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L E T T E R

T O T H E

Rev. Dr. ADAMS of Shrewsbury :

OCCASIONED BY THE  
PUBLICATION OF HIS SERMON,  
PREACHED AGAINST

The Rev. Mr. ROMAINE :

E N T I T L E D

A Test of True and False Doctrines,

To which is now added,

A D E D I C A T I O N

T O T H E

PARISHIONERS OF ST. CHAD'S AND CUND,

W I T H

A N A P P E N D I X ;

Containing a short Account of the four principal Heresies which  
have infested the Church, since the first planting of Christianity,  
viz. those of ARIUS, PELAGIUS, SOCINUS, and ARMINIUS :  
And concluding with a serious Expostulation with Dr. ADAMS.

A S A L S O

A LETTER from Mr. ROMAINE to Dr. ADAMS;

By the AUTHOR of PIETAS OXONIENSIS.

If either State Oaths on the one Hand, or Church Subscriptions on the other,  
once come to be made light of, and Subtilties be invented to defend or palliate  
such gross Insincerity ; we may bid farewell to Principles, and Religion will  
be little else but disguised Atheism. Dr. WATERLAND.

The SECOND EDITION revised, corrected and very much enlarged.

L O N D O N ,

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(10)

## A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

The Public are requested to excuse the inaccuracies of the first Edition, which was written, printed and published, in little more than three weeks after the Author had seen Dr. ADAMS's Sermon, and therefore several errors which the Printer had notice to correct (though too late) have unavoidably appeared in that edition.

N. B. The references in the following Letter are all made to the first Edition of the Doctor's sermon, which is verbatim the same with the second.



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TO THE WORTHY  
PARISHIONERS  
OF  
St. CHAD'S and CUND.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

**Y**OU have the honour, and happiness of being members of a truly apostolical church, viz. that of the church of England, and though I would by all means advise you to pay attention to the caution of your own pastor, in not *basily believing that he is a setter forth of strange doctrines*, yet I would have you at least as cautious of believing that your own church is *a setter forth of strange doctrines*. Receive nothing upon man's authority. Weigh every thing you hear in the ballance of God's unerring word; bring it to the law and to the testimony;  
above

above all, be careful not to search the scriptures by halves, nor without earnest prayer for that spirit of humility, wisdom, and of a sound mind which cometh down from the Father of lights. Be not affrighted by bug-bear names, neither be tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but try the spirits whether they be of God. Remember that the most pernicious opinions have laid claim to scripture authority, and that it is no proof of the truth of any doctrine, that either great names or multitudes are found to be the abettors of it.

With these precautions, I beg leave to put the following Letter into your hands, (not without my earnest prayers to the throne of grace, that a blessing may attend the perusal of it) and to subscribe myself,

Your most sincere friend and servant,

Philalethes.

A LETTER

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A

L E T T E R, &c.

REVEREND SIR,

**A**S a minister of the gospel and dignitary of the established church, you had certainly a right to caution your flock against whatever might appear to you erroneous or delusive; and as you have thought proper to send abroad into the world, what you advanced from the pulpit, every individual must be allowed an equal right of examining into the grounds of your cautions, and of delivering his sentiments with the same freedom which you yourself have done, and then it must be left to the impartial reader to judge, to which side the charges of error and delusion most properly belong.

Think not, Sir, that I would in the least depreciate your just merit; as a writer who has ably defended the outward evidences of Christianity, you have an indubitable claim to the respect and esteem of all who are grieved to behold the sad growth of Deism



and Infidelity in this day; but how far you have acted consistently with your office and character as a divine of the church of England, either in preaching or publishing the discourse in question, what follows may perhaps determine.

AS to the three or four first pages of your Sermon, the strictest regard to truth obliges me to call them nothing but meer froth and an empty flourish of words, which are plainly intended to throw dust and prejudice into the eyes of the reader at his first setting out; but which might just as readily be brought in defence of a good cause, as of a bad one; or of a bad one, as of a good one. As it is not therefore declamation, but argument which I would attend to, I shall pass them over in silence.

It will be necessary however before I enter upon the merits of your performance, just to observe, that it is but too usual with writers who are engaged on controversial subjects, to endeavour to cast odium upon what they cannot confute, by grossly misrepresenting the doctrines of their opponents, and then charging those doctrines with consequences that have not the least connection with them. Now however unfair this manner of proceeding may be, yet it readily goes down with the bulk of mankind, who are too apt to receive their opinions upon the meer *ipse dixit* of their teachers, and whilst indeed they are gulled and deceived by false glosses and plausible appearances, cry out in astonishment, How fine!—how excellent!—how unanswerable!—How far, Sir, you have descended to this illiberal way of writing, shall be left to the impartial decision of every candid person



person who shall take the trouble of perusing the following pages.

YOU will readily agree with me, Sir, and I with you, that the only touchstone of divine truth should be the written word of God. This word I doubt not you had read and considered with attention before you entered into the ministry; and that you also firmly believed that all the fundamental truths of the scriptures were contained in the articles, homilies, and liturgy of the church of England, I cannot without a manifest breach of charity dispute; otherwise you could not surely have conscientiously subscribed and given an open solemn declaration of your HEARTY [A] assent to them, as being strictly agreeable to the word of God; which you must have done at least six or seven times before you could attain your present rank and preferments in the church. And this your *unfeigned* belief of all and every one of the thirty-nine articles, must previous to your ordination, have been testified to the bishop, under the hands of three or four clergymen; nor could you possibly have held any living, except that within two months after your induction you had publicly read all the thirty-nine articles, and again declared your UNFEIGNED ASSENT thereto, in the church belonging to such living, and in default of such declaration, the sentence of deprivation would have been immediately incurred. Besides this, the fifth canon of the church, and the statute of the 13th of Eliz. ch. 12, do adjudge all persons worthy, both of excommunication and deprivation, who shall dare to oppugn the said articles,

[A] Ex animo. Vide can. 36.

or any part of the book of common-prayer, or maintain any doctrine contrary thereto; and such offenders shall not be restored but by the archbishop upon their repentance, and revocation of their wicked errors. Vide canon vi. 13 Eliz. ch. 12.

All these laws are farther enforced by the royal declaration prefixed to the said articles of religion, which declaration, peremptorily forbids “ every preacher  
 “ and minister whatever, from putting his own sense  
 “ and comment upon any of the articles, or from  
 “ drawing them aside any way, and enjoins them to  
 “ be taken in their plain, literal, grammatical sense.”

Now it is most certain that our church, by requiring all these solemn tests, subscriptions, and declarations from her ministers, and by denouncing such severe punishments on every delinquent who should be found offending against the same, did hereby suppose that she had strongly fortified herself against the encroachments of all heretics and innovators whatever. Her pious reformers were well convinced that oaths and subscriptions were things of a most awful nature, and not to be trifled with by any man who believed there was a God unto whom all hearts are open, and from whom no secrets are hid. They certainly concluded that the abandoned wretch who could betray the friend of his bosom, the adulterer who should prove false to the affection of the best of wives, or even the hardened villain who could plunge his poisoned dagger into the tender mother's breast, were objects less to be dreaded, than he who through base and self-interested views, should swear to doctrines he never believed, and intrude himself into the church  
 in

in order to suck her breasts and prey upon her vitals. God grant, Sir, that such aggravated guilt may never be laid to your charge or mine.

THESE considerations being premised, the matter of our enquiry is not so much whether the church and the scriptures accord together, as whether the doctor and the church are of accord. For my own part, I am fully persuaded of the strict harmony there is between the sacred oracles of truth, and our articles, homilies and liturgy; and that you are as fully persuaded of this harmony every man must necessarily conclude, who has been witness to your own solemn and repeated declarations that the book of common-prayer, and the thirty nine-articles were entirely agreeable to the word of God. But whatever harmony there may or may not be between the scriptures and the church of England, I fear there will not be found any great harmony between your professions and your conduct. And if this be the case, we may well say with the famous *Dr. South*, "That to be  
"impugned from without, and betrayed from within,  
"is certainly the worst condition that a church can fall  
"into."

YOU have made a very ingenuous confession, Sir, that the sermon which the reverend *Mr. Romaine* preached at *St. Chad's* church in the month of *September* last, gave rise to your discourse, which it appears by the date was delivered the Sunday fortnight after *Mr. Romaine's*: and as you tell us in your preface that you forbear to mention the particular tenets and the rash unguarded expressions at which you were offended, I will as ingenuously inform you, that what-  
ever

ever other excuses may have been given for your dislike to that gentleman's sermon, I doubt not but it was chiefly owing to his so strenuously maintaining and defending the Divinity and Godhead of our blessed Saviour, that you were so much disgusted at it; my reasons for this assertion are,

Ist, That as soon as ever you came into the vestry after sermon, you told Mr. *Romaine* with a discomposure of spirit, (which to say the least, as ill became the house of God, as it was irreconcilable with your own protestations of candor, charity and forbearance [B]), "That your congregation was not used to such doctrine, and you hoped would never hear such again," and you must do Mr. *Romaine* the justice to acknowledge that for his part he received the rebuke with the greatest meekness and good manners, and only observed, "That it was neither a proper time nor place for disputes."

Ildly, I am led to suppose that the divinity of Jesus Christ was the great stone of offence at which you stumbled, from the discourse on this subject which passed between you and certain gentlemen in going from St. *Chad's* church to your own house, as well as from what passed in your own parlour afterwards, when being pressed hard by the articles, and liturgy, and particularly with that expression in our excellent communion service, to be used on the feast of Trinity, "That which we believe of the glory of the Father, the same we believe of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, without any difference or inequality," you could no otherwise evade the force of the testi-

[B] Pref. p. 6.



monies brought against you, but by saying, “ That the compilers of the articles and liturgy were only fallible men, and that divinity was much better understood now than at the time of the reformation.” You may remember, Sir, that hereupon the honesty of your confession was much commended, and had you in consequence of your disapprobation of the doctrines of the church of England, immediately resigned all the rich preferments which you hold by your subscriptions to those very doctrines, in that very church, the whole kingdom must have echoed with encomiums, upon your honest, upright, and disinterested behaviour.

III<sup>dly</sup>, I cannot help believing that you have a settled dislike to the trinitarian doctrines, not only because (as I am credibly informed) the divinity of Jesus Christ, has no place in any of your sermons, but because the Athanasian creed is never read in your church, no not even at those times when it is positively enjoined by the rubric to be read, by which means you have found a very easy method of accomplishing the well known wish of the renowned Tillotson [C], without the formality of an act of parliament, or of convocation.

IV<sup>thly</sup>, But what puts this matter beyond all dispute, is, that you have given it under your hand, that it is erroneous doctrine to maintain that “ Man  
“ on account of his own inability to do any thing that  
“ is good, stands in need of a redeemer of INFINITE  
“ DIGNITY to atone for his sins, and in his own per-

[C] That the church were well rid of the Athanasian creed.

“son to suffer the punishment due to them [D].” An assertion this, which I almost tremble to write, and which surely no Christian can read without horror; as it at least contains an indirect denial of those three leading principles of our religion, original sin, the divinity of Christ, and the atonement which he made when *he himself bore our sins in his own body on the tree.* 1 Pet. ii. 24. I shall however dwell no longer on this subject, but dismiss it with this observation; That though our legislators have in their wisdom and care for tender consciences, given an indulgence by the act of toleration to Protestant Dissenters of every denomination, yet they have absolutely refused this indulgence to all who deny the doctrine of a trinity in unity, or that any of the three persons in this trinity are very and eternal God. And as a proof that they looked upon such a denial to be the highest pitch of blasphemy and prophaneness, it is enacted by the 9th and 10th of William III. which is expressly intitled *An act for preventing the horrible crimes of blasphemy and prophaneness,* That “Whosoever shall deny any one of the  
 “three persons in the trinity to be God, or shall deny  
 “in preaching or writing the doctrine of the blessed  
 “trinity as set forth in the thirty-nine articles, he shall  
 “be incapable of holding any ecclesiastical office [E].”

