

ART. VIII. *Memoirs of William Paley, D.D.* By George Wilson Meadley. Second Edition, with an Appendix. Edinburgh, Constable, and Co. London, Cradock and Joy. 1810. 8vo. pp. 404.

'**SEPULCHRUM** haud pulchrum pulchrai feminae' is an incongruity not peculiar to Gruter. But departed genius, as well as departed beauty, claims a master's hand; the one in the sculptor, the other in the biographer. Yet it has too often been the misfortune of both to have their memories consigned to humble friends and unskilful, though flattering, artists.

Paley was among the few gifted men of the present age who have merited an union of talent and affection in the man that should undertake to deliver their lives and characters to posterity. Such, moreover, and so intimate had long been his connexion with one family eminently qualified for the purpose, that, after his decease, the public naturally looked with some degree of hope and expectation to that quarter. But the reserve of high rank, and the engagements of a laborious profession may be supposed to have prevented the exertions of one individual, while another and an earlier friend, broken down by bad health, and expecting soon to follow the subject of this memoir, could only cultivate in private conversation, or in secret recollection, the memory of him whom he most loved while living, and most venerated when dead.

Dr. John Law was one of those accomplished Englishmen who have been transplanted from subordinate stations of competence and usefulness in England,

'To waste their sweetness on the desert air;' to spend their remaining days in the tumult of Hibernian politics; and, in the midst of bigotry and hatred, to exercise spiritual jurisdiction over a clergy without congregations. Such has been the lot, such indeed the reward of ill-judging ambition in more tranquil times: but this unfortunate prelate fell upon evil days as well as evil tongues; and situated as he found himself, at its eruption, in the very focus of the Irish rebellion, by an unhappy determination not to quit a post in which his presence could have little effect, anxiety and alarm laid the foundation of those complicated diseases which hurried him to the grave.

This event, and those which led to it, the public have to deplore on their own account as well as his; since the leisure and tranquillity of Carlisle, from which he was transplanted, would probably not only have prolonged his days, but produced that tribute to the memory of his friend, which (without meaning any disrespect to the present biographer) must be allowed to have fallen into

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very different hands: for, in addition to a manly and penetrating understanding, a severe integrity, and an erudition able not only to comprehend the attainments of his friend, but to assist and promote his inquiries, there was in the temper and manner of Dr. John Law, though the younger man of the two, something which, without either effort or intention, in the earlier days of their friendship, acquired and long maintained an high ascendant over the mind of Paley. Of the other able and intimate companions of his youth, some were gone before, and the rest did not long survive him: so that the memory of Paley might, in the course of a few years, have been preserved only in his works, had not the diligence and zeal of his present biographer exerted themselves, before it was too late, to collect many scattered anecdotes which, with their present depositaries, would quickly have been no more, and out of these, assisted by his own recollections, to embody such a resemblance, as his skill would permit, of this extraordinary man.

To Mr. Meadley, therefore, we feel and acknowledge some obligation; for, though we could antécédently have wished the task in other hands, yet before he seized it the undertaking appeared to have become a derelict, and it is no longer matter of censure, or even of surprize, that he undertook it; for it ought to be a rule of criticism, as it is of law, in every case to accept the best evidence which can be procured.

To this second edition of the work before us, (which, on account of the 'enlargement' it has received, gives us an opportunity of completing the sketch which we laid before the reader in a former No.\*) we have, as a whole, no very material objections: the style is not exceptionable; the facts and dates are accurate; the writer's apprehension of the character which he has undertaken to delineate, though somewhat faint, is usually right: while, with a becoming interest in the subject, his admiration is never excessive, his panegyric never disgusting. With all these merits, this *Life of Paley* as a man of genius and originality not surpassed in our days, has one radical deficiency, which the writer could not help—an absence of those magic touches of art which constitute the difference between a dead and living resemblance, between the tame though faithful strokes of a moderate artist and the magic touches of a Reynolds, which are able to draw intellect and passion out of canvass, and appear almost to reanimate the dead. The political party, indeed, to which this writer belongs, have never been celebrated for such powers: the faculty, however, of distorting and misrepresenting, of seeing every object through their own coloured medium, of depreciating the most generous acts and darkening the

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\* No. III, Art. IV.

brightest characters, they have abundantly imparted to their pupil Mr. Meadley. But more of this hereafter.

