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# R E M A R K S

ON THE

*REV. DR. VINCENT'S*

**DEFENCE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION;**

WITH AN ATTEMPT TO STATE FAIRLY

**The Question,**

WHETHER

THE RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION AND MORAL CONDUCT OF  
THE RISING GENERATION, ARE SUFFICIENTLY  
PROVIDED FOR, AND EFFECTUALLY  
SECURED, IN OUR SCHOOLS  
AND UNIVERSITIES:

TOGETHER WITH

*The Sentiments of several late Writers, and others, on this  
important Subject.*

BY A LAYMAN.

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*Ἡ παιδεία ἐστὶ σοφία.*

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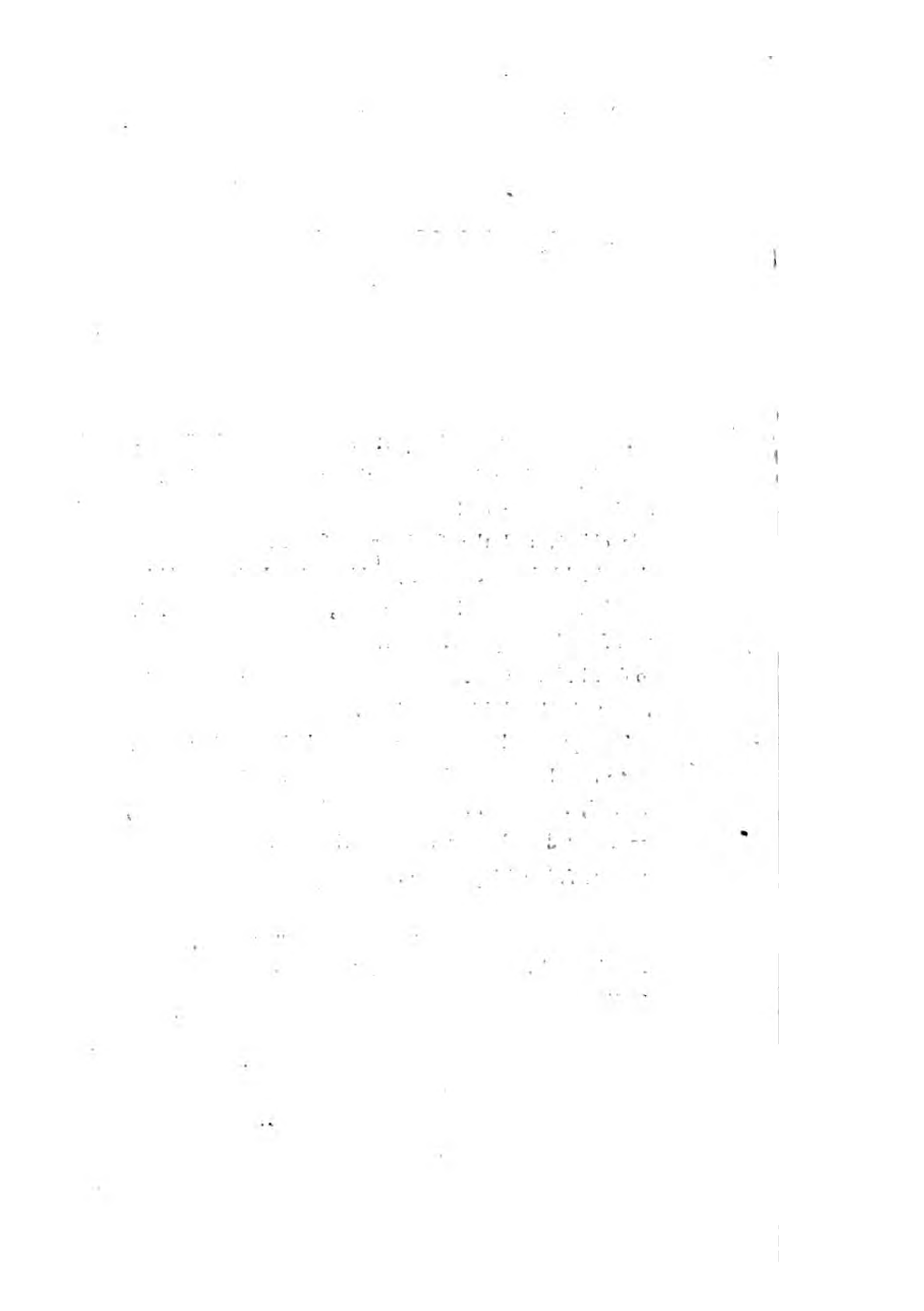
## ADVERTISEMENT.

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**THOUGH** a considerable part of the ensuing Tract consists of quotations, it is hoped, this will not be ascribed to the base practice of book-making. *To do good*, was the sole object, and the sentiments of Men of note were thought likely to conduce to this end. If it should be found to contain little new matter, let it be considered, that some late experiments have given us too much reason to dread Novelty in Philosophy and Politics, and it is still more to be dreaded in Religion\*.

The principal quotations are marked as such, though some may have escaped observation. The whole has been revised, and much information, and some entire passages, contributed by Men, whose experience has enabled them to state facts with precision.

\* See the Preface to a small volume of excellent Sermons on the Doctrines and Duties of Christianity, printed for Cadell and Davies, 1801.



# R E M A R K S,

&c.

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**SOME** eminent Divines having arraigned the system of our public education, as defective in respect to religious instruction, Dr. Vincent undertook its vindication, in a Letter addressed to the Bishop of Meath, entitled, *A Defence of public Education*. But every unprejudiced person, who peruses that tract, must see that it is rather a defence of himself and of Westminster school; and upon closer examination, I fear it will appear to have been written in haste, and in heat, and under the influence of personal animosity. These are dreadful obstacles to sound reasoning, and great inlets to error; and as error is never so dangerous as when mixed with truth and piety, and protected by rank and character; and much mischief may arise from permitting so important a question to be decided prematurely, on a partial representation, and imperfect evidence; I hope I shall not mispend my own time, or that of my readers, by offering such remarks on Dr. Vincent's pamphlet, and the subjects therein discussed, as may tend to bring the question concerning religious instruction fairly and dispassionately before the public, and induce men of greater ability, and more extended information, to give it that serious and de-

liberate consideration, to which it is so abundantly entitled.

Awed by the superior fame of him, on whose work I am about to comment; and aware of my own inability to do justice to my subject, I have long waited in the vain hope of seeing the task undertaken by some abler hand; and similar motives induce me still to withhold my *name*. Should *my* observations be weakened by my insignificance, in the same proportion, in which *his* have derived force and effect from his station and character; the plainest truths must sink under such accumulated disadvantages.

But though I fight in a mask, I will endeavour to fight fairly, nor have I any inducement to do otherwise. A stranger alike to Dr. Vincent and his opponents; if I *respect them* for their talents, *I honour him* for his long and unremitting exertions, in a most laborious and arduous office. And though my plan will compel me to state objections to several passages in his tract, I hope no one will suppose me insensible to its beauties; or capable of perusing without admiration the pious praise of that able champion of our faith, Mr. Jones of Nayland; the eloquent and grateful testimony to the talents and admonitions of the venerable Metropolitan of York; or other passages no less worthy of their author.—But I must quit this pleasant path for one beset with thorns and briars.

The first half of Dr. Vincent's pamphlet is rather an attack than a defence; an attack, not on opinions or arguments, but on men. He begins with the Bishop of Meath, and goes on to Dr. Rennell, Dr. Gaskin, &c. Let us follow him in the same order.

To the Bishop he says, in the first sentence of his book, "Proof, in the business now to be discussed, your Lordship seems to have thought totally superfluous; without any knowledge of your own, without inquiry or examination,

you assume the testimony of Dr. Rennell as incontrovertible."

Whether it arise from the want of religious instruction, or from whatever cause, too many in this our day, consider a Bishop as entitled to no more respect than another man; nay, some seem even to take pleasure in sneering at that sacred Character: those, however, who with me think it entitled to peculiar reverence, especially from the inferior orders of the Clergy, will probably see something objectionable in the wording of the sentence just quoted, as well as of many others in the following pages of Dr. Vincent's work. But whatever may be thought of the *language*, the *matter* is surely objectionable. Had Dr. Vincent said only, that the Bishop had *produced* no proof, the position would have been correct; but to assert that he has *no knowledge of his own*, and *has neither inquired nor examined*, is to assert what is incredible, and what cannot be known, much less proved: and thus in accusing the Bishop of bringing a charge without proof, he falls himself into the very error, which at the same instant he is censuring in his Superior. I beg leave also to remark, that Dr. Vincent charges the Bishop "with assuming the testimony of Dr. Rennell as incontrovertible" (page 3); "with grounding his charge on the testimony of Dr. Rennell" (page 10); "with mistaking Dr. Rennell's rhetoric for argument, or assertion for truth; and with going beyond the information of his brief" (page 12). In page 22 he calls Dr. Rennell "the guide the Bishop has follow'd, and the oracle he has believed;"—and in page 32 says, "Dr. Rennell has led his Lordship into the error." Yet in the very next sentence he admits, that "the same outcry (as he terms it) is to be found in several of our religious and moral writers;" and if we turn to the Bishop's words as quoted by Dr. Vincent himself, in page 10, we shall see, that so



far from borrowing his opinion from Dr. Rennell, the Bishop was prepared to offer his sentiments, before he found the subject anticipated by the Doctor.

Dr. Rennell comes next; and such is the attack on him, and the circumstances under which it was made, that they demand a more particular discussion.

Of the language in which this attack is couched, I am unwilling to speak my own sentiments. I will quote some of Dr. Vincent's phrases, and let the reader judge for himself.

"How he brought himself to think, that he was more invulnerable than others of his profession, I know not." Page 3.

"False I call it, in direct terms; and calumnious I would have called it." Page 12.

"He ought not to arrogate all merit to himself." Page 20.

"What must be your opinion of Dr. Rennell, the guide you have followed, the oracle you have believed?" Page 22.

"Mr. Jones neither overcharged the colouring, nor perverted the terms. Dr. Rennell has done both." Page 27.

"Perhaps he has mistaken obloquy for rhetoric; perhaps it was congenial to his talents to copy rather the railing accusation of the orator—than his eulogy." Page 29.

"The family of the Rennells." Page 30.

"Dr. Rennell, by an uniformity of perversion, transmutes it." "I cannot sufficiently express my contempt of the insinuation." Page 37.

Such is the language of the attack. I must now beg the reader's attention to the very singular circumstances attending it.

Dr. Vincent tells us, that when Dr. Rennell's discourse was published, he (Dr. Vincent) had prepared a defence; but

but upon the interference of some common friends, Dr. Rennell wrote a letter, in which he made *an exception in favour of Dr. Vincent, and of Westminster School*—that Dr. Vincent in answer said he was contented to be silent. A reconciliation took place, and Dr. Vincent entered into *articles of peace* with Dr. Rennell. He adds, “ I was not a little surpris'd to find afterwards, that another letter was written by Dr. Rennell to the Board, much less favourable to me, and much more resolute in censuring Public Schools and Universities, than even his publication. I repented of my acquiescence, BUT MY WORD WAS PASSED, and I made no further complaint.” See pages 4, 9, 10. Here then I ask, if the *articles of peace* were such, and the *word passed* so strong, that though Dr. Vincent repented of his acquiescence, he did not *then* think it right to attack Dr. Rennell; on what principle can he justify attacking him *now*; since, as far as appears, during the whole intermediate space, those articles of peace have remained unfringed by Dr. Rennell, even in the smallest iota?

