

MR. IRVING'S CHURCH AND THE RECORD NEWSPAPER.

THE author of an excellent pamphlet entitled "A Word for Inquiry previous to Decision on the present Manifestations of... Spiritual Gifts," has pointed out the licentiousness of the periodicals on this subject; and we propose to offer some considerations in support of his position, and especially with reference to the Record newspaper. Six months ago we thought it right to praise some of the political articles in the Record; protesting at the same time against its misrepresentations of doctrine and its ignorance of theology, and suggesting that Christian politics, and not theology, was the proper province of a newspaper. Our protest has been disregarded, and our suggestion rejected with disdain, by the Record, and it has gone on publishing misrepresentations of fact and of doctrine even more glaring than those formerly exposed in our pages; and we therefore hold ourselves bound to redeem our pledge, by pointing out a few of its recent theological blunders and perversions.

The power of the daily press is very great in England: but its power to do good is small, in comparison with its power for evil. It can rouse and madden bad passions, but it cannot lead or calm them. It is exactly what Mr. O'Connell said of the power of the priests in Ireland,—it could excite to rebellion, but it could neither stop nor direct it. This power is chiefly derived from its anonymous character; and would be nearly at an end if the persons who write the leading articles were compelled to affix their names to their productions. If it were known to all the world, as it is notorious to many, that a retired linen-draper is the principal writer in one; that a lawyer and an unbeneficed Scotch minister are hired at a fixed salary to write for another, and on any subject take just whatever side the proprietors order them to take, as most conducive to the sale of the paper; that a clerk in a public office writes a third, &c. &c.; the power of misleading the public would be much diminished. Still, however, the mere reiteration, day after day, of the same line of sentiments, does produce considerable effect, even over those who are most on their guard against it. Meretricious and tricky politicians have constantly been tempted to avail themselves of this arm for the furtherance of their views, and as constantly have such means been avoided and condemned by true statesmen. It was one of the greatest blots in the character of Mr. Canning, that, having been seduced in his youth, by his wit and talent for poetry, to become a principal contributor to the Anti-jacobin newspaper, he could not divest himself of the same propensity when he became a minister of the Crown: it is a stain on the public reputation of Lord Brougham to be suspected of a similar device. If such

proceedings be discreditable to worldly men who aim at any distinction amongst their equals, it is needless to say that similar conduct is wholly inconsistent with genuine religion, however consonant it may be with the emptiness, the tinkling brass, of modern profession.

Now, whenever a newspaper chooses to run down a private individual, its power of defamation is for a short time irresistible. It is only last year that the *Times* chose to run down Mr. Bingham Baring. Every charge adduced was known, to all who were conversant with the transaction, to be false: every averment rebutted in the most complete and satisfactory manner: still, having been joined by Cobbett, there is just apprehension for his personal safety. There never was a time in the history of the world, until these days, when similar practices could be pursued with similar results under the mask of religion. We have now a company of men calling themselves religious, and following exactly the same practices in religion which the *Times* and other papers do in politics. Mr. O'Connell understood the nature of newspapers perfectly well, when, at a meeting of the Anti-Slavery Society, in answer to some one who complained that the daily press was against them, said, "But, gentlemen, all newspapers are a commercial speculation: the same means which induce them to take one side can always induce them to take the other." At times of popular excitement, however, they must always take the side which the mob take, or be silent: a paper would quickly be ruined which ventured to resist the torrent. The *New Monthly Magazine*, which understands them well, betrays, in its laboured panegyric, the absolute necessity of all newspapers falling in with the delirium of the time, in whatever it may happen to consist. "The press," it says, "have no interest counter to the interest of the people.....WITH the people has been their interest....with the people has been their battle," &c. &c.—that is, they sell their papers by always agreeing with whatever whim takes the mob. There is equal madness in religion as in politics. Truth and sense are necessarily confined to a few. Burke once said to John Wilks, "Sir, I have the sense of the House with me."—"Yes," replied Wilks; "and I have the nonsense of the House with me, and therefore I shall out-vote you."

As Mr. Irving is the ablest theologian of the present day, the most powerful preacher and most profound writer, of course he must have few to appreciate him; and, moreover, as he has shewn a readiness to sacrifice all systems, partialities, and inventions of men, in order to follow what he sincerely deems to be the teaching of the Lord, men who either love those systems better than the truth, or conceive that all needful truth is embodied in them, hate him, as they did his Master before him, in whose

footsteps he walks. All the newspapers, indeed, have attacked him; and, as if to furnish superabundance of proof of their incompetence to examine dispassionately the question of the permanence of miraculous power in the church of Christ, they have all assailed the facts of the present manifestations, as if they were one and the same with the abstract doctrine itself.

