

which are by general use converted into all the force of decisive arguments.

1. *The doctrines of offered grace and general invitations, are most conformable to the advanced state of intellect and society.* This position is thought to be beyond dispute, and to go a long way towards proving the truth of general invitations, and the consistency of tendering salvation to dead and powerless sinners. But from the remarks that I have made, it will be evident to demonstration, that such notions and conduct are at variance with common understanding and general good sense. Besides, the argument is without foundation, because the natural man, though he may have cleared the rubbish from the wells of science, and turned their turbid waters into crystal streams, is nevertheless, according to Paul's argument, incapable of understanding the things of the Spirit, and therefore, must be unqualified to sit in judgment upon things which he cannot understand. At best, the judgment of such people can only be the judgment of those who are unable to form a right opinion upon the subject. Was the bible merely an accompaniment for the toilet — was it the chronicle of fashions, the æthenacum of literature, or the registrar of arts and sciences, why then human opinion might judge of its accuracy. But such is not the case. The religion of Jesus is not of this world: its doctrines, ordinances and worship are of divine institution, and therefore immutable; and as such, must for ever render ridiculous all such arguments as the one I am noticing. The gospel resembles the human body, which combines the most agreeable modulations, colours, and forms: it is the only thing whose real figure may be seen without disguise, and which remain the same in all ages.

2. *Calvinistic sentiments have been gradually giving way for this last century.* Perhaps so: but what are we the better for the defection? Is there more real godliness and christian simplicity in professors, than there was a century back? No. Religion is not a life-times inheritance with thousands. It is certainly a fashionable dress, in which not a few are acting their pantomimes. And perhaps the major part of professors

will in course of time fade away, and sink into irrecoverable obscurity. Are they more acquainted with the bible than they were a century back? They are not. They seldom examine their creed, and as such it is no marvel they should believe they know not what. Religious opinion roll in large masses, like impetuous volumes of water; and for a solitary individual to attempt to alter its course, is like attempting to turn the tide of the Thames by interposing the palm of the hand. The minds of thousands are acted upon by interest or ostentation; which make them unite their tributary streams in one channel; and to endeavour to prevent it by human means only, is like labouring to prevent the fusion of the polar ices, while the sun is pouring its vertical beams upon their immeasurable domes. Nothing but divine grace can alter the course of human nature, melt their hearts, and give an evangelical direction to their mental and moral effusions. The flowings of the natural mind cannot be restrained; but where the Spirit of God is not moving upon the face of the waters, its course will be invariably guided by the trail of popular prejudice. It is evident that the opinion of the bulk of professors is not their own. Talk to them about bible truths, and their ignorance is too visible to be mistaken; they know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm. The chief of their knowledge is confined in a very limited circle; they know they do not like what are termed *high doctrines*, and they know they do not like those who may have the temerity to embrace them: though to assign any other reason for their dislike to the people than what is considered a term of reproach, to wit, that they are *antinomians*, would perhaps be a difficult task. As to the doctrines themselves, they know little or nothing about them, only as they see them exhibited by those who are disposed to cavil at them in the pulpit. Of course their distortion on such occasions is not trifling; and their altitude is only to be equalled by the rings in Ezekiel's vision, which were so high as to be *dreadful*. "As for their rings, they were so high that they were dreadful." Ezekiel i. 18. Many ignorant people hear good men abused, under the pretence of defending

the gospel from antinomianism, when their doctrines are generally misrepresented for the sake of bringing severe charges against them.* Such practice produces rivetted hatred in the minds of thousands, against both the followers of truth and their doctrines. Many hearers admire the discourse which fills them with contempt, alarm, and bitterness. They *know*, and it is chief of their knowledge on the subject, that antinomians are characters that ought to be shunned as much as the witch of Endor, so disgusting is their appearance; and as to their sentiments, they are so high that they are *dreadful*. But even this little knowledge contains a *general sufficiency*, though it admits of only a *limited application*.

