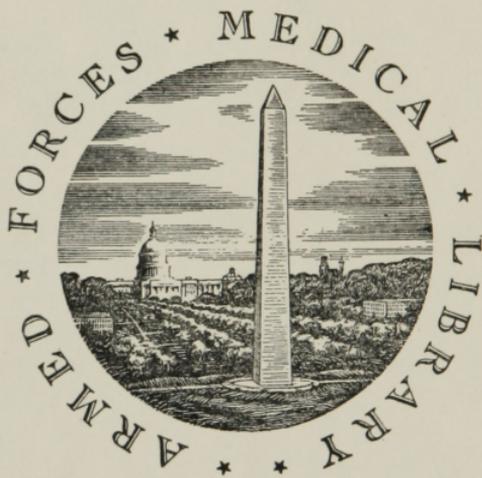




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**A DISCOURSE,**

IN TWO PARTS;  
DELIVERED IN  
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THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IN LEXINGTON,  
FEBRUARY 3, 1822;

To the Class of the Medical School  
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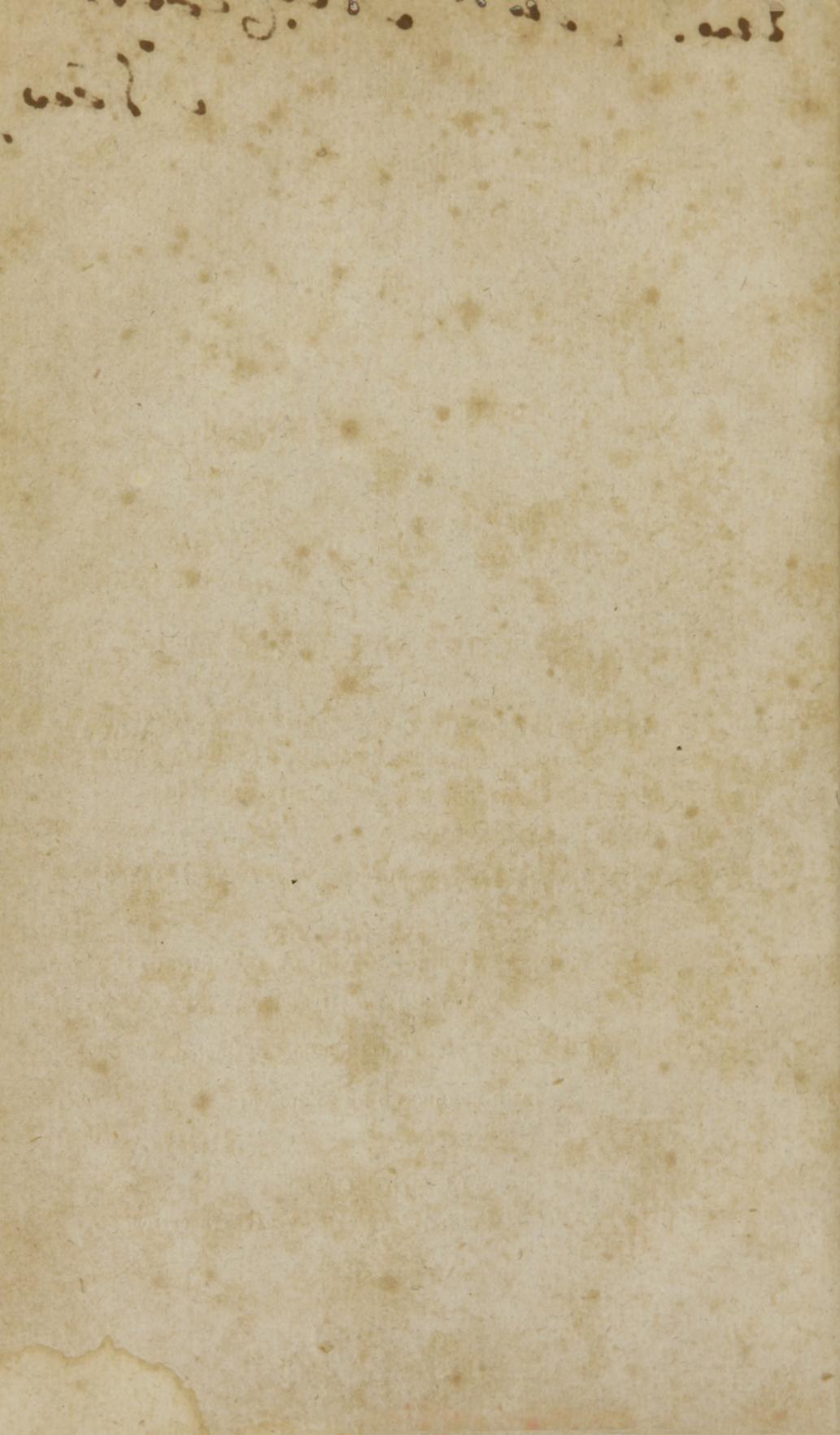
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## ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following discourse was delivered from imperfect notes. In writing it out, some omissions and some additions have been made: The leading theme and substance, however, have been preserved.

The Author pleads the shortness of the time allowed him for composing it since its delivery as some apology for its imperfect appearance.



1 COR. 1, 21. *In the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God.*

CONTEMPLATE Paul as viewing all that the Philosophy of Greece had achieved in the knowledge of God and the reformation of mankind, and under this view exclaiming to the Church at Corinth, where is the Philosopher? Where the Scribe? Where the disputer or sceptic of this world? Let these declare what reformation they have wrought on mankind—Hath not God shown the foolishness of the wisdom of this world; the insufficiency of Philosophy in bringing men to the knowledge of God and the practice of virtue by leaving them so long to its guidance without effect? For when in the wise government of God experience had shown that the world through Philosophy did not attain the knowledge of God, it pleased God through what Philosophers call the foolishness of preaching to save them who believe the things preached concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.—I say contemplate him in this light and you have a pretty correct apprehension of his meaning and the design of his address in the text and context.

It is having a different God that makes a different religion—A false God makes a false religion, and erroneous views of the character of the true God produce errors in the true religion.—The present Jews, Turks, Mahometans, Natural Religionists or Deists, Pagans and Christians all differ about religion because they have different Gods.—The only true God is the God that is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, and it is in relation to him that our text speaks.

It is thought by some that all who worship, worship the same God. Upon this principle Pope constructed his Universal Prayer wherein the Supreme Being is addressed as a common Father under the names of Jehovah, Jove or Lord.—The worshippers of the true God and idolaters are represented as one. But Paul instructs us better, who, when the priest of Jupiter came to offer sacrifice, exhorted him to turn from these vanities unto the living God—knowing that Jupiter is nothing—a mere vanity.

Our text asserts, that it is “in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God.” My design is to justify the apostle in the declaration which I receive in its most plain and obvious acceptation, and to prove that the human mind cannot attain the knowledge of God by the philosophy and science of this world.

Good men and learned men differ with Paul on this subject. Deism and scholastic theology are directly opposed to the truth of the text.—I confess the difference is an essential one.

The *Natural Religious* sentiment considers mankind in a state different from their real one—It views the relation that the soul bears to God totally different from the Scripture view, and entirely different from that which the experience and history of

J. G. Mason

all ages evince. It regards the mind as possessed of a capacity for acquiring original spiritual information independent of revelation, contrary to the express declaration of Scripture, and the consciousness of every man who will carefully examine the operations of his own mind in relation to the subject.—It regards man as sustaining very near, if not the same, relation to God in holding communion with him and in acquiring the knowledge of him he did before the fall. In short, it views him as in the light while in truth he is in gross darkness.

My proofs that “in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God” and cannot know him is three-fold—

1. Scriptural.
2. The incapacity of the mind to acquire spiritual knowledge from natural things ascertained by experiment.
3. The actual and exclusive operation of revelation in imparting the knowledge of God, and spiritual existences.

After having attended to these proofs I will exhibit some Chronological and Historical facts in relation to the subject, and notice a little the influences of the Gospel upon the intellectual, moral and social powers of man in the present world, and suggest some improvements in education which the preceding investigations indicate.

Before I enter upon the subject permit me to premise a few explanatory remarks to prevent misapprehension.

There is no difference between myself and other Christians who take their principles from the Bible as to the belief in the existence of God—creation—the immortality of the soul—its spiritual nature—its separate existence from the body after death until the resurrection—the existence of conscience or the moral faculty, &c.—but I maintain that the knowledge of God, of creation, the spiritual nature and the separate existence of the soul from the body, its immortality, &c. are exclusively doctrines of revelation; and deny that they can be known, circumstanced as the human mind is, without it. And I moreover maintain that the existence of this knowledge is a conclusive proof of the truth of revelation on account of the impossibility of its being acquired without it.

Permit me further to premise, that *natural religion*, the natural knowledge of God did exist before the fall of man, but never since he transgressed, and “the Lord sent him forth from the Garden of Eden and drove him out.”

Before he sinned immediate communion and union between him and his maker were the natural order of the economy in which he was placed.—His soul was immediately instructed and enlightened by the communications of God in spiritual as well as natural things as far as it was proper he should be informed.—This is fairly indicated by the short notices Moses has given us on the subject

But in consequence of man's transgression God withdrew from him, by reason of which he lost the image and knowledge of God; natural religion ceased, and ever since the divine communications of God to his intelligent nature have been supernatural, and made by the Logos, the speaker for and to man in his mediatorial character.

*M. P. J. J.*

I moreover observe that the operations of God's spirit in *quickening* the heart and making it to *feel* the truth as it is revealed and in imparting justifying faith and the love of God, his government and service are fundamental principles in the system I advocate ; but it is ordinarily by and with the truth, the word of God, that he effects these things.

With regard to the nature of his *secret* operations in relation to infants, idiots and the hetahen, I permit not myself to indulge in speculations—God has reserved these things to himself, and “ shall not the judge of all the earth do right ? Gen. 25. 18.

If it be asked why I am so much in earnest upon the subject of revealed religion—I answer, that the God of the Bible may be regarded as the God of nature, and that our opinions and sentiments of him and ourselves be formed in accordance with his character and the relation we sustain to him as he has revealed them ; for a man may live all his life ignorant of God and of himself and be a philosopher too.