The editor of the Record pronounced at first, that the persons who are alleged to be speaking by the power of the Spirit of God must be deceived, because it was prohibited, in 1 Cor. xiv., for women to teach in the church. Finding, however, afterwards, that there were other texts in Scripture besides that—as, for example, 1 Cor. ix. 4—he recanted this opinion in a subsequent number, and in evincing his candour shewed so far nothing worse than ignorance. The point is so clear and decided that there is no doubt or question upon the matter, amongst those who know any thing of the proceedings of the primitive church. It is not, therefore, one that could admit of a moment's deliberation, in any one who was even superficially acquainted with the subject. It is very right for a person to meditate and reflect upon every thing which he hears for the first time, and not decide upon it until he has done so; but the fact of his saying that he is deliberating, is proof that the subject is new to him; and the first decision of the editor of the Record being contrary to, and in the teeth of, the opinion of all well-instructed persons in ecclesiastical history, shews also the unsoundness of the view which *prima facie* suggested itself to his mind, and the leaning of his inclination to condemn first, and then to seek for a justification of his sentence of condemnation. But, nothing abashed at being detected to have dogmatized upon a subject upon which his own recantation proved that he could have bestowed only the most superficial attention, he comes out on the 21st of November with the following paragraph in a long leading article:—

‘ We can do little more at present than express our *deliberate conviction* that the appearances which have had their centre and home in Mr. Irving's church in Regent Square, are delusive and visionary. Breaking out in Scotland in support of the evil figment of *universal pardon*, they now exert themselves in Regent-square church as an adornment of that far deeper heresy which has issued from that sanctuary, which declares the *sinfulness* of the flesh of Christ. We may thus in the first place form a clear and most decided judgment of the pretensions, by the character of the *doctrines* which they are intended to support.’

That such is the editor's *conviction* there is no reason to doubt; but we may well question the assertion, that he *deliberated* upon the matter, since it has been shewn that he was obliged to revoke a former *deliberate conviction* pronounced with equal positiveness

a very few days before. Some ingenuity was required to put so many mistatements upon so many subjects into so few lines : it is not true that *the appearances* which broke out in Scotland were to support the evil figment of universal pardon : it is not true that Mr. Campbell, or any other minister in Scotland, has preached *universal pardon* : it is not true that *the appearances* in London had at their *breaking out* any connection with Mr. Irving's church : it is not true that they have ever been adduced, by any human being, in support of any doctrines whatever : it is not true that Mr. Irving has preached the *sinfulness* of the flesh of Christ. The first person who ever spoke in an unknown tongue and prophesied by the Holy Spirit, was Mr. James Macdonald : he was not a member of Mr. Campbell's church, nor did he live in the same county with him : Mr. Macdonald lives in Port-Glasgow, and Mr. Campbell's parish of Row is six miles distant, and on the opposite side of the Frith of Clyde. Mr. Macdonald was a member of, and in full communion with, the church of Dr. Barr, under whose ministry he continued for many months to sit, rather than incur the charge of schism, although Dr. Barr, during that whole time, made use of the sanctity and protection of his pulpit to attack Mr. Macdonald in the grossest and most personal manner, so as to direct the eyes of the whole congregation Sunday after Sunday towards him. The first time that Mr. Macdonald ever considered the subject of the permanence of the miraculous power of the Holy Ghost being to be manifested in the church, was after that doctrine had been opened up by Mr. A. Scott, then a missionary from Mr. Irving's church in London, in a sermon which he preached upon the passage, "In whom (Christ) also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession," &c.—With respect to the term *universal pardon*, as imputed to Mr. Campbell, we know not how to avoid the conclusion that its use is a dishonourable subterfuge to avoid stating the real question at issue between the Antinomian Calvinists, who think lying and every other sin are covered by believing certain abstract propositions about justification by faith and final perseverance, and between those Christians whom God has enlightened to see that their scheme is an invention of Satan. The editor of the Record knows, or ought to have known, that the real question at issue is, "Did Christ die for all the world, or for only a few?" He must know that the clergy of the Church of England are bound to hold the former—are bound to teach each child to profess "I believe in God the Son, who hath redeemed me and all mankind;" though he himself, and all the Scotchmen in London who vilify Mr. Campbell, hold the latter.—The next mistatement is that wherein he declares that Mr. Irving teaches the

sinfulness of the flesh of Christ. Over and over again it has been repeated that Mr. Irving has never used such an expression as the *sinfulness* of Christ's flesh; that, on the contrary, he has asserted over and over again the *sinlessness* of Christ's body, soul, and spirit, in far stronger terms than has ever been done by his opponents: but, no! nothing will do: Mr. Irving is to be written down by him, as Mr. Bingham Baring was to be by the Times, and the editor of the Record goes on reiterating the thousand times refuted statement. But still there is something more of honesty even in this than in the base insinuation that the persons who say they are speaking by the power of the Holy Ghost are impostors, who have lent themselves to Mr. Campbell and Mr. Irving to practise this most horrible cheat, in order to persuade men to receive certain doctrines of these ministers. We could scarcely believe in the existence of a mind so abandoned as to conceive such a crime, and then deliberately to charge it upon humble, meek, modest persons of various ranks, who have for many years continued in a course of undeviating and unblemished Christian deportment.