Will it be said, that the Bishop of Meath's quoting Dr. Rennell's words, is a fresh aggression on the part of Dr. Rennell? Surely not.—But a more painful question remains.—How can Dr. Vincent justify the going out of his subject, and charging Dr. Rennell with things no way connected with it? Things of the most ridiculous and of the most serious nature.

“ With publishing sermons, which he cannot sell.”  
Page 6.

“ With denying faith to every Churchman but himself.”  
Page 17. “ With neglecting a school with which he is connected.” Page 19. “ And with thinking he has no equal among his equals.” Page 20.

What is it to us, or the question before us, whether Dr.  
Rennell

Rennell has sold five or five thousand copies of his Discourses?

What is it to us, whether Dr. Rennell or Dr. Vincent has preached more Charity Sermons, or taken more notice of the Charity Schoolmaster? If the fact be, that Dr. Rennell, who never preaches but to crowded audiences, and to audiences whose pockets are not supposed to be the emptiest, yet cannot prevail on them or others to purchase his works; it is a curious phenomenon in the annals of literature; and it behoves him to take care how he continues to advertise new editions of his Discourses, while the old ones remain unfold.

If, through his neglect, the poor have not the Gospel preached to them, or the means of instruction provided; if he accuses his brethren falsely, or is vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind; these are crimes which no oratory can extenuate, no zeal excuse.—“ But neither Dr. Vincent nor I are authorized to be his judges;—to his own Master he must stand or fall.”

Still there remains one passage relating to Dr. Rennell, which, if it should strike Dr. Vincent as it does me, I am confident he will not suffer to appear in his future editions. I cannot figure to myself an idea more degrading to a man, to a Briton, and, above all, to a Christian divine, than to have his name connected, or his conduct compared, with that of TOM PAINE. Page 13.

Another strange circumstance attends this attack: Dr. Vincent himself tells us in page 4, that Dr. Rennell *excepted both him and his School out of the accusation*; yet in the very next page he says, “ the reproaches of Dr. R. still remain unretracted.” And though he afterwards repeatedly mentions Dr. Rennell’s exception, he continues to write, as if Dr. Rennell continued to accuse both him and his School.

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Were we even to suppose that Dr. Rennell either did not know his own meaning, or did not truly declare it; still a dilemma remains. Still Dr. Vincent complains of that, which he himself undertakes to prove cannot concern him. In page 37, after stating many very laudable practices in Westminster School, he adds, "This, my Lord, an indifferent person would call elementary instruction, at least; but Dr. Rennell, by an uniformity of perversion, transmutes it into elementary ignorance. I cannot sufficiently express my contempt of the insinuation." Let us now turn to Dr. Rennell's words in page 15; they are these, as given by Dr. Vincent: "all who are acquainted with the elementary ignorance of Christianity, in which *young men* are permitted to remain in the greater part of our Public Institutions," &c. A doubt might have arisen, whether, by Public Institutions here, Dr. Rennell intended Schools and Universities, or only the different Colleges in the latter; but Dr. Vincent has decided the question at the bottom of the same page, by asserting, that the expression, *young men* in this situation, is a term *exclusively appropriate* to the two Universities."—Such are the consequences of permitting our feelings to overpower our judgment.

The next personal attack is on the Secretary of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge. But why is his name withheld? Every body knows that the Secretary of that Society is George Gaskin, D. D.; and what every body thinks of him, I would here state, but that I wish still to avoid what Dr. Vincent terms going "a step beyond the information of my brief." Hitherto I have drawn all my facts from Dr. Vincent's *own words*, and that I may continue to do so, I will content myself with stating *his* character of the Secretary. It is this—That he is *Dr. Vincent's friend, a good man, and an admirable secretary.*

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I do not observe that Dr. Vincent brings any direct charge against him; but in page 8, he says: "The Secretary is so innocent of concerting any plan against me, or designing any evil by the publication, that he did not know the contents of the Discourse," &c. "No, my Lord, the Secretary, with all his deference to your Lordship's rank, &c. had never been induced by curiosity or duty, to read one word of your sermon. It passed from your Lordship's hands into the Secretary's, and from the Secretary to the Printer." "Suppose the sermon to have contained heterodoxy, or any thing worse, who was culpable? not the Board—for the Board never does see the sermon—not the Secretary, for he never looked at it," &c.

Now what are we to understand from all this? are we to take it literally, or is it what Sir Richard Hill calls *gentle strokes of irony*? If the former, Dr. Gaskin is acquitted by Dr. Vincent himself; if the latter, what has Dr. Gaskin done to deserve them? or what could he have done to avoid them? Should he must have inserted Dr. Vincent's note without the authority of the Board? Or should he have tried to prevail on the Board to order its insertion? Had he done either, Dr. Vincent must have been the first to censure him; for at page 33, we find the Doctor asserting, that if—(formerly your *if* was your only peace-maker; now, alas! it is otherwise employed) "if his opinion, or influence, have *at all* contributed to promote the rejection of my request, by the Board, I shall feel that our excellent Society, like many others, is rather too much under the direction of its Officers."

If then, at all to contribute to the *rejection* of the Doctor's request, be wrong, surely to contribute to its *reception* cannot be right. But does it appear that Dr. Gaskin did either? And may we not fairly conclude, that the excellent

cellent Secretary of the excellent Society, did his duty as well on this as on other occasions.

Dr. Vincent next attacks a whole Legion at once; whom he ranks and intitles thus—Cowper, Dr. Randolph of Bath, Mr. Gisborne, and Mrs. Trimmer—and the charge against them all is, that *the same outcry* is to be found in their works. I call this host of foes, a Legion; not merely on account of that shout or outcry, in which they resemble the legions of modern Gaul; but also on account of the different sorts of soldiers of which it is composed. We have here Clergy and Laity, Male and Female, a Doctor, a Mr. a Mrs. and Cowper. It resembles other legions also, in that it admits of variety in its numbers. In the first edition it consisted only of two, but recruits have since been added.

To be serious,—what does all this mean? Were Mr. Gisborne and Mrs. Trimmer coupled together, to render them ridiculous? And Mr. Cowper and Dr. Randolph prefixed with the same view? Is there any one circumstance ridiculous, or contemptible, in the character, the conduct, or the writings, of any of them? Were it not beyond my brief, I would state who, and what they are; but it is needless—let their own works praise them; nay, even Dr. Vincent himself tells us, they are religious and moral writers, and therefore surely unfit objects of any disrespect.

Of the nature of their outcry, I may have occasion to say more hereafter.

Still there is another object of our Author's censure, which I cannot mention as such, without much concern. I mean, that Society, which the Doctor so elegantly, and I believe justly, describes, as “doing the most extensive good with the least possible parade,” and which, therefore, he respects above all others.—“Nothing (says he, page

7) can diminish my esteem and veneration for that excellent Society, which I have now attended for almost thirty years, with an affection that cannot be surpassed by the attachment of its best and warmest friends."—Yet this object of his veneration and affection, he charges in print, with giving its sanction to accusations, in his opinion so heinous and unjust, that language seems unable to supply terms strong enough to express his abhorrence and contempt. He asserts, that if the event should be proportionate to the means (used by the Society), all the Public Schools in the kingdom will be left without a scholar. Page 6. He taxes it with refusing to circulate a note of his, and adds—"The Board was so prepossessed either of my delinquency, or Dr. Rennell's veracity, that my application was utterly in vain." Page 7.—He accuses it of "something like a departure from its usual candour;"—joins the Board with the Secretary, in that strange kind of writing in the 8th page, upon which I have already observed;—again charges it with refusing a request, which "a Roman and a Gentile would have granted"—and hints a suspicion, that it is "rather too much under the direction of its officers."—"We have among us a piety and a gratitude to our nursing mother; faults she has, which we rather dissemble than expose." Page 14.—Thus

—————"Even-handed justice  
Commends the ingredients of our poison'd chalice  
To our own lips."

I am no friend to dissembling; but neither dissimulation nor exposure was requisite here. As a Member of that Society, and no doubt connected with many other respectable Members of it; if any thing appeared to be wrong, why not state it at the Board, and propose the proper remedy?

medy? But what, in fact, has the Society done amiss? It has permitted the Preacher to add notes to his sermon—A custom perhaps objectionable, though certainly useful.—A custom, however, of at least fifty years standing, and probably coeval with the Annual Sermon. But it has also refused to circulate with the Account of the Society, a Note from a private Member, advertising a Tract not yet published. Now can any man doubt that *such* a custom would be objectionable? And why suppose this refusal to arise from a prepossession of Dr. Vincent's delinquency, or Dr. Rennell's veracity? surely it is more likely to have arisen from there being no precedent, and the evident danger of creating one.

At any rate, can the publication of such charges as these be otherwise than prejudicial to the Society? Dr. Vincent assures us nothing can diminish *his* esteem and veneration; but a moment's reflection would have shown him, that esteem and veneration must unavoidably increase or lessen with the apparent worth of their objects: and I appeal to his own friends and admirers; whether their zeal and veneration for this Society has felt no check or diminution from the publication of his pamphlet?

Before I quit this part of my subject, I have still to observe, that Dr. Vincent's attacks on others, were provoked by no *personal* attack on him. Dr. Rennell, against whom he points his main battery, expressly excepted both him and his School.

The Bishop's Note is certainly very strong and general; so much so, indeed, that I am inclined to believe, as well as to hope, that it was penned with less deliberation than so serious a Charge demanded. But neither by name, or allusion, does he, or Dr. Randolph, or Mr. Gisborne, or any other writer on this subject, that I know of, point at



Dr. Vincent, otherwise than as one of those, to whom the instruction of our youth is intrusted.

I have now done with Dr. Vincent's personalities (if I may be allowed the expression), and wish I could blot them from his book. I might have said more; but I fear, I have already dwelt on them too long. Yet when we recollect the unqualified praise bestowed on his work in private, the public approbation, which (without any exception) it is said to have received from a numerous assembly; and how pointedly it has been extolled by one of our most popular Reviews, as uniting the "temper of a Christian," with "the delicate forbearance of politeness," there is too much reason to apprehend, that the fullest investigation would scarcely suffice, to open the eyes of his numerous and truly respectable, though very partial friends.

To the impartial, I fear, I have already proved the existence of some degree of personal animosity in Dr. Vincent's Vindication. I have also shown incidentally, that some parts of it were written in haste, and in heat; and this will more evidently appear, by referring to pages 10 and 29. In the former, quoting the Bishop's Note (the very charge he is to confute), he says—"the express words of your accusation are these"—and then gives, what is certainly intended for the whole note; yet in a quotation, containing in the original only nine lines and a half,—two words are omitted in the first line,—six in the third,—one is changed in the fourth, and one in the ninth; besides several alterations in the punctuation.