I now

[D] P. 28.

[E] Notwithstanding what Dr. Adams has alledged [P. 36. note] of the connivance of magistracy for a latitude of opinions in matters of faith, I defy him to prove that his principles now are or ever have been tolerated by law in any nation under heaven; but I can produce him examples without number, of the  
 abhor-

I now pass on to a more particular examination of what you are pleased to advance, concerning the means whereby true and false doctrines are to be discovered.

abhorrence with which his tenets have always been received ever since the planting of Christianity. And the learned Fuller, in his Church History of Britain, gives us a recent instance of one Bartholomew Legate, who in the reign of James I. an. 1611. was condemned to death, and burnt in London, as an incorrigible heretic, for affirming that the Nicene and Athanasian creeds contain not a profession of the true Christian faith—That there are no persons in the Godhead—That Christ was not God from everlasting—That the world was not made by Christ—That Christ was not God, otherwise than an anointed God—That Christ was not equal with God.

These were some of Legate's tenets, with which (saith Fuller) he abused the Word of God, by opposing God the Word. As to his life, the historian adds that it was very unblameable, to which he adjoins this remark, "That the poison of heretical doctrine is never more dangerous, than when served up in clean cups and washed dishes." Church Hist. book 10. cent 17.

One of the principal texts wherewith the bishop of London utterly gravelled this enormous heretic was, that of John xvii. 5. *And now O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.* Ibid.

Mr. Strype in his annals of the Reformation, during the first twelve years of queen Eliz. tells us that the bishops advised, that "incorrigible Arians, Pelagians, or Free-will men, be sent into some one castle, in North-Wales, or Wallingford; and there to live on their own labour and exercise, and none to resort to them but their keepers, until they repent of their errors."

Let it be observed that I do not mention these examples by way of approbation of the severity exercised on the delinquents, but to shew that the doctrines contained in Dr. Adams's sermon have always been deemed worthy of public censure.



AND here I must observe that you set out with a fundamental mistake, in supposing, that *man wants no assistance but the exercise of his own reason* to find out the nature and attributes of God [E].—Now if this were the case, what need of that important question in the book of Job, Canst thou by searching find out the Almighty? or to what purpose hath an apostle left it on record, that the world by wisdom knew not God, whilst our Lord affirms, that no man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him? Nay, if it were a truth that man by the exercise of his reasoning faculties could attain any knowledge of the nature and attributes of God, then God must not only be divested of his essential nature, but be without one of his most distinguishing attributes, viz. *his incomprehensibleness*. It is therefore a most presumptuous assertion, to affirm that we ought to form our ideas of God from our *own notions* of his nature and attributes, and then to interpret his word agreeable to those notions. On the contrary, we ought to form our ideas of God, wholly and intirely from what is revealed of him by his own unerring Spirit in his own written word, and howsoever this word may at any time speak contrary to what would be the natural conceptions of our reason, here reason must stoop to the word, and not the word to reason [F].

And

[E] P. 15 39.

[F] Doctor Adams [p. 40.] has the following paragraph, which I transcribe at large, that the reader may be better able to form what judgment he can of his meaning.

“ Let

And truly what an unsafe guide reason is in matters divine and spiritual, and consequently of the nature and attributes of God, (for God is a Spirit), must be very evident to all who will submit to the apostle's determination, that "The natural man receiveth  
 " not the things of the spirit of God, neither can he  
 " know them, because they are spiritually discerned." But thus to set up reason in the throne, is absolutely to deny the fall of man, and to make the illumination of the eternal Spirit utterly needless; and therefore we shall generally find that those gentlemen who are advocates for the reasoning powers of man in the discernment of spiritual things, do for the most part cordially embrace the whole Pelagian system, and by making no manner of distinction between reason since the fall, and reason in the state of innocence, do

" Let us ever interpret the more difficult passages of scripture  
 " by those that are clear and evident, remembering that what is  
 " necessary to all, must be level to the capacities of all. Let us  
 " not wrest these into articles of faith, or with *this obscure light*  
 " in our hands, presume to enter into the counsels and decrees  
 " of providence and matters of speculation, which are too high  
 " for us."

The whole passage is certainly very confused, and intricate; it is therefore possible that I may mistake the Doctor's design, however, it appears to me that by *this obscure light* he means *the Scripture*: and yet the assertion appears so horrible from a Christian Divine, that though I cannot otherwise make any sense of what he has advanced, I am very desirous he should further explain himself to the satisfaction of his readers. If by *this obscure light*, the scripture really *be* meant, then we cannot be surpris'd at the Doctor's great skill in theology, since he has two lights to walk by, viz. the bright light of *nature* or *human reason*, and the *obscure light* of God's word.

thereby

thereby supersede the necessity of all divine light to remove the natural darkness of the understanding, and too often treat the whole doctrine of the Holy Spirit's influence and inspiration [G], as nothing else but the fancy of a deluded sect, or the effect of a dis-tempered brain.

I may yet farther add, that by making reason the supreme judge of divine truths, we in a manner make void the very end of all revelation whatever; for if we are determined to receive nothing upon God's own authority, till we have tried it at the bar of this great Diana; then notwithstanding the manifestations he hath given of himself, with the bible in our hands, and with all our reason in our heads, we are not likely to have any clearer knowledge of him than what the philosophy of Greece and Rome could furnish us with. And in fact, we find, that all the fundamental truths of the gospel, are either totally exploded, or else explained into nothing by persons of this reasoning character.—Yet how incapable unenlightened reason is to form any judgment of the nature and attributes of God, or to decide what is fit and meet for *him* to do, *whose ways are not as our ways, and whose thoughts, are not as our thoughts,* may be farther gathered from some plain instances taken out of the scriptures of

[G] In the collect for the fifth Sunday after Easter, our church teaches us to pray. O Lord, from whom all good things do come; grant to us thy humble servants, that by thy holy **INSPIRATION** we may think those things that be good.

So also in the collect in the communion service. Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the **INSPIRATION OF THY HOLY SPIRIT.**

truth,

truth, where if reason had been left to determine the matter, she would immediately have given her vote and verdict in direct opposition to what the infinite wisdom of God hath thought fit to appoint, and to leave upon record as his dealings with the children of men.—For example,—Would reason ever have confined the knowlege of the true God for so many hundred years to so small a spot of the globe as the land of Judea?—Would reason ever have thought it a command worthy of God that the Israelites should destroy whole nations before them, sparing neither aged nor suckling; and that before they came out of Egypt they should borrow the jewels and riches of their neighbours to carry them off as spoil and booty [H]?—Would reason ever have concluded that the judge of all the earth did right to harden Pharoah's heart that he would not let the people go, and then to pour out all his plagues upon him for detaining them, yea and to declare that he had raised him up for this very purpose, that he might shew his power in him and that his name might be declared throughout the earth [I]?—Would reason ever have esteemed it a matter of equity that Jacob should inherit the blessing instead of his elder brother Esau, especially if reason be left to judge of the means by which he obtained it [K]?—Would reason ever have thought that the royal line and holy seed should have been continued through the adulterous commerce of David with Bathsheba [L]?—Would reason have

[H] Exod. xii. 35, 36.      [I] Exod. ix. 12. Rom. ix. 17.

[K] Gen. xvii. 6, 7, 8, &c.      [L] 2 Sam. xii. 24.



smote Uzzah for his honest intention of supporting the tottering ark [M]?—Would reason have destroyed the man of God for returning to eat bread and drink water at the house of the prophet in Bethel, when he thought he was simply obeying the voice of the Lord by so doing [N]?—Would reason ever have conceived, that it was consistent with the nature and attributes of an all-merciful God, to send out a lion to slay the man, who (only from a principle of tenderness, so far as it appears) refused to smite one of the sons of the prophets [O]?—Would reason ever have justified Elisha for cursing little children in the name of the Lord, only for saying unto him go up thou baldhead, go up thou baldhead? Or would reason have justified the Lord himself for sending two bears out of the wood to tear forty-two of them in pieces [P]?

What can reason think of the bloody rite of circumcision, the offering of Isaac, and all the various types and institutions of the ceremonial law? Why, we see that reason rejects them as ridiculous and unworthy of God, and hence so many wise free-thinkers, or free-inquirers as they now call themselves.

But this is not all.—Reason cannot see how three eternal, coequal persons can subsist in one divine essence,—hence so many Arians [Q].—Reason cannot see how guilt and corruption should be derived from our first parent Adam,—hence so many Pelagians [R].—Reason cannot see how God should be-

[M] 2 Sam. vi. 6, 7.

[O] 1 Kings xx. 35, 36.

[Q] See the Appendix.

[N] 1 Kings xiii. 24.

[P] 2 Kings ii. 23, 24.

[R] See the Appendix.

come incarnate and make atonement for sin,—hence so many Socinians [S].—Reason cannot see why free-grace should have all the glory, and man's free-will have nothing to do in the work of salvation,—hence so many Arminians [T]. Yet each of these must have their sting at the articles of our excellent church; each must have Christianity disembarassed from what they cannot reconcile to their own preconceived opinions, and nothing must pass for RATIONAL RELIGION, except what their wisdom pronounces fit and right for God to do. But if we remove the objections of all these wise reasoning gentlemen, I fear that we poor credulous enthusiasts, who profess to believe every jot of God's word, simply upon the authority of its infallible author, shall have a very small portion of scripture left for the exercise of our faith; and I am sure the apostle Paul might have saved himself the trouble of declaring that “Whosoever will be wise, must become a fool,” (i. e. in man's account.) Nor could our Saviour himself with any propriety have said, “I thank thee, O Father, lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes [U].” I shall only add that however the plain declarations of God may be cavilled at as mysterious by some, and full of absurdities by others, yet these very mysteries and absurdities (as they are deemed) are to the true Christian an incontestible proof of the divine original of the scriptures; for

[S] See the Appendix.

[T] See the Appendix.

[U] Matt. xi. 25.

had human reason and wisdom undertaken to have imposed upon the world in framing a religion, they would have freed it from all those clogs and impediments, which now cause it to be a stone of stumbling and rock of offence to so many great and learned ones of the earth.

THE very same rectitude which you suppose to be in the understanding or reasoning powers of man, you conclude to be in the will and affections; the former of which throughout your whole discourse you suppose to be in a state of absolute freedom as to the choice of good or evil: and the latter to be at least as inclineable to exercise themselves in the love and pursuit of heavenly, as of earthly objects. Nay, you even propound the question with a sort of triumphal challenge, “Is the love of God and our neighbour *unnatural* to the mind of man [X]?”

Now I beseech you, Sir, to tell me from your own views of these leading faculties of the soul, the understanding, will, and affections, where is the difference between man before, and man after the fall of Adam? Why truly none at all. His reason is as capable of discerning spiritual things, his will as free to choose them, and his affections as much set upon the love of them, as Adam’s were in the state of paradise [Y].

This

[X] Page 25.