The next paragraph is as follows:—

'The opinion formed of them from this criterion is altogether confirmed by a view of the pretensions themselves. A miracle is a departure from the course of nature established by God, so simple and striking, as undeniably to prove that the Hand which established the course has now broken in upon it. The miracles of the Old and New Testament manifestly support and justify this definition. Even the unbelieving Jews (the most bigoted and obdurate of men) could not deny the miracles; while their hearts were hardened against the truths which the miracles proved to come from God. But here what have we? Some delicate and nervous *women* (not a man among them) restored to a measure of health by a strong exciting cause; and an assumption of speaking and writing an unknown tongue; while, on the one hand, any proof that it is a tongue is wholly wanting; and, on the other, equally extraordinary and extravagant appearances have been frequently manifested in cases which were undoubtedly the offspring of pure fanaticism: and the true church at large, instead of being forced to say, with the unbelieving Jews, "these men do many miracles," are satisfied that they see simply a spirit of delusion come forward in support of erroneous doctrine and most malignant heresy. The union indeed is perfectly natural and becoming. The sect do nothing comparable in strangeness to the wonders effected by the Egyptian magicians. We know whence they had their power. And yet we are called upon to believe that the present abortive and most pitiable attempts at miracle, truly discover the finger of God!"

It is extremely difficult to know what the editor here means. In the paragraph immediately preceding the first above transcribed he writes as follows:—

‘ So peculiarly awful is the condemnation of those who blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, that most men who are seriously alive to eternal things, shrink from the possibility of approach to the commission of so irremediable a crime; and multitudes, accordingly, seem afraid almost of forming an opinion which shall deny the assumption by any party, however visionary, of Divine inspiration. This, however, is not a temper of mind prescribed by Scripture; on the contrary, it is most unscriptural. The scriptural injunctions are, “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God.” “Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.” And when we come in humility of mind, and praying for light from the Eternal Spirit to illuminate our understandings in judging of the new and strange things which from time to time appear in the church, we may be assured, that, in the serious performance of this scriptural duty, we are as far removed as can well be imagined, from an offence, the commission of which we deprecate from our inmost soul. In malice let us be children; but in endeavouring to do our duty to the church of God, in understanding, let us be men.’

From this passage, in which the editor speaks of *Divine inspiration*, and of *not believing the spirits but trying the spirits*,” it was natural to conclude, that in the first extract which was given, and which immediately followed this, he alluded to the *gift of tongues*: first, because that is the only one of the manifestations which is taking place in Mr. Irving's church; secondly, because it was the point to which the complaint of Mr. Gordon, Mr. Finch, and Captain Harcourt, in the Reformation Society, referred, which elicited these remarks; and thirdly, because it was not easy to suppose that even the editor of the Record would make the expression “*Divine inspiration*” apply to miraculous healings, or the injunction to “*try the spirits*” have any application whatever but to persons speaking by a supernatural power. But, strange to say, it turns out that the *pretensions* alluded to are cases of miraculous healing! And here blunder upon blunder multiplies; for, of all the cures which have taken place, one only was of a member of Mr. Irving's church. Mrs. Maxwell is a Wesleyan Methodist; lives in Norfolk; and it is doubtful whether she ever saw Mr. Irving in her life. Elizabeth Gillow, who is just dead, was confined to her room many years; never was inside his church; and was cured before he was born. Miss Fancourt attended the Episcopal Jews' Chapel, of which her father was reader. Miss Hughes was a member of Mr. Owen's Chapel, at Chelsea. Miss Greenwood lived at Liverpool: and

the poor labourer's wife lives at Willian, in Bedfordshire, where Mr. Pym is rector: and neither of whom were ever within the door of Mr. Irving's church. Moreover, not one of them ever heard of the questions which the editor of the Record falsifies by the term *universal pardon*, and the *sinfulness of Christ's flesh*, or heard of Mr. Campbell's name. Thus it is PROVED—(it is particularly requested that the word may be noted) PROVED—that it does not rest upon our assertion on one side, and that of the editor of the Record on the other—that it is PROVED, that his assertion that the miraculous cures were got up in order to support any doctrine whatever, is a most perfect falsehood, without even a shadow of foundation which he can twist into an excuse and so escape by a plea of mistake. Miss Hall, a child who was cured, did sometimes attend Mr. Irving's ministry; and it was by his teaching her to pray to Jesus as the Saviour of the body as well as of the soul, that she was cured; and she left London shortly afterwards.