Let us next survey the dissenting clergy. Are they more spiritual, humble, and useful than they were formerly? As to *spirituality*, we are certain there is but little of that; and with regard to their *humility*, little need be said upon that subject. The robes of a humble mind they seem to handle but very seldom; by many they are totally neglected, and by some they are merely affected; but few make them every-day garments. And as it respects their *usefulness*, of course there is some fire with the smoke; but how many are regenerated under their ministry is not for us to determine. Yet this fact seems pretty clear, that many are influenced by sordid motives, and many are deceived. The doctrines insisted upon are such as must not give umbrage to any, and the cross is preached without its offence. By these means, a form of religion becomes naturalized to thousands, and the church of Christ is swarmed with hypocrites, libertines, and formalists. Persons are manufactured for the ministry, like other articles for other purposes. They are taught to give a speculative arrangement to mistaken notions, and then *endeavour* to teach others to do the same. Such persons preach bor-

* They are not unfrequently in a similar situation to those persons, who in days that are past were condemned to stand in the pillory—elevated on such occasions, to receive the benefit of a *general pelting*. When will such disgraceful practices have an end?

rowed doctrines, borrowed experience, and not unfrequently borrowed morality. In hearing their orations one might be tempted to address them as the young student did his tutor, 'Alas! Master, it was *borrowed*.' This system of things, diffuse its influence among the vast hoards of professors, and render them almost all of a piece, so that there is 'like priest like people.'

Let us, in the last place, see how the defection of Calvinism improves the moral condition of society. Dare people retire to rest at night with less and fewer bolts upon their doors than they did formerly? Are they more careless about the protection of their property, and less careful of the safety of their lives than they were a century back? Are we allowing our prisons to moulder down without erecting new ones? Nay, are they not so crowded that seldom a parliamentary session is allowed to pass away, without something being said upon the subject in the style of regret? If we look into the commercial world, allowing for the increase of population, can we discover more morality and less knavery? Is there less deception practised, or do fewer disgraceful events transpire? In a word, examine society in all its grades and forms, and say, is the moral condition of mankind bettered by the defection of Calvinism? I mean the five capital points of Calvinism. But how stands the moral thermometer of professors affected by such atmospherical revolutions. Perhaps if the tradesman's books were examined, and the relations of other classes to society inspected, the standard height might be taken, pretty near the point of *congelation*. Such are a few of the glorious benefits occasioned by the defection of bible truth.

3. *Another century will witness the total overthrow of all exclusive sentiments.* This is often alleged by way of joyful triumph, and is thought to be indisputable. We are naturally fond of prying into the mysteries of futurity, which induce many people, even in this enlightened age, to convert natural appearances into ominous indications. Hence some are calculating upon the configuration of planets, as the prophetic guage of meteorology, politics, religion, &c. Moore has been an-

nally prophesying the overthrow of the papal hierarchy, but still it exists, and for the present it is likely to exist. These remarks, by the law of suggestion, brings to remembrance the famous prophecies of Mr. Wesley, and one of his preachers named *Bell*, respecting the desolating comet and earthquake. The latter of which was long since to have swallowed up London and Westminster; and the former, to have dried up the rivers, scorched up the vegetables, if not reduced the earth to a cinder. But London has remained free from volcanic disturbances, and the baleful visitations of destructive comets. Westminster continues in being; St. Paul's cathedral supports its cupola; its architectural columns are as perpendicular as ever, and its altitude remains much the same as it was when Sir Christopher Wren measured its elevation. The earth possesses an accumulating portion of strata, and we are in the habit of witnessing vegetables in gardens, grain in the fields, water in the valleys, and trees on many of the hills, notwithstanding the predictions of these *reverend divines*. And just so the doctrines of grace continue to the present day, notwithstanding all the prophecies which have been levelled against them. Truth is still what it was, and is so far from being either swallowed or scorched up, that it still remains a *living* plant, and will some day be a *flourishing* and *productive* one. And notwithstanding the various and united efforts which are made, to poison its roots, perish its bloom, strip off its leaves and even to sliver off its branches; the hand that planted it continues to nourish and defend it, and will never suffer it to be rooted up nor destroyed. It is the sweetest and fairest flower in Jehovah's garden below, and while he has labourers to dress the environed plot, he will order it to be properly cultivated, by which means it will throw out its little shoots in different directions. These he will cause to be transplanted and to take root in various parts of his dominions; he will yet cause his truth to flourish like the lily and blossom like the rose, and will bathe its fragrance and its beauty in the transparent dews of heaven. These presumptions are founded upon a more sure word of prophecy, to which we do

well to take heed as unto a light shining in a dark period and in dark places.

