

heaven, "to afford him praise, the easiest recompense, and pay him thanks—how due!" He understood the feeling of a grateful mind, which "owing owes not, but still pays, at once indebted and discharged." He felt it to be not so much the duty of man, as his glory and delight, to sanctify himself and keep the Sabbath of the Lord. But Philander could not forget, that *his* was the *Christian Sabbath*; as the thought entered his mind, his eyes became dim with tears—with tears of gratitude and joy. He was suddenly in the temple, prostrate at the altar, at the table of his dying Lord. He felt something of the value of redemption; he recollected the seasons of holy communion with his Saviour; he remembered how his heart had burned within him by the way, and how Jesus had been made known to him in the breaking of bread,—and he burst forth into the song of David, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." His mind dwelt with delight on the glorious plan of salvation: he pursued it through the stages of its progress on earth, and arrived at its consummation in heaven; there he beheld the ransomed sinner standing before the throne of God and the Lamb, freed from sin, and care, and pain, joining the hallelujahs of angels and perfected spirits. He paused—for he felt familiar with the scene: he remembered, that the day of sacred rest had often been cherished, as a type and pledge of that nobler rest which *remaineth above*: he remembered that his Sabbath-enjoyments were sometimes felt to be blissful anticipations of the joys of heaven; and full well he recollected, that in this view of the Sabbath, he had especially exclaimed with the holy Psalmist, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."

E. P. S.

For the Christian Observer.

Sincerum est nisi vas, quodcumque infundis  
acescit. HOR.

TRUTH, when misapplied, or mixed with error, is more dangerous than falsehood itself. The latter is commonly detected by men of plain understandings: the former may be clothed in so specious a dress, or may be so much in unison with existing prejudices, as to perplex and unsettle the mind of a sincere but timid inquirer.

This remark was suggested by the perusal of a pamphlet, entitled, "Thoughts on the Tendency of Bible Societies, as affecting the Established Church and Christianity itself, as a reasonable Service, by the Rev. A. O'Callaghan." This pamphlet, I shall not scruple to affirm, abounds in misrepresentation, in illogical and inconclusive reasoning, in unfounded and exaggerated statement. I am well aware that these are strong terms, and ought not to be used unadvisedly: they contain charges which are easily made, and which should therefore be made with the greater caution. How far they are warranted in fact, and justified by a minute and careful examination of the leading principles therein avowed, it will be incumbent upon me in the sequel to shew.

This controversy has been carried on with such unintermitted zeal, that all the topics in debate, it might fairly have been concluded, were exhausted long ago, and the minds of men made up on the subject: that it was, at any rate, useless to re-kindle angry passions by recurrence to the past; since the evil, if it were an evil, was irremediable, or, if the designs of the Bible Society were executed wisely, then the fruits would be daily more and more apparent and convincing. But the opponents of this Society are, it seems, still restless and uneasy: they run the same circle of argument and invective; they renew the attack "*verbo mendaci, aut mordaci*;" and serve up

again and again the same dishes to our jaded palates, seasoned with the same accompaniments, so altered and disguised as to suit the prevailing taste of the day, or the peculiar humour of the writer.

It would greatly exceed the limits I now propose to myself, to follow Mr. O'Callaghan step by step through the whole of his digressive and very declamatory pamphlet. His imagination is so excursive, so lively, so fruitful in resources; he presses so much extraneous matter into his service, that one cannot but suspect him of some secret misgivings, lest, if he should leave his cause to be tried by the standard of unimpassioned reason (of which he is, in other respects, so vehemently enamoured,) it would be weighed in the balance, and found wanting. However this may be, the chief thing which I at present undertake to deal with, is the *principle* upon which the whole force of his conclusions rests. And this course I am the rather inclined to pursue,

1. Because the same *principle*, for the most part, pervades the sentiments of all who think, with Mr. O'C., that the Bible Society is fraught with mischief to the Established Church.

2. Because, if the foundation of their objections be proved to be insecure, then "it will follow, as the night the day," that the whole superstructure, however attractive and imposing, must be insecure also.