The next misstatement to be noticed in this article—there are others which are equally productive—is that contained in calling the persons who have been cured, and who are speaking in the Spirit, a "*sect*." It has been already shewn, that those who have been cured of divers diseases are scattered all over England, and are members of different churches, no two of them belonging to the same. It is, therefore, as absurd to call them a sect because they have been partakers of the same mercy, as it would be to say that the editor of the Record belongs to the same sect as Carlile and Taylor because the same course has been taken by them all in mocking and scorning at these manifestations. It is likewise as false to say that those who speak with tongues and prophesy compose one sect, as it is to say so of those who have been miraculously cured. The first person who spoke by the Holy Spirit in London was a member of Mr. Baptist Noel's congregation, in St. John's chapel, Bedford Row: another is a French clergyman in Edinburgh: another is a clergyman of the Church of Scotland: another instance is that of the Messrs. Macdonald, who are members of Dr. Barr's congregation: another is a perfectly uneducated Highland girl: another is Mrs. Caird, who was a member of Mr. Story's congregation at Roseneath: another is a poor woman in Bedfordshire: another, in Liverpool: another, an eminent solicitor in Yorkshire: another, a woman in Norfolk. Thus, then, it is again proved, that every particle of the paragraph—even to its very insinuations—is altogether unfounded.

But it may be asked, why take the trouble of exposing this journal, if it be so utterly sunk in moral depravity as to publish such a mass of falsehood under the semblance of a regard for religion? The reason is, that this very claim of regard for reli-

gion has been but too successful. The stories propagated by the Record have been assumed to be true, and have been argued upon, by various persons throughout Scotland, England, and Ireland, as facts. It is therefore an imperative duty to disprove the assertions made in that paper; to shew that they are either mistakes so gross as to destroy all confidence in its averments, or that they are made with a wilful intention to deceive.

In the same journal of the 28th of November, after some common-place twaddle about the doctrine of miracles, which is quite childish, the following passage occurs.—

‘ But while we thus for the present dismiss the general question of miracles, as irrelevant to the immediate subject in debate, we can have no hesitation in reprobating those awful delusions which now prevail in Mr. Irving’s chapel. On this subject we feel ourselves bound to speak out with decision, and we not only greatly marvel that Mr. Thelwall should hesitate to pronounce his opinion as to the reality of these manifestations, but we cannot but think that any minister of Christ, who is acquainted with the doctrines of Mr. Irving and his disciples, incurs a fearful responsibility if he falters in their condemnation. We take our stand on the broad ground of Scripture. We know that these gifts are claimed by persons who teach the malignant heresy of our Lord’s sinful humanity, and if an angel from heaven were to preach such a doctrine, we should be bound at our peril to reject his testimony. That many who are “weak in the faith;” that some who are “unlearned and unstable;” that others who have been all their lives “tossed about with every wind of doctrine;” that those who have been “ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth,” should be led away by the delusion, is consonant to all experience; but that any individual of sound judgment and scriptural learning should ever doubt as to the truth or falsehood of miracles, brought forward to support a most awful and justly-condemned heresy, is to us one of the most melancholy circumstances connected with this pernicious delusion.’

The editor makes a broad, unqualified assertion that the manifestations which are now taking place in Mr. Irving’s church are “*delusions*,” which he has “*no hesitation in reprobating*.” He has not alleged one reason for his opinion; he has not paid his country readers the compliment of supposing them to be capable of entering into the discussion; he does not furnish a particle of evidence that he is himself acquainted with any one rule by which to form a Scriptural opinion; but he comes out with a sweeping assertion against a man whom, if he were not blinded by bigotry, he must know to possess one of the most powerful minds of the present day. He erects himself into Mr. Irving’s superior, and seems with admirable self-complacence to look down disdainfully

on the object of his reproof as a poor misguided idiot with whom so great a man as the editor of the Record cannot condescend to argue ! There is no proof so conclusive of a little and pitiful spirit as affecting to despise the talents of an opponent ; more especially when that opponent has attained an eminence of intellectual reputation which will survive as long as theological literature survives ; while the Record, and all that it has written, and the writers themselves, might be swept away, without one human being beyond the circle of their own families, caring about them, or knowing that they were gone. Now let it be remarked, that, though it was false in the editor of the Record to say that either the gifted persons, or those who have been miraculously cured, connected the gifts of prophecy, or of healing, with any doctrines of redemption, or of Christ's human nature, yet that the editor of the Record has done it ; and therefore, in following his example, and "*feeling ourselves bound to speak out with decision,*" we "*take our stand upon the broad ground of Scripture,*" and say, that whoever denies, as the editor of the Record does, the truth of Christ having come in flesh exactly such as ours, does that which the unerring word of God declares to be a mark of antichrist : that, upon that same unerring word of God, the editor of the Record holds more decided heresy, and what is more literally denounced as hateful in God's sight, than the wicked abomination of the Papacy. In order that there shall be no room for doubt or cavil here, the orthodox and the heretical creed on this point is stated in parallel columns.

The Orthodox creed, which Mr. Irving has ever maintained, is, that the Son of God took into personal union with Himself the fallen substance of the Virgin Mary, of David, of Abraham, of Eve ; thereby forming the one sinless Person of Jesus Christ.

This is proved to be the creed of the heretics by the illustration of one of them—namely, that a child partakes no more of the nature of its mother than an acorn partakes of the nature of the soil in which it is sown. This is also proved by the argument of another from Scripture, which is, that it is written of Christ's body, "*Behold, I create a new thing in the earth ;*" which, he says, proves it was not the old substance of Mary : and also, "*A body hast thou prepared me ;*" which, he says, shews it was not to be made of any thing pre-existing. That they shall not have the pretext to accuse us of garbling or mistating them, we subjoin two passages from one of their heretical pamphlets. ' No language can be more precise than this. From

The Heretical creed, which the Record, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, and others, maintain, is, that the Son of God took into personal union with Himself A NEW SUBSTANCE, first created in the womb of the Virgin Mary ; thereby, &c.

