

She recovered a little from her first fit of sickness, but soon relapsed: about five weeks ago the disorder returned, which ended in Death. She still retained the same unshaken confidence as before; the Lord often visited her with tokens of his Love and Favour which enabled her to bear all afflictions without a murmuring or complaining thought; particularly in the night season she was favoured with such comfortable and reviving views of the love of Christ and her own acceptance with God, thro' him, as made her long to be dissolved and to be with him in the Paradise above. While Mr. Rhodes was administering the Lord's Supper to her, she was so overpowered with a sense of the Lord's presence, that she felt no pain of body, and it seemed as if she was in Heaven. Her leader asked, the night before she died, whether she was afraid of Death? She answered, "No, no. If the Lord will be with me in that hour, as he has been with me hitherto, I shall be more than conqueror." In the night she was exceeding happy, and desired those who were present to read several hymns, with which she was much delighted. For about an hour before her departure she lay in sweet silence, and then quietly gave up her spirit into the Hands of her gracious Redeemer, Sept. 15, 1795, in the 45th year of her age. C. HOPPER.

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On the Authority for believing the Bible to be the Word of God:

Extracted from the first Letter of the Bishop of Landaff, to Thomas Paine.

**T**HE first question you propose for consideration is— "Whether there is sufficient authority for believing the Bible to be the Word of God, or whether there is not?"—You determine this question in the negative, upon what you are pleased to call moral evidence. You hold it impossible that the Bible can be the Word of God, because it is therein said, that the Israelites destroyed the Canaanites by the express command of God: and to believe the Bible to be true, we must, you affirm, unbelieve all our belief of the moral justice of God; for wherein, you ask, could crying or smiling infants offend?—I am astonished that so acute a reasoner should attempt to disparage the Bible, by bringing forward this exploded and frequently refuted objection of Morgan, Tindal, and Bolingbroke. You profess yourself to be a deist, and to believe that there is a God, who created the universe, and established the laws of nature, by which it is sustained in existence. You profess that from the contemplation of the works of God, you derive a knowledge of his attributes; and you reject the Bible, because it ascribes to God things inconsistent (as you suppose) with the attributes which you have discovered to belong to him; in particular, you think it repugnant to his moral justice, that he should doom to destruction

the crying or smiling infants of the Canaanites.—Why do you not maintain it to be repugnant to his moral justice, that he should suffer crying or smiling infants to be swallowed up by an earthquake, drowned by an inundation, consumed by a fire, starved by a famine, or destroyed by a pestilence? The word of God is in perfect harmony with his work; crying or smiling infants are subjected to death in both. We believe that the earth, at the express command of God, opened her mouth, and swallowed up Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, with their wives, their sons, and their little ones. This you esteem so repugnant to God's moral justice, that you spurn, as spurious, the book in which the circumstance is related. When Catania, Lima, and Lisbon, were severally destroyed by earthquakes, men with their wives, their sons, and their little ones, were swallowed up alive:—why do you not spurn, as spurious, the book of nature, in which this fact is certainly written, and from the perusal of which you infer the moral justice of God? You will, probably, reply, that the evils which the Canaanites suffered from the express command of God, were different from those which are brought on mankind by the operation of the laws of nature.—Different! in what?—Not in the magnitude of the evil—not in the subjects of sufferance—not in the author of it—for my philosophy, at least, instructs me to believe, that God not only primarily formed, but that he had through all ages executed, the laws of nature; and that he will through all eternity administer them, for the general happiness of his creatures, whether we can, on every occasion, discern that end or not.

I am far from being guilty of the impiety of questioning the existence of the moral justice of God, as proved either by natural or revealed religion; what I contend for is shortly this—that you have no right, in fairness of reasoning, to urge any apparent deviation from moral justice as an argument against revealed religion, because you do not urge an equally apparent deviation from it, as an argument against natural religion: you reject the former, and admit the latter, without considering that, as to your objection, they must stand or fall together.

As to the Canaanites, it is needless to enter into any proof of the depraved state of their morals: they were a wicked people in the time of Abraham, and they, even then, were devoted to destruction by God; but their iniquity was not then full. In the time of Moses, they were idolaters, sacrificers of their own crying or smiling infants; devourers of human flesh; addicted to unnatural lust; immersed in the filthiness of all manner of way. Now, I think, it will be impossible to prove, that it was a proceeding contrary to God's moral justice, to exterminate so wicked a people. He made the Israelites the executors of his vengeance; and, in doing this, he gave such an evident and terrible proof of his abomination of vice, as could not fail to strike the surrounding nations with astonishment and terror, and to impress on the

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minds of the Israelites what they were to expect, if they followed the example of the nations whom he commanded them to cut off: "Ye shall not commit any of these abominations---that the land spue not you out also, as it spued out the nations that were before you." How strong and descriptive this language! the vices of the inhabitants were so abominable, that the very land was sick of them, and forced to vomit them forth, as the stomach disgorges a deadly poison.