William Paley, though not actually born in the district of Yorkshire called Craven, was descended of Craven parents, and transplanted thither in his infancy. The inhabitants of this rugged and remote tract have, like other mountaineers, a character more strongly marked than their lowland neighbours, from which Paley derived an early tincture, which no intercourse with the world ever wore off, or produced an inclination to wear off. With clear and shrewd understandings, great humour and naiveté in their conversation, fondness for old stories, rusticity often affected, and a dialect which heightens and sets off every other peculiarity, that country has produced many archetypes of this extraordinary man, though none perhaps with equal powers of reasoning, or even invention.

In this congenial soil and climate, therefore, he appeared less original, less of a phenomenon than any where else. But here too the unworn asperities of his manner, by exciting the least surprise, gave the least offence, and here perhaps to the last day of his life he most willingly reposed, and found himself most at home. The highest advancement in the church would, in this respect, have had no effect upon him. He was, and ever would have been, what Lipsius called *Vespasian*,—*homo subrusticus et vere Sabinus*.

In his education every thing seemed prepared and disposed in order to demonstrate what some minds can do for themselves. From the school of his own obscure village, where little was taught, and that little far from well, he was sent to Cambridge to contend with the polished sons of Eton and Westminster, and the result was that he bore away one of the most honourable prizes from them all. Here two of the three years allotted to a severe course of academical study were loitered away by Paley in unconnected and desultory reading. A third year of severe application placed him above his competitors.

The Cambridge system of study is a *forcing* system, which, applying itself almost wholly to one subject, and being adapted to minds of a single cast, frequently debilitates the understanding through life, by the effort to produce a single fruitage. Paley was none of these sickly productions of toil and art: his powers once roused became spontaneously and abundantly prolific, and the native fertility of his mind, instead of being exhausted or impaired by a single push, appeared to be invigorated by severe exertion.

We are next to contemplate him as a teacher and a guide, as fellow and tutor of his college. Here he had the fortune to be associated with an admirable coadjutor, Mr. John Law, in concert with whom he planned and executed a laborious and comprehensive

sive system of institution, supported by a vigorous and spirited discipline. This deserves to be remembered as one of the last attempts in that, and perhaps either University, to sustain or to revive the ancient tone of authority, which was at once rough and affectionate, peremptory and parental. 'You do not treat me like a gentleman,' said a young man to one of these faithful reprovers, in the new spirit which was just beginning to appear, 'You do not treat me like a gentleman.' 'I never meant to do so,' was the answer, 'but as a boy under discipline.' We record this as a specimen of the true temper of an old tutor in an English university before the spirit of gentlemanship had eaten out both authority and attachment, which are now succeeded by an intercourse between the governors and the governed, the teachers and the taught, so perfectly elegant and well-bred, and at the same time so cool and mutually indifferent, that it might seem as if the only object in view was for the one party to maintain his popularity, and the other his independence. How far the Universities have given way to the general spirit of the times, or how far, by concession to youthful encroachment, they have contributed to the lamentable diffusion of that spirit through the kingdom, we shall not at present inquire. Thus much, however, is certain, that its effects have been equally pernicious in public and domestic life; and even in the Universities themselves what has been gained (or rather what has not been lost) by the exchange? The tutor was more loved when he was more feared, and the pupil, instead of the liberty which he claims, has, at the most dangerous period of life, become the slave of his own will and passions.

'Di majorum animis tenuem et sine pondere terram,  
Spirantesque rosas et in urnâ perpetuum ver,  
Qui præceptorem sancto voluere parentis  
Esse loco!'

The following anecdote, which reflects the highest honour on these two virtuous and independent young men, shall be told, after a short preface, in Mr. Meadley's words. About the time of a great contest for the High Stewardship of the University, which is in the recollection of many persons yet alive, the members of the Senate had ranged themselves under two noblemen of very opposite characters, though both of great abilities. The partizans very naturally resembled their respective patrons. The leaders of the former party shall be nameless; of the latter, we mention with honour that intrepid spirit the present Bishop of Landaff.