In page 29, Dr. Vincent asserts, that the Bishop considers Dr. Rennell as *the most eloquent preacher of the age*. I have looked in vain for such a passage. The Bishop does indeed call Dr. Rennell "a zealous and eloquent preacher."—And if ever there was a truism, that is one.—The allowance of ten readers to each copy of the Bishop's Sermon,  
seems

seems too large; and the assertion, that "here is an evil report propagated to thirty thousand persons, twice in two years," is incorrect; since two years intervened between the publication of the two Discourses. See page 6.

I trust no one will suppose I mean to insinuate that Dr. Vincent has in these instances been guilty of wilful misrepresentation; they are stated merely as proofs of haste and heat.

Happy, most happy should I be, if what I have said, could convince Dr. Vincent, and others, especially of his Profession, how imprudent, as well as improper it is to, wander into the thorny wilderness of personal altercation. How many pages has he wasted, and caused me to waste, without advancing a single step towards the main question!

If we now consider the remainder of Dr. Vincent's pamphlet, we shall see clearly the truth of my assertion, that it is little more than a defence of himself and of Westminster School.

On the general system of Public Education, he says little; and of that little a considerable part is foreign to our purpose; this he admits, as to what he says of Milton, Cowley, and Addison; and it is no less true of the boast in the 17th page,—that ours is "the most liberal education known in Europe;" and that foreigners "allow the palm of general information to English travellers, above all others."—A vain boast surely, at least as applied to the present discussion. No question is before us, whether the system of Education in this Island be liberal, or productive of general information. The inquiry is rather, whether general information be not too much its object, to the exclusion of Religious Instruction. And if the testimony of foreigners is to be relied on, it should go to prove, that our travellers are able defenders of the Doctrines of Christianity,

tianity, and eminent examples of the purity of its precepts.

The main point insisted on by Dr. Vincent, relating immediately to the question before us, is;—that the reading of Pagan Authors does not make ours a Pagan Education; nor is liable to the various objections brought against it. And to a certain extent this is true. But though reading Pagan Authors be not teaching Paganism, has it no tendency to instil Pagan Ideas into the minds of boys? If, as Dr. Vincent observes, “the first part of Christian Education is to make young people acquainted with the Scriptures,”—must not the first part of Pagan Education be, to make them acquainted with the doctrines and ceremonies of Paganism? But it will be said,—this is obviated by the master’s pointing out the errors and absurdities of heathenish superstition; and showing “how far its moral doctrines approach the truth, and how infinitely they fall short of the Word of God.”—Where this is done, with the diligence, the zeal, and the abilities of a Vincent, the danger is greatly diminished; and would perhaps be altogether annihilated, if the comment could always attend the text, and were as easily remembered. But let it be observed, that the same text is read in all schools, while the comment varies with the diligence and abilities of the teachers. It is also observable, that Dr. Vincent omits entirely, what appears to me to constitute the greatest objection to the Classics, and which applies peculiarly to those, which are the most usually read and remembered by school-boys.—I mean their OBSCENITY, and that of the Latin poets in particular.

“Maxima debetur puero reverentia.”

If to preserve our minds pure, we must look on nothing, read nothing, hear nothing, that may inflame our sinful passions;

passions; what success can we hope, when at the very period, when our passions are strong, and our reason weak, we feed them daily with impure ideas?—But of this, more hereafter.—Let it not however be supposed, that I wish to detract from the merits of the Classics, or to banish them from our schools. Admiring, as I do, their various beauties, and regarding them as some of the noblest exertions of the human mind, I have no hesitation in declaring, that, as by the study of them arts were at first revived after the lapse into barbarism and ignorance, so by the attentive, though by no means servile imitation of them, must excellence now be attained. Nay, I scruple not to assert, that great blame attaches to the present age, for not studying them more attentively; for sitting down contented with a superficial knowledge of them, or with viewing them through the medium of a cold translation. They are mines replete with the most precious ore, and should be deeply explored. But in proportion as we extol their superiority as compositions, is the danger of reading them without due caution increased. If their eloquence be so fascinating, their conceptions so sublime, so exquisite their wit, and so poignant their satire, as to captivate the young, and to claim the admiration of the learned; what danger is not to be dreaded, when under these beauties is concealed the greatest depravity of morals, and the most deplorable corruption of principles? Surely it is highly necessary to provide some antidote for the delicious poison, which thus secretly distils itself into the mind of youth; in order to derive from the classics the end of all learning,—by informing the understanding to correct and improve the heart.

With respect to the mode, in which Public Education is conducted, Dr. Vincent seems expressly to decline entering into it, except as it exists in Westminster School.

He rightly asserts, that under the expression *Public Schools*, not only Winchester, Eton, and Westminster, but also the other great schools, both of the Metropolis, and in the rest of England, ought to be comprised. But except naming some of these, and denying the relevancy of the charge if applied to them, he enters not into their conduct or defence.

Of Winchester and Eton he says—"What sense the Warden and Master of Winchester, or the Master of Eton (omitting the Provost, may have of this procedure, I know not, but they are men of abilities, and equal to their own defence. I have not communicated with them, because I had not the arrogance to offer myself as a champion in the common cause." And respecting the Universities, he says—"This is a subject foreign to my purpose; the Universities are not deficient in those, who are qualified to meet Dr. Rennell on any ground." Here then he seems to disavow all intention of defending any of these; yet how can the Public Education of the Country be defended, if the conduct of all the great seminaries but one be omitted? Of Winchester indeed he adds, that "he knows enough, generally, to believe that the accusation is groundless;" and at the end of his Tract, after giving a pretty full account of the Religious Instruction at Westminster, he gives that of Winchester in four lines, adding in a fifth—"This account is very imperfect."

Surely an account confessedly *very imperfect*, can scarcely be considered as a defence.

Of Eton he says still less—nothing indeed, but that Dr. Rennell was bred there; which certainly does not render him less competent to consider the system there pursued. Were Dr. Vincent's principle to be universally adopted, and were every man to dissemble the faults of those seminaries, in which he was educated; all discussion must end at  
once;

once; or be maintained by those only, who have not the best means of information. But as all human institutions are liable to imperfections, to endeavour the correction of these, seems rather an act of duty, than of ingratitude.

Of the Universities, Dr. Vincent notes two circumstances, which certainly are much to their credit, though but remotely connected with the present topic: for the question is, not what books have been printed at Oxford or Cambridge, but what studies are there pursued: and when it is considered, that the Lectures in Divinity need only be attended by those who are to take Orders; and that the *indispensable* attendance required, is rather nominal than real; I fear it will prove scarce worth debating, whether in fact, “no Bishop will ordain a candidate without a certificate from the Professor, that this duty has been fulfilled.” Page 16. Could a regular attendance on the whole course, be enforced by subsequent examinations or otherwise; and were that attendance exacted from all students before they take their first degree, much advantage might be expected from Lectures of such a nature, delivered by men of sound principles, learning, and ability.

But let us now advert to what is in fact the pith and marrow of the Work—I mean Dr. Vincent’s defence of himself, and of that School over which he so ably presides.

Of himself he says, “I am too old for reformation;” “I cannot now change my method, my habits, or my opinions;” “I acknowledge no delinquency or neglect.”

Perhaps this might as well have been omitted; perhaps a different declaration would have better become the servant of a Master, who was meek and lowly in heart, and who exhorts his disciples to learn of him.

Dr. Vincent admits, that *Neglect, Vice, and Evils* of va-

rious sorts, exist in his School.—Can none of these be *avoided*? Can none of them be *diminished*? Surely, while such exist, a resolute resistance to all reformation cannot be justified. Surely, at the close of the scene, to have remedied one evil, or checked one vice, will produce more comfort and conscious satisfaction, than any defence of Public Education.

The religious offices at Westminster, as stated by Dr. Vincent, page 33, after repeated consideration, I am not able to understand. “They amount (he says) to prayers (including the graces) ten times a day;” but how many of the ten are prayers, and how many graces, he does not tell us. “Of these none are actually omitted, except the prayers at six o’clock in the morning: the majority of the others is performed regularly from five to nine times every day, when we attend school twice, with a remission on one day only in the week.” What can be intended by saying, the *majority* is performed *from five to nine times every day*? “The Latin prayers at six in the morning, and eight in the evening; with the English at twelve and five, comprehend nearly the whole service of the church.” But as it is not stated what parts are retained, and how they are allotted; the dividing *nearly the whole* into *four parts*, and then omitting *one of the four*, makes it difficult to conceive how the sense and spirit, and connexion of the original service can be preserved.

I comprehend so little what I have now quoted, that I scarce know how to form any judgment on it. If prayers are repeated more than four times a day, I am one of those, who think they certainly recur too frequently. The repeating of them sometimes in one language, and sometimes in another, seems an odd mixture; and the omitting of the morning prayers is most unaccountable. Supposing (which surely is not the case), that the scholars at Westminster

minster are permitted to indulge in bed till seven, eight, or even nine o'clock; still they must rise at last, and when they are risen, why can they not pray? At what other foundations early prayers are omitted, I know not; at Winchester they are daily read in chapel to all the boys by one of the Chaplains, or one of the Masters, before six in summer, and before seven in winter; and the Head Master himself is constantly present, unless prevented by illness.

The habit of prayer, though in itself a good habit, may easily be rendered a very bad one. Prayers too long continued, or too often repeated, disgust the vivacity of youth; prayers read hastily and inattentively, become objects of contempt and ridicule. Prayers not heard, not heeded, or not understood, can never edify\*; and by some even in Westminster School, Latin prayers cannot be readily and fully comprehended.

The habit of reading the Scriptures is also most excellent. But may not the using of them for translation into Latin in the lower forms, render them odious to little boys, or reduce them in their esteem, to the same rank with other works, used for the like purpose? To me it has always appeared dangerous, to degrade the Bible to a level with other books. It is the *Word of God*, and as such entitled to all honour.

I fear I differ once more with Dr. Vincent, when he says (page 36), that the World, and the Parents of the children intrusted to his care, have no right to exact the voluntary and higher offices, to which he there alludes. When a Clergyman undertakes the instruction of youth, I conceive both the Parents and the World have an indisputable right to expect from him religious instruction and

\* See Note A at the end.



moral government. For are not these his bounden duty, and have we not a right to expect from every man *that*, to which his duty obliges him?

But Dr. Vincent, I am persuaded, has no inclination to evade the duty, though he may think himself accountable for the performance of it, to God alone.

In page 41, Dr. Vincent again observes, that “vice still exists,” and again intimates that this is unavoidable; and to a certain degree it is so. But the true question seems to be—Are the Religious principles and the moral conduct of the Westminster Scholars the best that can reasonably be expected from boys who have received a Christian education? If they are, their master deserves all honour. If they are not (whatever unguarded expressions may have escaped him in the ardour of debate), I am confident Dr. Vincent will be ready and willing to redouble his exertions, and to adopt every hint (however obscure its origin) which may tend to promote an object so infinitely important.