[Y] That the Doctor believes neither spiritual nor eternal death to have been the effect of Adam’s sin is most clear, by his affirming that “ONLY by the first man’s disobedience all men became mortal.” But if this were so, then the sentence which God pronounced was never inflicted, for God saith, “IN THE DAY thou



This then is the system of Doctor *Adams* as a man of reason; but how agrees it with the plain declarations

“ thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die (a)”. Whereas Adam lived above nine hundred years after the words were spoken. But Satan said, “ Thou shalt not surely die.” i. e. In the day thou eatest thereof; (otherwise it is no answer to what God had said before,) so that if we admit the Doctor’s reasoning concerning the death here mentioned, being only the death of the body, then Satan must have told the truth, and God himself have been found a liar.—The case then stands thus. God saith, “ In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.” Satan saith, “ Thou shalt not surely die,” (*in that day,*) but IN THE DAY ye eat thereof your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as Gods, *knowing good and evil*. Whether the Doctor speaks the language of God or of Satan in this point, let his own sermon determine.—I close this note with observing that Dr. Adams explanation of that important passage. “ By one man’s disobedience, many were made finners,” (which from Dr. Taylor, he interprets, were made mortal, or made sufferers) is as contrary to common sense as it is to scripture, for the Greek word for finners (*αμαρτωλοί*) is the very same here, as in the epistle of Paul to Timothy, where it is said that *Jesus Christ came into the world to save finners*. Now suppose that according to the Doctor’s strained sense of the passage in Rom. v. 19. we were to read, “ This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that *Jesus Christ came into the world to save SUFFERERS, or all men that became mortal*, what egregious nonsense would this be? and yet we may as well make the text in 1 Tim. i. 15. speak this language, as that in Rom. v. 19. But further, I beg leave to animadvert a little upon the improper and inconclusive manner, in which the Dr. expounds this scripture. “ Its only meaning is,” you have his own words, “ That, as by the first man’s disobedience all men became mortal, so, by the obedience of Christ, the weight of this sentence is removed, and all are restored to life again”—To what kind of life? doubtless that forfeited and lost by the

(a) Gen. ii. 17.

tions of God's word, *viz.* That man is dead in trespasses and sins [Z]. That there is none righteous, no not one [A].—That all the imaginations of man's heart are only evil continually, and that in him dwelleth no good thing [B]. That his understanding is darkened, alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in him, because of the blindness of his heart [C].—That it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth [D], that the heirs of promise are not born of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God [E], who of his own will beget them with the word of truth [F], and worketh in them both to will and to do, having predestinated them by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will [G]. That the Son quickeneth whom he will [H]. That we have not chosen Christ, but he hath chosen us [I]. That no man can come unto Christ except the Father draw him [K]. That of ourselves we are without strength [L] and

first man's disobedience must be here meant: otherwise the parallel in the manner it is proposed will not hold, is unjust, and falls to the ground. He will not assert that all or any are restored by Christ's obedience from natural death, to natural life again. Yet to this absurdity is he reduced; unless he grants that spiritual and eternal death are to be understood in the former part of the antithesis, as well as spiritual and eternal life in the latter. But what inconsistencies will not men run into, sooner than give up favourite notions which encourage that spirit of independency so deeply rooted in the heart of every fallen son of Adam.

[Z] Eph. ii. 1.	[A] Rom. iii. 10, &c.	[B] Gen. vi. 5.
Rom. vii. 16.	[C] Eph. iv. 18.	[D] Rom. ix. 16.
[E] John i. xiii.	[F] James i. 18.	[G] Phil. iii. 13.
Eph. i. 5.	[H] John v. 21.	[I] John xv. 16.
[K] John vi. 44.	[L] Rom. v. 6.	

can do nothing, no not so much as think a good thought [M].

Now what torturing, twisting, and wire drawing must these scriptures undergo, before they can be brought to harmonize with your notions of man's natural excellencies and free will? And if we examine the sentiments of the church of England in these points, we shall immediately find that she bears her testimony as much against you as the word of God does. In her ninth article of *original or birth sin*, she expressly declares, that "Man is very far [Z] gone  
 " from original righteousness, and is of his own na-  
 " ture inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always  
 " contrary to the spirit; and therefore in every per-  
 " son born into this world it deserveth God's wrath  
 " and damnation." Her tenth article, intitled the  
 article of *Free will* as peremptorily affirms, that "The  
 " condition of man after the fall of Adam, is such,  
 " that he *cannot* turn and prepare himself by his own  
 " natural strength, and good works to faith and call-  
 " ing upon God: wherefore we have no power to do  
 " good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, with-  
 " out the grace of God by Christ preventing us that  
 " we may have a good will, and working with us  
 " when we have that good will. Her liturgy and  
 collects from beginning to end speak the same lan-  
 guage. In them we acknowledge that ALL HOLY  
 DESIRES as well as all just works proceed from God.—  
 That through the weakness of our mortal nature we  
 can do NO GOOD THING. That we have NO POWER of

[M] John xv. v. 2 Cor. iii. 5.

[N] *Quam longissime.* As far as possible.

ourselves to help ourselves.—That we cannot do ANY THING that is good, and therefore lean only on the hope of heavenly grace.—That it is God by his special grace preventing us, who puts into our minds good desires, and enables us to bring the same to good effect.—The homilies of our church are, if possible, stronger on these points than the articles and liturgy, but to avoid prolixity I decline making any quotations from them in this place; and conclude this head with observing, that though our reformers denied the freedom of the will in spiritual things, they did not on that account make man a meer machine, but whilst they gave all the glory of his salvation to God alone, they supposed that there was no violence at all offered to the will, which still acted freely under the renewing influences of the Holy Spirit, both chusing and refusing according to the objects set before it.

To explain this by a familiar illustration.—Let it be supposed that Dr. *Adams* had the offer of a bishopric. Now although there would be no compulsion made use of to force him to accept this bishopric, nevertheless the desire of saving souls, or some other motive, would no doubt weigh so powerfully with the Doctor, that he might easily be persuaded to submit to the ceremony of installation: yet all this while there would be no infringement of the freedom of his will, which would be compleatly won over by the sweetly attractive power of the bishopric, and the hopes of guarding the diocess from the poisonous doctrines of enthusiastic teachers.

Still



Still you say, p. 24. " Let me ask, if we have not  
 " the power of doing good, have we the power of  
 " doing evil? But this power cannot be without the  
 " other." What reasoning is this for the great  
 champion of all reasoners. You might as well have  
 asked, whether a stone has not the property of  
 swimming, because it has that of sinking: and then  
 say that the one cannot be without the other; for the  
 heart of man as naturally follows its own corrupt bias,  
 as a stone sinks when thrown into the water.

But I believe, Sir, you have a smattering of phi-  
 losophy, for if I mistake not I once heard you preach  
 a sermon at *St. Chad's*, in which you spoke of the  
 SPECIFIC GRAVITY of bodies; then, Sir, you know  
 that it is a received maxim in natural philosophy, that  
 all material bodies, whether still or in motion, endea-  
 vor to keep the state they are in, and do keep that  
 state till acted upon *ab extra*, by some superior force  
 or principle; just so it is in spirituals; the apostate heart  
 of man can no more swerve from its universal law  
 of NATURAL PROPENSITY TO EVIL [P]; till influenced  
 by the almighty power of God, than matter can cease  
 to obey its own laws of gravitation, attraction, impul-  
 sion, &c.—As this a word in your own way, I  
 hope it will be the more conclusive.

Pass we on now to a more particular considera-  
 tion of what you have advanced (p. 15.) where in  
 laying down your test of true and false doctrines you  
 say, " If we are told that the law of God is so pure

[P] This is the Doctor's own expression, and it seems as if he  
 had introduced it into his sermon, only to shew how often he could  
 contradict it.

“ and perfect, that we cannot with our best endeavours equal it in practice, but must in very many instances fall short of it? and at the same time that nothing but universal and unremitted obedience will be accepted at his hands; that the least sins of the least of his creatures, are of infinite guilt in his sight; that no amends can be made, or pardon obtained for any sins that are past, by repentance and a better obedience for the future; that God has no mercy but in consequence of the mediation and intercession of Christ: this is plainly representing God as an hard task-master, &c. &c.”

And are these, Sir, your real sentiments concerning the law of God; that law which is holy, just and good; that law which is the transcript of the divine will and perfections, and is as unchangeable as its glorious author? can you really think that this law will stoop to the weakness and infirmity of a poor corrupted creature, and accept a sincere obedience instead of a perfect one? If this were the case, then surely among a whole world of beings to whom you believe the love of God and of our neighbour to be so natural, some, yea many might be found, who could put in their claim to eternal life upon the terms of the law, and consequently would stand in no need at all of a redeemer. And that this is plainly your belief, may be seen from those EXCEPTIONABLE passages (as you stile them) in Mr. *Romaine's* sermon, which I shall quote in your own words. “ *God hath no mercy but through Christ the redeemer.—God hath no mercy but in consequence of the mediation and intercession of Christ.*”—Now for a minister of Jesus Christ,

Christ, a protestant divine, a doctor of divinity of the church of England, to cull these expressions out of a sermon, on purpose to declare his abhorrence of the doctrine they contain, astonishes me to such a degree, that though your book lies open before me, I can hardly credit my own eyes.—What, Sir, do you really call it strange doctrine, exceptionable doctrine, “That God can shew no mercy but through Christ the redeemer?”—So saith Dr. *Adams*; but what saith the scripture?—There is no other name under heaven by which we can be saved but ONLY that of Jesus Christ [Q].—Other foundation can no man lay, than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ [R].—Without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins [S].

Again, what saith the church of England? These are her own words. Art. 18. [T] The title of which is, “*Of obtaining eternal salvation ONLY by the name of Christ.*” “They also are to be had accursed who presume to say, that every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth; so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that law and the light of nature; for holy scripture doth set out unto us ONLY the name of Jesus Christ, whereby men must be saved [U].”

Since

[Q] Acts iv. 12. [R] 1 Cor. iii. 11. [S] Heb. ix. 22.

[T] This article in its plain, literal, grammatical sense, by no means excludes the whole heathen world from salvation, but only affirms that none are saved but in and through Jesus Christ.

[U] The Doctor by way of vindicating the mercy of God, has dreadfully obscured the glory of that finished salvation, which is in Christ Jesus: for (p. 16, 17) he says, that “Even for greater



Since then in direct opposition to scripture and the church of England, you have so fully given it as an article

“ crimes upon our sincere repentance and amendment we shall  
 “ be forgiven, and in some degree restored to favour.” That  
 expression (*in SOME DEGREE*) at least implies that if we have  
 been great sinners, we shall not be *INTIRELY* restored to favour;  
 But for the infirmities of nature, the righteousness of God, as  
 governour of the world, will make merciful allowances, &c.” O  
 soothing song to the pride of man, such doctrine can never want  
 admirers. But in all this there is not one word about Christ.  
 Pardon is to be obtained and peace made with God, but all is to  
 rest upon our repentance and amendment. And in the whole of  
 God’s dealing with us, it is more or less merit or demerit in the  
 subject, and not at all in consideration of the full atonement made  
 for sin, that any are forgiven and restored to favour.—But give  
 me leave to say, Sir, that the greatest sinners that ever breathed,  
 sinners in whom every crime is centered, may have as full, as  
 free, as perfect a pardon through Christ, and stand as high in the  
 favor of God, as the most exalted saint that ever lived. God views  
 them as they are in his Son, with whom he is always well  
 pleased. He looks not at less or greater degrees of guilt, he  
 loves his people, not for their own sakes, but for the sake of him  
 in whom they are always compleat. And therefore he gives the  
 freest invitations to the very vilest of sinners, *Come now, and let  
 us reason together, though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white  
 as snow, though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool.* The  
 scripture abounds with examples of this absolute and free pardon  
 to great as well as (what you would call) *little* sinners. Particu-  
 larly in the case of the pharisee and publican, and of the two  
 debtors, who owed the one five hundred, and the other fifty  
 pence. The former of which debtors was as *FRANKLY* for-  
 given as the latter. And it must be observed, that our  
 Lord brought this very instance to Simon the pharisee in whose  
 house he was, because Simon was comparing his own little sins,  
 with the enormous ones of the poor woman, who washed our  
 Lord’s feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her  
 head. But what if our Lord, instead of saying *to whom much is  
 forgiven*

article of your faith, that God *can* shew mercy to sinners without the mediation and intercession of Christ, I am the less surprized to find you joining hands with the church of Rome in establishing that *long exploded* doctrine among all sound Protestants, (viz.) the distinction between great and little, venial and mortal sins. When the redemption of Christ is made so light of, it is the most prudent way to make as light of sin as we can; and therefore I don't so much wonder that Mr. *Romaine's* assertion that "*there are no little sins,*" should have given you so much offence. Not that Mr. *Romaine* meant to alledge that some sins were not more heinous or aggravated than other sins; or that there were not degrees of punishment in another world for those who had run

*forgiven, the same loveth much*, had said, "the infirmities of this pharisee I readily make an allowance for, and he now stands high in my esteem; and you also, O vile woman, I do in some degree, though not quite, restore to my favour;" he would then have spoken the language of Dr. Adams's gospel; though not much to the relief of the poor woman's conscience.—I have no other remark to make on this head, than to express my astonishment how the Doctor after having thus limited the mercies of God, and preached despair to his congregation, should ask the following question. "Who then shall tell us, that God hath forgotten to be gracious, or that he hath shut up his loving kindness in displeasure?" indeed, Sir, you yourself have told us tantamount, or at least opened a door for the Romish doctrine of a state of purgatory, in which souls who are only IN SOME DEGREE, though not quite restored to favour, are to undergo a longer or shorter season of purification by fire, in proportion as their sins have been more or less aggravated. Nay, even the great apostle of the Gentiles, inasmuch as he styles himself the chief [*πρωτότης*] the first of sinners, must have had his share in this purgatorial element.

greater lengths in wickedness than others, and died in their impenitency: but that no sin could be called *little* before the infinite holiness of God, all and every sin being a transgression of that law whose language is, *the wages of sin is death.*—*He that keepeth the whole law, and yet offendeth in one point, he is guilty of all.*—*Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.* Now, Sir, can that be called a *little* matter which not only deserves, but actually incurs the eternal curse of God upon body and soul for ever? Surely to think or call any sin *little* in this sense, must indeed argue that we have *little* thoughts of God, and that we esteem him even such an one as ourselves. Besides which, there cannot be a more effectual way to open the floodgates of licentiousness than by talking of *little sins*: For where is the man that will not immediately rank his own bosom idols among those *little sins*, and when he has indulged himself in them as long as he judges convenient, will make no doubt but a merciful God will readily overlook such trifling infirmities [X].

