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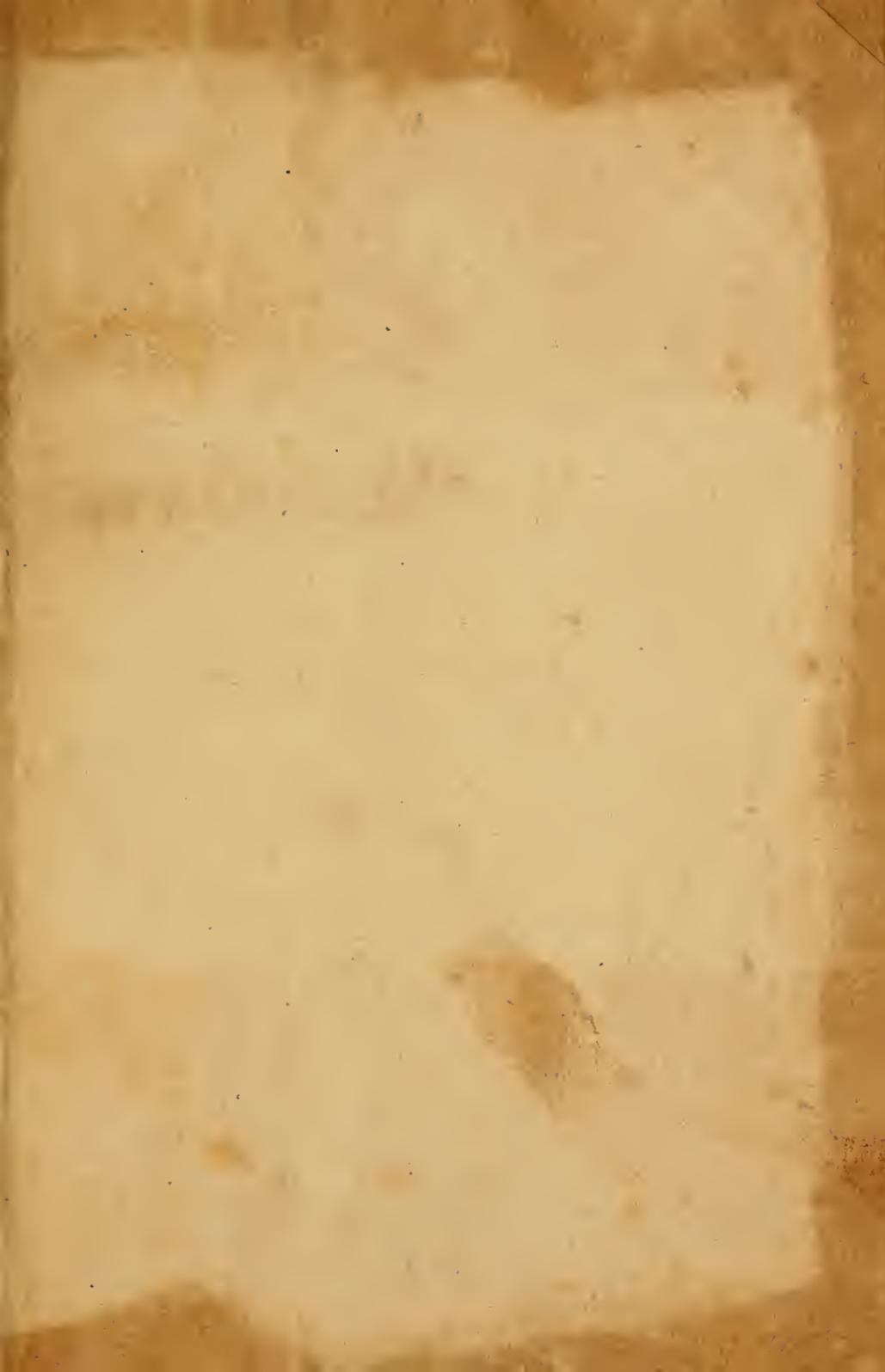
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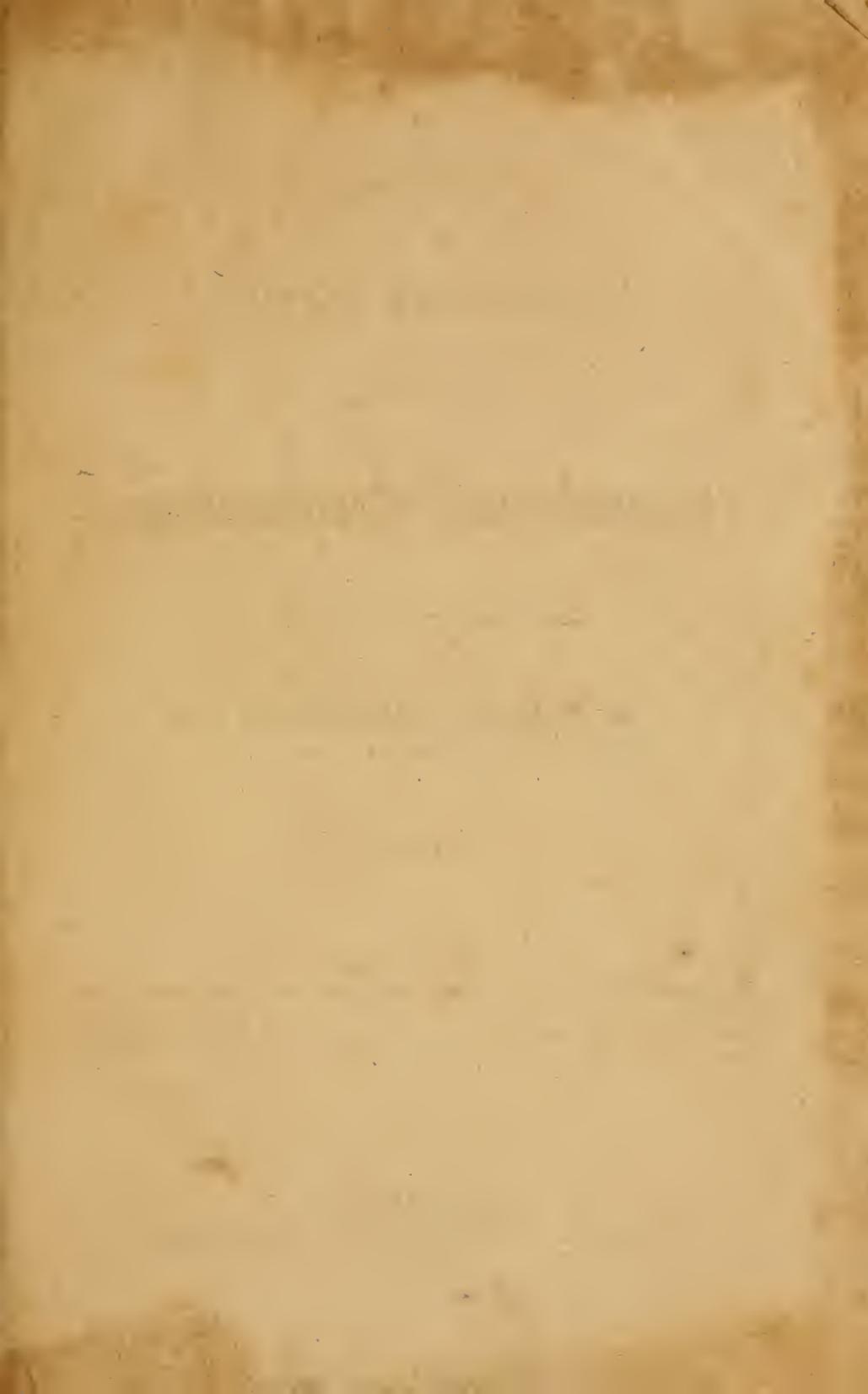
Presented by Mr. Samuel Agnew of Philadelphia, Pa.

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THE WHOLE TRUTH,

RELATIVE TO THE

CONTROVERSY

BETWIXT THE

AMERICAN BAPTISTS:

COMPILED AND ARRANGED

BY HENRY HOLCOMBE, D. D.

Pastor of the first Baptist church, in Philadelphia.

PART I.

He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.

SOLOMON.

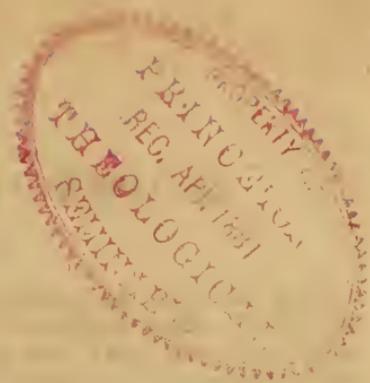
Doth our law judge any man before it heareth him, and know what he doeth?

NICODEMUS.

PHILADELPHIA:

PRINTED FOR THE COMPILER, BY J. H. CUNNINGHAM.

1820.



CERTIFICATE.

Without expressing any opinion on the merits of the pamphlet, entitled "The Whole Truth," &c., I do hereby certify, that I have examined the extracts contained in it, which purport to be taken from the letters of the Rev. Doctors Fuller and Furman, and from a printed communication of John King; and find them to have been faithfully copied, from said letters and communication, without any variation in the words, or the sense. The whole of these writings, it is true, are not given; but so much of them as the author has cited, will be found in the originals now in his possession.

EZRA STILES ELY, D. D.

Pastor of the the third Presbyterian church, in Philadelphia.

Feb. 22, 1820.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

IT is high time the controversy between the American Baptists should be fully and fairly laid before the religious public. This order of Christians, it is supposed, including their adherents, can be little short of half a million : so that the confusion and discord into which they are thrown, are not inconsiderable evils ; especially as they alienate their mutual affections, and sink them in the esteem of other denominations. Many enquire, with solicitude, whether the influence which has produced this mass of pernicious effects, is of *foreign* or *domestic* origin. That there is a Babylonish garment, a golden wedge, or an Achan, in their camp, has become incontrovertible. It is, on all hands, confidently concluded, from the existing state of things, that there is some selfish *Metropolitan*, who has systematized his measures, and enlisted his agents, to manage the resources of these people to his own advantage. But, how to designate the *arch-hypocrite*, amid the complicated foldings of deep disguise, and well-disciplined ranks of *fame-guards*, is the difficulty. The enquiry employed to solve it, has resulted in a general impression, that this *demi-pope* exists, either in *Dr. Henry Holcombe*, or *Dr. William Staughton* : and, at present, if we may judge from Mr. Lewis Baldwin's Letters, and the Corresponding epistle of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, at her session in 1819, appearances are much against *Dr. Holcombe*. In Mr. Baldwin's performance, consisting of ninety-two octavo pages, *Dr. Holcombe* is represented as possessing the art and address which have imposed on the constituted authorities of the State, and two Universities ; and is stigmatized as the author of a nameless production, equally false and detestable : and the associational epistle exhibits him as an offender of such magnitude and enormity, that two thousand nine hundred and ninety-four *accusers*, who represent themselves, as " sound in the faith and *pious*," have risen, in the majesty of their strength, to banish him, as it would seem, from the earth, as unfit for human society. Acts xxii. 22. And, in addition to these authorities, it is well known, that the Rev. Luther Rice has signified that *Dr. Holcombe* is the cause of all the discordance which has agitated the Conventions, Missionary Boards, and Advisory Councils, of the Baptists, from Maine to Georgia.

This, though much, is not all, his opponents have advanced, and widely circulated, against *Dr. Holcombe* : a board of missions have silently exterminated his name from their publications. Now, should he remain *silent* under all these charges and insinuations, and especially as a whole association has levelled her artillery at *him alone*, the public would naturally impute *such silence* to a consciousness of *criminality*.

In appealing, however, from so great a number of witnesses and *judges*, to a far higher tribunal, it should certainly be with unfeigned diffidence, and testimony amply sufficient to prove himself innocent of what they have laid to his charge: but, whatever may be the result of the present controversy, all will admit, that, before he is condemned, he should be patiently *heard*: and, if able to show, by disinterested characters, of undoubted and high respectability, that all the accusations of which he is the subject, are either false, or *frivolous*, let him be honourably acquitted, and his accusers estimated according to their deeds. One thing is clear: if Dr. Holcombe can solidly vindicate himself from the allegations of his opponents, he is strongly bound to do it.

Who can suppose, that he could peacefully descend to the grave, and, from the fear of man, or a spurious delicacy, leave his religious friends and posterity, to hear him reproached, as a disturber of the peace and good order of society, with adequate means in his own hands, as *he believes*, to prevent that posthumous infamy? It may be fairly presumed, that all who know the value of reputation, will say, as with one voice, if Dr. Holcombe can prove, to the satisfaction of a correct and candid public, that the present contentions betwixt the American Baptists, originated from sources beyond the sphere of his influence, and through the instrumentality of characters above his control, he is under all the obligations which duty and honour can impose, to do it, without the least avoidable procrastination. In attempting to furnish a clue to just perceptions of the present controversy, so far as Dr. Holcombe has been involved in it, how natural is the exclamation, "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" James, iii. 5.

It may be confidently relied on, that the original question in this affair, was, *virtually*, Shall Dr. Holcombe be suffered to enjoy religious *liberty*, in Philadelphia? Standing fast, Gal. v. 1. in this precious gift of God to man for a while, in opposition to individuals, a party was formed for the *unconcealed* purpose of driving him from this city, by a combination of systematical efforts. Passing *private* endeavors to effect this object, as unsusceptive of such proof as some might require, a few shall be stated of too *public* a nature to admit of contradiction.

The attack made on him in the first Baptist convention for foreign missions, is of the utmost notoriety: and, from its importance, in the present case, it may be proper, not only to adduce its *cause*, but trace it into several of its legitimate *consequences*.

Soon after Dr. Holcombe arrived in Philadelphia, he was informed, and thoroughly convinced, by the Rev. John P. Peckworth, that the Rev. William White, then pastor of the second Baptist church of this city, was a lewd and dissolute character: and this appalling conviction was corroborated, by a variety of corresponding testimony! Hence, when the Rev. Dr. Staughton nominated Mr. White as a suitable person to be on a conventional committee, Dr. Holcombe, before that venerable body, questioned the propriety of this nomination, on the

ground of Mr. White's at least, very *doubtful* standing in *religious* society. Instead, under these circumstances, of leaving the parties immediately concerned, to settle this affair, Dr. Staughton rose, and expressing sovereign contempt for any opposition his friend could receive from Dr. Holcombe, said, "*I'll support you, brother White:*" and this promise, it must be admitted, was performed, with unwearied zeal and activity, until Mr. White's circumstances, in his *religious* connexions, became desperate. As one of the consequences of that rupture, Drs. Holcombe and Rogers, Vice-Presidents of the Baptist board of foreign missions, were dropped, in silence, from their minutes. This *negative* thrust, was considered as intentional and foul *calumny*. "In most cases," as the late Rev. Dr. TIMOTHY DWIGHT observes, "words are made the vehicle of slander. It may, however," he adds, "be accomplished without words. When we are reasonably expected," he continues, "to give a fair character of another, we may easily, and deeply slander him by silence." Dwight's Theology, Vol. IV. page 576.

Had the Vice-Presidents submitted to this public insult, all must allow they would have been wanting in a proper regard to the feelings, and reasonable expectations of their friends. Thus was Dr. Holcombe first arraigned before the public by his present opponents. This assault he repelled, as publicly as he received it. Amongst other facts, it is believed, he clearly evinced, that the silence which he justly resented, issued from the *embarrassment*, united with *malevolence*, of his chief opponents, Messrs. *Staughton, Rice, and White*.

Through the combined influence of the same brethren, the first Baptist church of Philadelphia, standing firmly betwixt them and her pastor, was not suffered so much as to read her solemn protest against the proceedings of the council in which they were leading members. This imperious policy was evidently intended to prevent the disclosure of facts embraced in that instrument, and, eventually led to its publication. Thus was the church compelled, either to defend or relinquish her invaded rights. In their next session, which was in 1817, with a view to Dr. Holcombe's banishment from the city, as their *ultimate* object, they struck with all their force at this church, in denouncing her protest as false and atrocious, and threatened her if she persisted in the course she was pursuing, with exclusion from their body.

Soon after these ecclesiastical menaces, a mere spectator, as it would seem, of those conflicts, published a piece, signed "*Plain Truth;*" and by an exhibition as lucid as pointed, of several important facts, "set on fire the course of nature." James, iii. 6.

Highly exasperated with Dr. Holcombe, from a suspicion that he was the author of this anonymous publication, they convened in 1818, prepared for *summary measures*. Nevertheless, to that session, this church sent a respectful letter, and a delegation worthy of herself, in the sincere hope of convincing all the impartial and unprejudiced of that body, of the rectitude and necessity of her protest: but she was received with such stern indignity, and treated so des-

potically, that her delegates, asserting her independence, declared in the most explicit terms, a dissolution of her connexion with that body, and withdrew from it, agreeably to their instructions.

Yet, astonishing as it may seem, this association, AFTERWARDS formed a resolution in reference to the *withdrawn* church, and gravely informed the religious public, that they had excluded her from their community!

This was another outrage on their usages, not to be borne, without public animadversion: accordingly, a pamphlet, entitled, "*Misrepresentations Exposed*," was published for that purpose. Some months after this piece was in circulation, a *contradiction* to it appeared in a series of abusive letters, addressed, chiefly, to Dr. Holcombe, by the unfortunate *Lewis Baldwin*. An immediate and pleasant replication to this essay, was made in Miller's *Strictures*.

Here it was hoped, by the moderate and judicious of both parties, that the present controversy would *terminate*: but the corresponding letter, now taking its rounds, manifests, as some conceive, a malignant pleasure in its *continuance*.

On first reading this effusion, Dr. Holcombe intended to take no further notice of it: but learning, since, that it spreads, in a separate form, as well as with the minutes of the association, to diffuse its leaven throughout the whole mass of the American Baptist churches, at the instance of some of his most enlightened friends, he determined to bestow on it the attention of a few leisure hours.

As this contest is *personal*, and Dr. Holcombe's part in it *has ever been, and will continue to be, of a purely DEFENSIVE nature*, he hopes for permission,

First: To explain, by an extract from one of his letters above alluded to, the *real* cause of that silence with which he was, *virtually*, expelled from the Baptist board of foreign missions:

Secondly: As his opponents have succeeded in making many believe, that he is the author of the anonymous piece, commonly called "*Plain Truth*," he considers himself bound, in self-defence, to give a fair specimen of the *manner* and *matter* of that performance: and this he does without assuming the least responsibility for its contents, though he neither knows, nor *suspects*, any thing in it, to be *untrue*.

Thirdly: He has a right, it will be admitted, to avail himself of statements by the first Baptist church of Philadelphia, respecting the grounds on which she withdrew from the association, as constituting a material article in his defence.

Fourthly: He introduces *Miller's Strictures*, as an answer to Baldwin's letters; and,

Fifthly: A reply to the association's corresponding letter, will conclude this little volume.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER

ON THE

Silence of the second annual report of the Baptist board of foreign missions, relative to their exchange of Vice-Presidents, by Henry Holcombe, D. D. Pastor of the first Baptist church of Philadelphia.

“There is a time to speak.”—SOLOMON.

RECOMMENDATION.

“The same spirit which has disorganized our board of foreign missions, has reared its brazen front in the association. Those who may covet an acquaintance with it, should read a letter lately published by Dr. Holcombe.

“Witnesses of the first respectability testify that this production by no means exaggerates the obliquities, not to say the enormities it exposes. We need add no more than that the leading characters in the tragedy which that letter correctly exhibits, were the actors in our truly farcical Association,” of 1816.

Misrepresentations Exposed, by the first Baptist church of Philadelphia, page 25.

Before we commence the *extract* in view, we would premise, that the letter from which it is taken, was written to a friend, immediately after the circumstances to which it adverts occurred. The writer sent it to press, without requesting the aid or concurrence of an individual. As it was of incontrovertible verity, he deemed authorities unnecessary.

A few allusions, and figurative expressions, in this letter, are reduced, in the extract, to literal and explicit terms.

When the author wrote, he hoped that “great plainness of speech,” on the points in debate, might never be necessary: hence he was intentionally ambiguous, on several delicate points: but from unavailing hints, he proceeds to a plain statement of facts.

EXTRACT, &c.

Philadelphia, Aug. 26, 1816.

THOMAS GILLISON, ESQUIRE, S. C.

Dear Sir,

THE generous attention you have paid to foreign missions, entitles you to correct information, respecting their concerns. This, however, is not to be obtained through the medium of any public vehicle within my knowledge. And as in reading the first and second annual reports of the board, you look for a degree of truth and candour which those pieces do not contain, by this address I hope, in some degree, to supply their deficiencies.

The agreeable acquaintance we have had for twenty-five years, emboldens me to use this freedom; and especially as it has been your painful lot to witness my severe trials while presiding in that body.

Under this circumstance you have seen my envied seat almost literally shaken by my opponents. And recently they have contrived to put the Rev. Dr. WILLIAM ROGERS and myself out of office. This achievement is announced by the trump of Silence.

In the second annual report of the board, their Vice-Presidents, enrolled with honour in all their preceding publications, are excluded from every page. It is too obvious to admit a doubt, that this measure was intended to operate against their characters. Except in case of disability, death, or resignation, the officers of the board are permanent, by the Constitution.

Now, if they are out of office from either of these causes, why are not the public informed of the fact?

It is with reluctance I enter on this enquiry; but however unpleasant, it should certainly be prosecuted to a correct result.

Favour me with your attention, and you must soon perceive the true cause of their silence, with respect to what has become of their Vice-Presidents.

In the convention of 1814, I made an unsuccessful attempt to keep the Rev. William White's name from our minutes, to prevent, if possible, the dishonour which now

rests, through his anticipated defection, on the missionary and the Christian cause.

A reasonable time afterwards, I pressed the return of the Rev. Luther Rice to India, agreeably to his engagements, though contrary, as we have long known, to his intentions. A while after this unpopular step, I took an active part in opposing the appointment of Mrs. Charlotte H. White, as a foreign missionary: and, on finding, through a channel of undoubted respectability, that before a quorum of the board were apprized of her wish to see India, her clothes were purchased, and assuming fitness for the voyage, I frankly manifested my cordial disapprobation of this underhanded policy. In the next place, I ventured to oppose the Rev. Dr. Staughton, in an attempt he made to influence the board in favour of engaging our funds to support Mrs. White, a young widow, in case she should marry the celebrated *Felix Carey*.

The Rev. Thomas B. Montanye, an honorary member, being present on that occasion, aided the minority in preventing an appropriation from our treasury for this singular purpose. About this time, Mr. Judson addressed a communication to the board which drew from me, the following remarks: It is said, by an old adage, "Straws show which way the wind blows;" and it is obvious, that silence, in some cases may express more than volumes. With the power of this twin-sister of darkness, Mr. Judson is evidently acquainted. Informed of all the circumstances which produced our board, he has imparted to this body an important article of intelligence in "expressive silence."

He *may*, indeed, according to the suggestions of Dr. Staughton, have said, in epistles which have not come to hand, that Mr. Rice left India under the influence of pure missionary zeal, and with the sincerest intention to return; but, all we can affirm is, that Mr. Judson, in his only communication to the board, does not lisp a syllable respecting his long absent colleague!

In thus extolling the *power*, I probably provoked my opponents to the *abuse* of silence.

But it is one of the excellent maxims of the divine go-

vernment, to suffer the weapons which are employed in the best, to be abused in the worst of causes.

Thus you see how I was impelled, from my views of rectitude, to expose myself to the *revenge* of my opponents. They probably thought themselves injured, and were certainly much provoked by my opposition : but had I, through fear of their resentments, acquiesced in their conduct, or even connived at it, I must have been unfaithful to the trust reposed in me, as an officer of the board, and, of course, wounded my own conscience.

Permit me now to trace the steps by which the majority fell into an embarrassment, which, united with *revenge*, produced their *silence*.

The Rev. Mr. Hough having been called by the board to a missionary station in *Burmah*, and his wife, a gay young woman, with two small children, refusing to proceed with him, without a female companion, Mrs. White, at her written request, was placed in this capacity.

Very shortly, however, after thus accommodating the ladies, they separated, with strong symptoms of mutual aversion ; and continued apart as long as they remained on shore, in this country.

Mrs. White affirming, that she would never live in the servile state of a companion for Mrs. Hough, nor go to India, except she were put on an equality with male missionaries, the majority made a strenuous effort to gratify her with this elevation. To prevent it, if possible, and for other purposes, on the 13th of September, 1815, Dr. Rogers, the Rev. Daniel Dodge, the honourable William Moulder, and your friend, presented a common letter of resignation to the board : and three of us, immediately afterwards, retiring, a quorum for business was not left on the floor. Our motives, in tendering this letter, though different, prevented the accomplishment of their purpose. This result was of the most provoking nature. One of her advocates, and a gentleman of no less weight in the board than the Recording Secretary, the Rev. *William White*, had averred, that no arguments which his opponents could use, should prevent the association of our amiable widow, on grounds of reciprocity, with male missionaries : but the

wise are sometimes taken in their own craftiness. 1 Cor. iii. 19.

In consequence of this measure, we gained time to expose the unconstitutionality, and inexpediency, of the appointment in question: and found we were not alone in opposing this quixotic enterprize.

At the next, which was an adjourned, meeting of the board, as members and officers, we claimed attention to our grievances: and the more effectually to secure this right, withdrew our tender of resignation. Several members considering us, as having no further claim on the board, we told them that if they would assert, and affix their signatures to the assertion, that less than a quorum have a right to accept the tendered resignation of a member, or that after such a tender he has not a right to withdraw it, while unaccepted, we would immediately retire and give them no further trouble. Refusing to make either of those assertions, they admitted, that we remained entitled to our seats, as members, and as officers of the board. Matters thus settled, we proceeded, with the appearance of harmony, to business. In correspondence with this decision, at a subsequent session, Mr. Dodge, not withdrawing his tender, a motion for its acceptance was made, and carried with but one dissenting voice.