'When,' says our biographer, 'the hall of Christ's College, which had been promised through the interest of Dr. Shepherd, was fitting up for a benefit concert for Ximenes, a Spanish musician, warmly patronised by Lord Sandwich, Mr. Paley and Mr. Law peremptorily insisted that

that the promise should be recalled, unless satisfactory assurance was given that a lady then living with his lordship, and who had been openly distributing tickets, should not be permitted to attend. At first the senior tutor, who was in habits of intimacy with Lord Sandwich, (a very reputable connexion for a divine and an institutor of youth,) 'objected to the idea of excluding any lady from a public concert: but afterwards when they urged that standing in a public situation as the instructors of youth, it was their duty to discountenance every sort of immorality, and threatened to appeal to the Society in case of his refusal, the assurance was given, and the *arrangement* suffered to proceed.'

Be it remembered, that of these two champions of morality and decorum, the older was then no more than twenty-eight!

It was about the same time, and by means of the same early connexion, that Mr. Paley was introduced as chaplain into the family of Dr. Law, then newly appointed to the bishopric of Carlisle, who like other scholarlike men elevated to these high situations in the decline of life, wanted an active and skilful coadjutor. Neither party had reason to repent of this connexion. The chaplain lived in his patron's family as an equal; their confidence was reciprocal; his services merited all which a see richer in patronage than that of Carlisle could bestow, and they received from the limited resources which it did afford more than his disinterested and unambitious temper aspired to. Beside a series of parochial preferment of no great value, he became successively Prebendary of the Cathedral, and Archdeacon and Chancellor of the diocese.

We stop the progress of the narrative for a moment, in order to notice, before they are left too far behind, some particulars in the early character of Paley as a scholar and a writer. It is not a little diverting that the first known composition of a man who never afterwards discovered a glimpse of poetical taste or imagination, should have been *A Poem in the manner of Ossian*. Had we been assured that the first work of Mr. Gray had been a solution of some mathematical problem in the *Lady's Diary*, we should scarcely have been more astonished. His next performance, of which more than one copy appears to be extant, is his Prize dissertation, written when senior Bachelor of Arts, where, in a style somewhat uncouth and rugged but with great vigour of thought, and a promise of all his future excellence as a reasoner, he supports the cause of the Epicurean philosophy, disencumbered by him with great skill from the load of calumny with which it had been oppressed by its enemies, against the impracticable and unnatural dogmata of Zeno. Of this original performance Mr. Meadley has given a short specimen from the conclusion; to which we shall subjoin the exordium.

\* Cum e Græcia jamdudum cesserit philosophia atque serò admodum  
apud

apud nostros expetita lacertos tandem porrexisse videatur, utile profecto erit atque huic certè loco accommodatum, disjecta philosophorum monumenta respicere eorumque ita conferre utilitates, ut habeamus aliquando quo lare et nos tutemur et civitatem. Quæ quidem utilitatum comparatio et quasi contentio cum ipsa per se sit fructuosa et frugifera, tum maxime nostris eò studiis commendatur quod materiam hancce veteres integram omninò intactamque reliquere. Quamdiu enim viguit Athenis philosophia, quisque suæ sunt astricti disciplinæ, eamque ad augendam totos sese penitusque tradidere; inde propriis delectati studiis, aliena aut omninò contempsere aut parum studiose prosecuti sunt. Affectibus planè præpediti ad dogmata *diversarum* scholarum excutienda accessere, magistros interea suos superstitiose venerantes.

This composition, in the midst of the drudgery of a school, to which the talents of Paley had then been condemned, is said to have been the work of a fortnight; but the materials, of which there is a copious suppellex in the notes, must have been the result of long and previous research. Paley had not yet begun to disdain a parade of ancient authorities; but from this time, he employed himself much better in drawing from the stores of his own mind than in borrowing the best sense of antiquity on moral subjects, far inferior for the most part to his own.

