pope in all his eleven volumes which will bear any comparison with this? As elegant a piece as he ever wrote was, "Verses to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady." But was ever anything more exquisitely injudicious? First, what a subject! An eulogium on a self-murderer! And the execution is as bad as the design: It is a commendation not only of the person, but the act! —

"Is it in heaven a crime to love too well?
To bear too tender or too firm a heart?
To act a lover's or a Roman's part?"

Yes, whatever men may think, it is a crime, and no small one, with Him, that sitteth in heaven, for any worm on earth to violate the canon He hath fixed against self-murder. Nor did any one ever do this out of firmness of heart, but

for want of firmness. "A Roman's part?" Nay, no Roman ever acted this part, but out of rank cowardice. This was the case of Cato in particular. He did not dare to receive a favour from Cæsar.

13. But go on:—

> "Ambition first sprung from your high abodes,
> The glorious fault of angels and of gods."

Consummate nonsense! "Of angels and of gods!" What is the difference? Are not these angels and gods the very same? that is, in plain English, devils! Are these subjects of panegyric, or fit to be recommended to our imitation? And if the fault they were guilty of were so glorious, what cruelty was it to cast them into hell for it!

But what comfort does the poet provide for the woman that was guilty of this glorious fault? Why, this:—

> "Yet shall thy grave with rising flowers be dress'd,
> And the green turf lie light upon thy breast."

Who would not go to hell, to have the green turf grow upon his grave? Nay, and primroses too! For the poet assures her,—

> "There the first roses of the spring shall blow!"

The conclusion of this celebrated poem is not the least remarkable part of it:—

> "Life's idle business at one gasp be o'er,
> The Muse forgot, and thou beloved no more!"

"Idle business" indeed! If we had no better business than this, it is pity that ever we were born! But was this all the business of his life? Did God raise him from the dust of the earth, and breathe into him a living soul, for no other business than to court a mistress, and to make verses? O what a view is here given of an immortal spirit, that came forth from God, and is going back to God!

14. Upon the whole, I cannot but think that the natural understanding of Mr. Prior was far stronger than that of Mr. Pope; that his judgment was more correct, his learning more extensive, his knowledge of religion and of the Scriptures far greater. And I conceive his poetical abilities were at least equal to those either of Pope or Dryden. But as poetry was not his business, but merely the employment of his leisure hours, few of his pieces are so highly finished as

most of Mr. Pope's are. But those which he has taken the pains to polish (as the "Ode to the Memory of Colonel Villiers," the "Paraphrase on the Thirteenth of the Corinthians," and several parts of "Solomon") do not yield to anything that has been wrote either by Pope, or Dryden, or any English poet, except Milton.

THOUGHTS

ON

THE WRITINGS OF BARON SWEDENBORG.

1. "I WAS born," says the Baron, "in the year 1689. My father, Jasper Swedenborg, was Bishop of Westragothia. King Charles the Twelfth appointed me Assessor in the Metallic College, in which office I continued till the year 1747, when I quitted the office, to give myself wholly to the new function which the Lord had called me to. In 1719 I was ennobled by Queen Ulrica Eleonora, and named Swedenborg. I am a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Sciences, at Stockholm. In the year 1734 I published the '*Regnum Minerale*,' in three volumes folio; and in 1738 I took a journey into Italy, and stayed a year at Venice and Rome.

"In the year 1743 the Lord was pleased to manifest himself to me in a personal appearance, to open in me a sight of the spiritual world, and to enable me to converse with spirits and angels; and this privilege I have enjoyed ever since. From that time I began to publish various unknown *arcana*, that have been either seen by me, or revealed to me, concerning God, the spiritual sense of Scripture, the state of man after death, heaven and hell, and many important truths." This is dated, "London, 1769." I think he lived nine or ten years longer.

2. Many years ago, the Baron came over to England, and lodged at one Mr. Brockmer's, who informed me, (and the

same information was given me by Mr. Mathesius, a very serious Swedish Clergyman, both of whom were alive when I left London, and, I suppose, are so still,) that while he was in his house he had a violent fever; in the height of which, being totally delirious, he broke from Mr. Brockmer, ran into the street stark naked, proclaimed himself the Messiah, and rolled himself in the mire. I suppose he dates from this time his admission into the society of angels. From this time we are undoubtedly to date that peculiar species of insanity which attended him, with scarce any intermission, to the day of his death.

3. In all history I find but one instance of an insanity parallel to this: I mean, that related by the Roman poet, of the gentleman at Argos, in other respects a sensible man,—

Qui se credebat miros audire tragœdos,
In vacuo lætus sessor plausorque theatro,—

"who imagined himself to hear admirable tragedies, and undoubtedly saw as well as heard the actors, while he was sitting alone, and clapping them in the empty theatre." This seems to have been a purely natural disorder, although not easy to account for. Whether anything preternatural was added in the case of the Baron, I do not undertake to determine.

4. The accounts of those "admirable tragedies" which he has published take up many quarto volumes. I have read little more of them than what we have in English, except his inimitable piece, *De Nuptiis Cœlestibus*,—"Of the Marriages in Heaven." To the reading of this, I acknowledge, I was invited by the newness of the subject; and I cannot doubt, but the same circumstance (though they were not sensible of it) contributed much to the pleasure which those pious men, Mr. Cl., Mr. Ha., and Mr. Cl—s, have received from his writings. The same pleasure they naturally desired to impart to their countrymen, by translating, publishing, recommending, and propagating them with their might. They doubtless found an additional pleasure from the huge admiration wherewith many received them; and I should not wonder if some of these should be adopted into the society of angels, just as the Baron himself was; nay, I cannot but apprehend, that they have already attained to a degree of the same illumination.

5. Desiring to be thoroughly master of the subject, I procured the translation of the first volume of his last and largest theological work, entitled, "True Christian Religion." (The original the Baron himself presented me with a little before he died.) I took an extract thereof from the beginning to the end, that I might be able to form a more accurate judgment. And one may trace, through the whole, remains of a fine genius, "majestic, though in ruins!" From the whole I remark, that what Mr. Law oddly imputes to Sir Isaac Newton is truly imputable to the Baron: He "ploughed with Jacob Behmen's heifer," and that both in philosophy and divinity. But he far exceeded his master: His dreams are more extraordinary than those of Jacob himself.

6. Nothing can be more extraordinary than his manner of expounding the holy Scriptures; a specimen of which he has given in his exposition of the Decalogue, in which he undertakes to show, not only the literal and spiritual, but even the celestial, meaning of each commandment. For example:—

"By the fourth commandment, in the spiritual sense, is meant the regeneration and reformation of man. The work of regeneration is successive." This is borrowed from Jacob Behmen. "Answering in its several stages to man's conception, formation in the womb, his birth and his education. The first act of the new birth is reformation; the second act of it is regeneration." That is, in plain English, the second act of the new birth is the new birth!

"In a spiritual sense, by honouring father and mother is meant revering and loving God and the church. In a celestial sense, by father is meant revering and loving God and the church. In a celestial sense, by father is meant God; by mother, the communion of saints.

"The celestial meaning of the sixth commandment is, Thou shalt not hate God.

"Committing adultery, in a spiritual sense, is adulterating the word of God.

"Stealing, in the celestial sense, is the taking away divine power from the Lord."

7. I will oblige the reader with a few more of his extraordinary expositions:—

"In Scripture, by a garden, a grove, woods, are meant,

wisdom, intelligence, science; by the olive, the vine, the cedar, the poplar, and the oak, are meant the good and truth of the church, under the different characters of celestial, spiritual, rational, natural, and sensual; by a lamb, an ox, a sheep, a calf, a goat, are meant innocence, charity, and natural affection; by Egypt is signified what is scientific; by Ashur, what is rational; by Edom, what is natural; by Moab, the adulteration of good; by Ammon, the adulteration of truth; by Jacob is meant the church natural; by Israel, the church spiritual; and by Judah, the church celestial."

Can any person of common understanding defend any of these expositions? Are they not so utterly absurd, so far removed from all shadow of reason, that, instead of pronouncing them the dictates of the Holy Ghost, we cannot but judge them to be whims of a distempered imagination? A thousand more, equally absurd, are to be found in all his writings; but I believe these are abundantly sufficient to show the man.

8. Equally extraordinary is the account which the Baron gives of charity and faith:—

"When a man keeps the Ten Commandments, charity follows of course.

"Charity consists in living well.

"Charity consists in willing what is good."

That both these accounts are wrong is certain; but who can reconcile one with the other?

"There can be no faith in an invisible God."

This is bold indeed! Was it intended to confute St. Paul, making use of that very expression in describing the faith of Moses, "He endured as seeing Him that was invisible?"

"Faith in general is a belief that whoever lives well, and believes right, shall be saved."

This definition is quite ambiguous: Believing right may have a hundred different meanings. And it is utterly false, if that expression means any more than a belief "that God is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him."

Rather, faith in general is "a divine evidence of things unseen."

"The Lord is charity and faith in man; and man is charity and faith in the Lord."

I make no scruple to affirm, this is as arrant nonsense as was ever pronounced by any man in Bedlam.

9. Be this a specimen of the Baron's skill in expounding the Scriptures. Come we now to his memorable Visions and Revelations.

Any serious man may observe, that many of these are silly and childish to the last degree; that many others are amazingly odd and whimsical; many palpably absurd, contrary to all sound reason; and many more, contrary, not only to particular texts, but to the whole tenor, of Scripture.

These are interspersed with all the doctrines which he delivers, in order to put them beyond all doubt. The grand error which we learn from his whole work is, that there are not three persons in one God. This stares you in the face, almost in every page, from the beginning to the end of his book. So in the very first chapter,

OF GOD THE CREATOR,

we read, "God is one, in essence and person, and Jesus Christ is He.

"Jesus Christ is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

"Before the creation of the world, there was no Trinity, but it was provided and made when God was manifested in the flesh, and then existed in the Lord Jesus Christ."

"A Trinity of divine persons existing before the creation of the world, is a Trinity of Gods."

10. But he is not content with denying the Trinity. He goes much farther than this: He excludes all that believe it from salvation, and counts it the most damnable of all heresies.

"The church is now in so ruinous a state, that there are scarce any traces left of its ancient glory. And this has come to pass, in consequence of their dividing the divine Trinity into three persons, each of which is declared to be God and Lord. This is the true source of all the Atheism in the world."

I believe no Arian, Socinian, or Mahometan ever affirmed this before.

Again: "The Nicene and Athanasian doctrine concerning a Trinity, have given birth to a faith which has entirely overturned the Christian church."

Nay, Bishop Bull has indisputably proved, that this faith was delivered to the saints long before the Nicene Council sat, and before Athanasius was born.

Yet again: "He that confirmeth himself in a plurality of gods, by a plurality of persons, becomes like a statue formed with movable joints, in the midst of which Satan stands and speaks through its mouth."

So all that believe the Trinity are, according to his charitable sentence, possessed by the devil!

11. To confound all the Trinitarians at a stroke, he adds this memorable relation:—

"In the spiritual world (which lies in the midst between heaven and hell, having heaven above and hell below) are climates and zones as in the natural. The frigid zones are the habitation of those first spirits, who, while on earth, were lazy and indolent. Having once a desire to visit them, I was carried in the spirit to a region covered with snow." (Remember, this region was in the other world!) "It was on the Sabbath-day; and I saw a number of men, that is, human spirits, who had their heads covered with lions' skins, by reason of the cold;" (or who knows, but the poor spirits might have been frozen to death?) "their bodies, with the skins of leopards; and their legs and feet, with bears' skins. I also observed several riding in chariots, made in the shape of dragons with horns; they were drawn by small horses without tails, which ran with the impetuosity of terrible, fierce beasts. They were all flocking towards a church, in which hung a tablet inscribed, 'A divine Being, consisting of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in essence one, but in persons three.'"

He has abundance of relations to the same purpose. I will add but one more:—

"I once saw a spirit as lightning falling from heaven. I asked him the reason of it. He replied, 'I was cast down, because I believed that God the Father and God the Son are two persons.' All the angels believe they are but one person; and every word that contradicts this, causeth in them the same pain, as if they should snuff up some pungent powder into their nostrils, or as if one should bore their ears through with an awl. And every one has a place in heaven according to his idea of God."

O no; this is a deadly mistake! Every one has a place

in heaven, not according to his ideas, but according to his works.

But notwithstanding all his new revelations, I believe, according to the old one, "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit; and these three are one."

For the term "person" I contend not. I know no better: If any does, let him use it.

12. Let us now inquire, what is the Baron's own belief concerning the Trinity.

OF THE LORD THE REDEEMER.

"The Lord received his soul from Jehovah, and the divinity of the Father was the Lord's soul.

"The humanity whereby God sent himself into the world was the Son of God.

"The passion of the cross was the final temptation which the Lord endured as the grand Prophet; and it was the means of the glorification of His humanity; that is, of its union with the divinity of the Father."

No. There is not a word in all the Bible concerning any such union of the humanity of Christ with the divinity of the Father. He was then glorified, when He was received again into the glory which He had before the world began.

13. What then is redemption?

"Bringing the hells under subjection, and reducing the heavens into order. God's omnipotence in accomplishing this work was an effect of His humanity." Strange indeed!

"It is now believed, that His passion on the cross was the very act of His redemption. No: The act of His redemption consisted in this, that He accomplished the last judgment which was executed in the spiritual world, and then separated the sheep from the goats, and drove out of heaven those that were united to the dragon. He then formed a new heaven of such as were found worthy, and a new hell of such as were found unworthy, and by degrees reduced all things in each place to order. By these acts He united Himself to the Father, and the Father Himself to Him."

"The Lord is now accomplishing redemption; that is, subduing the hells, and bringing the heavens into order;

which was begun in the year 1757, together with the last judgment, executed at the same time."

What heaps of absurdity are here! only fit to have a place in Orlando Furioso.

Redemption is, "bringing the hells into subjection." When were they not in subjection to the Almighty? "And reducing the heavens into order." When was heaven, the abode of angels, out of order? "God's omnipotence was an effect of his humanity." Blasphemy, joined with consummate nonsense. "He by degrees reduced them to order." "By degrees?" No: A word, a nod from Jehovah was sufficient. "By these acts He united Himself to the Father." Blasphemous nonsense again. "The last judgment was executed in the year 1757." This is the top of all the Baron's discourses!

"It was once granted me to speak to the mother Mary. She appeared in heaven just over my head, and said, she was the mother of the Lord, as He was born of her; but that when He was made God, He put off all the humanity He had from her. And therefore she is unwilling any should call Him her son, because in Him all is divine."

In all this jumble of dissonant notions, there is not one that is supported by any scripture, taken in its plain, obvious meaning. And most of them are as contrary to Scripture as to common sense.

14. But here follows as curious an assertion as any: "Christ redeemed the angels as well as men. The angels could not have stood," (mark the proof!) "unless the Lord had wrought this redemption, because the whole angelic heaven with the church on earth is as a single man, whose internal is the angelic heaven, and whose external is the church. To be more particular: The highest heaven is the head; the second and lowest heaven are the breast and middle region of the body. The church on earth is the loins and the feet; the Lord is the soul of the whole man. Wherefore, unless the Lord had effected redemption, this whole man must have been destroyed; the feet and loins must have perished by the defection of the lowest heaven; the region of the breast, by the defection of the second heaven; and then the head, being left without a body, must of necessity have fallen to decay."

Surely such an argument has not often been seen! But

it is full as good as the conclusion drawn from it; which is utterly inconsistent with the declaration of St. Paul, "He took not upon Himself the nature of angels" in order to redeem them; but only that of man, in order to redeem lost mankind.

OF THE HOLY GHOST.

"The Holy Ghost is not God Himself, but the divine operation of God.

"The Holy Ghost is divine truth. Therefore our Lord Himself is also the Holy Ghost.

"The divine operation, signified by the Holy Ghost, consists in reformation and regeneration; and, in proportion as these are effected, in renovation, vivification, sanctification, and justification; and, in proportion as these are effected, in purification from evils, remission of sins, and final salvation."

Whoever is acquainted with the process of the work of God in the soul, must see, with the fullest evidence, that a man talking of it after this rate, is, if not a madman, ignorant of all vital religion.

15. Another grand truth which the Baron flatly denies is, justification by faith; and he not only denies it, but supposes the belief of this also to exclude all that believe it from salvation.

"Do not you know that Luther has renounced his error with respect to justification by faith? and, in consequence thereof, is translated into the societies of the blessed?

"The bottomless pit, mentioned Rev. ix. 2, is in the south-east quarter. Here all those are confined, who adopt the doctrine of justification by faith alone; and such of them as confirm that doctrine by the word of God are driven forth into a desert, and mixed with Pagans."

However, they need not stay there always; for the Baron assures us, that on "believing that God is not wind, but a man, they will be joined to heaven."

And we may hope the time is near; for he informs us, that "some months ago, the Lord called together his twelve Apostles, and sent them forth through the whole spiritual world, as formerly through the natural, with a commission to preach the Gospel."

So if men have not saving faith in this world, they may have it in the world to come.

But indeed there is no room for any justification in the Scripture sense, that is, forgiveness, if, as he vehemently asserts, (after Jacob Behmen,) that God was never angry. "It is extravagant folly," says he, "to teach that God can be angry and punish; nay, it is blasphemy," says this bold man, "to ascribe anger to God." Then the Scripture is full of blasphemy; for it continually ascribes anger to God, both in the Old and the New Testament. Nay, our Lord himself is a blasphemer; for he ascribes anger to God: "His lord was wroth;" yea, wroth to such a degree, that "he delivered him to the tormentors. So likewise shall your heavenly Father do also unto you." (Matt. xviii. 34, 35.) In flat opposition to which the Baron affirms, "God cannot sentence man to damnation!"

