tion. Her temper was naturally amiable; and this, graced with the beauties of religion, made her rank highly among the most interesting of her sex. Her lovely corpse, wet with the tears of love, was covered from the view of weeping friends, and consigned to the silent tomb, to sleep in peace, till called to receive a crown of immortality from the hand of her Lord. She left a little babe about two weeks old, with a loving companion, and a very numerous and respectable connexion.

Also, in Georgetown, Ky. Nov. 27th, Mrs. MARGARET BRADFORD, wife of Daniel Bradford, and daughter of Elijah Craig. All the virtues, which can adorn a daughter, a wife and friend, shone pre-eminently in her through her short life. She had not made a public profession of religion previous to her last illness, but a few hours before she died, she experienced the joys of salvation in answer to her fervent prayers, and left us an undoubted testimony of her acceptance with God. We have lost indeed a friend—one, against whom the tongue of calumny could never dare to speak, nor the eagle eye of malevolence could ever find a fault. How heart cheering the thought, that heaven's inhabitants are only such; and such shall meet to part no more.

We have just received an extraordinary account of about 30,000 Methodists in England, withdrawing from that church and connexion, because the Conference disapproved of the introduction of instrumental music in the churches. The full account shall appear in our next. To us, backwoods Americans, this conduct of those seceders appears be the extreme of folly, and it argues that they have a greater taste for music, than they have for leligion.

EDITOR.

NOTICE.

Mr. Samuel Brown's communication, with the Editors remarks, shall appear in our next.

ERRATA.—While the 1st No. of Vol. 3 was in press the Editor was absent. Several errors are discovered. In the Obituary, p. 21, read *Shideler* instead of *Shields*. In p. 22, *immoralities* instead of *immortalities*.

THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

BY BARTON W. STONE,

AN ELDER IN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

"*Prove all things: hold fast that which is good.*"—PAUL.

VOL: 3.] GEO: TOWN, K. JAN. 1829. [No. 3.

From the Christian Register.

MR. MONTGOMERY'S SPEECH.

The following extract is from Rev. Mr. Montgomery's speech before the Synod of Ulster, to which we have recently alluded.

After some remarks on the difficulty of reducing to order, in his speech, the "desultory reasonings of his opponents," he proceeds to say:—

I shall proceed with as much regularity as circumstances permit, and fearlessly lay before you my sentiments upon a subject involving not merely the character and stability of this church, but likewise the interests and influence of Christianity itself.

I shall set out upon a principle which I consider to be unassailable, viz: that religion is entirely a matter between man and his Creator, excepting so far as one human being may lawfully endeavor to influence another by friendly counsel and instruction. Farther than this, no earthly power has a right to extend: to one Master alone, all are accountable; and as no man can stand in my place, to answer for my principles and conduct before the tribunal of my Judge, I shall never regulate my views of Divine Truth by the opinions of fallible mortals, nor permit them to interfere with that faith which is to direct my conduct, and to hallow my heart. For instruction, if I be in error, I would be grateful; with courteous admonition, I would not be offended; but to authoritative decisions I never shall submit,—for I should thereby renounce the unalterable allegiance which I owe to the sole King and Head of the Church.

It has been said, that Arians held "that there is *nothing essential* in Christianity." If this asssertion has been made in ignorance, I pity the persons that have used it; if in wickedness, and with a deliberate purpose of misrepresentation, I

hope that I can forgive them. I am bound, however, to say, that it has not a shadow of foundation in truth. So far from alleging that there is *nothing* essential in Christianity, we distinctly hold *every thing* to be essential which God has been pleased to reveal. But I shall tell you what we do say,—that those doctrines, concerning which there have been interminable and bitter controversies amongst Christians, cannot be the *Fundamentals of Religion.* We rest this opinion upon the most profound veneration for the all-perfect and adorable character of the Supreme Being. We believe, that, in all things, he can adapt the means which he employs to the ends which he desires to promote: we feel satisfied that he could have no difficulty in suiting the language of his Revelation to the capacities of those for whose benefit it was communicated: and we necessarily infer, that no principle can be fundamental which is not explicitly revealed. I would put it to my opponents to say, what conception *they* must form of the justice and benignity of God, who aver that he has left matters essential for the salvation of his creatures in such a woful state of uncertainty, that scarcely two men can agree in their explanation of them. Would not this be to impeach both the wisdom and goodness of the Deity, and to render him accessary to the destruction of his people? And that the doctrine of the Trinity is one of a very doubtful character, I can easily prove from the variety of opinions entertained upon the subject, even by the Orthodox themselves. The copious extracts read by my friend, Mr. Blakely, from the works of the most eminent divines of the Established Church, amply testify, that amongst them there is no unity of sentiment: and in a volume lately published by one of the most intelligent members of this Synod, the doctrine of the Trinity is freely admitted "to be a doctrine of *inference*, and not of *explicit revelation.*" Mr. Carlisle was too ingenuous to contend for triumph instead of truth; and he has candidly admitted, what a determined controversalist would have kept out of view. Whilst we hear on all sides, in this House, that the Trinity is *the* fundamental doctrine of Christianity, he freely admits, "that he would not place a doctrine of inference upon an equality with one of explicit revelation." With him, therefore, there must be other doctrines of superior importance; for, certainly, there are many expressly revealed.—But in the conduct of the Orthodox members of this Synod, last year, at Strabane, we have an irresistible proof, that they

were not agreed amongst themselves regarding their assumed fundamental principle. After disputing for hours about substance, and essence, and person, they were at length compelled to adopt a sentence from the Shorter Catechism, about the terms of which no two of them agreed: and when the whole affair was over, one of them very gravely said to another, "*Your* orthodoxy is not *my* orthodoxy." Yet, in the face of all these facts, Mr. Elder had yesterday the hardihood to assert, "that no man could read a chapter in the Bible without seeing the doctrine of the Trinity clearly revealed." If the matter be so *very* clear, is it not strange that he did not point out to his brethren the mode of expressing the doctrine in the *language of Scripture?* Such a step would have been courteous to them, and charitable to us: for, in that case we would have cordially joined in their declaration.