' the Fall, every individual of the human race had been unholy, ' conceived in sin ; but now, that Almighty power, *by which all ' things had been called into existence, was again to be exerted ;* ' and that Spirit which, at the beginning had moved on the face ' of the waters, was to come upon Mary ; the Lord was *to create ' a new thing* in this sinful world.' Again ; ' The fruit of the ' Virgin's womb stood ALONE *among men.*' It is from their heresy in this point that their other heresy, on the subject of the extent of the atonement, is confirmed : for, having made in their theory a Christ who is not bone of the bone and flesh of the flesh of all mankind, they adopt what Mr. Irving has graphically and truly designated the "Stock-Exchange divinity of debtor and creditor," and contend that a certain quantum of suffering on Christ's part bought off from a reluctant God only an adequate quantum of punishment from a limited number of men. They cannot see that the efficacy of any thing done by Christ must be co-extensive with the whole nature which the Son of God assumed : and, in fact, they cannot shew the Incarnation to be any manifestation of God's love at all. With this is also necessarily connected their denial of the sovereignty of this world being the heaven of redeemed manhood.

On these subjects the editor of the Record takes his stand, and argues that miracles cannot be true, because they would confirm these essential points of Christianity : parallel reasoning shews that they are true, because they do confirm them, and that the doctrines are confirmed by this additional support. These three doctrines are the most important, and the most worthy to be contended for, in the present day, of all the doctrines of Christianity ; and the denial of them is a surer mark of Antichrist than is Popery. The absurd and unscriptural position of the editor of the Record, that the miraculous cure of a lady in Liverpool is a *proof* of the soundness or unsoundness of any doctrine preached in London, must not, however, for a moment be admitted, although it might be retorted successfully upon him ; nor that a person speaking in an unknown tongue, or prophesying, is a proof of any thing. These things being brought forward as proofs, evince the nature of the editor's mind, and his capacity for examining evidence : they shew also the grounds upon which his *deliberate convictions* are formed, and the real value of his dogmatical assertions. The way in which these miraculous events confirm the orthodoxy of the doctrines which have been preached in Mr. Irving's church is this :—Although Messrs. Way, Hawtrey, M'Neile, and some others, preached a few desultory sermons on the only true Christian hope, the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, as Son of Man, to rule in the power of the Godhead over this regenerated earth, Mr. Irving was the only minister in London who preached a detailed and

elaborate exposition of this great doctrine, together with all its accompaniments, in such a manner as to produce a permanent alteration in the kind of pulpit theology of the day. This doctrine was laughed at, by the majority of the leading clergy, as visionary; and the Record treated it as at best useless, and, by sneering at Mr. Irving's labours, did it as much disservice as if the editor had openly opposed it. In the same church, only, was also shewn the Christian duty of the state with respect to Popery, and the certainty of judgments coming upon this land if the government granted the Popish claims. In the same church, only, was brought out the sole foundation of the salvation of any man—namely, that Jesus Christ was, and is, bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh: for the assertion of which the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland has ejected Mr. Maclean. By this truth being taught in the manner it was, the heresy of the manhood of Christ being not our flesh and bone, but a new creation of a better kind of flesh and bone, was shewn to pervade all classes of professors of religion; but no class so completely as the doctrinal Antimonians, who call themselves high Calvinists, and who conceive that the belief of a doctrine will enable them to keep out of hell, while their lips are filled with false witness against their neighbour. In the same church was first preached the true doctrine of the Sacraments, in contradistinction to the modern, newly invented notions of the Evangelical school, that they are only empty signs: by which the permanence of the power of the Holy Ghost being manifested in all members of the body of Christ was once more declared to the people. This being received into faithful and simple hearts, God's word was found to be true, and the predicted signs have followed in "them that believe:" they "do speak with new tongues;" they have "cast out devils;" they are "cured of their diseases;" they do "prophecy." These things have and do all produce the further invariable consequence, also predicted, of exciting the false accusations of mockers and scorners; whereby the editor of the Record greatly contributes to confirm the correctness of this view: and thus the whole taken together forms as complete a system of sound doctrine, with its attendant predicted success, as Holy Writ can furnish.

The Record proceeds:

'At the same time, in the case of Mr. Thelwall and some others, we are willing to do justice to the amiable but mistaken spirit in which their scepticism has originated. They conceive that they are shut up to the belief that if the gifts are not from above, "it is plain they are from beneath." This is an awful alternative, from which, if necessary, we should not shrink, but we do not consider ourselves at all obliged to adopt it.'