Had Mr. *Romaine* even said that a wanton glance was *adultery*, or an angry word, *murder*, he would have had the sanction of our Lord himself for the assertion; and yet I fear we have too many pharisaical interpreters of the law in this day who make very *little* account of such sins of the heart, provided the outside be fair and decent.

But

[X] Our divine poet *Milton* seems of opinion, that it was by a stratagem of this sort that the serpent deceived Eve, and therefore he introduces him as thus accosting her,

*Will*

But as you have been so much offended at the expression that “*God has no mercy but through Christ the redeemer*”; be pleased to tell us in what other way he *can* or *will* shew mercy to sinners. If it be not through the gospel, it must be through the law; and if by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.—It is certain there were never from all eternity to this moment any other dispensations than these two. It must therefore be either of faith or of works. And yet (I am sorry to say it) you have so jumbled and confused these together, sometimes ascribing salvation wholly to the works of the law, and talking of our being able to make God amends and obtain pardon for past sins by repentance and better obedience; at other times making some mention of the merits of Christ, (and once even vouchsafing to use the word *atonement*;) that it is very difficult to pursue you through all the various windings of your labyrinth, or even to guess what plan you mean to adopt. You say and unsay,

*Will God incense his ire,  
For such a petty trespass?*

And it was well observed by a very learned and pious writer of our church, that there can be no better proof that any doctrine is of divine original than when it debases man, exalts Christ, and promotes holiness.—Consequently that doctrine which exalts man, debases Christ, and does not promote holiness, must have its rise from another source, even out of *the bottomless pit*. Now whether the Doctor by exalting so highly the natural powers of man; speaking so very lowly of Christ, as to abhor the thought of there being no mercy, but through his intercession; and by being so zealous to establish the notion of *little sins*; has proved that his doctrine is from above, or *ab infra*, must be left to others to judge.

advance



advance and contradict; and not unfrequently amuse yourself in pelting at men of straw, which your own dexterity hath set up [Y].

But

[Y] Among the various examples of this sort in the Doctor's sermon, I mention only the following, p. 31, " Consigning all  
 " without distinction, young and old, infant and suckling to the  
 " punishments of the next world, for no other crime but that of  
 " being born in this."—This is an artful evasion of the doctrine of original sin, and contains a most notorious slander into the bargain.—It is certainly the doctrine of scripture and of our own church, that all men are conceived and born in sin, and are by nature children of wrath, and that this corruption of nature *deserveth God's wrath and damnation*, and this the Doctor has confessed again and again, not only when he subscribed the articles, but whenever he baptized an infant. But that any persons are or can be guilty of any crime only for being born into the world, or that this was ever asserted by those called Methodists, is utterly without foundation; and for my own part, I have ever maintained that all children whether baptized or unbaptized, who die before the commission of actual sin, are undoubtedly saved through Christ.

Again, The doctor says, p. 37. " By decrying the use and necessity of good works, making the obedience of Christ stand  
 " for the obedience of Christians, and placing religion in faith  
 " and opinion, they relax the obligations of duty, flatter the sinner with false hopes of pardon, without reforming and amending his life, put a mask into the hands of hypocrisy, and open  
 " a door to licentiousness."

Now this is begging the question, and nothing better than meer *brutum fulmen*.—But before you lay these tenets at the door of any man whatever, you ought to have some proof of your charge.—Be it therefore known unto you, Sir, that the necessity of reformation and of good works, is not decryed as you insinuate: on the contrary (though it would be the highest arrogance to give them any place in procuring acceptance with God) they are firmly established upon the only sure foundation, namely, faith in Christ, and love to God.

Again,

But surely, Sir, if you had duly considered the nature, extent, and spirituality of the law, we should never have heard your proposing repentance and future obedience (however necessary in their proper place) by way of making amends for sins that are past. For we are all debtors to fulfil the law of God, and therefore the question is not, how far we have kept it, but whether we have answered all its demands. Not *how many* breaches of it we have been guilty of, or whether we repent of those breaches, but whether we have broken it at all. The law cannot abate of its demands, however we have lost our power to fulfil it, and if instead of flying to him who *bath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us* [Z], we think to make God amends by repentance and better obedience for the future, the law like a merciless creditor will shew us no favour; our former transgressions of it still stand out against us;

P. 20. "It will be said that faith is the substitute of good works, " and the only stipulated condition of acceptance with God."—I know no-body that ever said any such thing; but faith receives Christ, and with him, love to God and to his commandments.

Again, p. 39. "Whatever doctrines dispense with the practice, " or may be applied to evade the force of the gospel precepts; " whatever doctrines loosen the obligations of duty, speak peace " to the sinner, or flatter him in his sins, these cannot be of God."

Agreed.—Let us then beware of that doctrine which calls any sin *little*, or supposes that God can dispense with the demands of his own law. Since such principles must inevitably lead us into downright Antinomianism; and being destructive of all our notions of the nature and attributes of God, cannot according to your own rules of discerning between truth and falshood, be admitted as agreeable to his holy word.

we are liable to be arrested by the justice of God, and to be cast into the prison of outer darkness, from whence we can in no wise be released till we have paid the uttermost mite.

Let another familiar example illustrate this.— Suppose that the parishioners of *St. Chad's* and *Cund*, were to withhold from *Dr. Adams* only one year's dues of those livings, and when the Doctor demanded the money, they were to answer, “ It is true, Doctor, we “ are in your debt, but it is only for one single year ; “ we are sincerely sorry we should be in arrears, but “ we promise *to make you amends* by a punctual pay- “ ment for the future.” Now would not the Doctor with great reason think that this was no amends at all? Nay, would he not think himself highly injured by such treatment? and would not the parishioners of *St. Chad's* and *Cund* be every day liable to be arrested and imprisoned for non-payment of that one year's dues, however exactly they might pay for the time to come? Examine the case, and the analogy will be palpable.

PROCEED we now to examine another of those strange doctrines, as you are pleased to esteem it, “ That the works of the best men are stained “ with sin.”

Every cavil, which can be raised against a truth so humbling to human pride as this is, proceeds from one and the same root, ignorance of the law of God, its nature, extent, and spirituality: For the law being infinitely perfect, can admit of nothing less than an infinitely perfect obedience, and whatever falls short of this obedience, is sin, and consequently a transgression



gression of the law [A]. Now there never was not ever can be an action, even of the most holy man that ever lived since the fall, (the man Christ Jesus only excepted,) which came up to the full demands of the law, and which was not on that account chargeable with sin, and therefore under the Mosaic institution there was a sacrifice appointed for the iniquity of the holy things of the children of Israel; and for the same reason do we find those holy men of old, Isaiah, Daniel, David, Hezekiah, &c. making such humbling confessions of their sinfulness. And if I may be allowed to bring an example of modern date, it shall be that of the holy and learned bishop Beveridge, who in his *Private Thoughts on Religion* thus expresseth himself.

“ I do not only betray the inbred venom of my  
 “ heart by poisoning my common actions, but even  
 “ my most religious performances with sin. I cannot  
 “ pray, but I sin; I cannot hear or preach a sermon,  
 “ but I sin; I cannot give an alms or receive  
 “ the sacrament, but I sin; nay I cannot so much as  
 “ confess my sins, but my very confessions are still  
 “ aggravations of them; my repentance needs to be  
 “ repented of, my tears want washing, and the very  
 “ washing of my tears needs still to be washed over  
 “ again with the blood of my redeemer. Thus not  
 “ only the worst of my sins, but even the best of my  
 “ duties speak me a child of Adam.”

Nevertheless though we affirm with the scriptures and our own church that the best actions of the best of men, *cannot endure the severity of God's judgment,*

[A] 1 John iii. 4.

and by coming short of what the law requires, are tainted with sin; yet we firmly believe that “ Good works are pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively faith, infomuch that by them a lively faith, may be as evidently known, as a tree discerned by the fruit.”—Art. 12.

HAVING now gone through the tests you have given us of true and false doctrines; and having taken a survey of your REAL CREED as a man of reason, and of your CONVENIENT CREED, as rector of *St. Chad's and Cund*, we will beg leave to draw a contrast between the two, and see whether *Dr. Adams*, or the rector of *St. Chad's and Cund*, has the best end of the staff.

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THE REAL  
C R E E D  
of the reverend  
*Dr. Adams*, as a  
man of reason.

THE CONVENIENT  
CREED of the reverend  
*Dr. Adams*, as rector of *St. Chad's and Cund*.

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I Utterly reject the doctrine of the Trinity, and absolutely deny that in the Unity of the Godhead, there be three persons of one substance, power, and eternity. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

I account it heresy to maintain, that we stand in need of a REDEEMER OF INFINITE DIGNITY to atone for our sins, and in his own person to suffer the

I Heartily and unfeignedly believe the doctrine of the holy Trinity. And I am fully persuaded in my own conscience, that though there be but one true God, yet in Unity of this Godhead there be three persons of one substance, power, and eternity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.—Art. 1.

Where are now those Arians, which deny Christ to have been perfect God, of equal substance with the Father? *Homily of the Nativity.*

The Son which is the Word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, THE VERY AND ETERNAL GOD,

## REAL CREED.

the punishment due to them. P. 28. [B]

I utterly reject the creed of St. *Athanasius*, as being full of gross absurdities, contrary to reason, and to my own interpretation of scripture, and therefore I have not read it, nor suffered it to be read in my church these fifteen or twenty years [C].

I believe that there are *in every man's nature* principles of virtue and good tendency; and that the love of God and of our neighbour, are natural to the mind of man.—P. 25.

## CONVENIENT CREED.

GOD, of one substance with the Father, took man's nature, &c. &c.—Art. 2.

I pray EVERY SUNDAY in the Litany to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, the holy, blessed and glorious Trinity, three persons and one God, to have mercy upon me, a miserable sinner.

The creed of St. *Athanasius* ought THOROUGHLY to be received and believed. For it may be proved by most certain warrant of holy scripture.—Art. 8.

That which I believe of the glory of the Father, the same I believe of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, without any difference or inequality. *Communion service for the feast of Trinity.*

I pray publicly every Trinity Sunday, in the collect for that day, to be kept in that TRUE faith of a Trinity in Unity; and I return God thanks for having brought me and my congregation to the acknowledgment of that blessed doctrine.

I believe that *every man* born into the world is of *his own nature* inclined to evil.—Art. 9.