That the doctrine of the Trinity may be one which, as Mr. John Brown asserts, the most ignorant persons can most easily embrace, I do not pretend to deny. Presumption is a natural consequence of ignorance. Vanity of heart, unchastened by accuracy of judgment, has led to the most arrogant assumptions. It is not when men are illuminated by the spirit of Divine truth, that they presumptuously dictate creeds to their brethren, but when they are blinded by their own prejudices and passions. The wise and the enlightened are always distrustful of their own judgments; whilst the weak and the uninstructed are almost universally positive and dogmatical.

The fact is, it was this ignorant vanity of man which first led to human interference in matters of faith, obscured the lustre of Divine truth, and paved the way for all subsequent corruptions. In the apostolic ages, when there was no creed but that which came from on high, when there was no interference with opinions save "the counsels of love," Christianity went forth in its native purity and simplicity, captivating the hearts and adorning the lives of men. But the moment that earth attempted to patronize the religion of heaven, the moment that the Empire of Rome took Christianity under its protection—that moment corruption commenced, "the fine gold became dim." Priests and governors dictated modes of faith and forms of worship; and, in order to sanction the assumption, laid claim to infallibility, in determining the counsels of Heaven. Under this pretence arose a power more extensive and more terrible than any that ever

influenced the destinies of the world—a power that equally held in thraldom the cottage and the pallace; that almost extinguished the light of literature and science; that took away much of the genuine substance of religion, and left but shadowy forms and ceremonies in its room. The argument of the *majority* having a right to coerce the *minority*, was urged with equal justice then as it is now: might constituted right, whilst racks, and dungeons, and flames, confirmed her decisions, and preserved uniformity.

Upon what principle was it first attempted to change this scene of things? Why, upon the simple and rational and scriptural principle, that every man has an inalienable right to take up his Bible, and to form his own conclusions regarding the things which belong to his duty here and his prospects hereafter. Upon this immutable principle the Reformation commenced; and happy would it have been for the world had it continued as it began. But, alas! the leaven of Popery has been more or less infused into every church. No sooner did Protestants acquire power, than they began to trench upon Christian liberty; they wrested the scourge from the Church of Rome, in order to apply it to the backs of their brethren; they wrote creeds, appointed ceremonies, and connected civil interests with religious professions, until every division of the Protestant Church exhibited a miniature of the great establishment from which it had dissented. The right of private judgment, indeed, was still talked of, and even praised, as I have heard done in this house, by those that are treading it in the dust; but with such persons, it consisted then as it does now, in exercising the right to judge both for *themselves* and for *others*. To assist Mr. Morell, and those who glory in the licentiousness with which you trample upon your own laws, I shall quote a passage from the *Code of Discipline*, to enable the world to form some judgment of the distinguished discrepancy which exists between your principles and your practice. The power possessed by the teachers of the church amounts to no more than this, to search the mind of the Spirit speaking in the Scriptures, and to produce the scriptural authority for what they teach. It is the privilege, the right, and the duty of every man to examine the Scriptures for himself; but in exercising the inalienable right of his own judgment, the Christian does not refuse to admit light, or to receive assistance from his teachers: he only refuses to acknowledge subjection to any authority but the word of God;

and before he assents to any doctrine, he claims the right of examining the Scriptures for himself, that upon their authority he may rest fully persuaded in his own mind. Holding out these incontrovertible principles, you claim the praise of liberality, "you keep the word of promise to the ear," but, acting in direct opposition to them, "you break it to the hope." You may speak of the Church of Rome as you will, but, in comparison with you, she is honorable and consistent. She claims infallibility, and consequently denies the right of private judgment; but with a monstrous inconsistency, you admit your fallibility, to which you demand a submission which nothing could authorize you to claim but an absolute freedom from the very possibility of error. I do ask, in sober sadness, how any class of Protestants can acquit themselves to their own consciences and the world, to assert that the brethren have a right to search the Sacred Records, and to deduce from their own conclusions, whilst at the very same moment they endeavor to curtail their privileges, and to put them to serious inconvenience for the mere exercise of ther natural and Christian rights!

I do aver that your whole overture is directly opposed to the first principles of the Reformation—the right of free inquiry, without penalty or privation. Should it be passed into a law, not a single student can be educated, or licensed to preach, without risk of injury and submission to human authority in matters of faith. If you persevere in this measure, you should change the whole system of education for your candidates. Instead of prescribing, as at present, an extensive course of ancient and modern literature, previous to their entering college and several years study of philosophy and science, subsequently to their entrance, in order to enlarge their views and increase their capacity for forming accurate judgments, you should limit their education and cramp their understanding, lest they be led to incur penalties by venturing to think for themselves. And when they enter the theological class, instead of directing their attention to the *Bible*, as the rule of their faith, and the anchor of their hopes, your professor should advise them to study nothing but "the accredited standards of the orthodox churches," by which their competency for teaching is eventually to be determined.—Besides all this, he ought studiously to conceal from their view the progress of Christianity, and the various sects that have arisen in the church, lest some heresy, such as Arian-

ism, should appear to their minds as rational and as scriptural as Calvanism itself. This would be the honest and manly course to pursue. No false ray of light would shoot across their minds from too free an inquiry into the meaning of the Scriptures; they would be taught to build their faith upon the *safe* foundation of the "Accredited Standards," and in all things they would be well prepared for due submission to their spiritual guides. But to enlarge and disenthral their minds, as you do at present, by literature, philosoyhy, and science; to tell them that the Bible, and "the Bible ALONE is the religion of Protestants," that they are bound to study it, and have a right to form their own opinions of its doctrines —to do all this, and much more, to produce a manly and independent mode of thinking and then to turn around upon them in the end, and to expel them from your church, if all their views do not precisely accord with yours—to act in this manner is surely equally tyrannical and unjust. Their time, their toil, their means of support—all are lost; because, you have taught them to *think*, and they have chanced to think differently from you!