I have often wondered what could be the reason that men, not destitute of talents, should be desirous of undermining the authority of revealed religion, and studious in exposing, with a malignant and illiberal exultation, every little difficulty attending the scriptures, to popular animadversion and contempt. I am not willing to attribute this strange propensity to what Plato attributed the atheism of his time---to profligacy of manners---to affectation of singularity---to gross ignorance, assuming the semblance of deep research and superior sagacity;---I had rather refer it to an impropriety of judgment, respecting the manners, and mental acquirements, of human kind in the first ages of the world. Most unbelievers argue as if the thought that man, in remote and rude antiquity, in the very birth and infancy of our species, had the same distinct conceptions of one, eternal, indivisible, incorporeal, infinitely wise, powerful, and good God; which they themselves have now. This I look upon as a great mistake, and a pregnant source of infidelity. Human kind, by long experience; by the institutions of civil society; by the cultivation of arts and sciences; by, as I believe, divine instruction actually given to some, and traditionally communicated to all; is in a far more distinguished situation, as to the powers of the mind, than it was in the childhood of the world. The history of man is the history of the providence of God; who, willing the supreme felicity of all his creatures, has adapted his government to the capacity of those, who in different ages were the subjects of it. The history of any one nation throughout all ages, and that of all nations in the same age, are but separate parts of one great plan, which God is carrying on for the moral melioration of mankind. But who can comprehend the whole of this immense design? The shortness of life, the weakness of our faculties, the inadequacy of our means of information, conspire to make it impossible for us, worms of the earth! insects of an hour! completely to understand any of its parts. No man, who well weighs the subject, ought to be surpris'd, that in the histories of ancient times many things should occur foreign to our manners, the propriety and necessity of which we cannot clearly apprehend.

It appears incredible to many, that God Almighty should have had colloquial intercourse with our first parents; that he should have contracted a kind of friendship for the patriarchs, and entered into covenants with them; that he should have suspended

the laws of nature in Egypt; should have been so apparently partial as to become the God and governor of one particular nation; and should have so far demeaned himself as to give to that people a burdensome ritual of worship, statutes and ordinances, many of which seem to be beneath the dignity of his attention, unimportant and impolitic. I have conversed with many deists, and have always found that the strangeness of these things was the only reason for their disbelief of them: nothing similar has happened in their time; they will not, therefore, admit, that these events have really taken place at any time. As well might a child, when arrived at a state of manhood, contend that he had never either stood in need of or experienced the fostering care of a mother's kindness, the wearisome attention of his nurse, or the instruction and discipline of his schoolmaster. The Supreme Being selected one family from an idolatrous world; nursed it up, by various acts of his providence, into a great nation; communicated to that nation a knowledge of his holiness, justice, mercy, power, and wisdom; diffeminated them, at various times through every part of the earth, that they might be a "leaven to leaven the whole lump," that they might assure all other nations of the existence of one supreme God, the creator and preserver of the world, the only proper object of adoration. With what reason can we expect, that what was done to one nation, not out of any partiality to them, but for the general good, should be done to all? that the mode of instruction, which was suited to the infancy of the world, should be extended to the maturity of its manhood, or to the imbecility of its old age? I own to you, that when I consider how nearly man, in a savage state, approaches to the brute creation, as to intellectual excellence; and when I contemplate his miserable attainments, as to the knowledge of God, in a civilized state, when he has had no divine instruction on the subject, or when that instruction has been forgotten, (for all men have known something of God from tradition,) I cannot but admire the wisdom and goodness of the Supreme Being, in having let himself down to our apprehensions; in having given to mankind, in the earliest ages, sensible and extraordinary proofs of his existence and attributes; in having made the Jewish and Christian dispensations mediums to convey to all men, through all ages, that knowledge concerning himself, which he had vouchsafed to give immediately to the first. I own it is strange, very strange, that he should have made an immediate manifestation of himself in the first ages of the world; but what is there that is not strange? It is strange that you and I are here---that there is water, and earth, and air, and fire---that there is a sun, and moon, and stars---that there is generation, corruption, reproduction. I can account ultimately for none of these things, without recurring to Him who made every thing. I also am his workmanship, and look up to him with hope of preservation through all eternity; I adore him for  
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his word as well as for his work: his work I cannot comprehend, but his word hath assured me of all that I am concerned to know---that he hath prepared everlasting happiness for those who love and obey him. This you will call preachment:---I will have done with it; but the subject is so vast, and the plan of providence, in my opinion, so obviously wise and good, that I can never think of it without having my mind filled with piety, admiration, and gratitude."

AN ACCOUNT OF Mr. WILLIAM PRICE.

**W**ILLIAM PRICE was born near Eniskillen in Ireland. At an early period, he commenced a soldier in the Eniskillen Dragoons. He stood two Flanders wars, ten campaigns, and twelve general engagements, without receiving the slightest wound. At his first going to Flanders, seeing himself exposed to danger on all hands, and not knowing the moment he might fall a victim to the horrors of war, he endeavoured to prepare for Eternity: But being ignorant of the way of attaining justification by faith in Christ, he set about establishing his own righteousness, as the foundation of acceptance with GOD. And now he thought all was well, because he forsook bad company, said his prayers, went to Church and Sacrament, and bore a good character among men. But that GOD, who "weigheth the spirits, and searcheth the hearts of the sons of men," saw the sincerity of his desires, and while he continued walking in the light of his inferior dispensation, provided means for bringing him out of all darkness into his marvellous light.

The first converted man that Mr. Price remembers to have conversed with, was Mr. JOHN HAIME, who at that time was publishing salvation thro' faith in Jesus, in the British camp. As Mr. HAIME was a strict attendant on the church, and sacrament; Mr. PRICE took particular notice of his serious deportment, which led to an intimate acquaintance with each other. Mr. HAIME urged the necessity of experiencing a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness: but Mr. PRICE did not readily understand this doctrine at first. However, that he might be entirely freed from his former ungodly companions, and improve an acquaintance with a few pious soldiers, who frequently met for the purpose of worshipping GOD, and taking sweet counsel together, of things pertaining to the kingdom of heaven, Mr. PRICE gladly cast in his lot among them. After some time, the rod of affliction was laid upon him, which brought him to the margin of the grave. And now the fears of death and judgment overwhelmed him, his sins stared him in the face, his righteousness failed and his hopes of heaven vanished away. In this situation the constant cry of his guilty soul was,—"Mercy! Mercy! Mercy!" In the midst of his distress, it sounded through his mind, "that Christ