Mr. Thelwall is perfectly right: to suppose that persons can

continue, at intervals, for several months to speak in an unnatural and particular manner; to assert that whenever they do so speak they are moved by a supernatural impulse; that they do this when alone, in private, in their own rooms, more often than in large assemblies; that they know not what they are going to say; and that they are made very often to utter opinions by the Spirit contrary to their natural judgment at other times; and yet that this is mere animal excitement, is a proposition so outrageously absurd that it makes one stare at finding it even in the Record. But let us see how he goes on.—

‘*The claims of Mr. Irving and his followers to the miraculous gift of unknown tongues, not only appears to us, after calm and we trust prayerful consideration, to be nothing better than a wild delusion, but they actually possess less of the character belonging to miracles, or to any species of supernatural agency, than almost any pretensions of a similar nature ever before brought forward. We think this will appear manifest to every one who reflects for a moment on the innumerable examples afforded by past and present experience of the extraordinary powers and workings of the imagination, when under the influence of either internal or external excitement. Its conceptions under such circumstances partake sometimes in the highest degree of the sublime and the mysterious, or they may be incoherent, ludicrous, and absurd. There is in fact no end to the ebullitions and vagaries of a heated and deluded imagination. Abundant proof of this is afforded in lunatics, and especially in that class called monomaniacs (insane on one subject only); likewise in nervous and hysterical people, whether male or female. There are many singular examples of persons of this temperament, when under the long-continued influence of excited feelings, from whatever cause, whether natural or religious, being wrought up into a state of rapturous ecstasy, characterized by a thousand inexplicable delusions, bearing sometimes a very close resemblance to supernatural agency. This may exist as a state of disease, and without the least attempt at imposition; it is, in fact, a species of delirium. The power of the imagination, when in this state of excitement, over the body, is also known to be most extraordinary. We can easily explain by these considerations the wonders related of anchorites, hermits, and various classes of religionists in the records of fanaticism, their miraculous cures, and their pretensions to a variety of other miraculous gifts. It is remarkable that new religious sects have frequently, either in sincerity or the reverse, endeavoured to establish their authority by these means. It is not necessary, therefore, to have recourse to the supposition either of imposition, or of any kind of supernatural agency, to explain most satisfactorily the nature of the proceedings now*

‘ going on in the Scotch Church, Regent Square ; and we can
 ‘ assure our Rev. Correspondent, that if he will consult some of
 ‘ the best medical writings and works on superstition, he will
 ‘ soon be as well satisfied as ourselves, that there never was per-
 ‘ haps a claim to miraculous agency supported by evidence so
 ‘ completely at variance both with general experience and com-
 ‘ mon sense.’

In this paragraph the editor sets out with another gross mis-
 representation, without a shadow of foundation for it,—that Mr.
 Irving *claims the miraculous gift of unknown tongues*. Is it,
 therefore, possible that the editor of the Record can have given
 it *prayerful consideration*? It is impossible that he can have
 considered, it is impossible that he can have prayed, upon the
 subject. With respect to the speaking in tongues *possessing a*
character belonging to miracles, it has never been so classed by
 Mr. Irving, nor by any writer whatever, ancient or modern, ex-
 cept the editor himself, and those who have copied him. He is
 utterly ignorant of what he is writing about : so that, if it were
 true that he had given the subject prayerful consideration, then
 is he a person of such fatuity of intellect as to be incapacitated
 by deficiency of reason from understanding a plain question : an
 idiot might as well give *prayerful consideration* to a question of
 the planets’ orbits, as he give it to the question of speaking in
 tongues by supernatural power.

The editor then quotes a passage from a sermon of Dr. Burns.

‘ The Rev. Dr. Burns, of Paisley, in the preface to a sermon
 ‘ lately preached at the Scotch Church, Swallow Street, has the
 ‘ following passage :—

‘ “ It is little more than a century past since the French pro-
 ‘ phets acted precisely the same scenes in London ; and in those
 ‘ scenes certain Pythonesses performed *their* part with a skill and
 ‘ an adroitness which our modern sybils have scarcely yet attained
 ‘ unto. There is this difference, however, between the two cases.
 ‘ The tongues in which the disciples of the French prophets ut-
 ‘ tered their effusions, were *really tongues*. I have read the
 ‘ printed exuviæ of those effusions, as recorded in the lives and
 ‘ writings of Lacy and others ; and while there is nothing very
 ‘ striking either in the sentiment or style, there is nothing at all
 ‘ strange or uncouth in the structure of the language itself. We
 ‘ have very decent Greek, and Latin, and French, and a little
 ‘ Dutch. In short, we have in these deluded people what *we*
 ‘ *know* to be language, and a language capable of being turned
 ‘ to some account. *This* we have not in the modern speakers ;
 ‘ and yet their more rational precursors soon fell back into their
 ‘ native obscurity. No great effort of reasoning was employed
 ‘ to put them down, and the civil magistrate interfered merely
 ‘ to keep the peace. But these misguided people thought proper

‘ to suspend the decision of their cause on the issue of their un-
 ‘ dertaking to raise one of their leaders from the grave, after he
 ‘ had been dead for some days. In the vicinity of the metro-
 ‘ polis prodigious crowds assembled, to wait in anxious expect-
 ‘ tation the result of the experiment. Suffice it to say, the
 ‘ experiment failed, the charm was broken, and the prophets have
 ‘ been in a state of ‘suspended animation’ from that day till
 ‘ now. I wish not to excite the risible faculties of any man ;
 ‘ and yet it is not easy to state these plain matters of fact in the
 ‘ sober and measured tone in which we would record the ‘ revo-
 ‘ lutions of empires.’”