When Dr. Vincent urges an inquiry into facts, but limits it in some measure to those, who have enjoyed the benefit of the Foundation; it brings back to my mind other passages, from which there seems room to apprehend, that less Religious instruction is provided for the other Scholars. How far this is the case, I am not certain. It is plain they are not totally neglected; and I am willing to hope their situation, as well as that of the King’s Scholars, will be attentively considered; and every possible assistance to virtue, and protection from vice, be afforded them.

Such are the observations suggested by the perusal of the Doctor’s pamphlet. But I should not easily forgive myself, if I were to omit stating most clearly and distinctly, that I am highly gratified by the account therein contained, of the Catechetical Lectures, the Bible Exercise,

the use of the Greek Testament and Grotius, and the Lectures in Passion Week. The merit of all which offices is *doubled* by the *manner*, in which they are performed. For this indeed we have only Dr. Vincent's word, but let others call for oaths and ordeals;—when freed from contention and prejudice, his words, I am persuaded, are words of truth and soberness.

The preparation of young people for Confirmation\*, and the Supper of the Lord, is so grave and serious a concern, that even to notice it may appear presumptuous in me.

I hope, however, I may be permitted to express my admiration of the terms, in which this subject is treated by Dr. Vincent; and of those excellent measures pursued by him, on these most important occasions; the effects of which, I have no doubt must be great, and great, I trust, will be his reward.

And here I close my remarks on his pamphlet. And although the sentiments of an unknown individual may be of little moment to him, yet as I have ventured to censure freely many passages of his work, I think it right thus publicly to declare my respect, both for his private character as a man, and his public conduct as a Schoolmaster and a Divine; and if through ignorance, inadvertency, or otherwise, I have said any thing improper, or which may justly offend him; I unsay it, retract it, and humbly ask his forgiveness.

Serus in cœlum redeat, diuque  
Lætus intersit populo!

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\* See Note B.

THE celebrated Monsieur Rollin, in his *Treatise on the Method of teaching and studying the Belles Lettres*\*; proposes the following question :

“ What are Christian Masters, who are intrusted with the education of Youth ? ”—His answer is in substance this—“ They are men, into whose hands Christ has committed a number of Children, whom he has redeemed with his blood—And for what end (adds he) has he committed them to their care ? Is it merely to make them Poets, Orators, Philosophers, Scholars ? Who will venture to assert, or even to think this ? He hath intrusted them to their care, that they *may make them TRUE CHRISTIANS.*—*This is the end and aim of the education of children ; other things are only the means †.*” See Rollin’s *Belles Lettres*, vol. iv. liv. 6. art. 13.

This position cannot surely be denied by any Christians (and to such only I write) ; it will, therefore, form a proper basis for that inquiry, which I intend to make the subject of my remaining pages, viz.—Whether the course of education pursued in this country, is well calculated to attain the end here proposed ?

This having been doubted by several late writers ; before I presume to suggest any thing of my own, I beg leave to lay before my readers, some short extracts from their works, according to their dates.

In Mr. Jones’s “ *Considerations on the religious Worship of the Heathens,*” p. 1, he says—

\* See Note C.

† See Note D.

“ From

“ From the common forms of School Education, our youth are in danger of returning back from the purity of Christians to the impure manners of Heathens.”

Dr. Rennell, in the Sermon which has occasioned so much observation, entered largely upon this subject; but it will be sufficient for my purpose, to quote the following passage from Note A.

“ The general state of Public Education in this country, with regard to religion, appears to require much attention. We cannot but lament that in very few of our best endowed Seminaries, the study of Christianity has that portion of time and regard allotted to it, which the welfare of society, the progress of delusive and ruinous errors, and the true interest of sound learning itself, seem at the present time peculiarly to call for.”

The Bishop of Lincoln begins his preface to the Elements of Christian Theology, thus—“ The great deficiency with respect to professional knowledge, which I frequently found in the Candidates for holy Orders, suggested the idea of the following work. *In consequence of the system of Education at present pursued in our Universities* previous to the first Degree, and of the short interval between the admission of young men to that degree, and their offering themselves to the Bishop for Ordination, it too often happens, that they have not applied themselves to theological studies to the extent which might be wished.”

Mr. Gisborne, in the dedication to his “ Familiar Survey of the Christian Religion,” says—

“ If I venture to assert that more than customary attention might advantageously be allotted to the inculcation of Christian principles and knowledge on the youth of this country; let me not be thought desirous of loading their instructors with harsh and indiscriminate censure;”

and

and in the next paragraph—"I fear that many young persons, if summoned from Seminaries of repute to a public examination, would give a better account of the fabled wanderings of Ulysses and Æneas, than of the heaven-directed journeyings of Moses and St. Paul; and would display a more intimate acquaintance with the fortunes of Athens and Rome, than with the historical progress of a religion designed to be their supreme comfort and guide through life, and the means of acquiring eternal happiness."—In the beginning of the preface to the same work, he adds—

"Among persons, who are convinced that youth, the spring-time of life, is the season when the seeds, which are to occupy and fill the heart are to be sown; and who regard the acquisition of eternal happiness through Jesus Christ as the great object of human existence; it is a common, and, I fear, a just complaint, that in any mode of education sufficient attention is too seldom devoted to religion."

Dr. Randolph to his "Sermons preached during Advent," subjoins the following note, page 193—

Page 12. line 4—"And from studies, which might adorn, but should not be made the basis of a Christian education, what evils have originated in a Christian land, for which the most extensive learning never can compensate," &c. &c.—"It is with painful remark I here confess to allude to the system of public education; and reflecting, as I do, that after many years employed in classical attainments, in seeking knowledge in the Lyceum, the Portico, and the Academy, I had not advanced a step in the only knowledge that was to make me wiser, happier, or better; I most cordially join my voice, to that of my friend and school-fellow, Dr. Rennell, as well as to that of another champion in the Christian cause, who followed us in the  
same

same mistaken paths of science, and with whose sentiments I am proud to concur, in deprecating that inattention to serious concerns, which is so visible in our greatest and best endowed Seminaries. I scruple not to affirm, that our Senate and our Bar are now exhibiting, in many instances, the fatal consequences of this neglect; and that amidst the exertion of the noblest faculties, the display of the brightest talents, religion has too often to weep over a total indifference to her duties, an habitual disregard for the providence of God, the Gospel of his Son, and the sacred institutions of his service."

The Bishop of Meath's Note to his Sermon preached last year at St. Paul's, p. 39, is as follows—"I had proposed to myself to say a few words on the sad degeneracy of our public schools in this most important part of education, and their systematic neglect, for such it is now become, of that religious instruction, which, in the earlier periods of the reformation, and even to a much later date, was so carefully provided for the higher and wealthier classes of the British youth; but I found the subject anticipated by Dr. Rennell, in his Sermon on this Anniversary, and I could add nothing to what that zealous and eloquent preacher has there urged to call the public attention to this portentous evil."

Others have, I believe, urged similar objections; but as far as numbers and character can give strength to a cause, those I have quoted may suffice. I mean not however to adopt all they have said; and it is to be observed that they have not produced their proofs\*. On the other hand, their assertions remain uncontradicted, except by Dr. Vincent †; and his defence, as I have shewn already, is confined to one School only, if allowed to be complete, even as to that.

\* See Note E.

† See Note F.

May we not then consider the Subject as open to further discussion? And may not many good effects be produced by a calm and candid examination of it? The great obstacles to this, are the prejudices, and partialities, both of individuals and societies. How strange and how disgraceful it is, that while the World at large acknowledges the excellence of both our Universities; too many of the Members of the one, will scarce allow any merit to the other. And the case is too similar between rival Colleges and rival Schools. Of the partiality of individuals to that Seminary, to which they once belonged, and of a Master to that, over which he presides, Dr. Vincent's Pamphlet, and the estimation in which it is held by Westminster Men, is a most striking instance.

Now is this rational? Or can it fail to be pernicious? If, instead of keeping our eyes open to the excellencies of others, and to our own defects, we are blind to both; how can we ever improve or amend? And if they, who from their situation, experience, and talents (I allude particularly to those, who superintend our Colleges and Schools), are the best judges of existing defects, and practicable improvements; if these, I say, instead of candidly and cordially uniting in such inquiries, will resolutely set their faces against them, and cavil at the wording of a proposition, or the qualification of the proposer; must it not impede, instead of promoting improvement, and prevent, in part, the good, which might otherwise result from it?

But it may be said, why all this outcry? Have not our Schools and Universities gone on and prospered for centuries past, on the same plan, which is now pursued? And are we yet to learn the danger of innovation? To this it may be replied; that to correct abuses, is not to innovate—that so old a system may probably have suffered from the hand of time—and that when an outcry is raised by  
such

such men as I have quoted, we may reasonably conclude, it must have some foundation.

And this supposition will be strengthened, if we consider the great changes, which have taken place since the plan of our education was originally formed.

Though it is impossible to look back without astonishment and reverence to the establishment of those numerous Churches, Colleges, and Schools, which the pious liberality of our Ancestors devoted to the promotion of Religion and Learning, and which are now the boast and glory of our Land; and though one is little less astonished at the wisdom, that framed those Statutes, by which they were regulated; yet we ought not to forget, that these being adapted to Popish superstition, some of them were annulled by the Reformation, and others have since become obsolete. Thus the system admirably calculated for the age, in which it was formed, though it may still continue fundamentally right, may need some additional supports, to enable it to withstand the corruptions of modern times. For little did William of Wickham dream of the Rights of Man, or the Age of Reason—of Kings tried and put to death by their subjects—of Senators neglecting their duty, and quitting their places, to preach the sovereignty of the people, to drunken Mobs in Taverns; and as little did the Pious Founders of Eton, &c. suspect, that their Schools were to contain hundreds of Scholars, clothed in purple and fine linen, and accustomed, from their infancy, to fare sumptuously every day.

An accurate comparison of the present state of our great Seminaries, with that in which they originally existed, would be a curious and useful work; but my aim will be accomplished, if what I have urged, shall induce those, who are most able and most interested, carefully to investigate the general System of Education now in use among us, and



the manner, in which it is practically applied in our Colleges and Schools.

A still more powerful inducement to this, may be drawn from the consideration of the conduct of our youth, at School, at the University, and when entered into Life.

Is it not notorious, that luxury, and the immoralities, which attend it, have crept into the upper Classes of our Schools? Are not our Colleges liable to the same imputation? And when men remove from thence into the great World, is not their conduct still more exceptionable? Do they, generally speaking, observe the ordinances of Christianity, and obey its precepts? Do we find them regular in their attendance on Public Worship, and at the table of the Lord? And are they, in their lives, patterns of temperance, sobriety, and chastity?

Is it not then highly necessary, to examine, without delay, our whole system, with a view to the moral improvement of our youth? To see whether the ancient foundations have been preserved uninjured, and what we have ourselves built thereon?