But what scripture, or what ground, or what authority have any person to conclude, that another century will bury in oblivion all exclusive sentiments? The prophetic part of scripture, seem strongly to indicate the purification of God's church in less than another century, but that will not be at the expense of truth and righteousness, but the reverse: nor can the fulfilment of past prophecies afford any analogy to reason by, I mean such prophecies as have originated in enmity and hatred to the truth of the gospel. Prophecies of this stamp have been often repeated, and as often failed. People become surcharged with spleen, and feeling their minds chagrined, irritation and expulsion takes place; the consequence of which is, a violent stream of bilious predictions are ejected, which effectually overthrow what arguments could not touch. But could false prophets have destroyed the truth as it is in Jesus, not a vestige of it would be discovered at the present period. No; it would have disappeared long before this.

But, why allow rigid Calvinism a whole century to quit its mundane abode? Why not predict a more speedy dispatch, and send it out of the world in a galloping consumption? Possibly it may recover, and then who can calculate upon its longevity? Even pulmonary complaints are by some physicians reckoned curable, and chronic diseases are removed by a few electrical sparks. In this intellectual, *intentional*, *intrinsic*, *ironical*, and *immortal* age, who can tell but what Calvinism--even *anti-Fullerite* Calvinism may find balm in Gilead, may find a physician there? Nay, who can be sure but ere this classical, chymical, critical, and upon the whole *comical* age, has taken its last farewell, Calvinism—solid, sound, old fashioned Calvinism, may have recovered its health, and the church become empearled in the lustre of her brilliant gems? And as such prophetic doctors seldom take but hasty glances at the features of Calvinism, suppose in their hurry they should have mistook a calm repose for a deadly disease, or a state of stupor for the wiry pulse of death? And

if so it is not impossible, nay, it is not improbable, but like the fabled echo, its limbs and energies may be excited to action, when those of others are beginning to be composed. Turn over the page of history, and there examine the various fluctuations, persecutions, defections and apostacies, to which the church has been subjected. If history will furnish us with a calculus drawn from past events, and conduct us to a future series of things distinctly impressed by the sign of resemblance, it is in favour of Calvinism's promotion. Motley Calvinism, and barefaced methodism, has been running its course for some length of time, and perhaps it will not be long before Jehovah will turn the captivity of his church like the streams of the south. But if this should not be the case, and supposing that in *half* a century, the wisdom of men should render obsolete the discriminating doctrines of the bible, still the foolishness of God is stronger than the wisdom of men, and he taketh the *wise* in their own *craftiness*. Persecution may come, the love of many may wax cold, and true believers may be hated by all men for his name's sake. The witnesses may be silenced, but the spirit of life will enter into them again; and though the woman be conveyed into the wilderness, she shall be *nourished* notwithstanding. Truth may be cast out into the streets; and many may tremble for the ark of God. But the Lord liveth, and blessed be the rock of my salvation; while Jehovah lives, his truth can never die. Yea, should all the advocates for Calvinism be silenced, should there not be an individual who is valiant for the truth; even then, God will take care of his truth as well as his people. Ministers of truth may be *put down*, but the truths of their ministry can never be *put out*. The doctrines of grace will not waste away like sepulchral tapers, but like self-feeding lamps, they will shine resplendant in the reign of death and in the midst of tombs. They are divine, and therefore indestructable. Their extinction may at times appear to us inevitable, but so they have done in ages that are past, and yet God has preserved them to the present day. They have met the scorn of socinians, arians, pelagians, arminians,

Wesleyans, and a host of others, and yet they stand, and stand unmoved too; yes, and they shall stand, for God is able to make them stand. Nothing is too hard for him, for he holds the hearts of all men in his hands; and I cannot but regard the vast diversity of human principles and passions in all their variety of association, as resembling the vegetable principles of nature in all their manifold combinations. The action of physical causes often destroy their tenacity, hold them in equilibrium, destroy their balance, and constrain them to form new associations so as to act in unison with fresh arrangements. And when God shall pour out his spirit upon his church — when he shall hiss for the bee that is in the uttermost parts of the earth, I have no doubt in my mind, but the present form of things will be strangely altered; prejudices will give way, the passions of the human mind will lose their present bias, and when held in a state of equipoise, a trifling force will destroy their equilibrium. This will occasion a new conjunction of principles, which by their action in a new line of conformity will institute a fresh train of events, more congenial to the revealed will of God, and more conformable to the purity, simplicity and order of primitive christianity. But I leave this train of thought to pursue another.