These overtures, however, would not only impose a virtual subscription to human interpretations of the Scripture, which may, or may not, be agreeable to the word of God; but they would impose this submission to man's authority, in a form more objectionable than was ever proposed in the darkest ages of the church. Were a candidate for the ministry obliged to subscribe the *Thirty-nine Articles, or the Confession of Faith*, he would, at least, be able to make up his mind, and to ascertain the full extent of the sacrifice required of him; but in coming before your projected Committee for license, he would be subjected to an ordeal for which no human being could make due preparation. He would be exposed to the caprice of a many headed monster; having as many opinions as members; all living in jealousy and collision with each other. No matter into what pliancy he might school his conscience, it would be almost impossible for him to escape. He might as well sail between Scylla and Charybdis, as hope at once to please Mr. Johnson, the smooth Arminian, and that staunch Calvinist, Dr. Wright. Whilst attempting to gain favor with the one, he would require to cast a side-long glance at the other; and also to watch the various minor movements of the extraordinary beings to whose humours his destiny in life must be in a great measure subjected. But, bad as this is, it is not the worst. This strange compound will necessarily change its features every year; so that at one time the majority of its faces may wear the stern, unbending lineaments of Calvanism, and at another, the softer looks of liberal Armenianism. I am not much inclined to submit to human authority; but were I compelled to do so, I should much prefer placing myself under the power of the Pope, to coming under the control of your projected Committee. I might study the character and accommodate myself, in due time, to the caprices of an individual; but to the ever-changing medley of passions, and prejudices and opinions, of which your committtee must necessarily be composed, no man could ever be conformed. The only consolation which I enjoy in contemplating this ecclesiastical monster is, that as it is not similar to any that ever existed in air, or earth, or sea, I am fully convinced that in its own turbid and jarring elements, it will carry the seeds of its dissolution, and speedily pass away from the world.

WEST-LIBERTY, HENRY CO. IA. Oct. 28, 1828.

DEAR BROTHER—Having heard you preach about twenty years ago, and being much pleased with the spirit of union you appeared to be in, and with your manner of preaching at that time, I then formed a favorable opinion of you, which I have retained to the present time. When I heard you preach I was young in years, and young in my profession of the CHRISTIAN RELIGION, and did not become acquainted with the *peculiarities* of the doctrine you hold for some considerable time after. But notwithstanding you differ from me in several particulars, that *charity which hopeth all things*, induces me to believe that your motives and intentions to do good to mankind are sincere. Not only am I thus induced to believe from charity, but also from your unweaned zeal in your ardent labours in the ministry, for the salvation of souls. Whenever I discover a desire manifested in efforts in any man to reform the wicked, to turn sinners from the error of their way, and to save souls from eternal death, I cannot but love that man, though he may differ from me in several things. I hope you will not conceive me to be your enemy. I can assure you I feel sincerely friendly to you; but as some points of doctrine, wherein we differ, appear essential to me, particularly with regard to the proper and personal DIVINITY of our blessed SAVIOUR, in which I have

placed all my hopes of future and eternal happiness; and as it relates to the personal existence of the HOLY SPIRIT, the direct witness of which I have professed to receive, that my sins are pardoned for *Christ's sake*, and that I am born of God, I desire you to give as full and as satisfactory an answer to the following questions as you can:

1. If JESUS CHRIST be not truly, properly, and really God, how can the scriptures be true, which ascribe to him the incommunicable attributes, and characters of the most high God? Or can those infinite perfections and divine characters belong to him, as well as to the FATHER, and he be not of the same nature and essence with the Father? And if he be not of the same nature and essence with the Father, and yet the same attributes and characters belong to him, must he not be another God? And would not this establish the idea of two Gods?

2. If Jesus Christ be not God in the highest sense, must he not be a creature? And if he be a creature and not God, how could he with propriety command his apostles to baptize in his own name, as well as in the name of the Father? As baptism signifies an entire consecration of the person that receives it to the service and honor of that Being, in whose name it is administered, ought this consecration to be made to a creature? If it might with propriety be made to a creature, why did St. Paul thank God that he had baptized none of the Corinthians but Crispus and Gaius, lest any should say that he had baptized in his own name?

3. If no man, (or creature, as it may be rendered,) was able to open the book, which St. John saw in the right hand of him that sat upon the throne, and yet the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, prevailed to open the book, and to lose the seven seals thereof, (Rev: v. 3, 4, 5.) will it not follow that he who bears the titles of the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and the Root of David, must be the uncreated, self-existent JEHOVAH?

4. You acknowledge Christ to be an object of worship, and say that you worship him by divine authority. Christian Messenger, Vol II, page 53. How will you make this agree with your professing to believe that he is a creature, or only a delegated or constituted God? Since God, throughout the scriptures, has forbidden mankind to worship any other being beside himself, and yet has commanded men and angels to worship Christ, how can he be any other than the supreme

God, without this consequence following, namely, that God has forbidden mankind to worship any other being beside himself, and that he has commanded both men and angels to worship another beside himself? And is not this charging the ALMIGHTY with contradicting himself?

5. If Jesus Christ possesses not an infinite and divine nature, as well as human nature, how could he be a *Mediator between God and man*, and become our *wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption?* If he be only a creature, how can he be the *propitiation for the sins of the world?* In a word, if he be a created being, how could his sufferings and death procure any thing more for the world than the sufferings and death of St. Paul, or any other man? If there be no virtue in the blood, and no merit in the death of Christ, do not the saints on earth, and the church triumphant in heaven, sing a false and foolish song, when they sing, *unto him, that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion, forever and ever?* If Christ be not essentially God, as well as man, and yet to say that he merited any thing by his sufferings and death for mankind, what does it differ from the doctrine of supererogation? Do you not generally undertake to prove that Jesus Christ is not the true God, by showing that he sometimes speaks and acted as a man?