Thus, you see, there was an admission, in both theory and practice, that less than a quorum cannot accept the tendered resignation of a member, and that a tender may be withdrawn at any time anterior to its acceptance.

We have, indeed, been blamed for resorting to the only means in our power to prevent the infraction of our constitution, as we conceived, and the misapplication of our funds, by "out-generaling," as is said, in this instance, our opponents—but we were sure, that to tender a resignation could not be unlawful: that to withdraw it at any time before its constitutional acceptance, might be both lawful and expedient: and, that, as the well-known case of a *prophet* shows, we are not obliged to explain all our views, nor to communicate all we know, to opponents. Jeremiah xxxvii. 14—27, inclusive.

Under these circumstances, on putting the question;

respecting the intended promotion of Mrs. White, five of the members present, signifying their opposition to it, only Messrs. Staughton and White answered in the affirmative. Mrs. White, of course, was continued as Mrs. Hough's companion, and, contrary to her former determination, sailed with our missionary family, in the *Benjamin Rush*, for Calcutta.

It is necessary to observe, that for eight months after this adjustment of our differences, I continued the acting president of the board, and was treated to a greater degree than I had been at any time before, with the respect due to my office. We made unavailing efforts, and in one instance, as it seemed, unitedly, to get Mr. *Rice* off for India, even under his liver-complaint, and without a wife; but after several evasions he boldly declared that he never considered himself under an appointment to return to that country!

At this stage of our affairs, comparative amity was the order of the day; and we appeared to have nothing on the carpet that threatened the brightening prospect before us with obscurity: but though, in the board, commotions had thus subsided, our ecclesiastical hemisphere, chiefly from Mr. White's intrigues, was overcast with portentous clouds.

The materials of a storm, from the influence of all the preceding causes, were collected in the bosoms of my opponents. Though their words were smoother than oil, they could not forget my opposition to what I deemed the exceptionable parts of their conduct, nor forgive the success which, in a few instances, attended it.

Hence, at a meeting of the board last May, in this city, with a view to severe retaliation, they adjourned to the 19th of June, in New York!

Though I did not, then, know the specific object of this adjournment, I could but observe, that my opponents looked unusually wise, and easily discovered, by the averted glances, and occasional elevation of their eyes, that they were deeply influenced by some great object: but as *great* is relative, you should not be disappointed if what they had in view were very inconsiderable, otherwise than as compared with their own missionary exploits. It has since ap-

peared, that, some time before this manœuvre, to ensure its intended effect, correspondences had been extensively maintained, for the purpose of giving such colourings to my conduct, as might draw wise and good men, from distant parts, to assist Messrs. Staughton, White, and Rice, in displacing a troublesome inmate, considered as a spy on their deeds, and an obstacle to the accomplishment of their projects. The scene of my anticipated humiliation was fixed where the intended actors might be most effectually concealed, and among those, should any descry their retreat, least acquainted with the conspirators and their opponents. Their plan of operations, which had for its exclusive object my expulsion from the board, will be best explained by the unprecedented manner of its execution.

On the day, and in the place appointed, they, and those who had been drawn, by their deceptive arts, to strengthen their hands, had the satisfaction to see your almost solitary friend in the midst of his enemies. A very retired apartment, of small dimensions, had been wisely chosen for the accomplishment of their purpose. In the liberal, and populous city of New York, a gloomy *shed* was selected for a deliberative body, including several eminent ministers of the gospel; and in so private a situation, that, during the whole session, even the eye of female curiosity, it is believed, in no instance, so much as peeped at us; and, besides the *conclave*, there could not, I think, at any time have been present more than *twenty* males!

The Rev. Dr. THOMAS BALDWIN, president of the board, had been prevented from meeting with us, on that occasion, and as the consequence, your friend was called to the chair.

The tragedy to be performed, was now opened, as many sanguinary plots have been, by at least, the appearance of a religious exercise. Some, I doubt not, endeavored to please God in it; but others, I have reason to fear, from their works, regarded it merely as the prelude to their favorite catastrophe.

The book of such minutes of the board, as its directors had seen fit to record, was distinctly read; and a committee appointed to recommend for consideration, things on which

they had decided in caucus, according to their own declaration, before they left Philadelphia.

They now formally assumed the power to ratify, or disannul, any of the former acts of the board ! This entering wedge, was followed by a series of correspondent resolutions.

Observing that I held a folded paper in my hand, and not supposing they could relish its contents, they resolved, that nothing, whatever, should be read to the board, during that session ! Accordingly, they would not suffer Dr. Rogers to assist his memory, by looking, occasionally, on his notes ; and in speaking without these prohibited articles, order ! order ! was vociferated, whenever the flashes of his eloquence rendered their darkness visible. The fire of their zeal increasing, for the first time I ever witnessed, or heard of such despotism in a deliberative body, I was denied, I will not say the privilege, but the *right*, of calling any member of the board, to take the chair, that I might occasionally speak on points in debate ! And with equal violence to the constitution, and all civilized customs, they would not suffer me to make a statement, from the chair, otherwise than by their direction, and as a matter of grace !

Under these, I think I may venture to say, unparalleled circumstances, every prudent man present, after the example of the chair, became silent, and left a few interested characters to the unresisted execution of their designs !

Now, in exact conformity to the plan of their operations, which had transpired from themselves, they declared a tendered to be a complete resignation, that their former decision to the reverse, was sufficient to restore the Vice-Presidents to membership, but not to office ; and that, consequently, their seats, as officers, were vacant, and must be immediately filled by balloting.

Pronouncing their proceedings palpably unconstitutional, I left the insulted chair, and waited, with a few astonished spectators, to see in what the ravings of our missionary champions would terminate.

Just as had been foretold, they gave me the go-by, and re-elected Dr. Rogers ; but, I scarcely need say, that he had more respect for himself, than by accepting their ap-

pointment, to admit, that he had been out of office, and of course, acting, like the board, in gross disorder, during the eight preceding months.

Obliged, under these humiliating circumstances, to appear before the public, in their second annual report, their embarrassment was complete; and the difficulty of extricating themselves, by fair and honourable means, had become insuperable.

They could not say their first Vice-Presidents were dead; nor that they had eloped from their country; nor that they had resigned; nor that they laboured under disabilities for the discharge of their duties: and to tell the truth respecting this affair, they knew would be ruinous to all their schemes!

In fact, the acting majority, were driven before the goads of *revenge* from Philadelphia, to their selected *hovel*; and here, in the perpetration of outrageous deeds, they were so suffocated, by their inflamed and discordant passions, that they were unable to utter a word, on their ingenious *exchange* of Vice-Presidents! Surely they could not have had an idea that those doings would ever be exposed to the public eye.

But after all their arts in evading the presence of witnesses, and refusing liberty of speech to their opponents, the nature and object of their measures, will, probably, by slow degrees, make their way into society: and could the public only know, that a body which might have had the use of as commodious an edifice as any in New York, immured themselves in an almost inaccessible shed, this fact, alone, would be an ample commentary on their procedure, in all its preceding details: but, in fact, their conduct, if considered, cannot be misunderstood, by the weakest capacities.

Every one must perceive, that were we to patronize such a board as this, or even submit, in silence, to its tyranny, our associations would next be sunk into mere caucusing assemblies, for low selfish purposes, and corrupt and despotic principles, spread their paralyzing effects through all the American Baptist churches.

Yours, &c.

We proceed, briefly to notice the pamphlet called "Plain Truth." An ample refutation of the *charge*, that Dr. Holcombe is the author of this work, will be found, by the reader, in "Misrepresentations Exposed," and, "Miller's Strictures." As some apology for those who originated it, we would remark, that the six productions advertized by the author of "Plain Truth," as amongst his authorities, were all from the pen of Dr. Holcombe, in different copies, never intended for seclusion from the public eye. Hence, we suppose, many are as confident that he is the author of the piece in question, as Isaac was, that Jacob's were Esau's hands: or, as others are, that they have heard Dr. Staughton's voice roll from the lips of his pupils. Such are the blunders made, for want of considering, that many things, with essential differences, exhibit, to superficial judges, the same appearance. In this way we may account for the confident assertions of some, that the style of "Plain Truth," is *peculiar* to Dr. Holcombe. But certainly he is not so singular in his composition, that no ingenuity could counterfeit it: yet this is taken for granted, by his opponents!

Anticipating, after all, that a few will blindly *insinuate*, that he is the author of this performance, and that it contains a tissue of unfounded aspersions, we shall simply add here the *réal* author's authorities, and, afterwards, present the reader with an extract, taken *verbatim*, from this anonymous work.

The author's principal authorities, it would seem, from his advertisement, and first note's references, are the protest of a large minority, including the Vice-Presidents of the Baptist board of foreign missions, against the conduct of that body; a letter by one of its Vice-Presidents, to a friend; a letter, signed by both its Vice-Presidents, to the honourable Judge Tallmadge; a letter, signed by the same officers, to an attorney at law; a letter, signed by a number of respectable characters, to the honourable Judge Riley; a protest by the first Baptist church of Philadelphia, against the proceedings of the Philadelphia Baptist association; and all the churches in which Dr. Staughton has held his membership, in passing, as "Plain Truth" says, "to his present eminence."

The reflecting reader, in slowly descending to the promised extract, will, very naturally, indulge his wonder, that, while this author, because *anonymous*, it may seem, has been loaded with unqualified abuse, his numerous *authorities*, as such, have suffered not even a public contradiction!!!

But "*Plain Truth*," shall speak for himself; and the reader is left to judge, after due attention to his *references*, whether he has said any thing inconsistent with his signature. With respect to this *particular point* we invite, we court, we warmly *solicit*, investigation.

EXTRACT, &c.

Letters to William Staughton, D. D. by PLAIN TRUTH.

The judge asketh for a reward, and the great man he uttereth his mischievous desire: so they wrap it up. MICAH.

PHILADELPHIA: PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR. 1818.

LETTER I.

DR. STAUGHTON,

I NOW commence, for your perusal, a series of letters, to which you will please to receive this as the preface. I am aware that many are for concealing every thing offensive, for the sake of what they call the CAUSE. "Charity," say they, "covereth a multitude of faults." This is true; and yet we agree, she refuses to "wrap up" presumptuous sins. Charity spreads her veil over sins repented of and forsaken, and weeps in the view of disallowed imperfections. She will neither take up a report, nor listen to the most distant insinuations, founded on any of these things. "As the north wind driveth away clouds, so she by an angry countenance serves a backbiting tongue." Her naturally serene brow, is never clothed with frowns more indignant, than when envy and malevolence are regaling themselves on the lamented iniquities of reclaimed offenders. But, charity can, and from her benevolent nature, *must* reprove and rebuke bold transgressors, and that with all au-

thority. She exposed the wild ambition of Abimelick by a cutting parable—ridiculed the priests of Baal by the keenest irony—called Elymas the sorcerer, an enemy of all righteousness, and a child of the devil—awfully punished Ananias and Sapphira for their duplicity and lies—and denounced those proud missionaries, the Scribes and Pharisees, who compassed sea and land to make proselytes, in terms of great severity. Keeping these things in view, it is hoped you will find no breach of charity, but, on the contrary, an unremitted exercise of it, throughout the following pages. They are intended, and I hope you will find them calculated, to elucidate, and place in a just and easy light, various important subjects which have remained too long, for the good of society, in a very obscure state. My design is to give them a specific form, which must constrain you to admit, or deny, their *verity*.

My impression is, that much confusion and evil are involved in the strife and contention of the American Baptists. My object is to expose these things as clearly and as impartially as I can, to the light. By this means many in Europe and Asia, as well as nearer home, may be led to discover the REAL CAUSES OF THE TROUBLES IN YOUR CONNEXION. Placed as you seem to be, at the head of a large party of these people, and hedged about, as you are by a multitude of devoted and active adherents and dependents, the truth cannot flow through ordinary channels, or I should not resort to this method of diffusing it. To render facts within my knowledge credible to those unacquainted with your history, it is necessary to be explicit; and merely from the nature of some of the facts the interests of truth will compel me to state, I may be thought severe. I might sign these letters with my proper signature, without fear of damages; as their contents admit of proof; but I am not a stranger to the disposition, nor instruments, that you possess to persecute, even unto distant countries. It is well known to all near your person, in the undress of life, that you cannot tolerate the man who thwarts your schemes. It appears to me, however, highly important, that the Christian world should be enabled to “judge righteous judgment,” respecting your affairs. I shall not be disap-

pointed if you denounce these sheets, as slanderous and vile ; but you will probably avoid a public denial of any *particular allegation* they contain, as this might lead to its establishment beyond the power of contradiction. Your policy has hitherto been flatly to contradict the most correct assertions, affecting your fame ; and it must be owned, that you have been but too successful, in bringing unwary strangers to take your word, as conclusive. But the more what I shall suggest and *assert*, is enquired into, the more the enquirer, if candid and dispassionate, will be convinced that I am governed by the strictest regard to truth and justice. Some may say, that admitting all I state to be true, it should have remained in the dark, as its exposition, not only detects the guilty, but pains the innocent. This is the language of those who so love peace, as to seek it, but seek it in vain, at the expense of purity : and while they commiserate the few innocent persons referred to, harden themselves against the many thousands who are injured, and like to be very seriously injured by your projects. As we hear nothing of the millions of blanks sold in Lottery Offices, so we are uninformed of the hard labouring poor, who feel the want of that money which you and your agents, draw from their scanty earnings.

It is a fact, however little known, that besides upwards of ten thousand dollars a year, which are received from the good people of these States, exclusively, *as they may suppose*, for missionary purposes, and placed to a very great degree at your disposal, you have contrived to make your private income, from various fees and salaries, at least five thousand dollars per annum !

I shall wound your feelings as little as is consistent with justice to the cause of truth and righteousness. Ingenuity, I know, under any circumstance, may equivocate, evade, or retort, and effrontery contradict and reprobate, but I would fain hope that you will acknowledge and improve

PLAIN TRUTH.

LETTER II.

DR. STAUGHTON,

EARLY in 1812, as the consequence of your preceding doings, you were encompassed with difficulties. Debts were contracted, and accumulating; some men were so obstinate, as to refuse to submit, in all things to YOUR WILL, and you were succeeded in your late charge, as Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Philadelphia, by Dr. Henry Holcombe.

No time was to be lost; for you were fully convinced, from report, and appearances, that without prompt and efficient measures you would now have "sorrow upon sorrow!" Assuming a lofty air, you addressed your antonished successor, as follows:—"Are you come to Philadelphia, for peace or war?" Before you gave him time to answer this inflammatory question, you proceeded in a tone and attitude of defiance, "If you are come for war, sir, I am ready for you."

On his expressing surprise at your conduct, and assuring you that he was a man of peace; you rejoined with an elevated voice, "Very well! give me an evidence of it, by exchanging pulpits with me." And when, as might have been expected, he replied, "I cannot do this without consulting my friends," you said, with great emphasis, "*Friends* have nothing to do with it; if you refuse the exchange I propose, I shall consider it as a declaration of WAR; and if you and Second-street," as you called his friends; "are for war, I am ready for you."

And although you have insinuated that in throwing these fire-brands, you were in sport, you can expect few to believe it. Your object was to draw the stranger immediately into embarrassments. You conjectured that in proportion to personal acquaintance with him, would be the extension of his influence. The sooner, therefore, you made an attack on him, the brighter was your prospect of success. An exchange of pulpits, proposed in your manner and terms, would have been what you wanted, an acknowledgment of your supremacy; and your appearance before his hearers, would have been highly offensive, and brought him into trouble at home; as, but a short time

before, they had indignantly dispensed with your services. Alas! alas! did you then realize that you were the professed follower of a meek and lowly Master, who enjoins the duty of mutual love on all his servants? Surely you must have forgotten his peaceful precepts, as well as the apostolic injunction, "Be courteous," and the inspired exclamation, "Behold how good and how pleasant a thing it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity!" If these wholesome words had formed any part of the man of your counsel, the evils since witnessed, would probably have been prevented, and peace might still have reigned in all the Baptist churches. But, equals, or neutrals, can never abide unmolested in your presence. Nothing so dangerously affects the whole course of nature in you, as the sight of independence.

Deaf to the divine admonition, "Leave off contention before it begins," you rashly elicited its fire, and as we shall see, blew it into a flame.

The reasons why, at times, the most wary men commit themselves, by acts of flagitious impropriety, are difficult to assign; but such instances often occur. It may be owing to judicial blindness, which has been known to eventuate in the emission of interesting facts, which else had remained in oblivion. In fine, even a man of your powers, whatever may be his principles, can do nothing, *ultimately*—
PLAIN TRUTH.

LETTER III.

DR. STAUGHTON,

In prosecuting my design, I shall now notice a few allegations against Dr. H. Not long after your demand of an exchange of pulpits with him, he was indisposed; and certain deacons, then your mutual friends, asked you to preach for him. Informing him of what had past, and of your willingness to officiate in his place, he signified that he hoped to be able to preach himself, and "*abruptly*," you have alleged, declined the acceptance of your service. This, considered in itself, was *uncourtly*; but may it not be fairly presumed, that he was actuated, on that occasion by an unwillingness, to subscribe, even in appearance, to your terms

of peace? He had probably not recovered from the wounds you had given him, on the subject of pulpits.

His next transgression, according to report, was of a weightier nature. The very first sermon he preached, after treating you as above, it seems, was against adulterers and adulteresses, with evident allusion to you and "Mrs. Staughton." This *report* is untrue. With Paul, he may have reproved "certain lewd persons of the baser sort;" but who could venture to say he alluded to you and "Mrs. Staughton?" In handling some subject, he possibly quoted the passage in which St. Paul maintains that, "The woman which hath an husband, is bound by the law of her husband so long as he liveth: but if her husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then"—mark his inference—"So then if while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress." What the man who marries her shall be called, as I am not a theologian, I must leave for you gentlemen of the cloth to determine: but I will risk the conjecture, that not one of all the pupils in, or *from* your theological school, ever recited, or would dare to recite these inspired sentences in your presence. But, however these, and some others, who wear black coats, may cringe, submit to the guidance of your eye, and prefer the suppression of holy writ, to your displeasure, the Rev. *Thomas B. Montanye*, was not afraid before you and a large assembly, to say, with a bold and elevated voice, "A bishop must be the husband of one wife; AND THAT NOT ANOTHER MAN'S WIFE."

The first open debate you and Dr. H. had, was before the assembled Baptist ministers of Philadelphia. Ten or twelve were present, and Dr. *W. Rogers* in the chair. To "wrap up" the case of a disorderly man, as he proved to be, who had just been received into your church, contrary to the rules generally observed in the Baptist connexion, you proposed that the assembled ministers should declare it as their opinion, that ANY MAN, whether ordained or not, *baptized* or not, moral or immoral, had a right to administer the sacred ordinance of baptism! You had baptized, you observed, before you were ordained; and you insisted, with not a little warmth, that *any* man had a right to do the same!

Dr. H. rose in direct opposition to your "views," and had the happiness to find all the ministers present, either silent, or on the side of the order and discipline of the Baptist churches.

So deeply mortified were you at this result, that your next proposition was to burn all the minutes of the society. To this a smile was the reply; and you adjourned, in full possession of your respective opinions.

Not long afterwards a council, consisting, I think, of twenty, was called by the Baptist church at Frankford, to sit on certain difficulties, which were stated in a written address. The late Dr. Samuel Jones was called to the chair. You immediately introduced the case of a woman, who had been disowned by the church, for very loose conduct, and without an application, by herself or any other person, strenuously insisted on her restoration!

Waiting a reasonable time, and finding none disposed to come in contact with you, Dr. H. rose, and objected to the taking up of this business, as unconnected with the object for which the council was called, as well as from the circumstance, that it was not agitated at the instance of the excommunicated member. Again you rose, and with your usual zeal in such a cause, advocated the measure; but your antagonist withstood your often repeated efforts to carry your point, until committing your views, respectively, to paper, those *opposed to yours*, prevailed by the concurrence of four-fifths of the body.

Thus you seemed to provoke controversy, by introducing, and endeavouring to sustain, things of the most indefensible nature.

Another instance of this kind occurred in the Philadelphia Baptist Association. You advocated a discontinuance of all correspondence and intercourse, with the New York Association, on the ground of her continuing in her body, a certain *first church*, which once refused you her pulpit. I do not say that it was from this consideration, that you manifested so great an antipathy to this church; because it was avowedly, and, perhaps, really, on account of her supporting a minister who had incurred your displeasure. Dr. H. supported this church, her pastor, and the continu-

ance of an affectionate correspondence with the New York Association; and in the issue of this contest also, you found yourself in a small minority. Thus continues
PLAIN TRUTH.

LETTER IV.

DR. STAUGHTON,

TO the above, succeeded still more public and obstinate collisions between you and Dr. H. In the Baptist Convention of 1814, to promote foreign missions, you moved to appoint a committee, and proceeded to nominate every member of it. This may have appeared undesigning and very innocent, in the eyes of some; but others had a sufficient knowledge of you to view it in a just light. They knew it was to create and confirm underworkers. Such characters as these, presently discern their patrons, and seldom forget, that "one good turn deserves another." Comparatively few men whose vanity is thus addressed, have virtue and independence enough to reject the bribe; and still fewer, the boldness to denounce such an unfair course. This conduct was calculated to exert a still, but strong influence over the mind, and to lay a sure foundation for support under the clashings you anticipated in the board of foreign missions.

Such management was duly appreciated, and of course, not well relished by Dr. H. He it appears, fathomed your schemes, and openly opposed the admission of *William White*, into your select committee. You pretended to treat this opposition with great contempt; and through the aid of your friend's complaints, soothed by your promise of support, excited the sympathies of that venerable body. Believing, as a body, that Dr. H. had been led, by some unaccountable means, to suspect the disinterestedness and purity of your intentions, without any just cause, they sought, and, with some difficulty, effected a speedy, but as the sequel proved, a hollow reconciliation. One effect, however, which you much prized, resulted from it. Mortified to find you and your friend were unknown to the *Convention*, and to avoid the appearance of a litigious disposition, Dr. H. was passive at that time, under all the rest

of your doings. Thus you gained an important point, by shewing a little mettle at the first start; and you and your friend proceeded in your joint-labours, without any further *immediate* interruption.

In forming the Board, Dr. Thomas Baldwin was elected President, Drs. H. and Rogers, Vice-Presidents, and you and White the secretaries. To mention all the members of this body, as some of them were merely nominal, would be superfluous. Several, from their local situations, had little or nothing to do with your affairs.

Seven members made a quorum, and ordinarily, you and Messrs. William White, John P. Peckworth, and Horatio G. Jones, were the majority, and the Vice-Presidents, and Mr. Daniel Dodge, the minority: and those are the only individuals I shall allude to under these denominations. The minutes and correspondence being in the hands of you and White,—you at the head of the majority—they, a party—and all your creatures—you were prepared for business.

Your opponents, relying on their own disinterestedness and integrity, were quite off their guard; and were very unequal to a contest with you and your colleagues, from another circumstance: they depended on your consciences as having some influence on your proceedings, and although their mistake was soon discovered, it was too late to correct the errors which had grown out of their false security. Dr. H., the acting President, was the subject of your unwearied opposition and insults. His prostration was the object to which you directed all your efforts; and though you were aware, that to depose a man of his acknowledged talents, and piety, against whom the tongue of slander had not dared to wag, was a herculean task, circumstances compelled you to persevere in your attempts to accomplish it. In this arduous course you were animated by the consideration, that they only are worthy of victory, who can conceive and execute great projects.

Here let us pause; and considering the reception you gave Dr. H. when he came to Philadelphia, the allusions he is *supposed* to have made to you from the pulpit, and his opposition to your views, before the Baptist ministers of this city, at Frankford, in the association, and when you

were forming your select conventional committee, we shall plainly perceive that his subsequent persecutions arose out of these things, as an effect proceeds from its cause.

Armed and accoutred as you now were, with a majority identified with your own *will*, your language, in effect, to Dr. H. was, "I will now make you rue the day on which you dared to rise in opposition to MY WILL."

After all, "take heed and beware," that you are not brought too late, to rue the day that you refused the admonitions of
PLAIN TRUTH.

LETTER V.

DR. STAUGHTON,

ALL things being ready, the board entered on *business*. The case of Mr. Luther Rice involved considerations of magnitude. He was sent with Mr. Judson, by a religious body in Massachusetts, to India as a missionary. There they changed their views, it seems, of baptism, and submitted to immersion. Mr. Rice subsequently returned to this country; for the purpose, it is said, of forwarding the original object of the mission, by collecting funds. Finding himself rejected by his former patrons, he turned his attention to the Baptists. By them he was noticed, received an appointment to return to India, and became instrumental in awakening a missionary spirit. This gave the man a commanding influence. He constantly held up the idea of returning, according to his engagements, to the aid of Mr. Judson, when possessed of funds sufficient for the purpose. This of course, was expected; but he made various pretexts for delay. He said he had a liver complaint, that would be fatal to him in a few months, were he to return to that climate. After this sham had become threadbare, he affirmed that he could not go to India without a wife, nor obtain one, by any lawful means.

By these subterfuges, he gained time to devise new schemes. At this stage of your affairs, Dr. H. fell under the displeasure of Mr. Rice also, by detecting and exposing the *facts*, that he had never joined a Baptist Church, nor intended to return to India! By way of revenge, he originated the report, that Dr. H. was an enemy to missions.

Now Mrs. Charlotte H. White presented herself as a candidate for an appointment in India. This was used as evidence of astonishing zeal, and to damp it was represented as the effect of unparalleled turpitude. In vain did your opponents object to her sex, her delicate constitution, or want of qualifications for missionary service. For them to oppose, was sufficient to engage you to *press*, as you successfully did, her appointment.