When I deny the applicability of the wisdom of this world to the production of original spiritual ideas, I no more design to deny the spirituality of the soul, &c. than to deny animal life or vital phenomena when I deny to mechanics the power to produce or to explain them. I oppose not the improvement of science, but delight in its cultivation. I only insist that every thing be preserved in its proper place. It is a requisition of reason to believe every thing by its own proper evidence, and to preserve it in the light in which it was originally learnt. Discard credulity.—Too easy a faith is unfriendly to the science that cometh from above. Believe nothing without proof, nor any thing with greater assurance than the evidence it is built upon will justify. Go where truth carries you, regardless of consequences. If Natural Religion or Deism, or Materialism, or Atheism be true adopt them—but if they all be false and Revealed Religion—the religion of the Bible—alone be true, adopt that. And that it is true, I do not fear producing a conviction in the mind of every unprejudiced, attentive hearer.

I now proceed to consider the methods of proof enumerated—that “ in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God.”—and

#### 1st. The Scriptural

In adducing Scripture evidence under this division I design only to shew the Scripture definitions, views and statements on the subject.

It is essential to revelation that it make known the existence of those beings of which we are naturally ignorant, and the *insensible* relation of things that we naturally know.

Our investigation will prove that the mind has a *capacity* for spiritual knowledge which nature cannot inform or enlighten.

The following are Scripture statements :

“ All Scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, &c.”

“No man hath seen God at any time the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father he hath declared him.”

“O righteous Father the world hath not known thee.”

“Faith is the evidence of things not seen”—it “cometh by the word of God,” that is, the information imparted by God’s word.”

“Without *faith* it is impossible to please God—he that cometh to him must *believe* that he is; the only begotten Son, he hath declared him.”

“Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.”

It is essential to faith, that its objects be things not seen and which are only known by the revelation of them. We do not know through faith that the worlds *are*, but through faith we know that they were *made*; for the revelation informs us that “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth,” &c.—We do not know through faith that we *are*, but it is through faith that we know that God *made* or *created* us, and that in him we live and move and have our being—that we have spiritual and immortal souls, and that our bodies will be raised from the dead, &c. Faith and sense, or the knowledge derived from the *natural* operations and laws of things sensible are distinguished from each other. “We walk by faith and not by sight.” 2 Cor. 5. 10. “We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.” 2 Cor. 4. 18.—“By faith Noah being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an Ark to the saving of his house” Heb. 11. 7.

One would suppose that these Scripture statements and explanations on this subject are sufficient for Christian Philosophers,—We proceed in the

2d place, to prove that “in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God,” from the incapacity of the human mind to acquire spiritual knowledge by natural science or the knowledge of natural things according to the above Scripture statements.

One of the most useful exercises of reason is to ascertain its limits and to restrain itself within them.

In a course of correct investigation according to the principles of right reason, great sacrifices must be made, some of the most urgent propensities of the mind must be put under the most severe restraint and regulation. The human mind feels restless and dissatisfied under the anxieties of uncertainty and ignorance. It longs for the repose of conviction, and to gain this repose it will often rather precipitate its conclusions than wait for the tardy lights of observation and experiment. It is a principle in Bacon’s Philosophy, that man is ignorant of every thing antecedent to observation.

It is not by the exercise of a sublime and speculative ingenuity that man arrives at truth. It is by letting himself down to the drudgery of observation—it is by descending to the sober work of seeing and feeling, and experimenting that he does so.

If we arrive at the knowledge of God by reasoning upon nature, there is no point in philosophy more undeniable than this, that we can show by what train of rational

procedure we arrived at the information or made out the deduction. If this cannot be done, then the knowledge of God stands upon its own evidence as light and sound do, and cannot be subordinate to any preconceived opinions, nor superceded by them, nor can it be placed in the circle of *natural science* without the most evident impropriety.

All the elementary parts of our knowledge consist in the ideas we derive from *sensation* and *reflection* or the perception of external objects, and the notices the mind takes of its own operations—and the internal feelings of the body and moral sense.

In considering this division of proof it is necessary that we close the Bible, and with that, dismiss *every idea* from our minds and *every word* and *name* from our vocabulary derived from revelation, until we have formed them without it. Previous to this, however, permit me to give you an imperfect description of the God of the Bible.

The word *God* is the stipulated sign of that being who is essentially different from all the existences with which we are naturally acquainted. He has no relation to time, nor place, not being *older* to-day than he was a thousand years ago, nor a *part* here nor a part there—who has no relation to *measure, number, proportion, or form*—who is in his own nature *immaterial, independent* and *eternal*—who is, being simply considered in and of himself—the *uncreated* source, and the creator and preserver of all things, though dissimilar to all—All wise, every where present, though unperceived by any, and all powerful—A being of goodness, love, justice, mercy, faithfulness and truth—the governor of the Universe, to whom nothing of assignable forms, colours, or qualities can attach—to whom no finite idea belongs, whom no line can circumscribe nor period bound—and it is by the custom of using the name *God* and its various synonymies, Lord, Jehovah, &c.—a custom established by himself, by repeated revelations in connection with miraculous appearances, and by positive divine institutions among men that it is the sign of that being and the bond of union to which his attributes, natural and moral, are tied or connected in the view of the mind, and forms the complex idea of him.

We now close the Bible, and drop every idea and word derived from it, and from traditional revelation. But remember the text says that “in the wise arrangement of God the world by wisdom knew not God” Now confute it if you can. Employ your senses and faculties. Take nothing for granted and concede nothing. You have five senses; eyes, ears, touch, taste and smell. The mind has five leading faculties; perception, memory, imagination, judgment and consciousness, to which we may add the moral sense. Philosophers agree that in order to the exercise of these faculties impressions must be made upon the organs of our senses.

*Stewart* observes “that the first occasion on which our various intellectual faculties are exercised are furnished by the impressions made on the organs of our senses, and without these it would be impossible for us to arrive at the knowledge of our faculties.” Through the eye the mind perceives visible objects and receives the ideas of them and of colours, and through the ear the idea of sound, and so on with respect to the other senses.

None of the ideas thus received can enable you in the use of them to ascend higher than the objects and their natures from which you derived them. You can combine and modify and variously arrange them, but you can do nothing more—and without them you can neither think, remember, imagine, or reason in relation to them or the objects from whence they were derived, no more than a mechanic can construct a watch or erect a house without materials; so literally true is the following observation of David Hume, which is in accordance with Locke on the same subject, “Although nothing is so unbounded in its operations as the imagination of man—to form monsters and join incongruous shapes and appearances, costs the imagination no more trouble, than to conceive of the most natural and familiar objects; and whilst the body is confined to one planet, along which it creeps with pain and difficulty, the imagination and thought can transport us in an instant, into the most distant regions of the universe. But although our thought seems to possess this unbounded liberty, we shall find upon a nearer examination that it is really confined within very narrow limits, and that all this creative power of the mind amounts to nothing more than the faculty of combining, transposing, augmenting and diminishing, the materials afforded us by sense and experience.” The mind in its reflex operations forms the ideas of perception, memory, imagination, consciousness, &c; by noticing its own feelings and its operations in the exercise of these faculties, which, as Stewart observed it would be impossible for us to arrive at the knowledge of but for the occasion furnished by the impressions made on the organs of our senses. You can *perceive* nothing but through the senses or by noticing the mind’s own operations or by consciousness. The internal sensation of hunger, &c. impart no idea but that of painful or unpleasant feeling; the moral sense is exercised alone on the right or wrong of action. You can *remember* nothing; not previously perceived; you can *imagine* nothing whose parts you had not a previous acquaintance with; nor can you *judge* of any thing of which you have no perception. *Consciousness* is the mind’s perception of its own existence, faculties and operations, and relates only to the present time. The objects of it, Dr. Reid observes, “are our present pains, our pleasures, our hopes, our fears, our desires, our doubts, our thoughts of every kind; in a word all the passions, and all the actions and operations of our own minds, while they are present—we may remember them when they are past; we are conscious of them only while they are present.”—Take away these objects and occasions of consciousness and it ceases. Consciousness advances us not one moment beyond the present in the knowledge of our own existence.

Matter is necessary in a two-fold point of view for the operation of mind:

1st. The living brain and nerves which pervade the whole body and render it susceptible of internal feeling.

2d. External objects which impress the senses.

Destroy these and all the operations of the mind are destroyed, according to every *natural* appearance—in the absence of these there is no *natural* indication or evidence of the existence of mind.

But this is Materialism! To be sure it is, and that is the true language of nature, unenlightened from a supernatural source; nor is the separate and independent existence of the soul from the body indicated by or deducible from any appearances in the nature of its connexions and operations. Certain states of the brain correspond with certain states of the mind, and every change in the state of the brain is associated with a corresponding change in the state of the mind. Disorders in the brain are accompanied with proportionable disorders in the intellect, as in drowsiness, intemperance, fever, delirium and lunacy; and when the organization ceases, perception appears to cease. Nature indicates that it is as reasonable to conclude that perception is the result of organization in some way, as that the pulsations of the heart and arteries are, or that the colour and odour of the violet is the consequence of its peculiar structure. Nature on this as well as every other subject leaves us totally ignorant of every thing beyond her range of sensible operation.

Our souls are spiritual and will exist separate from matter; but nature is not the source from whence we learn the fact; but the God of nature and of the soul supernaturally making them known. If we obtain spiritual knowledge we must have spiritual means of information.

Reason, in relation to spiritual subjects, without revelation, is like the powerless eyes of an infant gazing upon darkness impenetrable. Reason can be no more its own informer on spiritual subjects than the eye can be the source of its own light on visible ones; nor is it any degradation or disparagement to intellect to obey its own necessities in learning and believing things by their own proper light and evidence.

But it is asked, has not the world been made? Ask nature—She replies, that out of nothing, nothing can be produced.

Could nature have *created* itself? The word *creation* is excluded from the investigation until you discover a fact in nature from which it could be originated; it does not belong to the vocabulary of nature, and but for revelation you never could have had it.