6. If I am not mistaken your *Christian Messenger* denies the personal existence of the Holy Ghost. If you believe not in the personal existence of the Holy Ghost, how can the Spirit itself bear witness with your spirit that you are a child of God? Do you think that you have as good reason for not believing in the person of the Holy Ghost, as the disciples of John, whom St. Paul found at Ephesus, had for not having received the Holy Ghost, who had not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost? You quote Dr. Watts to prove your argument, without informing your readers that Dr. Watts, while in the prime of his life, and in the strength of his years, and especially while composing his hymns, was a strong trinitarian. It is well known that Dr. Watts became very weak in his mind, and childish in the latter part of his life. But if you ought to believe a certain doctrine because this celebrated author believed it, ought you not to believe one doctrine as well as another, held by the same celebrated author? And if so, ought you not to

believe that all who die in infancy, unbaptized, are annihilated at death? And the doctrine of unconditional predestination, which you have long since abandoned? As the Holy Ghost is often called *God* in the scriptures, and personal pronouns are applied to him, had we not better receive the natural meaning of the scriptures, without resorting to human inventions, and the artifice of men to explain it away, by saying it is metaphorical, and thus make metaphors to go on all fours like quadrupeds? If a man may thus make metaphors when he pleases, may he not make metaphors of the whole of the scriptures, and would not this end in perfect mysticism?

7. Why do you refuse to believe that there are three persons in one God? Is it not because of the mystery and incomprehensibility connected with the mode and manner of the existence of three persons in the God-head? If so, may you not for the same reason refuse to believe that God exists as one indivisible being? And may you not for the same reason refuse to believe that you exist yourself, because it is mysterious how you exist? You cannot know either the essence of spirit, or matter, or how these substances do exist. But is God, as to the mode of his existence, strictly speaking, an object of number? Does not number imply limitation?

I must now conclude; wishing that both you and I may know the truth, and be found complete in Him, who is the True God and Eternal Life, in the great day of final decision and retribution. I am, &c. SAMUEL BROWN.

P. S. It is the request of some of the subscribers for the Christian Messenger, as well as my own, that you give this letter a place in one of your numbers, with an answer as soon as may be convenient. S. BROWN.

ANSWER TO SAMUEL BROWN.

GEORGETOWN, KY. Nov. 25, 1828.

DEAR BROTHER:—Your friendly letter I have just received, having been absent for several weeks in the lower counties of this state. I hasten to comply with your request in answering the queries you have proposed me. In doing this I must be brief, because the subjects involved in the queries have already been discussed in the C. Messenger in former numbers; but as you may not have read them, I will give you a brief answer.

Query 1st. "If Jesus Christ be not truly, properly, and really God, how can the scriptures be true, which ascribe to him the incommunicable attributes and characters of the most high God," &c.

Ans. My brother has taken for granted what we think needs proof. We ask, where do the scriptures ascribe to Jesus the incommunicable attributes of the most high God? Where do they ascribe to him self-existence—eternity—or infinity? These are considered the incommunicable attributes of the Most High, and we are bold to say they are no where in the Bible ascribed to Jesus.

You have no doubt often heard from the pulpit omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence ascribed to Jesus, and without examination may have received this as truth. But if Jesus be truly, properly, and really God, why do the scriptures declare that all power was *given* him—that the Father *taught* him what he should say and speak—that he prayed to the Father, &c.? Must we conclude that he was omniscient, because Peter said, "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee"? As well might we conclude that Christians are omniscient, for it is said of them, "Ye have received an unction from the Holy One, and *ye know all things*." 1 John, II. 20. But Jesus has been sufficiently explicit on this subject, when he said, "Of that day knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." How this declaration can comport with the doctrine that he is omniscient, judge thou. How he can be omnipotent, and yet declare that he received all power from the Father, and without him could do nothing, we confess we cannot see. His omnipresence is argued from the expression, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." I presume you believe in the existence of an intelligent spirit, called Satan, and that where the sons and daughters of God are gathered together, he is in the midst of them; but do you believe he is therefore omnipresent? I think not. I believe Jesus is present in heaven and in earth, and yet from this cannot conclude that he is infinite.

The latter part of your 1st Query suggests the idea that the Son is *of the same nature* and essence of the Father, or else he must be another God. This part of your query would involve too much speculation to be profitable. We contend with the Fathers of the first centuries, that the Son

is *of the same nature of the Father*, as being his *own* Son; but we deny the doctrine of modern trinitarians, who affirm that the Son is the very same essence, or nature, with the Father, or the same individual Being with the Father. This we consider as absurd and anti-scriptural. For if this one being be the Son, where is the Father of the Son? You would not willingly say this one being is the Father of himself, and the Son of himself—you could not conceive how the Father sent the Son, if they were but one Being—how the Son could say "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me," and yet they but one being—how the Son ascended up to the Father, and sat down at his right hand, where he was before he did descend, and yet the Father and Son but one being—how he could pray to the Father, and yet the very being himself!!

Jesus has stopt me from speculating on this point, when he said, "No man, (literally, no person,) knoweth the Son, but the Father." No person in earth, or heaven, knoweth the Son, *how* and *when* the Father begat him. This secret is with the Lord, unrevealed to any in the universe. And yet the vain world have been wrangling for 15 centuries on this unrevealed secret! We think it sufficient to believe that he is the Son of God—God's own Son, his only begotten Son, his first begotten and beloved Son, sent into the world to save sinners, and that he is fully able to do the work for which he was sent. With the offices, character, and message of the great Mediator, we are particularly concerned, and leave speculations on notions to such as are fond of them. I hasten to your second query.

Query 2nd. "If Jesus Christ be not God in the highest sense, must he not be a creature?" &c.

Ans. With the primitive Fathers, and especially with the Apostles, we believe that Jesus was the Son of God. "But who can declare his generation?" How he derived his existence from the Father, we cannot tell—But we constantly affirm it was not by creation, for creation is a production of something out of nothing; but the Son was *begotten* and *brought forth* by the Father. We conceive a very great difference between the acts of *begetting* and *creating*. Adam *begat* a son in his own likeness; but Adam did not create a son. Adam's son was of the same nature as himself, but not the same individual nature, or being, with himself. If Jesus was a creature, or a Son by creation, we cannot see why he is

called God's *only* begotten Son—his *only* Son—his *own* Son, seeing God has myriads of sons created both in heaven and on earth. And to which of the angels, said he, at any time, "Thou art my Son"? &c.