To those who affirm, with Jacob Behmen, the Baron, and most of the Mystics, that there is no wrath in God, permit me to recommend the serious consideration of only one more passage of Scripture: "And the Kings of the earth, and the great men, and every bondman, and every freeman, said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" (Rev. vi. 15—17.) Here I would ask, (1.) Is not "He that sitteth on the throne" distinct from "the Lamb?" (2.) Is not "the Lamb" Jesus Christ? God and man? (3.) Is no wrath ascribed to Him in these words? Who but a madman can deny it? And if there was no wrath in the Lamb, what were all these afraid of? a shadow that never had any real existence? Would the Baron have told them, "It is extravagant folly to suppose that God can be angry at all?"

16. But it is no wonder that he should utter such bold assertions, seeing he judges himself to be far wiser, not only than the inhabitants of this, but than those of the other, world. "I was amazed," says he, (in one of the visits he favoured them with,) "that people who had resided some time in the spiritual world, should be so ignorant still. Lest they should continue so, I waved my hand as a token for them to listen." He informs you farther, that "some of them fell into fits,"—hysterical or epileptic?

Again: "Being on a time in a conversation with angels, there joined us some spirits lately arrived from the other

world. I related many particulars touching the world of spirits, which were before unknown to them."

Yet again: "Being in the world of spirits, I observed a paved way, quite crowded with spirits. I was informed, it was the way which all pass, when they leave the natural world. I stopped some of them, who did not yet know that they had left it, and questioned them about heaven and hell. They seemed altogether ignorant of them. I was amazed, and said, 'There is a heaven and a hell; and you will know this, when your present stupidity is dispelled. Every spirit, for a few days after death, imagines he is still alive in the world.'" No, not an hour; not a single moment! It is absolutely impossible. "'This is now the case with you.' So saying, the angels dispelled their ignorance: On which they exclaimed, 'O, where are we?' We said, 'You are no longer in the natural world, but in the spiritual.' They cried out, 'Then show us the way to heaven.' We said, 'Follow us.' They did so. The keepers of the gate opened it, and let us all in; but when those who receive strangers examined them, they said instantly, 'Begone; for ye have no conjunction with heaven.' So they departed and hastened back."

17. Permit me now to mention a few of his peculiar sentiments, before I proceed to those relative to the world of spirits.

"These truths are implanted in the understanding, in a place inferior to the soul."

What place is that, in the understanding, which is inferior to the soul?

"Faith enters into man from the soul, into the superior regions of the understanding."

Is then the soul placed between the superior and inferior region of the understanding?

"The human understanding is, as it were, the refining vessel, wherein natural faith is changed into spiritual faith."

I cannot at all comprehend this. It is quite above my understanding.

"The human mind is an organized form, consisting of spiritual substances within, and of natural substances without, and, lastly, of material substances."

Nay, natural substances must be either matter or not matter But indeed the mind is not matter, but spirit.

"Every man at death casteth off the body, and retains the soul only, with a circumambient accretion, which is derived from the purest parts of nature. But this accretion in those admitted into heaven is undermost, and the spiritual part uppermost; whereas in such as go to hell it is uppermost, and the spiritual part undermost. Hence a man-angel speaks by influence from heaven; a man-devil by influence from hell."

"The form of God is truly and verily human; for God is true and very man."

But the Scripture says, "God is not a man." Which shall I believe? the Bible or the Baron?

This is my grand objection to the Baron's whole system relative to the invisible world; that it is not only quite unconnected with Scripture, but quite inconsistent with it. It strikes at the very foundation of Scripture. If this stands, the Bible must fall.

18. The account which he gives of the creation is this: "By the light and heat proceeding from the spiritual sun, spiritual atmospheres were created. These being three, three heavens were formed, one for the highest angels, another for angels of the second degree, and the third for the lowest angels. But the spiritual universe could not subsist without a natural universe. Therefore the natural sun was created at the same time; and by means of his light and heat, three natural atmospheres were formed, enclosing the former, as the shell of a nut does the kernel." So then the spiritual world is enclosed in the natural! I thought it had been "in the midst between heaven and hell!" "By means of these atmospheres the terraqueous globe was formed, to be the abode of man and other animals. So God did not create the universe out of nothing, but by means of the spiritual sun."

But out of what did he create the spiritual sun? It was created, unless it was eternal. Therefore this, or something else, was created out of nothing, unless some creature was co-eternal with its Creator. So that we must come, at last, to something created out of nothing; and this alone is properly creation. In this sense it was that "God in the beginning created the heavens and the earth." And what a sublimity is there, with the utmost simplicity, in the Mosaic account of the creation! How widely different

from the odd, whimsical account of the Baron and Jacob Behmen!

19. He informs you farther, "There is a full correspondence between angels and men." Of what kind? Not the wisest mortal can guess, till the Baron unfolds the mystery. "There is not a single society in heaven which does not correspond with some part or member in man. One society in heaven is in the province of the heart or pancreas. Others are in correspondence with the spleen or the stomach, with the eye or the ear, and so on. The angels also know in what district of any part of man they dwell. I have seen a society of angels, consisting of many thousands, which appeared as a single man.

"And God joins all the heavenly societies in one, that they may be as a single man in his sight. Yea, and he joins together the congregations in hell, that they may be as a single infernal form. He separates these from heaven by a great gulf, lest heaven should be an occasion of torment to them. When I had informed an assembly of spirits of these things, which they did not know before, the spirits which wore hats departed, with their hats under their arms. In the spiritual world, the intelligent spirits wear hats; but the stupid wear bonnets, because they are bald, and baldness signifies stupidity."

I really think this needs no comment. He that can receive it, let him receive it.

20. "As angels and spirits are men, (for no angel was ever created such,) so they have divine worship; they have preaching in their temples; they have books and writings; particularly the word of God.

"The word, kept in the temples of the spiritual world, shines like a star of the first magnitude, sometimes like the sun; and from the radiance that encompasses it, there are beautiful rainbows formed about it. Yea, when any verse of it is wrote on paper, and the paper thrown into the air, that paper emits a bright light of the same form with the paper itself. And if any one rubs his hands, face, or clothes against the word, they emit a strong light, as I have often seen; but if any one who is under the influence of falsehood looks at the word, as it lies in the holy repository, it appears to him quite black. If he touches it, it occasions an explosion, attended with a loud noise; and he is thrown

to a corner of the room, where he lies as dead for the space of an hour. If he write any passage of it on a piece of paper, and the paper be thrown up toward heaven, the same explosion follows, and the paper is torn to pieces and vanishes away."

Observe: These things could only be done by the almighty power of God. And can anyone think the all-wise God would work all these miracles for no end?

21. "Every verse communicates with some particular society in heaven; and the whole communicates with the universal heaven. Therefore, as the Lord is God, so also heaven is the word." Exquisite nonsense and self-contradiction!

"There was an ancient word extant in the world, previous to that given to the children of Israel." I cannot believe it. I believe there were no letters in the world, till God wrote the two tables. "This word is preserved in heaven; and also in Great Tartary.

"I have conversed with angels who came from Great Tartary, and informed me, the Tartars have had it time immemorial. They said, likewise, that in this word is contained the 'Book of Jasher,' mentioned Joshua x. 13, and the book called 'The Wars of the Lord,' mentioned Numbers xxi. 14. They told me that they cannot endure any foreigner to come among them; that the spirits from Tartary are separated from others, dwelling in a more eminent expanse; and they do not admit among them any from the Christian world. The cause of this separation is, because they are in possession of another word."

What, and do they envy it to others? And does this envy occasion their being so inhospitable? One may boldly say, this information never came from the angels of God!

OF HEAVEN AND HELL.

22. Many of the preceding errors are not small; neither are they of little importance. But of far greater importance are the accounts he gives us "concerning Heaven and Hell." I have now his treatise on this subject lying before me; a few extracts from which I shall lay before the reader:—

"Many learned Christians, when they find themselves,

after death, in a body, in garments, and in houses, are in amazement."

And well they may be; since the Scripture gives us not the least intimation of any such thing.

"I have conversed with all whom I knew in the body, after their departure from it; with some for months, with some a year; and with many others, in all, I suppose, a hundred thousand; many of whom were in heaven, and many in hell."

Perhaps, in a course of years, the gentleman of Argos might see an hundred thousand actors.

"Spirits are men in human form; and still they see, hear, and enjoy their senses."

"When they enter the other world, they retain the same face and voice that they had before; but, after a time, these are changed, according to their predominant affection, into beauty or deformity."

"As soon as they arrive, all who were relations, friends, or acquaintance before, meet and converse together, having a perfect remembrance of each other. But they are soon parted, according to the different lives they had led, and no more see or know one another."

"Arians find no place in heaven, but are gradually divested of the power of thinking right on any subject. At length they either become mutes, or else talk foolishly, moping about with their arms hanging down before them, like paralytics or idiots."

"When a man dies, he is equally in a body as before, nor is there to all appearance the least difference; only it is a spiritual body, freed from all the grossness of matter; so he seems to himself to be as he was in this world, and knows not as yet that he has passed through death. He possesses every outward and inward sense that he possessed before; and he who took delight in studying, reads and writes as before. He leaves nothing behind him but his earthly covering: He takes with him his memory; retaining all that he ever heard, saw, read, learned, or thought in the world, from his infancy to his leaving it."

Who is able to reconcile this either with Scripture, philosophy, or common sense?

"After death, the examining angels inspect a man's face, and commence their inquest, which begins at the fingers of

each hand, and is from thence continued throughout the whole body."

Was ever so odd a thing imagined as this examining spirits from the fingers' ends?

23. "The new comers are tried by good spirits. They are known from turning themselves frequently to certain points of the compass, and from taking the ways that lead thereto, when they are left alone.

"Men eminently holy are taken to heaven immediately after death; and men eminently wicked cast into hell. But most spirits go through three states before they enter either hell or heaven.

"In the first, men do not know that they are dead. This may continue a week, a month, a year. Men and their wives commonly continue together a longer or shorter time, according as they agreed in this world. But if they had lived in variance, they usually break into strife and quarrelling, even unto fighting. Yet they are not totally separated till they enter their second state.

"The second state is their inferior state, in which both the good and bad, being stripped of all disguise and all self-deceit, see and show what spirit they are of.

"The third state is a state of instruction for them to go to heaven.

"But few spirits go to heaven till they have undergone vastation. This is performed in subterraneous places, where some pass through very painful discipline. Here they are divested of all earthly affections, without which admission into heaven would be attended with danger. The region appointed for vastation is under the feet, and surrounded with infernals. Evil spirits are employed in the vastation of the good."

Then the wicked do not cease from troubling, neither are the weary at rest!

How exceeding small is the difference between the Romish and the Mystic purgatory!

24. "Spirits that desire to go to heaven are told that God denies entrance into heaven to no one; and if they desire it, they may be admitted into it, and stay there. Some of them accordingly were admitted; but no sooner did they enter, than they were struck with the influx of the heavenly light, and seized with such a heartfelt agony, that they were

racked with infernal pains, and, being mad with anguish, cast themselves down headlong.

"Sometimes hypocrites insinuate themselves into heaven. But they presently feel an inward anguish, on which they cast themselves headlong into hell among their fellows."

But how did they pass the great gulf? Is it filled up since the time of Dives and Lazarus?

25. Let us now consider what account the Baron gives of the inhabitants of heaven:—

"God sometimes appears in heaven in an angelical form, but commonly as a sun; not horizontally or vertically, but before the face of the angels, in a middle attitude. He appears in two places; in one before the right eye, in the other before the left eye. Before the right, He appears as a perfect sun; before the left, as a bright moon, of the same size with our moon, and surrounded with many lesser moons."

How agrees this poor, low, childish account, with that grand one of the Apostle's, "Who dwelleth in the light which no man can approach; whom no man hath seen, nor can see?" (1 Tim. vi. 16.) No, nor men-angels, as the Baron calls them.

"There is not an angel in heaven that was created such, nor a devil that was once a good angel; but all the angels and all the devils were formerly men upon earth."

This grand position of the Baron, which runs through all his Works, that all angels and devils were once men, without which his whole hypothesis falls to the ground, is palpably contrary to Scripture. We read in the thirty-eighth chapter of Job, "When I laid the foundations of the earth, the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." But man was not yet created. Therefore, these sons of God were not, nor ever had been, men.

On the other hand, we read, 2 Cor. xi. 3, "The serpent," that is, the devil, "beguiled Eve through his subtilty." But this devil could not have been a man; for Abel, the first man that died, was not yet born.

"The angels are of both sexes, and there is marriage in heaven as well as on earth. Their beatitudes of spiritual conjugal love may be reckoned up to many thousands."

How is this consistent with our Lord's words, "In the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in

marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven?" (Matt. xxii. 30.)

"The angels are not always in the same state, with regard to love and wisdom: Sometimes their love is intense; sometimes not. When it is lowest, they may be said to be in the shade, and in the cold, as their brightness is obscured, and their state unjoyous. They are eclipsed and in a joyless state; otherwise, they would be carried away by self-love."

What! Can the angels in heaven be "carried away by self-love?" Then they may drop into hell.

"The angels of the highest heaven are naked, because they are in perfect innocence." (I thought all the angels had been in perfect innocence.) "The next in flame-coloured robes, the lower in white.

"The angels of an inferior heaven cannot converse with those of the superior; neither can they see them when they look up, their heaven being veiled, as it were, with a dark mist: Nor can the superior angels converse with them, without being deprived of their wisdom.

"Divine influx passes from God to man through his forehead; from the lower angels, all round from his forehead and temples; from the highest angels, through the back part of his head."

26. It would be tedious to point out the particular oddities and absurdities in the preceding account. It may suffice to remark in general, that it contains nothing sublime, nothing worthy the dignity of the subject. Most of the images are low, and mean, and earthly, not raising, but sinking, the mind of the reader; representing the very angels of God in such a light, as might move us, not to worship, but despise them. And there is a grossness and coarseness in his whole description of the invisible world, which I am afraid will exceedingly tend to confirm rational infidels in a total disbelief of it.

27. But the most dangerous part of all his writings I take to be the account which he gives of hell. It directly tends to familiarize it to unholy men, to remove all their terror, and to make them consider it, not as a place of torment, but a very tolerable habitation.

"In hell," says he, "there appear bats and owls, and likewise wolves, tigers, rats, and mice; and there grow thorns and thistles, briers and brambles. But these some-

times disappear; and then nothing is to be seen but heaps of stones, and fens full of croaking frogs."

Yes, much more is to be seen, in his "Treatise of Heaven and Hell." Hear his own words:—

"I was allowed to look into the hells: There are three hells, as well as three heavens: Some of them appeared like caverns in rocks, first proceeding far horizontally, then descending, either perpendicularly or by windings, to a great depth. Some resembled the dens of wild beasts; others, the subterraneous works in mines. Most of them are of three degrees of descent; the uppermost dark, the lowest of a fiery appearance. In some hells appear, as it were, ruins of houses, in which infernal spirits skulk. In the milder hells are a kind of rude cottages; in some places like a city with streets and lanes, inhabited by infernal spirits, that live together in hatred, quarrellings, and fighting even to blood, while in the streets thefts and robberies are committed. There are also gloomy woods in which the spirits wander like wild beasts; and caves, into which some, when pursued by others, fly for refuge. Moreover, there are sandy deserts, with ragged rocks and scattered cottages; and to these deserts the worst spirits are at last driven."

28. But how does this agree with what we read in the Scripture concerning hell-fire?

The Baron answers: "Hell-fire is not a material fire, but it is the love of self and the world, together with all the inordinate passions and evil concupiscences springing therefrom. They who are in hell have no sensation of heat or burning, but only such kind of heat as inflames their evil passions. But this heat is turned into intense cold, on any influx of heat from heaven. At such times, the infernals are seized with a convulsive shivering, like people in an ague-fit."

It was said, "Evil spirits cast themselves into hell of their own accord." How does this come to pass? "There exhale from hell into the world of spirits certain fetid vapours, which evil spirits are greedily fond of. For as was the sin which each was fond of in this life, such is the stink of which he is fond in the next. Thus they that had perverted divine truths, delight in urinous smells; misers, in such smells as proceed from swine and putrefying flesh; while such as lived in sensual pleasures, find their gratification in ordure; and hence we may perceive whence melancholy and lowness of

spirits proceed. Those spirits that delight in things indigested and putrid, such as meats corrupted in the stomach, hold their confabulations in such sinks of uncleanness in man as are suitable to their impure affections. These spirits are near the stomach; some higher, some lower, and occasion uneasiness of mind; but this anguish, those who know no better, ascribe to disorders of the stomach or bowels."

But to return: "From every particular hell, exhale effluvia from the qualities of the spirits therein. These striking the senses of those that are of similar affections, excite in them the most grateful perceptions. They presently turn to the quarter whence those effluvia rise, and hasten to be there. On their first arrival, they are received with a show of kindness; but it lasts only a few hours; then they are vexed all manner of ways. And these miseries are called hell-fire.

"Gnashing of teeth means, the various disputes and wranglings of such as are in error."

How egregiously trifling is this account! So puerile, so far beneath the importance of the subject, that one who did not know the character of the writer, might naturally imagine he was turning it into burlesque.