4. *The lukewarmness and even coldness of those who profess hyper-calvinism, is said to be a proof of its being unscriptural.*

To this it is replied, 1. the degree of religious fervour can never be a test of sound doctrine, and whoever is conversant with the pages of ecclesiastical history will readily concede this point. 2. If the argument proves any thing, it proves *too much*; because it would prove every form of religion and every theological opinion however absurd, to be indisputably right, which would be equal to proving contradictions are true. For it is evident that some of the most absurd notions have had some of the warmest advocates. Papists have instituted crusades against Mahomedans, and Servetus perished upon the block. Nevertheless the musselman's religion continues, the divinity of Christ is still denied,

and the papal beast is still in being. There are those who defend with as much warmth the maxims of Confucius, as others do the religion of Jesus of Nazareth, yet no christian ever entertains the idea that they are both equally true and equally useful. The truth is, we can never form a safe judgment, of the accuracy or fallacy of any religious sentiment by the extent of feelings which its followers may develope.

5. *High Calvinists are said to be inactive, and even averse to liberal institutions, which is imputed to the influence their doctrines have upon their minds, and is therefore thought to militate against them.*

To this it is answered, 1. if they are *inactive*, the integrity of their creed will not be impugned by the allegation. 2. If they are inactive, cool, and deliberate, they are free from the excitement produced by unhallowed fire, and the disorder occasioned by charitable phrenzy. Then 3. as to their aversion to charitable institutions it must be observed, that the majority of them are in circumstances far below mediocrity, and that it is with great difficulty they can procure a comfortable subsistence for their own minister. And if they were to lessen his sources for the sake of contributing to various institutions, would the baptist funds furnish him with supplies? They would not. But is it right to conclude, that because they are unable to lend their assistance towards the accomplishment of charitable objects, they must therefore view them with feelings of deep dislike? Surely inability and aversion, are not inseparable companions. But the objector must grant, that some of the best institutions derive their warmest support from men of high calvinistic sentiments; and if so, such sentiments cannot have any tendency to contract the benevolent feelings of the human heart; nor to stupify the sensibilities of the mind, nor to gender parsimonious habits; much more to create and foster those unfavourable feelings which are illiberally charged upon them.

6. *Another objection is, that they are unconcerned about the salvation of their fellow creatures.*

This is founded in either weakness or wickedness,

or both united. I have no doubt but the interest which they experience in witnessing sinners who were afar off, brought nigh by the blood of the cross, is marked by feelings as lively and powerful as any other class of people; not even excepting those to which the objectors belong. But it is often urged, they do not encourage missionary exertions, nor assist other religious funds. This is partly false, and partly true. Many of them do assist missionary undertakings; and did not the baptist missionary society receive its formation at the hands of those, whose sentiments were in general accordance with those exhibited in the pages of this work? With regard to other institutions, they are not now what they once were; the funds are managed by a party, and the donations monopolized by those, whose creeds are as free from *restraint* as they are from *propriety*. Look for instance at those funds, the object of which was to put a few *useful* books into the library of poor ministers, and to facilitate the means of subsistence where their stipends are diminutive. Look at those funds which were designed for their support when enfeebled and superannuated, and for administering to the necessities of their surviving widows, supposing them to leave any. They are deprived of assistance from all these sources, except in very partial instances. And as to the state of these funds, the public know scarcely any thing, though it is public property. No publicity is given to the manner in which such property is disbursed, nor the ends to which it is applied. Annual reports are unknown, at least they are to me. I do not say, that such is the case with regard to every religious institution, but I do affirm it is the case with some — perhaps not a few. Now under such circumstances can it be wondered at, if they should support fewer institutions than what those do who have larger means, or are supplied by one institution to support another?

7. *They are said to be disgustingly illiterate and ignorant, which is supposed in the judgment of charity to prevent them from understanding the doctrines they embrace.* They are illiterate — this is truly the case

with many, but I submit that they may understand the doctrines of the gospel notwithstanding the absence of literature. Most of them can read the bible, and with regard to the truths it contain, great as their ignorance is, they are so conversant with them, as to put to the blush not a few, who in their own view are mighty proficient in theological lore. It is also objected, that the ministers of that respectable denomination are grossly and unpardonably illiterate. Of course they are generally pretty free from all the tinsel which a seminary can impose.