Man of his own nature is fleshly and carnal, corrupt and naught, sinful and disobedient to God, without ANY SPARK OF GOODNESS in him, without any virtuous or godly motion, ONLY given to evil thoughts, and wicked deeds.—*First part of the Homily on Whit Sunday.*

[B] When we reflect on the great progress which Arianism, Semi-Arianism and Socinianism, have made among us, heresies which rob Christ of his Divinity, or at best make him a subordinate God, or God only by appointment; we cannot wonder that any Minister, who is jealous of his Master's glory, should caution his hearers against the notion of a LITTLE God.

[C] We will give the Doctor till next Trinity Sunday to renounce his errors; and therefore we hope that on that day he will resume the *long-explored* creed of St. *Athanasius*.

REAL CREED.

CONVENIENT CREED.

We be of ourselves of such earth, as we can but bring forth weeds, nettles, brambles, briars, &c.— *Second part of the Homily on the misery of man.*

All men of their evilness and natural proneness be universally given to sin.— *Ibid.*

In ourselves as of ourselves, we find nothing whereby we may be delivered from this miserable captivity, into which we are cast through the envy of the devil, by breaking God's commandment in our first parent *Adam* — *Ibid.*

By ascribing all that is good in men to the overruling and irresistible power of God, they destroy the possibility of virtue, the idea of a state of trial and probation, &c.—P. 37.

As for the works of the Spirit, the fruits of faith, charitable and godly motions, if man hath any at all in him, they proceed ONLY OF THE HOLY GHOST, who is the ONLY worker of our sanctification, and maketh us new men in Christ Jesus. *Homily on Whitsunday.*

To all their other strange doctrines, "They have added yet THIS ABOVE ALL, to entail the guilt of *Adam's* sin upon ALL HIS POSTERITY." —P. 31.

When *Adam* had broken God's commandment in paradise, he purchased thereby, not only to himself, but also TO HIS POSTERITY for ever, the just wrath and indignation of God.— *Second Homily of the Passion.*

Original sin is the fault and corruption of EVERY MAN, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of *Adam*.— Art. 9.

The scriptures NO WHERE suppose the guilt of *Adam's* sin to be imputed to his posterity, which cannot be believed without confounding all our ideas of justice and equity, of innocence and guilt.—P. 32.

*St. Paul* IN MANY PLACES, painteth us out in our colours, calling us the children of wrath when we were born.— *First part of the Homily on the misery of man.*

Christ was crucified, not only to be a sacrifice for ORIGINAL GUILT, but for the actual sins of men.—Art. 2.

O what a miserable and woful state was this, that the sin of one man should condemn ALL MEN, that nothing in all the world might be looked for, but only pangs of death, and pains of hell.— *Homily on the Nativity.*



## REAL CREED.

## CONVENIENT CREED.

I believe that nothing is meant by that text—*Rom. v. 19.* (By the disobedience of one many were made sinners,) only that all men became mortal, or subject to temporal death, by the first man's disobedience; and this doctrine I have taken special care to instil into the minds of my parishioners.—P. 32.

It could not be expected, that the scriptures should warn us against a doctrine so unlikely ever to be thought of, as this [of original sin:] a thousand volumes might have been written by the apostles, without their SUSPECTING [C] that an opinion like this could be conceived by man.—P. 31.

The first man *Adam* having but one commandment at God's hands, namely, that he should not eat of the fruit of knowledge of good and evil, did notwithstanding most unmindfully, or rather most wilfully break it, in forgetting the strict charge of his maker, and giving ear to the crafty suggestion of that wicked serpent the devil. Whereby it came to pass, that as before he was blessed, so now he was accursed; as before he was loved, so now he was abhorred; as before he was most beautiful and precious, so now he was most vile and wretched in the sight of his Lord and maker; instead of the image of God, he was now become the image of the devil; instead of the citizen of heaven, he was now become the bond-slave of hell, having in himself no one part of his former purity and cleanness, but being altogether spotted and defiled; inasmuch that he now seemed to be nothing else but a lump of sin; and therefore by the just judgment of God was condemned to EVERLASTING DEATH. This so great and miserable a plague, if it had only rested on *Adam*, who first offended, it had been so much the easier, and might the better have been borne. But it fell not only on him, BUT ON HIS POSTERITY AND CHILDREN FOR EVER. So that *the whole brood of Adam's flesh* should sustain the self-same fall and punishment, which their forefather by his offence most justly had deserved.—*Homily on the Nativity.*

They are in a strange labyrinth of error who tell

The condition of man after the fall of *Adam* is such, that he CANNOT turn

[C] This expression seems not very reconcilable with St. *Paul's* assertion, that all scripture is given by inspiration of God. But although the Doctor here tells us, that the apostles never SUSPECTED that an opinion like this [of original sin] would ever be introduced or thought of, and therefore the SCRIPTURES have no where warned us against it; yet he also tells us, a few lines further, that the SCRIPTURES strongly exclaim against these hard sayings. So that Scripture BOTH, and Scripture BOTH NOT furnish us with cautions about original sin. See the Doctor's Sermon, p. 31.



## REAL CREED.

tell us, that we are utterly incapable of performing any good works; or that our nature is so impaired and corrupted by the fall of our first parents, that *we have no power or will* to refuse the evil, and chuse the good, much less to produce any acceptable fruits of righteousness.—P. 23.

They are also in a labyrinth of error who tell us, that the works of the best men are stained with sin.—P. 23.

By ascribing all that is good in man, to the overruling and irresistible power of God, they destroy the possibility of virtue, the idea of a state of probation, &c.—P. 37.

## CONVENIENT CREED.

turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good works, to faith and calling upon God; wherefore **WE HAVE NO POWER TO DO GOOD WORKS**, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have that good will.—Art. 10.

Grant to us, Lord, the spirit to think, and do always such things as be right-ful; that we, **WHO CANNOT DO ANY THING THAT IS GOOD** without thee, &c.—*Collect for the ninth Sunday after Trinity.*

O Lord, who see'st that of ourselves we have **NO power** to help ourselves.—*Collect second Sunday in Lent.*

Through the weakness of our mortal nature, we can do **NO GOOD THING** without thee.—*Collect for the first Sunday after Trinity.*

Our own imperfection is so great, through the corruption of original sin, that all is imperfect that is within us, faith, charity, hope, dread, thoughts, words and works.—*Third part of the Homily on Salvation.*

All the good works which we can do be imperfect.—*First part of the Homily on Salvation.*

Truly there be imperfections in our best works.—*Second part of the Homily on the misery of man.*

Let us not be ashamed to confess imperfection in all our best works.—*Ibid.*

We are of ourselves very sinful, wretched, and damnable. Of ourselves, and by ourselves, we are **NOT ABLE** either to think a good thought, or work a good deed.—*Ibid.*

We are sheep that run astray, but we cannot of our own power come again to the sheep-fold; so great is our imperfection and weakness.—*Ibid.*

O God, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed.—*Second collect for evening prayer.*

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In trying the spirits, judging of doctrines, and interpreting the scriptures, let us consult the sentiments of nature, and the first dictates of conscience, and take the light of reason along with us.—P. 39.

You want NO assistance, but the exercise of your own reason.—P. 15.

If ye will be profitable readers of holy scripture, REASON must give place to God's holy Spirit; you must submit your worldly wisdom and judgment to his heavenly wisdom and judgment. Consider that the scripture, in what strange form soever it be pronounced, is the Word of the living God.—*Second part of the Homily of the information of certain places in the scripture.*

The Holy Ghost is the schoolmaster of truth, which leadeth his scholars into all truth; and who so is not led and taught by this schoolmaster, cannot but fall into deep error, what knowledge or learning soever he hath, or how fair soever he hath been in the estimation and judgment of the world.—*First part of the Homily on certain places of scripture.*

These sentences, good people, unto a natural man, seem mere absurdities, contrary to all reason: for a natural man, (as St. Paul saith) understandeth not the things that belong to God, neither can he so long as old Adam dwelleth in him.—*Second part of the Homily on certain places of scripture.*

St. Chrysostom saith, Man's human and worldly wisdom or science is not needful to the understanding of scripture, but the revelation of the Holy Ghost, who inspireth the true meaning into them, that with humility and diligence set themselves to search.—*Second Homily on reading the scriptures.*

True is the saying of Bede, where the Holy Ghost doth instruct and teach, there is no delay at all in learning.—*First part of the Homily on Whitsunday.*

It is exceptionable doctrine to affirm, that God hath no mercy, but through Christ the redeemer, and in consequence of his mediation and intercession.—P. 16.

If

They are to be had accursed, that presume to say, that every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that law, and the light of nature. For holy scripture doth set out unto us, ONLY the name of Jesus Christ, whereby men must be saved.—Art. 18.

No

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If we are told that the law of God is so pure and perfect, that we *cannot* with our best endeavours equal it in practice; and that nothing but an universal obedience will be accepted, &c.—This is representing God as an hard task-master, reaping where he hath not sown.—P. 15.

No man CAN fulfil the law of God, and therefore by the law all men are condemned.—*Third part of the Homily on salvation.*

No man can fulfil the law according to the strict rigour of the law.—*Second part of the Homily of salvation.*

Such was the frailty of mankind after his fall, such was his weakness and imbecillity, that he could not walk uprightly in God's commandments, though he would never so fain.—*Second Homily on the Passion.*

The abettors of false doctrine affirm, that we stand in need of a redeemer, not only of infinite dignity, to atone for our sins, but who must in his own person suffer the punishment due to them, and in his own person fulfil the law in their stead.—P. 28, 29.

Whereas we were condemned to hell and death everlasting, he hath given his own Son, being God eternal, immortal, and equal to himself in power and glory, to be incarnate, and to take our mortal nature upon him, with the infirmities of the same; and in the same nature to suffer most shameful and painful death for our offences.—*Third part of the Homily on faith.*

Christ paid the ransom of his people by his death. He for them fulfilled the law in his life. So that now in him and by him, every true christian man may be called a fulfiller of the law.—*First part of the Sermon on salvation.*

The scriptures nowhere speak of imputed righteousness.—P. 32. The abettors of false doctrine affirm, that the righteousness of Christ is become their righteousness. P. 29.

St. Paul saith, Blessed is the man unto whom God IMPUTETH RIGHTEOUSNESS, without works.

Christ is now the righteousness of all them that do believe in him.—*First part of the Homily on salvation.*

The justification, mentioned by St. Paul, has no respect, nor can with propriety be applied to the present state of Christians.—P. 21.

Art. 11. *Of the justification of man.*  
WE are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works and deservings.—Wherefore that WE are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort, as more largely is expressed in the *Hom. on justification.*

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If God has any mercy, grace or favour, for his creatures; and it is surely impious to doubt this, it must be obedience, a right conduct, in other words, righteousness and holiness of life, which recommends us to his favour.

We see many among them, who we doubt not will be saved for *their works sake*. — P. 34.

The ONLY title to favour in the subject, must be obedience to the governing power. We cannot so much as suppose any covenant between God and man, but THIS must be the condition on the part of man.—P. 20.

Let us imitate the life, before we presume to trust in the merits of Christ.—P. 42.

The virtue of faith in its whole extent is included in obedience, and derives all its value in the sight of God, from the principle I have mentioned, *viz.* obedience

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Justification is the office of God only, and is not a thing which we tender unto him, but which we receive of him, not which we give to him, but which we take of him by his free mercy, and by the only merits of his most dearly beloved Son, our only Redeemer, Saviour and Justifier, Jesus Christ.—*Second part of the Homily on salvation.*

This is the ordinance of God, that they which believe in Christ should be saved *without works*, by faith only, freely receiving remission of their sins.—*Third part of the Homily on salvation.*

St. Paul declareth NOTHING upon the behalf of man, concerning his justification, but ONLY a true and lively faith, which nevertheless is the gift of God, &c.—*Homily on salvation.*

The ONLY mean and instrument of salvation required on our parts, is FAITH, i. e. a sure trust and confidence in the mercies of God, whereby we persuade ourselves that God both hath, and will forgive our sins; that he hath accepted us again into his favour, released us from the bonds of damnation, and received us again into the number of his ELECT people, not for our merits or deserts, but ONLY and SOLELY for the merits of Christ's death and passion.—*Second part of the Homily on the Passion.*

We doubt not but works done before justification, and which spring not from faith in Christ (which the Homily on faith explains to be a sure TRUST and confidence on the mercy of God through Christ) have in them the nature of sin, and are not pleasant and acceptable to God.—Art. 13.