29. But the masterpiece of all he has wrote upon the head, you have in the following account, which I transcribe at large, that the pious reader may know how to judge of this highly-illuminated author:—

"The state of those who enter the other world is as follows:—1. As soon as they die, they do not know for some days but that they are living in the former world." This is a favourite sentiment of the Baron; but how palpably absurd! "2. They then see they are in the world of spirits, which is between heaven and hell." No: This will never agree with our Lord's words, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise:" Neither with those, "The rich man also died; and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment." Here was no interval; but as soon as ever he had left the earth, he was lifting up his eyes in hell! "3. The new spirit is led about to various societies, good and bad, and examined how he is affected by one or the other. 4. If he is affected with good, he is introduced to good ones of various kinds, till he comes to a society corresponding with his own natural affection. He there puts off the natural, and puts on the spiritual, affection; and then is taken up into heaven." How utterly

contrary is this roundabout way, to the plain words of Scripture, "The poor man died, and was carried of angels into Abraham's bosom!" See, the instant the soul left the body, it was lodged in the paradise of God. "5. They who have no affection to good are introduced to the evil societies of various kinds, till they come to one that corresponds with their evil affections." O no! The devil and his angels will make shorter work with those that know not God. "6. Such as formerly enjoyed power and authority are made rulers over societies; but as they knew not how to use their authority, after a few days they are degraded from it. I have seen such spirits, when they were removed from one society to another, and invested with power in each; yet, after a short time, degraded in all. 7. After frequent degradations they do not care to engage in any other public office, but retire and sit down in sadness, till they are removed into a desert, where there are cottages for their habitations. There work is given them to do; and in proportion as they do it, they receive food; but if they do it not, they are kept fasting, till hunger forces them to work. Food in the spiritual world is like the various kinds of food in our world; and it is given from heaven by the Lord to every one, according to the services he performs; for to him who does no service, no food is given." Did ever mortal before so practise the art of sinking? give so poor, low, gross an account of the other world? But he proceeds: "8. After some time, they are disgusted with all employment; and then they go out of their cottages, and sit down in solitude and indolence: But as no food is given them, they grow hungry, and think of nothing but how they may get something to eat. Some of whom they ask alms, say, 'Come with us, and we will give you work and meat too.'" Can anyone believe this,—that spirits suffer hunger, and are obliged to go a-begging? "9. They work awhile; but then leave their work, and betake themselves to company, till their masters turn them off. 10. On their dismission, they see a path that leads to a sort of cavern. The door is opened, and they enter in, and ask whether any food is to be had there. Being answered, 'There is,' they ask leave to stay there, and leave is given them. Then they are brought into the cavern, and the door is shut after them. The governor of the cavern comes, and says, 'Ye are never to leave this place more. Behold your companions: They all

work hard; and, in proportion to their work, they receive food from heaven.' Their companions then tell them, 'Our governor knows for what work every one is best suited. He enjoins it daily; and when we have finished our work, we receive our food.'" O how much more comfortable is the condition of these spirits in hell, than that of the galley-slaves at Marseilles, or the Indians in the mines of Potosi! "'But if we will not finish our work, we receive neither food nor clothes.'" Clothes! I never knew before that we should want any in the other world. "If any does mischief to another, he is thrown into a corner of the cavern, upon a couch of cursed dust." Does he mean of hot ashes? "Here he is miserably tormented, till the governor sees he repents; and then he is taken off, and ordered again to his work." Was ever anything more curious, or more encouraging to men that resolve to live and die in their sins? You see, there is place for repentance even in hell! If he repent of his sins even there, though he may be tormented a while, yet the devil, seeing him penitent, will have mercy upon him! But here is more comfort still: "Everyone in hell is at liberty to walk, converse, and to sleep, when he has done his work. He is then"—surely such a thought never entered into the heart of a Christian before!—"He is then led into the inner part of the cavern, where there are harlots, and he is permitted to take one for himself." Amazing! So the Christian Koran exceeds even the Mahometan! Mahomet allowed such to be in paradise; but he never thought of placing them in hell! The Baron should have concluded here; for nothing can exceed this. But he adds: "Hell consists of such caverns, which are nothing but eternal work-houses. The work of those who were unjust judges is to prepare vermilion, and to mix it up into a paint, to paint the faces of harlots. The most abandoned spirits are driven into a wilderness, and compelled to carry burdens."

So here is the uttermost punishment that is allotted for the worst of all the damned spirits!

30. I will add but one more of the Baron's dreams, to illustrate one of the preceding: "Satan was once permitted to ascend out of hell with a woman to my house. She was of the tribe of Sirens, who can assume all figures, and all habits of beauty and ornament. All such are harlots in the world of spirits. I asked Satan if the woman was his

wife. He answered, 'Neither I, nor any in our society, have wives: She is my harlot.' She then inspired him with wanton lust, and he kissed her and cried, 'Ah, my Adonis!' I said, 'What do thou and thy companions think of God?' He said, 'God, heaven, angels, and the like, are all empty words.' I answered, 'O Satan, thou hast lost thy understanding! Recollect that thou hast lived in another world!' Immediately his recollection returned, and he saw his error. But the cloud soon returned upon his understanding, and he was just the same as before."

31. Having now taken a sufficient view of the Baron's reveries, let us turn to the oracles of God. What saith the Scripture? What account does God himself give of the state of wicked men after death? Not to multiply texts, I will cite a very few out of many that might be produced: "Tophet is ordained of old: He hath made it deep and large:" (God himself, not man:) "The pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, as a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it." (Isaiah xxx. 33.) "If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: It is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell-fire; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." (Mark ix. 47, 48.) "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." (Matt. xxv. 41.) "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power." (2 Thess. i. 9.) And in what condition are those that are punished with this everlasting destruction? Do they eat, and drink, and wear apparel, and choose themselves harlots, and walk, and enjoy sweet sleep? Nothing less. If the word of God is true, if "the Scripture cannot be broken," the wicked, one and all, "are cast into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." (Rev. xix. 20.) Yea, "whosoever is not found written in the book of life, will be cast into the lake of fire." (xx. 15.) But they will not eat, or drink, or converse, or dally with women; neither will they sleep there. For "they have no rest, day nor night; but the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever!"

32. Who illuminated either Jacob Behmen, or Baron Swedenborg, flatly to contradict these things? It could not be the God of the holy Prophets; for He is always consist-

ent with himself. Certainly it was the spirit of darkness. And indeed "the light which was in them was darkness," while they laboured to kill the never-dying worm, and to put out the unquenchable fire! And with what face can any that profess to believe the Bible, give any countenance to these dreamers? that filthy dreamer, in particular, who takes care to provide harlots, instead of fire and brimstone, for the devils and damned spirits in hell! O my brethren, let none of you that fear God recommend such a writer any more! much less labour to make the deadly poison palatable, by sweetening it with all care! All his folly and nonsense we may excuse; but not his making God a liar; not his contradicting, in so open and flagrant a manner, the whole oracles of God! True, his tales are often exceeding lively, and as entertaining as the tales of the fairies: But I dare not give up my Bible for them; and I must give up one or the other. If the preceding extracts are from God, then the Bible is only a fable: But if "all Scriptures are given by inspiration of God," then let these dreams sink into the pit from whence they came.

WAKEFIELD,
May 9, 1782.

JOHN WESLEY.

REMARKS

ON

THE COUNT DE BUFFON'S "NATURAL HISTORY."

[PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1782.]

Malebranche maintains an odd conceit
As ever enter'd Frenchman's pate.

PRIOR.

BUT is not the Count de Buffon's first conceit full as odd? —that the earth (and so every other planet) is only a slice of the sun, cut off from it by the stroke of a comet. (Page

64.) He that would take pains to confute this wild theory, must have little to do.

In consequence of this, he supposes all the inner part of the earth to be glass, and strains every natural phenomenon to support his hypothesis. He is certainly a man of a most lively imagination: Pity that his judgment is not equal to it.

Many of his thoughts are quite singular. So: "The upper stratum of the earth, from which all animals and vegetables derive their growth and nourishment, is nothing but a composition of the decayed particles of animal and vegetable bodies." (Vol. i., page 12.) Impossible! Was it composed of decayed animals and vegetables before any animal or vegetable had decayed?

"The earth was covered with the sea for many ages, and thereby the strata therein were formed." (Page 15.) I believe all the upper strata were formed by the deluge; though no man can tell how. Yet I allow, the sea has covered many countries, which are now far distant from it. And I suppose some mountains were then formed by the flux and reflux of it, in the manner he describes.

"The vapours exhaled from the earth deposit mud, of which, mixed with particles of animal and vegetable substances, or rather with particles of stone and sand, the upper stratum of the earth is composed." (Page 161.)

How is this consistent with what was said before?—This upper stratum of the earth is "nothing but a composition of the decayed particles of animals and vegetables." (Page 12.) And how is the following sentence consistent with it? —"Vegetables derive more of their substance from the air and from water than from the earth." (Page 168.)

"All stones were originally a soft paste." (Page 173.) It is probable that most stones were.

"Clay and sand are substances of the same kind." (Page 184.) I doubt this cannot be proved.

"Glass is the true elementary earth; and all mixed bodies are only glass in disguise." *(Ibid.)* Perfectly new! Believe it who can.

"If flints remain long exposed to the air, and unmoved, their upper surface is always white." (Page 185.) "Expose to the air the hardest and blackest flint, and in less than a year the colour of its surface will be changed, and it will

gradually lose its hardness." Not so. The flints of which most of the churches in Norwich are built, have lost nothing of their hardness; and the surface, though exposed to the air, has not changed colour at all, in two or three hundred years.

"Crystals are an exudation of flints." (Page 199.) I doubt it.

"Red porphyry is composed of the prickles of the sea-hedgehog. At Ficin, in Burgundy, there is a red stone that is entirely composed of them, and there is a considerable stratum of it." (Page 213.)

"The number of sea-shells is so great in every part of the earth, it is absolutely impossible that all the fish which inhabited those shells should live at the same time." (Page 221.) "Neither have we any proof that the earth was entirely dissolved at the time of the deluge." (Page 222.)

I believe, therefore, that some of those shells were deposited by the deluge; but most of them in succeeding ages.

"Some mountains in Switzerland exceed the highest of the Pyrenees three thousand two hundred yards. Many mountains in Asia are higher than any in Europe. Atlas in Afric is at least as high as those of Asia." (Page 231.)

Nay, Dr. Shaw, who measured it, informs us, that the height of it is only six hundred yards! Does this exceed the Pyrenees, or mountains in Switzerland? It is not half the height of Snowdon-Hill.

"Mountains do not furnish springs, except at their bottom." (Page 232.) They do; often on their sides, sometimes at the very top; especially when a higher mountain is near.

"My theory rests on four facts: 1. That the earth, to a considerable depth, consists of parallel strata, which were once soft." I think this is highly probable. "2. That the sea did for many ages cover the whole earth." I think this is highly improbable; though it has doubtless covered many parts of it for some time. "3. That the tides, and other motions of the waters, have produced many inequalities in the bottom of the sea." This is unquestionable. "4. That the figure and corresponding angles of the mountains have risen from the same cause." (Page 243.) Probably this is true of some mountains, not of all.

"The surface of rivers from bank to bank is not level. When a river swells suddenly, the middle of it is higher than the sides, sometimes two or three feet. But near the mouth, the middle is lower than the sides." This is a curious observation.

"There are often currents of air, directly contrary to each other, one above the other. But this never lasts long; for its general cause is, the resistance of some large cloud, which reflects the wind in a direction contrary to its natural course, but is soon dissipated." (Page 376.) A just solution of that odd phenomenon.

"In Cerem, an island near Amboyne, it is winter in the north part, while it is summer in the south. And the interval between these two seasons is not above three or four leagues." (Page 388.)

"In Egypt a south wind prevails in summer, which is so hot as to stop respiration. It prevails still more terribly along the Persic Gulf, suffocating all persons who fall within its vortex." (Page 389.) The same blows in summer along the Red Sea.

"Whirlpools are occasioned by contrary currents of water, and whirlwinds by contrary currents of air." (Page 397.)

"Tufa is an imperfect substance, between stone and earth, and deriving its origin from both, by the intervention of rain-water."

"Of the changes of land into sea, and of sea into land. I believe these changes have been very frequent." (Page 482.)

The sum is, 1. "The whole of what is now dry land was once covered by the sea. 2. The tides, and other movements of the sea, perpetually detach, from the coasts and from the bottom of the sea, shells and matter of every sort. And these are deposited in other places in the form of sediments, and give rise to the horizontal strata there. 3. Most of the inequalities on the surface of the globe have arisen from the motions of the waters of the sea; and most mountains were formed by the successive accumulation of these sediments. 4. The currents which followed the direction of these inequalities, afterward bestowed on them their present figure, that is, their corresponding angles. 5. Most of the matter detached from the coasts, or the bottom of the sea, were deposited in the form of a fine impalpable powder," (this I doubt,) "which entirely filled

the cavities of shells. 6. The horizontal strata, which have been formed by these accumulations, which were at first soft, hardened as they dried; and the perpendicular fissures arose from their drying. 7. The surface of the earth has been disfigured by many vicissitudes;—rain, frost, rivers, winds, subterraneous fires, earthquakes, inundations, whereby the sea has alternately changed places with the dry land, especially in the first ages after the creation."

Vol. ii. The Count's theory of the earth is wild and whimsical enough, but it is innocent. I cannot say so much for his theory of generation, which I take to be utterly inconsistent both with reason and Scripture. To prepare the way for it, he first endeavours to confound the distinction between animals and vegetables; between which all men but himself know there is an essential, unalterable difference; every animal having a degree of self-motion and sensation; neither of which any vegetable has. Then he substitutes for the plain word "generation" a quaint word of his own, "reproduction," in order to level man not only with the beasts that perish, but with nettles or onions.

Vol. ii., p. 15: He lays the foundation of his wonderful theory: "The Creator" (I exceedingly doubt whether he believes there is any such being) "has put no fixed limits between animals and vegetables." 2. "The production of an animal requires a smaller exertion of nature than the producing a vegetable, or rather no exertion at all." Marvellous indeed! 3. "Animation or life is a property belonging to all matter." And is not thought too?

"Every animal or vegetable contains in every part of it a germ or embryo of the same species, which may be expanded into a whole of the same kind with that of which it is a part." (Page 16.)

This is the nature of a polypus; but who can show that there is any other such animal in the world? I deny that a worm is such. It is not true that every part of this contains a whole. Show me, who can, any animal but a polypus, which has "a power of multiplying by all its parts." Till then, the foundation of this whole theory totters. Till then we cannot believe that "there exists in nature an infinity of organic, living particles, of the same substance with organized beings:" (Page 18:) A position that directly leads to Atheism. So does his denial of any final causes in the

world: (Page 69:) This is Atheism barefaced. For if God did not create all things for determinate ends, he did not create them at all.

All writers upon generation suppose either spermatic worms or eggs. But both of these systems he thinks impossible. His grand objection is: "How inconceivably minute must those animalcula have been when in the loins of the first man!" This may confound our imagination, but is no argument at all, unless he could confute that well-known demonstration of Dr. Keill, that "any given particle of matter may be so extended as to fill any given space," (suppose a million times larger than that occupied by the solar system,) "and yet the pores of it shall not exceed any given magnitude." Would not any man of sense, who has read and considered this, see the weakness of Buffon's main argument?

But, says he, "The pre-existent germs in the first man are not inanimate embryos, included within each other, but real animals." (Page 137.) Yes, according to his hypothesis, but not according to ours. As to difficulties in accounting for the manner of generation, they will not weigh a straw with a man of reflection. For how are we obliged to account for it at all? Let it lie among the inscrutable secrets of our Creator.

All that I learn from his experiments is, to doubt whether the supposed seminal animalcula are alive at all; and indeed to doubt concerning the whole tribe of microscopic animalcula whether there be any real life in them. I rather think that "these moving bodies are not real animals, as they exist in the seminal fluids of both sexes, and in the flesh of all animals, and in the seeds of all plants." (Page 212.)

"It is then apparent that all parts of animals and of vegetables are composed of living organic particles." (Page 214.) Not at all. It is no more apparent that they are living, than that they are rational.

At page 330 the Count totally denies that children are marked in consequence of their mothers' longing. Is this affectation or ignorance? But he aims at accounting for it: "The marks of fruits are always yellow, red, or black." No. My own mother longed for mulberries. In consequence of this, my eldest brother had all his life a mulberry on his neck. And both the size and colour varied just like those

of a real mulberry. Every spring it was small and white; it then grew larger, exactly as real mulberries do, being greenish, then red, then a deep purple, as large and of as deep a purple as any mulberry on the tree.

"All animals but man are totally void of reason." (Page 367.) You may as well say, they are totally deprived of sight. Only put the plain word understanding for the equivocal word reason; and can you say, They are all totally void of understanding? No man dares affirm it.

"Smiles and tears are peculiar to the human species." (Page 376.) No; stags, and even oxen, shed tears. An ox will weep much, if separated from his yoke-fellow.

"According to Simpson's tables, above a fourth part of children die in the first year; more than a third in two years; and at least one half in the first three years.

"May we be enabled to write the history of the critical period, without exciting any ideas but what are strictly philosophical; with that philosophical apathy which annihilates every loose desire." (Page 401.)

And after this grave declaration, he will enlarge upon virginity, impotence, castration, infibulation, (never heard of before in England,) in such a manner as a modest Heathen or Mahometan would be ashamed of!

It was at first my design to go through the whole of the Count's work; but I dare not spend my time so idly. Although the Edinburgh translator has shortened it much, it is still intolerably long and tedious; and the author's fancy so vastly outruns his judgment, that he asserts a hundred palpable falsehoods. But what shocks a serious reader most is, his obscenity and his Atheism. The former glares even where one would least expect it: In describing, for instance, a horse and a mule. I wonder how he missed a similar piece of natural history relating to that noble animal, a sow. As to his Atheism, I was for some time in doubt; as he often names God to grace his page. But I can doubt no longer: As he openly professes and defends materialism, and every materialist is an Atheist, I cannot set him down for any other. But, were more proof wanting, that curious sentence, vol. iii., page 505, is plain enough:—"In most beings, there are fewer useful or necessary parts than those which are useless or redundant. But as we wish to refer everything to a certain end, when parts have no apparent

uses, we either suppose that their uses are concealed from us, or invent relations which have no existence." He that asserts this, must totally deny a wise Creator: Consequently, he must either believe that chance created the world, or that it existed from eternity. In either case, he denies the being of a God. I cannot, therefore, but place the Count de Buffon as far beneath Voltaire, Rousseau, and Hume, (all of whom acknowledge the being of a God,) in religion as in understanding.