Your query is founded on the supposition that we believe Jesus the Son of God to be a creature, which we deny, with respect to the holy spirit or soul, which existed with the Father before the world began, or in the beginning of creation, and for which a body was prepared in the womb of Mary.

Your query supposes that Jesus must be God in the highest sense, or why should the apostles baptize in his name? I cannot see the force of your argument. I believe the Israelites were all baptized into Moses, and yet Moses was not God supreme. We differ in our views of Baptism; and any argument founded on opinion not supported by scripture, cannot produce conviction.—I proceed to

Query 3. If no man (or creature as it may be rendered) was able to open the book which John saw in the hand of him that sat upon the throne, and yet the Lion of the tribe of Judah, prevailed to open it.—Rev. v. 3, 4, 5. Will it not follow that the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, must be the uncreated, self-existent Jehovah?

Answer. Your exposition of *no man*, as meaning *no creature*, is inaccurate. Neither the word *man* nor *creature* is in the Greek text. The word is *oudeis*, which literally signifies *no person*. No person in heaven, earth, or under the earth was able to take that book in the hand of Jehovah on the throne, and open it, and loose the seals thereof, but the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David. Why? Because no other was qualified and authorized to do it. Read the 1st. verse of the Book. "The Revelation of Jesns Christ, *which God gave unto him*, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass, and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John." The connexion plainly proves that this Lion was not the self-existent Jehovah; for his name is immediately after called *the Lamb*, and he took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne; here were two distinct beings—the heavenly hosts immediately sing to him as having been slain, and had redeemed them to God by his blood. Surely language could not more clearly designate two Beings, one of whom shed his blood. This could not be the self-existent God, for he cannot die nor suffer. It was the Son of God, the root and offspring of David.

QUERY 4. This query is on the worship of the Son of God. We have so fully treated on this subject in our last volume, in our letters to Mr. Clack, and Philip's address, that we must refer our brother to those numbers. He can get them from some of our patrons in his neighborhood. We think his candid mind will be profited, if not convinced, by the perusal of them.

QUERY 5. This query involves many. I will notice them in order 1st. "If Jesus Christ possessed not an infinite and divine nature, how could he be a mediator between God and man?" Ans. Can my brother tell me how could Moses be a Mediator between God and man, when he did not possess the infinite and divine nature? See Gall. III. 19, 20. If Moses was a Mediator between God and man, why could not the Son of God be with greater propriety? To this no reasonable answer can be given. If he were God supreme, how could he be mediator between himself and man? Impossible. 2. How could he become our *wisdom, righteousness, sanctification* and *redemption*," if he be not infinite God?—Ans. The Son of God became our wisdom by teaching us the lessons calculated to make us wise, which lessons he received from the Father, and which were taught him of the Father. He is made our righteousness and sanctification, because by this truth taught us, we are justified, sanctified, and saved through faith and obedience. He is made our *redemption*, because by him we are redeemed *from our vain conversation*, from all iniquity, from our enemies, and finally shall be redeemed from death and the grave. Cannot God Supreme do all these works *by* his Son, as well as make the worlds *by* him, to save *by* him, to work miracles and wonders *by* him, to reconcile the world unto himself, *by* him, and finally to judge the world *by* him? This is the faith of the Apostles. "But with us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, *by* whom are all things and we *by* him." 1 Cor. VIII. 6. If *by* him are all things, then wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption are *by* him; but Paul declares "all things are of God," and "of whom are all things"—therefore we conclude that Cod does all things by *means* or instrumentality of his Son, and that with equal propriety, the Son may be called wisdom, righteousness, &c. as salvation, power or judge. Must the Son be God supreme, because called by these names? Think and answer to yourself according to the scriptures. Read the text where Christ is said to be made unto us wisdom, &c. and you will at once be convinced that he was not the infinite God. "But of him (God) are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom," &c.—1 Cor. I. 30. According to your views, it should be read thus: "But of him, the infinite God, are ye in the infinite God who of the infinite God is made wisdom," &c. Christ *was made* wisdom—I ask, by whom? Could he be active in making and passive in being made? 3. The third part of your 5th query is, "If he be only a creature, how can he be the propitiation for the sins of the world?" Answer. The term *only a creature* we reject, for we, as before stated, believe he was the only begotten Son of God. If there be any difficulty in your query it attaches to you, not to us; therefore, the solution devolves on you. You acknowledge that God supreme cannot suffer—therefore the sufferings of Jesus were entirely confined to the human nature, to the *creature only;* how could this make a propitiation? In your own words, "How could his sufferings and death procure any thing more for the world than the sufferings and death of St. Paul, or any other man?" You may endeavor to apply the *orthodox* prop, that God was the altar on which the humanity suffered, which gave efficacy to the sufferings—still they were the sufferings of the "creature only." This depreciates his sufferings too low for us. We believe with you, that God supreme did not suffer; but we cannot agree with you that the "creature only" suffered; for we verily believe that the Son of God took flesh and blood and died to destroy death and him that had the power of death, that is the devil.

The fourth part of your fifth query is, "If there be no virtue in the blood, and no merit in the death of Christ, do not the saints in earth and heaven sing falsely and foolishly, when they sing "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen." Rev. I. 5?

ANSW: They certainly would sing very falsely and foolishly. But such a saint I have never seen, who believed there was no virtue in the blood of the Son of God; and although your system goes far to deny the virtue of his blood, as being that of the "creature only," yet my charity believes that your views and language are at variance. You, my bre-

ther, must acknowledge that the saints would sing very falsely and foolishly, did they fully believe that Jesus Christ, to whom they addressed their song, was the only true God.—With this view read the song. "Unto the *only true God*, that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood—(Did the only true God die?)—and to the *only true God*, who hath made us kings and priests unto the *only true God*, and to the Father of the *only true God*, be glory, &c." Would not this song be false and foolish indeed? If so, sing with understanding in future.

5. The fifth part of your fifth query is, "If Christ be not essentially God as well as man; and yet to say that he merited any thing by his sufferings and death for mankind, what does it differ from the doctrine of supererogation?"