Mr. Rice continued to occupy in the United States. His salary had been fixed at eight dollars per week, while his expenses, great or small, at his own discretion, were all to be borne, and he left at liberty, to receive PERSONAL PRESENTS. He had learned in the land of his fathers how hard it is to get money, and acquired the ingenuity necessary for the purpose. His voyage to India had increased his experience, and completed his qualifications for mendicity. He knew and had well considered the difference between riding through the hospitable regions of civilization, abounding with every luxury, and spending his strength in the barbarous hoards, and sultry climes of India. HE was not willing to shoot that bourne from whence no traveller returns, in the midst of life, though he warmly recommended this course to others. He was not done with the present world. His treasure here, though not in hand, was anticipated, on good grounds. He was receiving *personal presents*, as the agent of a popular society, from a large and liberal community, to whom he declared his intention to spend and be spent in preaching the gospel to the perishing Hindoos! and he knew how to awaken their sympathies by relating his fatigue, and dangers by sea and land, and speaking of the GREAT THINGS he was soon to accomplish, by PECUNIARY MEANS. But collecting money, though probably the *ultimate*, was not the only object of his travels. With trumpet tongue, he was to sound your praise; to tell of your labours of love; and of your afflictions. He was to detail the trials you had to encounter from that "obstinate man," Dr. H. who would not submit to the dictum of the JUNTO. In fact, the projection and execution of the plan of sending Mr. Rice to collect money, at the expense of the societies, and to usher in the "Latter Day LUMINARY," shew the hand of a *master*.

Besides, in his often repeated routes through the country, he relieved you from the labour of writing letters explanatory of differences in the board, by verbally removing any prejudices which might arise against your proceedings. As your interest and his had become ONE, you had no fear on the score of his fidelity ; and his disposition to stigmatize Dr. H. was unquestionable. You had now arrived nearly at the consummation of all your missionary wishes and labours.

Mr. Rice was bringing in large sums of money, without any check on his cupidity. This was very exhilarating to your spirits ; but as the love of money is the root of all evil, I think this was putting his virtue to a severe test : so much so, that I should not like to be answerable for the issue.

But still you had your difficulties, as will ere long appear in the light of

PLAIN TRUTH.

LETTER VII.

DR. STAUGHTON,

I SHALL here bring into view a new species of your manœuvres. When the Convention met last year, in this city, you contrived to have all the strange ministers so quartered, that they should not mix with your opponents, any more than if they had been heathen, thieves, or *adulterers*. In providing for these strangers, you crowded your friends to repletion, and put them to much hardship and inconvenience. Even persons of no pretence to religion, and some of notoriously immortal habits, were forced to aid you, without suspecting your motives, in keeping the Convention from all intercourse with upright and independent characters. Your objects were to preserve, without disturbance, the lethargic security into which they had fallen, by the syren tongues of you and Rice, and to poison their minds with prejudice. What but the most cruel slanders, artfully insinuated, could have kept that body from enquiring of the minority of their late board, into the grounds of those collisions which had utterly disgraced it ?

Had the Convention done unto others, as *they* would have been done by, under their circumstances, they never would have condemned the minority without giving them

an opportunity to appear in their own defence. Instead of this, they proceeded on *exparty* evidence, appointed a committee after your own heart, to sit in judgment on the absent, with nothing but deceptive twilight, or rather Egyptian darkness for their guide! A report, prepared, probably, by your own pen, was laid before the convention, adopted by a majority, and promulgated to the world! But truths then *wrapt up* must be "proclaimed on the house tops." The crimson blush of shame must yet cover the cheeks of the impostor, and the incautious victims of his imposition. They, and you, must appear before the tribunal of an impartial public. The press, that natural foe to tyranny, is capable of bringing you all to account for your stewardship. But, after thus concealing your past nefarious deeds, you took due care to provide for future exigencies.

Your hopeful students, Welsh and Peck, got persons to your liking, and such alone, elected as members of your present board. They have since been rewarded by an appointment to a missionary station.

Your interests flourishing in the hands of these and other well appointed agents, at a distance, you are brooding, with much complacency, over your various interests in Philadelphia.

Deacon Shields, a wealthy man near four-score years of age, has been drawn by flattery and persuasion to doze in the chair of the board; Burgess Allison, John P. Peckworth, Horatio G. Jones, and John Bradley, are active, or to use better language, *passive* members of it; and you are its "vital spark," and Secretary, with an annual salary of FOUR HUNDRED DOLLARS.

Suffice it to say of this *quorum*, that they are all men who have supported White to the last extremity, and gone with you through all your difficulties.

In fact, I may add, that this *shadow* of a board, and all the funds of the Baptists for foreign and domestic missions, are in your hands, as clay in the hands of the potter. However little your constituents may be aware of it, this is

PLAIN TRUTH.

LETTER VIII.

DR. STAUGHTON,

I SHALL now refresh your memory, on the scenes exhibited in this city, at the Association of 1816. My aim is to give you a sketch that you will find correct, though not so large as life.

Here you are to make your debut as a secondary actor, in favour of William White, though in fact, the grand manager of the whole stage. It is true, you could not now, as at the late convention, be quarter-master to the company; and hence your defect in harmony.

Agreeably to previous arrangements, you named Horatio G. Jones, moderator; and he nominated Silas Hough clerk. The former was objected to by a small minority, under the impression that he would prove, as he certainly did, a partial officer.

Preliminaries adjusted, and letters from the churches read, a debate arose from an appointment White had received, by a domestic mission society, to preach a sermon for them on this occasion. And, as from the turn this affair took, it has given rise to much misrepresentation, I shall set it in a clear light, from the testimony of my senses, and other information, entitled to the highest confidence.

It appears that the First Baptist church in this city had lent their pulpit to this society, for the purpose of delivering annual discourses. And at a meeting of it, some months before the Association, it was remarked, that Mr. White was to preach their *next sermon*. Dr. H. objected to this, on the ground of his character; you warmly insisted on it, and, of course, it was expected that he would officiate. Indeed, it was affirmed that you calculated on a sufficient number of men to put him into the pulpit for this purpose. Under these circumstances, several friendly characters entreated Dr. H. to make no opposition to it. He thanked them for their solicitude and advice, but affirmed that he would abandon his pulpit for ever, if White, in a state of flagrant disorder, were suffered to disgrace it.

On becoming acquainted with this fact, your expectation of turning it to your advantage was highly sanguine. You had reason to believe that Dr. H. would not forfeit his

word ; and by arts in which you had become expert, from long practice, you were sure of a *majority* in the Association. After all, as White's infamy was known to many, you feared that a direct attempt to usher him into the pulpit, might not be attended with success. Presuming on your own popularity, you presented yourself in his stead. Your intention, had you been permitted to ascend the desk, was, undoubtedly, to call *him* to deliver the discourse.

Already on the skirts of the congregation, and finding he was not pitched heels over head out of the house, he drew a little nearer the centre of your operations. Encouraged by the ear of a female, after giggling a while with her, he rose, and emboldened by the bows and smiles of the moderator, and a few hints from your pencil, disgusted all the correct part of the audience by his impudent effusions.

In this state the Association found things, when there was a call for the "sermon." Though, as we have seen, White was appointed to deliver it, from an arrangement betwixt yourselves, accommodated to existing circumstances, you stepped forward as his *representative*. Dr. H., surrounded as he was by your partizans, said you should not preach in his pulpit, if he could prevent it, until certain points betwixt yourselves, received satisfactory explanations.

A scene of confusion now ensued. "*Shall one man be suffered to rule the whole Association?*" exclaimed half a dozen of your friends. "Order! order!" cried the moderator. The hum subsiding, it was moved, seconded, and carried, that *Dr. Staughton* should preach the sermon. After all, Dr. H. and a few others, opposed this measure. In the midst of the agony, John P. Peckworth said, "I will risk the opinion, that a majority of the delegates from *this church* favour our views." This was a bold stroke ; and probably directed by an abler hand than Peckworth's, as an entering wedge betwixt the pastor and the church.

Mr. Levi Garrett, justly provoked at this insolence, rising as the organ of his colleagues, said, "Mr. Moderator, you have now gone as far as you can, or dare go ; you will find it impossible to get into the pulpit."

At the sound of these words it occurred very seasonably to the sagacious moderator, that it was too late for the dis-

course. Thus, with the adroitness of Sir Reynard, he declined participating the fruits of your labours.

Many towering crests suddenly fell, and a motion for adjournment was carried without opposition. Thus the church and her pastor stood firmly in the just and necessary defence of their invaded rights. Shame! where is thy blush! Numbers have been made to believe, that you and the Domestic Mission Society were used very ill, in the case now fairly stated; but it is time the truth should transpire.

As to any disappointment, on the part of that society, nothing of the kind took place. The liberal members of it never supposed, that a church, in making them the offer of a place of worship, for any pious use, could be bound to suffer their pulpit to be degraded by disorderly characters. As to the Association, it had no concern in this business. It was at the exclusive disposition of the church and Mission Society. The undisguised fact is, you owed White a large debt of gratitude for supporting you through thick and thin; his critical situation now imperiously called on you to reciprocate his kindnesses; you ardently wished to humble an envied church, by an emphatic assertion of your control over her pulpit; the time had fully come for making a *predetermined* charge on Dr. H., and all your veterans, fully apprized of your thorough-going war measures, stood prepared for the execution of your orders.

You relied on your popularity, as sufficient to bear you through in this daring enterprize; and the success which had attended similar efforts, not a little inflated your effrontery. But there is a point over which assurance often makes men bound to their own destruction. Alas! poor man! you in an evil hour have thrown the gauntlet; you have past the Rubicon; and are on the brink of a tremendous precipice! Alas! alas! you will, probably, soon disappear, like a meteor that has past its zenith, and is rapidly descending to merge in the damps that engendered it. How will you then bear "the keen vibrations" of

PLAIN TRUTH?

MISREPRESENTATIONS EXPOSED.

STATEMENT

BY

THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

OF

PHILADELPHIA,

EXHIBITING THE GROUNDS ON WHICH SHE WITHDREW FROM

THE

PHILADELPHIA BAPTIST ASSOCIATION.



PHILADELPHIA :

PUBLISHED FOR THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

BY M. CAREY & SON.

1818.

We recommend the following statements, and remarks, to the adoption of the church, as worthy to see the light.

December 3d, 1818.

HENRY HOLCOMBE,

WM. ROGERS,

GEO. INGELS,

JOHN M'LEOD,

H. GOURLEY,

JOSEPH KEEN,

LEVI GARRETT,

JOSEPH S. WALTER,

THOMAS BROWN,

JOHN DAVIS,

WM. DUNCAN,

WM. S. HANSELL,

JOSEPH REYNOLDS,

ELIJAH GRIFFITHS,

SILAS W. SEXTON.

Dec. 10, 1818. At a *special*, and very *numerous*, meeting of the members of this Church, held in their Meeting House—Brother HOLCOMBE, Moderator :

The Report of the committee, on the subject, relative to their withdrawing from the Philadelphia Baptist Association, was read, *unanimously* adopted, and directed to be published.

Whereupon, on motion, *Resolved*, that brethren Holcombe, Rogers, Ingels, M'Leod, and Walter, be a committee to carry the above-mentioned object into effect.

The committee are hereby authorized to have fifteen hundred copies printed, as soon as practicable.

HENRY HOLCOMBE, Moderator.

Attest,

JOHN M'LEOD, Clerk.

JOSEPH S. WALTER, Assistant Clerk.

DEDICATION.

TO SUCH BAPTIST CHURCHES

AS

“STAND FAST IN THE LIBERTY WHEREWITH CHRIST HATH MADE US FREE,”

AND

THE UNPREJUDICED FRIENDS OF TRUTH AND ORDER

OF

ALL DENOMINATIONS,

THIS UNVARNISHED NARRATIVE IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY THE

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF PHILADELPHIA.

B

ADVERTISEMENT.

From the minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, as they relate to the acts of their two last sessions, their numerous correspondents, and many others, have been unavoidably led to believe, that this body has solemnly excluded from her communion the First Baptist Church of Philadelphia, for pursuing "an unhappy course," constituted by a series of "unwarrantable steps," and making, without the least provocation, by that council, a variety of deceptive, mischievous, and "very palpable misrepresentations."

And although she might satisfy *herself*, with the consciousness she possesses, that all those things are UNTRUE, yet, from a deep sense of her duty towards the misled friends of religion, she furnishes them, in this small treatise, with ample means of *correct* information, touching the points at issue.

She here accurately republishes her protest against the proceedings, in question, of that "*Advisory Council*," in connexion with several official documents, interspersed with suitable illustrations.

The public may rest assured, that had not the discolorings, and perversions, of the facts embraced in these unpleasant discussions, been *prodigious* and *unsufferable*, they never would have attracted the *notice*, much less received the formal *correction*, of the first Baptist church of Philadelphia.

PREFACE.

IN order to a correct judgment of this performance, it is necessary to understand, and keep in view, the well-known sentiments of the baptists, in reference to CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

While they readily, and with pleasure, acknowledge, that true religion, in an eminent degree, is common to all orders of christians ; as *Baptists*, their adherence to the independence of every gospel church is of the most decisive character.

No superiority exists, or, on their principles, can exist, amongst their ministers, or in any of their churches, but as the result of superior rectitude and usefulness. Giving the most distant intimation of entertaining a different view of this subject, would be fatal to the influence and popularity of any minister in their connexion.

So jealous are their churches, respectively, of their independence, that they have never delegated a power which, in the slightest degree, could affect their unre-

stricted liberty, or justify any association of their churches in the assumption of a higher style than that of an "ADVISORY COUNCIL."

Any attempt in one of these bodies, to act otherwise than conformably to this humble character, is considered, by all consistent Baptists, as an assumption which calls, imperiously, for prompt and efficient resistance. They all admit, that, whatever may be the defects of this strictly independent form of government, they are bound by honour and conscience to submit, *while Baptists*, to the legitimate operation of all its principles. These positions they consider as amongst their AXIOMS.

TO THE READER.

THE late Dr. Samuel Jones, in his centurial sermon, delivered in Philadelphia, October 6, 1802, before the Philadelphia Baptist Association, makes the following remarks :—

“ This Association originated in what they called general, and sometimes yearly meetings. At these meetings, their labour was chiefly confined to the ministry of the word, and the administration of gospel ordinances.”

It is a fact, not altogether unworthy of notice, that in all this valuable production, delivered on a memorable occasion, there is nothing found on the subject of any real, or supposed, divine authority for an Association of churches. “ But,” continues our venerable author, “ in the year 1707, they,” who before had their yearly meetings, “ seem to have taken more properly the form of an Association ; for then they had delegates from several churches, and attended to their general concerns.”

This is a concise, but just, view of the nature and origin of the body whose late conduct the subsequent sheets delineate. After respectfully mentioning Jenkin Jones, Owen Thomas, David Davis, Enoch Morgan, and Abel Morgan, Dr. Jones adds, “ These were men of shining talents, with whom we have had few, if any, since, that would bear a comparison.”

Whether this body has continued to depreciate, or is *now in a decline*, it is the *reader's* province to judge.

It is admitted, on all hands, that while an Association is confined to spiritual concerns, it may be useful, and eminently so ; but should it forget that the independence of the churches, which *create* it, must be inviolably maintained, and arrogate to itself the powers of a high ecclesiastical court, it becomes, in the hands of ambition, a formidable engine of TYRANNY.

The reader, interested in the *fact*, should be informed, that very serious misunderstandings have, by some means, arisen amongst

the Baptists of Philadelphia ; and, as the natural consequence, affected their Order, *especially*, to a very considerable extent.

The origin, progress, and aggravations, of these regretted differences, have been variously, and, in some instances, erroneously represented, verbally and from the press.

The minutes and reports of the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions—a letter by one of its Vice-Presidents—the protest republished in the following pages—anonymous letters, signed “*Plain Truth*,” FALSELY ascribed to the Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Philadelphia, as their *Author*—and the minutes of the two last sessions of the Association in view—are the publications referred to—but *verbal* effusions on those topics are endless.

The only check they have received in their rapid circulation, has been from requesting their propagators to be *specific*, and annex their signatures to their assertions.

It has been, and the hope is indulged that it ever will be, the sincere endeavour of the First Baptist Church of Philadelphia, to speedily terminate these distressing contentions, which, most injuriously, affect the peace and harmony of the churches.

With a view to these important objects, in subordination to the divine glory, such a manifestation of the truth, touching those points, is here made, as, it is believed, must approve itself to every impartial reader’s conscience.

STATEMENT, &c.

on his fellow

A REMARK of vital importance to the elucidation of our subject is, that the GRAND POINT which divided us and the Philadelphia Baptist Association, respected the character of *William White*, late pastor of the Second Baptist Church of Philadelphia. Our views of this man, in the light of evidence, clear, *to us*, as sunbeams, and those of the Association, appeared to be diametrically opposite. We considered and treated him as an offender, in no ordinary degree, against the laws and customs of civil and religious society; and they, in the rejection of the testimony which we regarded as conclusive, most zealously supported him, as an innocent, worthy, and honourably distinguished minister of the gospel, suffering, in a degree that excited their tenderest sympathies, from our envy, malevolence, and *persecutions*.

X

These discordant views, and the correspondent efforts which they publicly produced in the Association against whose proceedings we conscientiously protested, interested our mutual feelings, and those of hundreds of astonished spectators, to an indescribable degree: so that the notoriety of this important FACT, is equal to its vitality in the present discussion.

After all, in the minutes of their next session, so far were they brought to coincide with us in opinion, with respect to this *recently contested* character, that they were constrained, however *reluctantly*, to present us with the following articles :—“ Brethren Staughton, H. G. Jones, and Thomas Shields, were appointed a committee to draw up a suitable minute, respecting the exclusion, by the Second Philadelphia Church, of their late pastor, Wm. White.” The result of this unanticipated appointment follows :—“ The committee appointed in the case of Wm. White, late pastor of the Second Baptist Church in Philadelphia, who is excluded from said church for contempt of the church and for refusing to meet certain charges brought against him, Reported,

“ That they have reason to believe that said Wm. White is continuing a career of unparalleled immorality, which renders it the duty of the Association to caution the churches and the public against encouraging him. It is alleged on good authority, that the said Wm. White is travelling with a woman whom he calls his wife, while his wife and family are now in Philadelphia.” On viewing this rapidly-returning tide of their their esteem and affections, we were like them that dream ; and could scarcely realize, that the late determined *supporters* of Wm. White, could now treat him with positive *injustice*, and *unfounded abuse* !

What *reason* that committee, and the Association which adopted their report, had to *believe* that his career of immorality was “ *unparalleled*,” we have yet to learn : they have certainly *published* nothing, whatever knowledge they might have had of his *secret history*, that will justify this unparalleled insinuation ! It certainly would have been sufficient, for all useful purposes, to brand

him with flagrant transgressions, on authority which they have not thought it proper to *adduce*, without loading him with this obviously disproportionate opprobrium !

But how it is, that we, as events have abundantly proved, knew much, and they, as it would seem, little or nothing, of the odious profligacy of this unfortunate man, at the session of their body which occasioned the ushering of our solemn protest into light, is a difficulty, of which we shall not attempt the *solution*.

On this *knotty point*, we must leave others to their own unbiassed reflections.

The protest above alluded to was introduced by the following remarks :

The right of a minority, to protest against whatever it may conceive to be improper, in the conduct of the majority, has rarely been questioned.

Whenever minorities are obliged to submit, in silence, to majorities, however large, there is an end to liberty.

While freedom exists, constitutions, defined agreeably to the established rules of language, govern all societies ; and their feeblest members have nothing to fear from the most arbitrary and despotic majorities.

On the basis of these liberal principles, we claimed, but were denied the right to read our protest against proceedings of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, at their late session, in our place of worship.

It was not pretended that this denial was predicated on the terms in which our protest was couched, nor on the mode of its introduction.

The worthy churches composing a great majority of this Association, need not be informed that it has no control over their liberties.

It is obvious that an Association of churches is never the effect of religious obligation ; but, in its best state, a matter of mere choice, from the influence of prudential motives.

Under these considerations, we are constrained, by a sense of duty, to submit the instrument which an advisory council would not deign to hear, to the consideration of all impartial, and independent churches.

And this measure seems to us the more necessary and important, as the present epoch is acknowledged to be highly interesting to us, as American Baptists. The singular advantages enjoyed in our country, have combined with other, and still more efficacious means, greatly to augment our numbers.

Indeed religion, itself, from the extent and lustre of its triumphs, has become popular ; and adventurers are making a cloak of our strict profession, to conceal their deeds, and give currency to the “good words and fair speeches with which they deceive the hearts of the simple.” Under their ministry, it cannot be concealed, that conformity to the world is almost complete ; the doctrines of sovereign grace, which distinguish our excellent Confession of Faith are seldom, or never, heard ; the door of admission to our tables is widened beyond all scriptural bounds ; discipline, if it exist, is extremely lax ; and the standard of morals is reduced to invisibility !

Men who turn the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ into lasciviousness, and are otherwise in notorious disorder, obtain seats, as delegates*, in our Associations, and,

* Several of those delegates have since been excommunicated, by their respective churches, which have been put, it would seem, on the *alert* by our protest. From the church, of which Wm. White was then pastor, thirty-three members have since been excommunicated.

under the influence of corrupt and deluded majorities, are elevated to our pulpits !

Iniquity is covered by those who declare that a confession of it, or even ocular demonstration, would not convince them of its existence ! The testimonies of all out of our religious connexions, as well as those of the senses, have, in some instances, been declared insufficient grounds of an ecclesiastical censure ! And those who express a contrary opinion, and manifest a disposition to believe, on ordinary grounds, are threatened with legal prosecutions.

The state of things described in those remarks admits of much amplification ; and that it *actually* existed, is proveable by evidence at once copious and decisive. The phrenzy of party spirit led individuals to doubt, as they pretended, and absolutely to *reject* every species and degree of evidence urged against Wm. White. And the dangerous principles, that absconded persons should be admitted into churches, to the Lord's Table, and to the sacred ministry, *merely* on what some call their "experiences of grace," were advocated in the Association, and had been acted on by one of their churches, with the approbation of an associated majority of their delegates.

It was with reference to these melancholy facts, that elder Daniel Dodge*, a messenger from the Delaware Association, wrote to Dr. Rogers, on what he had just before beheld, as follows :—

"The scenes which my eyes and ears witnessed when in your city are ever before me : Oh my brother, what shall we do ! must we abandon truth and order, give up our Discipline, and the rules of the Gospel ? must we

* Mr. Dodge is now the highly-esteemed pastor of the Baptist Church of Piscataqua, N. J.

now be taught, that a gospel church may be composed of persons who are members of other churches, by a relation of their experiences? must we be taught, that a collection of excommunicated persons, are a regular Gospel Church? If this be gospel order, we have never before had it in our churches. But why all this? 'there is a wheel within a wheel.' I hope you will be able to discover the Achan; for 'there is death in the camp.'

"There is but one thing I dread more in churches than division, and that is a surrender of truth. A union formed on the principles advocated in your Association, is like a rope of sand. As soon may you put out the fire of Vesuvius with oil, as form a lasting union on those principles. They contain the very essence of discord; and there never was, nor never will be, any thing else where they prevail. I have no doubt but you will maintain the truth, with the meekness, patience, and firmness, which become a christian minister, in fighting the battles of the Lord. Your case has not, yet, become so perilous as was Paul's. Tender my most affectionate regards to dear Dr. Holcombe. My soul compassionates his case; for I believe he suffers for the truth's sake; but let him glory in it.

"I feel willing to live, and to die, in the defence of those truths he preached, and of the gospel order he defended, before the Association. When those all-important truths lose their influence on my soul, 'O may I cease to be!' O my brother! Although there are some bright spots in our spiritual horizon, yet, on the whole, this is a dark and gloomy day! O how my heart bled, when subjects of the first importance were stated in your Association, to see the messengers of the churches giggling! Are these the lights of the world, and the glory of Christ."

Those are the terms, equally honourable to the head

and heart of a man, and a minister, whose praise is in all the churches, and in society at large. It is remarkable too, that he is one of at least six of the oldest ministers, present at the Association, who left it with a disgust which forbids their attendance at any of its future sessions, except they should be held under a radical change of circumstances.

Passing a letter from the state of Ohio, on disorders similar to those before us, as not essential to the execution of our *present* design, we would here introduce from another the paragraph, which, in our protest immediately followed it:—

This writer's words are, "I have been informed, by those who are ready to inform a court of Judicature, that some of those coloured people have threatened to stab, or shoot, any man who will dare to call them slaves!

"The heterogeneous body, however, composed as it was, of real and pretended members, was in tolerable harmony until a persecution commenced against deacon Simmons*. He had been, I cannot say so wicked, nor even so imprudent, but so unlucky, as to offend a gentleman who pronounced him a "great villain;" and charged him with so many atrocities, that I verily thought he deserved something more than expulsion from a religious society.

"But judge of my surprise, when I found he was expelled from the church, without a single specification of crime! This singular circumstance, appearing on the church book, led to a re-investigation of his case. A council was called, consisting of the gentleman who denounced him, another who was one of the witnesses

* A coloured man of the First African Baptist Church of Philadelphia, in Thirteenth, between Race and Vine Streets.

against him, and a few others including the writer and Dr. Rogers ! But incredible as it may appear, it is no less true, that all attempts to prove something against him which should give, at least, a colouring of justice to his expulsion, proved abortive !”

In correspondence with the threatenings of those people, a few nights before the late meeting of the Association, after two unsuccessful attempts on the life of Simmons, he was shot through one of his thighs, about nine o'clock in the evening, as he was entering his gate ! And the very men he suspected, from their own menaces, of a concern in this murderous act, were messengers to the late Association !

But so far were the majority from regarding these circumstances, in a proper light, that one of their leaders* had the assurance to ascribe the wound which this persecuted man received, to the management of his friends !

On this occasion, horror seized, and strongly agitated, hundreds of virtuous bosoms ! an involuntary burst of indignation shook the house †.