REMARKS

UPON

MR. LOCKE'S "ESSAY ON HUMAN UNDERSTANDING."

PEMBROKE, *April* 28, 1781.

FOR some days I have employed myself on the road in reading Mr. Locke's "Essay on Human Understanding:" And I do not now wonder at its having gone through so many editions in so short a time. For what comparison is there between this deep, solid, weighty treatise, and the lively, glittering trifle of Baron Montesquieu? As much as between tinsel and gold; between glass-beads and diamonds. A deep fear of God, and reverence for his word, are discernible throughout the whole: And though there are some mistakes, yet these are abundantly compensated by many curious and useful reflections. I think, therefore, a little time will be well employed in pointing out those little mistakes, and in extracting some of the most useful passages of that excellent treatise.*

I think that point, "that we have no innate principles," is abundantly proved, and cleared from all objections that have any shadow of strength. And it was highly needful to prove the point at large, as all that follows rests on this foundation; and as it was at that time an utter paradox both in the philosophical and the religious world.

* The "passages" here referred to were inserted by Mr. Wesley in the fifth, sixth, and seventh volumes of the Arminian Magazine.—EDIT.

That all our ideas come from sensation or reflection, is fully proved in the Second Book. And why should any one be angry at his using the word "idea" for "whatever is the object of the mind in thinking?" Although, it is true, it is his favourite word, which he often thrusts in not so properly.

That "Socrates asleep and Socrates awake is not the same person," (Book II., chap. i., sec. 11,) I can by no means allow. This odd assertion depends upon another, which will be considered by and by.

The operations of the mind are more accurately divided by Aristotle than by Mr. Locke. They are three, and no more: Simple apprehension, judgment, and discourse. It seems Mr. Locke only gives a new name to simple apprehension, terming it perception. Of judgment and reason, he speaks in the Fourth Book. Discerning, comparing, compounding, abstracting, are species of judgment. Retention, or memory, refers to them all.

Complex ideas are most awkwardly divided (I fear, chiefly through affectation of novelty) into modes, substances, and relations. (Chap. xii.) How much clearer is the vulgar division of beings into the ten classes called "predicaments;" or into the two,—substances and accidents! If the word "mode" has any determinate meaning, it is only another term for accidents. And are not relations one species of accidents? So that Mr. Locke's discovery comes to this,—Complex ideas are either modes, substances, or a particular sort of modes!

When accidents are termed *modus entis* or *entium,* in Latin, the phrase seems proper enough. But why any man should squeeze it into the English tongue, I know not; since the old word "accidents" is full as good: And we may retain it without any danger of "running into the notion, that accidents are a sort of real beings."

"What is it determines our will with regard to our actions? Some uneasiness a man is under." (Chap. xxi., sec. 31.) Not always. Pleasure determines it as often as pain. But "desire is uneasiness." It is not: We desire to enjoy pleasure as much as to avoid pain. But desire differs *toto genere,* both from one and the other. Therefore, all that follows, about pain alone determining the will, is wrong from end to end.

"If it be asked, What is it moves desire? I answer, Happiness, and that alone." (Chap. xxi., sec. 41.) How flatly does that contradict all that went before, where it is said, "Uneasiness alone causes desire!"

"Section 8.—An animal is a living organized body; and, consequently, the same animal, as we have observed, is the same continued life communicated to different particles of matter, as they happen successively to be united to that organized living body. And whatever is said of other definitions, ingenuous observation puts it past doubt, that the idea in our minds, of which the sound 'man' in our mouths is the sign, is nothing else but of an animal of such a certain form; since I think I may be confident, that whoever should see a creature of his own shape and make, though it had no more reason than even a cat or a parrot, would call him still a man; or whoever should hear a cat or a parrot discourse, reason, and philosophize, would call or think it nothing but a cat or a parrot; and say the one was a dull, irrational man, and the other a very intelligent, rational parrot. A relation we have, in an author of great note,* is sufficient to countenance the supposition of a rational parrot. His words are:—

"'I had a mind to know from Prince Maurice's own mouth, the account of a common, but much credited, story, that I had heard so often from many others, of an old parrot he had in Brazil, during his government there, that spoke, and asked and answered common questions, like a reasonable creature; so that those of his train there generally concluded it to be witchery or possession; and one of his Chaplains, who lived long afterwards in Holland, would never from that time endure a parrot, but said, they all had a devil in them. I had heard many particulars of this story, and assevered by people hard to be discredited, which made me ask Prince Maurice what there was of it. He said, with his usual plainness and dryness in talk, there was something true, but a great deal false, of what had been reported. I desired to know of him, what there was of the first. He told me short and coldly, that he had heard of such an old parrot when he came to Brazil; and though he believed nothing of it, and it was a good way off, yet he had so much curiosity as to send for it; that it was a very great

* Sir William Temple.

and a very old one; and when it came first into the room where the Prince was, with a great many Dutchmen about him, it said presently, *What a company of white men are here!* They asked it what he thought that man was, pointing at the Prince. It answered, *Some General or other.* When they brought it close to him, he asked it, *D'où venez vous?* It answered, *De Marinnan.* The Prince, *A qui estes-vous?* The parrot, *A un Portugais.* Prince, *Que fais-tu là?* Parrot, *Je garde les poules.* The Prince laughed, and said, *Vous gardez les poules?* The parrot answered, *Ouy, moy, et je sçay bien faire;* * and made the chuck four or five times that people use to make to chickens, when they call them. I set down the words of this worthy dialogue in French, just as Prince Maurice said them to me. I asked him in what language the parrot spoke; and he said, in Brazilian. I asked whether he understood Brazilian: He said, No; but he had taken care to have two interpreters by him, the one a Dutchman that spoke Brazilian, and the other a Brazilian that spoke Dutch; that he asked them separately and privately, and both of them agreed in telling him just the same thing that the parrot said. I could not but tell this odd story, because it is so much out of the way, and from the first hand, and what may pass for a good one; for I dare say this Prince, at least, believed himself in all he told me, having ever passed for a very honest and pious man. I leave it to naturalists to reason, and to other men to believe, as they please upon it.'"

According to the foregoing account it is evident, Mr. Locke thinks, "consciousness makes personal identity;" that is, knowing I am the same person, makes me the same person. Was ever a more palpable absurdity? Does knowing I exist, make me exist? No; I am before I know I am; and I am the same, before I can possibly know I am the same. Observe, "before" here refers to the order of thinking, not to the order of time.

"Person," says he, "is a thinking intelligent being." Is

* The dialogue between the Prince and the parrot may be thus rendered into English:—Prince.—"Whence come ye?" Parrot.—"From Marinnan." Prince.—"To whom do you belong?" Parrot.—"To a Portuguese." Prince.—"What do you there?" Parrot.—"I look after the chickens." The Prince laughed, and said, "You look after the chickens?" The parrot answered, and said, "Yes, I; and I know well enough how to do it."—EDIT.

it so? Then the same soul is the same person; and that whether it be conscious of being the same or not; and whether it be joined to this or that body. But to constitute the same man, there must be the same body as well as the same soul. But how can this be, seeing the body is changing every moment? That I deny. I deny that the human body changes at all, from the cradle to the grave. By the body I understand that system of vessels which we bring with us into the world, which from that moment is distended more and more in every part, by the adhesion of earthly particles, which circulate through, not only the veins and arteries, but every fibre of its frame. Now this does not, cannot change at all: It neither increases nor diminishes. The blood is in a continual flux; it is not the same for two moments together. But then flesh and blood is not the body; it is only the body's temporary clothing. If this be totally changed every seven years, the body is the same. And, therefore, it is the same man, although he has put on another coat.

Let none then seek a knot in a bulrush. The case is plain, unless it be puzzled by art. I call Cato the same person all his life, because he has the same soul. I call him the same man, because he has the same body too, which he brought into the world.

But what blessed work will Mr. Locke's hypothesis make! If there be no personal identity without consciousness, then Cato is not the same person he was at two months old; for he has no consciousness at all of what he was then. Nay, I have no more consciousness of what I was or did at two years old, than of what Julius Cæsar did. But am I not the same person I was then?

Again: If, consciousness ceasing, identity ceases, a draught of Lethe would change a man into another person. Yea, or if a fever wiped what was past out of the memory, he would not be the same person, nor consequently accountable either to God or man for anything that he, that is, another person, had done before.

There may, therefore, be identity without consciousness. Consequently, although the latter usually accompanies the former, yet it is not the same thing. Yea, and consciousness may be without identity. I know the fact. There is a species of madness, which makes a man conscious of

things he never did, and of words he never spoke. Is he therefore accountable for them? So he thinks; but God's thoughts are not as his thoughts.

Upon the whole, if you take the word "person" for a thinking intelligent being, it is evident, the same soul, conscious or unconscious, is the same person. But if you take it for the same soul, animating the same human body, (in which sense I have always taken it, and I believe every one else that has not been confounded by metaphysical subtlety,) then you and I and every man living is the same person from the cradle to the grave. And God will accordingly reward every man, or every person, (equivalent words,) according to his own works; and that whether he be conscious of them or no; this will make no manner of difference. What every individual man or person sows here, he will reap in eternity.

In reading over the second volume of Mr. Locke's Essay, I was much disappointed: It is by no means equal to the first. The more I considered it, the more convinced I was, 1. That his grand design was, (vain design!) to drive Aristotle's Logic out of the world, which he hated cordially, but never understood: I suppose, because he had an unskilful master, and read bad books upon the subject. 2. That he had not a clear apprehension. Hence he had few clear ideas; (though he talks of them so much;) and hence so many confused, inadequate definitions. I wonder none of his opponents hit this blot.

I have not time to point out half the mistakes in this volume. I can only make a few cursory strictures.

All along he dotes upon ideas, and frequently puzzles the cause by dragging in the word needlessly and improperly.

Page 3. "To what is it that names, in the use of language, are immediately applied?" Did he know what he meant? If he did, how crude and indistinct is the expression!

Page 4. All this chapter Dean Aldrich comprises in three lines: *Vox est signum rei vel conceptûs ex instituto vicarium: Primò declarat conceptum; deinde supponit pro re.* "A word is a sign purposely put for a conception or thing: It first expresses your thought; then the thing you think of."

Page 11. Here his hatred of logic breaks out: "Defining

by genus and difference may be the shortest way, yet I doubt whether it be the best." Then what is the best? No man living can tell a better than this; only if we do not know the difference, we must assign the properties.

Page 21. "The disputes of the schools." I doubt whether Mr. Locke had ever a clear idea of that term. What does he mean by them in, "O ye schoolmen!" But who are they? all the commentators upon Aristotle in the fifteenth and sixteenth century? Did he read them all? Did he ever read one of them through? I doubt, not. Then he should not rail at he knew not what.

Page 22. A man need only read the first chapter of Genesis, to be convinced that God made every species of animals "after its kind;" giving a peculiar essence to each, whether we know that real essence or no.

Page 26. I wish he had understood the three rules of definition, and he would have wrote far more intelligibly than he did.

"The jargon of the schools." *(Ibid.)* What does that term mean? I doubt he had no clear idea of this.

Page 37. "Species and their essences have no real existence in things." Moses says otherwise; and so does Mr. Locke, page 44: "By real essence, I mean that real constitution of anything which is the foundation of all its properties. But this we do not know." True; but it exists. Yet this he denies again, page 50, and page 53, where he says, "Species are not distinguished by generation." Certainly they are: A man generates a man; a dog, a dog; a crow, a crow; and so in other both plants and animals. If there are any exceptions, (as in monsters,) this does not vacate the general rule.

Page 63. "Nature makes many things which agree in their inward frame and constitution: But it is not this real essence that distinguishes them into species." Surely it is: Yet he strangely adds, "The boundaries of the species are made by man." No; by the almighty Creator.

"Each abstract idea makes a distinct species." *(Ibid.)* What! Does my idea of them make a horse, a cow, and a dog, three distinct species? Would not these species be equally distinct, if I had no idea of them at all?

Page 71. The chapter about particles I do not understand; nor does Mr. Locke seem to understand himself

He aims at something, but makes nothing out. *Operosè nihil agit.*

Page 82. "The simple ideas that co-exist in substances." No: Ideas exist only in the mind.

Page 83. "The complex ideas of substances are very different on different men." What then? They are not so different but that all men know a horse from a cow, a crow from a pigeon, and iron from gold.

Page 93. "Logic has much contributed to the obscurity of language." The abuse of logic has; but the true use of it is the noblest means under heaven to prevent or cure the obscurity of language. To divide simple terms according to the logical rules of division, and then to define each member of the division according to the three rules of definition, does all that human art can do, in order to our having a clear and distinct idea of every word we use. Had Mr. Locke done this, what abundance of obscurity and confusion would have been prevented!

Page 99. "Though the word 'man' signifies nothing but a complete idea of properties united in a substance; yet we commonly suppose it to stand for a thing having a real essence on which those properties depend." I do suppose it; and so does everyone that has common sense.

Page 100. "It is a false supposition, that there are certain precise essences by which things are distinguished into species." It is a most true supposition. The Scripture asserts it; and all experience agrees thereto.

Page 140. "Possibly we shall never be able to know whether any mere material being thinks or not." I wonder Mr. Locke did not rather give up this absurd sentence, than defend it through thick and thin.

Page 201. "Man or gold, used for species of things, constituted by real essences, stand for we know not what." Yes, we know what they stand for perfectly well; and no sophister can persuade us to the contrary.

Whatever Mr. Locke says against the terms "essence" or "species," he can find no better words. But I impute this to his violent spleen against logic, which he never rightly understood.

Page 206. "Put a piece of gold separate from the reach and influence of all other bodies." Where is that? Certainly beyond the fixed stars.

Page 209. "Judgment may reach farther." Had he any clear idea affixed to this term.

I think the two next chapters, "Of Maxims, and Of Trifling Propositions," are very true and very useless.

Page 272. "The faculty which supplies the place of knowledge, is judgment. The mind has these two faculties: By knowledge it certainly perceives the agreement or disagreement of ideas; by judgment it presumes them to agree or disagree without perceiving it."

O where are clear ideas now? Is knowledge a faculty of the mind? Or was ever judgment taken before for presuming what we do not know? What a vile abuse of words is here!

Judgment is that operation of the mind which pronounces things to agree or disagree. This is all that the word properly means; and refers as much to certain as to probable things.

Page 277. The chapter Of the Degrees of Assent is quite unsatisfactory. Dean Aldrich says more upon that head in twelve lines than Mr. Locke does in twelve pages.

Page 283. "Any testimony, the farther off it is from the original truth, the less force it has." Nay; the testimony on which we believe the resurrection of Christ, has as much force now as seventeen hundred years ago.

Page 288. "Reason is assisting to all our other intellectual faculties, and contains two of them; namely, sagacity, and illation." What a jumble of ideas! "Reason is that faculty which contains two others,—sagacity and illation!" No mortal ever found this out before. By illation, I suppose he means, the inferring one thing from another. Why, then, can he not say plainly, like other men, "The mind has three operations,—simple apprehension, judgment, and discourse?" But if reason be a faculty of the mind, (usually termed the understanding,) it contains them all three; that is, operates all these ways.

Page 290. Here comes his main attack upon logic, by that marvellous invention of substituting juxta-position of ideas in the place of syllogism. But Bishop Browne has so thoroughly confuted this, (in his Essay on "Human Understanding,") that to add anything more is quite superfluous.

Page 300. "I take notice of one manifest mistake in the rules of syllogism,—that particular premises prove nothing."

Can anything show more clearly his total ignorance of logic?

From a careful consideration of this whole work, I conclude that, together with several mistakes, (but none of them of any great importance,) it contains many excellent truths, proposed in a clear and strong manner, by a great master both of reasoning and language. It might, therefore, be of admirable use to young students, if read with a judicious Tutor, who could confirm and enlarge upon what is right, and guard them against what is wrong, in it. They might then make their full use of all the just remarks made by this excellent writer, and yet without that immoderate attachment to him which is so common among his readers.

WHITEHAVEN, JOHN WESLEY
May 28, 1781.

REMARKS

ON

MR. BRYANT'S "ANALYSIS OF ANCIENT MYTHOLOGY."*

I BELIEVE this is one of the most remarkable books in its kind, which has been published for some centuries. The author is a person of a strong understanding, deeply acquainted with ancient literature, and has, by much thought, extracted abundance of truth from a vast heap of absurd fables. Many of his discoveries, indeed, do not admit of certainty, but they are highly probable; and of many others, all circumstances considered, we cannot reasonably doubt.

I doubt most of what he terms radicals, as I know not how to answer that question, "In what language does *ai, eia, air,* &c., signify thus or thus?" Not in Hebrew; not

* These remarks form the introduction to a series of extracts from the work, inserted by Mr. Wesley in the sixth and seventh volumes of the Arminian Magazine.—EDIT.

in Syriac; not in Arabic; not in any language that I have the least knowledge of. Therefore I question whether they mean so in any language that is now, or ever was, upon earth. Whatever then is built on this foundation, can be no more than probable.

If you say, "It means so in the Ammonian language," I ask, How do you know that? Did you ever see a book wrote in that language? No, nor a single sentence. This, therefore, leaves us just as much in the dark as we were before.

One defect more seems to run through the whole work, —entire want of method. Had the dissertations, which are strangely huddled together, been placed in any regular order, they would have been far more agreeable and more intelligible than they are at present.

THOUGHTS UPON TASTE.

[PUBLISHED IN THE YEAR 1780.]

1. A FEW weeks ago I read with care and attention a celebrated "Essay on Taste." I cannot say, but I entered upon it with great expectation, as I knew the author to be a man of understanding, and one whose natural abilities were improved by a considerable share of learning. I knew likewise that the performance itself had been highly and generally applauded; yea, that the Doctor had been honoured with the medal which is yearly given by the Society to him that produces the best performance on the subject proposed.