But it is time to let Mr. O'C. speak for himself. "The writer of these sheets" (says he, p. 14,) "can affirm, that on putting the Bible to this test (*i. e.* the test of experiment,) by a careful perusal, he found it, collectively taken, one of the most difficult books he ever read, and that this character was applicable, though in different degrees, to every part not purely historical." Here, then, I am contented to take my stand. I join issue with Mr. O'C. on this the *avowed principle*, the ground-work of all his

future reasonings, which elsewhere repeatedly occurs; viz. that the Bible "is of all books perhaps the most difficult" (p. 6;) and that, be it remembered, "*in every part not purely historical:*" "the Bible, without note or comment, is *unfit* for the perusal of the *rude and illiterate*" (p. 11.) It is clear, from these passages, that Mr. O'C. does not mean to be understood to state that *many parts* of the Bible are full of difficulty—a position which *no one* would be disposed to controvert—but that the character of extreme difficulty pervades "*every part not purely historical;*"—an affirmation from which, I apprehend, *every one* will instinctively revolt; or, if some few should be found to accede to it, they would surely accede with almost insurmountable repugnance.

If I were to assert, that, on putting the Bible to the test of experiment, by a careful perusal of *many parts not purely historical*, the result was totally different from what Mr. O'C. experienced, I could not hope that such assertion would have much weight, because it might with propriety be considered as the opinion of one obscure individual opposed to that of another. But, if I can shew (as I most assuredly can,) that the opinions of men who were the brightest ornaments of our church at different periods since the Reformation—opinions gravely and deliberately published to the world—are directly at variance with those of Mr. O'C., I think I may safely leave it to the good sense of mankind to determine, whether they will adopt his crude and novel sentiments, or adhere to the matured and collective wisdom of ages.

Before I proceed to cite the authorities above alluded to, I cannot forbear making one or two observations, to which Mr. O'C.'s mode of expression renders him peculiarly obnoxious. In the first place, it may be remarked, that it is one

thing to *read* the Bible, and another to *search the Scriptures daily*. Is it not probable, that this writer's difficulty may, in part at least, originate here? Or has he sufficiently considered that certain dispositions, and a particular frame of mind, joined to earnest prayer for understanding, that we may understand the Scriptures, are required of those who fervently and devoutly desire to read them with advantage? "Would we know the main cause of our fruitless hearing of the word, here it is: men bring not a meek and guileless spirit to it." "*Utilis lectio, utilis eruditio, sed magis unctio necessaria, quippe quæ sola docet de omnibus.*" But, as it is rather dangerous for any one to tread upon this ground, who startles at the reproachful term "fanatic, or enthusiast," I beg leave to refer, for a farther elucidation and confirmation of this part of the subject, to a valuable tract, published by the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, entitled, "*The Necessity and Usefulness of Reading the Holy Scriptures, and the Dispositions with which they ought to be read.*"

In the next place, there is surely a singular infelicity in adducing the different sects amongst the Jews, as one of the many instances of the difficulty of rightly interpreting Scripture; those Jews, some of whom were men of deep erudition and learning—men who enjoyed the advantage of reading the sacred volume in their own familiar tongue—to whom the laws, manners, customs and institutions therein described were thoroughly known; the peculiar idioms (which are now said to create so much obscurity) natural and easy. Are these the circumstances from which we are desired to infer that the *learned* make a proficiency in the most essential points of Christian knowledge, which the *rude and illiterate* are unable to attain? Are we to look for the proof of this in the immediate followers

of our blessed Lord; in the persevering incredulity of the Scribes and Pharisees; in the unsubdued virulence and opposition of the chief priests and rulers? If "reason only is to be the interpreter of Scripture," how is it to be accounted for, that whilst "numbers were added to the churches daily," in less civilized regions, scarcely a single convert was made by the Apostle amongst the learned, refined, and enlightened members of the Areopagus at Athens? \* Are these the examples by which we are to decide, that human learning is the only accessible medium by which an adequate knowledge of the truth can be acquired? Is it not manifest, on the contrary, that the Jews, to whom Mr. O'C. so unaccountably appeals in support of his opinions, are the most striking and durable monuments of the total insufficiency of all human learning to generate a ready assent to the truths of the Gospel? If the Jews, as a nation, grossly misconceived the character of the Messiah, will Mr. O'C. venture to insinuate, in contradiction to the whole tenor of the Gospel, that such misconception proceeded from a deficiency in learning, or a want of mental capacity? Is it not abundantly obvious, on the contrary, that it was *pride and hardness of heart—wilful obstinacy—and a presumptuous dependence upon "improved reason alone"*—that made them spurn that true and living interpretation, which the simple and humble-minded, whether learned or unlearned, rich or poor, embraced with alacrity and joy? "Them that are meek shall he guide in judgment, and such as are gentle, them shall he learn his way."

