

such miscellaneous subjects. The author has exemplified activity in research, and judgment in selection; and, upon the whole, we do not scruple to pronounce his performance a work which does justice to its local subject, and, as the first executed in England, a model for future publications of the same nature.

In revising our remarks on the present state of population in Berwick, we discover, and now correct, a defective account, by estimating the amount of lives at 7930, in 1796, from the records of baptisms and funerals. The author adds, 'In that year the houses paying church-rate were 1300; and in 1797, 1500; besides some hundreds of houses inhabited by poor people exempted from that rate. If this information is correct, the population in February, 1799, may be stated at 10,000, within the walls and liberties; and, if the inhabitants in Tweedmouth and Spittal be added, the whole population is nearly 14,000.' P. 266.

The title of the next section, *Diseases*, affords the author a fit opportunity of evincing his professional abilities conformably to the plan prescribed by the Board of Agriculture. The local maladies *there*, and in similar situations, are enumerated; and, tho' specific remedies are superseded, the general means of preserving health, such as aliment, air, exercise, sleep, clothing, cleanliness, tranquillity of mind, are judiciously recommended and warmly enforced. This section of 59 pages merits the special and uniform attention of all who have access to this elaborate publication.

The Gospel its own Witness: or, The Holy Nature and Divine Harmony of the Christian Religion contrasted with the Immorality and Absurdity of Deism.
By Andrew Fuller. 8vo. boards. Pp. 361. Button, &c. 1799.

THE writer of the following pages is not induced to offer them to the public eye from an apprehension that the church of Christ is in danger. Neither the downfall of popery, nor the triumph of infidels, as though they had hereby overturned Christianity, have ever been to him the cause of a moment's uneasiness. If Christianity be of God, as he verily believes it to be, they cannot overthrow it. He must be possessed of very little faith, who can tremble, though in a storm, for the safety of the vessel which contains his Lord and Master. There would be one argument less for the divinity of the Scriptures, if the same powers which gave existence to the Anti-Christian dominion had not been employed in taking it away. But though truth has nothing to fear, it does not follow that its friends should be inactive.—*Preface.*

INTRODUCTION. The controversies between believers and unbelievers are confined to a narrower ground than those of professed believers with one another. Scripture testimony, any farther than as it bears the character of truth, and approves itself to the conscience, or is produced for the purpose of explaining the nature of genuine Christianity, is here out of the question. Reason is the common

ground on which they must meet to decide their contests. On this ground Christian writers have successfully closed with their antagonists: so much so, that of late ages, notwithstanding all their boasts of reason, not one in ten of them can be kept to the fair and honourable use of this weapon; on the contrary, they are driven to substitute dark insinuation, low wit, profane ridicule, and gross abuse. Such were the weapons of Shaftsbury, Tindal, Morgan, Bolingbroke, Voltaire, Hume, and Gibbon; and such are the weapons of the author of the *Age of Reason*. Among various well-written performances, in answer to their several productions, the reader may see a concise and able refutation of the greater part of them in Leland's "*View of the Deistical Writers*."

'It is not my design to go over the various topics usually discussed in this controversy, but to select a single one, which I conceive has not been so fully attended to but that it may yet be considered with advantage. The *internal evidence* which Christianity possesses, particularly in respect to its holy nature and divine harmony, will be the subject of the present enquiry.

'Mr. Paine, after the example of many others, endeavours to discredit the Scriptures, by representing the number of hands through which they have passed, and the uncertainty of the historical evidence by which they are supported.—"It is (says he) a matter altogether of uncertainty to us, whether such of the writings as now appear under the names of the Old and New Testament, are in the same state in which those collectors say they found them, or whether they added, altered, or dressed them up."—It is a good work, which many writers have undertaken, to prove the validity of the Christian History, and to shew that we have as good evidence for the truth of the great facts which it relates, as we have for the truth of any ancient events whatever. But if, in addition to this, it can be proved that the Scriptures contain internal characters of divinity, or that they carry in them the evidence of their authenticity, this will at once answer all objections from the supposed uncertainty of their historical evidence. . . ."

'It is true, the scriptures having been conveyed to us through the medium of man, the work must necessarily in some respects have been *humanized*; yet there may be certain marks of divinity upon it to render it evident, to every candid mind, that it is of God.

'We may call the Mosaic account of the creation a tradition, and may be said to know, through this medium, that the heavens and the earth are productions of the divine power. But it is not through this medium only that we know it:—the heavens and the earth carry in them evident marks of their divine original. These works of the Almighty speak for themselves, and in language which none but those who are wilfully deaf can misunderstand. "Their sound is gone forth throughout all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." Were any man to pretend that its being a matter of revelation, and to us merely traditional revelation, that God made the heavens and the earth, and, therefore, that a degree of un-
certainly

certainly must attend it,—he would be reminded that the thing itself carried in it its own evidence. Let it be candidly considered, whether the same may not be said of the holy scriptures. They will admit of historical defence; but they do not require it. It was on this principle that the Gospel was proclaimed in the form of a *testimony*. The primitive preachers were not required by him who sent them to prove their doctrine in the manner that philosophers were wont to establish a proposition; but to declare the counsel of God, and leave it. In delivering their message, they commended themselves to every man's conscience, in the sight of God.'

Part I. The Holy Nature of the Christian Religion contrasted with Deism. Chap. I. Christianity reveals a God, glorious in holiness; but Deism, though it acknowledges a God, yet denies or overlooks his moral character. II. Christianity teaches us to acknowledge God, and to devote ourselves to his service; but Deism, though it confesses one Supreme Being, yet refuses to worship him. III. The Christian standard of morality is enlarged, and free from impurity; but Deism confines our obligations to those duties which respect our own species, and greatly palliates vice with regard to a breach even of them. IV. Christianity furnishes motives to a virtuous life, which Deism either rejects or attempts to undermine. V. The lives of those who reject, will not bear a comparison with theirs who embrace, the Gospel. VI. Christianity has not only produced good effects in those who cordially believe it, but has given to the morals of society a tone, which Deism, so far as it operates, goes to counteract. VII. Christianity is a source of happiness to individuals and to society; but Deism leaves both the one and the other without hope.

Part II. Harmony of the Christian Religion, considered as an evidence of its divinity. Chap. I. The harmony of scripture with historical facts, evinced from the fulfilment of prophecy. II. Harmony of scripture with truth, evinced from its agreement with the dictates of an enlightened conscience, and the result of the closest observation. III. Harmony of scripture with its own professions, argued from the style in which it is written. IV. Consistency of the Christian doctrines, particularly that of salvation through a Mediator, with sober reason. V. Consistency of the scripture doctrine of redemption with the modern opinion of the magnitude of creation. Concluding addresses to Deists, Jews, and Christians.

The topics whence the credibility of the sacred oracles has been inferred, the truth of the doctrines revealed, the purity of the precepts to be obeyed, the method of redeeming and reforming a degenerate world, with the reasonableness of the sanctions with which the Gospel is enforced, together with the imperfections and absurdities of Deism, have often been examined with candour, and the preference decided with judgment, in distinct treatises, as the points under occasional discussion occurred. Here the two schemes are considered, part by part, and special conclusions deduced, equally honourable to the author's abilities, and to the cause he has undertaken to defend.