This Dr. Burns is known only as the author of a coarse, vulgar, and scurrilous pamphlet, entitled “The Gairloch Heresy tried,” filled, like this article in the Record, with wilful perversions, misrepresentations, and abuse of his neighbours. It would have been surprising if two such kindred spirits had not met; and the sermon found a soil congenial to it in the Record. The Doctor knows nothing about the French prophets. His argument is, That the French prophets spoke *very decent Greek and Latin* (which he has read), and yet the French prophets were impostors: that the tongues spoken now are neither Greek nor Latin: and, therefore, the conclusion cannot fail to be, that if the French prophets, who did speak decent Greek and Latin, were impostors, *à fortiori* other prophets, who speak neither, must be impostors likewise. Now, waving the Doctor’s logic, let us examine his fact—namely, the *decent Greek and Latin*. It is not true that Lacy, or any other of the French prophets, *spoke decent Greek and Latin*: one of the grounds on which they were proved by contemporary writers to be impostors (though a bad one, because there were far better grounds) was the badness of their Greek and Latin. So that either the Doctor has said wilfully what is untrue, or he knows nothing about Greek and Latin. This last may be the case; but then it was a false assumption of knowledge on the Doctor’s part, to pronounce a dogmatical opinion upon that of which he knew he was ignorant. The contemporary writer who attacked the French prophets on this very ground of their bad Greek and Latin, says, “They speak broken and imperfect languages; by which I do not mean of their own mother tongue, whether French or English—at which they probably may be as ready as any of their neighbours, though here they are not without their slips and improprieties—but of those they would be thought to have by inspiration. I observe no Hebrew, save only in a few words that Sir R. Bulkeley says he collected out of a speech of Mr. Dutton—and yet there is *haaren* for *haaretz*. Mr. Lacy is very sparing of his Greek, of which I find scarce seven lines in all; and one would think there should not be many faults in so little a compass; yet it is undeniable that here are

more gross, palpable errors of divers sorts than there are lines"—(the Record and Dr. Burns say it is very decent Greek!)—"errors in accenting, in orthography, in syntax, in declension, in false rendering. Are these like the dictates of the Holy Ghost? are these the effects of a Divine inspiration? or, rather, are they not, on the other hand, so many apparent convictions of shameless impostors, or at best of a lamentable enthusiasm, when a man is not afraid to ascribe his own weaknesses and delirium to the infallible Spirit of God?"

Perhaps it may be alleged in extenuation, that, though the Record and Dr. Burns may know nothing of Greek, and have therefore laid themselves fairly open to the charge of arrogant imposture in pretending to understand that of which their total ignorance has been now proved, yet the word *Greek* may have inadvertently slipped in, and that they are correct in their assertion respecting the decency of the Latin. Unfortunately, however, this excuse can stand them in little stead; for as to the Latin language, the same examiner of the French prophets says, respecting this very Lacy on whose Latinity Dr. Burns has pronounced his opinion that it was very decent—which opinion the editor of the Record has adopted—"He is more liberal of his Latin, which he may be supposed to have a little more insight into; yet here too he not only expresses himself in such bald improper phrases as an ordinary school-boy would be heartily ashamed of, but oftentimes uses apparent Anglicisms, Gallicisms, or other words that are by no means Latin"—(very decent Latin, say the Record and Dr. Burns);—"at other times he is miserably out in point of syntax, or misapplies his words, or else speaks mere nonsense: and sometimes, again, he has two or more of these incongruities together; besides divers other foul mistakes, too many to be here inserted." Such is the very decent Latin of the Record and Dr. Burns! And thus it is seen that there is not even a collateral branch of any part of the subject of the gifts of the Holy Ghost in which the mockers are not shewn to be given over to a spirit of lying, and of a reprobate mind;—a warning to others, that "they learn not to blaspheme."

Upon the subject of tongues, two other opponents have entered the lists, in the persons of Mr. Pilkington and Mr. Leslie. They say that the tongues are perfectly easy to understand, for that they are English, French, and Latin; and therefore the persons speaking them are impostors! This is just as it should be. First, the tongues are unknown: therefore, say the Record and Dr. Burns, the speakers are impostors. Secondly, the tongues are known: therefore, says another and equally solid objector, the speakers are impostors. Now it is against such folly as this that the characters of the parties speaking ought to have influ-

ence, and do have influence in all honest minds : and the value of the double objection, to all sincerely anxious persons, is, to shew that to prejudiced minds it is all one what is done : the thing is unpopular, and must be written against ; and black may be maintained to be white, or white to be black, according as shall best suit the end to be attained : the contempt of the work is seen in equally attacking it whether it be black or white. The Record says the tongues are false because they are to *support* the fallen humanity and the glorious reign of Jesus Christ : Mr. Leslie says they are false because they will tend to *deny* the fallen humanity and the glorious reign. Mr. M'Neile says they are false because spoken by *women* : the charge against the prophets of the Cevennes was that they were *men*.