But here Mr. O'C. will be ready to exclaim, "All, therefore, that is wanting (in the opinion of the sup-

\* "Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many *wise men after the flesh*, not many mighty, not many noble are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise."

porters of the Bible Society,) for understanding the Scriptures, is a competent portion of self-abasement and *ignorance* on the part of man, with a Bible to read; God will do the rest." (p. 16) Is this the remark of intemperate prejudice, or wilful misrepresentation? Instead of the word "*ignorance*," which is insidiously and disingenuously introduced, substitute "*diligence in the use of the appointed means*," and it will be easy to find authority amongst the ablest divines and supporters of the Established Church, for a doctrine which excites in the mind of Mr. O'C. so much pleasantry. (See Judgment of Archbishop Cranmer, concerning the People's Right to, and discreet Use of, Holy Scripture, p. 15.)

How far Mr. O'C. is justified in stating, that "the greatest luminaries of our church and nation have thought that reason, improved reason, is the only interpreter of the Sacred Writings," we shall presently see, when I have contrasted the opinions of Archbishop Cranmer, of Archbishop Leighton, of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, and of Bishop Horsley, with those of Mr. O'C. This I shall do by extracting passages from the writings of those distinguished divines, and by reference to the tract above cited, which must necessarily be supposed to speak the sentiments of the Society by which it is published and circulated.

"Peradventure they will say unto me, How and if we understand not that we read that is contained in the books? What then? Suppose thou understand not the deep and profound mysteries of Scripture, yet can it not be but that much fruit and holiness must come and grow unto thee by the reading: for it cannot be that thou shouldst be ignorant in all things alike. For the Holy Ghost hath so ordered and attempered the Scriptures, that in them as well *publicans, fishers, and shepherds* may find

their edification, as great doctors their erudition. For these books were not made to vain-glory, like as were the writings of the gentile philosophers and rhetoricians; to the intent the makers should be had in admiration for their high styles, and obscure manner and writing, whereof nothing can be understood without a master or expositor: but the Apostles and Prophets wrote their books so that their special intent and purpose *might be understood and perceived of every reader*, which was nothing but the edification and amendment of the life of them that read or hear it. Who is it, that reading or hearing read in the Gospel, 'Blessed be they that be meek, blessed are they that be merciful, blessed are they that are clean of heart,' and such other like places, can *perceive nothing, except he have a master to teach him what it meaneth.*" (See Judgment of Archbishop Cranmer, &c. p. 14.) Again: "Here all manner of persons.... *learned, unlearned; rich, poor.....tenants and mean men,.....artificers, husbandmen, &c..... of what state and condition soever they may be, may in this book learn all things, what they ought to believe, what they ought to do,*" &c. &c. Therefore I will take it for a conclusion sufficiently determined and appointed, that it is convenient and good the Scriptures be read of *all sorts and kinds of people,*" &c. (Ibid, p. 18.)

"It (*i. e.* the Bible) is so contempered, that there may be many things, yea, *all the main things* in it, profitable for all, fitted to the use of the *lowest estate and lowest capacities of men.*"—Archbishop Leighton's Works, vol. I. p. 338.