We must set no good works before faith, nor think that before faith a man may do any good works: for such works,

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altho<sup>3</sup>



## REAL CREED.

obedience to God.—  
P. 23. [D].

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altho' they seem unto men to be praise-worthy, yet indeed they are but vain, and not allowed before God.—*Homily of good works.*

The reformers were bad interpreters of scripture; they have surely erred from the right way, through a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge, adopting opinions long since exploded, and deforming religion with doctrines highly injurious to the honour of God, and subversive of all the principles of morality.—P. 36.

I, WILLIAM ADAMS [E], do FROM MY HEART believe, that the book of articles and of common-prayer (compiled by our reformers) are intirely agreeable to the word of God, and that the books of Homilies do contain godly and wholesome doctrine.—Art. 35. Can. 36. [F]

[D] According to this, if the Doctor means any thing, he means to make obedience the root of faith, and not faith the root of obedience. I choose however to refer the Reader to the Doctor's Sermon, to try if he can draw any other meaning out of it. It is certain the whole passage is much embarrassed; and though perhaps the fault may be in me that it appears unintelligible, yet it were to be wished that as the Doctor had near four months to cook up his sermon for the press, he had sent it out in a less slovenly garb, observing some degree of method, avoiding so much tautology, and paying a little more attention to the accuracies of grammar.

[E] The Canon requires that each subscriber should thus mention his christian and surname.

[F] These Homilies (or Sermons) were set forth in the reigns of *Edward VI.* and queen *Elizabeth*, and appointed to be read in churches by the minister when there is no sermon; and it is the duty of all churchwardens to see that a copy of them is in every church throughout the kingdom. In the preface to the Homilies, as it was published in the year 1562, we are told, that her majesty, by the advice of her most honourable counsellors, had caused them to be printed anew, "to avoid the manifold enormities which heretofore by FALSE DOCTRINE, have crept into the church of God," &c. &c.

THE foregoing disagreement between the reverend Dr. *Adams* as a man of reason, and the rector of *St. Chad's* and *Cund* as a dignitary of the church of England, is not only obvious to every reader, but even to the Doctor himself, who greatly laments that there should be so little harmony between persons so nearly a-kin;



a-kin; however if the Doctor cannot come up to the church, he wishes the church may come down to him. And to effect this happy reconciliation he has two strings to his bow; the one by explaining the articles and homilies in such a manner and with such a latitude, as to give them a direct contrary interpretation from the original intent of the compilers, which is a liberty he tells us with *great truth* [G] that his reverend brethren in the ministry have been taking *openly and avowedly* for a century past: (but which by the bye, if our judges were to take in explaining away the Magna Charta, they would not long escape with a whole skin.) The other by striking a bold stroke at once, kicking those stubborn *long exploded* things, articles, homilies and liturgy quite out of doors, and new varnishing the church upon the more polite and rational plan of modern divinity: however till this happy æra arrive, the Doctor in spite of all his conscientious lamentations, is very ready to swear and subscribe, again and again, for the sake either of the church's peace or her preferments. Still however re-

[G] The Doctor has not quite so much truth on his side, when he tells us, that "this latitude of subscription seems to have been claimed and allowed from the beginning." The title to the articles affirms that they were drawn up (not to reconcile) but to PREVENT diversities of opinions. And it is certain that during the reigns of Edward VI. queen Elizabeth, James I. and part of the reign of Charles I. no divine who at all deviated from the plain, literal sense of the articles, ever did so, without incurring public censure. And if any who have written upon the articles have defended such a latitude of interpretation, it has been only some of modern date, who not well relishing the pure doctrines of the church of England, would thereby apologize for their own inconsistency in having subscribed to them.

erving this salvo, that he only subscribes to the articles and homilies, so far as he believes them to be agreeable to the word of God; a salvo so mighty pretty and convenient, that any man in the world who makes use of it, might safely subscribe to pope Pius's creed, or to the koran of Mahomet, and any Papist or Mahometan to the whole book of common-prayer.

And now what are we to say to all the Doctor's cautions against false prophets, since he hath borne his public testimony against the articles, homilies and common prayer book, and hath so plainly given us to understand that he ranks her excellent reformers among these delusive teachers and BAD INTERPRETERS OF SCRIPTURE [G]. Why, we must at least take the liberty of saying, that Mr. *Romaine* has the satisfaction of being condemned in very good company, (viz.) with the bishops Cranmer, Latimer, Ridley, Hooper, and a glorious army of martyrs who sealed with their blood those very truths, which the Doctor has so severely attacked, as "highly injurious to the honour of God and subversive of all the principles of morality [H]."

But are not great mischiefs to be apprehended from the prevalence of those doctrines which you have written against? Will not religion be exposed to the contempt of rational men, and to the scoffs of the prophané and impious [I]?

No, Doctor, quite the contrary; for there never was more real piety, and practical godliness in the kingdom than when the doctrines of the reforma-

[G] P. 37.

[H] P. 36.

[I] P. 37.

tion were preached in their purity, and perhaps never less than at present. And the reason is obvious, for religion is indeed sadly *exposed and brought into contempt* by the conduct of too many of the clergy, in subscribing to what they do not believe, and submitting to the lowest and basest equivocations in order to defend proceedings, which in every other sphere of life would be condemned as contrary to all the received principles of common honesty and fair dealing amongst men. And that this is the case at present, is evident from that smart piece intitled the *confessional*: as also from the independent whig, before the departure from the doctrines of the church became so general and notorious. Nor is the matter one jot mended by saying that it is *pain and grief to ingenuous minds* [K], to subscribe to forms which  
in

[K] The following are the Doctor's own words. "It is still  
" pain and grief to ingenuous minds to subscribe to forms, which  
" in their first appearance they cannot approve. I must there-  
" fore earnestly join with those, who wish to see the ministers of  
" our church *relieved from this burden,*" &c.

Again. "That there have been, and may still subsist many  
" difficulties in the way of attempting this alteration in our na-  
" tional church, every thinking and candid person will allow,  
" and therefore till this can be done, it seems a duty in all to  
" forbear complaining of their superiors," &c.

I readily acquiesce with Doctor Adams, that many who do not at all *approve* the articles in their first appearance, do very well approve of them upon a nearer review, or at least they sufficiently **APPROVE** of what is to be obtained by subscribing to them.

I must here beg leave to introduce a story, founded upon fact, of one whom I call a *real* enthusiast. This man's father built an house of stone, and after he had finished it, his son disliked both the materials and the colour of it, and mightily wished that it had  
had

in their hearts they do not believe; since the very assertion implies no less a contradiction in terms, than if we were to talk of an honest knave, a perjured truth-teller, or an healthy invalid. Besides which, it is utterly destructive of the very design and institution of all oaths, tests and confessions of faith whatever; and therefore it is certain that when the archbishops and bishops of both provinces, together

had been built with red bricks. Well, what should he do? it was too late to alter it, and to effect the change by human art was quite impracticable. Why, truly, he persuaded himself, that if he had but a proper degree of faith to believe it, this white stone house would soon become a red brick house. Accordingly out he goes and views the structure; still nothing appears but whited walls: he chides his unbelieving spirit, and views it a second time; when behold the house looks more and more of a reddish cast, and the mortar begins to appear between the joints of the bricks. And now nothing is wanting but the third review to turn the stone into perfect brick.—'Tis done, and the delighted visionary lives as comfortably in his imaginary house of red brick, as if there really were not a white stone belonging to it.

With such like enthusiasts does this nation abound. Our good forefathers at the time of the reformation builded a church on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. This church they walled round with articles, homilies, and liturgy in order to keep out Arians, Pelagians, Socinians, Arminians, &c. but many of her late born sons who live under her roof, and feed themselves at her table, not well relishing those articles, &c. set themselves to take another view of them, and so view and review them, till they work themselves up into a persuasion that those very doctrines which once appeared in such frightful colours, instead of discountenancing, were really intended as an introduction for every heresy, to which in their plain, literal, grammatical sense they are so diametrically opposite. And so the poor dreaming enthusiasts at length become happily persuaded that white is black, and black white.

with



with the whole body of the clergy in convocation assembled, subscribed and approved the articles and homilies, in the year 1571, and the same were ratified by the queen's authority, they no more thought that any honest ingenuous minds would call the searcher of all hearts to bear witness of their unfeigned and hearty assent to the doctrines therein contained, if they did not (*ex animo*) believe those doctrines, than they thought that perjury and piety, truth and falsehood were synonymous terms [L].

It may be said, that this is speaking very severely; but the Lord God knoweth, that it is speaking truly; and every discerning man's conscience must tell him that this is not the least exaggeration

[L] There is a ceremony at Naples which our English sailors call by the name of WHITE-WASHING; it consists in making a profession of the Popish religion, and submitting to all the forms enjoined, for which if the party *white-washed*, were before an Heretic or Protestant, he receives a reward of about two sequins; and I am credibly informed that some of our British tars have frequently undergone this ceremony of *white-washing*.—Now suppose that one of these sailors who had been *white-washed*, as often as Dr. Adams has subscribed to the articles, was to say “that it was pain and grief to his ingenuous mind to think that he could not obtain his two sequins without passing through the previous forms, and that he heartily wished to see his worthy brethren delivered from THAT BURDEN of declaring their assent to the tenets of the church of Rome:” could any man in the world justify the conduct of this sailor?—I am sure Dr. Adams himself could not; poor Jack's conscientious exclamation of its being SUCH PAIN AND GRIEF to him to subscribe to what he did not believe for the sake of the two sequins, would only remind us of a similar exclamation of that reverend gentleman (O STRANGE TO TELL) who is well known by the name of OH! GRIEF OF GRIEFS.



tion of the case. The murderer who is convicted of murder, the felon who is convicted of theft, may with as much justice complain of being called a murderer and a felon, as they, who from the base motives of self-interest, set their hands to what their hearts detest, complain of being stigmatized as the vilest hypocrites and the most designing equivocators. Our Lord hath said, *by their fruits ye shall know them*, and when the holy Spirit of truth can stir up any man most solemnly to subscribe to one thing, for the sake of worldly gain, whilst he believes another in his heart, then I will acknowledge that they who do so, are the faithful prophets of that God, who *requireth truth in the inward parts*, and who hath given us this distinguishing mark of the ambassadors of his gospel, that they are not **DOUBLE-TONGUED**, nor greedy of filthy lucre [M].

PERMIT me now to observe that the scripture hath given one very distinguishing test of true and false doctrines, which you have entirely passed over in silence, and that is, by the effects which follow the preaching of the one and of the other; and as all real christians are *the salt of the earth, the light of the world, cities set on an hill*, consequently these effects must and will appear wherever the doctrines of truth are received into the heart, and,

If, They will make the possessor of them really and truly happy in the knowledge and experience which he has of the favour of God towards him in Christ Jesus: all tormenting sense of sin and guilt

[M] 1 Tim. iii. 8.

will

will be taken out of the conscience, he will have confidence towards God as his reconciled friend and father, in the son of his love; *the Spirit itself will bear witness with his spirit that he is a child of God, enabling him to cry Abba, Father, and to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory* [N].

Idly, In consequence of this intercourse which is opened between Christ and the soul of a believer, sin is loathed and its dominion dethroned; the path of duty becomes easy and delightful; victory is obtained over the world; afflictions and trials are borne with patience, resignation and fortitude; new affections bear sway in the heart; crosses and reproaches are welcomed for the sake of Christ; a savour of things divine and spiritual dwells upon the tongue; the glory of God is uppermost in the thoughts; death is welcomed as a disarmed enemy; and an hope full of immortality causes the soul to love and long for the appearance of the Lord Jesus.