Far be it from me, to suppose myself qualified to correct the errors and supply the deficiencies of that most important part of our System of Education, which has Religion and Morals for its objects: but having ventured to call the attention of others to this most serious subject; I hope it may not be deemed presumptuous if I submit to their consideration some reflections, which are the result of much meditation, assisted by the sentiments of men, who have adorned the most eminent of our Public Institutions.

As order and discipline are indispensable, but can scarcely be preserved, when societies become very numerous, and the members widely dispersed; no School ought to consist of more than 300 Scholars at the utmost, including those on the Foundation. The Boarding Houses should be all  
under

under the control of the Head Master, and the Managers of them be nominated and removable by those, who nominate the Masters. No Boarding House to receive more than forty Boys; and a Master or Usher to reside in each House; and to superintend as well the moral conduct, as the studies and exercises of all the Boys in that House: no private Tutors to be allowed. Thus all would have equal advantages, and each House would form, as it were, a distinct establishment, under a Master, whose whole attention (except in school-time) would be devoted to its well-being.

It is reported as a saying of the late Dr. Barnard (under whose auspices Eton flourished so highly)—“If you will govern the *Parents*, I will be answerable for the *Boys* ;” and beyond all doubt, much of the mischief charged on Schools, originates at home. One dreadful evil certainly does—I mean the enormous sums given under the name of pocket-money; which at once tempt and enable the Boys to commit all sorts of excesses, and produce among them an inequality of the worst kind. Could this pernicious practice be abolished, half the vices of Public Schools would perish with it. But how to stop it, I know not; and so long as it continues, it must continue to produce most pernicious effects. These may however be checked, by making *expulsion* the inevitable consequence of any gross act of immorality; public expulsion if the act was notorious; private removal if otherwise; and this without any exception, at least among those, who are not on the Foundation. Were this measure adopted, much immorality, and many disturbances, would be prevented.

Another evil originating with the Parents, but not always checked as it might be by the Masters, relates to the Vacations. These are in some Schools too long, in others too frequent, in others both. Surely three Vacations in the year of four weeks each, or two of five or six weeks,

weeks, are the most that can reasonably be allowed. At any rate, the prevailing practice of remaining at home beyond the day fixed for the reassembling of the School, is mischievous in so many respects, that it ought never to be permitted, but in case of absolute necessity. An easy, and (as I am informed) an effectual remedy, is provided in some Schools. Those, who return on the day appointed, are not called on to repeat the Holidays Task; those, who come the day following, must say half of it; those, who stay a day later, the whole of it; and if any remain longer absent, corporal punishment and other penalties are added, in proportion to the offence.

In contemplating the characters of both boys and men in the higher classes of society, the most general and radical defects, appear to be,—the want of *devotion*, and the not making Religion *the rule of life*. Too many, I fear, have not that habit, which ought to be taught in infancy, and continued till death; the habit of falling on their knees every night and morning, to ask pardon for past offences, and grace and protection for the time to come. Others again, though neither infidels nor profligates, seldom think of God or Religion, unless perhaps on Sunday mornings; trusting the whole conduct of their lives, to their feelings, or to the imperfect, and too often false morality, which they have picked up from ancient, or (what is worse) modern Philosophy; instead of subjecting every intended act, to be tried by the example and precepts of Christ. These evils, if I mistake not, have their origin in the neglect of *private Prayer*, and of *reading the Scriptures*. Every Boy should be obliged to learn by heart, a short form of morning and evening prayer, suited to his age and situation; and no pains should be spared, to inculcate the duty, and enforce the practice, of repeating these as regularly as night and day return, meekly kneeling on their knees.

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In the lower Forms, if one hour on Sundays, and Festivals, and on one or two other days in each week, were devoted to the reading of the Bible, accompanied with a short explanation by the Master, and ending with just so much examination as might secure attention to the lecture; the best and most lasting effects might be produced. The Boys would not only become acquainted with the historical facts, and moral maxims; but being freed for the time from the difficulties attending a foreign tongue, would readily receive the instruction, and relish the beauties, pointed out to their observation, by the comment of the Master. The same hour might in the higher forms be devoted to the study of the Greek Bible\*. And thus would they be furnished with the only sound and solid principles, whereon to found their future conduct. But, alas! what can preserve them from the dangerous poison of impure ideas, adorned with all the charms of elegance and harmony, and presented to them mixed with the noblest sentiments of honour and virtue? No human power or wisdom—for “he that toucheth pitch shall be defiled therewith.” And defiled they are, and defiled they must be, so long as such books are put into their hands.

What then is to be done? Are we to banish from our Schools most of the Latin, and several of the Greek Poets? If the question be, whether the morals are to be corrupted for the sake of polishing the understanding, it admits of one answer only, on Christian Principles. But is this case remediless? Why cannot these Authors be cleared of their impurities, and rendered safe as they are delightful? In some instances this might easily be done, with little diminution of the bulk, and less, of the beauties of their works. Of others, though more must be omitted, still the finest parts might be retained †. And surely some-

\* See Note G.

† See Note H.

thing may readily be sacrificed to so essential an object. ONE BOOK indeed there is, which no art of man can render fit for perusal; but which, by a strange fatality, all Boys are *compelled* to read, and some to imprint deeply on their minds. Well would it be for them, and for the World, if the whole of it were committed to the flames. I allude not merely to its obscenities, though most detestable; but to its general plan and principles; particularly to that most dangerous of all artifices, the making virtue contemptible, by feeble sketches of correct characters, void of every brilliant; quality and vice popular, by combining it with wit and genius, and painting profligate characters in lively colours, calculated to charm and captivate the youthful mind.—How then can any Clergyman justify putting *TERENCE* into the hands of his Pupils?

If to state the defects of Schools in general, be an invidious task; how much more so must it appear, to arraign the particular customs of individual Seminaries? But as every Westminster man may be supposed to have burnt my work, as soon as he discovered my wish to do as much for his favourite Author; I think I may venture to say a few words, on the use, to which that Author has long been applied in the Dormitory. For who, that has not been bred up in prejudice, can deny, or doubt, the fatal effects, which must necessarily be produced, by the public recital of the scenes already alluded to, and which are too well known to need a fuller description? On this head indeed (as well as some others) I am anticipated by another anonymous writer, who in reviewing Dr. Vincent's Defence in the Antijacobin for January last, has so ably discussed the Westminster annual play, and the use there made of Terence in particular; that I have nothing to add, but to express my grief and my surprise, that such exhibitions\*

\* See Note I.

should continue to be patronized and applauded, even by some of our most reverend Divines; at a time when private Theatricals and Bills of Divorcement seem to follow each other like cause and effect; and to threaten the extinction of all decency and conjugal fidelity, among the higher ranks of society. Nor can that prejudice surely be less inveterate, which can contemplate without pain and grief, a number of fine manly youths of family and fortune, of high attainments, and still higher promise, dressed like Opera dancers, in silk and satin, roving over a whole neighbourhood, entering both public and private houses; stopping Stage Coaches; and taking from all descriptions of passengers, half crowns, shillings, and even sixpences, which some of them have hardly earned, and can ill afford to part with,

Oh! but (it will be said) this is an ancient custom at Eton—it is so—but surely if ever there were a custom “more honoured in the breach, than the observance”—this is such, at least as now practised. If at other Schools, an election day, or a day kept in memory of a pious Founder, cannot be observed, without a degree of excess, utterly inconsistent with Christian sobriety; is it not the duty of the Governors to abolish so corrupt and corrupting a practice? If extrajudicial oaths are always objectionable; how much more so when tendered compulsorily to boys of fifteen?

Let us now turn to our Universities; where also, among many things excellent and admirable, I fear we shall find some, which call loudly for redress.

The system of Public Worship, consists of morning and evening Prayers daily in the Colleges; and on Sundays, Sermons are preached in the University Churches, and the Under-graduates at least, are supposed to attend them. But if we inquire more narrowly how the prayers are

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performed,

performed, we shall find them too often used as a roll-call, and in some Colleges, with permission of being absent during the first and most solemn part of the service. Too often also they are read with such rapidity, as to make credible the stories told, of men, who boast that they exceed all others, in reading with impious velocity, what should never be uttered but with profound reverence. If we recollect to whom these prayers are addressed; who can help shuddering at so indecent a recital? This evil is the more inexcusable, because the remedy is equally obvious and easy. In some Colleges, the prayers are decently and even devoutly read, and absence at their commencement, subjects the absentee to an imposition. Why will not all follow so fair an example? At any rate, if time cannot be allowed to read the whole service decently, let it be curtailed; but let it not be rendered an object of ridicule to the profane, and of scandal to the pious.

As for the Sermons—who has not heard of *Hack Preachers*? and how can it be expected that young men of taste and sense, will be content to listen to such, when tempted by all the charms of eloquence, and all the ardour of zeal, to go, where certainly it is neither right nor fit they should ever appear; but where they are permitted to go with impunity? If all the energy and ability be on the side of error\*; the consequence must be fatal. But why is this? cannot our Universities supply their Pulpits with Preachers qualified at once to please and to instruct? and what price would be ill bestowed, in procuring such assistance?

It has already been observed, that luxury (always accompanied by vice) has penetrated even these sacred walls. This perhaps is not strange; but surely it is passing strange, that so little exertion should be used to stop its progress.

\* See Note J.

Are not its effects certain and fatal? Does it not necessarily produce habits of expense inconsistent with the future welfare of the majority of the Students?

How are men thus educated, to enjoy any comfort when reduced to the narrow incomes of Curacies or small Livings? Should better preferment, aided by private fortune, fall to their lot (which comparatively can seldom happen), still how are they to support a Wife and Family, and to educate their Sons, as themselves were educated?

Should we inquire whether the religious instruction afforded at School, is continued at College, and the deficiencies of the former, supplied by the latter; we shall too often receive a most painful answer. In this (as in most respects) Colleges vary; but in some, and those not the smallest or least noted, I fear it will be found, that from the day the Students enter, to that, on which they quit the University, they are not required, or even recommended, to read a single book, either on the doctrines, or the duties of Christianity. Its evidences are perhaps laid before them; but having proved its truth, instead of explaining its tenets, and enforcing its precepts, shewing its nature, its importance, and its proper application as the *rule of life*; the Teachers suffer it to remain unknown; while the whole time of the young men is engrossed by the unauthorized assertions of the Moralist\*, the visionary speculations of the Metaphysician †, and the barren demonstrations of Mathematics ‡. If at Cambridge a Student were to burn his Bible, and banish from his mind every idea of Religion, he would not be thereby impeded in the public examinations, or obstructed in taking his Degree: subscription to the articles might formerly have staggered him, but Dr. Paley has taken care to obviate all such objections. Does not this disease call aloud for a remedy, and

\* See Note K.

† See Note L.