My experience, I confess, leads me most fully and deliberately to assent to the truth of these declarations. But does it from thence "inevitably follow (as Mr. O'C. would have us believe, p. 15.) that the clergy are not therefore an essential part of a religious commu-

nity?" Does it indeed follow, because "the main things are profitable for all," that therefore no farther instruction is needful? In what part of Scripture has Mr. O'C. discovered, that he, who has imbibed a portion of the wisdom which is from above, acquires thereby a disrelish for receiving farther instruction from his appointed teachers? That a slender proficiency in religious knowledge is calculated to make us turn a deaf ear to those deeper mysteries of the Gospel, or those practical lessons of holiness and obedience, which it is the duty of the clergy to enforce and of the flocks committed to their charge to receive. Surely, good sense and truth are all on the side of those who admit, with Archbishop Leighton that "the Scriptures are a depth that few can wade far into, and none can wade through; but yet *all* may come to the brook, and refresh themselves with drinking of the streams of its living water, and go in a little way, according to their strength and stature." Vol. i. p. 338.

But let us now turn to the view, which is taken of the difficulties of Scripture by the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, and see how far it accords with Mr. O'C.'s doctrine. In the tract before cited, are to be found the following passages: "The Scriptures must be read with submission, and obedience of faith. Since it is God who speaks in them, we have nothing to do but to be well assured that we rightly understand their meaning, *which is never difficult in things necessary to salvation.*" (p. 31.) Again; "When we read the commands and precepts, which God has given us in his word to be the rule of our actions, it is our duty to believe that obedience and conformity to them is absolutely and indispensably necessary. And *as the sense of Scripture is never obscure in this respect, and it is impossible we should be deceived, unless we wilfully shut our eyes against the*

*truth, all we have to do is with humility and an honest heart to submit to whatever God is pleased to command.*" p. 33.

Thus then it is plain, that the opinions, sanctioned by the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, not only go the length of contravening the character of difficulty in *many parts of Scripture not purely historical*, but are explicit to shew, that error in these cases can only arise from "wilfully shutting our eyes against the truth." Is it possible that Mr. O'C. should deserve such reproof? If he does,—and I see no means of eluding its direct and palpable application to him,—who is bold enough to confide in such a leader?

It would be easy to multiply quotations from other divines of established authority, if that were necessary. I shall, however, content myself with extracting two passages; one from the justly celebrated Charge of Bishop Horsley, delivered to the clergy of his diocese in 1790; the other from a sermon of that judicious and learned prelate. "We have (says the Bishop) *experimental proof*, that there is nothing in the great mystery of godliness, which the *vulgar, more than the learned, want capacity to apprehend*: since upon the first preaching of the Gospel, *the illiterate, the scorn of pharisaical pride*, who knew not the law, and were therefore deemed accursed, were the first to understand and embrace the Christian doctrine. Nor will this seem strange, if it be considered that *religion and science are very different things, and the object of different faculties. Science is the object of natural reason; religious truth of faith.*" (pp. 13, 14.) This opinion of Bishop Horsley has a two-fold application to the subject before us: it completely rebuts (as far as weight, and authority, and talent can do it) the *principle*, upon which Mr. O'C. has raised so im-

posing a fabric; and it furnishes a ready answer to all such observations as the following: It would be highly desirable (says Mr. O'C.) that the peasantry of Ireland understood and respected the laws of their country more than they do at present; yet no society has yet started up, with the avowed object of dispersing among them cheap editions of Blackstone, or Coke upon Littleton, without note or comment. A competent knowledge of natural philosophy, astronomy, metaphysics, and political economy, could not fail to humanize their minds, lessen their taste for nocturnal depredations, and quench their thirst for blood; yet no sagacious reformer has yet come forward with a proposal for circulating among them Newton, Laplace, Locke, Smith, or Stewart, without note or comment. Why? Because "religion and science are very different things and the *object of different faculties*. Science is the object of natural reason; religious truth of faith." Well may we apply to Mr. O'C. the words of our Saviour to Nicodemus: "Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?"