‘In the pulpit,’ says his biographer of him, at the same period, ‘he was less admired, his early discourses being verbose and florid, a fault by no means rare in men of genius, before they have acquired a purer and more simple style.’ And again—‘It was probably his present experience which led him afterwards to remark, in reference to those who had two sermons to preach every week, that they had better steal one of them; for though a sermon occupied the preacher only about twenty minutes in the delivery, it took, or ought to take him, more than half a week in the composition. And yet few men could compose more rapidly than himself. He seems to have entertained a very low opinion of that kind of vapid declamation which imposes so much upon the multitude.’ And truly so does every man, even of ordinary taste or understanding. But, if Mr. Meadley wishes it to be understood that the earlier discourses of Paley partook of that ‘vapid declamation’ which his better taste condemned, we must be allowed to differ from him. Several of these discourses are known to be extant; and more perhaps are remembered as delivered from the pulpit. They were indeed declamatory: they certainly wanted the closeness and cogency of his later compositions; but they were neither verbose, nor florid, nor vapid: they were the forcible and animated effusions of a young orator, who by a due severity to his own luxuries was shortly to attain to excellence.

It is only minds of great elasticity and vigor, conscious of their

ability to enlighten mankind, and aware of the responsibility attached to great talents, which, after having quitted the great scenes of learning, continue to pursue their studies for the purpose of systematic instruction in the country—Paley was one of these: wherever settled or however employed, it was impossible for him not to observe or reflect; with such internal resources he wanted no library; and, with him, to compose was as easy as to converse. The series of works which a retirement of about twenty years produced is happily well known to the public; with them we have no immediate concern, and Mr. Meadley might have spared himself the trouble of analyzing their contents: but some invidious remarks on those splendid rewards which his author merited for his services in the cause of religion, and the spirit of rancour displayed by him towards the memory of Mr. Pitt, whose disposition towards Dr. Paley he has either misrepresented, or not understood, call for correction and reprehension—And first, with respect to his refusal of the mastership of Jesus College—‘The whole of his motives for this refusal have never yet been clearly ascertained; nor perhaps were they fully communicated even to his most intimate friends’ (here we agree with the biographer)—‘to one gentleman indeed, he stated a conviction that he should be scarcely able to remain a single month in office’ (meaning probably the vice-chancellorship, which would have followed the other) ‘without quarrelling with Mr. Pitt—Mr. Paley, who was no timeserver, seems to have been unwilling to place himself in a situation in which unworthy compliances might be either expected or required.’—This is a foul libel on the dead and the living—on the minister and on the heads of houses—the first as an haughty tyrant; the second as a set of unprincipled and self-interested slaves. It is neither a duty incumbent on ministers nor men to heap rewards on those who thwart and oppose their measures; but independence and hostility are not convertible terms, and in that station we undertake to say, that a man like Paley, with all his independence of spirit, would have held no such course, as to debar him from preferment. Besides, the surmise is negatived by facts; as it is well known that, about the same time, a man of far less merit, and by principle as well as connexion actively hostile to the court, was promoted by the crown to the mastership of another college, with an express reservation of his party and his principles: and the biographers might have known, that when Paley’s first and best friend heard of the refusal, his observation was, that he had ‘missed a mitre.’

Dull and shallow men are not always fit to be trusted with the loose talk of their betters; and these words, if ever uttered at all, were probably spoken in that careless and jocular manner so peculiar

liar to the speaker, and which was sometimes turned to his disadvantage.

Again—'It had long been a reproach to the chief dispensers of ecclesiastical patronage, though certainly with some honourable exceptions, that so comparatively small a portion of preferment in a very opulent establishment had been bestowed on so deserving a divine. The ministers of the crown had neglected the instructive moralist, and the bench of bishops seemed almost equally inattentive to the theologian who had supplied so new and satisfactory a demonstration of the authenticity of the Epistles of St. Paul. After the publication of the Evidences of Christianity, however, any farther forbearance on the part of the great episcopal patrons was scarcely possible. Whatever subordinate difference of opinion might be supposed to distinguish the creed of Dr. Paley from that of some of his more dignified brethren, his merit as a defender of the Christian Revelation was indisputable and too prominent to be neglected at *so critical a time*.'