‡ See Note M.



is it not high time that the study of Christianity should have some attention paid to it, and that a certain proficiency in it should be required, in order to the attainment of Academical honours\*? With this view perhaps the *Elements of Christian Theology* were composed; and if these were put into the hands of every man on his first coming to the University, and an efficacious perusal secured by suitable lectures and examinations; this alone would tend greatly to remove that sad deficiency, of which the Right Reverend Author too justly complains; and if time would permit, other Authors might be perused in the same manner, with the greatest advantage. I hope there is no society in either University, which would be likely to make an improper selection for this purpose; but to prevent the possibility of so dangerous and disgraceful a step; and to secure an uniformity which is always desirable†, and especially in Theological Studies; it might be advantageous, if the same books were read in all the Colleges, and selected by the University at large. It is indeed greatly to be wished, that a similar uniformity could be established in other studies, as also in discipline, between the several Colleges of each University, and even between the Universities themselves.

Trivial circumstances have sometimes given rise to the greatest events; and most happy should I be, if I might indulge the smallest hope, that the hints of an individual may give rise to such a system of piety, uniformity, and harmony, as may free our Universities from all reproach, and render them in every respect, the glory of this nation, and the admiration of the world.

I have now completed my plan—By shewing—that Dr. Vincent has not vindicated public education, from the charge of defectiveness in Religious Instruction and

\* See Note N.

† See Note O.

**Moral Regulation—**By stating fairly this important question, and the sentiments of several writers respecting it— And lastly, by mentioning such instances of defectiveness, and such measures for their correction, as have occurred to my own mind, or been suggested by others. In doing this I have not been able to please myself, and therefore can scarcely hope to content my readers. But if any one shall take the trouble to correct my errors, and continue the discussion, I earnestly entreat him to recollect, that, however weakly or erroneously the point in debate may have been stated or maintained, truth will still be truth; and those, who sincerely wish to discover it in the present case, must fairly meet the question—

**WHETHER THE RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION AND MORAL CONDUCT OF THE RISING GENERATION, ARE SUFFICIENTLY PROVIDED FOR, AND EFFECTUALLY SECURED, IN OUR SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES?**

## NOTES.

### NOTE A.

*Prayers not heard, &c. can never edify.*—Page 19.

THE indecent manner, in which prayers are read in certain Colleges and Schools, is most shocking. In some of the latter, sensible boys in the higher forms, after having been present at the same prayers daily for years together, have never been able to hear enough of them, to know their import. In some Colleges, such is the careless haste, with which the service is performed, that even the youngest students are scandalized and disgusted, at the indecency of the officiating minister.

The following accounts were communicated by an eye-witness, whose correctness I have no reason to doubt.

“At Eton the oppidans lived mostly in dames’ houses, or with their tutors; a few lodged in the town. At my dame’s there never were any prayers, or any graces; I believe other dames’ houses were exactly the same in this respect.

“We went into chapel on an average six times a week, viz. twice on Sunday, twice on the whole holiday, and once on each of the half holidays; and the conduct of the boys there, was certainly disorderly. I understand Dr. Goodall has introduced decency into Chapel. There were no prayers at any time in the upper School, except that on Sundays the fifth or sixth forms went to hear the theme set, when something was read, but not heard.

“Religious instruction, in the upper School, we never had any. On a Monday morning the fifth and sixth forms had to say by heart fifteen verses of the Greek Testament. The fourth form used once a week to say twelve verses, which they had previously construed and parfed. I do not recollect ever to have heard the spirit of any passage explained,

plained, or inculcated. There was another form called the Remove, but in this I think there was no appearance of Religious instruction.—

“At Cambridge there were sermons on Sundays, and set days, at St. Mary’s. Those went who liked it. I speak largely if I say I heard there five sermons, that I could wish to hear again.

“The number of times, on which chapel was to be attended weekly, was different in the various Colleges. Though piety, whim, or affectation, might make a few casual exceptions, the usual manner of performing the service, was, from all I have observed and heard, calculated to produce the worst effects; to alienate the young from pious attendance on public worship, and to teach them to contemn their Superiors, who so openly made a mock of their holy profession. For children will notice the actions of the full grown, and the profligate object to clergymen the neglect of the clerical character.”

#### NOTE B.

*Confirmation.*—Page 21.

SPEAKING of the Confirmation of the Westminster Scholars, Dr. Vincent says: “I have never seen an instance of that irreverent and tumultuous behaviour which occurs too frequently in the numerous assemblage from contiguous districts.” See Defence, page 38.

Here then is a positive charge, brought by a most respectable Clergyman, who has had abundant means of knowing the fact; that irreverent and tumultuous behaviour frequently occurs, upon one of the most solemn and awful occasions possible. Is not this a scandal and disgrace to our church and country?

#### NOTE C.

*Monsieur Rollin, in his Treatise on the Method of teaching and studying the Belles Lettres.*—Page 22.

THE whole of this excellent work should be read, and some parts of it studied with the utmost attention, by every person engaged, or likely to be engaged, in the instruction of youth. It is also an excellent book to put into the hands of young people. Such, and so various are its merits, that to do them justice would require the pen of the Author,

Monsieur Rollin’s Ancient History, and Roman History, are no less

less excellent, and should be read by all. They are models of what History should be, especially when intended for the instruction of the young. The most important facts are selected, and are interspersed with reflections full of true wisdom and genuine piety. Happy would it be for us, if we were supplied with such histories! But, alas! our case is the very reverse. Mr. Hume's History of England, the most pleasing, and on the whole, perhaps, the best we have, is made the vehicle of the most mischievous attacks on Christianity, so artfully disguised, as to be imperceptible to the unsuspecting eye of youth.

Dr. Robertson contents himself with unfair statements of those circumstances, which relate to our establishment in Church or State, and dis agrees with his Presbyterian and democratic notions.

Mr. Gibbon very artfully attacks all Revealed Religion.

And too many of our modern Historians, and indeed of our modern Writers in general, are men of unsound principles, both in theology and politics; and whatever be the subject, on which they profess to write, they contrive to introduce their erroneous tenets. That man will deserve well of his country, who shall write a faithful history of the last century, on good principles,

NOTE D.

*To make them true Christians is the end and aim of the education of children.*---Page 22.

LET every Minister of the Gospel, who is a Master, or Tutor, consider seriously, whether this has been *his end and aim* in the instruction of his pupils.

NOTE E.

*They have not produced their proofs.*---Page 25.

DR. RANDOLPH has produced one instance, in which he could not be mistaken; and the appeal he makes both to the senate and the bar, is, I fear, too obviously well founded to admit of any doubt. The difficulty of producing proofs, does not perhaps consist in the want of proofs to produce; but in the danger of injury to those persons, or societies, who may be brought forward; and in some cases there may also be danger to the party producing them. Dr. Vincent mentions an action for defamation; and we all know, a libel may be a libel, though

though true; and there is a wide difference between *legal* and *satisfactory* evidence. After all, surely the testimony of such men as the Bishops of Lincoln and Meath, Dr. Rennell, Dr. Randolph, and Mr. Gilborne, is at least sufficient evidence, whereon to ground an inquiry.

## NOTE F.

*Their assertions remain uncontradicted, except by Dr. Vincent.*—Page 25.

MR. DAUBENY, in a volume of Sermons, just published, has a note in defence of Winchester School. And his testimony, and the character and talents of those, to whom the care of that School is committed, leave no room to doubt that it is conducted with much attention and ability: but as he does not enter into any particular statement of its system, or of the provision made for the Religious instruction of the Scholars, we are not enabled to judge from his account, whether that provision be adequate. Bishop Kenn's Manual is an excellent tract; but I fear is scarcely known to many a modern Wickhamist. In order to judge from facts, the whole system of devotion and Religious instruction, must be stated; and even then we may be greatly deceived, unless we have also an impartial account of the manner, in which it is administered; for on *this* the whole effect depends.

## NOTE G.

*The study of the Greek Bible.*—Page 31.

“If the New Testament be true, the Old is so too; because the New Testament tells us, that it is—*Search the Scriptures*, says our Lord to the Jews, *for they are they which testify of me*. We cannot therefore admit the one revelation, and deny the other. They are closely united by Him, who is the author of both; and *what God hath joined together, let not man put asunder*.”

So says Dr. Ogden, in his second excellent Sermon on the Lord's Supper. But this doctrine does not suit our modern divinity; and so in spite of all that Dr. Ogden or his Master can say, the Old Testament is too often left on the shelf. If it were read constantly in Schools, accompanied by short oral expositions and illustrations; young people would learn at once to understand and appreciate its

wonderful contents. There *only* can we find an authentic Ancient History; and that, short indeed, but astonishingly comprehensive; including in a small compass, the origin of the world, and of its inhabitants; with their history during three thousand years, of which we have no other account entitled to any degree of credit.

*There* we have a body of laws, both moral and ceremonial, appointed by God himself; adapted indeed to the wants of one peculiar people; but abounding with wisdom and instruction.

*There* we find poems and hymns, which remain to this hour unrivalled in sublimity as well as piety.

*There* we have a collection of maxims for the conduct of life, to which the wisdom of heathen antiquity has nothing to compare.

*There* Moses, and all the Prophets, foretell, and by foretelling prove, Christianity.

In a word, *there* is an inexhaustible fund of instruction, information, and amusement, adapted to all ages, situations, and dispositions. Were these sacred records explained and enforced, in the manner pointed out by Dr. Vincent in his 37th page, they would furnish young men with the only adequate defence against the subtleties and sophistry of that metaphysical deism, which is now so prevalent, under the names of Moral Philosophy, Morality, Ethics, Casuistry, and Natural Law.

“I am no enemy to philosophy; but when philosophy would rob me of my Bible, I must say of it, as Cicero said of the Twelve Tables:—This little book alone exceeds the libraries of all the Philosophers, in the weight of its authority, and in the extent of its utility.”—See the Bishop of Llandaff’s admirable Apology for the Bible; Letter the Third.

#### NOTE H.

*The finest parts might be retained.—Page 31.*

FROM some Schools Ovid is totally banished, and certainly some of his works are absolutely inadmissible, but others of them (especially great parts of his *Metamorphoses*) are too admirable to be rejected, and might easily be separated from the dross; this method has already been adopted with success on the continent.

Nota

## NOTE I.

*Such exhibitions.*—Page 32.

THAT theatrical performances are prejudicial to the morals of young people, cannot surely be denied. But it is said to have been urged in defence of the Westminster play, that it is ordained by the statutes. To this I shall only answer; that if, notwithstanding those statutes, morning prayers can be omitted daily, surely a play may be omitted annually. Or let it be commuted for public speaking, which, as practised at Winchester, Eton, Harrow, and elsewhere, seems not only innocent, but in many respects advantageous.

## NOTE J.

*If all the energy and ability be on the side of error, the consequences must be fatal.*—Page 34.

If we except that short but dreadful period, when fanaticism, united with hypocrisy, overthrew both the Church and Monarchy; at no time since the Reformation, has enthusiasm spread so wide in England as in these our days. It has been carried to the greatest excess, both by Clergymen and Laymen, in meeting-houses, barns, and fields. By more sober Divines, holding some of the Calvinistic tenets, it has been introduced into our churches and chapels, though in a less degree, and in a milder tone; but mixed sometimes with indecent reflections on the rest of our Clergy. This would be less alarming, if such reflections were as groundless as they are indecorous; but, alas! they are often too just; and those, who are the objects of them, irritated and disgusted by the success of their opponents, instead of reforming what is amiss, and redoubling their zeal, fly off to the contrary extreme, and affect to treat their accusers with contempt.—*Fas est et ab hoste doceri*—much more ought we to be willing to learn from our sincere and zealous, though mistaken, brethren.