You cannot name a thing of which you have no previous idea, and you can form no idea without a corresponding fact. What fact has transpired in the view of the mind, consisting in the origination of something from nothing, which is the proper idea of a creation, that could suggest to you the idea, & indicate the name or word as the sign of it? We must have the *fact* exhibited to us before we have use for the word or can have the idea, if of natural origin. Running back the current of time the language of nature, in every succeeding century, is the same, until we are lost in the depths of antiquity: and excluding all traditional information we must set down in ignorance of every thing beyond natural and sensible existence. I am urgent upon this subject, because the principle I am establishing assumes it as an incontestible fact, that "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," and that it is "through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which do appear," & that the faith "through

which we understand" these things is communicated to us "by the word of God." This view of the subject illustrates a former observation, "that the *insensible* relations of things which are naturally known are as necessarily discovered by revelation as is spiritual existence otherwise unknown." Without the *fact* and the *proof* of a creation you cannot pretend to conceive of the existence of a Creator, nor can we have or use the words by which they are designated.

By what steps an uneducated mind is to rise up to the knowledge of a being who has no relation to time, place, measure, number, proportion, or form, to whom nothing of conceivable shapes, colours or qualities can attach, whom no line can circumscribe nor period bound, and who is essentially dissimilar to mind and all its laws and properties, is utterly inconceivable; and to assimilate him to any of these things, is to change the truth of God into a lie. Where shall the savage set out, for all are so by nature? He is without the name of what he is to seek, and without a fact to suggest the idea or the name, yet names are the only marks or signs of essence or existence in spiritual subjects, to which he could affix any conceivable properties—and names cannot be given to things of which we have no apprehension. When or where then could he begin to search for he knew not what?

We are told that the construction of the eye will lead us to the information. What does true philosophy and science require of us in relation to the eye?

They require that we unravel and understand its structure, its composition and laws, its constituent parts and elementary forms, & the adaptation of the whole to vision: and they require of us nothing more. Were we as well informed as we are ignorant of these things, we could not transcend these limits. The formation of the eye is as really referable to the operation of definite and regular laws in the animal economy as the formation of the hair or the nails, or the secretion of the tears.

It is objected: Do not the Scriptures say, "the invisible things of God from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead?" To which I reply, that the Scriptures never contradict themselves. They never urge the works of God to teach us his existence, but his eternal power and Godhead, when revealed as his works; for it is through faith we understand that the worlds were made; that "God created the heavens and the earth." Dr. Dwight translates the passage thus, "For the invisible things from the creation of the world, *being understood*, are clearly seen in the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead."

To the mind possessed of the knowledge of God, and when the heart is right, "the heavens declare his glory, and the firmament sheweth his handy work;" but this never was done to a mind destitute of that previous information.

The *Moral Instinct* or moral sense is adduced to teach us the being of God. This exists without necessarily possessing the knowledge of God—it teaches no original spiritual ideas, and is conversant with moral conduct. It operates in reference to a sense of *right*, or a rule of action derived either from its own feeling, or from reason and judgment, or both. It forms a part of the original constitution of man, and issues

ceptible, under proper culture, of great improvement. But a great difference exists between an erroneous ignorant conscience, and one enlightened and rectified by truth. The case of Paul before and after his conversion, exhibits the contrast.—Before, he persecuted the truth even unto the death—after, he suffered persecution for it, even to the loss of his life.

But the authority of Paul himself is quoted in confutation of the sentiment, that the operation of the moral faculty is not necessarily right, or that it possesses the knowledge of God in the absence of revelation. The passage usually referred to is Rom. 2. 13–15: “For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified: for when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law are a law unto themselves; which show the works of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing, or excusing one another.”

It is true that *when* the Gentiles do the things contained in the law, they shew the works of the law written in their hearts, and they “are justified” too “before God.” But what Gentiles are they that do the works of the law? What are the things contained in the law? The first is “Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.” The second, “Thou shalt not make unto thyself any graven image—thou shalt not bow down to them nor worship them” The Gentiles of whom Paul speaks were “*justified before God*”—not by the works of the law, for by it no flesh shall be justified in his sight, “but by faith without the deeds of the law.” But how could they believe in him of whom they had not heard? for faith came by hearing. The Gentiles spoken of by Paul who did the things contained in the law were those whom Paul had opened the eyes of and turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they might receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Christ.

We are told that there is an error in our translation of the passage, arising from an improper pointing. If Paul is permitted to explain himself there can be no doubt of it.

When properly pointed and arranged it stands thus: “For when the Gentiles which have not the law by nature, *do* the things contained in the law,” &c.

The Jews were born under the law, and so they had the law by nature, that is from their very birth, which the Gentiles had not; and it should be remembered that “we who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles” are the very words of the Apostle himself; and yet it would be the height of absurdity to affirm of the best Jews that ever lived, that they “did by nature the things contained in the law” But to assert this of the Gentiles is the very first bone of contradictions.

Paul in the preceding chapter says of the Gentiles, that “When they knew God they glorified him not as God, neither were they thankful but became vain in their imaginations and their foolish hearts were darkened, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image.” “Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and

worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator," &c. And were these the Gentiles who did the things contained in the law, and shewed the works of the law written in their hearts? Do we find any Gentiles better by nature than these were? The last act of Socrates' life (except the drinking of the poison) was an act of idolatry—he ordered a cock to be offered to Esculapius.

The Gentiles of whom Paul speaks, who did the things contained in the law, and who were justified before God, were converts to the christian religion, who had God's law written upon their hearts by the spirit of God under the Gospel: at least Paul speaks of none other whose consciences were in accordance with the law of God, and who were "justified before him."

I proceed in the

3d place, to consider the actual and exclusive operation of Revelation in imparting the knowledge of God and spiritual things—and of the insensible relations of sensible things

What we have said under the two preceding divisions has considerably anticipated what I am now to exhibit.

We have seen the unfitnes or inaptitude of the wisdom of this world or human philosophy and science to impart the knowledge of God and of spiritual existence. The reason of it is that they are learnt alone by language, which was originally revealed, since immediate revelation ceased.

We have the information that God is—that he created the world, &c.—and if the question be asked, from whence it was derived? The child ten years old, instructed in a christian land, will inform us—it will tell us that it has been taught it, and the savage in the American forest makes the same reply, but refers to the tradition of his fathers. The former is perhaps more clear and comprehensive, but his information has been derived from a more luminous and a purer source: Socrates and Plato gave the same account of the source of their imperfect knowledge—they had learnt by tradition—it was a *hear say* with them.

Upon spiritual subjects the archetypes are never seen; in natural ones they are, or are apprehended by sensible operations. On spiritual subjects words are the means of ideas; we can no more think than speak without them—all we learn is by words, and all we think is in words, and without them could neither learn, think nor teach.

The demonstration is conclusive language upon spiritual subjects could not be contrived without thought and knowledge, but the mind cannot have ideas, thoughts, and knowledge without language, therefore language must be previously taught before man could become possessed of spiritual knowledge, and none could teach him but God, or some one by his inspiration. I appeal to your own consciousness and experience of what passes in your own minds, and if you can acquire ideas or think upon spiritual subjects without words as the instruments of ideas and thought, without immediate supernatural inspiration, to which but few will pretend in our day, I yield the point.

It is by the *custom* of using words that they become the stipulated signs of ideas, and on spiritual subjects it was first established by the repeated revelations of God himself and divine institution. Sensible things tend to illustrate the things that are revealed so long as the revelation is kept truly in view, but never suggested them without the revelation. "The invisible things of God being understood, as God had shown them, are clearly seen by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." In this view "the heavens declare the glory of God" and all his works praise. David, under the influence of it, contemplating the structure of his own body and the nature of his soul, exclaimed, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well." But where is the Anatomist or Philologist, without this antecedent light deeply impressed upon his heart, ever felt or expressed these sentiments?

So far from the creatures ever leading to the Creator without the previous knowledge of him, they were the cause of the first and most universal idolatry when the world forsook and denied him.

In illustration of this subject permit me to introduce to your notice a case recorded in the *Memoirs of the Academy of Sciences at Paris*, of a person born deaf.

"The son of a tradesman in Chartres, who had been deaf from his birth, and consequently dumb; when he was twenty-three or twenty-four years of age, began on a sudden to speak, without its being known that he had ever heard. This event drew the attention of every one, and many believed it to be miraculous.—The young man, however, gave a plain and rational account, by which it appeared to proceed wholly from natural causes. He said that about four months before he was surprised by a *new* and pleasing sensation, which he afterwards discovered to arise from the ringing of bells; that as yet he heard with one ear, but afterwards a kind of water came from his left ear, and then he could hear distinctly with both; that from this time he listened with the utmost curiosity and attention to the sounds which accompany those motions of the lips which he had before remarked to convey ideas or meaning from one person to another. In short he was able to understand them, by noting the thing to which they related, and the action they produced. And after repeated attempts to imitate them when alone, at the end of four months he thought himself able to talk. He therefore without having intimated what had happened, began at once to speak, and affected to join in conversation, though with much more imperfection than he was aware.

Many divines immediately visited him, and questioned him concerning God, and the soul, moral good, and evil, and many other subjects of the same kind; but of all this they found him totally ignorant, though he had been used to go to mass, and had been instructed in all the externals of devotion, as making the sign of the cross, looking upwards, kneeling at proper seasons, and using gestures of penitence and prayer. Of death itself, which may be considered as a sensible object, he had very confused and imperfect ideas, nor did it appear that he had ever reflected upon it. His life was little more than animal and sensitive. He seemed to be contented with the sim-

ple perception of such objects as he could perceive, and did not compare his ideas with each other, nor draw inferences, as might have been expected from him. It appeared, however, that his understanding was vigorous, and his apprehension quick, so that his intellectual defects must have been caused, not by the barrenness of the soil, but merely by the want of necessary cultivation."

A method has been discovered within a few years past by which the deaf and dumb are taught the knowledge of God, spiritual existences, &c. But they acquire this knowledge by learning to read the Scriptures, and the information derived therefrom.

person born blind may be taught the existence of light by a person who sees it, by the use of the word *light* and the manifestation of its sensible properties imparted to his mind through his four senses, and explained by words. He can be lead about by its influence—distant objects can be described to him before he arrives at them—a history of former events, with which he had been acquainted, and a letter from a friend may be read to him, and the effects of light in imparting growth and health to vegetables described. All these influences of light are by description attached to the word *light* and which word thus clothed, the blind man receives as the mark or sign of that existence by which he distinguishes it from others, and through which he contemplates it. He remembers and uses it for this purpose. The whole of this instruction is supernatural to him, and was made known by description or representation, previous to which his mind could not form any idea of the existence of light or invent any word expressive of it, nor think about it.