That exalted order are too much accustomed to obloquy to suffer themselves to be scared into acts of bounty; they are not, and they ought not to be, the slaves of popular opinion: but differing as they all did, from some subordinate tenets which Dr. Paley was known or suspected to hold, they maintained a dignified reserve towards him till his general services to the cause of Revelation had overborne every subordinate scruple, and awed even bigotry into silence. Four of the most illustrious prelates of the English church, to one alone of whom perhaps he was personally known, then spontaneously interposed to gild the later days of such a man with the sunshine of their favour, and to enable him to close an active and useful life in ease and opulence.

And this is the reward to which Mr. Meadley thinks the benefactors of his friend entitled! their bounty, as he would have it believed, was drawn forth by a feeling of self-reproach and a consciousness of having neglected transcendent merit: the time was critical, and any farther inattention to the merits of Paley might have endangered the establishment.—It were better even that a man like Paley were neglected, than that 'the chief dispensers of ecclesiastical patronage' should once give way to such a spirit; let the principle of concession to popular opinion but be carried a little farther, and their studies would be filled with libels in the shape of petitions; their houses would be surrounded by mobs clamouring for factious declaimers, and they would be no longer masters of their patronage or themselves. If judgment in selecting be the first qualification of a great patron, fortitude in refusing is the second. Had Dr. Paley thought on these occasions with his biographer, he would have received the bounty of his patrons in sullen silence: nay perhaps have told them that he owed it not to them



them but to himself, or at least to the general sense of the nation on his behalf. On the contrary, his expressions of gratitude were public, affectionate and sincere.

These testimonies, however, flattering and valuable as they were, came late: but they contributed to sooth the painful decline of an useful life now drawing rapidly to its termination. That final scene Dr. Paley contemplated with cheerful anticipation, and endured with unaffected composure: the period of self-enjoyment on earth he felt was at an end, he had lived to accomplish a great and beneficial system of instruction for mankind, and he saw nothing in the prospect before him to dismay—nothing indeed which did not animate and cheer him under his temporary sufferings. Thus disposed and prepared, died this great and excellent man, May 25, 1805.

His mind was of a very original cast, and of that universal comprehension which is able to adapt itself to every subject. To a consummate knowledge of his own faculty together with its kindred sciences of morality and rational metaphysics, he added two accomplishments never perhaps united before, (certainly not with the third,) physiology and the law of England. It seemed indifferent to what profession he should originally have applied himself. He would have raised himself to the summit of any one. Yet, though indefatigably industrious, he was not a learned man. He disdained the pedantry of quotation, and never wasted on tedious research into antiquity those precious moments which were better occupied in original observation and reflection. Accordingly no English divine or philosopher has ever attained to the same or to any considerable degree of eminence with so small a portion of what may be called erudition. In this respect he most resembled his master, Locke. His classical learning was that of a school-boy just discharged from a country seminary: of the oriental languages he appears to have known nothing. His citations from the Fathers were made to his hand, but it has never been discovered that in applying and reasoning upon them he mistook their meaning. His biographer admits perhaps too readily and too universally that he had no taste—for poetry indeed he had none. Imagination was not his province, and argument and induction he well knew could best be managed in prose. For the supposed inelegance of his style we are not disposed to admit the apologies of his injudicious friends. The imputation ought to have been denied. It was not inelegant. Traces indeed of his provincial dialect may now and then be detected when he did not intend it; but he frequently used a strong and coarse expression purposely and for the sake of impression. In fact his style was formed on the manner of Johnson, with many of his hard words, but with sentences less involved.

Perspicuity

Perspicuity and force were its leading characters. Perhaps he was the clearest writer in the English language. His luminous conceptions were never encumbered by verbosity, never clouded by ill-chosen and unexpressive phrases. In the construction of periods his ear was good; he sometimes rose with his subject into great majesty of expression, though his ordinary tone was easy and graceful familiarity. With these excellencies it stirs our indignation to hear such apologies as this, in the mawkish and sickening language which the condescending and benevolent apologist, as we suppose, mistook for that elegance denied to Paley.