Answ. Your query is founded in error. You suppose that Christ is both essentially God, and essentially man; or, in orthodox style, very God and very man, and yet but one person. There is no proof of the existence of this doctrine in the Bible; but the contrary is every where taught. How often do we hear Jesus saying, "not my will but thine be done." Do you say, that part of Christ, which is man, speaks to that part of him, which is God? If so, are there not two wills in him, and consequently two intelligent beings; for what more clearly designates a distinct being than distinct will? If Christ had but one will, how could he be both very God and very man? If he had two, how can he be the *one* Lord Jesus Christ? God has an infinite intelligent mind, and man has a finite intelligent mind. Were these two minds in Christ? if so, how could he be one person? If they were not, how could he be very God and very man in one person.

Supererogation is doing more than is required, or more than our duty, and this surplusage of duty is merit. I understand the Catholics when they talk of supererogation and merit; but when you apply these terms to the sufferings of Christ, my mind is perfectly at a loss for your meaning.—Were the sufferings of this perfect God and perfect man in one person, required? I humbly ask by whom? Were infinite or eternal sufferings required? So say the orthodox, for nothing less could make satisfaction for infinite evil or sin. It would then follow that as the divine-human-being could not suffer more than infinite or eternal, and this was required, there can be no merit, or surplusage of sufferings. I must think you attach a different idea to the terms, from what I

have stated. If by *merit* you understand *worth*, I have no objection to the term, provided it be not attached to the term supererogation.

Query 6. Your 6th query is respecting the personal existence of the Holy Spirit. You plainly state that I have made Dr. Watt's *dogmas* on this point my argument, to prove that the Holy Spirit, or Spirit of God, is not a proper person. I have long ceased to call any man master on earth. Doctor Watts's character as a great and good man I revere; but I do not esteem him so highly as to make him an oracle. I have never learned from history that his mind became so very weak and childish in his old age, as you have suggested.—Some have wished to insinuate this in order to destroy the force of his doctrine after he had relinquished his former views of the trinity; But what man, who will soberly read his "Glory of Christ;" and then say his mind was weak and childish? I think my brother will be convinced that I, as well as my correspondent Timothy, have adduced arguments from scripture to prove our doctrine in the Christian Messenger, irrespective of Dr. Watts. To them I refer him for our reasons for denying the Holy Spirit to be a third person in Trinity.

You ask, "If you believe not in the personal existence of the Holy Spirit, how can the Spirit itself bear witness with your spirit, that you are a child of God?" I answer: *The Spirit itself* is the spirit of adoption, put in opposition to the spirit of bondage to fear. Every child of God has the spirit of adoption. They love their God and his people; and this is the wistness that they are children of God. Rom. viii. 15. Do examine this passage, and you will doubtless admit my exposition to be correct. We deny not the personal existence of the Holy Spirit, as your qoery supposes, for we verily believe that God himself is very frequently called the Holy Spirit, and God is a person. But the Spirit of God most frequently means the power or energy of God; and never a third person in deity. I can only give a simple statement of our views, without giving our scriptural arguments, lest I extrude from this No. more important matter. As to your queries respecting personal pronouns, applied to the Holy Spirit, I must refer you to Mr. Worcester's Bible News for information.

Query. 7. This query is founded on the supposition that we deny the trinity because of its mysteriousness. In this

you are entirely mistaken. As well might we deny the existence of a self-existent Being; for we know nothing of an uncaused Being in nature. No, Sir, we deny the doctrine for better reasons, and the greatest of all is, that it is not a doctrine of revelation. Another, among the least, is that the abetters of the doctrine are so variant and opposite in their notions of it. Many are trinitarians by profession, who are unitarians in sentiment, if they have any sentiment. They agree in nothing, but that it is an incomprehensible mystery, and therefore understood by none. Of what use can an unrevealed doctrine be, not to be understood? and why should such importance be attached to it, as to make the belief of it indispensable to salvation? All of God you love and adore, is his character revealed; you know nothing more. His being or essence, or the mode of his existence, you know not. You may think the Father is God,—that the Son is God—and that the Holy Ghost is God; yet you worship but one God under these different names, and you love and adore but the one character in all these names. That same character in God I love and adore; his being or essence I know not; it is not revealed, and therefore unnecessary for us to know.—You believe Jesus Christ is the Saviour of sinners, and that salvation is entirely of God. I believe the same, and trust entirely on this Savior. You may think that you cannot trust your eternal all on any less than God, and therefore as you are to trust in Jesus he must be God. I cannot trust on less than Almighty power and boundless grace; and yet when I trust in Jesus the Son of God, I know I trust in one in whom the fulness of Godhead dwells bodily. Almighty power, infinite wisdom, mercy and truth are pledged for the salvation of the soul that believes and trusts in Jesus. You believe that the Holy Spirit, as a third person, who is the only true God, must operate on the heart in regeneration. I believe that the only true God does the same work. Christians are one in all essentials of religion. Why should they wrangle and strive to no good effect? May God give us his good spirit, and lead us into the very spirit and power of truth. EDITOR.

STRICTURES ON A SERMON.

BROTHER STONE,—I have this day heard an extraordinary discourse, by a college bred divine, upon these words:—"It is good for us to be here." It was extraordinary,—not for its length, not for the elegance of its style, nor yet for the eloquence with which it was delivered; but, for its want of conformity to plain matters of fact. It was, however, a fair specimen of much of the preaching of the present day.

Having given us a geographical discription of the mount of transfiguration, on which the words of the text were spoken by Peter, our preacher proceeded to state the reasons which influenced the apostle to say, "It is good to be here."

It was good to be there,

1. Because, there, for the first time, the disciples became acquainted with the true character of Christ. They had, previous to this, looked upon him as only an extraordinary man at most, his divinity having been veited by his humanity. But there, his divine glory was manifested, the true dignity of his character, as God-man was disclosed: wherefore, Peter, under the full beams of his divinity, exclaimed, "Master it is good for us to be here!"