In this case, by the use of words, he has that made known to him whose existence he knew nothing of before, and the insensible relation of sensible things, such as the growth of vegetables, safety in walking, reading, &c. by the influence of light, that he could not have otherwise conceived of. By faith he knows that light exists, and this faith was imparted to him by the words of his instructor, and the supernatural facts displayed to him in attestation of it, for all to him, as before observed, is supernatural beyond his four senses. His faith is the evidence of things not seen. He had a capacity for knowing the existence of light, but his natural means or those addressed to his four senses, could not enlighten it.

I have adduced the above case as far as it is applicable to spiritual things, to illustrate the production of that knowledge and belief of spiritual things not derivable from nature. I might also illustrate the christian's hope, by the hope that might be excited in the blind man by the promise of a successful operation upon his eyes by an Oculist of truth and skill. If he *believed* the promisor he would *hope* in his promise, should he regard the possession and enjoyment of light a desirable thing: and should the operation prove successful it would form an occasion for gratitude to his benefactor.

"We are saved by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? but if we hope for that we see not then do we with patience wait for it."

The Christian's hope is the practical expectation of good things promised by a faithful God and is the effect of *belief* in the promise. This belief or faith is the gift of God, by his word wrought in the heart by his spirit.

*Names* in acquiring and retaining knowledge on spiritual subjects are indispensable. They are the objects of thought or the mediums through which the existences designated by them are made known, and by which they are thought of; for the mind can neither describe, define, or even conceive of any being not known to the senses or deduced from natural sensible appearances till acquainted with the name and in some sense the meaning of it. For names not only distinguish existences from each other, and are the means by which they are made known, but they are the bonds which tie together the several attributes and properties peculiar to each, and which constitute things what they are in the view of the mind; for in spiritual subjects the attributes and qualities which make up the complex idea of them, which were it possible to learn without names, are too subtle and fleeting for the mind to retain without some mark of essence whereunto it can annex them.

After God had inspired Adam with a right knowledge of the creatures over which he had given him dominion, and doubtless names corresponding with their natures, which none but their Creator knew, he brought unto Adam every beast of the field and fowl of the air to see what he would call them—and whatsoever Adam called every living creature that was the name thereof. Nor is it reasonable to imagine that God should instruct him in the knowledge of his fellow creatures before that of his Creator: We on the contrary find the words *God* and *Lord God* used upwards of forty times in the two first chapters of the book of Genesis.

The particular agent in the revelations of God to men is exhibited in the Scriptures as a being of pre-eminent character, entitled the *Logos* or *Word of God*, the Great Master of Language, the speaker for and to man, in relation to whom a great Hebrew and Greek scholar observes, "If it be asked why the second person in the adorable Trinity is called the Word of God? the easiest and most natural answer seems to be, because He hath always been the revealer to mankind of Jehovah's attributes and will; or because, as he himself speaketh, 'No man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.' Matt. 11. 27. 'No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him' John 1. 18. The divine person who has accomplished the salvation of mankind is called The Word and the Word of God, not only because God at first created & still governs all things by him, but because men discover their sentiments and designs to one another, by the intervention of words, speech, or discourse; so God by his Son discovers his gracious designs in the fullest & clearest manner to men. All the various manifestations which he makes of himself in the works of creation, providence & redemption; all the revelations which he hath been pleased to give of his will are conveyed to us through him, and therefore he is by way of consequence fitly styled the Word of God."

That which makes natural religion impossible is this: Man by sin lost com-

union with God and with that the knowledge of him, which cannot be restored by nature. He also forfeited his immortality and lost the divine image from his soul in which he was made. The incarnate word has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. He restores to the soul the knowledge of God through the revelations he has made of him—and by his spirit and truth renews it in knowledge after the image of him who created it. Every lineament of the divine character drawn upon the soul of man is through the truth taught by the Logos and written there by the spirit of God.

The God of the Scriptures and man's salvation is the God of nature and of mind, and is so represented in every part of the word of God. The only true method by which the knowledge of him, of creation, the soul's immortality, &c. can be acquired, teaches also man's creation and fall, the entrance of sin and death into the world, and God's plan of restoring him by grace through the Lord Jesus Christ, and that is the revelation in the Bible.

The Philosophy and science of nature teach us the real essence of nothing, neither does the word of God. For we are left as ignorant of the essence of Deity and of our own souls as we were before we learnt that the former exists or that the latter is spiritual and immortal.

The expression of God's will sustained by the evidence of miraculous facts incorporated with his institutions are the only occasion and foundation of the knowledge and belief of man's future existence. His immortality does not depend upon himself nor upon nature, and of course could be learnt from neither.

That the Grecian and Roman philosophers had some imperfect notions of God and a future state of being is evident; the only point to be settled is from whence they obtained them. That they were not formed by deductions from nature is evident from the impossibility of it from what has been proven, and from their own acknowledgments, and the fact, that when they attempt to reason on the subject in support of their belief the very reasons they assign are palpably false.

The few bright sayings in the writings of the Pagan philosophers are nothing more than flashes of lightning, which may amaze, but cannot direct the benighted traveller and only prove that they had *heard* of subjects which they did not understand, and repeated names the true import of which they never knew.

A conclusive proof that the God of creation, of nature, of providence, of mind and of salvation is alone known as he is revealed in the Scriptures, we have in the fact, that no nation (the Jews excepted, who have the old Scriptures) have ever possessed the knowledge of him, since the Gospel began to be published, but as they were instructed by that very Gospel.

Natural Religion has never been heard of but in a land of Bibles. Like many weeds which grow only in cultivated countries, Natural Religion is found only in a Christian soil; and but for the ideas obtained from the Bible, it could have no existence.—It is unlike the Religion of the Jews, the Christians or the Pagans.—It has no cere

monies, ordinances or worship—no prophets or priests. With respect to the origin of scholastic theology, Mosheim gives us the following account: “The Christian Church was scarcely formed, when in different places there started up certain pretended reformers, who, not satisfied with the simplicity of the religion which was taught by the Apostles, meditated changes of doctrines and worship, and set up a new religion drawn from their own licentious imaginations. This we find from the writings of Paul; particularly where some were for forcing the doctrines of Christ into a conformity with philosophic systems which they had adopted. “Beware lest any man spoil you through Philosophy and vain deceit after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.” Colos. 2. 8. Again, “Keep that which was committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings and oppositions of science falsely so called, which some professing have erred concerning the faith.” 1 Tim. 6. 2. The influence of these teachers was but inconsiderable at first. During the lives of the Apostles, their attempts towards the pervertion of christianity were attended with but little success; they, however, acquired credit, and influence by degrees. In the third century, the christian doctors, who applied themselves to the study of letters, and philosophy, soon abandoned the frequented paths, and struck out into the dubious wilds of fancy. They looked upon it as a noble, and glorious task to bring the doctrines of celestial wisdom into a certain subjection to the principles of their philosophy, and to make deep, and profound researches into the intricate, and hidden things of God. Origen was at the head of this speculative tribe. This great man, enchanted by the charms of the Platonic philosophy, set it up as a test of all religion, and imagined that the reasons of each doctrine were to be found in that favourite philosophy; and their nature, and extent were to be determined by it. Origen’s disciples exceeded him, and from their systems, the scholastic theology derives its origin. The same principles gave rise to another species of theology, which is called mystic. Its first promoters proceeded from that well known doctrine of the Platonic school, which was also adopted by Origen, and his disciples, that the divine nature was diffused through all the human soul, or that the faculty of reason was an emanation of God into the human soul, and comprehended in it the principles and elements of all truth, human, and divine, the disciples of this divinity having entertained a doubt that it was extremely difficult, if not impossible, to defend every thing contained in the sacred writings from the cavils of heretics, and infidels, so long as they were explained, literally, according to the real import of the terms, they had recourse to the fecundity of their imaginations, and maintained that the holy scriptures were to be interpreted in an allegorical manner, peculiar to the Platonic system. They accordingly alledged that the notices conveyed under the outward terms, according to their literal force, and import, was not the true meaning of the sacred writer, but that it was to be sought in a hidden mysterious sense.”

The following extract is from Chalmers:—“In a few ages after the commencement of christianity, the the human mind deserted its guidance and rambled as much as ever in quest of new speculations. It is true that they took a juster and a

longer sight since the days of Heathenism; but it was only because they walked in the light of revelation. They borrowed from the New Testament without acknowledgement, and took its beauties and its truths to deck their own wretched fancies and self-conceited systems. In the process of time, the delusion multiplied and extended. Schools were formed and the ways of Deity were as confidently theorized upon as the processes of Chemistry or the economy of the Heavens. Universities were endowed and natural theology took its place in the circle of the sciences. Folios were written and the respected luminaries of a former age poured their *a priori* and their *a posteriori* demonstrations on the world. Taste & sentiment, and imagination grew apace; and every raw, untutored principle which poetry could clothe in prettiness or over which the hand of genius could throw the graces of sensibility and elegance, was erected into a principle of the Divine government, and was made to preside over the councils of the Deity. In the mean time the Bible, which ought to have superceded all, was itself superceded. The Bible, instead of being admitted as the directory of our faith upon its external evidences must be tried upon the merits of the work itself; and if our verdict be favorable, it must be brought in, not as a help to our ignorance, but as a corollary to our demonstrations. But is this ever done? Yes! by Dr. Samuel Clarke and a whole host of followers and admirers.

“We do not condemn the exercise of reason in matters of theology. It is the part of reason to form its conclusions when it has data and evidences before it. But it is equally the part of reason to abstain from its conclusions when these evidences are wanting. Reason can judge of the external evidences of christianity, because it can disceam the merits of testimony. But reason is not entitled to sit in judgment over those internal evidences, which many a presumptuous theologian has attempted to derive from the reason of the thing, or from the agreement of the doctrine with the fancied character and attributes of the Deity.

“In the popular religions of antiquity, we see scarcely the vestage of a resemblance to that academical theism which is delived in our schools, and figures away in the speculations of our moralists. The process of conversion among the first christians was a very simple one. It consisted of an utter abandonment of their heathenism, & an entire submission to those new truths which came to them through the revelation of the gospel, and through it only. It was the pure theology of Christ, and of his apostles. That theology which struts in fancied demonstration, from a Professor’s chair, formed no part of it.