But two other facts must be stated to enable the reader to account for the unparalleled disorder which degraded this Association : some days before they convened we were credibly informed, that they were determined to put one of two men ‡, the least acceptable to us of any at their disposal, into our pulpit, however we might oppose this uncourtly measure ! Accordingly they attempted to carry their design into effect ; but, with all

* Wm. White.

† This hyperbole has been pointed to as an error, by a member of the Association, who, in the progress of his speech on it—waxing warm—represented us as having written and printed so largely, that *steam-boats* had been made to GROAN with our publications.

‡ Wm. White, or Dr. Staughton.

their boasted numbers, in this instance, they were foiled, and retired from a scene of confusion which it would be neither easy nor pleasant to describe.

They say, in their minutes, that our pulpit was refused, without condescending to account for it. Yes, we would not suffer it to be entered by a disorderly character. And, we would ask, what church could consider any man in order who would devise, and attempt to execute, a plan to force himself, or his brother, on their premises?

It is one thing to ask alms, and another to demand a purse. Had double, or treble, the amount of what Great Britain demanded of us, as tax, been requested as a favour, we should have readily granted it; but rather than pay a cent, as tribute, we chose to expend a million in defence.

On the whole we have just to observe, that the same spirit which has disorganized our Board of Foreign Missions, reared its brazen front in the Association. Those who may covet an acquaintance with it, should read a letter lately published on "the silence of the second annual report of the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions, relative to their exchange of Vice Presidents*."

Witnesses of the first respectability, testify that this production by no means exaggerates the obliquities, not to say the enormities, it exposes. We need add no more, than that the leading characters in the Tragedy which that letter correctly exhibits, were the Actors in our truly farcical Association.

For the information of strangers to our opponents, and their communications, it may not be improper to observe, that they not only manifested a disposition, as we conceived, to reject all evidence, but to tease us with

* By Dr. Holcombe.

legal prosecutions, should they be able to collect any thing actionable from our productions. From these very unusual circumstances, we couched our protest, as you will presently perceive, in correspondent terms.

PROTEST.

THE undersigned representative of the First Baptist Church in Philadelphia, solicits permission to state, that we solemnly *Protest* against all the proceedings of this Association, in so far as contrary to sound doctrine, and the discipline of our churches.

We perform this duty with great reluctance ; but, if we mistake not, in the fear, and with a single eye to the glory of GOD.

Living in an age of scepticism, we shall guard, as much as possible, against committing ourselves by any unsupported assertion.

Though some men may prove, in their own opinion, any thing ; we shall now attempt to prove nothing. How can we even identify, beyond controversy, any man ? May not one man be exactly like another ? Or, how can we distinguish, to a certainty, betwixt a man and his apparition ? We may suppose many things ; but is it not possible that the combined testimonies of all our senses may deceive us ? Are there not many, of ex-

cellent natural and acquired parts, who consider all evidence whatever, in its very nature, equivocal and deceptive? Is it not, at least, doubtful, whether any conceivable assemblage of circumstances can furnish proof sufficient to criminate a suspected character? If circumstances, combined to any extent, and our senses, separately and connectively, may deceive us, how can we safely depend on affidavits?

The witnesses may be frightened, or bribed, have flaws in their reputation, or, from some other cause, labour under fallacious impressions. In either of these cases, what dependence can be placed on their oaths or affirmations*?

Aware of the difficulty, not to say the impracticability, of proving facts, we shall attempt nothing of this nature. Whatever our impressions may have been, as our perceptive powers are limited, and our judgments fallible, we readily *concede*, that no associational decisions may have been determined on, previously to this session; that the choice of a moderator, may have been uninfluenced by party considerations; that, possibly, the letters and messengers from corresponding Associations were treated with due respect and delicacy; that, peradventure, no plan of supplying our pulpit, on the evening we met, had been preconcerted; that in the attempt which seemed to be made to force a minister on us, there may have been no design to divide us; and, that in the whole course of our debates, nothing may have appeared like unfairness in argument, rancour, personal

* All these queries, singular as they may appear, were correctly predicated on the quibbles and evasions of Wm. White's advocates, in their unavailing, though strenuous endeavours to maintain his standing in religious society.

abuse, or ill-natured reflections. And, we are compelled, further, to *admit*, that the organs of hearing may have deceived those who signify, that several of our orators dealt largely in slanderous insinuations, indelicate allusions, disgusting similes, reflections on distinguished officers of the state; and even sneerings at the doctrine of a particular Providence.

We can say no more, but we will not say less, than, that against all which has appeared to us, in those matters, contrary to meekness and humility, affability and courteousness, and the respect and attention due to character and office, we *Protest*.

And, alas! other, and still more exceptionable things, if possible, operate on our minds, to the disadvantage of those whose suffrages, during the present session, have so far governed our decisions.

They continue, we believe, a number of men and women in their fellowship, and on our minutes, who are living in violation of the laws of the United States*!

Several of them, we are informed, were seized, a few evenings ago, by a civil officer, at one of the doors of this house, under serious charges; and, though delegates among us, were taken under guard, and hauled before a magistrate.

* This society is enrolled on the minutes of the late Association, and represented by seven delegates, with a *licensed preacher* as their *chairman*.

We are sorry to learn that some of these *select* men are unknown, as *baptists*, otherwise than by *their own report*.

Some of them, it seems, were lately excommunicated, for odious vices; but have since been restored to the fellowship and confidence of their associates—and the *chairman himself* is, unfortunately, of *this number*.

In fine, if there are not persons in this body, under excommunication, and in very dishonorable connexions, we despair of ever substantiating any fact in the whole current of events !

That these scandals exist among us, we do not affirm ; but, will their existence be openly denied*, by any individual who has the least reputation at stake !

All we can say, therefore, is, that we solemnly *Protest* against every measure, and act, which during this session, or at any other time, may have tended to patronize, countenance, or conceal, disorderly and vicious characters†.

In assigning our reasons for this *Protest*, suffer us to observe, that without a strict and conscientious regard to the divine pattern, with respect both to the admission and exclusion of members, our churches can never enjoy peace and prosperity.

Light and darkness, righteousness and unrighteousness, Christ and Belial, can have no fellowship.

If churches can be composed always, as they ought to be, of enlightened men and women, no danger can arise, but, on the contrary, much advantage, from the operation of democratic principles ; but if once we suffer graceless and unprincipled characters, by any means, to creep into our sacred inclosures, until they form majorities, Ichabod, or, the glory is departed, may be written on the gates of all our Sanctuaries.

Associations of real and consistent Christians, each

* No : they have not been—they *cannot be denied*.

† The things above merely *alluded* to, are *facts*. Accordingly the committee of the Association, on this *protest*, make no complaints of ambiguity in its language ; nor of a mis-statement of the measures it censures.

striving to take the lowest seat, are among the most excellent means of grace.

In such bodies the mind of Christ is humbly sought, and, when found, directs all their deliberations into correct channels, and to happy results. And, while matters are thus conducted, churches are benefited by combination; but should ever their delegates, regardless of their Lord's authority and glory, depart from the golden rules, and harmonizing spirit of his word, into envyings, ambitious competitions, and vain janglings, they should immediately withdraw, and separately maintain, at once, their good order, and their independence.

An apostle commands us in the name, and by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, to withdraw from all disorderly persons.

The necessity of thus dissolving existing connexions, we earnestly deprecate; and are still determined to seek and cherish the unity of the spirit, in the bond of peace.

There is nothing more precious in our eyes than the harmony of the churches, except purity, and the pleasure of a good conscience.

Indeed, we are unable to conceive of genuine peace, unsupported by rectitude. Happily, all wicked compacts must, eventually, be destroyed by the subversive matter which they contain in their own bowels.

As the subjects of these convictions, we can never follow a multitude to do evil; nor suffer ourselves to be driven by a "Host," from duty's plain path; though, in this, a little child may lead us. Farewell.

Signed by order, and in behalf of the whole church,
October 16, 1816.

HENRY HOLCOMBE,

Chairman of the Delegates of the First Baptist Church to the

Philadelphia Baptist Association.

REMARKS, &c.

This is the *Protest* which was refused a single reading in our Association, though made by a church, represented in history, as second to none in the United States. And the instrument, even in its present form, we are aware, may give offence. Indeed, the probability is as ten to one, that the very style, if not the language* in which it is written, will be deemed exceptionable. But be assured, candid reader, a plainer statement of the facts alluded to, would be still more likely to offend.

And had we been less cautious in expressing ourselves, we might have been involved, according to the order of the day, in expensive law-suits. Several of the triumphant majority, are, already, engaged in suits of a seriously distressing nature. In this remark, however, we intend no indiscriminate censure. The innocent are, sometimes, reluctantly drawn into courts of judicature by the guilty. When whips, cudgels, and fire-arms are not only talked of, but actually resorted to, in settling controversies, it is certainly time for denounced victims of blind rage, to seek shelter under the paternal arm of the community. And all on the Lord's side must see the necessity of rising up for him against the workers of iniquity. We need the whole armour of God. He,

* It has been customary to write and read things improper to be known by the *vulgar*, in a *dead language*—Latin, Greek, or Hebrew.

alone, knows in what our "fiery trials" are to terminate.

After all, though it is well known that liberty of speech has been denied us, as well as the right of reading our protest, it would be nothing new, were we told that admitting the truth of all our statements, we ought to have remained silent, and not to have injured the cause by a publication.

But, what cause? Not the cause of Christ. His kingdom has nothing in it that requires the aid of darkness.

Yet, with some, crime does not consist in transgressing the divine law; but in publishing transgressions!

With these emollient expositors, it was not Ahab, the troubler of Israel, nor Herod, in the matter of Philip, who sinned; but Elijah, and John the Baptist, in pointedly charging them with their peccadilloes!

It is the practice, now-a-days, to turn attention from the greatest offences, by criminating the spirit, or the object, of the medium through which they appear.

Even a text taken, or a quotation made, from the word of God, if it admit of an application to a favourite offender, will condemn a whole sermon! Instead of dispassionately inquiring into facts, supposed to be unfairly stated, not fully established, or even false, the custom is, to rail against, and threaten their discloser; or, finding his only fault is speaking the truth, to say "he is unworthy of notice."

But our Association has condescended to notice a query from the society, which, in contradiction to the authority of the State, they call, "The First African Baptist Church of Philadelphia."

Now, gentle reader, what query, think you, could

these sons of Ham, in obscure darkness, propound to our learned Association?*

Whether persons excommunicated, or who belong to churches in Virginia, can be members of a church in Pennsylvania? No:—

Whether it be orderly, to pitch members of a church out of a place of worship on their heads, and drown their cry of “murder!” by singing hymns? No:—

Whether it be humane, and pious, to shoot a man for calling slaves, slaves? No:—

On each of these points they appear to be sufficiently informed for practical purposes.

But, to keep you no longer in suspence, this is their query: “Is it consistent with the discipline of Baptist churches, for regular ministers among us to administer the Lord’s supper to persons excluded, and by preaching for them to support them in their unwarrantable conduct?”

And though simply stating such a question insults the plainest understanding, to say nothing of the quarter from which it came, our dignified council, with all the gravity of a bench of bishops, took it into their consideration! And, like an assembly of Daniels, answered it emphatically, in the negative! “*It is not.*”

May we not anticipate the following, as similar queries?

Must irregular, or disorderly ministers, among us, have their hands tied by our discipline?

* The attentive reader will observe, that this query respects only one small society of Ham’s sons—who, *as such*, are on equal grounds with those of *Japheth*. In many of their kindred, according to the flesh, we joyfully recognise the enlightened, and precious sons and daughters of Zion.

Is it matter of any moment, for what, or by whom, persons are excluded from church-privileges?

May a man under the highest censure of a gospel church, preach, and administer the Lord's Supper?

Are we obliged to keep any, especially the sixth, seventh, and eighth of the ten commandments?

Is Pontius Pilate the Saviour of the world?

One of this class of people, a few years ago, in South Carolina, to the query, "Who is Christ?" replied, "Abraham!" And the most superficial reader of the query to our Association, must perceive that neither of the above queries exceeds it in the fragrance of its absurdity. What! is it matter of doubt, whether ministers, regular, or irregular, among us, may, consistently with our discipline, preach to persons excluded, *to encourage them in unwarrantable conduct*? It would be highly absurd to inquire if it be right to do evil* that good may come; but it is much more so to ask whether our ministers may, or may not, oppose our discipline in its operations, support unwarrantable conduct, by the prostitution of their office, and have fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness!

But, we hope the churches concerned, will seriously weigh, and solidly answer, the query which follows:—Is the Philadelphia Baptist Association, in its present state, sanctioned by the Holy Scriptures?

Those churches are very competent to judge, what manner of spirit this body breathes, what number and kind of delegates compose it, what order it maintains, the discipline it patronizes, the correctness of its state-

* Any kind—or the *least* degree of it.

ments, the weight of its letters*, the sum of its advice, and what examples it sets for their imitation.

And, after ascertaining their late conduct, the churches composing it must find themselves deeply interested in

* The majority against whose acts we protest, as above, in their corresponding letter, say, "our session has been protracted to an unusual length." Unusual indeed—eight days—one of which was occupied—after a new fashion—till midnight!

To account for this singular protraction, they speak of elaborate investigation, and a decision, which, they believe, "goes to establish the Independence of our churches."

Whatever annoyance our churches may suffer from despotism, we hope they will never need associational support for the establishment of their Independence. It has long been well established; and, stable as a rock amid conflicting billows, holds in just contempt the rage, and envy, of assailants.

Were the decision referred to, however, to unfold its legitimate tendencies, to a certain degree, it would, most assuredly, destroy every vestige of our discipline and harmony. Their decision that the Africans on our minutes are an orderly gospel church, virtually says, that the language of our church books may be profane—the order of worshipping assemblies maintained by muscular force—and that we are at liberty to receive, and retain in our communion, persons eloped from distant places, without credentials—persons either members of other churches—or under excommunication—and, persons, confessedly, in nature's darkness!

We rejoice to alleviate the distresses of our most unfortunate fellow-creatures; but cannot agree to patronize the disorderly, in either civil or religious society.

Rather "come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you; and ye shall be my sons and daughters," adds he who established the Independence of CHURCHES, long before the existence of Associations.

practically determining on the nature of its claims, if indeed it possess any, to their patronage.

And one more query, in particular, we are humbly of opinion, ought to be agitated among us. It is simply this:—Can a minister, once justly excommunicated for gross immorality, ever be restored, on scriptural grounds, to his office?

To this however, there are *previous questions*, which we find stated, and, we think, well answered, in a circular letter from the Baptist ministers and messengers, assembled at Hamsterly, Old England, May 26 and 27, 1779, in the following terms:—

1. “Can a person cast out of a church for disorderly conduct, stand, *in right*, either to that or other orderly churches, in any other light than an *excommunicated person*, although he be received into fellowship by a people who call themselves orderly, especially when the people receiving him know him to be excommunicated, and yet never made application to the church which excommunicated him, to enquire into his repentance, and loose him from the censure thereof?”

The answer to which was——

He ought still to be considered, as in right he is, an *excommunicated person*. For, if such a person had repented, he ought to manifest it unto those from whom he was separated. Nor has any other people a right to receive him, according to the laws of Christ, until that people have satisfaction concerning his repentance; or at least inform them, of his crime, who wait to receive him, and give them liberty to deal with him accordingly.

For other churches to receive excommunicated persons, KNOWING them to be such, is to trample on the authority of King Jesus, to throw down the walls

of Zion, to encourage and harden men in sin, and to fill the churches with the erroneous, the licentious, and profane.

2. If such a person take upon him to preach the gospel, is it lawful and orderly for any, church members especially, to hear him; *especially* if they are *advertised* of these things, and are members of the church that cut him off?

Answered—*Unlawful for any—more so for church members—most of all for those advertised of it, and members of the church which cut him off.* Because with such we ought not to eat—of other men's sins we ought not to partake—but this conduct, by encouraging and hardening the person in his errors, will involve us in his guilt.

We are not to give offence—but this practice is offensive both to God and GOOD men.

In one word; to hear such, only occasionally, may be productive of much evil, both to ourselves and others, and therefore to be avoided.

And if any one of ours have been blameable, in things of this nature, we are willing to say, with good old Jacob, *peradventure it was an oversight*; but hope, for the Redeemer's honour and the Church's welfare, they will *no more be overseen therein.*"

What the Association said of us, and our protest, at their next session, appears in their minutes as follows:—

“A committee was appointed to attend to the resolutions and requests, contained in many of the letters from the churches relative to the protest of the First Philadelphia Church, against the proceedings of our last Association. Brother M'Laughlin, Hough, Grigg, Allison, and Montayne formed the committee.

The committee appointed on the subject of a protest against the proceedings of the Philadelphia Baptist Association by the First Baptist Church of Philadelphia, with prefatory and concluding extracts and remarks by Henry Holcombe, their Pastor, respectfully report,

That such a publication was entirely unprovoked by the Association, whose measures, ensured in said protest, your committee consider wise, just, and necessary; according with the discipline of our churches and the word of God. They regret the unchristian temper it breathes, and the very palpable misrepresentations with which it abounds. They consider its tendency as mischievous, calculated to mislead the uninformed; and are of opinion that said church owe it as a duty to this body, to retrace their unwarrantable steps, or, in case of perseverance in their present unhappy course, that the Association owes it to her own honour and harmony, and to the cause of righteousness and truth, to separate from her body a church with whom she cannot have communion*. The Association suspend any further proceedings, leaving the whole for the solemn consideration of said church until the next Association.

Ordered to be recorded as *unanimously* adopted."

Shortly after the reception of those widely disseminated charges, and *menaces* against us, we appointed a committee to dispassionately examine their merits.

On due consideration, as we believe, and prayer for divine direction, after recapitulating the contents of those articles, they made the following report:—

“From the various facts which have been developed between the meeting of the Association in 1816 and 1817, we are fully of opinion, that the members of this

* Here the report ends—and the Association, it would seem, act upon it *prior* to its adoption.

council *ought* to have been *convinced, of the truth, and propriety, of the substance contained in our protest.*

In the case of *William White*, we think ample *proof* of it has been given by the body, who published his career of immorality as "*unparalleled.*"

We did *hope* this *developement* would have taught her a lesson of *moderation*, relative to the *protest.*

Had she not been under improper influence, instead of being guided by the *Word of God*, and the dictates of the HOLY SPIRIT, there would have been no necessity for a church anxious to maintain truth and order to have protested against her proceedings: neither would there have been any necessity for *publishing* our protest, if the Association had suffered it to have been READ.

The committee recommend, that the church adhere to the truth contained in said *protest*, and that a letter be written, and delegates appointed, to the next Association, with instructions, if necessary, to call for *explicit specifications* of the charges *alluded* to by them, in their minutes of 1817; and to enter into any arrangements, calculated, in their opinion, to restore and promote *harmony*, between that body and this church, CONSISTENTLY WITH THE CAUSE OF TRUTH AND RIGHTEOUSNESS. But, should a disposition continue and prevail in that body, to *persevere* in the unwarrantable course of injustice and *persecution*, against this church, began by them in 1816, and continued in 1817, then the messengers should be authorized to assert the INDEPENDENCE of the church, and separate from an Association who have assumed *undelegated* powers, in publishing *slanders* against this church, and *threatening* to separate her from their body.

All which is respectfully submitted.

Signed,

GEO. INGELS,
 HUGH GOURLEY,
 JOSEPH KEEN,
 JOHN M'LEOD,
 LEVI GARRETT,
 WILLIAM DUNCAN,
 ELIJAH GRIFFITHS,
 JOSEPH S. WALTER.

Cordially adopting this report, conformably to a recommendation it contains, we addressed to the late Association the following epistle:—

The First Baptist Church of Philadelphia, holding, and *maintaining*, the doctrines, ordinances, and discipline comprised in our excellent confession of faith, to the Philadelphia Baptist Association, send christian salutation:—

BELOVED BRETHREN,

At your last session, from circumstances which it would be uninteresting to detail, you received from us neither letter nor messengers. As circumstances of this nature, from various causes, frequently occur in all our Associations, your candour will require of us no apology.

We embrace the present opportunity, to renew to you the assurance, that we highly appreciate the communion of saints, and resume our epistolary correspondence with you, under the influence of a sincere desire to promote, on the principles of the relation in which we stand to each other, as independent churches, permanent peace and harmony.

As delegates of these favoured bodies we address you, and from your wisdom, influenced and regulated by the Spirit and Laws of our common Lord, anticipate happy results.

We have great reason for gratitude to the God of all grace and consolation, for the continuance of unity and peace among ourselves, for the stated ministry of the word, and the regular administration of gospel ordinances.

Our congregations are uniformly large and attentive, and, we hope, favoured with the divine presence.

Trusting that, as we have received the Lord Jesus, so we have been enabled, through grace, to walk in him, *judge* of our surprise, brethren, when, in your minutes of last year, we found ourselves charged with having made "*palpable misrepresentations,*" and with "*pursuing an unwarrantable course!*"

And to be threatened, as we were, without even a *specification* of crime, real or imaginary, by your body, with the highest censure, was, in our humble opinion, a still greater departure from every correct rule of associational proceedings.

Acquainted, therefore, as you will readily acknowledge us to be, with our rights, and with your delegated powers, we confidently indulge the hope, that you will dispassionately *reconsider*, and, as publicly as they have been past, *rescind*, the resolutions embracing those points.

If you admit, what surely none can deny, that an enlightened independent body will never delegate a right to infringe its own privileges, or sully its character, you must, at once, perceive, that, had our conduct been exceptionable, we were not amenable at *your bar*.

Churches of our Order, understanding their Christian

Liberty, will never suffer themselves to be arraigned before a few of their own members, *associated*; nor before any other men or body on earth.

If one church may be dishonoured, not by a transferred, but, as we conceive, an *usurped* power, another may, a third may, and so on, until, by such an usurpation, some man, men, or body, may, at length, possess, and exercise, dominion over all the churches.

To you, brethren, we look, with equal respect and confidence, to assert, and vindicate, in your minutes, our rights and character, *as an independent Church of Christ.*

It is our happiness to live in a discerning age and country, and, be assured, we feel an ardent solicitude to see things so conducted, that the wise and good of all denominations may unite in honouring them with their approbation.

Brethren, to the Law, and to the Testimony, and, in so far as founded on this Word, to our Confession of Faith, and Church Discipline, let us direct our regards, and not to individuals, nor *party-interests*, lest haply we be found even to fight against God.

If sincere in our profession, Christ is our MASTER, and we are *brethren*.

Let us leave others presumptuously to say, "*We will not have this man to reign over us.*"

O that the language of our tempers and conduct may be, "HE IS LORD OF ALL."

Be it our constant aim to take the right side of all questions, whoever it may affect, that, knowing no man after the flesh, we may have the honour to be "*fellow-helpers to the truth.*"

Finally, brethren, if, in the spirit of conciliation and

love, you will show that with, or without provocation, we have made any false statement, or taken a single step in an unwarrantable course, we are prepared to retread *this*, and correct *that*, with a view to the harmony of the Churches, and the glory of God.

And, from an equally sincere regard to the same important objects, we doubt not but you will calmly review your minutes, as they respect our conduct, and do us that justice the case may require.

Since our last communication, we have received by baptism 75—by letter 27—dismissed 31*—excluded 12—deceased 17—present number 492.

Wishing you a session distinguished by many tokens for good, we remain, as ever, yours in gospel bonds.

Signed the evening before the opening of the Association, in behalf of the whole church—without a dissenting voice.

JOHN M'LEOD, Clerk.

JOSEPH S. WALTER, Assistant Clerk.

Should it be thought that confidence and esteem were not *sincerely* expressed in this letter, it must be considered, that churches frequently *change their delegates*, and that those who act improperly at *one session*, charity hopes will *REPENT*, and do *well, afterwards*.

The names of the delegates we omitted in the church's *letter*, to *prevent an unnecessary repetition*, as they appear, with a few *exceptions*†, in the following *report* :

* Of these was the majority of the members who lately constituted the Baptist Church in Camden, New-Jersey.

† These exceptions are *five*—three of which are ascribable to professional duties—bodily indisposition—and filial delicacy:—and the other two—to *unknown causes*.

“ We, the undersigned delegates, appointed on the 5th instant, to the Association, respectfully *report*:—*that* we presented your letter to the moderator, and, with some *difficulty*, procured the reading of it—*that*, when called to answer to charges, in their last year’s minutes, of having made “*palpable misrepresentations*,” in our *protest*, and taken “*unwarrantable steps*,” we called for *specifications* of those things, but in vain—*that verbal*, as well as *written*, specifications, were denied us—*that*, instead of specifications, they proposed stating the *reasons* that influenced the committee that penned those charges—*that, the reasonableness* of our proposition, to have specifications of our alleged “*misrepresentations*,” and “*unwarrantable steps*,” stated to us, being OBVIOUS, we could but consider their refusal to accede to it, as EVASION—*that*, retiring, a few minutes, by *permission*, we agreed to request, IN WRITING, those *specifications*—THAT WE DID THIS, but without moving them from the ground they had taken—*that*, treated with utter inattention, as to the business in hand, after waiting until the attention of that body was turned to another subject, we observed, *that all hope of accommodation with them had EXPIRED*, and WITHDREW, *agreeably to our instructions*—bidding them—FAREWELL.

It is with pain, we add, *that* attempts were made, not only to prevent the *reading of your letter*, but to *silence us*, as the representatives of a body charged with “*high crimes and misdemeanors*,” and “*arraigned for trial*,” at their bar!

These extravagant expressions, it is true, were used by an *individual*, but one who stands high in that “*Advisory Council*,” as we have, *hitherto*, considered it

without the slightest reproof, or correction by the moderator !”

Signed—Henry Holcombe, William Rogers, George Ingels, John M'Leod, Joseph Keen, Hugh Gourley, Levi Garrett, Joseph S. Walter, Thomas Brown, Joseph Reynolds, John Davis, Elijah Griffiths, William Duncan, David Johns, Henry Benner, Silas W. Sexton, William S. Hansell, Thomas Wattson, David Weatherly, Samuel W. Keen.