It was good to be there,

2. Because, Moses and Elias were sent from heaven upon a most important message to the disciples, which related to the object of the Messiah's death, and the nature of his kingdom. While, therefore, they deliver their message to Peter, James and John,—unfold to them the design of the Messiah's death, to satisfy law and justice, in the room and stead of his people, and enable God to be just and the justifier of the believer,—while they show them how all the types and shadows of the law pointed to, and had their completion in Christ,—how the new dispensation should take the place of the old, and supercede it,—how the church was to be brought out of the old dispensation into the new,—how, through the sacrifice of Christ, the gospel should triumph over ignorance, superstition, idolatry and every obstacle, until, finally, the kingdoms of this world should become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ. While all these glorious truths pass in full review before the admiring mind of Peter, overwhelmed with joy, in the ecstacy of his soul, he cries out, "Master it is good for us to be here."!!

This was the substance of our Preacher's discourse. And thus, Mr. Editor, did he represent Moses and Elias, as engaged on the Mount, in the unworthy employment, (as I would say,) of delivering a Calvinistic lecture on the atonement, to the disciples: Nay more; as presenting, in epitome, the whole Calvinistic System, the whole Westminster Creed!!

It is, however, no part of my design, in this communica-

tion, to investigate the merits of the calvinistic system, though it is confidently believed, the scriptures every where discountenance it. My design is, to show that our preacher has represented Moses and Elias as employed in an embassy from heaven to the disciples, in which they never were employed; and that he has represented Peter as being influenced to say, "It is good to be here," by reasons which never influenced him:

And thus to show the pernicious consequences of studying the scriptures through human systems of divinity, and of taking detached portions of God's word, and sometimes man's words, torn from their connexions, and making them speak a language they never were intended to speak.

Now for the proof—

1. It is not a fact, as our preacher represented, that Moses and Elias talked with the disciples, about the death of Jesus, or any thing else. For proof of this we refer to Mat: ix. 4, and Luke ix. 30. All which verses declare that they talked with Jesus, not once intimating that they talked one word with the disciples.

2. It is equally contrary to fact, that Peter said, "It is good to be here," for the reasons assigned by our preacher: Because, first, there is no evidence that Moses and Elias talked with Christ on the design of his death, and nature of his kingdom. It is simply related, that they talked with Jesus about the decease he should accomplish at Jerusalem. But, secondly, admitting Moses and Elias did talk with Jesus about the object of his death, and the nature of his kingdom, it is certain the disciples understood nothing of the conversation; for it is said they "were heavy with sleep," and "when they were awake, they saw Christ's glory, and the two men that stood with him." Upon which, Peter, just roused from his slumbers, amazed, and even alarmed at the unusual glory of Christ's appearance, exclaimed, from the sudden impulse of the moment, "Master it is good for us to be here:" "Not knowing (says Luke) what he said."

Thus, Mr. Editor, we see our preacher and the evangelists in direct opposition. The latter declaring that Peter was sore afraid, and knew not what he said; but the former, that his mind was in vigorous exercise, and that while he listened, with intense anxiety, and profound attention, to the luminous display of divine truth, made by Moses & Elias, concerning the object of Christ's death, the character, and

triumphs of his kingdom, he was influenced to exclaim, from the best of reasons, fully understanding what he said, "Master it is good to here"!!

Now, though the evidence already adduced, is certainly sufficient to show that Peter was not influenced to say, "It is good to be here," by the reasons assigned by our preacher, yet we have more testimony on the subject. That Peter, in common with the rest of the Apostles, continued, till Christ's death, to look for the establishment of a temporal kingdom, by the Messiah, is evident from the fact, that after his death, he returned to his former employment of fishing, having lost all hope of ever seeing the Saviour again. But had he, according to our preacher, understood the object of the Messiah's mission from the skies, he never would have looked for a temporal kingdom, nor would he have lost his hopes when the Saviour died.

Again: Had Peter understood the gospel plan, he would have known that Christ must needs die and rise again from the dead the third day. But it is written of him and John, after Christ's resurrection, that "as yet they knew not the scripture that Christ must rise again from the dead."

Once more: Had Peter understood the character of the gospel dispensation, would he not have known that the Gentiles were to be fellow heirs with the Jews? We think so. And would there have been a necessity for the vision of the sheet, knit at the four corners, with all manner of four-footed beasts, creeping things, and fowls of the air, upon it to convince him that the Gentiles were not to be excluded from the mercy of God? Certainly not. Yet, Mr. Editor, in direct opposition to these plain facts, which, we would think, the merest tyro in divinity could not have overlooked, our college-bred preacher, who has been spending his whole time, for a number of years, in studying divinity, declared, that Moses and Elias taught Peter, on the Mount, the nature of the gospel dispensation, and that having apprehended it he exclaimed, "It is good to be here"!!! This, sir, is a clear demonstration of a fact, which, I doubt not, you have noticed, that preachers and their hearers may be adebts in human systems of divinity, and yet be ignorant of many of the plainest truths contained in the gospel. Or in other words; that a knowledge of Calvinistic divinity, and christian divinity is quite distinct the one from the other. Alas! sir, *that* must be a deplorable state of religious society, when preach-

ers can attempt to prove the peculiarities of Calvinism, from words which were spoken at random, and which, it is certain, had no more bearing upon that system than the first verse of Genesis, or the first verse of first Chronicles; and when people are so ignorant as to receive such preaching as gospel. In vain do we hope to see a reformation to any considerable extent, while such fatal ignorance of the book of God prevails; and such undue reverence of human systems is cherished. Every effort, therefore, in our power should be used to arouse the christian world from their fatal slumbers, to a sense of their rights,—to the reading of the New Testament, the grand charter of our liberties, that they may be prepared and induced to shake off the shackles of human authority and stand forth on the side of truth. We rejoice to know that the influence of human systems is declining, and must decline till they cease to be, and the people of God all become united upon God's own system. May heaven hasten this glorious event, is the prayer of TIMOTHY.

From the Christian Register.

UNIVERSAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.

The following letter is from Charles Butler, Esq. of Lincoln's Inn, a leading and venerable member of the Roman Catholic communion. We cannot speak of it more fitly, than in the words of the editor of the Christian Pioneer. "It breathes, says he, "the spirit of pure Christian benevolence, of universal religious freedom. From such men, what can the Protestant world have to fear? Such a spirit it would be well, were Protestants of all denominations to imbibe—such a mind, it would advance the progress of mankind, would they all attempt to equal. The letter was written the day after the public festival in commemoration of the Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts."