“But it is asked, is not this an enlightened age? and since the days of the gospel, has not the wisdom of two thousand years accumulated upon the present generation? has not science been enriched by discovery? and is not theology one of the sciences? Are the men of this advanced period to be restrained from the high exercises of their powers? and because the men of a remote and barbarous antiquity lisped and drivelled in the infancy of their acquirements, is that any reason why we should be restricted like so many schoolboys to the lesson that is set before us? It is all true that this is a very enlightened age, but on what field has it acquired so flattering a

distinction? On the field of experiment. The human mind owes all its progress to the confinement of its efforts within the safe and certain limits of observation, and to the severe restraint which it has imposed upon its speculative tendencies. Go beyond these limits, and the human mind has not advanced a single inch by its own independent exercises. All the philosophy which has been reared by the labour of successive ages, is the philosophy of facts reduced to general laws, or brought under a general description from observed points of resemblance. A proud and a wonderful fabric we do allow; but we throw away the very instrument by which it was built, the moment that we cease to observe, and begin to theorize and excogitate. Tell us a single discovery, which has thrown a particle of light on the details of the divine administration. Tell us a single truth in the whole field of experimental science, which can bring us to the moral government of the Almighty by any other road than his own revelation. Astronomy has taken millions of suns and systems within its ample domain; but the ways of God to man stand at a distance as inaccessible as ever; nor has it shed so much as a glimmering over the counsels of that mighty and invisible Being, who sists in high authority over all worlds. The boasted discoveries of modern science are all confined to that field, within which the senses of man can expatiate. The moment we go beyond this field, they cease to be discoveries, and are the mere speculations of the fancy. The discoveries of modern science have, in fact, imparted a new energy to the sentiment in question. They all serve to exalt the Deity, but they do not contribute a single iota to the explanation of his purposes. They make him greater, but they do not make him more comprehensible. He is more shrouded in mystery than ever. It is not himself whom we see, it is his workmanship; and every new addition to its grandeur or to its variety, which philosophy opens to our contemplation, throws our understanding at a greater distance than before, from the mind and conception of the sublime Architect. Instead of the God of a single world, we now see him presiding in all the majesty of his high attributes, over a mighty rage of innumerable systems. To our little eye he is wrapt in more awful mysteriousness, and every new glimpse which astronomy gives us of the universe, magnifies, to the apprehension of our mind, that impassable barrier which stands between the counsels of its Sovereign, and those fugitive beings who strut their evanescent hour in the humblest of its mansions. If this invisible Being would only break that mysterious silence in which he has wrapt himself, we feel that a single word from his mouth would be worth a world of darkling speculations. Every new triumph which the mind of man achieves in the field of discovery, binds us more firmly to our Bible; and by the very proportion in which philosophy multiplies the wonders of God, do we prize that book, on which the evidence of history has stamped the character of his authentic communication."

I have thus endeavored to justify the Apostle in the text, that "in the wisdom of God, the world, by wisdom, knew not God."

1st. By scripture authority by which it is manifest that it is by faith we know that he is.

2d. By an investigation of the powers of the mind in acquiring knowledge, by which it is evident that the capacity of the mind for spiritual information cannot be enlightened by nature or its own energies.

3d. By showing the exclusive and actual effects of revelation as a supernatural light from heaven in imparting knowledge on spiritual subjects. The whole proves that the mind is the *recipient* of spiritual ideas from the word of God, and that the noble and ignoble, the wise and the simple, are equally indebted to it for all they know, or can know of spiritual subjects.

It moreover appears from the investigation, that there is as great a necessity that the word of God be what it professes to be, a supernatural light from heaven, in order to the knowledge of God, and the spiritual information we possess, as that light and air should exist in order to their effects, and that there is, in reality, as little doubt of the truth of the former as of the latter.

It is a most interesting consideration, that this word of God, which discloses to our view the realities of the invisible world and a future state of being, otherwise unknown, points to the Lord Jesus Christ as "the way, the truth and the life," and is the very instrument, by and through which the life-giving spirit of God, ordinarily quickens the heart, works faith in the soul, and renews it in knowledge after the image of Him who created it.

Receive it therefore into your hearts, as it is in truth and indeed the word of God; the mean of spiritual discernment, which is able to make you wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Receive it as the bond of union which connects in the view of the mind the things which are seen with the things which are not seen. Receive it as introducing to your acquaintance the great Architect of the Universe, who presides in high authority over all worlds, whose presence pervades all things, who is concealed from mortal eye behind the elements he has made, through and by which he gives birth to all events effected in the system of instrumental causation, & who worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will. Receive it as it presents the wonderful construction and adaption of parts, in the human body, with its diversified laws and functions, displayed by anatomical demonstration and physiological development, as the device of the wisdom of God and the workmanship of his hand. It is owing to these things not having been thus viewed, that so many physicians have been sceptical; so far from anatomy or physiology leading to the knowledge of God, without revelation. Receive the word of God, for it is that which exhibits his moral perfections as they shine in the face of Jesus. And O! that while we behold, as in a glass, his glory we may all be changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of God.

The profession of medicine is conversant with all the complicated forms of affliction and anguish, which fill our world with mourning, and crowd the gates of death.—The physician is often the messenger of God to rescue the agonizing patient from the torturing power of disease, and to restore him to health, family and friends; but death

must come at last, for "it is appointed to man to die once," and the hand that had so often prescribed with success, must itself be withered by its stroke. The word of God explains all this, & the gospel points to the mighty conquerer, who, by his own death has destroyed him who has the power of death, and plucks the string from the heart of the confiding saint; who fills the soul with a hope full of immortality, when "the silver cords are loosing, the golden bowl is breaking, the pitcher is breaking at the fountain, the wheel at the cistern, and the dust is preparing to return to the earth as it was, and the spirit to God who gave it." Receive, therefore, "the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth."



THE  
SUBSTANCE  
OF  
**A DISCOURSE,**  
IN  
TWO PARTS.

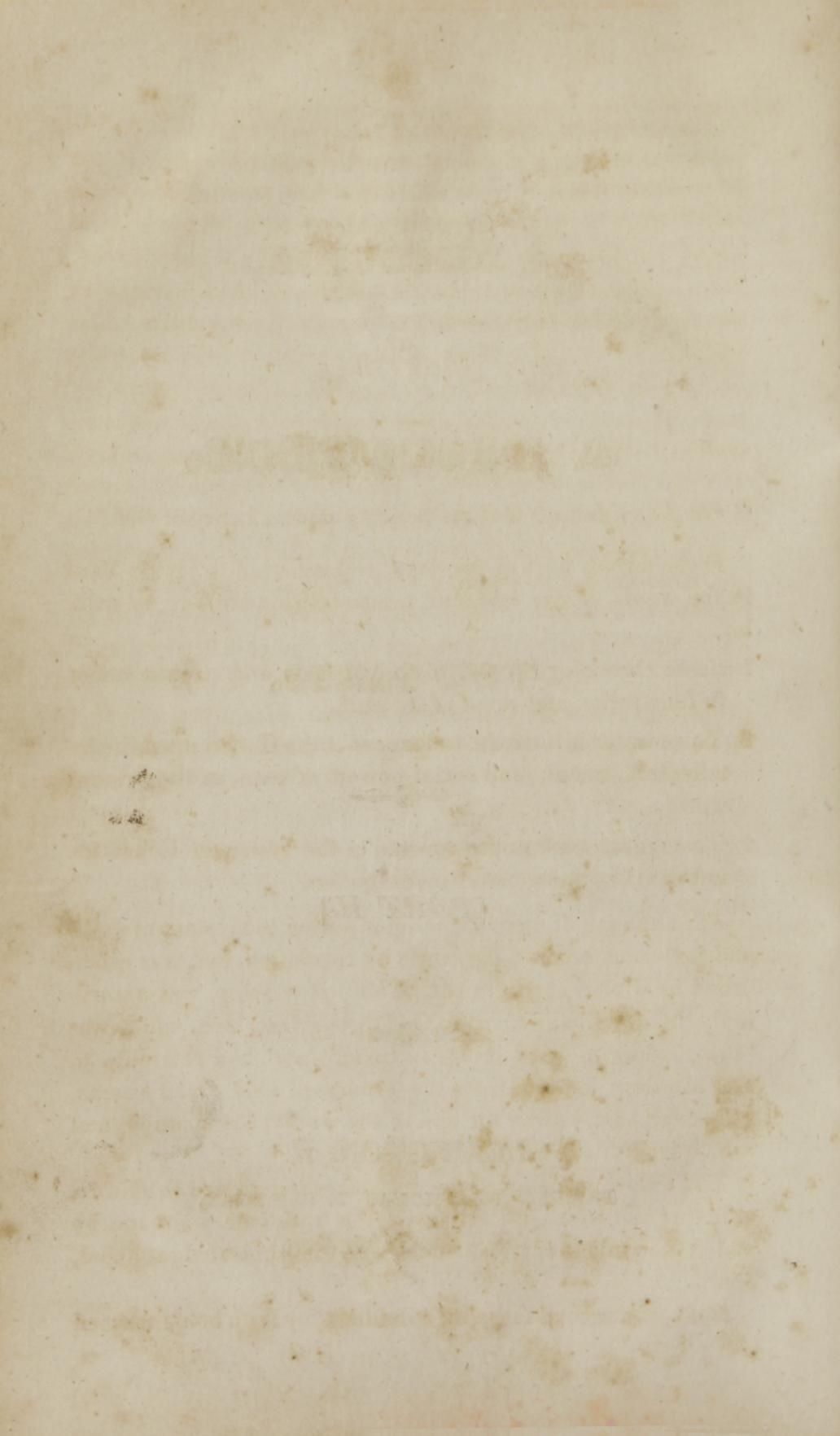


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[PART II.]



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# A DISCOURSE.

[PART II.]

## I. CORINTHIANS i. 21.

*“In the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God.”*

IN the former part of the day I endeavoured to justify Paul in the words of our text, and promised this evening to exhibit,

1. Some chronological and historical facts and circumstances in illustration and proof of its truth.
2. To consider a little the influences of the Gospel upon the intellectual, moral, and social powers of man, in the present world.
3. To suggest some improvements in the system of Education indicated by the general investigation.