Learning is either, ornamental or essential, artificial or useful. Now I cannot imagine how, ornamental learning can be a necessary qualification for preaching the gospel, in such a manner as to point out the way and plan of a sinner's salvation. A person may talk about substances, modes, ideas, terms, conception, definition, judgment, proposition, reasoning, syllogisms, &c. and this is all very well in its place, but surely it cannot be thought necessary in order to preach the gospel. What advantage is it to a poor sin-burdened soul to be informed, that all substances are either animate or inanimate, simple or compound, pure or mixed—that the modes of existence are, either essential or accidental, primary or secondary, absolute or relative, intrinsic or extrinsic, inherent or adherent, physical or supernatural; what avail would it be to him, if he was informed, that our ideas of things thus modified, may be sensible, spiritual, abstracted, simple, complex, compound, collected, universal, particular, real, and even imaginary? What consolation would it convey to his bleeding heart to be told, that the Rev. Gentleman who addressed him, understood the nature of negative, positive, simple, complex, abstract, and concrete terms? Would such things ease his mind, or assuage his grief? Would they offer a fair solution to the enquiries which are rapidly forming in his bosom respecting his present and future condition? No, this require a close acquaintance with the first workings of a divine principle in the soul, together with a clear and comprehensive knowledge of the doctrines of grace. Deep experience

and a clear understanding, are the chief qualifications of a gospel minister ; and these it must be allowed they may have, without ornamental literature. But we have to witness the reverse in many of those who charge us with being illiterate. We are compelled to witness tinsel and varnish, without solid useful knowledge ; we observe, in too many instances, all the stiffness of the pretended scholar without the humility of the real saint ; we have attitude for tragedies, dramas, and even comedies. Artificial literature, has succeeded in repealing all restrictive acts ; have married the singing-pew to the orchestre, the pulpit to the platform, and the church to the world. But the twelve apostles did not emerge from the dust and cobwebs of a study—they did not emanate from a seminary of corruption after they had studied the classics, read *Belles Lettres*, and received a creed from their tutor's library, stamped like a shilling for the mint with the image of the master-dictator : they did not spring from a mining association working old caverns where the treasures had been exhausted ; they did not burst from a hoary hoard of antiquaries, groping among the tombs to make a sale of the canonized relics they might happen to find ; they did not come out from a school of literary resurrectionists, who dug up corruption and anatomized both the dead and the living with the pen of plagiarism. Then what, and who were they ? Why, they were plain, simple, and unadorned men, who knew something of life beside its extravagances, and who were practised in those feelings and forms, which mark the mutual and necessary intercourse between man and man. Paul certainly had a good store of ornamental literature, but he did not regard it as necessary to preach a free and plain salvation. He did not exhibit the salvation of Jesus encrusted with an air of mystery, or dressed in antiquated and obsolete language, or varnished with the lustre of Gamaliel's lore ; but he preached a plain salvation in a plain manner. And it will not be denied, as plainly it cannot, that men may preach the gospel, and preach it well too, without artificial learning ; without understanding the Urim and Thummim, or the curious girdle of the high

priest, or the tapestry of the tabernacle of meeting, the capacity of the omer or the weight of the jewish shekel. It will not be asserted that a person must understand the philosophy of the bible, or the botany, mineralogy, geography, &c. thereof, before he can preach the gospel. Artificial learning may afford pleasure and amusement, and perhaps advantage; but if a person understands the way and plan of salvation as therein revealed, that is sufficient for all useful purposes. And such a person preaching the gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, will be abundantly more useful than those who are preaching of it in wisdom of words, or excellency of speech. Useful learning like charity, *never faileth*, "but whether there be prophecies they shall fail, whether there be tongues they shall cease, whether there be knowledge it shall vanish away." All artificial literature in a minister, without divine teaching is,

As evanescent, and as weak,
As beauty on a dying cheek.

Or like a gilt-edged envelope to a blank valentine, or a golden shrine to a worthless picture.