2. Yet, to speak the plain truth, I cannot affirm that it altogether answered my expectation. It did not appear to me to be wrote upon a good plan, neither to be well digested. And there are assertions almost in every chapter, which are exceeding disputable. Many of these I could not clearly affirm; some of them I utterly deny. Neither could I find, in the whole tract, any clear, just definition of the subject.

So that after all he has said, one would still be puzzled to answer the question, "What is taste?"

3. But is there any better book upon the subject extant? I do not conceive there is. At least I have not seen it; although there are some ingenious thoughts of Mr. Addison upon it in "The Spectator." And nearly related to this is his fine "Essay on the Pleasures of Imagination." But taste is a more extensive word. It does not relate to the imagination only.

4. It may be the more difficult to understand the precise meaning of the word, because there are so few words that are synonymous to it. I do not recollect any, either in Greek or Latin; no, nor yet in the English language. Indeed we have some which are generally supposed to be nearly equivalent with it. So a man of taste is almost the same with a man of genius, a man of sense, or a man of judgment; but none of these mean exactly the same thing.

5. "Most languages," says Mr. Addison, "make use of this metaphor, to express that faculty of mind which distinguishes the most concealed faults and nicest perfections in writings." But this definition is far too narrow: For taste refers to other things, as well as writings. And when he adds, "It is that faculty of the soul which discovers the beauties of an author with pleasure, and his imperfections with dislike;" this is too narrow still; for taste is concerned with many things beside authors.

6. What then is taste, in the general meaning of the word? It is certainly a faculty of the mind, analogous to the sense of taste. By the external sense we relish various foods, and distinguish one from the other. By the internal, we relish and distinguish from each other various foods offered to the mind. Taste is therefore that internal sense which relishes and distinguishes its proper object. By relishes, I mean, perceives with pleasure; for in the common acceptation of the word, we are not said to have a taste for displeasing, but only for pleasing, objects. And as various as those objects are, so various are the species of taste.

7. Some of these are objects of the understanding. Such are all speculative truths; particularly those of a metaphysical or mathematical nature. So we say, a man has a taste for metaphysics; which is more than to say, he has judgment therein. It implies over and above, that he has a

relish for them; that he finds a sweetness in the study of them. And when we say, a man has a taste for the mathematics, we mean by that expression, not only that he is capable of understanding them, but that he takes pleasure therein.

8. Another species of taste is that which relates to the objects that gratify the imagination. Thus we are accustomed to say, a man has a taste for grandeur, for novelty, or for beauty; meaning thereby, that he takes pleasure in grand, in new, or in beautiful objects, whether they are such by nature or by art. And herein there is an unbounded variety. I mean, in the different tastes of men; some having a taste for grandeur, some for beauty. Some, again, have a taste for one kind of beauty; and others for another. Some have a taste for the beauties of nature; others for those of art. The former for flowers, meadows, fields, or woods; the latter for painting or poetry. But some have a taste both for the one and the other.

9. But is there not likewise a kind of internal sense, whereby we relish the happiness of our fellow-creatures, even without any reflection on our own interest, without any reference to ourselves? whereby we bear a part in the prosperity of others, and rejoice with them that rejoice? Surely there is something still in the human mind, in many, if not in all, (whether by nature, or from a higher principle,) which interests us in the welfare, not only of our relatives, our friends, and our neighbours, but of those who are at the greatest distance from us, whether in time or place. And the most generous minds have most of this taste for human happiness.

10. May we not likewise observe, that there is a beauty in virtue, in gratitude, and disinterested benevolence? And have not many, at least, a taste for this? Do they not discern and relish it, wherever they find it? Yea, does it not give them one of the most delicate pleasures whereof the human mind is capable? Is not this taste of infinitely more value, than a taste for any or all the pleasures of imagination? And is not this pleasure infinitely more delicate, than any that ever resulted, yea, or can result, from the utmost refinements of music, poetry, or painting?

11. As to taste in general, internal as well as external taste seems to belong to all mankind, although infinitely

diversified both as to the objects and the degrees of it. When therefore we say, "A man has no taste," the words are not to be taken strictly, as if he had absolutely no taste at all in any of the foregoing senses; seeing every man living has, more or less, an internal, as well as external, taste. But they are to be understood in a limited sense. He has no taste, suppose, for metaphysics: He has no discernment, and he has no pleasure, in things of this abstracted nature. Another man has no taste for mathematics: He has neither pleasure nor judgment therein. Meantime the mathematician has no taste either for poetry or music: He does not discern, and he does not relish, the beauties either of one or the other. But every one of these has some internal taste, how dull soever it be.

12. A dull taste is properly one that is faint and languid, that has no lively perception of its object. But sometimes, by a man of a dull taste, we mean one that relishes dull things: Suppose dull, low compositions in music or poetry, or coarse and worthless pictures. But this is more properly termed a bad taste. So one is hugely pleased with the daubing of a sign-post; another with doggerel verses; and a third, with the heavenly music of a pair of bagpipes! Almost every town and every village supplies us with instances of the same kind. We sometimes call this a false taste, as it supposes things to be excellent which are not. In many, it is natural: They have had this wrong turn ever since they were born. But in others, it is gradually acquired either by reading or conversation. Then we term it a vitiated taste: Of this, too, there are abundant instances.

13. On the other hand, he has a good, a just, or a true taste, who discerns and relishes whatever, either in the works of nature or of art, is truly excellent in its kind. This is sometimes termed a correct taste; especially when it is delighted more or less, according to the greater or smaller degree of excellence that is in the object. This differs very little, if at all, from a fine taste; especially as Mr. Addison defines it,—"that faculty of the mind which discerns with pleasure all the beauties of writing:" Should it not be rather, "which discerns all that is grand or beautiful, in the works both of art and nature?"

14. Such a taste as this is much to be desired, and that on many accounts. It greatly increases those pleasures of

life, which are not only innocent, but useful. It qualifies us to be of far greater service to our fellow-creatures. It is more especially desirable for those whose profession calls them to converse with many; seeing it enables them to be more agreeable, and consequently more profitable, in conversation.

15. But how shall a man know whether he is possessed of this faculty or not? "Let him," says Mr. Addison, "read over the celebrated works of antiquity," (to know whether he has a taste for fine writing,) "which have stood the test of so many ages and countries; or those works among the moderns, which have the sanction of the politer part of our contemporaries. If, upon the perusal of such writings, he does not find himself delighted in an extraordinary manner; or if, upon reading the admired passages in such authors, he finds a coldness and indifference in his thoughts, he ought to conclude, not (as is most common among tasteless readers) that the author wants those perfections which have been admired in them, but that he himself wants the faculty of discerning them."

16. But how can a man acquire this taste? It "must in some degree be born with us; as it often happens, that those who have other qualities in perfection are wholly void of this. But though it may in some measure be born with us, there are several means of improving it, without which it will be very imperfect and of little use to the person that possesses it. The most natural means is, to be conversant with the writings of the best authors. One that has any taste either discovers new beauties, or receives stronger impressions from the masterly strokes of a great author every time he peruses him."

17. "Conversation with men of genius is another means of improving our natural taste. It is impossible for a man of the greatest parts, to consider anything in its whole extent. Every man, beside general observations upon an author, forms some that are peculiar to his own way of thinking. So that conversation will naturally furnish us with hints which we did not attend to, and make us enjoy other men's parts and reflections as well as our own." Besides, if we converse freely with men of taste, and incite them to "open the window in their breast," we may learn to correct whatever is yet amiss in our taste, as well as to

supply whatever we or they perceive to be still wanting; all which may be directed to that glorious end, the "pleasing all men for their good unto edification."

THOUGHTS

ON

THE POWER OF MUSIC.

1. By the power of music, I mean, its power to affect the hearers; to raise various passions in the human mind. Of this we have very surprising accounts in ancient history. We are told, the ancient Greek musicians in particular were able to excite whatever passions they pleased; to inspire love or hate, joy or sorrow, hope or fear, courage, fury, or despair; yea, to raise these one after another, and to vary the passion just according to the variation of the music.

2. But how is this to be accounted for? No such effects attend the modern music; although it is confessed on all hands, that our instruments excel theirs beyond all degrees of comparison. What was their lyre, their instruments of seven or ten strings, compared to our violin? What were any of their pipes, to our hautboy or German flute? What, all of them put together, all that were in use two or three thousand years ago, to our organ? How is it then, that, with this inconceivable advantage, the modern music has less power than the ancient?

3. Some have given a very short answer to this, cutting the knot which they could not untie. They have doubted, or affected to doubt, the fact; perhaps have even denied it. But no sensible man will do this, unless he be utterly blinded by prejudice. For it would be denying the faith of all history; seeing no fact is better authenticated. None is delivered down to us by more unquestionable testimony; such as fully satisfies in all other cases. We have, therefore, no more reason to doubt of the power of Timotheus's music, than that of Alexander's arms; and we may deny his taking

Persepolis, as well as his burning it through that sudden rage which was excited in him by that musician. And the various effects which were successively wrought in his mind (so beautifully described by Dryden, in his Ode on St. Cecilia's Day) are astonishing instances of the power of a single harp, to transport, as it were, the mind out of itself.

4. Nay, we read of an instance, even in modern history, of the power of music not inferior to this. A musician, being brought to the King of Denmark, and asked, whether he could excite any passion, answered in the affirmative, and was commanded to make the trial upon the King himself. Presently the Monarch was all in tears; and, upon the musician's changing his mood, he was quickly roused into such fury, that, snatching a sword from one of his assistants' hands, (for they had purposely removed his own,) he immediately killed him, and would have killed all in the room, had he not been forcibly withheld.

5. This alone removes all the incredibility of what is related concerning the ancient music. But why is it that modern music, in general, has no such effect on the hearers? The grand reason seems to be no other than this,—the whole nature and design of music is altered. The ancient composers studied melody alone; the due arrangement of single notes; and it was by melody alone, that they wrought such wonderful effects. And as this music was directly calculated to move the passions, so they designed it for this very end. But the modern composers study harmony, which, in the present sense of the word, is quite another thing; namely, a contrast of various notes, opposite to, and yet blended with, each other, wherein they,

> Now high, now low, pursue the resonant fugue.

Dr. Gregory says, "This harmony has been known in the world little more than two hundred years." Be that as it may, ever since it was introduced, ever since counterpoint has been invented, as it has altered the grand design of music, so it has well-nigh destroyed its effects.

6. Some indeed have imagined, and attempted to prove, that the ancients were acquainted with this. It seems, there needs but one single argument to demonstrate the contrary. We have many capital pieces of ancient music, that are now in the hands of the curious. Dr. Pepusch,

who was well versed in the music of antiquity, (perhaps the best of any man in Europe,) showed me several large Greek folios, which contained many of their musical compositions. Now is there, or is there not, any counterpoint in these? The learned know there is no such thing. There is not the least trace of it to be found: It is all melody, and no harmony.

7. And as the nature of music is thus changed, so is likewise the design of it. Our composers do not aim at moving the passions, but at quite another thing; at varying and contrasting the notes a thousand different ways. What has counterpoint to do with the passions? It is applied to a quite different faculty of the mind; not to our joy, or hope, or fear; but merely to the ear, to the imagination, or internal sense. And the pleasure it gives is not upon this principle; not by raising any passion whatever. It no more affects the passions than the judgment: Both the one and the other lie quite out of its province.

8. Need we any other, and can we have any stronger, proof of this, than those modern overtures, voluntaries, or concertos, which consist altogether of artificial sounds, without any words at all? What have any of the passions to do with these? What has judgment, reason, common sense? Just nothing at all. All these are utterly excluded, by delicate, unmeaning sound!

9. In this respect, the modern music has no connexion with common sense, any more than with the passions. In another, it is glaringly, undeniably, contrary to common sense; namely, in allowing, yea, appointing, different words to be sung by different persons at the same time! What can be more shocking to a man of understanding than this? Pray, which of those sentences am I to attend to? I can attend to only one sentence at once; and I hear three or four at one and the same instant! And, to complete the matter, this astonishing jargon has found a place even in the worship of God! It runs through (O pity! O shame!) the greatest part even of our Church music! It is found even in the finest of our anthems, and in the most solemn parts of our public worship! Let any impartial, any unprejudiced person say, whether there can be a more direct mockery of God.

10. But to return: Is it strange, that modern music does

not answer the end it is not designed for? and which it is in no wise calculated for? It is not possible it should. Had Timotheus "pursued the resonant fugue," his music would have been quite harmless. It would have affected Alexander no more than Bucephalus; the finest city then in the world had not been destroyed; but

*Persepolis stares, Cyrique arx alta maneres.**

11. It is true, the modern music has been sometimes observed to have as powerful an effect as the ancient; so that frequently single persons, and sometimes numerous assemblies, have been seen in a flood of tears. But when was this? Generally, if not always, when a fine solo was sung; when "the sound has been an echo to the sense;" when the music has been extremely simple and inartificial, the composer having attended to melody, not harmony. Then, and then only, the natural power of music to move the passions has appeared. This music was calculated for that end, and effectually answered it.

12. Upon this ground it is, that so many persons are so much affected by Scotch or Irish airs. They are composed, not according to art, but nature; they are simple in the highest degree. There is no harmony, according to the present sense of the word, therein; but there is much melody. And this is not only heard, but felt, by all those who retain their native taste; whose taste is not biassed (I might say, corrupted) by attending to counterpoint and complicated music. It is this, it is counterpoint, it is harmony, (so called,) which destroys the power of music. And if ever this should be banished from our composition, if ever we should return to the simplicity and melody of the ancients, then the effects of our music will be as surprising as any that were wrought by theirs; yea, perhaps they will be as much greater, as modern instruments are more excellent than those of the ancients.

INVERNESS, JOHN WESLEY.
June 9, 1779.

* Mr. Wesley has here altered a line of Virgil, and applied to Persepolis that which was said concerning Troy. It stands thus in the Æneid:—

Trojaque nunc stares, Priamique arx alta maneres;

and is thus translated by Pitt:—

"Old Priam still his empire would enjoy,
And still thy towers had stood, majestic Troy."—EDIT.

A THOUGHT

ON

THE MANNER OF EDUCATING CHILDREN.

[PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1783.]

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1. A GENTLEMAN with whom I was conversing a while ago, was speaking largely on the manner of educating children. He objected strongly to the bringing them up too strictly; to the giving them more of religion than they liked; to the telling them of it too often, or pressing it upon them whether they will or no. He said he never pressed it upon his own children, but only spoke of it occasionally in their hearing; and if they appeared affected, then answered their questions, or perhaps spoke to them directly. He thought that the common methods that are used in those that are called religious schools, of talking about divine things continually, and daily pressing it upon children, did abundantly more harm than good; especially if any severity were used: And concluded with saying, that those children who had been trained up in this manner, as soon as the restraint was taken off, were commonly worse than others.

2. As all this was perfectly new to me, I made little answer for the present; but it put me upon much thought. I knew it was quite agreeable to the sentiments of Rousseau in his "Emilius;" the most empty, silly, injudicious thing that ever a self-conceited infidel wrote. But I knew it was quite contrary to the judgment of the wisest and best men I have known. I thought, If these things are so, how much mischief have we done unawares! How much hurt has Miss Bosanquet (now Mrs. Fletcher) been doing in the world for many years! How much more have the Miss Owens done, spoiling twenty children at a time! How much mischief is Miss Bishop likely to do! Perhaps more than even Miss Owen! Above all, how much mischief has

been done, and is now doing, at Kingswood, where (if this hypothesis be true) we are continually ruining fifty children at a time!

3. "But be this as it may, I urge the matter of fact against such an education. The children educated thus are, when grown up, actually worse than other men or women." I doubt the fact; nay, that is not enough, I totally deny it. As frequently as this has been affirmed, it is notoriously false. Some few, and very few, of those women that were brought up by Miss Bosanquet or Miss Owen, either never were converted to God, (perhaps never convinced of sin,) or have "made shipwreck of the faith," and, at the same time, of its attendant, a good conscience. And undoubtedly these would be worse than others; than those who had not so grieved the Holy Spirit of God. The same may be said of some of those men that were educated at Kingswood School. If they quenched the Spirit, they would be worse than those that never were partakers of it. But this proves nothing, unless it were a general case; which is not by any means true. Many, both of the women who were educated by Miss Bosanquet or Miss Owen, and of the men who were educated at Kingswood, are holy in heart and in life, and trust they shall praise God to all eternity that ever they saw those schools.

4. Yet I allow that what is commonly called a religious education frequently does more hurt than good; and that many of the persons who were so educated are sinners above other men, yea, and have contracted an enmity to religion, which usually continues all their lives. And this will naturally be the case, if either the religion wherein they are instructed, or the manner of instructing them, be wrong. But in most of those that are termed religious schools, there is a grand error either in the former or the latter instance.

5. With regard to the former, how few are there of those that undertake the education of children, who understand the nature of religion, who know what true religion is! some of them supposing it to be barely the doing no harm, the abstaining from outward sin; some, the using the means of grace, saying our prayers, reading good books, and the like; and others, the having a train of right opinions, which is vulgarly called faith. But all these, however

common in the world, are gross and capital errors. Unless religion be described as consisting in holy tempers; in the love of God and our neighbour; in humility, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, contentedness in every condition; to sum up all, in the image of God, in the mind that was in Christ; it is no wonder if these that are instructed therein are not better, but worse, than other men. For they think they have religion, when, indeed, they have none at all; and so add pride to all their other vices.