After the fall of man, the religion suited to his state of guilt, and pollution, entered the world by revelation, and was established by divine appointment. The first worship was accordingly the worship of the true God through sacrifice, which was “the shadow of good things to come,” and had reference to the bleeding lamb of God, the promised seed of the woman, who should take away the sins of the world; the corruption of which lead to superstition and idolatry.

The following detail of circumstances is designed to afford a clue through which we may trace the traditionary streams by which the nations of the earth derived their knowledge of God, &c.

Noah, the second father of mankind, “by faith being warned

of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house, by which he condemned the world and became the heir of the righteousness which is by faith," lived three hundred and fifty years after the flood: Shem, Noah's son, was about one hundred years old at the time of the deluge, and lived five hundred years after.

The confusion of tongues took place about one hundred and one years after the flood, at the building of the tower of Babel with Nimrod and company, who was the son of Cush, who was the son of Ham; with whom polytheism probably originated, and who were scattered abroad from Shinar "upon the face of all the earth." They were dispersed into Persia, Hindostan, Canaan, Egypt, the Lesser Asia, Thrace, and all the countries bordering upon the Mediterranean.

These self-willed theologians, philosophers, and politicians, no doubt judged that their plans and inventions of religion and government would far surpass those which God had established for the patriarchial state.

In their migration they carried the spirit with them which first occasioned the revolt against the government of God, which induced them to make themselves kings and lords many: for, as Paul explains it, they held "the truth in unrighteousness; for that which might be known of God he had shown unto them: but when they knew him they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God gave them up unto vile affections," &c. "And even as as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind to do those things which are not convenient; being filled with all unrighteousness," &c. This is not a description of one, but of all idolatrous nations.

This tendency of the human mind to pervert and corrupt the truth after it was made known, is evinced by the history of idolatry in every age.

Moses, in his address to the Israelites, guarded them strongly against it. He reminded them of the terrific scene they witnessed at Mount Horeb; "ye came near and stood under the mountain," said he, "and the mountain burnt with fire unto the midst of heaven, with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness, and the Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice, and he declared unto you his covenant which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments. Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves, (for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire,) lest ye corrupt yourselves and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure; the likeness of male or female; the likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air. And lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the hosts of heaven, shouldest be driven to worship them and serve them," &c. Deut. 4. Compare this part of the above precautionary address to the Israelites, with Paul's account before exhibited of what actually did take place with those who knew God by his making himself known unto them, but who changed his glory into an image, &c. and we have not only a correct view of the tendency of the human mind to idolatry, but also an account of the way in which it began. For the creatures, contrary to the doctrine of Natural Religion, were so far from leading to the Creator, that they were the cause of the first and most universal idolatry when the world forsook and denied him.

The name of God remained with an opinion of some superior excellence belonging to it; but the nature so totally forgotten that they arbitrarily annexed the name to the most glorious of visible objects, the sun, moon, or stars, which they accordingly fell down to and worshipped as God.

Truth never changes but for the worse. Original falsehood is a contradiction and impossible. An instance of this we have in the name of God, to which some supremacy and worship would be annexed—his proper appellation Jehovah remained,

but turned into a lie, and called Jove: not denoting any truly divine being, but matter, or man, or fowls, or what every one pleased; for the world had three hundred Jupiter gods.

The same rule will hold good in all cases. If there had not been once a *true religion*—one that was revealed and established by divine appointment, we could never have heard of false ones. Every mode of Gentile worship was some divine institution perverted. This manifests the certainty of revelation, and the weakness of reason, which was so far from discovering *new* truths on spiritual subjects, that it could not retain the former ones it had learnt. This appears from its never recovering them when once lost, but by fresh instruction.

The existence of such an extraordinary event as a universal deluge we might well imagine would be long had in remembrance, and be transmitted to every branch of Noah's family. And when there should be a falling off from the truth we might expect that Noah, so distinguished by Deity, could not fail being revered by his posterity; and when idolatry prevailed, would have divine honours paid him. Accordingly traces of the deluge are found among the historians and mythologists of almost every country settled at very early periods; and traces of it are particularly found in the sacred rites of the Hindoos of Egypt and Greece. We find Noah revered with divine honours under the names of Prometheus, Deucalion, Inachus, Osiris, &c.

Noah established a universal patriarchal Church. It had its prophets and priests. Bishop Horsley, in his discourse on the prophecies of the Messiah dispersed among the heathen, makes it very clear that Melchizedek was a priest of the most high God in it. Potiphera of On in Egypt, father-in-law of Joseph, and Jethro the Midianite, Moses' father-in-law, were also priests of it in its very corrupt state. Job was a prophet, who had the testimony of Jesus, the spirit of prophecy; as was also Balaam, though a very wicked one.

In all the Pagan worship there were sacrifices.

Clemens, president of the College of Alexandria, A.D. 192. says, that the Greek philosophers took their main principles out

of Moses and the prophets. Eusebius & Theodoret illustrate and confirm this by a variety of instances. Hermes Trimegistus, the famous Egyptian priest, is said to have conversed with Abraham, who died five hundred and twenty-seven years after the flood, when he went down into Egypt. This was between eighteen and nineteen hundred years before Christ.

Sanhoniathon, the Phenician, who, in the time of the Judges, about 1240 years before Christ, wrote a history of the world, says he took the principal parts of it from the writings of Jerubael, priest of Jehovah.

The Mosaic writings were spread far and wide in the extensive reign of king Solomon and the Babylonish captivity, and were probably carried by the queen of Sheba to the uttermost parts of the earth. Some devout Jews dwelt in every nation under heaven, who doubtless carried the Old Testament with them. Acts. ii. 5.

Daniel was the master of the wise men of Babylon, and taught the knowledge of the true God. Nebuchadnezzar and Darius commanded all nations, and people, and languages, to serve the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and of Daniel, on the severest penalties. That they might know who the God of these Hebrews was, and how to serve him, it is probable that a written account was circulated by Daniel concerning him and his worship.

Aristobulus, mentioned in 2. Maccabees, Ch. 1. says, that there was a Greek translation of Moses and the prophets before the time of Alexander, and that Pithagoras, Socrates, Plato and Orpheus, critically searched the writings of Moses, and took some of their principal sentiments out of them.

Plato says that all laws came originally from divine institution. He says, in his Alcibiad, "it is necessary that a law-giver should be sent from heaven to instruct us, and such a one I do expect, and O! how greatly I do desire to see that man. This law-giver must be more than a man, who is to teach more than man could know by his own nature. He must be of a nature that is superior to man; that is a divine na-

ture." De Repub. He confesses that he did not come to the knowledge of God by his own discovery, but *by hear say*; he frankly owns that he received them from Syrian and Phœnician fables or traditions. He derives the very existence of the gods from their information. Phileb. All this shows that we cannot go further in spiritual truth than we have a borrowed light to guide us.

Socrates says men become good as some become prophets, not by nature, but by divine inspiration. When making his defence before his judges, he said, "it is time for us separate. I that I may suffer death, and you that you may enjoy life; but which of us has the happiest lot is known only to the gods. *Death either reduces us to nothing*, and entirely destroys all sense and consciousness, or, as *some say*, death carries us into another region." To assert that Socrates died a martyr to the doctrine of the unity of the divine essence, is a vulgar error. He worshipped the gods of his country according to the established rites.

The natural tendency of the human mind to pervert, corrupt, and forget divine truth, after having learnt it, and incapacity to regain it, except by renewed instruction, is apparent from the uniform writings of Moses and the prophets, and of the Apostles, and from the history of the world in relation to religion. If there be a liability to lose, and no capacity to regain, the knowledge and worship of the true God, it is evident that this knowledge and worship are not the offspring of nature in man.

If philosophy itself was the first cause of its corruption after the truth was revealed—the cause of polytheism and atheism, and has continued to be so, then philosophy is not only incapable of teaching religious truth, but when permitted to govern the mind in religious sentiments, destroys it. This is the reason of Paul exhorting the Collossians to "beware lest any man spoil them through philosophy, and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." Colos. ii. 8.

The late Doctor Dwight observes, "that the knowledge of one God was among all the ancient nations derived from traditional instruction, and that the only result of such investiga-

tions as the reason of man entered into concerning this subject, was either polytheism or atheism. While this traditional instruction was conveyed and received without mixture, mankind acknowledged and worshipped Jehovah the living and true God; but as soon as tradition became corrupted the knowledge and worship of the true God became corrupt also, and by degrees vanished. Traces of both remained for periods, differing in different nations, but their perfection was lost and forgotten.

The nearer we approach to Noah, the nearer we invariably come to the true and perfect character, the unperplexed and unblemished worship of Jehovah. The farther we recede from this patriarch, the deeper we find ourselves sinking into the abyss of polytheism. Were the knowledge and perfections of God inferred by reason from nature this process would of course be inverted. The traditional state would be the state of obscurity, imperfection and error, because men reasoned less and believed upon authority more. As philosophy advanced, investigation multiplied; as the subject was more frequently taken up in form, and professedly examined and discussed, the proofs of the existence and perfections of one God would be accumulated, and the knowledge of this great subject rendered progressively more clear and certain and unobjectionable. The fact, however, has been uniformly contrary to this representation. As tradition has declined, the knowledge has declined with it. As it has been corrupted, the knowledge has been corrupted; when it has been lost, the knowledge has been lost.

The origin of polytheism has been founded in human reasonings only. In Asia and in Europe alike, philosophy has devised, extended and established this miserable system. And as philosophy has been advanced, the errors of polytheism have been advanced and multiplied, or have terminated in atheism.

In the most flourishing state of philosophy in Greece, Rome, Egypt, Persia, and Hindostan, polytheism has been the most absurd—its errors the most numerous, and its worship the most abominable. The doctrines of the American savages concerning God, religion and duty, are far less perplexed, censurable,

and ridiculous than those of these learned countries. What is the reason of all this? I answer, because the knowledge and worship of God are exclusively of divine revelation, and can only be preserved in purity by preserving the tradition or revelation pure. The philosopher and the peasant are upon a perfect equality in acquiring original knowledge of God. The latter is more likely to preserve the truth, by philosophising less than the former, and believing it upon its own evidence more.

II. I am to notice briefly the influences of the Gospel upon the intellectual, moral and social powers of man in the present world.