This report, at an unusually full meeting of the members, of both sexes, was promptly adopted, with but *one dissenting voice*.

A general joy ran through the church, and congratulations were reciprocated, on the assurance given, that we had WITHDRAWN from the Association, and were to have nothing more to do with that body, in her present disorganized and fallen state.

A review of the AXIOMS, stated in the Preface, *and of our CHARTER*, contrasted with *their late conduct*, will enable the churches to judge of the expediency of looking forward to a society, constituted on our *original principles*, under the name and style of, “THE REFORMED PHILADELPHIA BAPTIST ASSOCIATION.” *This, we conceive, should be our POLE STAR.*

Having thus stated the *grounds* on which we withdrew from this body, we respectfully solicit the company of those to whom we affectionately dedicate this piece, through a few more pages, to the *conclusion*.

You have now seen, in a clear and unequivocal light, how offences, and controversies, originated amongst the Baptists of Philadelphia. Our *protest*, against which much has been said, with a few short illustrative notes, necessary to strangers *only*, has past your impartial

scrutiny ; and you have seen the charges it has been the occasion of drawing on us, the report on them by our committee, our letter to the late Association, and the report of our delegates on the reception with which they met in that body.

The causes which ultimately compelled us to come out from this Association, and to be *separate*, have not escaped your attention ; nor the formal, and very *public and explicit* manner of effecting this separation.

You are, therefore, now prepared, and possibly *anxious*, to see what the minutes of their last session say on the subject of our bidding them FAREWEL.

It cannot have escaped your notice, that they, who claimed to be our *judges*, were our only *accusers* ; and, though *hard pressed* to give some *instance* of improper conduct on our part—even to the making of a *single misrepresentation*, or taking *one unwarrantable step*—they have not been prevailed on to *attempt it* ! They say, indeed, but have not *proved*, nor *can* they, that, “ *entirely unprovoked,*” we *published* our protest against their proceedings ; but the *facts*, of which *you* will judge, *are*, they not only PEREMPTORILY refused to hear us *read it*, but suffered their *chief* speaker, WILLIAM WHITE, to say, without reproof, when it was intimated, that if they would not hear us *read it*, we should *publish it*, “ *They’ll not DARE to publish it, BRETHREN, —there will be no publication.*” We would respectfully ask—what would an enlightened and free people, hundreds of whom were present on the occasion referred to, have thought of us, had we continued *silent*, under these circumstances ? And you must be left to think, what YOU PLEASE, of a *body* who, *knowing* these things,

said our publication was “*entirely unprovoked by them**.”

After thus egregiously, as we conceive, committing themselves in the *out-set*, they pronounce the *measures* which our protest *censures*—“WISE, JUST, and NECESSARY!” This, you will find, is saying, by undeniable *implication*, that to do business in *caucuses*, before the meeting of the Association, is WISE—the refusing of a *minority* the right to *read* their *protest* against proceedings of the *majority*, which they *disapprove*, is JUST—and the admission of disorderly—or even *excommunicated* persons into our churches—“NECESSARY.”

Our *temper* you may recollect, as breathed in the protest under their notice, is *regretted* as “*unchristian* ;” but, appealing from “*their bar*,” to the “*law and to the testimony*,” we cheerfully leave this unerring *criterion* of a christian temper, to define what *manner* of temper that is, which can have no fellowship with the works of darkness, and reproves them “*sharply*.”

From the *temper* which our protest breathes, they transfer their *regrets* to the “very palpable misrepresentations” with which, they affirm, “it abounds.” But, as they have never so much as attempted to prove this bold assertion, by a quotation from our protest, or *otherwise*, we shall, in answer to it, merely ask the following question :—who can believe that any, *professedly*, christian society, of half our number, would offer to read an *instrument* abounding with “very palpable misrepresentations,” respecting things which had just occurred, in the presence of those earnestly *requested* to hear it ?

* O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united !—JACOB.

Or, should such an *inconceivable* event have *happened*, is it *morally possible*, that the body, hearing those numerous, and “very *palpable*, misrepresentations,” should refuse, on a just DEMAND, to *specify* ONE, *even* to save their own *veracity* from being rendered *questionable*? These queries obviously involve their proper answers.

The truth is, if we may depend on the most credible testimony, the knowledge of certain things in our *protest*, was carried over the walls of the Church, to our opponents; and their *leaders* had the address to prevent the reading of it, as the only means of *evading*, at that critical juncture of their affairs, an exposure to its just, and *necessary* severity.

The committee proceed from what they represent, as our *theoretical* atrocities, to charge us with *practical*, and *reiterated vices*, under the denomination of “unwarrantable steps,” so numerous as to constitute an “*unhappy* COURSE.” And we hereby promise them a *solid* reply, whenever it may suit their convenience, and be in their *power*, to throw over this *crude*, *unwieldy*, and *incredible* CHARGE*, the slightest shadow of *justice*.

It must be recollected that the report on which we have bestowed a few remarks, was, “ORDERED, to be recorded as *unanimously* adopted.”

In taking our leave of it, we are authorised to say, that this “ORDER,” was predicated on *inadequate grounds*.

We are now prepared to attend to what the Association say of these things in the minutes of their late session; and we find it *comprised in the following lines*:

“It was moved and carried, that we proceed immediately to a full and final consideration of the 22d minute

* It much resembles the charge in Acts 17. 6. “These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also.”

of the proceedings of last year, respecting the First Church of Philadelphia.

Adjourned till 3 o'clock.

Met pursuant to adjournment.

Resumed the business of the First Church; the result of which was, a *Resolution*, that this Association, conscious of the rectitude of her own acts in relation to the First Baptist Church of Philadelphia, and from the persevering conduct of said Church, as manifested by her present delegation; are constrained to say, they cannot continue her any longer a member of this body."

Now, christian friends, can you believe, that such a motion as this was ever made and carried, in the presence of our delegation? We conceive that you *cannot*. If it could be supposed that this motion was made, and carried, it would follow, that they *previously* determined, in *caucus*, to make short work of what concerned us. Had they left themselves to be governed by rising events, how could they have determined to proceed to the "*full*" and "*final*" consideration of our case? How did they know but that we should manifest signs of repentance, and humbly request their *indulgence*, and their *prayers*, for "*one year more*," as preliminaries to the "*full*" and "*final*" consideration of their minute respecting us? And had the church, of which more than half their number of individuals are descendants, prostrated herself at their feet, imploring the prolongation of their clemency and forbearance, for a few months, how could they have sternly resisted *such importunity*?

But, if we may be permitted to disclose the *truth*, on the united testimony of our delegation, neither the word, "*FULL*," nor "*FINAL*," was in the motion to which they have here reference.

This deviation from *accuracy*, however, should be ascribed, perhaps, to a dignified negligence of what they may deem "*small things.*"

On the result of this very comprehensive motion, they are concise, in the extreme.

They take no notice, *whatever*, of the *articles* included in the report of *our delegates*. It is *particularly* interesting for the friends of truth and order, for whose information we write, to know, *whether the resolution in which the motion, in question, RESULTED, was passed BEFORE, or AFTER, the withdrawing of our delegation from their body*. If BEFORE, they *might* be correct, in saying they could not continue us any longer a member of their body; but if AFTER, their resolution is *calculated*, and must have been deliberately *intended*, to impress the public mind, with the *belief*, that we had stood our trial at the bar of our *accusers*; and, after retaining the *honour* of a connexion with them as long as possible, were *expelled from their body*. Christian friends, be *assured*, this deceptive, and highly *farcical*, RESOLUTION passed, AFTER our delegates, calling heaven and earth to witness the fragrance of their disorder, and *injustice*, had retired *from them*, to enjoy, with us, a happy *Independence*, and receive the confidence and esteem due to their well-tried integrity.

When that Assembly were speaking of what they called the *rectitude* of their acts—of not being able to RETAIN, a PREVIOUSLY *withdrawn church*, any longer a member of their body—and of an ABSENT, as a PRESENT, *delegation*, how good men could sit in silence, it is hoped will be enquired into by their CONSTITUENTS*.

* The few in the Association, who, after we withdrew, spoke in our behalf, and the numbers who boldly accompanied

After the termination of our concern with that body, as above, they say in their 9th minute, "Brethren Peckworth and Proudfoot were appointed a committee to examine the Minutes of other Associations." In their 18th Minute, it appears, "The committee to whom were referred the Minutes of the Corresponding Associations, reported, that they find nothing in them that calls for our attention."

Now it happens to be within our knowledge, that the "Minutes of the Boston Baptist Association, held at the Baptist Meeting-House in Woburn, Sept. 16 and 17, 1818," were amongst the minutes which were considered as containing NOTHING that called for *their* attention. The churches, and individuals, we have the honour of addressing, we think, will be of a different opinion, on perusing, from the last mentioned Minutes, the following, if we mistake not, VERY IMPORTANT ARTICLE :—

"We notice in the Minutes of the Hartford Baptist Association an account of several persons travelling about the country under the character of Baptist preachers, who are evidently notorious impostors. Such impositions are frequently practised upon the churches. Men of corrupt principles and immoral lives, not unfrequently obtrude themselves upon society. If things were *set in proper order* in the churches, they would not find it easy to get admittance. But there are in most communities some brethren of warm temperament, possessing more zeal than knowledge, who think it of

us, partaking of our disgust at the conduct of our opponents, and sharing the honour of their revilings, are entitled to just praise, and will gratify us by receiving our sincere acknowledgments.

little importance what a man believes, provided he appears to come in the *power of religion*. A designing impostor will need nothing more to give him currency with such good men, than a false show of humility, accompanied with strong assurances that he is actuated by pure zeal for God.

With a view to prevent such impositions as far as possible, we would recommend, that no person who is a stranger be received as a minister of the gospel, who has not credentials of the most unequivocal nature. Indeed travelling preachers ought to take letters from one minister, or public character to another, as far as they travel. A man of fair character will find no difficulty in obtaining such letters, and those who cannot obtain them, or who carelessly neglect them, ought not to be received.

Impostors usually have papers, but if you examine them, you will generally find them of an ancient date, or from characters unknown to those where they travel*. Is it not manifest that a greater degree of watchfulness is wanting, especially in such churches as have not a stated pastor? We would hence advise, that no church destitute of a pastor, invite a stranger, of whom they have no knowledge, to preach among them, unless he bring a letter of introduction from some respectable character with whom they are acquainted. Such a pro-

* OR, AN IMPOSTOR may *interline*, if not *fully* FORGE letters; and, by *management*, getting a *transcription* of them certified as *such*, by a few respectable, *unsuspicious*, characters—in the absence of the *originals*—reduced, perhaps to *ashes*—it may be *difficult* to detect the IMPOSITION.

cedure would prevent much mischief and disgrace, which the churches are otherwise liable to suffer.

Signed.—THOMAS BALDWIN, Moderator.

JAMES M. WINCHELL, Clerk.”

With this enlightened and venerable Association, we most cordially *recommend*, “*That no person who is a stranger, be received as a minister of the gospel, who has not credentials of the most UNEQUIVOCAL NATURE.*” And should any person have obtruded himself upon one or more of our churches, *without such credentials*, we recommend, with equal cordiality, that on *detection*, he be dealt with as our Discipline directs. It is certainly as much our duty, and interest, to “*purge out, when found amongst us, the LEAVEN,*” which, scripture and experience assure us, is highly deleterious in its effects, as it is to resist its insinuating influence *as it approaches us.*

We are highly gratified in observing, that what the Philadelphia Baptist Association considered as beneath *their notice*, has been very interestingly incorporated, with a variety of congenial matter, in “THE AMERICAN BAPTIST MAGAZINE, AND MISSIONARY INTELLIGENCER; published under the direction of the Baptist Missionary Society in Massachusetts,” for the benefit of Missions.”

The extensive circulation, and just celebrity of this work, must *ensure*, with its *permanency*, and increase of *patronage*, the *efficiency* of its valuable contents.

“*Finally brethren,*” with good will—a *love of benevolence*—towards all men—not excepting our enemies, *if we have any*—and unfeigned *complacency*, in what we conceive to be your moral excellence, we must

bid you an affectionate *adieu*—in the confident hope, that you will impartially, and correctly judge betwixt us, and those from whose associated body we have withdrawn ourselves from conscientious motives, on the grounds, we hope, clearly, and fairly exhibited in the preceding pages. Our only *desire is*, that, if you consider us as justified in the part we have taken against our opponents, and in withdrawing from an Association *almost** wholly under their influence, you may honour us with your friendship and correspondence.

If to recriminate were as expedient as it is just, we might give a lengthy list of “unwarrantable steps,” taken by this body in her conduct towards us; but we had rather leave to others the recapitulation of our statements, and a decision, in the light of the testimonies adduced, on the true nature of the acts to which we have reference.

In fine: had an unbelieving Court of Judicature sat, in the complex character of our *accusers*—our *only* accusers—and judges—*only* judges—denied us the right of answering for ourselves, as well as of appealing from their tribunal—and condemned us—without a testimony—or a cause—we might have borne it: but to be treated so by those with whom we had taken sweet counsel and in whose *real* prosperity we always rejoice, constrains us to look to God, by his grace, and to the faithful in society, by their sympathetic regards to sustain us.

* There are several churches, *yet*, in this body, who evidently begin to stand *aghast* at her proceedings. It is quite a PHENOMENON, among baptists, to see *accusers*—*witnesses*—*attornies*—*and judges*—in the *same*—*the very identical characters*—*arraigning*—*trying*—and, in a most *summary and rapid manner*—*CONDEMNING*, a *silenced*—*unconvicted CHURCH*.

And, as we utterly disclaim all caucusing—selfish projects—and competition with any man—or society—on earth—except in doing good—we rely, with the greater confidence, on the support afforded by the frank—and, especially, the practical expression of correct opinions.

If, as christians, so *churches*, are to exhort one another, those which stand fast in the Liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, will suffer, from us, the word of exhortation.

Only let your conversation be, “as it becometh the gospel of Christ,” and *our Zion*, whose harps are now on the willows, shall soon—*very soon*—receive the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

Walk in the Light of the Lord—have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness—sedulously guard against deceivers—esteem spiritual men—who labour, *exclusively*, “in word and doctrine,” and “watch for your *souls*”—as worthy of “double honour”—seek the wisdom which is from above, and is *first*, PURE, *then*, PEACEABLE—take Christ—the Apostles—and apostolic churches—for your patterns and guides, in doctrine and practice—and you shall not long be “forsaken” and “hated; for the Lord will make you an eternal excellency, the joy of many generations.”

Our limits admonish us to conclude:—Brethren and friends, give thanks and pray for us:—give thanks for our regular growth—by the admission of worthy individuals to our special privileges—and for our uninterrupted *harmony*—during the last seven years. As incontestible evidence of it, insinuations to the *contrary*, notwithstanding—our communion seasons, and especially of *late*, have been remarkably well attended—and *happy*—our fellowship

one with another has increased, and abounded—from external pressure—and no act of the church, in our recollection—throughout this period—called forth more than two or three negatives :—pray that we may “ put on the whole armour of God,” and stand—*stand fast*—in our Liberty—and, that, having done all we may stand : that we may continue in peace among ourselves ; and, “ *if it be possible*, as much as in us lieth, live peaceably with all men :” that we may do good, according to our humble abilities, as we have opportunity, and, especially to the household of faith : that we may never avenge ourselves, nor render railing for railing, but, on the contrary, bless them that curse us, and pray for them that despitefully use—and *persecute*—us : that we may endure hardness, as good soldiers of Jesus Christ—and, that we may never be permitted to purchase a deceitful peace, by the sacrifice of our Independence.

Signed, in *behalf* of the Church.

JOHN M'LEOD, Clerk.

JOSEPH S. WALTER, Assistant Clerk.

STRICTURES

ON

BALDWIN'S LETTERS.

BY JESSE MILLER.

Men shall clap their hands at him, and shall hiss him out of his place. **JOB.**

PHILADELPHIA :

Printed for the author, by J. H. Cunningham.

1819.



MILLER'S STRICTURES.

Sir—Were I a member of Sansom-street Church, and had but a single fellow member to stand by me, we should think it a duty, if we had the ability, to address you as follows :

BROTHER LEWIS,

WE have read your letters to Messrs. Holcombe, Rogers, and Dodge, not as critics, but as friends to fair discussion, and in the spirit of fraternal love. In this exercise of Christian patience, the precepts, “Rebuke not an Elder, but entreat him as a father,” “Be courteous,” and “Study the things which make for peace,” were impressed, with much force, on our minds.

The First Church, in assigning her reasons for withdrawing from our association, we must own, was moderate, and seemed to avoid every thing of a personal nature, that she might not provoke us. By her unequivocal and official voice, she cleared her pastor from the imputation of being the author of “Plain Truth,” so called ; and had she erred, instead of being governed by verity, in vouching for the correctness of his letter on the Board of Foreign Missions, or in the piece called “Misrepresentations Exposed,” she was certainly entitled to more respect than is paid her in your publication.

The manner and matter of this piece, out of the question, it is exceptionable, brother, in a very high degree, from its author.

We are aware that old men are not always wise, and that a young man may be honourably distinguished by modesty, intelligence, and stability ; but, unfortunately,

your youth, brother, has not been remarkable for its freedom from, at least, the appearance of pertness, fickleness, irritability, vanity, and intrigue. You have, indeed, for some years been a professor of religion; but, even this period of your life has been painfully checkered by contentions with your connexions, changing sides, and the highest censure of one of our churches. But though we hope you are penitent, as well as restored to church-privileges, yet we are sorry that the cause of our beloved Pastor and the association, was not placed in the hands of some other advocate.

If the publications of the first church required an answer, it should have come from an authorised agent of the association. On this point, among correct men, there can be but one opinion.

In debates betwixt religious bodies, if any individual may start up, and reply to one of the parties, though it were not by flat contradiction, and buffoonery, there could be no end to controversy.

We lament, brother, that circumstances connected with this case compel us to say, that you appear, in the light of your letters, more like "a busy-body in other men's matters," than a son of peace and veracity.

Alas, brother! if we have enemies, they will rejoice that you have written this book. Who, or what, could have induced you so wofully to commit yourself and us? If your performance was worthy of a gentleman, or even of a christian, you would gain little fame by it, as you are supposed to be the mere amanuensis of our party. If to do good by this work, either by informing the judgment, bettering the heart, or correcting the taste of its readers was your design, we must own our inability to perceive it. It will be supposed, we fear, that as the

instrument of a caucus, you aimed in this unhappy affair, at little more than the name of a reply to the first church, and to swell your piece by unwieldy quotations to the quarter-dollar size. But though it lost nothing by passing through the hands of our learned Pastor on its way to market, we cannot very highly appreciate its intrinsic, whatever may be its commercial value. Be assured, brother, nothing but the gravity of the subject prevents a smile, on observing that the copy right of your letters is secured, according to law! We risk nothing in the conjecture, that this portion of your literary property, as well as your poems, is doubly secure.

Such is its title, brother, that few have breath, and memory to enquire for it; or, in a small pamphlet room to insert it. For want of a snug running title, like, "An answer to Misrepresentations Exposed," or, "The weasel in contact with the file," we should not wonder, were you obliged to read it yourself to non-subscribers, or have it hawked through the streets. And, it appears to us, brother, that crowded as your title page is, had it the small-pox, it could never communicate infection to the body of your work. So far from "developing," according to promise, the points your piece embraces, you seem to have, intentionally, enveloped them in darkness. When it happens to be said of a few book-worms that they have read all your letters, the exclamation, "This is the patience of the saints!" immediately follows. And the complaints we have heard of your ambiguity, induces the opinion, that you might find sale for a pamphlet under the title of "An exposition of Baldwin's letters." Or, a still better plan of giving the scintillations of your genius full scope, might be the publishing of an abridgment of your letters, as a school,

book, on the unviolated principles of Murray's Grammar, Duncan's Logic, and Blair's Lectures on Rhetoric.

But what grieves us unspeakably more, brother, than these small blemishes, like spots on the sun, *every thing* the first church has published, stands as firm as if your maiden pen had yet to spring from the side of its mother goose! We can expect nothing less, than that public opinion will say, your incoherent, tedious letters, only expose our painful embarrassments, and your want of taste and talents. It is said, and we must admit the fact, that, instead of addressing the church in question, as propriety and decorum required, you address, as it would seem, that you might individualize, and abuse her Pastor.

Brother, you have, beyond a doubt, greatly injured, not this man nor his charge, but yourself and us, by this ill-devised and crude effusion. It will now be said, with plausibility, however untruly, that we are no better than our Second-street neighbours.

Rising superior to illiberal and puerile personalities, you should certainly have addressed the church, on her own official publications.

Most palpably, brother, have you insulted her, by the unfounded insinuation, which runs through all your letters, that she is wholly directed and controlled by her pastor. Where were your candour, ingenuousness, and justice, when, in an evil hour you committed this flagrant and indelicate offence against her dignity and independence?

If such conduct as this is countenanced, it must soon prostrate the barriers betwixt, not only men and boys, but individuals and societies.

Not sanguine in expectation when we received your letters, we were less astonished than ashamed, on finding

that you had anticipated victory over your late, and lately admired Pastor, by exhibiting him as the uncouth and swaggering Goliath, and your "beloved self," as the renowned and amiable David! Allow us, brother, to say you should have achieved, and left it to others to proclaim this victory. Glory not, again, in what you may never realize; remember a king of Israel's admonition, "Let not him that girdeth on his armour boast as he that putteth it off."

Whether you suppose yourself to resemble the "man after God's own heart," as a poet, a statesman, or a warrior, we know not; but, one thing we know, your performance, throughout, displays you in Saul's armour, slinging, not stones from the brook, but dirt from the ditch, at the man of straw you caricature, and call Henry Holcombe.

Now, brother, look at that daubing attentively, and contrast it with the likeness, real or pretended, you exhibited of this identical man, but a little while before you received the illumination which drew you under our banners.

We can never forget the high colourings in which you painted him, on a certain occasion, at the very door of our meeting house. Forty-nine years old, within one week, when he first arrived in Philadelphia, at the time of your flattering delineation of him, he was, in your partial eyes, of a dignified appearance, a little rising fifty years of age, strong and active, of considerable eloquence, and, as a gospel preacher, second to none in the United States! And withal, you had the assurance, brother, and you cannot deny it, to represent him as free from defects which you most illnaturally insinuated were undeniable in our revered Pastor. But as these sins were com-

mitted in the days of your ignorance, and you have atoned for them by your present zeal, we freely forgive you, brother, and mention them merely to guard you against future inconsistencies.

But, though we admit that Holcombe is fair game, and that we must, according to our solemn league and covenant, get rid of him if possible, why do you bring Elder Daniel Dodge before the public, as deficient in Orthography, degraded by lending his name, and beset with enemies? Suppose this able minister of the New Testament, and honest man, has not, like some of us, the advantage of a finished education, that he did lend his name, for a stipulated and lawful purpose, to a confidential friend or two, and that he has enemies, you not being alone in attempts to disturb his peace, and injure his good name; are these crimes? These charges will class very well with some you exhibit against Holcombe, we mean those of improperly placing the word *to*, and speaking in the first person singular, above an hundred times, in one of his publications. But, brother, you may bring the same or similar allegations against the late celebrated John Newton, the eminently pious Halliburton, and a thousand others, of whom the world was not worthy, with St. Paul at their head. One of those great men would say, fearless of "egotism," "I am not ashamed of the gospel," while a spruce pragmatist, would fastidiously fill half a page in circumlocution, rather than appear singly, in the first person! Fy, fy! brother, such littlenesses as these remind us of dean Swift's clerk, if our memories serve us, who sought fame, not like you, by counting great P's, but by turning up, and enumerating, what he called "dog's-cars," in the church Bible.

Your letters, we must suppose, are benevolently intended to lessen, but the probability is, they will not a little increase our difficulties. You have been so bewitched as to introduce "Plain Truth" to public notice, and roundly to contradict the first church, by affirming, without the shadow of proof, that her Pastor is the author of it! But what weight can your dogmatical assertion have with a reflecting,——insulted community?

How is controversy ever to end, if the hundreds of respectable witnesses you confront are deemed insufficient to decide the point in question, by their united, solemn, and official attestation? Your testimony, without even a pretence to the least personal knowledge of its truth, to their's, borne in positive and unequivocal terms, is as a mite thrown into a scale, opposite to one filled with talents.

Instead of exposing yourself to a charge of falsehood, which, you may be assured can be well supported, and racking your brains, in fruitless endeavours to ascertain the *author* of "Plain Truth," why, in the name of common sense, brother, do you not fall pell-mell on its *contents*?

You are aware that even sons of science say, that piece discovers the hand of a master, and contains names, dates, places, and respectable references, sufficient to enable every curious reader to satisfy himself, with great facility, whether it is true or false. You have answered this anonymous production, after unnecessarily exposing it to the public eye, substantially as Paine did the Bible, when he called it "a book of lies."

And it mortifies us to perceive that you thus make the author of "Plain Truth" a prophet, as it would seem, in affirming that it would never be replied to,

otherwise than by condemning it in the gross. For your reputation's sake, dear brother, and for the honour of the fraternity, if you can disprove any essential part of that hated performance, do it; but if you cannot, e'en let it alone. Never again raise it from merited oblivion, as an evil genius, to torment us.