6. But suppose those that educate them judge right with regard to the nature of religion, they may still be mistaken with regard to the manner of instilling it into children. They may not have the spirit of government, to which some even good men are utter strangers. They may habitually lean to this or that extreme, of remissness or of severity. And if they either give children too much of their own will, or needlessly and churlishly restrain them; if they either use no punishment at all, or more than is necessary, the leaning either to one extreme or the other may frustrate all their endeavours. In the latter case, it will not be strange if religion stink in the nostrils of those that were so educated. They will naturally look upon it as an austere, melancholy thing; and if they think it necessary to salvation, they will esteem it a necessary evil, and so put it off as long as possible.

7. But does it follow, that we ought not to instil true religion into the minds of children as early as possible? Or, rather, that we should do it with all diligence from the very time that reason dawns, laying line upon line, precept upon precept, as soon and as fast as they are able to bear it? By all means. Scripture, reason, and experience jointly testify that, inasmuch as the corruption of nature is earlier than our instructions can be, we should take all pains and care to counteract this corruption as early as possible. The bias of nature is set the wrong way: Education is designed to set it right. This, by the grace of God, is to turn the bias from self-well, pride, anger, revenge, and the love of the world, to resignation, lowliness, meekness, and the love of God. And from the moment we perceive any of those evil roots springing up, it is our business immediately to check their growth, if we cannot yet root them out. As far as this can be done by mildness, softness, and gentleness,

certainly it should be done. But sometimes these methods will not avail, and then we must correct with kind severity. For where tenderness will not remove the fault, "he that spareth the rod, spoileth the child." To deny this is to give the lie to the God of truth, and to suppose we can govern better than Him. For, "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth."

8. In the name of God, then, and by the authority of His word, let all that have children, from the time they begin to speak or run alone, begin to train them up in the way wherein they should go; to counterwork the corruption of their nature with all possible assiduity; to do everything in their power to cure their self-will, pride, and every other wrong temper. Then let them be delivered to instructers (if such can be found) that will tread in the same steps; that will watch over them as immortal spirits, who are shortly to appear before God, and who have nothing to do in this world but to prepare to meet Him in the clouds, seeing they will be eternally happy, if they are ready; if not, eternally miserable.

JOHN WESLEY.

THOUGHTS ON GENIUS.

1. I HAVE for many years desired to see something, long or short, accurately written on the term "genius." It is a word almost in every one's mouth, and one that is used by abundance of writers; yet, I doubt, it is not well understood by one in a hundred of them that use it. I rejoiced, therefore, to hear that so eminent a writer as Dr. Gerard had published an Essay on the subject. But when I read it, I was disappointed of my hope: It did not in any degree answer my expectations. The ingenious and very learned author did not seem to understand the term at all: Nor could I find one proper definition of it throughout the whole treatise.

2. I hoped, however, to find full satisfaction on the head in Mr. Duff's "Essay on Original Genius;" although I was

surprised to observe it had been published above twenty years before the other. But I was disappointed again. Indeed, it undoubtedly contains many judicious remarks. But even here, what should have been done in the very beginning is not done at all. I want to know, first of all, What do you mean by "genius?" Give me a definition of it. Pray tell me this, before you say anything more about it. This is common sense. Without this, you may ramble as long as you please; and leave me just as wise as I was.

3. The word "genius" was used by the ancient Romans for a superior being, good or bad, who, they supposed, attended every one from his birth to his death. But in this sense of the word it has nothing to do with the present question; wherein it means either a quality of the human mind, or a man endued with that quality. Thus we say indifferently, He *is* a genius, or *has* a genius. I would here take it in the latter sense, for the quality which denominates a man a genius.

4. It is evident that genius, taken in this sense, is not invention; although that may possibly bear some relation to it. It is not imagination; although this may be allowed to be one ingredient of it. Much less is it an association of ideas: All these are essentially different from it. So is sensation, on the one hand; and so are memory and judgment, on the other: Unless by judgment we mean (as many do) strength of understanding. It seems to be an extraordinary capacity of mind; sometimes termed extraordinary talents. This may be more or less extensive; there may be a kind of general genius, or an extraordinary capacity for many things; or a particular genius, an extraordinary capacity for one particular thing; it may be, for one particular science, or one particular art. Thus Homer and Milton had a genius, an extraordinary capacity, for poetry. Thus Euclid and Archimedes had a genius, an extraordinary capacity, for geometry. So Cicero had a genius for oratory, and Sir Isaac Newton for natural philosophy. Thus Raphael and Michael Angelo had a genius, an extraordinary capacity, for painting. And so Purcell and Handel (to mention no more) had a genius, an extraordinary capacity, for music. Whereas, Aristotle, Lord Bacon, and a very few beside, seem to have had an universal genius, an

extraordinary capacity to excel in whatever they took in hand.

5. It may be allowed that the word is frequently taken in a lower sense. But it has then a word prefixed to it, to restrain its signification. So we say, A man has a middling genius, or a little genius. But it is generally taken for an extraordinary capacity, of whatever kind.

6. Genius in philosophy, poetry, and oratory seems to imply a strong and clear understanding, connected with an unusually extensive and lively imagination. In which respect it may truly be said, not only of a poet, but also of an orator and philosopher, *Nascitur, non fit:* "He has this endowment by nature, not by art." Yet it may be granted, that art may exceedingly improve what originally sprung from nature. It may receive assistance, likewise, from the memory; (nearly related to the imagination;) and also from the passions, which on various occasions enliven and strengthen the imagination.

7. It may be observed, I purpose to abstain from using the word reason or judgment; because the word understanding is less equivocal; and I would always use one and the same word to express one and the same idea.

8. Both the writers above mentioned suppose taste also to be essential to genius. And, indeed, it does seem to be, if not an essential part, yet an essential property of it. Taste is here a figurative word, borrowed from the sense of tasting, whereby we are enabled first to judge of, and then to relish, our food. So the intellectual taste has a twofold office: It judges, and it relishes. In the former respect, it belongs to the understanding; in the latter, to the imagination.

9. To sum up all: Perhaps genius may be defined, an extraordinary capacity for philosophy, oratory, poetry, or any other art or science; the constituent parts whereof are a strong understanding, and a lively imagination; and the essential property, a just taste.

JOHN WESLEY.

LAMBETH,
November 8, 1787.

THOUGHTS ON MEMORY.

THERE is a near relation between memory, reminiscence, and recollection. But what is the difference between them? Wherein do they differ from each other? Is not memory a natural faculty of the mind which is exerted various ways? And does it not exert itself sometimes in simply remembering, sometimes in reminiscence or recollection? In simply remembering things, the mind of man appears to be rather passive than active. Whether we will or no, we remember many things which we have heard or seen, said or done; especially if they were attended with any remarkable pleasure or pain. But in reminiscence, or recalling what is past, the mind appears to be active. Most times at least, we may or may not recall them, as we please. Recollection seems to imply something more than simple reminiscence; even the studious collecting and gathering up together all the parts of a conversation or transaction, which had occurred before, but had in some measure escaped from the memory.

But there is one sort of memory, which it seems more difficult to understand than any other. You pronounce or hear a discourse, or copy of verses, which fixes upon your memory. Afterwards you can repeat, in your mind, the words you spoke or heard, without ever opening your lips, or uttering any articulate sound. There is a kind of inward voice (so we may term it, for want of a better expression) which, like an echo, not only repeats the same words without the least variation, but with exactly the same accent, and the same tone of voice. The same echo repeats any tune you have learned, without the least alteration. Now, how is this done? By what faculty of the mind, or the body, or both conjointly? I am as sure of the fact, as I am that I am alive. But who is able to account for it? O how shall we comprehend the ever-blessed God, when we cannot comprehend ourselves!

JOHN WESLEY.

YARMOUTH,
October 21, 1789.

THOUGHTS ON SUICIDE.

It is a melancholy consideration, that there is no country in Europe, or perhaps in the habitable world, where the horrid crime of self-murder is so common as it is in England! One reason of this may be, that the English in general are more ungodly and more impatient than other nations. Indeed we have laws against it, and officers with juries are appointed to inquire into every fact of the kind. And these are to give in their verdict upon oath, whether the self-murderer was sane or insane. If he is brought in insane, he is excused, and the law does not affect him. By this means it is totally eluded; for the juries constantly bring him in insane. So the law is not of the least effect, though the farce of a trial still continues.

This morning I asked a Coroner, "Sir, did you ever know a jury bring in the deceased *felo de se?*" He answered, "No, Sir; and it is a pity they should." What then is the law good for? If all self-murderers are mad, what need of any trial concerning them?

But it is plain our ancestors did not think so, or those laws had never been made. It is true, every self-murderer is mad in some sense, but not in that sense which the law intends. This fact does not prove him mad in the eye of the law: The question is, Was he mad in other respects? If not, every juror is perjured who does not bring him in *felo de se.*

But how can this vile abuse of the law be prevented, and this execrable crime effectually discouraged?

By a very easy method. We read in ancient history, that, at a certain period, many of the women in Sparta murdered themselves. This fury increasing, a law was made, that the body of every woman that killed herself should be exposed naked in the streets. The fury ceased at once.

Only let a law be made and rigorously executed, that the body of every self-murderer, Lord or peasant, shall be hanged in chains, and the English fury will cease at once.

Liverpool, JOHN WESLEY.
April 8, 1790.

OF THE GRADUAL IMPROVEMENT OF NATURAL PHILOSOPHY.*

1. NATURAL philosophy treats both of God himself, and of his creatures, visible and invisible. Of these I purpose to speak, in such a manner as to ascend from the consideration of man through all the orders of things, as they are farther and farther removed from us, to God the centre of all knowledge. (I mean, of visible things: Of the invisible world we cannot know much, while we dwell in houses of clay.) Thus speculative philosophy ascends from man to God; practical descends from God to man.

2. The most ancient nations, the Egyptians and Hebrews in particular, philosophized much concerning God, and concerning genii, good or evil spirits, of an order superior to man. What they taught concerning the visible world related chiefly to its origin, the changes it was to undergo, and its final dissolution. But on all these heads they only delivered to their posterity what they had received from their forefathers.

3. Among the Greeks, Thales Milesius and his followers applied themselves with great industry to discover, with the best helps they had, the material causes of natural things. They were succeeded by others, who more curiously searched into the structure of natural bodies. Here the foundation of natural history was laid, in various observations on plants, animals, and other things. And herein the endeavours of Aristotle and Theophrastus in particular are to be commended. Yet, in other respects, Aristotle did not promote, but rather obstruct, the knowledge of nature; for he made philosophy as unintelligible by his abstract and metaphysical notions, as Plato, Pythagoras, and others did, by their ideas, numbers, and symbols.

* This article forms the introduction to Mr. Wesley's "Compendium of Natural Philosophy," in five volumes, 12mo. The work was compiled from various authors; but the introduction and conclusion appear to have been his own composition.—EDIT.

4. In succeeding times, when the four Greek sects, the Platonic, Peripatetic, Epicurean, and Stoic, divided the western world between them, the Platonists almost confined themselves and their opinions to the subject of divinity; the Peripatetics regarded little but logic; the Stoics little but moral philosophy; and the Epicureans had small concern about any, being immersed in sensual pleasures: So that none of them made any considerable improvement in any branch of natural philosophy.

5. When the utter barbarism which followed was a little dispelled, Aristotle began to reign. His followers (the Schoolmen, as they were called) might have improved natural philosophy, if (like their master) they had diligently cultivated the knowledge of nature, and searched out the properties of particular things. But it was their misfortune to neglect what was commendable in him, and to follow only what was blameworthy; so as to obscure and pollute all philosophy with abstract, idle, vain speculations. Yet some of them, after the Arabians had introduced the knowledge of chemistry into Europe, were wise above the age they lived in, and penetrated so far into the secret recesses of nature, as scarce to escape the suspicion of magic. Such were Roger Bacon and Albertus Magnus.

6. After the revival of learning, as all other branches of philosophy, so this in particular, received new light. And none was more serviceable herein than Lord Bacon; who, well understanding the defects of the school philosophy, incited all lovers of natural philosophy to a diligent search into natural history. And he himself led them the way, by many experiments and observations.

7. After this, not single persons only, but whole societies applied themselves carefully to make experiments; that, having accurately observed the structure and properties of each body, they might the more safely judge of its nature. And the advantages which have arisen from hence manifestly appear from the Memoirs of the Royal Society at London; of the Academy of Sciences at Paris; and those of the same kind in Germany, as well as several other parts of Europe.

8. To mention but a few of the late discoveries in each branch of natural philosophy: With regard to the structure of a human body, how many things have modern anatomists discovered, which were either little understood by the

ancients, or wholly unknown to them! Such, for instance, is the circulation of the blood, discovered by Dr. William Harvey, whose "Anatomic Exercitations" concerning it were first published in the year 1628. Such were the lacteal veins, discovered first in brutes by Casper Asellius, of Cremona; and soon after in men. Such the thoracic duct, and receptacle of the chyle, observed first by Dr. John Pecquet, of Paris, whereby the whole course of the blood is now clearly understood.

9. Dr. Harvey improved natural philosophy by another no less eminent discovery; for he was the first of the moderns that showed all animals to be generated from eggs. That the ancients knew and taught this, (Orpheus in particular,) cannot reasonably be doubted. But as the knowledge of it was entirely lost, to revive was the same thing as to invent it. It is obvious, how great a light this pours upon that dark subject, with regard to the generation of men, as well as of other animals.

10. Another remarkable discovery in the last century was that of the transfusion of the blood. The blood of a young, lively, healthy animal was transfused, by means of a small silver tube, properly adjusted, into the veins of another, which was old, weak, and sickly. And the effect amazed all the beholders. When the experiment was tried before several of the Royal Society, a feeble, worn-out dog, ready to die with age, and hardly able to trail his legs after him, was no sooner filled with young blood, than he leaped up as from sleep, shook himself, and ran up and down, as lively and active as a puppy. In France the experiment has been made upon men, and with as surprising success. What pity that so important an experiment should ever fall into disuse! that it is not still repeated upon proper occasions! especially where all other means fail.

11. It cannot be denied, that Physicians have signally improved this branch of philosophy, as they have continual opportunities of making new discoveries in the human body. In diseases themselves, the wonderful wisdom of the Author of nature appears; and by means of them many hidden recesses of the human frame are unexpectedly discovered. The powers of medicines also, variously exerting themselves, lay open many secrets of nature.

12. And how many things in all bodies, as well as in the

human, which eluded all the art and industry of the ancients, have the moderns discovered by the help of microscopes! although these are not properly a modern invention; it being certain something of this kind was in use many hundred years ago. There are several works of great antiquity still extant; the beauties of which cannot even be discerned, much less could they have been wrought, by the finest naked eye which ever was in the world. Such is that seal, now in the cabinet of the King of France, allowed to be at least fifteen hundred years old, six-tenths of an inch long, and four broad, which to the naked eye presents only a confused group; but, surveyed with a microscope, distinctly exhibits trees, a river, a boat, and sixteen or seventeen persons.

13. Now, whatever assists us in searching out the structure of a human body, equally helps us to find out the nature and properties of other animals. Hence in these likewise we have received great light from anatomical and microscopical observations. Those especially who have bestowed their whole time and thoughts on one kind of animals, (as Dr. Willoughby, on fishes, Dr. Swammerdam, of Amsterdam, on insects,) have illustrated, to a surprising degree, the subjects on which they wrote.

14. Many have diligently searched into the nature of plants; particularly Mr. Ray, who has not only ranged them in a new method, but also wrote an elaborate history of them. Others have described, with equal diligence, either plants in general, or those of a particular country. And others have shown the like industry in finding out and explaining the nature of stones, metals, minerals, and other fossils.

15. Nor is it strange that the moderns have penetrated farther into the recesses of nature than the ancients, considering the advantages they have received from the art of chemistry. Not that this is an invention of later ages: It was in some measure known long ago. But as this art has been cultivated in our age, with far greater accuracy than ever; so by this means many properties of natural bodies have been discovered; of fossils in particular.

16. But none of these have so much engaged the study of the learned, or so well deserved it, as the loadstone. Its attractive force was known to the ancients, and the origin

of that discovery is recorded by Pliny. But it does not appear that they knew of its pointing to the pole, or of the use of the compass. This (the compass) was invented by John Goia, in the year 1300. But it has since been observed, that the magnetic needle seldom points exactly to the pole; but varies from it some degrees to the east or west, in a fixed and regular order.

17. Nearly related to the nature of fossils is glass, which was well known to the ancients, being mentioned by Plutarch and Lucian among the Greeks, by Lucretius, Pliny, and others, among the Latins. Yet the art of making glass has been since their times abundantly improved. One branch of this is, the art of making burning-glasses, which are now brought to so great perfection, as either to melt or reduce to ashes the most solid bodies, in a few moments. If these were known to the ancients at all, (which may reasonably be doubted,) yet the art was wholly lost for many ages, and not recovered till of late years.

18. Later ages have likewise made many discoveries with regard to earth, water, fire, and air; the last of which, air, though it be of so fine a texture as to be wholly invisible, yet, producing such amazing effects, has excited the most diligent inquiries of the curious. Nor does any part of philosophy afford a wider field for experiments and discoveries. The weight of it we can ascertain by that curious instrument the barometer, invented by Torricellius; the degrees of heat and cold, by the thermometer. By the air-pump, (invented by Otto Guerick, Mayor of Magdeburgh,) the air is drawn out of any bodies, or more largely thrown into them; and hereby many effects are produced, which deserve our diligent consideration.

19. With regard to water, the discoveries of later times are numerous and important. Such are the diving-bell, invented by George Sinclair; the diving-machine of Alphonso Borelli, a kind of boat, which is so contrived as to be navigated under water; and the art of making salt-water fresh, which is now done with little expense, so far that the saltness is taken away, and it is fit for almost all uses.

20. The nature and properties of fire also have been accurately traced in late ages; for which new occasion was given by the invention of gunpowder, by Berthold Schwartz, in the fourteenth century. *Aurum fulminans*, a yet later

invention, goes off with a louder explosion than gunpowder. Other bodies there are which do not burn, yet emit light. Such is the Bononian stone, which, placed in the dark, diffuses light like a burning coal. It is well known that the preparation called phosphorus has the same property.