The end of Christianity is to prepare mankind for the enjoyment of a future state; but in the prosecution of this end its doctrines and influences necessarily produce a *collateral* effect in the human species, as intellectual, moral and social creatures—for it has the promise of the life that *now* is, as well as that which is to come.

Since human happiness in the world consists in the proper exercise and application of the intellectual, moral and social powers, this religion must operate upon those powers—it does operate on them—and all that distinguishes Christian countries from those that are Pagan is referable to it. It enlightens and improves intellect, by multiplying the objects by which it is exercised. It introduces it to an acquaintance with God, the great source of intelligence, and with its own immortality. All the discoveries of nature are confined to the field within which the senses expatiate.

The intellectual powers by contemplating great subjects are enlarged and strengthened. The Deity with his perfections, and the invisible world with its glories, are suited to call forth all its energies of thought, and fill its boundless capacities with wonder, love and praise. The soul was made in the image of God; and since the loss of it by sin, it is renewed in that image by the knowledge of him. Intellect is more fruitful in useful inventions under the genial influences of Christianity.

The most important discoveries in philosophy and science, and the chief inventions in the arts which ameliorate the condition of mankind, have been made by intellects sanctified by the wisdom that cometh from above.

The Bible makes known the true and only system of correct morality. It exhibits the proper foundation of moral obligation, the will of God; and proposes the only qualification and motives by which its duties can be practised.

Philosophic speculations and scientific acquirements in nature never enabled a man to govern his own appetites. They only enlarge the sphere of sensual pleasures, and multiply the means of gratification.

Vice itself is obliged to borrow the aid of christian virtue for its own support. The votaries of infidelity dare not propose their philosophy in its licentious nakedness. Its voice is raised when talking of virtue and honour far above the level of its source.

Without positive divine institution, the whole system of morals is reduced to a calculation of individual expediency. There is no general rule which is equally binding upon all to counteract the tendencies of a depraved human nature; but every individual has a different moral code, shifting with ever varying circumstances.

“Talk they of morality! O! thou blessed Jesus!  
 Thou bleeding Lamb of God!  
 Thou Author of new morality to man,  
 True morality is the love of thee!”

De Luc, speaking of the superior efficacy of positive laws comparatively with the mere precepts of any system of moral philosophy, gives us the following narrative.

“Sometime ago I was conversing upon this subject with a very celebrated man, (the late Sir John Pringle) who had been Professor of *Moral Philosophy* in the University of Edinburgh; he was then advanced in years, and had lived much in the world. At that time I was still rather a friend to teaching of *rational morality*, thinking it was useful to bring men acquainted with their duty in every possible way. I had just read a new

work of this nature, entitled, "*Of an universal moral, or man's duties founded upon nature;*" and as he had not read it I offered to lend it to him. I cannot express the tone in which he refused this offer, but you will have some idea of it, when you come to know the motives upon which he did it. "I have been," said he, "for many years professor of this pretended science; I have ransacked the libraries and my own brain to discover the foundations of it; but the more I sought to persuade and convince my pupils, the less confidence I began to have myself in what I was teaching them; so that at length I gave up my profession and returned to medicine, which had been the first object of my studies. I have nevertheless continued from that time to examine every thing that appeared upon the subject, which, as I have told you, I could never explain or teach so as to produce conviction; but at length I have given up the point, most thoroughly assured that without an express divine sanction attached to the laws of morality, and without positive laws, accompanied with determinate and urgent motives, men will never be convinced that they ought to submit to any such code, nor agree among themselves concerning it. From that time, I have never read any book upon morality but the *Bible*, and I return to that always with fresh delight."

In the light of the science and morality of the Gospel we are taught the true principles of *civil liberty*, and by its influence obtain the power of self-government. How is it that civil liberty is almost without a name in the languages of Asia, the cradle of the human race, the most productive soil and the most delicious climate? A frightful despotism reigns over that vast portion of the globe! I answer, because the redeeming influences of the Gospel are not known, or have been but very recently heard of there, since it was totally banished by corruption and idolatry.

Civil liberty is not known but in Christendom, and genuine only where Christianity has suffered the least alteration from human policy, and is most practically cultivated. All must be sentimentally friends to liberty who have been made *free by the truth*, and are influenced by its motives.

The Republic of Rome was no more than a lordly aristocracy—nothing more distinguished it than its scorn for Plebian blood—its contempt for the common people. Debtors were sold to their creditors, when unable to pay them, as slaves. The Republics of Greece were no better. Athens, the most noted, which figured for more than a century in the height of its glory, was all that time a tyranny of the people, whose rash, jealous, furious, and inconstant humors could not be satisfied with the rule of any man or any set of men, however well qualified and disposed. Their great and excellent men were impeached, proscribed and banished, or executed as criminals. History does not afford a higher example of the union of equal liberty and civil order, except in countries illuminated by the light of the Gospel. The reason of this is because the Christian religion sets the highest and lowest on a level with respect to God, and regards them as brethren of the same family—thereby sentiments and feelings are generated favourable to the practical acknowledgement of *equal rights*.

It inculcates universal benevolence, kindness, compassion and charity. It tends to peace and good-will among citizens, and friendly intercourse among nations. Regarding all the tribes and families of the earth as of one blood, it fosters a love of country that is not exclusive, but beginning at home, it extends to the whole human family.

The wisdom and humanity it begets graduate the scale of punishments to the degrees of crime. It seeks more the reformation of the criminal than his destruction. It is the immortality which is brought to light by the Gospel that confers so much importance upon human life.

These are the principles upon which we may with confidence anticipate the perpetuity and extension of American freedom, and by which civil liberty will supersede the tyrannies and despotisms of the old world. The law of liberty must pervade the globe.

This earth was made for Messiah, the captain of salvation and prince of peace. His armies are in motion—they wield the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. The heathen

is given to him for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. His aim is the conquest of the world; and in his march the harps of Zion re-echo to the notes of the heavenly songsters, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will towards men." The Jews, the sons of the patriarch Abraham the friend of God, are turning to the Lord, and the veil is falling off their hearts, and with streaming eyes they kiss *the Son of David* as heir of all things. The day is rapidly advancing when "*the everlasting Gospel shall be preached to every kindred, tongue and people; when from the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the name of the Lord shall be great among the Gentiles—when all shall know him from the least unto the greatest, for the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the water covereth the sea.*" A thousand times ten thousand captives shall drop their chains, and come forth to light with joy too big for utterance. This is the triumph of the woman's seed—this the bruising of the serpent's head.

I proceed to the

III. And the last thing proposed, which was to suggest some improvements in Education.

We have seen that the word of God is the only mean of spiritual ideas and knowledge; makes known God and his character; is essential to thought as well as reasoning on religious subjects; and by the contemplation of the sublime and interesting objects it makes known, it ennobles and strengthens the intellectual powers, furnishes the only sound practical system of morality and stable basis of civil liberty, whose influences distinguish the civilized from the savage state: and lastly, and chiefly, it makes known the only plan of salvation through a crucified Redeemer, and assimilates the soul into the divine image. The question fairly arises, what ought to be done with the scriptures as it relates to education? The answer is a plain and easy one; they ought to enter into the very essence of education. All the languages which are taught and learnt at schools and colleges should be learnt and taught in reading the scriptures. Were the same pains taken when learning language to acquire the knowledge

of the true God and Jesus Christ, and the various truths revealed, the history of God's will and conduct recorded in the scriptures, that are taken to learn the heathen gods by reading heathen authors, how very different would be the state of our country in relation to religious education and christianity in general!

In a christian country the religion of the Bible in all places and on all occasions should be seen to preserve its superiority over the false; because one is worthy of God, and is the mean of enlightening the soul, of purifying the heart, and of raising honourable and just sentiments in men; while the other infuses sentiments of impiety and falsehood and vanity, dishonourable to God and destructive to man. If there is a natural opposition between truth and falsehood, we are now as irrational in betraying a partiality to the prophane objects of heathenism, as the heathen themselves would have been, had they shown the like regard to the sacred objects of the Bible when immersed in idolatry and ignorance; only with this difference, that they would have taken up what was better than their own, whereas we incline to that which is worse—their choice would have brought them nearer to God; ours brings us nearer to the devil.

The seats of learning in Christendom are for the most part so much engrossed by the Pantheon gods that they have scarcely an inscription to the God of *the Bible*; and when theology is professedly taught, it assumes a *natural form*, dressed in the trappings of the philosophy of the schools & the wisdom of the world such as God never revealed himself in. The true God is thereby divested of all the peculiar attributes of character with which he is clothed in the manifestations he has made of himself; and man is presented as sustaining a relation to him totally different from that in which God regards him.

This scholastic system of theology veils the glories of the Godhead as they shine in the face of Jesus—pours contempt upon the cross of Christ, and inflates the human heart with vain conceit and pride. Reducing every thing to sense and speculation, the deep-toned style in which human guilt and pollution

are depicted in the scriptures, and God's method of saving sinners, the *natural religionist* receiveth not, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned, examined by the light which revelation and not reason affords.

To neglect imparting to children spiritual instruction from the scriptures until their reason is matured, is most glaringly absurd. We have proven that their reason cannot be enlightened on the subject of religion without that very instruction. But can children be kept from the knowledge of God till their reason is matured? Common swearers will bring them acquainted with his *name*, and by bad example a thousand wrong notions will be produced, not afterwards to be eradicated. To wait for the consent of reason in children as a prerequisite to their instruction in the knowledge of God their Creator, and Christ their Redeemer, &c. is a sentiment that proceeds from infidelity itself, the total rejection of revealed religion, or a misapprehension of the nature and operation of the mind. For a parent to do this in Christendom, is to paganize in a great degree his own children. Apply the same principle to education of every kind. A child must be an accomplished scholar before he is instructed—he must acquire a critical knowledge of language before he learns his alphabet, or grammar,—or he must have attained his growth, before it is proper to feed him.

The heart should be engaged with the reason on the side of religion—its truths should be interwoven with the very earliest affections and desires that can have any influence over the mind.

Anticipating the development of the passions, the youthful mind should be guarded by religious instruction against seduction—parents and teachers should draw around them the impregnable rampart of religion.