In lieu of publishing the letters which you say contain a defence of our beloved Pastor, against the charges in "Plain Truth," your readers are referred to the Rev. Mr. Peckworth, as their *depository*! Such, it will be said, is our management, that all concerned, must come from the most distant regions, to this city, to see our Pastor's defence, or take your word as sufficient to render this trouble unnecessary! How could you thus presume on the credulity, and insult the good sense, of society? If you knew of any thing in those letters capable of defending our Pastor against "Plain Truth's" *main charge*, which gulps all others, though neither few nor small, as the changed rod of Amram's son engulfed the Egyptian serpents, why did you not bring it into the light, in preference to the trash, mere trash, brother, that fills your pages? Readers of your letters look for our accused Pastor's defence, as sailors do for point no point in the Delaware, and say they should be styled, "*Defence no defence.*"

And as you neither proved, nor attempted to *prove*, any thing incorrect in either of the pamphlets you undertook to refute, they are entirely unaffected, and even established, by your feeble attacks. You merely pronounce parts of them all to be false; but, brother, of what weight, in disputed points, is your word? Would you think an individual of even ten times your respectability, might fairly answer your production, by calling it a tissue of palpable falsities?

If we can understand your object, beyond pecuniary considerations, in this unlucky essay, it is not to vindicate the conduct of the Association, nor that of the Board of Foreign Missions; but to direct public attention from those bodies, and especially from the case of our esteemed Pastor, to other objects. To save the ship, an empty barrel is thrown to the whale.

The first church, Dr. Rogers, and Daniel Dodge, we acknowledge were judiciously selected, as the subjects of a few strictures, that the pointedness of your opposition to Holcombe might be concealed from careless and superficial readers. This was a plan that promised you the greatest facilities in the attainment of your main object. But you should have remembered, brother, that art seen through, as this effort of it must be, seldom accomplishes its purpose.

And we are sorry that you exposed your weakness, by labouring through whole pages to prove what none ever denied, or wished to conceal, that Drs. Rogers and Holcombe, with others, formerly treated William Staughton with respect, as we did William White, with whom at present, we should think it highly improper, and even sinful, familiarly to associate. Who does not know, and readily acknowledge, that after forming an intimacy with men, their subsequent conduct, to say nothing of other causes, may lead, nay, necessitate us to treat them as our Pastor is now treated by his former friends?

As to those whose names you display, to prove that they invited him to remain their Pastor, it must be owned, that he contrived to draw them into the adoption of this measure, merely for the sake of the document you have adduced, without the most distant thought of declining his then contemplated enterprise! The intro-

duction of this well recollected affair, was now, brother, premature, and should have been reserved for the next generation.

Of the same nature is the hazardous assertion, that we were all in peace prior to Holcombe's arrival.

Alas! our state, brother, before that event, was awfully the reverse of peace; and it is but common candour to admit, that had any other man come at the time, and under the circumstances he did, without implicitly submitting to the will of our Pastor, the same consequences which form the subject of our present complaints must have ensued. Your bare word to the contrary, notwithstanding, we must allow that the unknown, perhaps unsuspected author of "Plain Truth," which you set us the example of quoting, gives an accurate account of the rise, and the progress, to a very late period, of the controversies which have agitated us for the last seven years.

From the present state of things, it would not become us to show, if we felt, much respect for Drs. Rogers and Holcombe; but really, brother, you have so overacted your part, in caricaturing these men, who have long been highly and generally esteemed, that you have drawn on yourself much severity of censure from many who were your best friends.

With respect to Dr. Rogers, who does not know that he has reputably filled various and important stations in this city for upwards of forty years?

You most unbecomingly sneer, brother, at his having been compared to *Elisha*, "the chariot and the horsemen of Israel," from his well tried patriotism, and the zeal and ability with which he propagates and defends the word of salvation; but, at the same time, with the most

evident self-complacency you assume the character, and, without a blush on your downy cheeks, appropriate to yourself the *name*, of the far more illustrious DAVID! And how even *you*, brother, could presume to say of a scholar, a gentleman, and a divine, who lately commanded the suffrages of three thousand four hundred and twenty-six of his fellow citizens, for a seat which he honourably filled, in the Legislature of the commonwealth of Pennsylvania, that he was “*lost in silence, and forgot except by his vociferations,*” is scarcely conceivable!

What was publickly said of him in 1816, and sanctioned by the large and independent church of which he is a highly esteemed member and minister, is still true: “He stands high, moves in the first circles, in both civil and religious society, and his connexions are numerous, wealthy, and very respectable. Besides his praise, “*until of late,*” in all the churches, he is much valued as a correspondent, and a generous friend to Foreign,” as well as Domestic “Missions, by many ministers of our order, in Europe, Asia, and America.”

But what is more distressing still, several things which you say of Dr. Rogers, with the obvious design of separating “*very friends;*” and, particularly, what relates to his pretended recommendation of Dr. Staughton to the *Presidency* of Brown University, he affirms, and therefore, as well as from other considerations, we believe are untrue. We regret, brother, that you ever stumbled over those “*dark mountains,*” into this sea of insurmountable difficulties, which, we fear, you will find without a bottom or a shore!

Perhaps you will never be able to obliterate the impressions you have made to your disadvantage. You have told things which, if true, never ought to have

been told, by such a pen, brother, as yours; nor under the influence of low and base passions; and by incredible assertions, trifling charges, indecorous comparisons, and malignant insinuations, you have covered yourself with the reverse of glory. Who could believe that Dr. Holcome, ever menacingly brandished a cane at any one, in a religious assembly? or went stumbling out of a place of worship? or invited congregations to hear him preach a sermon on his persecutions? or that he ever said he wrote a protest, which he has vindicated with firmness and perseverance, in the moment of "*irritation?*" or that he wickedly denied being on a committee, every member of which was present? or that his letters, pronounced to be excellent, by the late Dr. Samuel Jones, Dr. Thomas Baldwin, and other good judges, of both style and Theology, are still a burden on his hands? or that he ever said, "I am a revolutionary officer?" was ever the author of anything to which he was afraid, or ashamed, to put his name? or that he ever asked the honour of your signature to an instrument of writing? or that he ever called himself "a celebrated writer?" or that a man who has associated ever since he was twenty years of age with the excellent of the earth, is a ruffian? We do not, nor can you, brother, believe one of these things. And we are sorry to find, that after raking the states from Maine to Georgia, for matter, all with which you accuse him, except the authorship of "*Plain Truth,*" and the denial of it, disproved by five hundred witnesses, is as frivolous as false. Among those you have trumped up, some partly, and others wholly fabricated, are the preaching of a great man out of Savannah; occasional warmth of expression, elicited by studied provocation; forgetting a name, or some equally trifling affair; re-

sorting in one instance, to a little stratagem, which required no sacrifice of truth or justice; the use of a tincture of irony occasionally; and the remanding two or three members to their seats, in the Board of Foreign Missions, when he thought they were not entitled to the floor!

And, brother, to set even these small matters in a fair light, it should be considered, that those of them which have any foundation in truth, happened in the heat of debate, when party collisions not only threatened life, but furiously assailed *character*!

The comparison on which you have stumbled, brother, between the usefulness of Drs. Rogers and Holcombé, and our *Pastor*, is ineffably repulsive! What must have been his delicate feelings, on finding himself by more than Goliathanian strength, hoisted into a suspended balance, against Drs. Rogers and Holcombe! How must his modesty have been affected, while, by the mighty magic of your quill, he found himself engaged aloft, in this species of competition! But, seriously brother, who appointed you, "*a child*," as you justly observe, a JUDGE of the comparative usefulness of ministers? Since, however, you have been elevated, by some means, to this highly responsible office, instead of consuming time in counting great I's, it might be better to get a missionary appointment, for the important purpose of itinerating through Pennsylvania, New Jersey, South Carolina, and Georgia, to reckon up, from church books, and other means of information, the numbers and weight of the spiritual descendants, and other monuments of the labours of these men, in order to a correct result and estimate, according to your criterion, of their respective degrees of usefulness.

And still more exceptionably rude are your *insinuations*: you attempt by these to make your readers believe, that Holcombe reduces the enlightened and dignified body, he justly deems it his honour to serve, to left hand cyphers; that he has either by the direct or indirect exertion of nefarious influence, drawn the high constituted authorities of the state into the error of improperly granting a charter of incorporation, to an African Society, under the denomination of “The first African Baptist church of Philadelphia;” and that the Universities of Rhode Island and South Carolina, have blindly bestowed on him unmerited honours!

Now, brother, thus to arraign such bodies before the awful bar of the public, reflection must convince you, is assuming higher ground, and arrogating to yourself bolder pretensions than you could maintain, were your beard equal to that of the British Lion!

But, last and worst of all, though before you became the subject of your present hopeful illuminations, you were very far from suggesting a doubt of the validity of Holcombe’s credentials, now he is publicly asked by you, if he has any, besides his Diplomas? This triumphant interrogatory follows a pompous exhibition of our Pastor’s testimonials!

This was reducing the subject of your strictures, it must be owned, to a painful dilemma: if silent, your virtual affirmation, that he has no credentials, besides his Diplomas, will assume the shape of a fact; and should he produce any of an honourable nature, this may be imputed to ostentation! Of the two evils, he will probably think it the least, to suffer his friends to lay before the concerned, from among others, the following instruments:

South Carolina, Pipe Creek.

These are to certify all gospel churches, and christian people, that our Rev. brother, Henry Holcombe, being duly elected by the church at Pipe Creek, on Savannah river, holding believers' baptism, particular election, and the final perseverance of the saints in grace, and he accepting their call for ordination, we, according to the primitive rule, and order of the gospel, have ordained him to preach the gospel, and to administer baptism to believers, on profession of their faith, and also the Lord's Supper, and to perform every other office of the ministerial function : and we, whose names are under written, do hereby commend him to God, and to the word of his grace, and to all churches of the same faith and order with us, as a faithful minister of the gospel of Christ : to which we have hereunto subscribed our names, this eleventh day of September, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-five.

1785.

Signed,

JAMES SMART, Minister.

THOMAS BURTON, Minister.

The Savannah Baptist Church, in Georgia, in conference convened, on the 9th day of August, 1811, to her sister, the first Baptist Church in the city of Philadelphia, send greeting.

Dearly beloved in the Lord,

Our dearly beloved brother, Henry Holcombe, our late venerable and highly esteemed Pastor, having applied for his dismissal from us to your enlightened body, he having received your call to become your Pastor, which he inclines to believe, and we sincerely hope, is the call of God ; we cheerfully resign him to you, by the will of God. We want words to express his worth. As a Christian, he is meek and humble, benevolent and humane, fervent in prayer, aiming singly at the glory of God, and ever promoting the interest of true and undefiled religion. As a minister of the gospel, faithful in watching over the flock of Christ, patient in tribulation, holy in conversation, easy of access, willing to communicate, zealous for the truths of God, exhorting, admonishing, and rebuking, with all authority. He most earnestly contends for the faith once delivered to the saints : he is ardent in study, unwearied in diligence, and greatly beloved by us, and in all places where he has preached the word, which have been many, and never in vain.

In friendship he is warmly attached, and ever ready to put the most favourable construction on the words and actions of even his enemies.

God has bestowed on him a great mind, and possessed him of many and singular talents, gifts, and graces, and every way qualified him for great purposes in the ministry of the gospel.

But we are not able to describe the excellencies that combine to form his most valuable, rare, and singular character. We have the most abundant reasons to bless and thank God for his work and labours of love among us for the last twelve years; and may God bless him to you, as he has blessed him to us. May his health be preserved, and your affections be ever increasing, and mutual. We do most heartily bid him God speed. Brethren, fare you well.

Your's ever, in gospel bonds.

Signed,

By order, and in behalf }
of the whole Church. }

JOHN SHICK, Deacon.
ELIAS ROBERT, Clerk.

Now, brother, if such testimonials as these should appear, among the archives of the first church, to have been brought by Dr. Holcombe from Savannah; and especially if it should appear, that he has, so far, answered the expectation they excited, what are you and the public to think of your insinuation, that he had no credentials besides his Diplomas?

In addition to the above, allow us to present you with a few lines from Dr. J. E. White, of Savannah, the pleasing and instructive author of "Letters on England, in two volumes," to a gentleman of this city. "I now address you principally with the view of introducing to your acquaintance the Rev. Dr. Holcombe, who is about to settle in your city, and to which he will be a valuable acquisition.

"The character of this gentleman is so well estab-

ished as to need no recommendations of mine ; and the valuable qualities of his head and heart will always command him respect and esteem.

“For every attention which it may be convenient to offer, Dr. H. will not be less obliged than myself, and I trust you will not find him among the least valuable of your acquaintance.”

We are sorry to find, brother, that you have intimated, that Dr. Holcombe had no encouragement to return to Savannah, in 1816, though the first church officially expressed a very different opinion. On this subject, the Rev. Mr. Screven, writes to him, thus : “My brother, being diffident of my abilities, I am induced to shrink from the important station that I now occupy. Permit me to lay before you a few of those reasons which may be advanced, as inducements for your return to this city and church. Here your past services have endeared you to a number of citizens ; here you would behold those spiritual children the Lord has given you ; here you could return, after a long absence, as Paul did to Corinth, to heal the disorders that have crept in during your absence ; and here, I feel justified in saying, your domestic happiness would be advanced, and your usefulness greater, generally, in this *country*, than where you now live.

“Say not you will injure the first church in Philadelphia : will you not leave with them a Dr. Rogers ? say not it will be interfering with the work assigned to me ; is there not a large extent of country destitute, from Savannah to the Euhaw ?”

After this wealthy and excellent man, disposed to retire, with an amiable consort, to their fine country-seat, had held out generous proposals, on the subject of salary,

he concludes: "Upon a review of the whole matter, will you, my brother, authorize my declining the pastoral charge of the Savannah church, in your favour?"

Now, brother, can you really believe, that such a man as Mr. Screven, would have written to his friend, as he did, without a due regard to the sentiments, and wishes, of the citizens and church his liberal epistle embraces? Or can you for one moment believe, that if Holcombe were the odious *Philistine* you represent him to be, that the first church, supposing he might return to Savannah, could have addressed him as she did, in the following terms?

"We feel pleasure in bearing our united testimony in relation to your labours among us. In your ministry, we have heard the great truths of the word of God preached, as we believe, in their primitive purity, and defended with that honesty and determined resolution, which satisfy our minds that you were sent here as a "defence of the gospel."

"We have, by means of your labours, had those truths so clearly elucidated, that we can, with humble confidence, say, we have grown in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Through your instrumentality, we have seen "rough places made smooth, and crooked places straight;" saints have been established, sinners converted, and mourners in Zion comforted. While our prayer to God is, that he may say to the flood of errors that abound, "hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed:" we believe that in the accomplishment of such events, he ordinarily uses as instruments, those whom he has "counted faithful, and put into the ministry:" and as we conceive that peculiar gifts are designed

by the great Head of the church, to fill correspondent stations, we confidently believe that your's are specially adapted to the station you now fill.

“ We conclude with the assurance, that should it consist with the unerring counsel of the glorious head of the church, and your own views and feelings, it is our sincere and earnest desire that you continue your labours among us, as our Pastor.

“ May you be enabled to *continue* to “ watch in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of your ministry,” that when the time of your departure is at hand, you may be enabled, with our apostle, to exclaim, “ I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day.”

This address from the first church to her Pastor, was dated the 13th of June, 1816, and by order, and in behalf of, the whole church, *Signed*, Joseph Keen, Levi Garrett, Wm. Duncan, John M'Leod, Hugh Gourley, Jared Sexton, Joseph Moulder.

Such, besides the honorary degree of A. M. and the Doctorate, at which you learnedly sneer, are Holcombe's credentials. And never, as we have good reason to believe, having been the subject of a military, civil, or ecclesiastical censure, he will probably continue, as he has hitherto proved, unaffected by the systematic attacks even of our fraternity.

Permit us to remark in passing, that you are the less excusable in overlooking the last, though not the least honorable, of his testimonials, from having seen it more at large, in a neat volume lately published by John Biq-

ren of this city, as the last production of the pious and elegant pen to which the religious public are indebted for "*Moulder's Essays.*"

On merely turning the leaves of your performance, it is obvious that you have been guided, with servility, by the plan, and constantly represented Holcombe as the *author* of "Plain Truth." And at the late Association, several of our friends eyed him askaunt, and gnashed their teeth; and while one by allusion called him an assassin, another "grinned horribly," in his face! A third reported that a Rev. Gentleman, not of our order, said that to him Holcombe had confessed himself the author of "Plain Truth;" but, on a fair investigation, this was found, and acknowledged, to be false. And though the whole strength and credit of your letters depend on the question you *begged*, that he is; after all, the united information, arts, and energies of our party can never *prove* this to be a *fact*.

Having thus built on the sand, your whole superstructure tumbles, with a tremendous crash, into ruins! And, to prevent even *gulls* from being bewildered by the deception you attempt to practise on them, in this affair, we will set it in as clear and strong a light as possible. Come now, what will you risk besides bare words, with many light as thin air, that Holcombe is the author of "Plain Truth?" It is said a poor man lost his horse, and while a mob was assuring him that their sorrow on the occasion was very great, a *practical* Philanthropist, stepping to the sufferer, said my sorrow for your loss is equal to only five dollars, receive this small sum, and look to your more sympathetic friends for correspondent additions to it. Suffer us, brother, to bring your confidence, that Holcombe is the author of this

piece, to a similar test. Will you agree to be confined one year in our Penitentiary, or to give a libel in due form of law, *Provided*, you do not prove, that *he is* its author? No, brother, neither you, nor any other individual of our party, will do it; nor, on the same ground, risk one hundred dollars: so that we are all thrown, as sailors would say, completely on our "*beam-ends!*"

We shall have to look out for another, we mean the *real* author, of this book, and collect our learned friends to write a long apologetical epistle to Dr. Holcombe, for making him, through mistake, the object of our libellous and unfounded aspersions! And while our hands are in, our bows drawn, from "thought's full bent and energy," it might be well to write and publish a VOLUME, against the infamous man, if we can ascertain him, who has, against the Board of Foreign Missions, and our beloved Pastor, in particular, exhibited *false charges*. Ah! this is the rub! Would the charges contained in the pamphlet called "Plain Truth," were false!

We have not said, nor, dearly beloved brother, will prudence in our humble opinion permit us to say to the public, that either of the charges in that piece, reduced to a simple proposition, is *untrue*. So that were we according to our prayer, to find its author, as the fabled farmer did the lion, who had plundered him of his heifer, like him we should, perhaps, be alarmed at the terrific discovery.

We only wish you had been asleep, rather than lugging "Plain Truth" from the verge of the oblivious pool, before the public eye. You have "erred, and gone astray," brother, like "a lost sheep!" Or, rather, you have suffered the iniquities of our party to be packed on

your head, that, as their "*scape goat*," they might let you take your chance in the wilderness of your, and their motley epistles. O that you had never, to change our simile once more, suffered yourself to be made the tool of a party, to abuse men who had done you no harm; for following, as well probably as they could, in bad company, the dictates of their consciences! We are greatly grieved, brother, to find that you have ever said, contrary to well known truth, that the first church at the late Association, refused and fled from *offered* specifications of her alleged transgressions! *You*, hundreds, even all present on that occasion, know that her delegates solicited, and proceeded on being refused, to demand, if it were but a single specification, either in writing or verbally; but could not obtain it! And knowing with whom she had to deal, her delegates, through their chairman, repeatedly called on all present to witness this flagrant instance of unfairness, and injustice. Brother, your letters must convince every intelligent and upright reader that our cause is desperate. It were endless to particularize all your palpable misstatements: such as, besides those already noticed, affirming that the association did not speak of the first church, as arraigned at their bar for high crimes and misdemeanors, &c.

Our strictures may seem severe; but your own conscience must testify, if unseared, that they are just, and we pray that they may prove salutary.

JESSE MILLER.

☞ The *Baldwin*, whose letters have received the foregoing strictures, is not, according to the impression of some, the Rev. Dr. BALDWIN, of Boston, but a young schoolmaster of Philadelphia, son-in-law to the Rev. John P. Peckworth.

J. M.

A R E P L Y

TO THE

Rev. Messrs. THOMAS ROBERTS and WILLIAM
E. ASHTON,

AS MODERATOR AND CLERK OF THE PHILADELPHIA
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, FOR 1819,

BY HENRY HOLCOMBE,
AMANUENSIS TO FRIENDS OF TRUTH.

GENTLEMEN,

YOUR corresponding letter we consider as inscribed to us; and we shall endeavour to answer it, by an address to you in your official capacities. After the composer of this production it is not our business to enquire: as you have adopted it, you must admit that you are responsible for its contents: and however inaccurate or uncourtly any of these may appear, it is our intention to approach you with the deference due to the pupils of the Rev. Dr. Staughton, and the superior years of those who usually occupy your seats.

This letter, it would seem, you regard as of more than ordinary importance: it circulates unconnected, as well as united in the common way, with your minutes.

We are aware that the dispute into which you have entered, as *chiefs*, is unpleasant; but in boldly contradicting a number of men, who, you allow, are as respectable as yourselves, you compel us to investigate the points at issue.

Your epistle is addressed to a number of associations, as well as to the individual friends of truth throughout your union: and as the destruction of Dr. Holcombe is the only perceptible object of it, probably it will be said, that, like the first king of Israel, your great body "Is come out to seek a flea, as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains." 1 Samuel, xxvi. 20.

From your superscription, you proceed, with evident avidity, and say, "It is well known to a considerable extent, that at the last session of our body the first Baptist church of Philadelphia was excluded from our community." Yet, contrary to the advice and remonstrances of

some of your most intelligent and discreet members, you determined to reiterate this important information! To Festus it seemed "unreasonable to send a prisoner," to Rome, "and not withal to signify the crimes laid against him:" Acts xxv. 27: but you, in your superior wisdom, thought fit publicly to announce the exclusion of a church from your community; and, a twelvemonth afterwards, to repeat the intelligence. And still we find nothing, specifically, laid to her charge.

Your language, in this epistle, if we can understand it, is similar to the Macedonian cry, Acts, xvi. 9, "Come over and help us:" though directed to a very different object. Tens of thousands in various, and many of them in the remotest, parts of the United States, are called on to help the Philadelphia Baptist association to crush Dr. Holcombe! Whether they will enter, for this generous purpose, into the alliance you virtually propose, or throw your epistle under their tables, time will inform us.

After all, this repeatedly announced exclusion is found to be a hoax! you know, and cannot deny, that before the motion for her exclusion from your body was even made, she had publicly, formally, and constitutionally, withdrawn from it. Instead, therefore, of affirming, as they do, "This association are constrained to say, they cannot continue," they should have said, cannot prevail with her to remain, "any longer a member of this body."

You must admit, that you have no right to detain a church, contrary to her will, in your connexion, for one minute; or, you must claim the right to keep her here during your pleasure: if you claim this right, and have power to exercise it, what becomes of the independence of your churches? but, if you do not, what will be thought of your reiterated declaration, that you have excluded a previously *withdrawn* church from your community! It is not pretended that she owed you any thing, and as you publicly acknowledge, and cannot deny, her independence, we should be glad to know by what authority, human or divine, or by what ancient or modern precedent, you have attempted to fix an indelible stigma on her character.

Leaving the public to judge for themselves in this case,

we proceed to the more important enquiry, for what delinquency in doctrine, or practice, has this church become the subject of your vague and undefinable aspersions? Your letter, it is fair to conclude, gives the best answer you could furnish to this question: and what is it? Why that she cast reflections on certain adventurers amongst the Baptists, who had corrupted the churches under their ministry: and, after all, surprising as it may appear, those offensive reflections were not made by the church, but by her pastor, in his individual capacity. See "Misrepresentations Exposed," p. 20. This is certainly a most egregious blunder! And, as may be seen in the piece just mentioned, her pastor said no more, in substance, on the delicate subject of disorderly ministers, than has recently been published by the Hartford, and adopted, and reiterated, by the Boston Baptist association.

But, in searching for something to criminate this church, is it not strange that you did not find, in her protest, and adduce the following strong assertion? "If there are not persons in this"—meaning your—"body under excommunication, and in very dishonourable connexions, we despair of ever substantiating any fact in the whole current of events." And as she challenged a denial of these gross disorders in your community, is it not truly wonderful, that, passing this explicit and weighty sentence, you should select a few general remarks, by an individual, and applicable to the guilty, alone, as the sole ground of her crimination?

Here your correspondents will pause, and find no difficulty in decyphering your conduct.

As if conscious, after all, that your chosen ground of censuring this church was untenable, you proceed, and say, "Had none of the foregoing criminations against this body been published, the disorderly conduct of her delegation was sufficient ground of expulsion." What! of immediate expulsion? expulsion without honouring the church with a hearing? How could you know, or even imagine, that she would not, on conviction that any of her delegates had acted improperly, suitably deal with the offenders? The custom of Baptist associations has generally been to visit a

backsliding church, by a committee, that they might, if possible, in this way, restore her to rectitude : but the affair in hand was a wide deviation from that fraternal procedure. So far was this church from being honoured with a visit by a committee, that she never had one by an individual, nor even a letter of remonstrance, at any stage of her alleged departure from correctness ; but, on the contrary, in your minutes of 1817, was abruptly charged with disorder, combined with “ palpable misrepresentations,” and threatened with exclusion from your body, if she did not “ retread her unwarrantable steps.”

In what even one of those misrepresentations, or false steps, consisted, you have never had the candour to inform us.

But, as we have seen your inability to exhibit any specific charge against the church, we shall enquire into the grounds of your displeasure with her delegation : and this enquiry is reduced to much simplicity, from the curious circumstance, that no act of disorder is charged on any member of this body, with the single exception of their chairman. Out of the twenty names comprised in it, his is the only one brought fully into view. An effort seems to have been made to give us the name of Dr. Rogers ; but, from an error in orthography, it proved abortive.

The other eighteen names over which you threw the mantle of darkness, shall be brought to light in the sequel. No other expedient is necessary to render the cause of their concealment obvious to all your readers : and your policy will be considered, by many, as equally sound, in sending numerous copies of your letter abroad, without *some* names on your minutes. Singular as the case may be, it is nevertheless a fact, that in attempting to “ assert the honour and purity of the Christian character,” by an exposure of the crimes of this church, without even *charging* her with an instance of misconduct, your thunders fall, exclusively on her delegates ; and more astonishing still, innocently rolling over nineteen of their heads, burst on their proscribed chairman !