To the Rev. Robert Aspland, Protestant Dissenting Minister at Hackney.

DEAR SIR,—

I have often corresponded with you, but never had the pleasure of seeing you till yesterday, at the dinner to celebrate the Repeal of the Sacremental Test.

This dinner I shall never forget. The speeches pronounced at it on civil and religious liberty—the power of argument—the impressive appeals to the heart—the noble sen-

timents of true Christianity—and above all the generous feelings towards the Roman Catholics, with which they abounded—will neder escape my memory or my gratitude.

You were pre-eminently great. I hung on every word you spoke. When you mentioned with so much sympathy the poor Roman Catholics who have suffered for conscientious scruples, I was lost in admiration of your real liberality, your nobleness of mind, and fearless disdain of prejudice. May my country abound with such as you! This, assuredly, is wishing her a great good.

I have advocated the Catholic cause since 1778, the year in which the first bill for the relief of the Catholics was brought into parliament. I had great pleasure yesterday in thinking that I had uniformly advocatied it on principles applicable to the case of all religious dissidents from the Church of the State. Early in life I met with Mr. Locke's first Letter on Toleration, which, you know, comprises all that is to be found in his subsequent letters. His doctrine of religious liberty became mine, and I have undeviatingly adhered to it. The sanguinary code of Queen Elizabeth, the Court of High Commission, the Episcopalian persecutions in Scotland, the ejection of the Presbyterian ministers by the Act of Uniformity, the proceedings in Oates's plot, and the scanty measure of religious liberty doled out in the Act of Toleration, I have frequently and loudly lamented and reprobated. As frequently and loudly have I lamented and reprobated the Inquisition, the Marian persecution, the massacre on St Bartholomew's day, the revocation of the edict of Nantes, the expatriation of the Jews and Moriscoes from Spain, and the niggard toleration yet shown to Protestants in some Catholic countries on the continent. I perfectly agree with Father Persons (in his *Judgment of a Catholic Englishman,*) that "neither breathing nor the use of common air, is more due unto man, or common to all, than ought to be the liberty of conscience to Christian men; whereby one liveth to God, and to himself; and without which he struggleth with the torment of a continued lingering death."

In my "History of the English Catholics," I have recorded Mr. Fox's having said to me, that "I should not meet with as many real friends to civil and religious liberty as I seemed to expect." What a stride has the glorious cause taken since his death! What a spring did it take yesterday! But never—never should our obligations to Mr. Fox be forgot-

ten. He took up our cause while it lay shivering on the ground, and to use the words of Gray,

"Ope'd its young eye to bear the blaze of greatness."

In fact, religious liberty was his favorite theme; and when he dwelt upon it, his periods rolled with more than his ordinary magnificence. How greatly did the nephew yesterday bring the uncle before all of us who remembered him! I have great pleasure to say, that when the Catholic Relief Bill was pending in 1791, Mr Pitt exerted all his powers in our cause. You know what favorites we were with Mr. Burke: how Mr. Wyndham spoke of us· that a wish for our emancipation was breathed in the last word uttered by Mr. Grattan. What men were these! How great is their authority!

I am sure, that yesterday, whenever the Duke of Wellington's great and glorious victory at Waterloo, and our hopes of him, were mentioned, it brought to your mind the oration for Marcellus, in which Cicero shows so admirably how greatly a general shares his triumphs with his officers and his soldiers, but that a deed of clemency is all his own. Should not his Grace—should not his Grace's friends—sometimes think of this?

I had the pleasure to sit next to our common friend, Dr. Thomas Rees. May God bless you both! Though we now pray in different churches, may we—may all that joined us yesterday—meet in the tabernacles of heaven, and sing the praises of the Almighty, and bless his holy name through all eternity!

Excuse my taking this liberty, and believe me, with the most heartfelt thanks to you and your friends, for your celestial deeds of yesterday, your and their most obliged and most obedient Servant, CHARLES BUTLER.

Lincoln's Inn, June 19.

Elder Js. McVey writes to the Editor that the religious prospects are good in Baltimore, and especially in Brookville, 30 miles from the city. In this place he has baptized a goodly number.

Elder Christy Sine, of Va. also writes, that there is a considerable revival in his bounds—that since July he has baptized 46, who professed to be born again, and that other Elders, in those parts, had baptized about as many more.

We promised, in our last, to give a particular account of the secession of Methodists in England. We have not room.

THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

BY BARTON W. STONE,

AN ELDER IN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

Prove all things: hold fast that which is good."—PAUL

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From the Christian Register.

REV. MR. MONTGOMERY'S SPEECH.

We continue our extracts from Mr. Montgomery's speech before the Synod of Ulster.

One argument (continues Mr. Montgomery,) much relied upon by our opponents is, that every society has a right to make laws for the government of its own members, and for the admission of others to its privileges. There is some plausibility, but no solidity in this. No society has any right to make a subsequent law in violation of a previous compact. Now, the projected overture would be a direct infringement of those liberal regulations under which we entered the Synod of Ulster; and if you take from us any power or privilege which we then enjoyed, you are guilty of a gross breach of faith. So much for your power of making laws affecting those already in your body: and now a few words respecting those who claim admission. On this point I assert that you have no power to make any laws, but such as are in accordance with the clear and express word of God. The Lord Jesus Christ is the King of his Church, the Bible is its constitution, and we are subjects bound to obey the laws of his kingdom. Our sole business, therefore, is, to regulate our conduct by the laws contained in the Statute-book; for it is evident that we have no right to alter any law, either to benefit ourselves or to injure others. Upon this principle I shall amply prove, that you have no right to refuse admission to any individual of sufficient attainments, and irreproachable life, who holds such religious opinions as I entertain. "To the law and to the testimony," I bring the matter for trial; and I refer you to the Acts of the Apostles, viii. chapter and 37th verse. You will there find the terms on which the Ethiopian was admitted to baptism by the Apos-