8. *They are said to be exclusive in their views and vindictive in their feelings.*

As to their being exclusive in their views, if viewing all mankind as under the curse of the law is being exclusive, why then it must be confessed they are so. If believing no more will be saved than those who are chosen, redeemed and sanctified, render them exclusive, they must fall beneath the charge. And if viewing the promises and invitations of the gospel as confined to believers in Christ, is sufficient to characterize them as exclusive, they have no desire to shrink from the allegation. But if by their being exclusive is meant, their concentrating all spiritual blessings within the limits of their own views, the charge is founded in falsehood. For my own part, I embrace all that think, and feel for all that suffer. And as to diversity of creeds, I cannot tell what measure of ignorance may accompany a principle of grace, any more than I can determine upon the degrees of gospel knowledge and moral feeling which a man may possess without it. There can be

no doubt but all God's people are taught the language of Canaan, and I view the different creeds which they embrace, in a similar manner as I regard the variety of dialects which may exist in one language. Each individual may use his own dialect, with profit to himself and advantage to others; each may petition, obey, and serve his king in his own tongue and province; the diversity of dialects would not exclude them from the pale of royal protection, though if they understood their own tongue in its purity it might facilitate their intercourse at court, and afford them many other conveniences too valuable to be despised. It might also be more agreeable to their prince and more honourable to themselves, if by applying the means afforded, they were seeking to obtain a knowledge of their tongue in its perfection. So a man may adore his God in his own creed, love him and serve him in a way of thinking peculiar to himself and a few others of the same denomination. And no sensible person would attempt to deny his privileges at the foot of the throne on that account, any more than the duke of Bedford would attempt to exclude the people of Yorkshire from presenting their petitions to the king, alledging that they could not receive any favour nor any protection from his royal brother, because their language varied in its pronunciation from that spoken by the people who reside in the same county with his highness. But while we allow great variety of thinking will not exclude a man from the kingdom of heaven, we contend that their thoughts may be very dishonouring to the gospel, and may be strongly opposed to the perfections of the Godhead, the doctrines and laws of Jesus, and the dispensation of his enriching favours. And such I contend is the subject of duty-faith, general invitations and offered grace.

As to vindictive feeling, it will be allowed that there are characters to be found who are of speculative habits, who pretend to be inflated by the Holy Spirit, and who conceive all their ideas to be imparted by divine inspiration. I am aware that there are people who discard the moral law of God as a rule of conduct. I am

prepared to believe that there may be persons who think that sin cannot do a believer any harm, and other things of the like nature; but let it be remembered, that with such sentiments I have nothing to do myself, and that therefore, I am not attempting a defence of either the doctrines or manners of such people. But I am pleading in defence of those, who preach and believe in a salvation limited in its value, discriminating in its designs, restricted in its invitations, and efficacious in its application. Respecting these persons, I affirm, that the charge is as unfounded in truth as it is uncharitable in itself. Many of them entertain the kindest feelings for those who differ from them in their mode of religious thinking, and are far from being backward in rendering them assistance when it is within their power, and they are in circumstances which render them deserving of it.

But let it be noticed, and let it be generally known too, 1. That *we* are confounded with persons to whom we do not belong. It is frequently concluded, that a person cannot reject the system of offered grace, without being a doctrinal antinomian; and then it is imagined if they are antinomians they must as a matter of course be *libertines*. We are, therefore, viewed in connection with vile ungodly characters. 2. Our *sentiments* are confounded with those which we disown and dislike. If we reject offered grace, that is deemed sufficient to establish our title to an antinomian's inheritance, and we must by so doing, necessarily make God the author of sin, live in sin, and be saved in sin, &c. How absurd and wicked are such conclusions! 3. Our views are exaggerated and misrepresented. By many they are not understood; not because they are perplexed, but because they are unwelcome to human nature, and as such, they are seldom contemplated by an impartial mind. They are not unfrequently dressed by their adversaries in a livery not their own; ornamented with all the fantastic ensignia of ridicule; marched like an effigy through the streets of public observation, and then solemnly devoted to devouring flames within the precincts of a market-place; while those who may have the courage to espouse

them, are sure to render themselves unpopular, and to be complimented in all the forms of vindictive and degrading phraseology. 4. We have to sustain privations and afflictions, both from professors and profane. We are reproached by both, and are called to forego the enjoyment of many earthly conveniences, through the influence of fashionable and overbearing professors; who manifest the deepest malignancy towards those who embrace the truth in the love of it. True, you talk to us about universal charity, but we are excluded from its fond embrace: at most, it can only be general in its *value*, for evidently it is limited in its *application*. You talk about the readiness of the christian to assist and succour every individual, but to us it is,

‘In accents *wisely faint*.’