But let us hear what weighty allegations are advanced to justify this unrelenting severity towards an individual.

What has he done so to criminate a whole church as to render it necessary for your body to exclude her, on his account, from the Christian world? In consequence of expulsion from your community, you say, this church stands alone: but, why these great swelling words? It is, indeed, her honour and happiness to be unconnected with your body, in its present state: but she has the pleasure to consider herself as in harmony with all other religious societies, to as great a degree, as she ever was while in your community.

But, we repeat the question, what has her pastor done to draw on her your anathemas? Unfortunately, we think, for your cause, your letter answers it: and, for the first time, in the present controversy, you have ventured on a few specifications.

This is as it should be: they shall receive attention.

Specification first:

“Dr. Holcombe rose,” it is admitted at the proper time, “and moved that a written specification of charges against the church should be given them, which was seconded by one of his own (the church’s) delegation.” In this leading charge, we see no harm at all. There was certainly nothing unreasonable, much less censurable, in this motion, whatever there might be in the clamorous opposition which, it is well recollected, was made to it.

Specification second: “Another motion was made,” though we are not told it was seconded, “for the postponement of the first motion, to make way for another by way of explanation. To this Dr. Holcombe vehemently objected, alleging that the proceedings were arbitrary, out of order, and that he was refused to be heard, until a member of his own delegation” (one of his colleagues) “acquainted with parliamentary proceedings, arose, and affirmed that a motion for postponement was always in order; and the motion was carried without further opposition.”

Now we should be glad to know what guilt these charges, of zeal in a cause supposed to be good, and of alleged, not proved, ignorance of parliamentary proceedings, can fasten on the accused, or what additional honour they can reflect on his courteous accusers. The public would, of course,

suppose that students from your school are familiar with parliamentary etiquette; and could think it no sin for a plain republican, even in the face of parliamentary authority, to oppose a motion for postponement, itself, under the impression that the real object of it was not "explanation," but the gaining of time to form a caucus, for the suppression of truth and order: so that unless you prove he was under no such impression, this charge also, falls, harmless, to the ground.

Specification third: "Dr. Holcombe in a vociferous manner broke in upon the order of the house, and loudly demanded a written specification." It is true, that, after soliciting, in vain, he did demand, as the right of the accused church, a written, or verbal, specification of her alleged crimes; but, as you, and many others can testify, could not obtain it. The truth is, you had none to give, as evidently appears from your having given none in your present letter. Under this embarrassed circumstance, all that your body could do, to evade an immediate suspicion, that she had exhibited groundless charges against this church, was to throw the whole assembly into confusion, and terminate, as she quickly did, all discussion.

It is, however, not true that Dr. Holcombe spoke louder than he usually does, in reproofing what he conceives to be vice, and endeavouring to defend truth, and gospel order, against their daring assailants. The key on which he commonly speaks, and that on which he spoke, by permission, at your bar, was the conversation-key, which, every one knows, in its loftiest tones, is essentially different from vociferation: nor did he break in, as you inaccurately state, upon the order of the house; for, as is well known, at the time referred to, it had no order to violate.

Specification fourth, and last: "When the Dr. found he could not bear down the whole association, he added threats to his demands—accused them" (as you observed in your second specification) "with refusal to hear him—and denounced his future vengeance in an appeal to the public," (a very hasty one) "through the medium of the press. He then called his delegation" (his colleagues) "to follow him out of the house, assuring the body that he would give them

work enough, in white-washing the characters of its members; and then rushed out of the house in great disorder, followed by most of his colleagues."

Here we see the dregs of the cup of wrath, administered, you say, by twenty-five churches, to Dr. Holcombe: but, after the clamour with which he has been hotly pursued, for years, the public may deem it strange, that in all this HUE-AND-CRY, he is charged with no vicious act: but condemned, and cast out of your community for words, and words used in the heat of debate, and not with a greater freedom than is customary, and allowable, in all well-regulated deliberative bodies. These words, uttered more loudly, and, you signify, more rapidly, than your rules of elocution approve, are displayed, by the justice of twenty-five churches, as his highest crimes, and misdemeanors!

And, though they had sufficient grounds to believe, that he makes no pretence to the graces derived from dancing-masters, they could not suffer his *gait* to escape their reprehension. He was not only "vociferous," say all your churches, but "RUSHED out of the house."

Now, gentlemen, please to review, with us, this verbose specification, clause by clause: and, without dividing responsibility for it, with your hundred colleagues, consider how you can answer, to your own consciences, for its contents.

Of the insinuation as unfounded as incredible, that Dr. Holcombe attempted to "bear down the whole association, we shall take no particular notice: to mention, is sufficient to refute it: it is evidently hyperbolic, and used merely to excite attention to what follows. You say, "*he added threats to his demands.*" The demands referred to, you will allow, amount to but *one*, which had for its object a specification of the huge aggregate of crimes alleged against the church of whose delegation he happened to be chairman: and from this circumstance, the duty of making that reasonable demand devolved on him, and not, immediately, on either of his colleagues.

To demands, you simply *say*, and we take the liberty simply to deny, that, "*he added threats.*"

Your body next, but, as noticed above, not for the first

time, urge, "*He accused them of refusal to hear him.*" One thing in this case is clear: he must have been under the impression that you refused to hear him, or he never could have uttered such an accusation before hundreds of witnesses ready to attest the innocence of the accused, and that to him due attention was paid, as the chairman of a respectable delegation from the first Baptist church in Philadelphia. But were we to fancy, what we cannot admit, that he received this attention, his remark, that you refused to hear him, by whatever mistake, or motive, elicited, surely would have been adequately punished by a reproof from the Rev. moderator, without moulding it, a twelve-month afterwards, into the awful shape of an associational charge. But this, however high, is not the highest of his unpardonable crimes: "*He denounced,*" say five and twenty churches, "*his future vengeance, in an appeal to the public, through the medium of the press.*" You mean, we must suppose, contrary to what you express, not that he *did this*, but *threatened to do it*, through this medium.

Some, through ignorance, or inadvertence, use words which express confusedly, and more or less than their meaning: but learned men, like you, in a formal communication to the public, are expected, with reason, to convey their sense with perspicuity and precision. Dr. Holcombe, you inform us, "*denounced his vengeance:*" but on so solemn a charge as this, you certainly should have told us, who, or what, was the subject of this terrible denunciation. Did he threaten any person, or some work of darkness? Did his threatening apply, as, it is presumed, you would have us to conclude, to your body, or merely to those in it, who might be found under the guilt of corrupt and abominable deeds? You leave us in uncertainty with respect to all these important particulars: and in the same state, as to the *matter* of his denunciation. You condescend to tell us, *plainly*, that he poured, *meaning*, that he threatened to pour, his denounced vengeance, through the medium of the press: but whether in showers, or torrents, of bodily or mental, temporal or eternal, plagues, is left to conjecture. On one more point, we must allow, you are perfectly explicit: it is in ascribing vengeance to *Dr. Hol-*

combe! This ascription by scholars, and divines, educated in the theological school of the Rev. Dr. Staughton, is of an astonishing nature. "*Vengeance is mine,*" saith JEHOVAH, Rom. xii. 19; and, we should suppose, *exclusively*: but you, with your twenty-five churches, speak of *Dr. Holcombe's* vengeance: and even of his "*future vengeance!*" This must be either irony, or blasphemy; charity compels us to suppose, that you speak thus ironically, to hold up his imbecility as an object of ridicule; but does not this most favourable construction that your words will admit, militate against your own magnanimity, in selecting a man you represent as a candidate for the accommodations of a madhouse, as the solitary object of your high associational resentments? But permit us respectfully to remind you that the entire substance of the clause in question, reduced to sobriety and truth, is merely this: on finding that your body would not endure representations which he deemed correct, and important, Dr. Holcombe said, that what then could not be heard, might be circulated through the medium of the press: so that the *truth*, which he signified, in dependance on divine aid, he would disseminate, is what they were pleased to nick-name *his "vengeance."* Truth, to be sure, is very formidable, and terrifying, to its foes: it is by no means unnatural for it to assume, in the eyes of guilt, the aspect of vengeance. Some fear nothing more than truth and justice.

Contending, at such fearful odds, it was certainly time for Dr. Holcombe to retreat from the effective vollies of a corps of two thousand nine hundred and ninty-four veterans: or, in evangelical language, twenty-five churches, all "sound in the faith and pious," embracing this large number of members: accordingly, you inform us, "*He called his delegation to follow him out of the house.*" Here you are pleased to represent a delegation from a public body, as belonging to Dr. Holcombe, who, you insinuate, called them *authoritatively*, to follow him out of the house. But, on the supposition that your statement is correct, without admitting it to be so, we may decorously ask, why was not he left to answer for this alleged breach of politeness, to his colleagues, or to the church they represented, without the conde-

scending interference of your dignified body ? Surely your grounds of criminating him must have been slender, or you never could have gravely incorporated so trivial a circumstance as this, with your official communications to the religious public !

On commencing his retrograde movement, it would seem, "*He assured the body that he would give them work enough, in white washing the characters of its members.*"

We here beg leave to ask a few questions, for information. Do you mean in this, rather ambiguous, clause, to distinguish between your body, and its members ? If so, you may suppose that Dr. Holcombe meant to say, he would give your body work enough in white-washing successively its individual members : but how do you understand that he intended to give you this job ? Was it by disclosing, or by creating, defilements in your borders, that he intended to engage you in this business ? After all, perhaps your meaning is, though you have not expressed it, that he gave you an assurance of enough to bear, under the operation of a white-washing by his own hands. Your words, however, indicate, that your body was to be active, not passive, in this ceremony. He was to give it, not something to bear, but something to do : work, was to be laid out for you : which was to consist in white-washing your characters : but whether some, or all of your members, were to be the subjects of this purgation, is not, by us, ascertainable. Should your letter, from possessing at least, the merit of originality, be republished, we hope you will not suffer much learning to prevent you from favouring us with a species of composition adapted to ordinary capacities. But believing your confusion to arise from erroneous conceptions of the words to which you allude, we shall state them, though at the expense of a short digression, for your information : Dr. Holcombe had been accused, you must recollect, with being the author of "*Plain Truth,*" and as your learned Preceptor was charged in this piece, with several dilinquencies, an attempt, it was reported, would be made by your body to vindicate his character : and with reference to this arduous undertaking, Dr. Holcombe, after re-

minding you of your late zeal, in supporting, as long as you could, William White, said "We understand you have a job of white-washing in hand, and we'll retire and give you room to go about it." These were his very words; and we assure you that he neither said, nor insinuated, any thing more on the subject. But to return: it was on his retreat, and immediately after uttering that grossly perverted sentence, that, as you assure us, "*He rushed out of the house, in great disorder, followed by most of his colleagues.*" This vague, this undefined, and unmeaning, allegation, reminds us of a very similar passage, in the words "*Great is Diana of the Ephesians.*" Acts. xix. 34. That *stigma* laid in one scale of a balance, and this *encomium* in the other, could produce no effect, we think, on the equilibrium of its beam.

But, gentlemen, if strangers to the parties engaged in the present controversy, were to believe, for the want of better information, that you have correctly stated the manner of Dr. Holcombe's departure from your presence, what can we suppose would be their ideas of it? Surely, that he moved with violence through the crowded house, pushing down, and throwing aside, all who had the misfortune to be in his way, and was followed by rather more than half his colleagues, who had to trample in their egress, on sprawling, scrambling, members of your out-raged body!

Judge of their surprise when they come, as they may, to receive our solemn assurance, that Dr. Holcombe, on the occasion referred to, uttered no threat, denounced no vengeance, spoke of white-washing no character, was in no disorder, but, after bidding you all FAREWELL, walked, with decorum, out of the house, and was followed by all his colleagues, except one, who remained, for ought we know, to take minutes of your succeeding deliberations.

It would not become us, as we have no apology to make for Dr. Holcombe's conduct towards your body, to recriminate; and especially as we are acting merely on the defensive: besides, we "have not yet, resisted unto blood, striving against sin." Heb. xii. 4.

Under other circumstances, it might be proper for us to say, that Dr. Holcombe received treatment in the presence, and by several of the *members* of your body, not easily dis-

tinguished from barbarism : but we shall pass from your specifications, to incomparably the most important part of your corresponding letter : a *part*, we fear, which fairly exhibits your method of conducting church-business, and several of your principles : it follows : “ It were to be supposed, without any investigation of the subject, that the religious public will have no hesitation in determining who are in the right, when it is considered that on the one side there is but a single church, however respectable she may have been, and on the other, no less than twenty-five churches, as respectable for their piety and soundness in the faith, as she, who, after allowing her two years to reconsider, united in the act of excluding her from their body.”

On this *master-key*, as we consider it, to your cabinet-council, we shall make several remarks, with the view of showing its fallacies, and inaccuracies.

You must perceive, at once, that the unblushing author of this paragraph, begs the question at issue ! Whether your body, or this church, be right, in the present controversy, is *the question* : and he, with a brazen front, says, “ It were to be supposed, without any investigation of the subject,” that your body is right !

Now whatever may be your number, the public will be inclined to think, a consciousness that you have truth on your side, would lead you to invite, rather than repress, investigation. Controversies have not unfrequently been found to eventuate much to the honour of a few opposed to large numbers. Men of the greatest excellence, you will grant, have been cast out of churches : these bodies, even for fidelity to their divine Master, have been separated from hierarchies : Luther and his colleagues, who dared to *investigate*, were covered with the opprobrium, and excluded from the community, of millions : Christianity was once oppressed by the superior numbers of Judaism : the Jews, for centuries before, were over-borne by “ *twenty-five*” times their number of Pagans : Caleb and Joshua were opposed by thousands : Lot by whole cities : and Noah, by a world.

Besides, how are your readers to know, otherwise than by *exparty* testimony, that you have correctly stated the

disparity of numbers betwixt yourselves and your opponents? The public may know little, or nothing of you, gentlemen; yet, after all the splendor of evidence you affect to adduce, it is completely shrouded in, permit us to say, two, *comparatively*, obscure signatures! And on this ground you suppose the religious public will believe you right, and, of course, your opponents wrong, “*without investigation!*”

Your error, it appears to us, is equally palpable, in the assumption, that the testimonies of all composing churches, are alike entitled to confidence. On no other supposition, can the public pronounce you right, in a controversy, merely because you out-number your opponents.

According to our LORD’S perfect rule, Matt. xviii. 16, “In the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word may be established:” and, you will agree with us, that nothing, by any testimony, can be more than established.

It is most assuredly the credibility of witnesses, and not their number, which establishes facts. We think, even you will allow, that in every place where the parties here concerned are known, the church would be as readily believed as the association: and her twenty delegates, probably, would be considered, in the city and county of Philadelphia, as fully equal, in the article of credibility, to your whole assembly. We will venture further, and respectfully offer for consideration, whether two or three might not be selected from this delegation whose testimonies could not be shaken, in any part of the United States, by the entire authority of this corresponding letter, honoured as it is with *both your signatures*. But we proceed to notice one of your theological sentiments:

Can you be aware of the compliment you pay yourselves, in professing to be as respectable for piety, and soundness in the faith, as a church you have disowned, as having, in your judgment, persisted, most obstinately in sin, for “*two years?*” The friends of truth must perceive, that you suppose piety to consist with habitual immorality! What is this, they will naturally exclaim, but an open declaration, that they are *Antinomians!*

Through the aid of your *key*, we have seen you, not at-

tempting to prove, but *begging* the question at issue; presuming the public would determine, *without investigation*, that you are right, on the ground of your numbers; representing all the testimonies of the parties concerned, as equal; signifying, by fair implication, that soundness in the faith and piety, may be in a church deserving expulsion from religious society, for obstinately pursuing an “unwarrantable course;” and we shall now prove, that you are flagrantly inaccurate, even in your *numerical* statements!

You boast of TWENTY-FIVE, while your own minutes show, that you have but *twenty-three* churches! A sufficient proof, that you did not anticipate investigation. In consistency with this radical error, you represent the disproportion betwixt yourselves and your opponents, as one to TWENTY-FIVE: but had you come nearer the truth, and said one to TWENTY, as three of those were *absent*, it would have been *still*, a *fallacious* statement. What is the fact? Your opponents are, in number, *upwards of five hundred*, and you *under three thousand*; so that instead of a *twenty-fifth*, they are more than a *SIXTH* of your number! You erroneously say, your TWENTY-FIVE churches which united in excluding *one*, from their community, were represented by one hundred and thirty-five delegates: but what will be thought of your democracy, and boasted equality of representation, by those who may observe, on the face of your minutes, that more than half this number were from *four* churches, under the immediate eye and control of your RULING ELDER? In matters of a speculative nature, art and ingenuity may pass error for truth, without much danger of detection: but where numbers are concerned, inaccuracies are easily exposed, in the light of demonstration. It may, therefore, well excite surprise, that the Rev. Messrs. *Slack*, *Montanye*, and *Matthias*, to whom your adopted letter is ascribed, did not render it consistent, at least, with your minutes.

But, to be ingenuous, we blame neither them, you, nor one of your churches, for any thing, except *implicit* obedience to a fallible MASTER. Sincerely do we hope, for the honour of your churches, that the adoption of this corresponding letter, and the sending of it, without your minutes, into the world, were, in no small degree, *clandestine* acts.

Certainly such a letter as this could not have been received, but at a late hour of your session, after many of the delegates had withdrawn; nor can we believe that a number of its copies could have found their way into market, otherwise than by the unauthorized agency of a few catch-penny characters. It would be, in our imperfect judgment, but common justice to keep such men from all the future sessions of your dishonored body: and should the churches resume, and exercise their scriptural authority, some of their unfaithful servants would tremble.

Thus terminating the view we have taken of the vital parts of your epistle, we shall just glance at a few minor mis-statements which have escaped your vigilance.

You say that when Dr. Staughton was called on to preach a certain missionary sermon, Dr. Holcombe refused his pulpit for that purpose.

The *truth* is, Dr. Holcombe said, "Dr. Staughton shall not enter this pulpit, if I can prevent it, *until* certain points betwixt ourselves receive satisfactory explanations.

The refusal of the pulpit was thus qualified, and not *absolute*, as you incautiously state.

And you seem surprized that Dr. Holcombe should have known more of Dr. Staughton at your session in 1816, than was known a twelve-month before! The *whole truth* is this: from arrangements made at the preceding *semi-annual* meeting of that society, and from credible information, Dr. Holcombe believed, that it was the intention of Dr. Staughton, if he could get into the pulpit, to call on Mr. White to deliver the discourse. The explanations which Dr. Holcombe required, relative to this arrangement, as well as some other matters, might have been made in a few minutes, but they were pertinaciously withheld: the pulpit was refused as the consequence. And considering the awful state of Mr. White, which events have proved, was on the very borders of universal notoriety, what honest man can blame Dr. Holcombe for this precautionary measure?

The next error we shall notice, is that of the assurance your letter gives, that Mr. White's *name* was not mentioned at your turbulent session of 1816!

This, considering the numbers who know it to be untrue,

perfectly astounds us. Surely, gentlemen, your powers of recollection must have entirely lost their tenacity! We assure you, from the testimony, of our own ears, that his name, odious as it had become, except in your body, was repeatedly mentioned, on that occasion: suffice it to say, it is in our perfect recollection, that it was mentioned by deacon Corfield, and by Dr. Holcombe: and hundreds, we are fully persuaded, cannot have forgotten that he was often alluded to, as the member last on the floor, and as the brother on the right, or left, of speakers. He was honoured with the whisperings too, and in some instances by suggestions from the pencils, of your colleagues. In a word, he was made, by the active zeal of his coadjutors, the most prominent character on the floor! But, your apology is your avowed ignorance, at that time, of his character; and you blame his opponents for not giving you a few enlightening hints of his turpitude.

Your readers, at a distance, are made to believe, that the church under your displeasure, found out, by some unaccountable means, that the Rev. William White was not immaculate: and, from inscrutable motives, kept this important secret from your body, as well as from the church of which he was pastor! So far, however, is this from the *truth*, that her deacons were duly informed, probably without *needing* information, of his intrigues, which, in fact, were well known, and frequently spoken of, with abhorrence, in *civil* society.

But, as most, if not all, the other errors contained in your epistle are refuted, by anticipation, in “Misrepresentations Exposed,” and “Miller’s Strictures”—we shall hasten to the *concluding*, which may not be found the least interesting part of our respectful address.

We shall here present you with the remarks of Dr. Holcombe, which, by mistake, we suppose, you impute to the censured church, and consider as “*a cruel libel on your body* :” alluding to disorderly adventurers amongst the American Baptists, he says, “Under their ministry conformity to the world is almost complete; the doctrines of sovereign grace which distinguish our excellent confession of faith, are seldom or never heard; the door of admission

to our tables is widened beyond all scriptural bounds ; discipline, if it exist, is extremely lax ; and the standard of morals is reduced to invisibility."

Your remarks on these allegations, *are*, " These direful effects, this awful falling off of our churches, *is* ascribed, to adventurers received amongst them, who, by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." You add, " the association looked round in vain for churches of the above description within their bounds ; and cannot but view the foregoing charges as a cruel libel on them."

These observations were made, you will recollect, at the session of your body, in 1816, and though then refused a hearing, soon afterwards received publicity. Now if they cannot be justified, by subsequent events, it is admitted, Dr. Holcombe should bear the blame due to the author of a "*cruel libel.*" In his defence, however, we shall appeal to *stubborn facts* : in consequence of a new ministry in one of your churches, in the ensuing year, as your minutes of 1817 show, she excommunicated *thirty-three of her members*. Your minutes of 1818, exhibit *forty-three*, who were made, by your churches, in the preceding associational year, the subjects of excommunication. Your minutes of 1819, add *thirty-four*, to this list of delinquents, who constitute an *aggregate of one hundred and ten practical witnesses*, to *prove*, that in 1816, suspicious of disorder in your churches, were not altogether without grounds.

With the various transgressions which led to the expulsion of those offenders, from your community, we have neither time, nor inclination, to blur our pages : but necessity compels us, in a few cases, to notice individuals : and, should it give pain, our opponents may thank themselves for it. The measures of defence to which we have resorted, might have been anticipated.

We begin with one of your most popular ministers, and shall give his character, drawn in your minutes of 1817, as follows :

" The committee appointed in the case of William White, late pastor of the second Baptist church in Philadelphia, who is excluded from said church, for contempt of the church, and for refusing to meet certain charges brought against him, *reported*, that they have

“ reason to believe that said Wm. White is CONTINUING a CAREER of
 “ UNPARALLELED immorality, which renders it the duty of the asso-
 “ ciation to caution the churches and the public against encouraging
 “ him. It is alleged, ON GOOD AUTHORITY, that said Wm. White is
 “ travelling with a woman whom he calls his wife, while his wife and
 “ family are now in Philadelphia.”

But, whether his CAREER of immorality were, indeed, UNPARALLELED, we shall be better able to judge at a more advanced stage of the present investigation. One thing is certain: if half you allege against him be true, he was a grand impostor; and this undeniable fact, considered in connexion with the number of his *satellites*, goes far towards justifying the aforesaid “charges.”

Samuel Johnson, another of your delegates, in 1816, is entitled to a place in this catalogue. He occasionally exercised his gifts, in church meetings: but, from a deficiency of talent, as a speaker, never met with any particular encouragement: besides, his appearance was much against him, as a candidate for the office of a public *teacher*. We happened to be present, on a certain occasion, when he was called, as a witness, into a court of judicature: but such were his drowsy and squalid countenance, and personal filthiness, that the honourable gentlemen who sat on the bench, without hearing a word he had to say, ordered him out of their presence. He was, however, some time afterwards, deemed qualified to sit, as a judge, in your advisory council, on the case of the first Baptist church of Philadelphia!

His name, we observe, stands on your minutes of 1818, as one of your delegates: but, some time since, he was thrown over the walls of one of your churches, for habitual intoxication; and, being embarrassed in civil affairs, eloped from the city. These facts are of such notoriety as to admit of no denial.

Samuel Carlisle's is the only other case, of this nature, to which we shall call your attention. According to a rule which is *sanctioned* by your body, this man was received as a member of one of your churches, by a relation of *his experience!*

This event took place *prior* to your session in 1816, but some time *since*, he had the misfortune to be arraigned before *John Shaw*, Esquire, of the Northern Liberties: and

by verbal communications, of undoubted credibility, we learn that, on being reproached, before this worthy magistrate, with having left a wife in Virginia, though he had married another woman in this city, he did not deny it; and, to the charge of having stolen a horse and saddle, worth two hundred dollars, he was constrained, from the testimony produced to establish the fact, to plead *guilty*! After a legal settlement of his affairs was effected, he reluctantly yielded to the necessity of returning to his *lawful* wife.

Now, gentlemen, when such characters as those, with their numerous supporters, were crowding to your tables, to profane the LORD'S Supper, who can think it was libellous in the pastor of a Baptist church, to utter a few general complaints?

But, we proceed to attempt a further justification of the "*charges*" under consideration, by stating a few particulars connected with the standing of several of your present ordained, and leading ministers: and, however distinguished by their talents, or to whatever respect they may be entitled, as members of civil society, should they, or either of them, be found out of gospel order, they must recollect, that the wisdom which is from above, is "*without partiality.*" James, iii. 17.

The laws of Christ, to which we all profess subjection, our discipline, confession of faith, and usages, as Baptists, without respect of persons, are, *exclusively*, to influence our opinions, and govern our decisions. On these grounds, we think it our solemn duty, under existing circumstances, to present you with a few short extracts from the letters of those eminent servants of God, the Rev. Dr. RICHARD FURMAN, and the late Rev. Dr. ANDREW FULLER.