‘To those, indeed, who love the exuberance of native character, there is in the writings of Paley, as connected with his personal naïveté, every thing to interest and to gratify. And for those, if such there be, who desiderate in him a higher temperament of sensibility or a finer delicacy of expression, let them learn to take substantial excellence wherever they are happy enough to find it, though it be not quite rectified up to their own exquisite standard of taste.’

With so much originality in himself, it is remarkable that in the first conception of his works Paley was not strictly original; nor were even the materials laid in by himself. There are some writers of great but disorderly understandings, unable to arrange, to amplify, or to illustrate their own conceptions. Such was Abraham Tucker, the heavy and desultory author of a book, the principles of which, whether true or false, by his own singular powers of style and illustration, Paley has wrought up into his masterly and inimitable work on Moral and Political Philosophy. The hint of the *Horæ Paulinæ*, perhaps the most cogent and convincing specimen of moral argumentation in the world, was, we believe, first suggested by Doddridge; the *Evidences of Christianity* are professedly a compilation, but so condensed and compacted, so illuminated and enforced, that it is impossible not to admire the matchless powers of the compiler's genius in turning the patient drudgery of Lardner to such account.—Let not, however, these humble labourers in the cause of literature be despised; every man has his gift, and if the hands destined to carve the enrichments of a temple or to adjust its symmetries, had been previously condemned to dig the marble from the quarry, the Parthenon and the Pantheon would probably never have existed. The same character belongs to his last and perhaps his most elaborate work, the *Natural Theology*. Here too Paley had his pioneers, as well as his forerunners; but his inimitable skill in arranging and condensing his matter, his peculiar turn for what may be termed ‘animal mechanics,’ the aptness and the wit of his illustrations, and occasionally the warmth and the solemnity of his devotion, which, by an happy and becoming process, became more animated as he

drew nearer to the close of life, stamp on this work a character more valuable than originality itself.

In common life Dr. Paley was probably the most acute observer since Swift, but without a tincture of his malevolence. He was constitutionally and incurably cheerful; for pain itself, of which in his later years he was exercised with an abundant portion, could not shake his persuasion of the truth of his own maxim, that 'the present is an happy life.' He delighted in conversation, but in conversation without effort and without display. No man better knew how to expose what is called fine talking, or to laugh out of countenance a kind of semi-nonsense which shallow understandings, gorged with more knowledge than they can digest, are very apt to produce. If he suspected that a plan was laid to exhibit him, he delighted to disappoint it. Though accustomed from his early years to converse much with his superiors of the highest rank in the church, he never thought it worth while to dissemble or to controul his native humour any more than to correct his native dialect in their presence. Though modest and unambitious, he was perfectly independent. He had no art of rising but that of deserving to rise. All his preferments came unsought. He was 'an economist upon principle,' and could therefore always afford to live without asking. The foundations of his great work on morality were laid in the rectitude of his own heart, as well as the clearness of his own head; for besides the most penetrating intuition into cases of conscience, his moral sense was in the highest degree lively and apprehensive.

'Compositum jus fasque animo sanctosque recessus  
Mentis et incoctum generoso pectus honesto.'

This last feeling, never bestowed on ordinary men, sometimes occasioned a certain degree of irritation from which minds and tempers of a coarser texture are exempt, and sometimes exposed him to the imputation of heat and violence, particularly in his opposition to the encroachments of a well known peer, and in his occasional rebukes of petty knavery or even stupidity which exercised him as a magistrate.

It is somewhat amusing to observe the embarrassment of modern reformers, and of Mr. Meadley among the rest, in their anxiety to press the name of Paley into their service. Too sagacious not to discover with them the manifold imperfections which adhere to every mode of human society, and too frank and open not to declare them, he had withall a faculty, which they do not possess, that of counting the cost of change. It was not a view to his own interests, but to those of his country, which taught him caution. He was never *practically* theirs; and at the tremendous crisis of the

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the French revolution, his powerful and popular pen was employed in persuading his countrymen, then on the point of a similar explosion, to understand and value the blessings which they already enjoyed.