21. Various theories of the earth have lately appeared. But they are no more than ingenious conjectures. The same may be said of the systems of the universe, a few particulars excepted. The Ptolemaic system, which supposes the earth to be the centre of the universe, is now deservedly exploded; since Copernicus has revived that of Pythagoras, which was probably received by most of the ancients. Tycho Brahe's, which jumbles both together, is too complex and intricate, and contrary to that beautiful simplicity, conspicuous in all the works of nature.

22. The telescope (invented by Galileo) has discovered many stars unknown to the ancients, together with the nature and motion of the planets, both primary and secondary. By this also have been discovered the spots of the sun, the inequality of the surface of the moon, the nature of the galaxy, or milky way, and many other particulars relating to the heavens.

23. With regard to body in general, it is commonly supposed that our age has a vast advantage over antiquity, by having found out new principles and new hypotheses, whereby we can account for all the secrets of nature. But this will bear a dispute. For beside that the chief of our hypotheses are not new, but known long ago, the learned have hitherto very little profited by all their hypotheses. And, in truth, all their disquisitions touching the causes of natural bodies terminate in mere conjectures; one whereof is often more probable than another; but none admits of any solid proof.

24. What remains of natural philosophy is, the doctrine concerning God and spirits. But in the tracing of this we can neither depend upon reason nor experiment. Whatsoever men know or can know concerning them, must be drawn from the oracles of God. Here, therefore, we are to look for no new improvements; but to stand in the good old paths; to content ourselves with what God has been pleased to reveal; with "the faith once delivered to the saints."

JOHN WESLEY.

REMARKS

ON

THE LIMITS OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE.*

PERHAPS a few observations on the littleness of human knowledge may not be unacceptable to the serious reader. I propose them barely as hints, which may be pursued at large by men of reflection and leisure.

To begin with the things which are at the greatest distance from us. How far does the universe extend, and where are the limits of it? Where did the Creator "stay his rapid wheels?" where "fix the golden compasses?" Certainly himself alone is without bounds; but all his works are finite. Therefore, He must have said, at some point of space,

> "Be these thy bounds,
> This be thy just circumference, O world!"

But where, who can tell? Only the morning stars who then sang together; the sons of God, who then shouted for joy. All beyond the region of the fixed stars is utterly hid from the children of men.

And what do we know of the fixed stars? A great deal, one would imagine; since, like the Most High, we too tell their number, yea, and call them all by their names! those at least which appear to the naked eye, both in the northern and southern hemisphere. But what are these in comparison of those which our glasses discover, even in an inconsiderable part of the firmament? What are one or two and twenty hundred, to those which we discover in the milky way alone? How many are there, then, in the whole expanse, in the boundless field of ether? But to what end do they serve?

* These remarks form the conclusion of Mr. Wesley's "Compendium of Natural Philosophy." Some of them occur in his sermon "On the Imperfection of Human Knowledge," Vol. VI., page 339; but they are here considerably enlarged.—EDIT.

to illuminate worlds? to impart light and heat to their several choirs of planets? or, as the ingenious Mr. Hutchinson supposes, to gild the extremities of the solar sphere, which according to him is the only inhabited part of the universe; and to minister, in some unknown way, to the perpetual circulation of light and spirit?

For our sakes only, that great man apprehends the comets also to run their amazing circuits! But what are comets? planets not fully formed? or planets destroyed by a conflagration? or bodies of an wholly different nature, of which therefore we can form no idea? How easy is it to form a thousand conjectures! How hard to determine anything concerning them! Can their huge revolutions be even tolerably accounted for by the principles of gravitation and projection? Has not Dr. Rogers overturned the very foundation of this fashionable hypothesis? What then brings them back, when they have travelled so immensely far beyond the sphere of the solar attraction? And what whirls them on, when, by the laws of gravitation, they would immediately drop into the solar fire?

What is the sun itself? It is undoubtedly the most glorious of all the inanimate creatures: And its use we know. God made it to rule the day. It is

> Of this great world both eye and soul.

But who knows of what substance it is composed? or even whether it be fluid or solid? What are those spots on his surface that are continually changing? What are those that always appear in the same place? What is its real magnitude? Which shall we embrace amidst the immense variety of opinions? Mr. Whiston, indeed, says that eminent astronomers are nearly agreed upon this head: But they cannot agree concerning his magnitude, till they agree concerning his distance. And how far are they from this! The generality of them believe that he is near a hundred millions of miles from the earth; others suppose it to be twenty, some twelve, millions; and last comes Dr. Rogers, and brings a clear and full demonstration (so he terms it) that they are not three millions from each other. What an unbounded field for conjecture is here! But what foundation for real knowledge?

Just as much do we know of the feebly-shining bodies that

move regularly round the sun; of Jupiter, Saturn, and other planets. Their revolutions we are acquainted with; but who is able, to this day, regularly to demonstrate either their magnitude or their distance? unless he will prove, as is the usual way, the magnitude from the distance, and the distance from the magnitude. And what are Jupiter's belts? Can any man tell? What is Saturn's ring? The honest ploughman knows as well as the deepest philosopher. How many satellites, secondary planets, move round Jupiter or Saturn? Are we sure even of their number? how much less of their nature, size, motions, or distances from the primary! But what wonder we are so ignorant concerning Saturn's moons, when we know so little of our own? For although some men of genius have not only discovered

Rivers and mountains on her spotty globe,

but have travelled over the whole hemisphere which is obverted to us; (and why is the same hemisphere always obverted? What reason can be assigned, why we do not see the other hemisphere in its turn?) have marked out all her seas and continents with the utmost exactness; yea, and carried selenography to so great perfection, as to give us a complete map of the moon; yet do others (and not without reason) doubt whether she has any atmosphere: And if she has not any, she can have no rain or dews, nor, consequently, either seas or rivers. So that, after all, we have nothing more than mere conjectures concerning the nearest of all the heavenly bodies.

What is it that contains them all in their orbits? And what is the principle of their motions? By what created power, what outward or inward force, are they thrown forward to such a point, and then brought back again to a determinate distance from the central fire? Dr. Rogers has evidently demonstrated, that no conjunction of the centrifugal and centripetal force can possibly account for this, or ever cause any body to move in an ellipsis. Will light moving outward, and returning inward in the form of spirit, account for them? Nay, if they take away some, they plunge us into other difficulties, no less considerable: So that there is reason to fear that even the Newtonian, yea, and Hutchinsonian system, however plausible and ingenious, and whatever advantage they may have in several particulars, are yet no

more capable of solid, convincing proof, than the Ptolemaic or Cartesian.

But let us come to things that are nearer home, and see what knowledge we have of them. And how much do we know of that wonderful body that enables me to see and know all things around us? I mean light. How is it communicated to us? Does it flow in a lucid river, in a continued stream from the orb of the sun to the earth? Or does the sun impel those particles only which are contiguous to his orb, which impel others, so on and on, to the extremity of his system? Again: Are the particles of light naturally and essentially lucid? or only by accident, when they are collected, or when put into motion? Yet again: Does light gravitate or not? Does it attract other bodies, or repel them? Is it the strongest, or the only, repellent in nature? and what communicates that power to all repellents in nature? Is this power the same with electricity; or wherein does it differ therefrom? Is light subject to the general laws which obtain in all other matter; or is it a body *sui generis*,* altogether different from all other bodies? Is it the same, or how does it differ from ether, Sir Isaac Newton's subtile matter? What is ether? Wherein does it differ from the electric fluid? Who can explain, and demonstrate the truth of his explanation, the phenomena of electricity? Why do some substances conduct the electric matter, and others arrest its course? Why does a globe of glass and another of sulphur just counteract each other? Why is the coated phial capable of being charged just to such a point, and no farther? *O crux philosophorum!* † superabundant proof of the shortness of human knowledge!

But let us consider what is not of so subtile a nature, nor therefore so liable to elude our inquiries. Surely we understand the air we breathe, and which encompasses us on every side. By its elasticity, it seems to be the grand mover and general spring of all sublunary nature. But is elasticity essential to air, and consequently inseparable from it? Not so: It has been lately proved, by numberless experiments, that it may be fixed, divested of its elasticity, and generated or restored to it anew. Therefore elasticity is not essential

* Of a kind peculiar to itself.—EDIT.

† O tormenting source of vexation to philosophers!—EDIT.

to air, any more than fluidity is to water. Is it then elastic any otherwise than as it is joined to another body? As every particle of air is, in its ordinary state, attached to a particle of ether, or electric fire, does it not derive its whole elasticity from this, perhaps the only true, essential elastic in nature; and, consequently, when separated from this, lose all its elastic force? for want of which it is then effete, and will neither sustain flame, nor the life of animals.

By what powers do the dew, the rain, the other vapours rise and fall in the air? Can we account for all the phenomena of them upon the common principles? And can we demonstrate that this is the true, the most rational way of accounting for them? Or shall we say, with a late ingenious writer, that those principles are utterly insufficient; and that they cannot be accounted for at all, but upon the principles of electricity?

Do we thoroughly understand the nature and properties of the atmosphere that surrounds us? that immense congeries not only of air and vapours, whether of a watery or inflammable nature, but likewise of effluvia of every kind, which are continually steaming out from solid as well as fluid bodies, in all parts of the terraqueous globe? Do all our instruments, with all the improvements of them, suffice to give us a thorough knowledge of its constituent parts? Do they inform us of their innumerable combinations and changes, with the remote and immediate causes of them? Very far from it; and yet it is not a barely curious knowledge, but useful in the highest degree; seeing, for want of it, not only various diseases, but often death itself ensues.

Let us descend to what is of a still more firm and stable nature, and subject to the scrutiny of all our senses; namely, the earth we tread upon, and which God hath peculiarly given to the children of men. Do the children of men understand this? Of what parts then is it composed? I speak now of its internal parts, in comparison of which the surface is next to nothing. Many arguments induce us to believe that the earth is between seven and eight thousand miles in diameter. How much of this do we know? Perhaps some cavities, natural or artificial, which have been examined by men, descend one, or even two miles beneath its surface. But what lies beneath these? beneath the region of fossils, of stones, metals, and minerals? these being only a thin

exterior crust. Whereof consist the inner parts of the globe? Of a nucleus, (as an eminent man supposes, in order to account for the variation of the needle,) and a luminous medium interposed between that and the outer shell? Or is there a central fire, a grand reservoir, which supplies all the burning mountains, as well as ministers to the ripening of gems and metals, if not of vegetables also? Or is the great deep still contained in the bowels of the earth, a central abyss of waters? Who hath seen? Who can tell? Who can give any solid satisfaction to a rational inquirer?

But what wonder if we are ignorant of its internal nature? For how many parts are there on the surface of the globe, which, after all the discoveries of later ages, are still utterly unknown to us! How very little do we know of the polar regions, either in Europe or Asia; in Asia particularly, where all but the sea-coast is mere *terra incognita!* How little do we know of the inland parts either of Africa or America; either of the soil, the climate, the fruits, the animals, or the human inhabitants! So far are we from having any proper knowledge of these, that we can scarce form any rational conjecture about them.

And who knows what is contained in the broad sea; in the abyss that covers so large a part of the globe? Many indeed go down to the sea in ships, and occupy their business in the great waters: But what know they of what is contained therein; either of its animal inhabitants, its productions of the vegetable kind, or those of a mineral or metallic nature? Most of its chambers are inaccessible to man; so that how they are furnished, we know not. Leviathan may take his pastime therein; but they are not designed for the children of men.

But let us come nearer home. How little do we know even of the furniture of the dry land! Survey those things which fall directly under our notice, even the most simple stones, metals, minerals. How exceeding imperfectly are we acquainted with their nature and properties! What is there in the inward constitution of metals, which distinguishes them from all other fossils; from stones in particular? "Why, they are heavier." True; but what makes them heavier? I doubt whether Solomon himself was able to assign the reason. What is the original internal difference between gold and silver, or between tin and lead? It is all

mystery to the sons of men. And yet vain man would be wise!

"If all the men in the world," says the great Mr. Boyle, "were to spend their whole lives in the search, they would not be able to find out all the properties of that single mineral, antimony." And if all men could know so little of one thing, how little can one know of all!

Let us proceed to the higher parts of the creation. Observe the vegetable kingdom: And here also whatever displays the wisdom of the Creator, discovers the ignorance of his creature. Who can clearly determine even the fundamental question concerning the general nature of vegetables? Does the sap perform a regular circulation through their vessels, or not? How plausible arguments have been brought, both on the one side and the other! Who knows the several species of vegetables, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop on the wall; or rather, if we would descend from the highest to the lowest, to the innumerable groves of plants which appear in the form of mouldiness; or those more innumerable (if the expression may be allowed) which do not appear to the naked eye at all? Who is able to discover the proper specific difference between any one kind of plant and another; or the peculiar internal conformation and disposition of their component particles? Yea, what man upon earth thoroughly understands the nature and properties of any one plant under heaven?

Ascend we higher still, from plants to animals. But here we are stopped in the midway. Under which of these shall we place the innumerable tribes of microscopic animals, so called? Are they real animals in the common sense of the word? Or are they animals in quite another sense? essentially different from all other species of animals in the universe; as neither requiring any food to sustain them, nor generating or being generated? Are they no animals at all, (according to the supposition of a late ingenious writer,) but merely inanimate particles of matter, in a state of fermentation? So much may be said for each of these opinions, that it is not easy to fix upon any of them.

If they are animals of a peculiar kind which neither generate, nor are generated, they spread a veil over one considerable branch of human ignorance. For how totally

ignorant are the most sagacious of men touching the whole affair of generation! I do not say, of the generation of insects and fishes;

> the countless fry,
> That by unnumber'd millions multiply.

But let us come to that of the most perfect animals, yea, of man himself. In the book of the Creator, indeed, were all our members written; which day by day were fashioned, when as yet there were none of them. But by what rule were they fashioned? in what manner? by what degrees, from the moment of impregnation? Who can explain

> How the dim speck of entity began
> To' extend its recent form, and swell to man?

By what means was the first motion communicated to the *punctum saliens?* When and how was the immortal spirit added to the mass of senseless clay? There is no need of descending to particulars; for it is mystery all; and, after all our researches, we can only say, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made!"

But is there any such thing as equivocal generation, whether of plants or animals? It is impossible anything can appear more absurd to the eye of reason! Was there ever an instance, since the world began, that a house grew of itself? nay, so much as a bed, a table, a chair, or the smallest piece of household furniture? And yet how trifling and inartificial is the construction of these to that of the meanest plant or animal! What is the workmanship of Whitehall or Westminster Abbey, to that of a tree or a fly? And yet, on the other hand, if we deny spontaneous generation, what difficulties surround us! If we can give a plausible account of the propagation of mistletoe on trees, and a few of the plants growing on the tops of houses, or on the walls of churches and towers, yet how many more confound all our sagacity! And how many animals are discovered in such places as no animal of that kind ever frequented!

With regard to the lowest class of animals, insects, almost innumerable are the discoveries which have been made within few years, particularly by the ingenious and indefatigable Mr. Reaumur! But how inconsiderable is all this

in comparison of that which still remains undiscovered! How many species, how many entire *genera* of these, are we totally unacquainted with! How many millions by their extreme minuteness elude our most careful inquiries! And the minuter parts of larger animals escape our utmost diligence: So that all we can attain to is an imperfect knowledge of what is obvious in their composition.

Have we a more perfect knowledge of fishes than of insects? How many of the inhabitants of the waters are entirely concealed from human view, by the element wherein they live! It is not permitted to the sons of men to walk through the paths of the sea, nor, consequently, to trace out their several kinds or species with any exactness. But it is highly probable these are far more numerous than the species of land-animals; as the distance between the smallest and the largest of sea-animals is so immensely greater: From the minnow, for instance, (though this is far from being the least,) to the Norwegian whale; to say nothing of Bishop Pontoppidan's cracken, and sea-serpent, which I doubt never existed but in his own imagination. And with regard to the species we are acquainted with, how little is it that we know! Only a few of their general properties; enough to satisfy our need, but not our curiosity.

We are something better acquainted with the inhabitants of the air; birds being more accessible to us: Yet upon the whole we are very far from being perfectly acquainted with them. Of many we know little more than the outward shape. We know a few of the obvious properties of others, but the inward, specific difference of very few; and we have a thorough, adequate knowledge of none.

"However, we have a more extensive knowledge of beasts, many of which are our domestic companions." Certainly we have: And yet a thousand questions may be asked even concerning these, which we are in nowise able to answer. To touch only on two or three general heads. Do they reason, or do they not? Whence arise the different qualities and tempers, not only in different kinds and species, but even in the individuals of one species, as in dogs, cats, and horses? Are they mere machines? If we assert they are, it inevitably follows, that they neither see, nor hear, nor smell, nor feel. For of this mere machines are utterly incapable. Much less can they know or remember any-

thing, or move any otherwise than they are impelled. But all this, as numberless experiments show, is quite contrary to matter of fact. On the other hand, if they are not mere machines, if they have either sensation, or knowledge, or memory, or a principle of self-motion, then they are not mere matter; they have in them an immaterial principle. But of what kind? Will it die with the body or not? Is it mortal or immortal? Here again we are got into an unknown path. We cannot order our speech by reason of darkness.

But although we know so little either of the things that are above us, of those that are beneath us, or of those that surround us on every side, yet it is to be hoped we know ourselves; and of all, this is the most useful, the most necessary, knowledge. But do we truly know ourselves? Do we know the most excellent part of ourselves, our own soul? That it is a spirit, we know. But what is a spirit? Here again we are at a full stop. And where is the soul lodged? In the pineal gland? the whole brain? in the heart? the blood? in any single part of the body? Or, is it (if any one can understand those terms) all in all, and all in every part? How is it united to the body? What is the secret chain, what the bands, that couple them together? Can the wisest of men give a satisfactory answer even to these few, plain questions?