The plan pursued of imparting universal instruction out of the scriptures through the various languages learnt, including the English, every possible condition of society will be stored with the great essential truths of heaven. The presidents and governors, legislators and judges, the commanders of armies and

fleets, lawyers and physicians, poets and literary men in general, with every other rank and situation in life, would be students of the Bible, and versed in its evidences and doctrines. Every thing would soon assume an aspect in accordance with it. All that has been enumerated in relation to the effects of the religion of the Bible would soon be realized. How different would such a state of things be from the present, in which it is generally thought, that the study of the Bible is the business of clergyman only! Nor can the objection that it is God that giveth the increase, avail any thing in the present case; for his word, the Gospel of his grace, is the very mean which the Spirit uses for glorifying the Lord Jesus in the world, by enlightening and renewing the heart, and establishing it in his love and obedience.

What a striking contrast is there in the plan proposed and the one heretofore pursued in their effects! How often do we find men of the best education, and filling the conspicuous stations in society and government, incomparably better acquainted with the heathen gods than the God of the Bible—far more conversant with the Pantheon than with the New Testament; and often less acquainted with the principles and evidences of the religion of the New Testament, and the character of the Lord Jesus Christ, than their slaves are! I mention this to show how exceedingly defective such a system of education is.

The command of God to the Israelites is not less necessary and binding in the present day upon Christians than it was upon that people, in order to the knowledge of the truth and the blessings of heaven: “Ye shall lay up these my words in your hearts and in your soul—and ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up—and thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thine house, and upon thy gates: that your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children.”

If the word of God be true; if it be the only mean of divine instruction; if it sustain the relation to spiritual and moral in-

terests, to individual, social, and civil happiness, which have been exhibited; then there can be no doubt of the indispensable necessity of cultivating the knowledge and use of it as has been suggested. And that it is true and really sustains those relations there is as little reason to doubt as there is to doubt the existence of mind, or the connexion between cause and effect.

I am asked, are we to throw aside the Latin and Greek poets, historians and orators? I answer, no. My only concern is, that our plans of education be so improved that in making learned men they be not made heathen mythologists, and that they become thoroughly acquainted with the theology of the scriptures, in its own statements and representations. In order to this, let the Latin and Greek languages, and every other language to be learnt, be critically studied by reading the scriptures in those languages. Before the student learns any thing of the heathen gods, let the character of the true God, as he has revealed himself, with the revelation itself, be well digested and understood by him. He will thereby not only acquire a knowledge of the languages, but will discern the transcendent purity and divine excellency of Bible theology above the Pantheon system. He will easily perceive that every form of Gentile worship was some divine institution perverted—and this very thing will conduce to show the truth and importance of the word of God, and promote spiritual information and Gospel morality.

I am again asked, is sectarianism to be taught and inculcated in public schools and colleges? I answer, by no means—the scriptures do not teach sectarianism. The faith once delivered to the saints is “one faith,” and when taught and learnt in the form of sound words in which it was revealed, cannot fail being restored and preserved in unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace. It is by viewing the same objects in the same light, that we have the same perceptions, and receive similar impressions. All christians profess to have taken their tenets from the Bible. Then let them all be merged in it, and they be no longer engaged in splitting the sun-beams of divine truth. The existence of *error* is the parent of different denomina-

tions in religion—that corrected, they cease. The declaration of Christ is as true now, as when first made, “If ye abide in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

The Bible regarded in its proper character as the truth of God, and every religious opinion subordinated to its authority, the jarring creeds and sects will be harmonized. The custom of cutting and slashing the word of God, as if it were no longer a living body of divine truth, but the subject of a lecture in Surgeon’s Hall, will cease.

Christians standing fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free, and refusing to have their consciences lorded over by the authority and the traditions of men, would soon realize that “there is one body, or church, and one Spirit, even as they are called in one hope of their calling—one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all and in all.” And all men would know that they are the disciples of the Lord Jesus, by their having love one for another. That scowling spirit of sectarianism, bigotry and superstition, which so much mars the beauty and peace of the kingdom of Christ, can only be consumed by the breath of his mouth and the brightness of his coming.

American christians of all sects ought to lay aside the regalia of European establishments. The idea that religion should be left free, was unknown at the time of the reformation. The union between church and state, effected by Constantine, twelve hundred years before, had produced the most extraordinary corruption in both. At the time of the reformation, ecclesiastical formularies were drawn up with the formality of civil laws, and established by legislative authority, with the severest pains and penalties. The universal idea was that civil authority should propaagate christianity by compulsory means. The idea of liberty of conscience was in those days unknown. No party felt the least scruple, with the exception, perhaps, of the Waldenses, whether catholic or protestant, when invested with power to denounce and persecute the religious profession of all other sects. With these religious establishments,

forms of church government, and religious ceremonies, were instituted to answer the designs of civil policy, which greatly perverted the simplicity and order of the gospel church, and impaired the rights and privileges of membership. These have, through the effects of custom and the traditions of men, though separated from the circumstances in which they originated, been introduced into these United States, and are made to operate as barriers to the purity of Christ's spiritual kingdom, and have an unhappy tendency upon intellectual, moral and civil liberty. *The perfect law of liberty*, is the alone corrective of all error in religion, morals and government; it is *the truth*, and the rule of right—by whose divine energies, radiated to the hearts of men by the influences of the Holy Spirit, our world will be filled with the knowledge and glory of God, and by its operations all the tribes of the earth shall be restored to themselves and to God.

I have now finished what I designed to say. Investigate the powers of your own minds—ascertain their limits, and you cannot fail seeing the necessity of a supernatural light to instruct you in spiritual knowledge. Search the scriptures—take nothing for granted—believe nothing without evidence, and entertain no opinion with greater assurance than the testimony it is built upon will justify. Realize that nothing but truth can make us free from error, ignorance and guilt. “If thou wilt receive the words of God, and hide his commandments with thee; so that thou incline thy ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.”

## NOTE.

The following case, published by Cheselden, is inserted as a note, and may be read in connection with page 15th, in the first part of the discourse. It illustrates many things in relation to the operation of the mind in acquiring ideas, &c.

*An account of observations made by a young gentleman who was born blind, or lost his sight so early that he had no remembrance of ever having seen, and was couched between thirteen and fourteen years of age.*

Tho' we say of this gentleman that he was blind, as we do of all people who have ripe cataracts, yet they are never so blind from that cause but that they can discern day from night, and for the most part in a strong light, distinguish black, white, and scarlet; but they cannot perceive the shape of any thing; for the light by which these perceptions are made, being let in obliquely through the aqueous humor, or the anterior surface of the chrySTALLINE, by which the rays cannot be brought into a focus upon the retina, they can discern in no other manner, than a sound eye can through a glass of broken jelly where a great variety of surfaces so differently refract the light, that the several distinct pencils of rays cannot be collected by the eye into their proper foci; wherefore the shape of an object in such a case cannot be at all discerned, though the colour may: And thus it was with this young gentleman, who, though he knew these colors asunder in a good light, yet when he saw them after he was couched, the faint ideas that he had of them before, were not sufficient for him to know them by afterwards, and therefore he did not think them the same which he had before known by those names. Now scarlet he thought the most beautiful of all colours, and of others the most gay were the most pleasing; whereas the first time he saw black it gave him great uneasiness, yet after a little time he was reconciled to it; but some months after, seeing by accident a negro woman, he was struck with great horror at the sight.

When he first saw, he was so far from making any judgment about distances, that he thought all objects whatever touched his eyes (as he expressed it) as what he felt did his skin, and thought no objects so agreeable as those which were smooth and regular, though he could form no judgment of their shape, or guess what it was in any object that was pleasing to him: He knew not the shape of any thing, nor any one thing from another, however different in shape or magnitude; but upon being told what things were, whose form he before

knew from feeling, he would carefully observe, that he might know them again; but having too many objects to learn at once, he forgot many of them; and (as he said) at first he learned to know, and again forgot a thousand things in a day. One particular only, though it appear trifling, I will relate: Having often forgot which was the cat, and which the dog, he was ashamed to ask; but catching the cat, which he knew by feeling, he was observed to look at her steadfastly, and then, setting her down, said, so puss, I shall know you another time.

He was very much surprized, that those things which he had liked best, did not appear most agreeable to his eyes, expecting those persons would appear most beautiful that he loved most, and such things to be most agreeable to his sight, that were so to his taste. We thought he soon knew what pictures represented, which were shewed to him, but we found afterwards we were mistaken; for about two months after he was couched, he discovered at once they represented solid bodies, when to that time he considered them only as party-coloured planes, or surfaces diversified with variety of paint; but even then he was no less surprized, expecting the pictures would feel like the things they represented, and was amazed when he found those parts, which by their light and shadow appeared now round and uneven, felt only flat like the rest, and asked which was the lying sense, feeling, or seeing?

Being shown his father's picture in a locket at his mother's watch, and told what it was, he acknowledged a likeness, but was vastly surprized; asking, how it could be that a large face could be expressed in so little room, saying, it should have seemed as impossible to him, as to put a bushel of any thing into a pint.

At first, he could bear but very little light, and the things he saw, he thought extremely large; but upon seeing things larger, those first seen he conceived less, never able to imagine any lines beyond the bounds he saw; the room he was in, he said, he knew to be but a part of the house, yet he could not conceive that the whole house could look bigger. Before he was couched, he expected little advantage from seeing, worth undergoing an operation for, except reading and writing; for he said, he thought he could have no more pleasure in walking abroad than he had in the garden, which he could do safely and readily. And even blindness, he observed, had this advantage, that he could go any where in the dark, much better than those who can see; and after he had seen, he did not soon lose this quality, nor desire a light to go about the house in the night. He said, every new object was a new delight; and the pleasure was so great, that he wanted words to express it;

but his gratitude to his operator he could not conceal, never seeing him for some time without tears of joy in his eyes, and other marks of affection: and if he did not happen to come at any time when he was expected, he would be so grieved, that he could not forbear crying at his disappointment. A year after first seeing, being carried upon Epsom Downs, and observing a large prospect, he was exceedingly delighted with it, and called it a new kind of seeing. And now being lately couched of his other eye, he says, that objects at first appeared large to this eye, but not so large as they did at first to the other; and looking upon the same object with both eyes, he thought it looked twice as large as with the first couched eye only, but not double, that we can any ways discover.

I have couched several others who were born blind, whose observations were of the same kind; but they being younger, none of them gave so full an account as this gentleman.



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