If to the great fundamentals of the Gospel, they add, as equally clear and important, some obscure, or erroneous tenets; will this justify us in preaching the dry morality of the Heathens, instead of the doctrines and duties of Christianity? Who is there that, in this Christian country, has not been present at the delivery of mere moral discourses, grounded on mere moral principles and arguments? Some



set up two objects of our veneration, *God*, and *Nature*, and two distinct religions, *natural*, and *revealed*. What then is *Nature*, but that order of things, which God has appointed? And what is *Natural Religion*, but those divine truths, which the Almighty revealed, first to Adam, and afterwards to Noah and his sons, and to Abraham and his descendants; and which have been handed down by *tradition*, or have since been collected at various times, by intercourse with Jews or Christians, or by access to their sacred records; but have been corrupted by negligence and ignorance, by distance of time and place, and by the erroneous deductions of unassisted reason? If it be more than this, produce its code, or, if that be lost, prove that it once existed. If the answer be, that it exists in the minds of all men; I deny the fact; I deny that any knowledge there exists which has not been received by instruction.—“Canst thou by searching find out God?” Job, xi. 7.—“The things of God knoweth no man.” 1 Cor. ii, 11. Besides, if this *ignis fatuus* (which is to rival, or even eclipse Revelation) were inherent in human nature, it must be the same in all men; whereas in this, beyond any other instance, are the endless varieties of error exemplified. *Quot homines, tot sententiae*—Look at the boasted philosophers of antiquity—Do they agree in their notions of the Deity, his Worship, or his Will? We find them to the last, doubtful and variable, differing from others, and from themselves, and unable to ascertain the truth. Warned by their example, and conscious of their own inability to discover the will of God; some among us, have contended for a rule of life, distinct from the knowledge of God, and of his will, and called by them, *morality, ethics, natural law, &c.* And is this that Gospel, which Christ commanded his disciples to preach to all the world? Was it to this our Clergy pledged themselves at their ordination? Did they not then solemnly declare their persuasion that the Holy Scriptures contain all doctrine necessary to salvation; and their determination *out of the said Scriptures* to instruct the people committed to their charge; and to teach nothing as requisite to salvation, but what may be concluded and proved thereby? Did they not then solemnly promise to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines, and to be diligent in reading the Holy Scriptures, and in such studies as help to the knowledge of the same? And is it thus they fulfil their vows? And do they thus hope to counteract enthusiasm? Or can they expect the Grace of God to render such preaching effectual to the salvation of their hearers? If enthusiasm shall ever be conquered, it must be by those

those weapons, which it misapplies. Let its opponents lay before their flocks all the fundamental doctrines of Christianity—The Creation—The State of Innocence and Covenant of Works—The Fall of Man—The Redemption and Covenant of Grace—The Wickedness of the old World, ended by the Flood—Noah and his Family preserved, and the Covenant renewed with him—The World re-peopled, the Confusion of Tongues, and Disperſion of the Nations—The Call of Abraham, his Faith—Iſaac the Type of Chriſt—The Plagues of Egypt—Moſes, and the written Law—The Hiſtory of the Jewiſh Nation under its Judges and Kings—The Rebellion of the Ten Tribes—Their Idolatry and Diſperſion—The Captivity of the Jews—Their Reſtoration—The Prophets, and their Prophecies—St. John the Baptiſt, the Precuſor of the Meſſiah—Jeſus the Mediator of the new Covenant—His Incarnation and Birth, his Circumciſion, and Submiſſion to the ceremonial Law—His Manifeſtation to the Gentiles—His Temptation—His Miracles—His Prophecies—His Precepts—His Character—His Conduct—His Trials—His Sufferings—His Death, and the Atonement and Satisfaction thereby made for the Sins of the whole World—His glorious Reſurreſtion, and triumphant Aſcenſion.

Nor let them fail to unfold the remaining Articles of our Faith—The Deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt, and his Office, as the Sanctifier of the Church—the great Myſtery of the Trinity in Unity—The one Holy Catholic and Apoſtolic Church, founded by Chriſt and his Apoſtles; its Conſtitution, its Officers, its Privileges; and our duty thence reſulting, to become and continue faithful members thereof, and partakers of its Sacraments, inſtituted by Chriſt himſelf, and his appointed means of Grace and Salvation. Let them alſo explain the connexion and communion between that part of the Church, which is ſtill militant on earth, and that, which is already triumphant in Heaven—The forgiveness of our Sins, procured by the Death of Chriſt, if we fulfil the conditions required by him; and the Rewards conſequent thereon, the Reſurreſtion of our Bodies, and eternal Happineſs in Heaven—And let them fulfil the remainder of their Vow, by pointing out to their Hearers, the Danger and Deluſion of the ſtrange and erroneous Doctrines, which are now too prevalent both in our own Church, and among thoſe numberleſs Sects, which are the diſgrace of our Holy Religion, whoſe characteristic is Unity.

In a word, let them not ſhun to declare all the Counſel of God; and let them declare it, like Dr. Vincent, “with all their heart, and  
mind,

mind, and soul, with all the powers they possess, and all the knowledge they have acquired."

Few of their hearers are judges of the soundness of a syllogism, but all of them have passions and affections; and are these able instruments of vice or error, never to be employed in the cause of true religion; of that religion, whose first and great commandment is love, and whose second differs only in its object; whose history, and whose fancies are calculated to melt the most obdurate heart, and make the stoutest tremble? Must the sufferings and death of the Son of God himself, for our sake, and in our stead, produce no emotion of sorrow or gratitude in our breasts? Must the certainty of eternal happiness and glory, or of torments endless and insupportable, have no effect on our imaginations, or even on those of our children? "Far from us, and from our clergy, be such frigid philosophy." No, let reason regulate all the faculties of our souls, and point them to their proper objects, but let no stolid apathy attempt their annihilation. Under reason's guidance they are not only harmless, but highly useful; and in nothing more so, than in promoting the interests of Christianity.

Left what I have here advanced on the subject of preaching, should fail to convince, or appear presumptuous as coming from a Layman, I desire to protect it by an authority, which no man who duly appreciates superior talents and sound principles, will be inclined to dispute. Bishop Horsley, in a late Charge, says as follows: "If, instead of thus preaching Christ, you are content to preach only Socrates or Seneca; if, instead of the everlasting Gospel of the living God, you preach some extracts only of your own, accommodated by a bold retrenchment of mysteries, to the blindness and the pride of human reason; depend upon it, animated enthusiasm will be an overmatch for dry, frigid ethics; superstition will be an overmatch for all such mutilated Gospels; and crafty atheism, taking advantage of the extravagance of the first, the insipidity of the second, the enormities of the third, and of the rash concessions of half-believers, will make an easy conquest of them all. In delivering the great mysterious truths of the Gospel, and I repeat it, *the whole Gospel, with all its mysteries, must be preached in all Congregations*, I would advise you to use in general, not an argumentative, but a plain didactic style; teach with authority, not as the scribes."

## NOTE K.

*The unauthorized assertions of the Moralists.*—Page 35.

EVERY assertion may fairly be called unauthorized, which contradicts the law of God; and every writing pernicious, which openly or indirectly tends to supersede, or weaken the authority of that law. In the very first page of Dr. Paley's "Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy," we are told, that Moral Philosophy means, that science which teaches men their duty, and the reasons of it, and that without it the rules of life, among which the Scriptures are allowed a place, oftentimes mislead men through a defect, either in the rule or in the application. If, therefore, to prevent the Scriptures from misleading us, moral philosophy must previously be studied, and moral philosophy teaches men their duty and the reasons of it, the conclusion is, that the Scriptures do indeed contain a rule of life, but do not teach men their duty or the reasons of it. The Scriptures must, therefore, upon Dr. Paley's assertion, be considered as affording a set of precepts, which, though true, could not be applied till the moralist interposed to give them efficacy. In vol. i. p. 8. of the same work, it is said, that the Scriptures "are employed not so much to teach new rules of morality, as to enforce the practice of it by new sanctions, and a greater certainty, which last seems to be the proper business of a revelation from God, and what was most wanted." It is presumptuous to determine what is the proper business of a revelation; and to assert that the enforcing of morality by new sanctions, and a greater certainty, was the thing *most* wanted, is at least to slight the necessity of a Redemption, without which the speculations of morality will prove but a broken reed.

In vol. i. p. 41. the author defines virtue to be the "doing good to mankind in obedience to the will of God, and for the sake of everlasting happiness." Mere implicit obedience, therefore, to the will of God will not, according to this definition, on which the author rests his whole system, be virtue, unless it is joined with the view of doing good to mankind. But the Scriptures give a different account of virtue, and bestow the highest praise upon acts of implicit obedience, of which it was impossible for any human faculties to foresee the beneficial consequences to mankind. And if Dr. Paley's be the true definition of virtue, how can men of ordinary capacities, and narrow information,

information, who compose the majority in every society, ascertain that their actions are virtuous, unless they do, what in fact is impossible, calculate the effects of each individual action upon society at large, and balance the good and evil of it with precision? And yet until it is determined on which side the scale preponderates, the directions of the moralist, who has rendered the Scriptures useless, must be inapplicable, and men in general live without a sufficient rule of life. But lest this reasoning should be deemed too finely spun, and to make the author answerable for conclusions, which he did not intend, and does not mean to admit, let him be heard in his own words. Vol. i. p. 70. "Actions are to be estimated by their tendency. Whatever is expedient is right. It is the utility of any moral rule, alone, which constitutes the obligation of it;" and it is undeniable, that the author has generally throughout his work, determined any particular mode of conduct to be right or wrong, by endeavouring to trace its general effect upon mankind at large. If Dr. Paley had merely laboured to shew, how in almost every human action it hath pleased our Creator to combine and interweave our temporal welfare with a strict submission to his commands, he would have attempted a work well worthy of his station in a Christian church. As it is, though the preface leads us to expect that the sanctions of Revealed Religion would form a material part of the work, yet the author has contrived to give the pre-eminence to moral speculations, and the reader retires from his book less swayed by the influence of religious obligations, than disposed to waste his thoughts in meagre and barren researches, for which the probability is, he has neither sufficient talents nor information. Nor is this book likely to produce inconsiderable mischief; by the smoothness of its style it has recommended itself to private libraries; and perhaps, by its argumentative form, to the University of Cambridge, where it supplies Theses for the public exercises, and is made a subject of the public examinations. At these examinations, however, it is merely required, that the contents of the book be accurately remembered; the truth or falsehood of its positions is not commented upon, and in no instance are any attempts made by the public instructors to point out its errors, or its tendency to lead men astray from the simple morality of the Gospel. Let any one read the chapter on Subscription of the Articles, and reflect whether the sophistry, which there presents itself, is fit to be taught, or rather not deserving to be utterly suppressed, if possible, by a society, whose boast it

it should be, to be a nursing-mother to our Church? The consequence of substituting any other instruction in the place of Religion, must be dreadful: it cannot therefore be impertinent, and it is hoped it will not be in vain, to have made these remarks. The caution of the Apostle seems no less needful now, than when it was first given:—  
*“ Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy, and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.”*

## NOTE L.

*The visionary speculations of the Metaphysician.*—Page 35.