The Rev. Dr. Staughton, it is well known, has for many years, in common with ourselves, and the Christian world, highly esteemed those excellent men, and will not, we are persuaded, contradict a single clause of the following extracts: speaking of a Mr. Staughton, Dr. (then Mr.) Furman proceeds:

"The circumstances respecting his marriage become the subjects of strict enquiry; a letter from Dr. STILLMAN, and another from

“ PRESIDENT MAKEY, are very pointed on the subject. Dr. FOSTER, it seems, has such scruples respecting him, that he cannot, as Dr. STILLMAN observes, ask him to preach. I thought I had communicated the circumstance to you respecting Mr. and Mrs. Staughton, of which you requested to be informed. It is, however, just this: they have been excommunicated by the church at Birmingham. A letter from Mr. PIERCE informs me of this: and what gives me a degree of pain, it was in consequence of a friendly application of mine to have them dismissed to us, with the difficulty of the church annexed. Mr. PIERCE was in favour of this measure. He moved for it, and exerted himself on the occasion, but the great body of the church were in the opposition, and agreed that the case being now brought before them, they must decide on it in a manner which appeared to them consistent with duty, and the sense of Scripture. Two passages of Scripture were principally resorted to: “The woman is bound by the law to her husband as long as he liveth:” and, “Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump.”

“ Mr. Staughton’s connexion with the lady to whom he is married, is indeed extraordinary, and the conduct romantic; gladly also would I have cleared my hands of the business, if I could have done it consistently: I confess it was a trying business to me, to perform the ceremony.

“ The idea of censure, which was likely to arise against his conduct as a minister, from the pulic mind, struck me forcibly on the occasion.”

On the subject of the above connexion, the late Rev. Dr. Fuller says:

“ To this I could never agree, and wrote my mind to Mr. Staughton, because it was taking on themselves to be judges in their own cause. Who could be certain that the man” (her husband) “ was an adulterer? or if he was, that his wife had not given him such provocation, as though it might not excuse him, yet might render her unentitled to marry another man? These were questions which would be examined if the cause were tried before a competent tribunal: but to act as he” (Mr. Staughton) “ did, was to be his own judge.

“ True honour should have prevented him from having any thing to say to a person whose HUSBAND WAS LIVING.

“ If Dr. S. thinks he did right in the affair for which he was excluded, to be sure he must remain as he is; but if otherwise, and if he have humility enough to write a frank acknowledgment of his sin to the church at Birmingham, I have no doubt of their forgiving him, and recommending him to any other church where he might incline to settle.

“ If he were to return to England, only acknowledging, as above, I should rejoice to see and hear him in my pulpit.”

The letters before us, from which the above extracts are taken, *verbatim*, are *dated* Charleston, S. C. and Kettering.

Old England: those from Charleston, by Mr. Furman, March 1. th, 1794, May 5th, '94, Dec. 23d, '95, and Feb. 5th, '96—those from Kettering, by Mr. Fuller, Nov. 29th, 1805, and Sept. 11th, 1806.

We have had access to other letters, of very *recent* dates, from great men in England, of a similar import; but it might seem even *indelicate* to add a single quotation to *such testimonies* as the above: and especially as Dr. Staughton, we must do him the justice to say, has never, that we could learn, denied their verity. It is merely from the imprudence, and, we may add, the *wickedness*, of some of his friends, in denying these things, and insinuating that they were fabricated by us, that their appearance, in our defence, became necessary.

You may know, gentlemen, but *we* have yet to learn, that Dr. Staughton has been restored to the church at Birmingham.

You may know, but *we* have yet to learn, that Dr. Staughton was regularly admitted into an American Baptist church.

You may know, but *we* have yet to learn, that Dr. Staughton received ordination to the sacred ministry, at the call of a gospel church, in either Europe or America. You, even *you*, however, and your *body*, may be as much in the dark on those important points as we; and should this, as we suspect, be the case, it must be allowed, that complaints, of a lax discipline, and its concomitants, amongst us, may not be without cause.

You need not be informed, that Dr. *Fuller* is the celebrated author of the Gospel its own Witness, nor, that Dr. *Furman* was the worthy President of both our triennial conventions.

Without a commentary on the case of the Rev. Dr. Staughton, we shall next bestow a minute's attention on the Rev. *Luther Rice*. A sketch of this gentleman shall be taken as drawn by the impartial hand of the Rev. Dr. EZRA STILES ELY. He says,

"A letter was written about twenty days after Mr. Judson's immersion, and signed by Mr. Rice, wherein mention is made of what had happened, as a *trying* event: yet within less than four weeks of the date of this letter, Mr. Rice had followed him.

“Those who have any knowledge of the Rev. Luther Rice,” continues Dr. Ely, “and of his subsequent *labours* and *thriving* in the “missionary cause, will not wonder at this.” Quarterly Theological Review, Vol. I. p. 93.

Some will probably consider the bullion words “*labours*,” and “*thriving*,” which this learned author *undergirds*, as equivalent to volumes, on the productive excursions, and present state, of your foreign *domestic* missionary. Thus, in a work of celebrity, our Presbyterian brethren, throughout the United States, are faithfully warned against over-rating the “*labours*,” or mistaking the object, of the Rev. Luther Rice. They, and those whom Dr. Ely is pleased to call his “respectable Baptist friends,” will, in all probability, see that the “*thriving*” of the handsomely *thriven*, Mr. Rice, shall not be at their expense.

As our present limits confine us to *one* more case, tending, as we suppose, to prove the justness of our complaints, in 1816, we shall select that of the Rev. John King, who was lately sent out as a *gentleman beggar*, under the auspices of names which afforded him many facilities to collect funds in aid of one of your pious churches under pecuniary embarrassments: and here we shall probably convince your body, that she erred in supposing Mr. White’s immorality to be “unparalleled.”

The subject of our present remarks, stands on your minutes of 1818, as the chairman of a delegation from one of your churches, and a licensed preacher; but pray why was he not exhibited in his true character, as an ordained minister? We know he was ordained, and that the Rev. Mr. White preached his ordination sermon, from Heb. v. 4. “No man taketh this honour to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.” Amongst American Baptists, it is peculiar, we hope, to your body, to furnish a junction of such a text with such ministers.

The Rev. Mr. King shall be presented to your notice, as portrayed in an instrument he was pleased to put into our hands, to defend his impeached morals.

It is dated, “Philadelphia, July 10, 1814:” and bears his proper signature. He commences this defence of his character, as he considered it, as follows:

“Whereas reports are circulated respecting my having a wife in New York, and coming to Philadelphia and marrying another; I therefore take the following method to lay before the world the manner of my life previous to my marriage with the first woman, and my reasons for marrying the second.”

Here, we see Mr. King has the candour to confess, at once, the sin of *bigamy*; or, in other language, that he has two wives! But, if we may believe an apostle, a bishop should be the husband of ONE wife: 1 Tim. iii. 2.

Had Mr. King's first wife been dead, or divorced, it is not to be supposed that he would have thought it necessary to “lay before the world,” his reasons for marrying another woman: but as he had been married to two *living* women, without the intervention of a divorce, he rightly judged, that his conduct required, at least, an apology. He gave his wife, he informs us, “lines of separation;” but of the *cause* of this separation he was “*his own judge.*”

As to his manner of life previous to his first marriage, he merely says, that he was a seaman; and the reason that he assigns for leaving his wife is, that she was a woman of ill fame; but of this, he is the only witness! Should this method of doing business, receive any thing which might be mistaken for the sanction of your body, it would certainly furnish great facilities for the dissolution of matrimonial contracts. Either of the parties, in such an event, might abandon the other, on the most accommodating terms.

It further appears, from Mr. King's statements, that, a considerable time after his second marriage, his first wife claimed him as her husband; and, on consulting, he observes, an attorney at law, the validity of her claim, was, on all hands, admitted. With reference to his second choice, Mr. King says,

“I did no longer consider her my wife for ever, and if I had through ignorance, been living in a state of adultery ten years, now that I had found out the evil, I thought it my duty to correct the error.”

Through ignorance, it would appear, he lived ten years in adultery! But when he found, in the light of common law, that to live so, was an evil, he set an example to all in the same state, by candidly saying, “I thought it my duty to correct the error.” It was, indeed, high time to set

about the work of reformation : but many who would abhor an odious transgression, committed recently, would almost, or quite excuse it, on the plea of antiquity ! On this ground, Mr. King is entitled to comparative praise. When he discovered, in the course of ten years, that it was an evil to live in adultery, or, at the very least, an “*error*,” he thought it his duty “*to correct it.*” After all, however, duty, in this instance, as is too often the case, had to give place to inclination.

We understand he has formed an alliance with a *fair* lady, and turned his back on both those sable dames, who had previously received his attentions ! With this third lady it cannot be denied, that he now lives in Philadelphia.

It is true he has been excommunicated, but without correcting the “*errors*,” arising from his gallantries, he has been restored to the fellowship of your churches. Yes : he is now acknowledged, in his ministerial character, by your large and orthodox community !

Judge what the feelings of *real* friends to order must have been, when they saw him sitting in 1818, amongst your leading characters, as a delegate, and the *chairman* of a delegation. He, no doubt, very cordially united with the majority of your body, in condemning all those “*vociferous*” characters, who had “*loudly*” complained of a lax discipline, and the want of a visible standard of morals, in some of your churches !!! And still, he is entitled to the privileges, of at least a *licensed* preacher, in your community !

Here, we hope, we may safely close the testimony in justification of our remarks, which you cannot but consider as a “*cruel libel*,” on your body.

If you, gentlemen, and the churches, will not be convinced by the aforesaid cloud of witnesses, that when those remarks were made, there was much amiss within the bounds of your churches, this conviction would not be induced, were as many more to rise from the dead, and bear similar testimonies.

All that remains, is for us to give you, and the public, the assurance, that amongst the eighteen delegates whose names were not suffered to appear on your pages, are those

of citizens who have occupied the seats of legislation in the commonwealth of Pennsylvania; sat in the Common and Select Councils of the metropolis, and held appointments of high responsibility under the government of the United States.

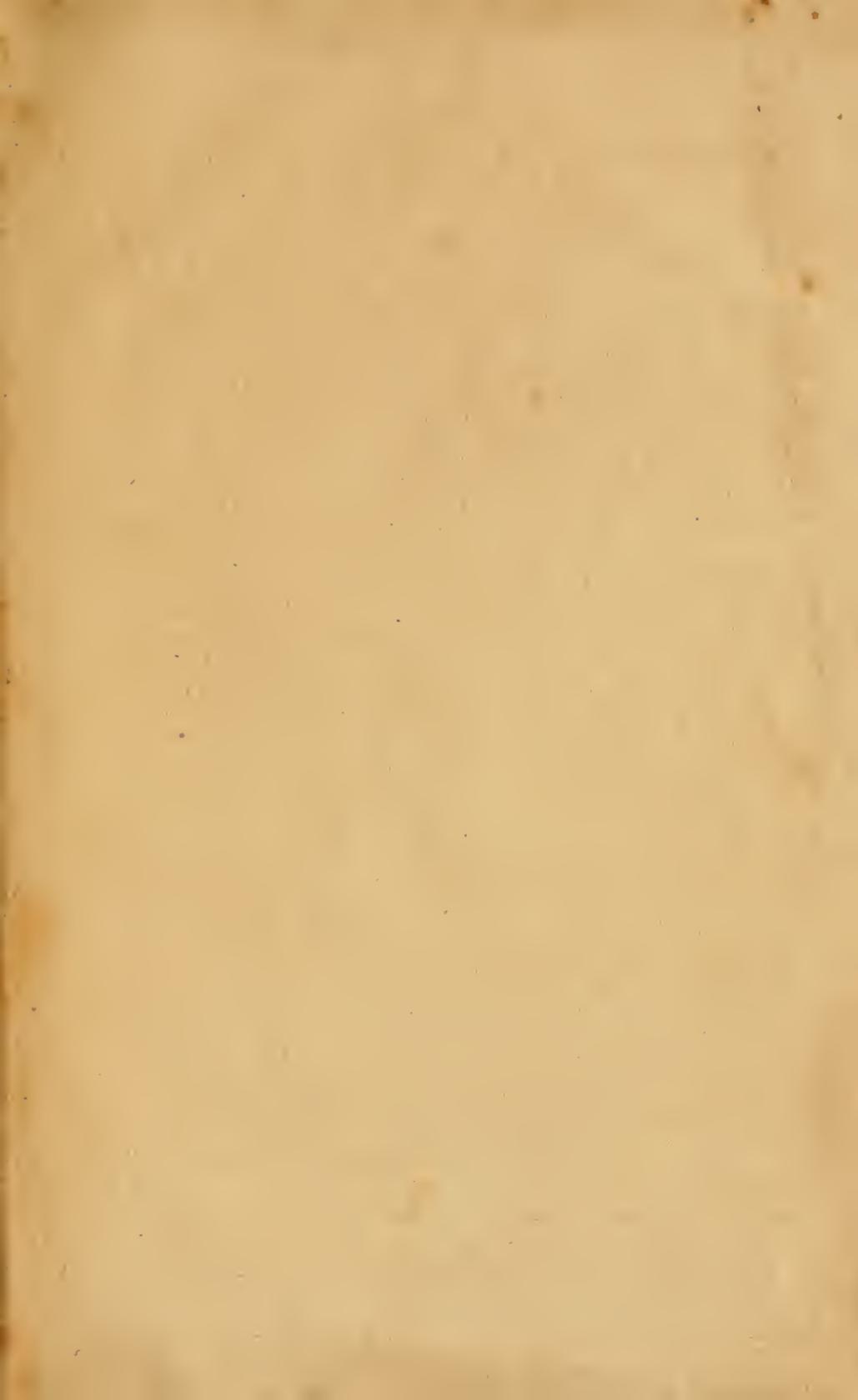
Without their leave, we shall venture to say, that they stand, and have long *deservedly* stood, high, in civil and religious society, as men of unimpeachable veracity, and sterling worth. From a regard to personal delicacy, we have alluded to but a part of those names you so *wisely* kept out of view. They are all, however in full fellowship with each other, and had you given them a place in any part of your letter, it would have rendered it perfectly harmless.

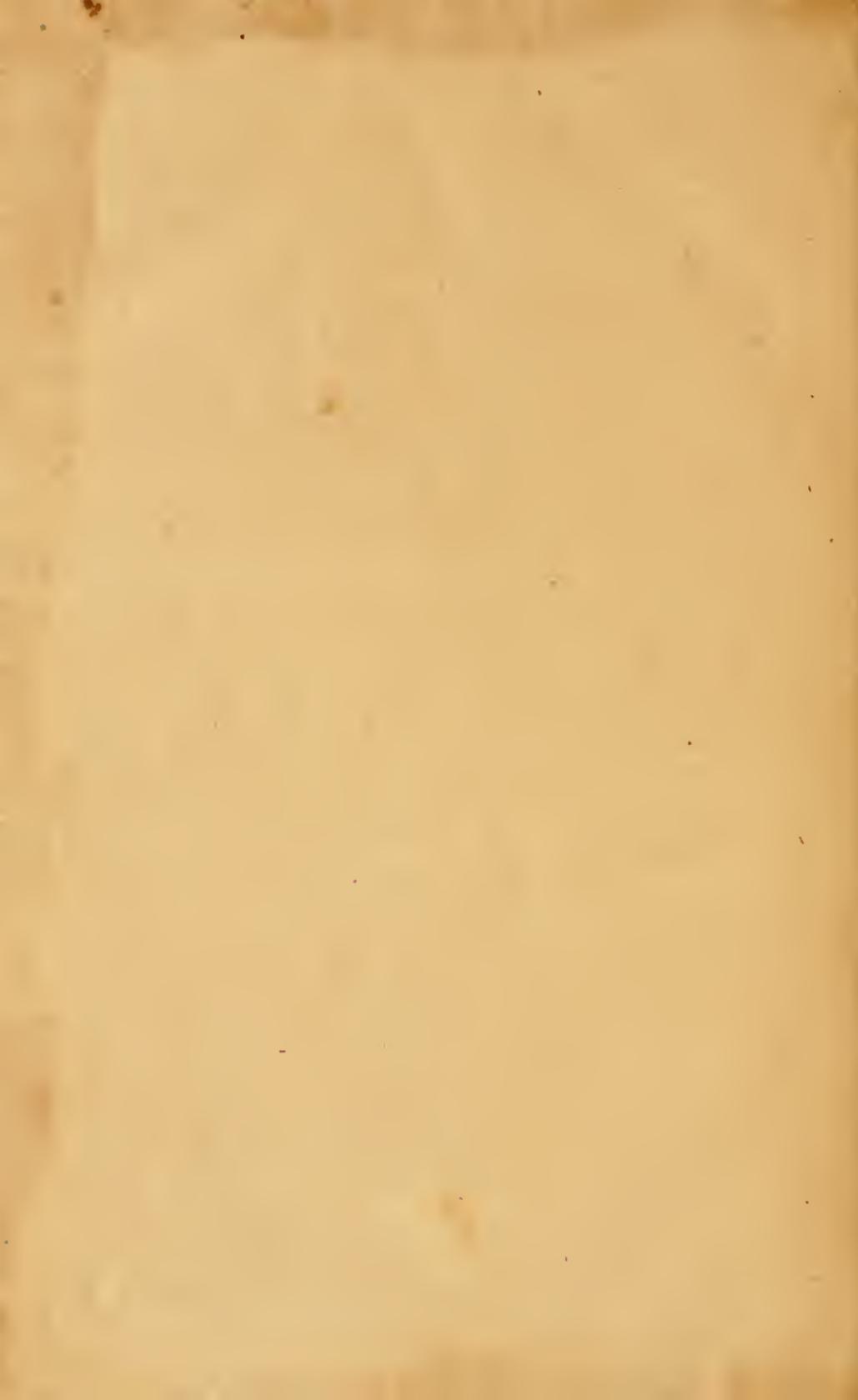
We shall conclude by referring you to the report, they unanimously made, on their return to the church they represented in your body, that you may realize the temerity which has contradicted it, in your corresponding letter. See Misrepresentations Exposed, page 44-5.

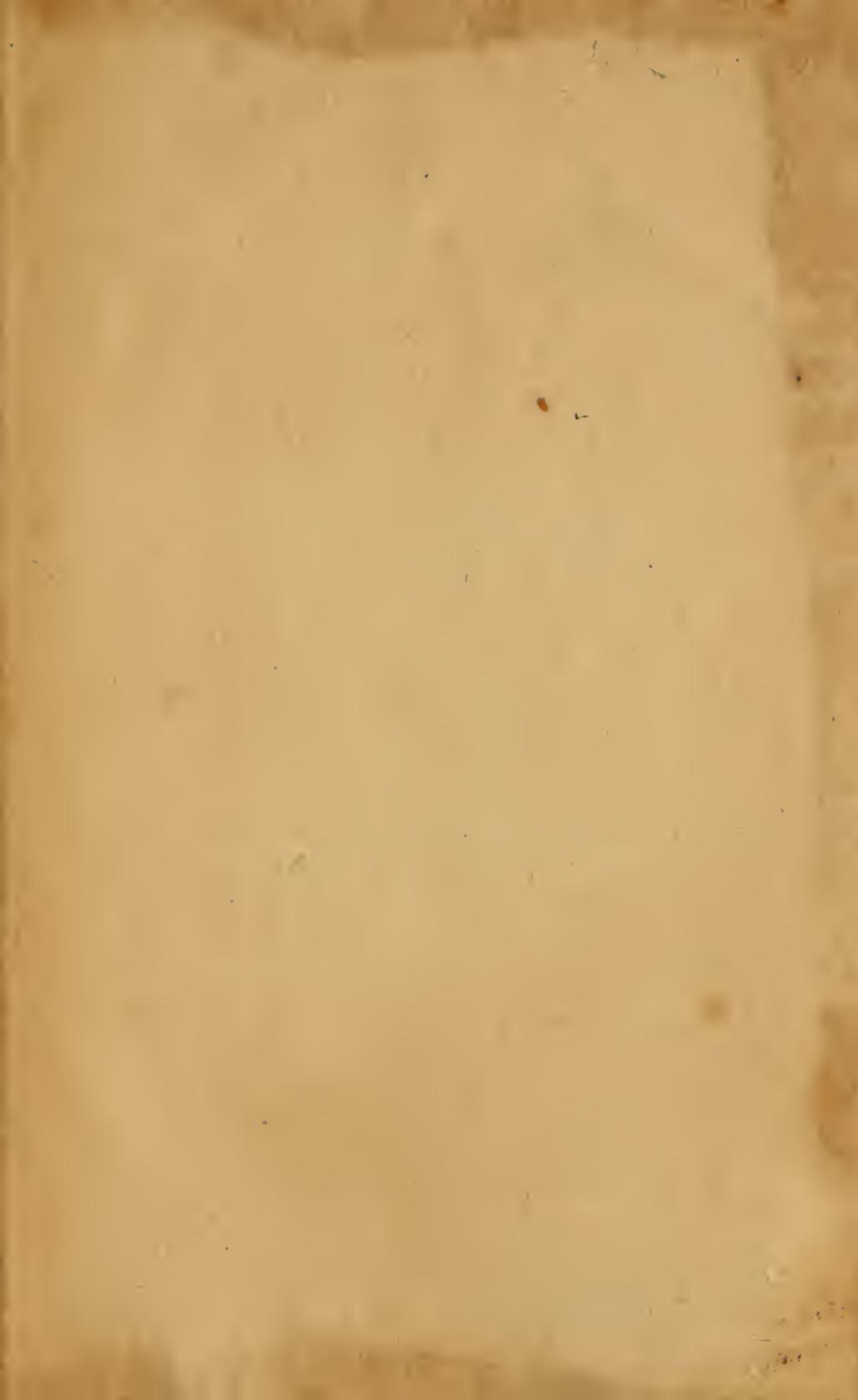
There you will see the REV. DR. WILLIAM ROGERS, Messrs. George Ingels, John M'Leod, Joseph Keen, Hugh Gourley, Levi Garrett, Joseph S. Walter, Thomas Brown, Joseph Reynolds, John Davis, Elijah Griffiths, William Duncan, David Johns, Henry Benner, Silas W. Sexton, William S. Hansell, Thomas Wattson, David Weatherly, Samuel W. Keen, and, were it of any use, after *such* names, we might add, gentlemen, your very humble servant,

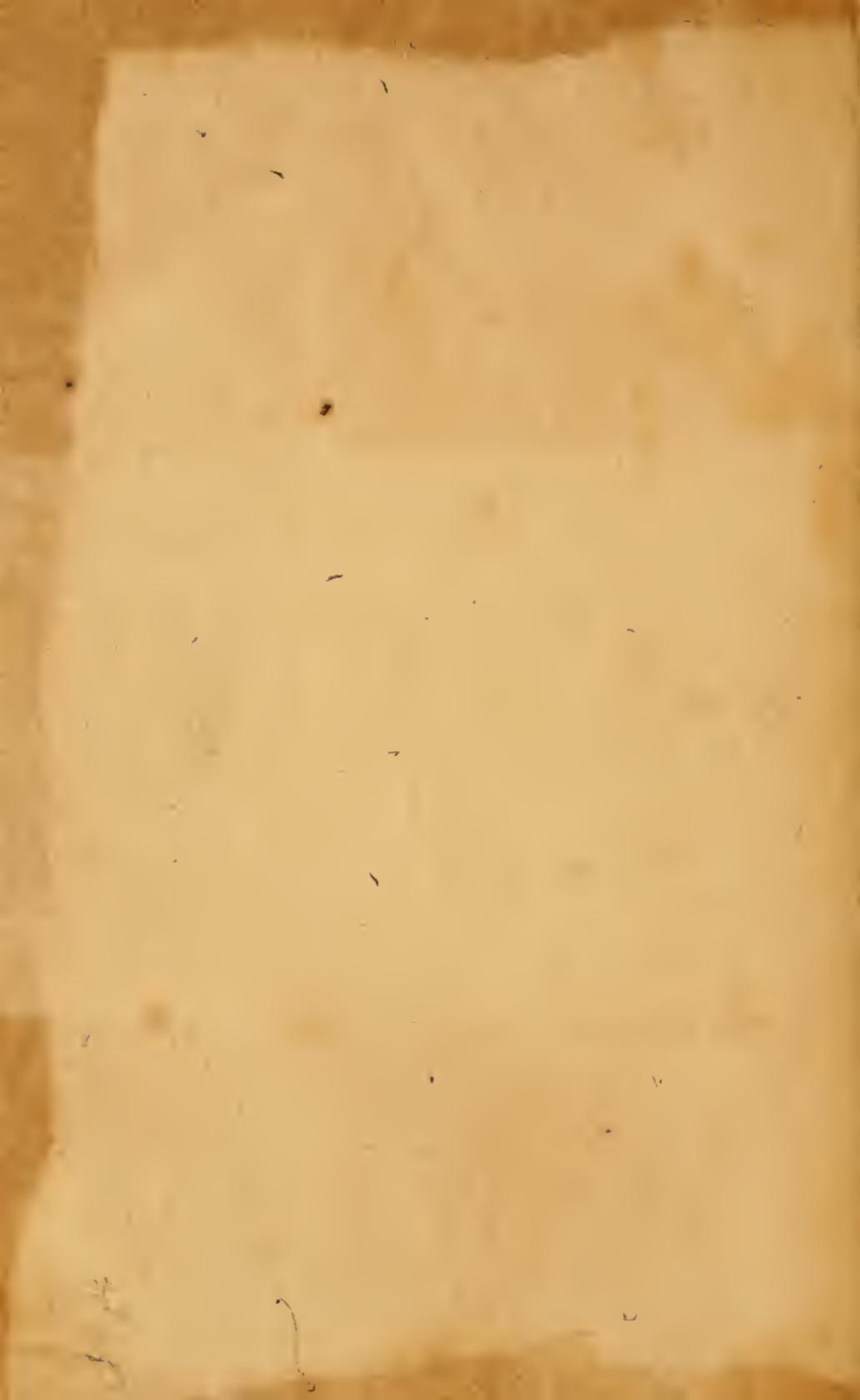
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