Still a cloud of suspicion long hung over him, and the prejudices of a great ecclesiastic in particular, are supposed to have obstructed his advancement; but it appears to be unknown to the biographer, (for we do not believe the fact to be injuriously concealed,) that at a later period Dr. Paley was actually proposed for an high station in the church by that great minister who, in this work, has been treated with so much injustice; and that the disappointment proceeded from an higher quarter than before. Homely truths about rulers, uttered in blunt and uncourtly language, are not always, we believe, the first recommendations to high preferment: the peculiarities also of a man of genius render him less *productive*, and the jealousy entertained of overbearing talents, when they have taken a political direction, leaves the way more open to those against whom nothing can be objected, than those for whom much may be urged.

Thus unrewarded by public patronage was the most useful writer of his age. 'Useful,' indeed, in the highest sense is the epithet to be annexed to the name of Paley: for such was his happiness in the choice of subjects, so carefully did he avoid all matters of doubtful disputation, that, with very few exceptions, his works may be read with equal gratification by Christians of all denominations, and with equal advantage by unbelievers of every description.

As a philosopher and a friend (we mean not to exalt his character by the comparison) he had many points of resemblance to Socrates: for, setting aside his physiological knowledge, which the Grecian sage contemned, and the unspeakable advantages of Revelation, of which, in its lowest degree, we can scarcely persuade ourselves that *he* partook; ironical humour, a disposition to instruct by asking questions, a fondness for colloquial pleasures in preference to those of taste, and a keen intuition into common life, equally characterised the English and the Attic moralist. The philosophy of both was common sense, and their study human nature.

In point of utility, however, as living teachers, their spheres of influence were not to be named together;—for who was benefited by the one?—Crito, Simmias, Cebes, and a few other virtuous and sensible men with whom their master's wisdom and his lessons stopped. The mass of the people at least received neither warning nor information. How different from the character of the man who instructed the future instructors of an whole people, and those too both numerous and in succession! Nor, when they are considered as deceased teachers of mankind, can the charms in which the

delightful language of Plato or Xenophon has invested the discourses of Socrates ever conceal the absence of that perfection of good sense, that irresistible cogency of reason, which belongs to the best moderns, and among *them* superlatively to Paley. In one word, whatever may be thought of this comparison by the idolaters of antiquity, and how coldly soever it may be received by strangers or by rivals, the members of his own university, and more especially his surviving friends, will see nothing in it to which their own bosoms do not reverberate—nothing which they will not recognize as a faithful memorial—*ανδρος, ὡς ἡμεῖς φαιμεν αν, των τοις αν επειραδημεν αριστι και αλλως φρονιμιωτατε και δικαιοτατε.*

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ART. IX. *Tracts on Mathematical and Philosophical Subjects; comprising, among numerous important Articles, the Theory of Bridges, with several Plans of recent Improvement. Also, the Result of numerous Experiments on the Force of Gunpowder, with Applications to the modern Practice of Artillery.* By Charles Hutton, LL. D. and F. R. S. &c. late Professor of Mathematics in the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich. 3 vols. 8vo. pp. xii. 1254. Lond. Rivingtons, &c. 1812.

**D**R. Hutton has been long known to the public as a most active and useful writer on mathematical and philosophical topics. He now comes forward at the advanced age of 75, and, by the revision of what he considers as the most valuable of his original pieces, and the addition of some new ones, has formed the present collection, which he seems to regard (though in this we sincerely hope he will be mistaken) as his last legacy to the public.

‘It is,’ he says, with his characteristic simplicity, ‘in all probability, the last original work that I may ever be able to offer to the notice of the public, and I am, therefore, the more anxious that it should be found worthy of their acceptance and regard. To their kind indulgence, indeed, is due whatever success I may have experienced, both as an author and teacher, for more than half a century: and it is no small satisfaction to reflect, that my humble endeavours, during that period, have not been wholly unsuccessful in the diffusion of useful knowledge.

‘To the same liberal encouragement of the public must likewise be ascribed, in a great measure, the means of the comfortable retirement which I now enjoy, towards the close of a long and laborious life; and for which I have every reason to be truly thankful.’

The tracts before us relate to a great variety of subjects. Some of them have already appeared in the *Philosophical Transactions*, or in detached works, but are now greatly modified and improved: and the volumes contain so much that is valuable, and indeed so much