Such are the blessings which real Christianity brings with it, blessings exactly suited to relieve the wants of every one who knows himself to be a fallen, helpless creature, and enjoyed by thousands of living witnesses, even in this day, where the pure doctrines of the gospel are enforced; but I appeal to experience and matter of fact, whether these effects do ever follow the preaching of that earth-born system, where the Godhead of the Saviour, the apostacy and helplessness of man, justification by faith alone, and the absolute necessity of the work of the Holy Ghost to quicken, sanctify, and comfort the

[N] Rom. 15, 16. 1 Pet. i. 8.

foul, are kept out of sight. There may indeed be a freedom from gross offences, and a regular attendance upon external forms and duties under such circumstances, but alas! is it not apparent to the eyes of every beholder, and must not consciousness tell the heart of every one who is a stranger to the experimental possession of the above truths, that the poor dry jejune thing commonly called religion, where these blessings are wanting, leaves its highest admirers just as it finds them, without any spiritual communication between Christ and their souls; without any sense of the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, or knowledge of their being in a state of reconciliation with him; as much under the influence of worldly hopes and fears; as much ashamed of being thought more religious than is consistent with the fashion of the times; as fretful, angry, and impatient under trials, provocations and afflictions; as eager after the friendships, honours and preferments of the world, and after its follies, vanities and pleasures; as totally regardless of the glory of God and the salvation of souls; as dead, cold, and indifferent to all holy soul-edifying discourse; as fearful or else as stupid upon the approach of death; and as far from longing after the glory which shall be revealed, as if Christ had never come into the world at all; or as if he were to come to give his people no enjoyments beyond what earth and sense could furnish them with, no victory over the evils of life, and no deliverance from the terrors of death?

UPON the whole. Had the title of your sermon run thus, "An attempt to overthrow the fundamen-

" tal

“ tal doctrines of the reformation, and of the estab-  
 “ lished church, by *William Adams*, D. D. minister  
 “ of *St. Chad's*, and chaplain to the LATE [O] bishop of  
 “ *St. Asaph*,” it would have been a very proper one  
 for the matter it contains; but this would have found-  
 ed too gross from one, who by the most solemn and  
 reiterated protestations had declared, that he un-  
 feignedly believed all those doctrines to be agreeable  
 to the word of God.

It must therefore be through the sides of that conve-  
 nient stalking horse called Methodism, that the poor  
 church, of England must be stabbed to the heart; but  
 permit me to say, that it might have been much more  
 prudent for you, Sir, to have followed the advice of  
 a certain right reverend personage, who being asked  
 by another divine, what measures could be taken to  
 stop the Methodists from preaching? was answered  
 by his lordship to the following effect, “ *We had bet-  
 ter let them alone, for they have the church on their side.*”

You have indeed attempted to make matters as  
 smooth as you could with those against whom you  
 write, by paying them a compliment or two upon  
 their pious and virtuous lives, and upon the zeal of  
 their ministers. But are you not aware, Sir, that  
 these very concessions overthrow the plan you have  
 been labouring to establish throughout your whole

[O] As this bishop has been dead sometime, and as the Doctor  
 still stiles himself his chaplain, I presume he can now exercise  
 that office only on supposition that his lordship's soul is in Purga-  
 tory, from which it may in due time be released by the prayers  
 of his still surviving chaplain. It must, however, be allowed that  
 the Doctor reaps as much benefit from his title of chaplain to a  
 dead prelate, as his present majesty does from being called king of  
 France, or the king of Sardinia from being stiled king of Jerusalem.



discourse? for the tree is known by its fruits, and if the fruits of righteousness do appear in the life and conversation, then we may be certain that there is found faith and right principles at the bottom; for thus saith the apostle, "Shew me thy faith by thy works."—To say that such an one is a very good man, but is of very bad principles, is a flagrant contradiction; yet into this contradiction have you been led, by attacking those you call Methodists, as Ehud did Eglon [P], with a compliment in one hand, and a dagger in the other. Besides, the zeal which you commend in these ministers, instead of being a virtue, must, (if what you have advanced be true) be a most horrible crime, and greatly displeasing to God. For this zeal, like that of our first reformers [Q], is not according to knowledge, but for the promoting of doctrines *highly injurious to the honour of God, and subversive of all the principles of morality* [R]. Be assured therefore, Sir, that the congratulations you are pleased to pay yourself in your preface upon your candor, charity, and forbearance; as well as the soothing speeches with which you have honoured those against whom your sermon is directly levelled, can answer no other end than to convince every reader who has the least grain of discernment, that you thought it most prudent to make your dose as palatable as you could, in hopes that it might be the more easily swallowed; and that no officious examiner might think himself warranted to pry into the ingredients. But as I utterly disavow all connection with sects and parties; as it is not this or that man I am concerned to vindicate; but the interests of reli-

[P] Judges iii. 15, 16.

[Q] P. 36.

[R] P. 36.



gion in general, and those of our excellent established church in particular, (whose doctrines it was indeed both PAIN AND GRIEF to me to see so villified and mangled, by one from whom she deserved better treatment, one who eats her fat and cloaths himself with her wool [S],) I say, since this is case, it will be needless to offer any apology for these remarks, or for the doctrines defended in this letter, doctrines which however rejected by you, Sir, as utterly inconsistent with the principles of virtue and morality, and *long since exploded* [T] as repugnant to all our notions of reason and religion, have yet been maintained and professed by the greatest and most learned men this nation ever produced, men who adorned them by their lives, and sealed the truth of them by their deaths.

I have nothing more to add than my requests that you would let the public know, why you have thought proper to conceal the MOST EXCEPTIONABLE parts of Mr. *Romaine's* discourse, and to caution your hearers and readers only against what you call The LEAST EXCEPTIONABLE PASSAGES [U], since to do this, was to defeat the very design of your own sermon; and to act the part of that unfaithful physician who employed all his skill to cure his patient of a sore finger, whilst he knew that a dangerous disease was preying upon his vitals. However I now call upon you to answer this letter, not by

[S] Ezek. xxxiv.

[T] Although the doctrines of free-will, justification by works, and the possibility of keeping the law, have been *exploded* by all protestant churches ever since the reformation, and although they are the distinguishing tenets of popery, yet Dr. *Adams* is not ashamed to avow them in the face of the sun.

[U] P. 16. note.

clandestine attacks in St. Chad's pulpit, but by coming out on fair ground; and in your reply, remember it is my particular request that you would be pleased to inform the world what those very *exceptionable tenets and rash unguarded expressions* were at which you were so highly offended; till you have done this, your charge stands quite unsupported, and your arrows instead of wounding Mr. Romaine, must recoil against yourself.

Had you, Sir, been content to have crowed upon your own dunghill, you might still have been triumphing in your imaginary victory over the doctrines of the Reformation; but by the publication of your discourse, you have given a challenge to the whole world to find a flaw in it; this challenge you see, Sir, hath been accepted, though I believe you are now heartily sorry that you offered it, since it is but too plain that you have condemned yourself out of your own mouth, knocked yourself down with your own weapons, and confronted yourself by your own subscriptions.

I will not deny, Sir, but you have many great names to countenance you in your disaffection to the church of England; but I again repeat it, that oaths and subscriptions are not to be trifled with, they are still the same solemn things they ever were, nor is the guilt of any man less, because thousands are partakers of it.

I once thought to have annexed my name to this letter; but names as saith a late ingenious writer, being of little consequence where truth is in question, I subscribe myself, Reverend SIR,

Your sincere well-wisher,

Philalethes.

T H E

## A P P E N D I X,

C O N T A I N I N G

A Short Account of the Arian, Pelagian, Socinian, and Arminian Heresies : And concluding with a serious Expostulation with the Rev. Dr. ADAMS.

**T**HE Arian heresy broke out under Constantine the emperor, towards the end of the third century. The Arians are so called, from Arius, a presbyter, of Alexandria. He denied (with the Rev. Dr. Adams) the essential divinity of the Son of God, and maintained with him, that he was inferior to the Father, both in nature and DIGNITY[Y]. Arius and his followers were excommunicated by several great councils, particularly by the famous council of Nice, an. 325. to the determinations of which council in every point of doctrine, Arius himself very chearfully subscribed in the emperor's presence, and confirmed his subscription by an oath. But although Arius had his CONVENIENT CREED to subscribe before the emperor, yet he had his REAL CREED under his arm, to which he had previously signed his name, and with execrable fallacy, he swore that he believed

[Y] Mosheim's Eccles. Hist. vol. I. p. 216.

what he had subscribed[Z]. The emperor admonished him to beware of fallacy, as he would escape the divine vengeance, and being inclined to believe him sincere in his profession, ordered Alexander the bishop to receive him again to communion. But he had not gone far from the emperor's palace, before he was seized with a disorder similar to that which put an end to the life of Judas, for all his intestines, together with his liver, and a great quantity of blood, gushed out from him behind, upon which he died immediately. This account I have taken partly from Mosheim, partly from Parker's Abridgment of the Ancient Ecclesiastical History of Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret. Histories of all others the most approved.

AT the very beginning of the fifth century, Pelagius broached his heresy, of which Mr. Fuller thus speaks; " Now the Arian heresy, by God's providence and good men's diligence, was in some measure suppressed; the unwearied malice of Satan, (who never leaveth off, though often changeth his ways to seduce souls) brought in the worse, because more plausible heresy of Pelagianism. For every man is born a Pelagian, naturally proud of his power, and needeth little art to teach him to think well of himself. This Pelagius was a Britain by birth, (as we take no delight to confess it, so we will tell no lie to deny it). Let no foreigner insult on the infelicity of our land in bearing THIS MONSTER, but consider first, if his excellent natural parts, and eminent acquired learning might be

[Z] According to some Arius told the emperor that he subscribed what was nearest his heart.



“ separated from his dangerous doctrine ; no nation  
 “ need be ashamed to acknowledge him[A].”

Among Pelagius’s tenets, are the following. He maintained (with the Rev. Dr. Adams) that there was no original sin, and that the transgression of our first parents was not charged on their posterity [B]. That man has free-will in spiritual things, and that human reason is capable of discerning divine truths. But I choose to give the reader Pelagius’s tenets in the very words of Dr. Mosheim, who being himself of Dr. Adams’s sentiments, his testimony will on that account be the less suspected of partiality.

“ He, Pelagius, looked upon the doctrines which  
 “ were commonly received concerning the original  
 “ corruption of human nature, and the necessity of  
 “ divine grace to enlighten the understanding, and  
 “ purify the heart, as prejudicial to the progress of  
 “ holiness and virtue, and tending to lull man-  
 “ kind in a presumptuous and fatal security. He  
 “ maintained, that these doctrines were false as they  
 “ were pernicious ; that the sins of our first parents  
 “ were imputed to them alone, and not to their pos-  
 “ terity ; that we derive no corruption from their fall,  
 “ but are born as pure and unspotted as Adam came  
 “ out of the forming hand of his creator ; that man-  
 “ kind therefore, are capable of repentance and a-  
 “ mendment, and of arriving at the highest degrees

[A] Fuller’s Church Hist. of Britain. Cent. V. book I.

[B] Doctor Cave, speaking of Pelagius, says, “ Peccatum Originale funditus sustulit, docens Adami peccatum soboli ejus NON IMPUTARI.

“ of piety and virtue, by the use of their natural  
“ faculties and powers [C], &c.”

These tenets were judged by the whole Christian church to be so contrary to scripture, so derogatory to the grace of God, so very soothing to the pride of man, and so manifestly tending to undervalue the office of the Holy Spirit, whose sole prerogative it is, to illuminate the understanding and renew the heart, that Pelagius's doctrine was universally condemned as impious and heretical, daring and presumptuous; and by the zeal and affectionate labours of St. Augustine and others, he was prevented from doing any considerable mischief. It must be observed however that the great stratagem, by which Pelagius promoted his cause, was by speaking great swelling words against the received doctrines of efficacious grace, basely alleging that they encouraged sloth, and tended to depreciate the goodness and mercy of God, and to make him the author of sin; and whosoever will consult Dr. Adams's sermon will see that the Doctor has been fighting with the same weapons.