But let us again attend to the writings of the same prelate. "It is incredible (says he) to any one, who has not in some degree made the experiment, what a proficiency may be made in that knowledge, which maketh wise unto salvation, by studying the Scriptures in this manner, (i. e. by comparing parallel passages,) without any other commentary or exposition than what the different parts of the sacred volume mutually furnish for each other. *I will not scruple to assert, that the most illiterate Christian, if he can but read his English Bible, and will take the pains to read it in this manner, will not only attain all that practical knowledge which is necessary to his salvation, but, by God's blessing, he will*

*become learned in every thing relating to his religion, in such degree, that he will not be liable to be misled, either by the refined arguments or by the false assertions of those who endeavour to ingraft their own opinion upon the oracles of God.* He may safely be ignorant of all philosophy, except what is to be learned from the sacred books; which indeed contain the highest philosophy adapted to the lowest apprehensions. He may safely remain ignorant of all history, except so much of the history of the first ages of the Jewish, and of the Christian Church as is to be gathered from the canonical books of the Old and New Testament. Let him study these in the manner I recommend, and let him never cease to pray for the illumination of that Spirit by which these books were dictated; and the whole compass of abstruse philosophy and recondite history shall furnish no argument with which the perverse will of man shall be able to shake this learned Christian's faith. The Bible thus studied will indeed prove to be what we Protestants esteem it, *a certain and sufficient rule of faith and practice, a helmet of salvation, which alone may quench the fiery darts of the wicked.*"—Nine Sermons, &c. pp. 226, 7, 8.

"We are not told, that the ignorant man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, while the literate man does receive them: but we are told, that the *natural* man, whether ignorant or literate, receiveth them not; and the reason assigned is, that they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." These extracts require no comment. They are plain, and go directly to the point at issue, and may, I think, be safely left to work their own way against the sophistries of Mr. O'C., heightened and embellished as they are with

various entertaining episodes of Puritans, and Methodists, and Gospel Preachers; episodes, made up of a strange admixture of truth and misrepresentation, unworthy of the cause which he has undertaken to advocate, and discreditable to the temper and spirit of a Christian minister.

I am, Sir, &c.

PAULINUS.

To the Editor of the *Christian Observer*.

THE attestation respecting the author of *The Whole Duty of Man*, together with my accompanying query (inserted in *Christian Observer*, Vol. XV. p. 435.) not having produced any other notice from your correspondents than the laconic observations of R. W. D. (Vol. XV. p. 643.) allow me to claim a place in your columns for a slight attempt to solve my own problem. It is with some reluctance that I occupy your valuable pages with a discussion purely bibliographical; but the subject being at present imperfectly noticed in your work, I shall, as briefly as possible, communicate the information which I have derived, and the ideas which have suggested themselves to my mind, by looking more closely into the question.

It is not difficult to ascertain the period in which *The Whole Duty of Man* appeared before the public, although your correspondent expresses some doubt even on that point. R. W. D. mentions the edition of 1677, as the earliest which he has seen. I have seen an edition of eighteen years earlier date, which is undoubtedly the first. Ballard states, that the work appeared in 1657; but it is clear that he was misled by the date of Dr. Hammond's prefatory letter written in that year. It was published at the beginning of the year 1659; for Dr. Hammond, in a letter to Mr. Peter Stainenough, dated March 16, 1659, among other

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notices of new publications, observes; "Two excellent pieces there are from an unknown hand, *The Whole Duty of Man*, and *The Gentleman's Calling*."

A more knotty question arises in the inquiry respecting the author of this work; and Junius himself has scarcely called forth more improbable conjectures than this writer. The concealment, so successfully studied, appears to be alluded to in the frontispiece to the older editions, which represents Moses veiled holding the tables of the Law in his hands; this motto being subscribed,—"*And till Moses had done speaking to them, he put a veil on his face.*" From this some have concluded (I think incorrectly,) that Bishop Fell himself was not made acquainted with the name, till the last work of the author had been produced.

The ingenious method by which Bishop Fell would lead us to the author is not, it must be confessed, very agreeable in its process, or satisfactory in its result. "Let the pious reader live a whole age of great austerities, and maintain an undisturbed serenity in the midst of them, and he will himself become a lively picture of our author."

Neither this work, nor the other pieces confessedly produced by the same hand, afford us any positive data by which we can ascertain the name of the writer. At the same time, there are some circumstances sufficiently marked to exclude certain pretensions; and others which, though more ambiguous, may serve as tolerable tests of the degree of probability which attaches to the contested claims of authorship.

I. The most decisive of these is, the period of the author's death. In the preface to the folio edition of the whole works (Oxford 1684,) which has been ascribed without controversy to the pen of Bishop Fell, the author is stated to be dead. Consequently, we may safely discard the