MR. JONES, who (as Dr. Vincent observes) had “ as sincere a faith, as ever adorned a Christian,” thanked God, that he had not a metaphysical head; and so in truth do I. The very name seems ominous, and I am not only convinced with Bishop Porteus, that “*METAPHYSICS* have been too often employed in undermining and subverting the clearest principles of morality and religion;” see Sermons, vol. i. p. 188; but am also firmly persuaded, they have a natural tendency thereto; and are pregnant with various mischiefs; particularly the confounding the most obvious dictates of common sense, in (what the Bishop admirably denominates) *the inexplicable mazes of metaphysical refinement.*

They lead to nothing certain or conclusive; a shrewd observer was he, who said,

“ He knew *what’s what*, and that’s as high  
 As metaphysic wit can fly.”

I am ready to acknowledge the great talents, and good intentions of Mr. Locke, but, I much fear, his works have contributed to the production of those detestable doctrines (political as well as metaphysical), which have shaken every government in Europe, and deluged with blood many of its finest provinces.

Of the soundness and safety of Mr. Locke’s principles, no man I suppose is a more competent judge than the present Bishop of Rochester, whose learning and talents, have made him at once the terror and envy of our modern philosophers. The following are his sentiments as expressed in his late Charge. Speaking of the men of science in France, he says: “ When they embraced the metaphysics of the sage

Locke, as they ever affect to call him, it was to apply them to a purpose to which the sage Locke himself, it must be owned, never perceived that they were applicable. More sagacious perhaps in this than their master, they saw, that upon his principles, once admitted, it would be easy to build a theory of mind, which would make the immaterial principle as unnecessary in the microcosm of Man, as it was, according to their distorted Newtonianism, in the Universe; reducing all the phenomena of Sensation, Thought, Reason, Intellect, to a mere system of vibrations."

#### NOTE M.

*The barren demonstrations of Mathematics.*—Page 35.

It is curious, but painful, to contemplate the different degrees of attention bestowed on Mathematics in our two Universities. In the one, a superficial knowledge of the first rudiments is considered as sufficient. In the other, every encouragement is offered, to devoting, almost exclusively, the whole time usually spent at the University, to the study of this Science.

That a competent knowledge of the elements of Algebra, Geometry, Astronomy, Mechanics, Optics, and Hydrostatics, is a desirable part of manly education, must surely be admitted by all. It is not unpleasant in itself, and it is applicable to various purposes of life; it opens and strengthens the Mind, and by teaching to reason justly, enables it, by solid argument, to ascertain truth, and confute sophistical declamation.

But these advantages may be fully secured, without compelling young men to explore the deeper recesses of analytical learning, and waste the prime of life, in the fruitless investigation of fluents and infinite series.

Besides, through the intense study of Mathematics, other useful knowledge necessarily lies neglected, and the only opportunity of acquiring it is lost; nay, the very taste requisite to its enjoyment is too often annihilated, and an unnatural and excessive application to this barren unsocial science, has in some instances ruined both the bodily and mental powers of the Student.

Nor is this all—still worse effects are too often produced. For as the body, when fixed too long in one posture, becomes deformed and weak; the mind poring incessantly on abstract Theorems and Problems, becomes contracted and callous; and is no longer able to ex-

expand

pand itself, or apply its powers in any other direction; and the Mathematician, when called to the contemplation of History, Politics, or Theology, after trying in vain to apply to their investigation the only sort of proof, to which he has been accustomed, shrinks back from the inquiry, and falls into scepticism. Whilst others, endued originally with talents of the same dimensions, having duly exercised them in the various branches of introductory knowledge, when summoned to the investigation of these subjects, by applying to each, such methods of proof as its nature admits, are enabled to form a sound determination. Having met with error in other sciences, they are led to believe that the conclusions of human reasoning on many subjects, fall short of truth; that the pride of self-opinion is neither unfrequent, nor unproductive of mischief: and convinced that no finite being can comprehend infinity, nor man find out the Almighty to perfection; they receive with meekness and gratitude, those revelations of himself, which God has vouchsafed to afford us; and finding, that, according to every rule of evidence and genuine criticism, the Bible stands confirmed, as the sacred record of the divine Will, they believe its doctrines, and obey its laws.

#### NOTE N.

*Academical Honours.*—Page 36.

IT is with no small satisfaction I learn that a new examination previous to the admission to the first degree, has been instituted at Oxford; and that Theology is one of those branches of knowledge, which it includes. May it produce as many and as great advantages, as the wisdom and moderation, with which it has been instituted, and hitherto conducted, give reason to expect! And may Cambridge, which had the honour to set the example of an examination, copy this essential improvement; and no longer suffer her Sons to remain ignorant of that science, which alone can make them wise unto salvation. I am also happy to hear, that the new Master of Eton is reviving the system there pursued, and correcting abuses with a firm and temperate hand.

#### NOTE O.

*To secure an uniformity, which is always desirable.*—Page 36.

THE difficulty of acquiring dead Languages would be greatly diminished, if the same Grammar were universally adopted; which might easily be effected, by permitting no other to be taught in the



Schools of Royal Foundation, and in Winchester College. According to our present system of Education, few Boys go to less than two Schools, and being moved at the time when they have learned by rote the Latin, and perhaps a considerable part of the Greek Grammar, it is a dreadful addition to their drudgery, to be put to learn other Grammars, varying more or less as the case may happen; but always enough to puzzle and perplex a child. The Masters also of the introductory Schools, are laid under great disadvantages; not knowing which Grammar to prefer, and having indeed only a choice between evils; for no one Grammar can suit all the Scholars, who may be offered, and the use of two or three Grammars in the same School, is obviously objectionable. Etiquette is never more misplaced, than when it impedes Science, and it is impossible to settle it accurately among equals. Perhaps in the present case, the honour of all might be secured, and the general good promoted, if the Eton Grammars, corrected by the Masters of Westminster, and those corrections confirmed or rejected by the Masters of Winchester, were to be adopted in all those Schools.

## POSTSCRIPT.

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IT was not till great part of the preceding pages was compiled, that I discovered in the Bishop of London's first volume of Sermons, some observations, so much in point to our present purpose, and so much more able than any thing I have said, or can say ; that I am confident every impartial reader will thank me for inserting them ; and it is no small satisfaction to me to be able to produce such high authority for several opinions, of the truth of which though convinced myself, I feared I might fail to convince others.

“ It may be thought, perhaps, that the regulation of dress, and diet, and amusement, and such like trifles, is below the notice of a great and learned body. But it is a mistake to think so.” Sermons, vol. i. p. 176.

“ In those points which relate immediately to morals, the least relaxation must tend to subvert our credit, and even endanger our existence. In a place sacred to virtue and religion, no species of vice, no kind of temptation to vice, can for one moment be tolerated or connived at. We shall not be allowed to say in our defence, that we only keep pace with the manners of the age ; this will be deemed our reproach rather than our excuse. It is *our* business, not meanly ‘ to follow a multitude to do evil ;’ not to *conform* to the corrupt fashions of the times, but by  
our

our precepts, and our example, to fortify our young disciples *against* them. It is evident that the world expects from us a more than ordinary degree of watchfulness over our conduct. It expects that the correction of national abuses should begin here ; and the expectation is not unreasonable. Whence should general reformation take its rise, if ever it rise at all, but from the two great sources of Learning and Religion ? We are as lights set on an eminence, shining at present, indeed, *in a dark place*, in the midst of luxury and profusion, but able, perhaps, by degrees, to disperse the gloom of the surrounding prospect. If we cannot check the excesses of the present age, we may at least crush future extravagances in their birth, by infusing into our youth those lessons and those habits of frugality, abstinence, and sober-mindedness, which are essential to the welfare both of the Universities, and of the State." Page 177.

" Under the impression of such reflections as these, it is obvious that there cannot be a properer time for carrying the young academic still one step further, and giving him some insight into the nature, the design, the evidences, and the precepts of the CHRISTIAN REVELATION.

" But here unfortunately we are obliged to stop. For this *most important part* of education, no *adequate*, no *public* provision is yet made in this University. Revealed religion has not yet a proper rank assigned it here among the other initiatory sciences ; is not made an indispensable qualification for academical honours and rewards ; has not, in short, all that regard paid to it, which its own intrinsic worth, and the peculiar circumstances at present attending it, seem to demand." Page 190.

" Does it not then seem highly advisable for us to turn our thoughts a little more towards this great object than has hitherto been deemed requisite ? It is true, indeed, that  
some

Some acquaintance with the abstruser sciences may be a very proper foundation even for theological learning. But it cannot surely be necessary to lay this foundation so exceedingly deep as is here generally done. It cannot be necessary to consume the flower and vigour of the youthful mind, in the very first stage, as it were, of its literary progress; to occupy it wholly for *three entire years* in these preparatory studies, when it should be going on to the 'principles' and elements at least 'of the doctrine of Christ;' should be advancing gradually from the foundation to the superstructure; should be learning, under wise and experienced 'master-builders,' to erect that sacred edifice of divine knowledge which must be its strong hold and fortress against the many adversaries it will soon have to contend with. If this great work is not carried on to a certain point, during the course of education in this place, when can we hope that it ever will? They who come here with a view to the means, not of acquiring, but of adorning a fortune, no sooner quit this literary retirement, than they engage with ardour in the various pursuits of fashionable life, and have seldom either inclination or leisure for studies of a serious nature. They who are destined to secular professions, or other active employments, find themselves, after leaving this place, so fully occupied, first in learning, and then discharging, the duties of their respective vocations, that they can scarce ever bring themselves to bestow that degree of attention on religious inquiries which their importance deserves. It is here then, or no where, that this great object must be brought home to their thoughts, and made a part, *an essential* part, of their academic acquirements. And this necessity (as I have already remarked) is still more apparent with respect to those who are sent here to qualify themselves for the pastoral office; whose peculiar province and business it will be,

be, to instruct the people committed to their care 'in the words of eternal life;' and who must therefore never expose themselves to the hazard of that insulting question, 'Thou that teachest another, teachest thou not *first* thyself?'" Page 193.

Such are the sentiments of this no less mild and prudent, than pious and learned Prelate. Sentiments not of his younger days only, but published, and re-published again and again, in his riper years. And be it remembered too, that they were delivered in a Commencement Sermon at Cambridge—a time and place when certainly nothing but a strong sense of duty, grounded on the necessity of the case, and on the importance of the subject, could have induced such a man to state any objections to the System of Education pursued in that University.

THE END.

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ERRATA.

Page 8, line 19, *dele* "must."

— 32, — 11, *place the semicolon after* "quality."