Of much later date is the rise of Socinianism [D], which was a mixture of the heresies of Arius and Pelagius. The accurate Alexander Ross, in his View of all Religions, tells us that “ Faustus Socinus, an Italian by birth, denied Christ and the Holy Ghost to be truly God, or that there is a trinity of persons in the Godhead. He maintained that there is a freewill to goodness in us, and that we may here fulfil the law. He held (with the Rev. Dr. Adams,) that God could

[C] Mosheim, vol. 1. p. 275, &c.

[D] Not much above 200 years ago.

justly pardon our sins, without any satisfaction or atonement.”—He also denied (with the Doctor) that Christ fulfilled the law in his own person for his elect, or that his righteousness is imputed to them for justification. He taught his disciples that the only end of all the doctrines, institutions and precepts of religion, was the practice of piety and holiness of life, hereby totally superseding the great end of our Lord’s appearance, viz. to redeem us from the curse of the law, and to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself[E].

James Arminius, divinity reader in Leyden [F], an. 1605, did not run into all those labyrinths of error, which Arius, Pelagius, Socinus, and some modern divines, who call themselves of the church of England have done. He held the divinity of Christ, and that there were three eternal coequal persons in the God-

[E] Dr. Adams tells us in his Preface, p. 9. “ That he always teaches his hearers that religion is designed to enforce the practice of piety and all good works, and that the end of ALL its institutions, as well as of its precepts, is holiness of life.” Now I readily agree with the Doctor that without holiness no man shall see the Lord, but to say that there is no other end proposed by *any* of the doctrines and institutions of the gospel, than the practice of piety and good works, is to fall into the rankest degree of Socinianism, and in effect to deny all need of a propitiatory sacrifice for sin.

[F] Dr. Abbot then archbishop of Canterbury speaking of the Arminian sect, thus expresseth himself. “ The foul vapours (of Arminianism) blew over from the Dutch coast and so infatuated some of our divines, that forsaking the beaten and approved path of faith, they betook themselves to the crooked ways and precipices of Arminius, destroying the articles of religion with their tenets, which they had confirmed by their subscriptions.”—Abbot. de Grat: & persev:

head, he acknowledged that man was born in sin, through the fall of Adam, but denied that his nature was *totally* corrupted. Hence he asserted that he had still a freedom of will to turn to God, but not without the assistance of grace. He held election to be conditional, and that the elect might fall from a state of grace. His doctrines occasioned great disturbance, but were soon condemned by the memorable synod of Dort, ann. 1618, to which synod five of the most eminent British divines were sent by king James I. [F]; who unanimously with the rest of the Protestant churches, condemned the doctrines of Arminius, as highly derogatory to the honour and grace of God, utterly repugnant to his sacred word, and to all their national confessions of faith.

NOW let any man take a survey of these tenets of Arius, Pelagius, Socinus, and Arminius, which I have faithfully collected from church history, and by comparing them with what Dr. Adams has advanced in his sermon, intitled *A Test of True and False Doctrine*, he will immediately perceive the strict harmony,

[F] The representatives of our church sent by his majesty to this synod, were George Carleton, D. D. then bishop of Landaff, and afterwards of Chichester: Joseph Hall, D. D. then dean of Worcester, afterwards bishop of Exeter and Norwich: John Davenant, D. D. then Margaret Professor and master of Queen's college in Cambridge, afterwards bishop of Salisbury: Samuel Ward, D. D. then master of Sydney-college in Cambridge and arch-deacon of Taunton.

On the 10th of December, Gualter. Balcanqual, B. D. afterwards dean of Durham, was also sent by the king, in the name of the church of Scotland.

In the beginning of the next month Dr. Hall, finding himself indisposed, returned to England; and his place was supplied by Dr. Goad, chaplain to the archbishop of Canterbury.

and



and amicable accord, which subsists between these four gentlemen and the doctor.—Did Arius deny the INFINITE DIGNITY of our Lord's person? The Doctor has in express words ranked it among the list of erroneous opinions, that man stands in need of a Saviour of INFINITE DIGNITY to atone for his sins, &c. (p. 28.)

Did Pelagius deny that Adam's sin was charged upon his posterity, and that man's nature is only inclined to evil? The Doctor throws the gauntlet in the same cause, and triumphantly asks, *Is the love of God and of our neighbour unnatural to us?* Nay he makes it the very height of impiety to assert that the sin of Adam is entailed on his posterity? (p. 31.)

Was it a distinguishing part of Socinus's heresy, that God could justly pardon our sins without a satisfaction?—The Doctor heartily joins issue, and we have it under his hand that Mr. Romaine gave him much offence by affirming that *God could shew no mercy but through Christ the Redeemer.* (P. 16.)

Did Pelagius, Socinus, and Arminius all of them affirm that there is in man a freedom of will in spiritual matters? The Doctor maintains the assertion over and over again, and makes this freedom of will one of the leading and fundamental principles of religion against which there lies no appeal. Yea in direct opposition to scripture and the church of England, he sets up human reason and the dictates of nature, as the only infallible guides in matters of a spiritual concern.

Now from this brief survey of these four heresies (which are the only ones of any note that ever pestered Christianity) and the opposition they met with, it is very plain that the trinity in unity, the divinity of our blessed

blesſed Saviour, the corruption of human nature by the fall of Adam, the atonement which Chriſt made in his own perſon for ſin, juſtification by faith alone, and the neceſſity of the Holy Spirit's influence to illuminate the underſtanding, renew the will, and regulate the affections of fallen man, have ever been eſteemed the leading principles of our religion; and that whenever any of theſe points have been denied, the whole catholic church of Chriſt hath unanimoſly condemned ſuch denial, and would not even allow the name of Chriſtian to thoſe who brought in any other doctrine, much leſs give them the right hand of fellowſhip, or bid them God ſpeed. What then would have been thought of the man, in whom every one of theſe hereſies were found to center?

AND now, Sir, what muſt your poor pariſhioners think of their ſpiritual guide? Are they to believe you tell truth when you ſubſcribe to the articles, homilies and common-prayer, or when you contradict all theſe in your harangues from the pulpit? Are they to ſuppoſe you were in earneſt when upon your knees at your ordination you moſt ſolemnly bound yourſelf to defend all the doctrines of the church of England, or when you vilified her pious reformers as bad interpreters of ſcripture and ſetters forth of tenets highly injurious to the honour of God, and ſubverſive of all the principles of virtue and morality, reaſon and religion?—Can you think, Sir, that ſuch glaring inconſiſtencies will paſs unnoticed; or can you be ſurprized that ſuch of your flock as have any true concern about their eternal intereſts, ſhould leave their ſtated paſtor and ſeek food for their ſouls wherever it is to be had? Will they not with reaſon cry  
out,

out, "our church teaches us one doctrine and our minister another, and yet whenever it suits his convenience, he will truckle and tack about like a weathercock; and for the sake of a living will declare his most hearty assent to what he most heartily disbelieves: how then can he ever pretend to preach to us against the sins of hypocrisy and double dealing? how can he talk about the generous principles of human nature, or inculcate the duties flowing from a love of truth and uprightness? We know that in temporal concerns such equivocation as the Doctor stands convicted of would be branded with the highest infamy, and that if a quaker when called to give evidence in matters of property were to make an affirmation directly repugnant to the **DICTATES OF HIS OWN CONSCIENCE** [G], for the sake of any secular advantage, he would, (if discovered) lie under a foul stigma all his life long, and incur all the penalties of perjury. And is such deceitful dealing less criminal in everlasting concerns than in those which relate only to this life? Is it a sin of a less heinous nature to make a merchandise of souls, and turn the word of God into a stalking-horse for gain, than to bear false witness in a court of judicature? How the Doctor can reconcile what he does with his own sentiments of religion and piety, virtue and morality, of which he speaks so much, we are at a loss to discover, but this is certain, that either our own pastor or our own church must be a

[G] 'Tis pity the Doctor did not think of this, when he told his congregation to listen to the dictates of their own conscience.  
P. 39.

very unsafe guide. Either the scripture or the Doctor must be in an error; either Arius, Pelagius, Socinus and Arminius must have been orthodox Christians, or our minister must be a wolf in sheeps cloathing."

Can you wonder, Sir, that such should be the language of your parishioners, whilst you preach such doctrine as is contained in your late publication? What christian heart can help pitying the unhappy deluded flocks who have such a shepherd for their leader? And what deplorable blindness must have overspread this poor nation, when such doctrines not only pass uncensured by authority, but are even approved by many of the clergy themselves. Yet do not mistake me; think not, Sir, that I condemn you for your open avowal of an aversion to all the essential doctrines on which the reformation is established, herein I commend your honesty, but that which I pronounce aloud to be absolutely inconsistent with your own principles of piety and virtue, reason and religion, and which proves your practice to be but a miserable evidence of the excellency of the system you have adopted, is the solemn declaration you have made of your unfeigned assent to all the articles and homilies of the church of England, and to the whole book of common-prayer, whilst you not only most cordially wish both articles and homilies abolished, but contradict from the pulpit the very intent and meaning of every prayer which but the moment before you offered up from the desk.

Do you imagine, Sir, that if the tenets of our church, were the same with those advanced in your  
sermon,



sermon, that either *that principal leader among the Methodists* [H], Mr. Romaine, or any other of those gentlemen who so heinously offended you by their preaching in *St. Chad's* pulpit, would in such case have subscribed to them? I durst venture my life that they would not. And it appears only lost labour to prove that whatever temporal advantage might be gained by equivocation and deceit, the reasoning of every man who valued his immortal soul would certainly be on this wise. “ I am here educated in a  
 “ country where such and such doctrines are the very  
 “ basis on which the national church is built; into  
 “ this church I have been baptized in my infancy, and  
 “ I have now an offer of her preferments if I will en-  
 “ ter into the ministry; but upon the most deliberate  
 “ review, I heartily disapprove those very doctrines  
 “ which are to be made the test of my admission.  
 “ What must I do? Shall I dare to dissemble before  
 “ the searcher of hearts, and swear that I believe  
 “ them? God forbid.—But if I do not, how shall I  
 “ be able to live in ease and affluence?—As to that  
 “ it is sufficient to say, what shall it profit a man if  
 “ he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or  
 “ what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?—It  
 “ is then concluded. Sooner let my tongue cleave to  
 “ the roof of my mouth, sooner let my hand rot from  
 “ my arm, than that the one should confess, or the  
 “ other subscribe what my heart can by no means  
 “ assent to. Let me be content to eat the bread of  
 “ honest industry, but never let me sacrifice what I

[H] Preface, p. 1.

“ am persuaded is the truth of God, for the sake of  
“ any temporal interests whatever.”

Now I appeal to all *ingenuous minds* whether this would not be the language of every one who pays the smallest regard to the voice of conscience, the dictates of reason, or the warnings of the Holy Sprit ?

I shall only add that I pray God, Sir, to give you repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth, that you may make a public and speedy recantation of what you have advanced to the dishonour of Christ, and the disturbance of his church.

REVEREND

To the Rev. Dr. ADAMS.

REV. SIR,

AS you have in the most public manner, both from the pulpit and the press, personally traduced me, as a setter forth of strange doctrines, tending at once to surprize the vulgar and to mislead the credulous; the most exceptionable of which doctrines you tell us you *forbear to mention*; you cannot think it unbecoming my office, as a minister of Christ, to join the author of this Letter, in calling upon you to explain your meaning; since it must be allowed to be a very hard case to be so severely condemned in general terms, without giving me an opportunity of vindicating (not myself, for I desire to be out of the question, but) the doctrines delivered in my sermon, doctrines which I am persuaded in my conscience are not only contained in the word of God, but are the very basis of that apostolical church, in which you and I have the honor to be ministers.

WILLIAM ROMAINE,

Rector of Black-Friars.

LONDON, Mar. 20, 1770.

F I N I S.

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