You talk about honest industry, but envy the staff when grasped by an antinomian’s hand. You boast of amicable feeling towards every son and daughter of Adam; but point your threatenings against those over whom you have any influence, supposing them to have the hardihood to venture within, what you are pleased to term an *antinomian-den*. Your tender mercies toward us, are something like the fine feelings of a sentimentalist, which will not suffer him to hurt even a *spider*, but which stimulates him to sweep away its web without ceremony; and thus deprive it of the only means of subsistence. In many instances your religious feeling towards us, resemble the felonious piety of slaves, who talk to the dying about life and strip them before they are dead. Now if under such circumstances as these, there should be amongst us those, who occasionally betray symptoms of a vindictive character, can it excite any marvellous feeling in the bosom of impartial spectators? I should think not. To expect accuracy of feeling and manners at all times, under such a state of things, is like expecting a person in excruciating agony, to place himself in a collected posture before his mirror, and there to teach with kind and gentle precepts, the globules of perspiration to pursue a graceful direction down his face—to dispose of his distorted features ac-

ording to the laws of harmony—to writhe in eloquence, groan in melody, and dance to an allegro upon a fiddle.

But, I ask, is it fair, is it kind, is it christian-like, is it even *manly* for you thus to treat us, and then to condemn us? You assail us from the pulpit and the press, in strains of *morose invective*; and if we rebut the charges, we are immediately set down for bitter, querrulous, impertinent people. You shut us out of your academies, and then reproach us for our ignorance.—You deprive us of the benefits of institutions which in their primitive existence contemplated our advantage, and then accuse us of indifference towards them.—You not unfrequently curtail the means of our subsistence, and then charge us with parsimonious habits.—You brand us with infamy, and then turn round and tell us we are illiberal!!

Such things have any face but a handsome one, and are a perfect contrast to those forms which Zeuxis painted, or Phydias sculptured.

9. *They are said to be UNSOCIABLE, which is considered as opposed to the religion of the gospel.* It would be well if the former part of this charge could be established: for ought not the people of God to come out from the world? and are not God's Israel, said to be a people *dwelling alone*, not to be reckoned among the nations? But supposing that their not associating with other *professors*, and their *non-attendance* of their public meetings, is chiefly intended in the unsociable affirmation; what is the general conduct of professors? is it such as would justify the opposite of what is complained of? Let us survey it. Without pretending to uncommon sanctity ourselves, it must be acknowledged that the partition between them and the world is so very slender, and they have broke down so very many, that it is dangerous trusting one's self among them. They are thirsting after the fashions and vanities, the maxims and frivolities of the world, and there is but little solidity or regularity about them. They are drawn into the churches by general invitations, and are made glad before they were ever made sad; they are joined to churches by profession, before their hearts are ever severed from

the world; this accounts for the levity and brevity of many professors: their levity augurs their brevity, and their brevity finally discloses their depravity. Like glow-worms, they shine and glitter only in warm weather. Hence we often see young beginners, associating themselves with unsanctified professors; they soon imbibe their spirit, then begin to copy their fashions, afterwards to mix with the world, and ultimately to throw off all restraint in their intercourse therewith. To suit them, doctrines must be legalized, ordinances carnalized, churches scandalized and thrown into the bosom of the world. No doubt but there are good people among them, who are exempted from these remarks, and with those I presume, we do not object to associate. But it may be asked, do you want our company? If you do, why asperse us? and if you do not, why condemn us for our distance and taciturnity? Then with reference to attending your public meetings, you must allow that they are conducted in a manner which must grieve any judicious person. Witness the levity, carnality, froth, impertinence, and ludicrous anecdotes which compose their *brilliant* speeches. Witness the loud clappings to injudicious allusions, unmeaning similes, crude metaphors, and blunt sarcasms. And it is evident that general interest cannot be excited and kept up, without the aid of novelty and levity; hence the most humorous and distant *strangers* must be picked and fetched, no matter at what expence—the collections will pay for it. I dislike the spirit and methods of such meetings, and very much question the general utility of humorous, brilliant, splendid strangers, being engaged on such occasions; even supposing that their journeys and services were all gratuitous. But if such things prove nothing else, they certainly prove that it is rather a *nervous* excitement, than an *evangelical* one. And like nervous people who have access to stimulants, when its temporary influence has subsided, they sink into a greater langour than before. Just so it is with them; while excitation is going on, they are as light and as loose as feathers in the air; but when that is over, they fall, like feathers in an exhausted air tube. I envy not that man either his judg-