As to the body, we glory in having attained abundantly more knowledge than the ancients. By our glasses we have discovered very many things, which we suppose they were wholly unacquainted with. But have we discovered why we perspire three parts in four less when we sweat than when we do not? What a total mistake is it then to suppose sweat is only an increase of insensible perspiration! Have we discovered why one part of mankind have black skins, and the other white? It is not owing to the climate; for both black men and white are born in the same latitude. And have not Negroes the same flesh and blood with us? But what is flesh? that of the muscles in particular? Are the fibres out of which it is woven of a determinate size; so that when you have divided them into smaller and smaller, to a certain point, you come to those of the smallest kind? Or are they resolvable (at least in their own nature) into smaller and smaller *in infinitum?* How does a muscle act?

If you say, "By being inflated, and consequently shortened;" I ask again, But what is it inflated with? If with blood, how and whence comes that blood? And what becomes of that blood, whither does it go, the moment the muscle is relaxed? What is blood? Of how many sorts of particles does it essentially consist? Of red globules and serum? But in the famous instance, the man bled at the nose till what was discharged had no redness left. By what force is the circulation of the blood performed? Can any one suppose the force of the heart is sufficient to overcome the resistance of all the arteries? Are the nerves pervious or solid? How do they act? By vibration, or transmission of the animal spirits? What are the animal spirits? If they have any being, are they of the nature of blood or ether? What is sleep? Wherein does it consist? We do not inquire what are the effects of it, (cessation of voluntary motion, and so on,) but what is the thing itself, the cause of these effects? What is dreaming? By what criterion can we distinguish dreams from waking thoughts? I mean, by what means may a dreaming person then know that he is in a dream? What is (the *consanguineus somni* *) death? When do we die? You say, "When the soul leaves the body." This cannot be denied. But my question is, When does the soul leave the body? When we cease to breathe, according to the maxim, *Nullus spiritus, nulla vita?* † This will not hold; for many have revived after respiration was utterly ceased. When the circulation of the blood stops? Nay, neither will this hold; for many have recovered after the pulse was quite gone. When the vital warmth ceases, and the juices lose their fluidity? Even this is not a certain mark; for some have revived after the body was quite cold and stiff; a case not uncommon in Sweden. By what token then can we surely know? It seems, none such can be found. God knows when the spirit returns to him; and the spirit itself; but none that dwells in a body.

What cause have we, then, to adore the wisdom of God who has so exactly proportioned our knowledge to our state! We may know whatever is needful for life or godliness, whatever is necessary either for our present or eternal happiness. But how little beside can the most penetrating genius know

* Next akin to sleep.—EDIT.

† No breath, no life.—EDIT.

with any certainty! Such pains, so to speak, hath God taken to hide pride from man; and to bound his thought within that channel of knowledge wherein he already finds eternal life.

CONVERSATION

WITH

THE BISHOP OF BRISTOL.*

BISHOP. Why, Sir, our faith itself is a good work; it is a virtuous temper of mind.

Mr. Wesley. My Lord, whatever faith is, our Church asserts, we are justified by faith alone. But how it can be called a good work, I see not: It is the gift of God; and a gift that presupposes nothing in us, but sin and misery.

B. How, Sir? Then you make God a tyrannical Being, if he justifies some without any goodness in them preceding, and does not justify all. If these are not justified on account of some moral goodness in them, why are not those justified too?

W. Because, my Lord, they "resist his Spirit;" because "they will not come to Him that they may have life;" because they suffer Him not to "work in them both to will and to do." They cannot be saved, because they will not believe.

B. Sir, what do you mean by faith?

W. My Lord, by justifying faith I mean, a conviction wrought in a man by the Holy Ghost, that Christ hath loved him, and given himself for him; and that, through Christ, his sins are forgiven.†

* This conversation appears to have taken place in the year 1739. It has been preserved in the hand-writing of Mr. Wesley. See his Life by Mr. Moore, vol. i., p. 463.—EDIT.

† This is, substantially, the definition in the Homily, but Mr. Wesley thought more correctly afterwards. See his Sermon on the Scripture Way of Salvation, Vol. VI., p. 47. It would appear from the Homily, that the faith by which justification is obtained, is a belief that we already possess it.—EDIT.

B. I believe some good men have this, but not all. But how do you prove this to be the justifying faith taught by our Church?

W. My Lord, from her Homily on Salvation, where she describes it thus: "A sure trust and confidence which a man hath in God, that through the merits of Christ his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favour of God."

B. Why, Sir, this is quite another thing.

W. My Lord, I conceive it to be the very same.

B. Mr. Wesley, I will deal plainly with you. I once thought you and Mr. Whitefield well-meaning men: But I cannot think so now; for I have heard more of you; matters of fact, Sir. And Mr. Whitefield says in his Journal, "There are promises still to be fulfilled in me." Sir, the pretending to extraordinary revelations and gifts of the Holy Ghost is a horrid thing, a very horrid thing!

W. My Lord, for what Mr. Whitefield says, Mr. Whitefield, and not I, is accountable. I pretend to no extraordinary revelations or gifts of the Holy Ghost; none but what every Christian may receive, and ought to expect and pray for. But I do not wonder your Lordship has heard facts asserted, which, if true, would prove the contrary; nor do I wonder, that your Lordship, believing them true, should alter the opinion you once had of me. A quarter of an hour I spent with your Lordship before, and about an hour now; and perhaps you have never conversed one other hour with any who spake in my favour. But how many with those who spake on the other side! So that your Lordship could not but think as you do.—But pray, my Lord, what are those facts you have heard?

B. I hear, you administer the sacrament in your societies.

W. My Lord, I never did yet; and I believe never shall.

B. I hear too, that many people fall into fits in your societies, and that you pray over them.

W. I do so, my Lord, when any show, by strong cries and tears, that their soul is in deep anguish. I frequently pray to God to deliver them from it; and our prayer is often heard in that hour.

B. Very extraordinary indeed! Well, Sir, since you ask my advice, I will give it you very freely. You have no business here. You are not commissioned to preach in this diocese. Therefore, I advise you to go hence.

W. My Lord, my business on earth is, to do what good I can. Wherever, therefore, I think I can do most good, there must I stay, so long as I think so. At present I think I can do most good here; therefore, here I stay. As to my preaching here, a dispensation of the Gospel is committed to me; and woe is me, if I preach not the Gospel, wherever I am in the habitable world. Your Lordship knows, being ordained a Priest, by the commission I then received, I am a Priest of the Church universal; and being ordained as Fellow of a College, I was not limited to any particular cure, but have an indeterminate commission to preach the word of God, in any part of the Church of England. I do not therefore conceive, that, in preaching here by this commission, I break any human law. When I am convinced I do, then it will be time to ask, Shall I obey God or man? But if I should be convinced in the meanwhile, that I could advance the glory of God, and the salvation of souls, in any other place, more than in Bristol; in that hour, by God's help, I will go hence; which till then I may not do.

AN ACCOUNT

OF THE

DISTURBANCES IN MY FATHER'S HOUSE.

When I was very young, I heard several letters read, wrote to my elder brother by my father, giving an account of strange disturbances which were in his house at Epworth, in Lincolnshire.

1. When I went down thither, in the year 1720, I carefully inquired into the particulars. I spoke to each of the persons who were then in the house, and took down what each could testify of his or her own knowledge: The sum of which was this:—

2. On December 2, 1716, while Robert Brown, my father's servant, was sitting with one of the maids, a little before ten at night, in the dining-room which opened into the garden,

they both heard one knocking at the door. Robert rose and opened it, but could see nobody. Quickly it knocked again, and groaned. "It is Mr. Turpin," said Robert; "he has the stone, and uses to groan so." He opened the door again twice or thrice, the knocking being twice or thrice repeated. But still seeing nothing, and being a little startled, they rose and went up to bed.

When Robert came to the top of the garret-stairs, he saw a hand-mill, which was at a little distance, whirled about very swiftly. When he related this, he said, "Nought vexed me, but that it was empty. I thought, if it had but been full of malt, he might have ground his heart out for me."

When he was in bed, he heard as it were the gobbling of a turkey-cock close to the bed-side; and soon after, the sound of one stumbling over his shoes and boots. But there were none there: He had left them below.

3. The next day, he and the maid related these things to the other maid, who laughed heartily, and said, "What a couple of fools are you! I defy anything to fright me." After churning in the evening, she put the butter in the tray, and had no sooner carried it into the dairy, than she heard a knocking on the shelf where several pancheons of milk stood, first above the shelf, then below. She took the candle, and searched both above and below; but, being able to find nothing, threw down butter, tray, and all, and ran away for life.

4. The next evening, between five and six o'clock, my sister Molly, then about twenty years of age, sitting in the dining-room, reading, heard as if it were the door that led into the hall open, and a person walking in that seemed to have on a silk night-gown, rustling and trailing along. It seemed to walk round her, then to the door, then round again; but she could see nothing. She thought, "It signifies nothing to run away; for whatever it is, it can run faster than me." So she rose, put her book under her arm, and walked slowly away.

5. After supper, she was sitting with my sister Suky (about a year older than her) in one of the chambers, and telling her what had happened. She quite made light of it; telling her, "I wonder you are so easily frighted: I would fain see what would fright me." Presently a knocking

began under the table. She took the candle and looked, but could find nothing. Then the iron casement began to clatter, and the lid of a warming-pan. Next the latch of the door moved up and down without ceasing. She started up, leaped into the bed without undressing, pulled the bed-clothes over her head, and never ventured to look up till next morning.

6. A night or two after, my sister Hetty, a year younger than my sister Molly, was waiting as usual, between nine and ten, to take away my father's candle, when she heard one coming down the garret-stairs, walking slowly by her; then going down the best stairs, then up the back-stairs, and up the garret-stairs: And at every step it seemed the house shook from top to bottom. Just then my father knocked. She went in, took his candle, and got to bed as fast as possible.

7. In the morning, she told this to my eldest sister; who told her, "You know I believe none of these things. Pray let me take away the candle to-night, and I will find out the trick." She accordingly took my sister Hetty's place, and had no sooner taken away the candle, than she heard a noise below. She hastened down stairs to the hall, where the noise was; but it was then in the kitchen. She ran into the kitchen, where it was drumming on the inside of the screen. When she went round, it was drumming on the outside, and so always on the side opposite to her. Then she heard a knocking at the back-kitchen door. She ran to it, unlocked it softly, and, when the knocking was repeated, suddenly opened it; but nothing was to be seen. As soon as she had shut it, the knocking began again. She opened it again, but could see nothing. When she went to shut the door, it was violently thrust against her. She let it fly open, but nothing appeared. She went again to shut it, and it was again thrust against her: But she set her knee and her shoulder to the door, forced it to, and turned the key. Then the knocking began again; but she let it go on, and went up to bed. However, from that time, she was thoroughly convinced that there was no imposture in the affair.

8. The next morning, my sister telling my mother what had happened, she said, "If I hear anything myself, I shall know how to judge."

Soon after, she begged her to come into the nursery. She did; and heard, in the corner of the room, as it were the violent rocking of a cradle: But no cradle had been there for some years. She was convinced it was preternatural, and earnestly prayed it might not disturb her in her own chamber, at the hours of retirement. And it never did.

She now thought it was proper to tell my father. But he was extremely angry, and said, "Suky, I am ashamed of you. These boys and girls fright one another; but you are a woman of sense, and should know better. Let me hear of it no more."

At six in the evening, he had family-prayers, as usual. When he began the prayer for the King, a knocking began all round the room; and a thundering knock attended the Amen. The same was heard from this time every morning and evening, while the prayer for the King was repeated.

As both my father and mother are now at rest, and incapable of being pained thereby, I think it my duty to furnish the serious reader with a key to this circumstance. The year before King William died, my father observed my mother did not say Amen to the prayer for the King. She said she could not; for she did not believe the Prince of Orange was King. He vowed he would never cohabit with her till she did. He then took his horse, and rode away; nor did she hear anything of him for a twelvemonth. He then came back, and lived with her as before. But I fear his vow was not forgotten before God.

9. Being informed that Mr. Hoole, the Vicar of Haxey, (an eminently pious and sensible man,) could give me some farther information, I walked over to him. He said, "Robert Brown came over to me, and told me your father desired my company. When I came, he gave me an account of all that had happened; particularly the knocking during family-prayer. But that evening (to my great satisfaction) we had no knocking at all: But between nine and ten, a servant came in, and said, 'Old Jeffries is coming;' (that was the name of one that died in the house;) 'for I hear the signal.' This, they informed me, was heard every night, about a quarter before ten. It was toward the top of the house, on the outside, at the north-east corner, resembling the loud creaking of a saw; or rather, that of a

windmill, when the body of it is turned about, in order to shift the sails to the wind. We then heard a knocking over our heads; and Mr. Wesley, catching up a candle, said, 'Come, Sir; now you shall hear for yourself.' We went up stairs; he with much hope, and I (to say the truth) with much fear. When we came into the nursery, it was knocking in the next room; when we were there, it was knocking in the nursery. And there it continued to knock, though we came in; particularly at the head of the bed, (which was of wood,) in which Miss Hetty and two of her younger sisters lay. Mr. Wesley, observing that they were much affected, though asleep, sweating and trembling exceedingly, was very angry; and, pulling out a pistol, was going to fire at the place from whence the sound came. But I catched him by the arm, and said, 'Sir, you are convinced this is something preternatural. If so, you cannot hurt it; but you give it power to hurt you.' He then went close to the place, and said sternly, 'Thou deaf and dumb devil, why dost thou fright these children that cannot answer for themselves? Come to me in my study, that am a man.' Instantly it knocked his knock, (the particular knock which he always used at the gate,) as if it would shiver the board in pieces; and we heard nothing more that night."

10. Till this time my father had never heard the least disturbance in his study. But the next evening, as he attempted to go into his study, (of which none had any key but himself,) when he opened the door, it was thrust back with such violence as had like to have thrown him down. However, he thrust the door open, and went in. Presently there was knocking, first on one side, then on the other; and, after a time, in the next room, wherein my sister Nancy was. He went into that room, and (the noise continuing) adjured it to speak; but in vain. He then said, "These spirits love darkness: Put out the candle, and perhaps it will speak." She did so: And he repeated his adjuration: But still there was only knocking, and no articulate sound. Upon this he said, "Nancy, two Christians are an overmatch for the devil. Go all of you down stairs: It may be, when I am alone, he will have courage to speak." When she was gone, a thought came in, and he said, "If thou art the spirit of my son Samuel, I pray, knock three

knocks, and no more." Immediately all was silence; and there was no more knocking at all that night.

11. I asked my sister Nancy, (then about fifteen years old,) whether she was not afraid, when my father used that adjuration. She answered, she was sadly afraid it would speak, when she put out the candle; but she was not at all afraid in the day-time, when it walked after her, as she swept the chambers, as it constantly did, and seemed to sweep after her: Only, she thought he might have done it for her, and saved her the trouble.

12. By this time, all my sisters were so accustomed to these noises, that they gave them little disturbance. A gentle tapping at their bed-head usually began between nine and ten at night. They then commonly said to each other, "Jeffrey is coming: It is time to go to sleep." And if they heard a noise in the day, and said to my youngest sister, "Hark, Kezzy, Jeffrey is knocking above," she would run up stairs, and pursue it from room to room, saying she desired no better diversion.

13. A few nights after, my father and mother were just gone to bed, and the candle was not taken away, when they heard three blows, and a second and a third three, as it were with a large oaken staff, struck upon a chest which stood by the bedside. My father immediately arose, put on his night-gown, and, hearing great noises below, took the candle, and went down. My mother walked by his side. As they went down the broad stairs, they heard as if a vessel full of silver was poured upon my mother's breast, and ran jingling down to her feet. Quickly after, there was a sound, as if a large iron ball was thrown among many bottles under the stairs: But nothing was hurt. Soon after, our large mastiff dog came and ran to shelter himself between them. While the disturbances continued, he used to bark and leap, and snap on one side and the other; and that frequently before any person in the room heard any noise at all. But, after two or three days, he used to tremble and creep away before the noise began; and by this the family knew it was at hand: Nor did the observation ever fail.

A little before my father and mother came into the hall, it seemed as if a very large coal was violently thrown upon the floor, and dashed all in pieces: But nothing was seen.

My father then cried out, "Suky, do you not hear? All the pewter is thrown about the kitchen:" But when they looked, all the pewter stood in its place. There then was a loud knocking at the back-door. My father opened it, but saw nothing. It was then at the fore-door. He opened that; but it was still lost labour. After opening first the one, then the other, several times, he turned, and went up to bed. But the noises were so violent all over the house, that he could not sleep till four in the morning.

14. Several gentlemen and Clergymen now earnestly advised my father to quit the house; but he constantly answered, "No; let the devil flee from me: I will never flee from the devil." But he wrote to my eldest brother at London to come down. He was preparing so to do, when another letter came, informing him the disturbances were over; after they had continued (the latter part of the time, day and night) from the second of December to the end of January.

HILTON-PARK, JOHN WESLEY.
March 26, 1784.

CALVINISTIC CONTROVERSY.

HAVING found for some time a strong desire to unite with Mr. Whitefield, as far as possible, to cut off needless dispute, I wrote down my sentiments, as plain as I could, in the following terms:—

There are three points in debate: 1. Unconditional election. 2. Irresistible grace. 3. Final perseverance.

With regard to the first, unconditional election, I believe,

That God, before the foundation of the world, did unconditionally elect certain persons to do certain works; as Paul to preach the Gospel.

That he has unconditionally elected some nations to receive peculiar privileges, the Jewish nation in particular.

That he has unconditionally elected some nations to hear