The author who examined the French prophets was Mr. Spinckes, from whose work the preceding account of their unknown tongues, or rather tongues too well known for their pretensions, is taken. One of the grounds on which he determined that all their claims to be taught of God in any thing was fallacious, was, that after the revocation of the Edict of Nantz some of their party had resisted the authority of the king. Would Dr. Burns and all the Presbyterian clergy consent to be judged by the same test ? Were all who joined in the Solemn League and Covenant children of the devil ? If resistance to the secular arm in matters of religion be proof of heterodoxy, where would be the Church of Scotland at this hour ? Dr. Burns cannot admit this as a proof that they were impostors ; and he had better confine himself to Scriptural tests, or he will only involve himself in more inexplicable absurdity.

But, to return to the Record.

' But while we say thus much merely to shew that we are not
' driven to the alternative suggested by Mr. Thelwall, and while
' we do not desire too curiously to scan either the character or the
' sanity of some of the claimants of inspiration, yet, if we try the
' manifestations by another test, they will still be found contrary
' to Scripture. We believe it is an admitted fact, that at present
' the tongues cannot be interpreted, and that no one knows the
' language spoken. Now, if this be the case, it will appear, by a
' reference to 1 Cor. xiv. 28, that the speaker is authoritatively
' enjoined "*to keep silence in the church.*" But the speakers at
' Mr. Irving's chapel do not comply with this injunction, and
' they therefore violate the authority of Scripture, and thus warn
' the Lord's people to beware of giving place to their pretensions.'

No one can read this passage without supposing that the persons who speak in Mr. Irving's church speak in unknown tongues alone : this is the clear meaning which the words convey : and yet what is the fact ? The persons who speak in the Spirit have *never once spoken in an unknown tongue alone*. They

generally speak in English alone : but sometimes they do commence with a few words in an unknown tongue. They, however, do not give way to this, because they know it is not calculated to edify the church. Let it, however, be granted that they do speak in an unknown tongue, contrary to the order of Scripture ; that is no proof that they are not speaking by the power of the Holy Ghost. If it were, the Apostle would have given, among other tests to the Corinthians, that “no one speaking in the church in an unknown tongue spake by the Holy Ghost :” instead of which he gives a very different reason for the prohibition—namely, that their so doing would not edify the church. Thus it is also plain that the editor’s *prayerful deliberation* on this argument has not been very laborious.

‘ There is one other argument at which we must glance before we conclude. It is often said, “ these are holy and prayerful men and women, and therefore it is unreasonable to suppose that they have not obtained an answer to their prayers for these gifts.” Now in the first place we would observe, that unless *there is a decided warrant* to pray for these gifts, such petitions cannot be acceptable to the Lord : but at all events, if the character of the claimants of inspiration is to be canvassed, it will be fair also to bring forward in opposition, the character of those holy men of God, both in England and Scotland, who, after much prayer and study of the word of God, have not only arrived at a contrary conclusion, but have strongly condemned the proceedings in question. We recur, however, to our strong-hold. We protest against any such appeal to individual character as fallacious, and as provoking an examination which must be inconvenient, and may prove that the claimants are perhaps in danger of being classed with “ those unlearned and unstable” persons of whom St. Peter writes. Above all, we repeat that heresy often shrouds itself beneath the cloak of outward sanctity, and that Arianism, Socinianism, and image worship, have all been sheltered under that form in which Satan cloaks himself when he assumes the garb of an “ angel of light.” The heresy as to our Lord’s humanity, and the grievous error as to universal pardon, are at the bottom of all the present delusions.’

There are many *decided warrants* to pray for the Holy Ghost, and no difference is made between one effect of the Holy Ghost and another. If, however, there be any difference in the injunction to pray for one effect more than another, it is for the gifts : “ desire earnestly the best gifts :” and it is with reference to the prayer for the Holy Spirit that our Lord declares that God will not use us worse than an evil earthly father uses his children. But where is the *warrant, decided* or implied, *to pray* for any other method of understanding the word of God but by the supernatural power of the Holy Ghost ? Is there any one thing in

the New Testament for which we have so strong and decided a warrant to pray for, as the Holy Ghost? Mr. Thelwall had written to the Record to shew that the Articles, Services, Canons, &c. of the Church of England, recognised the permanence of miraculous power in it. This the editor contradicted; and in support of his argument produced an extract from St. Augustine, which had nothing to do with the matter. In denying Mr. Thelwall's assertion the editor exposed his own ignorance; for besides the Collect for St. Barnabas, and other extracts from the authentic formularies of the church of which he calls himself a member, there is in the *old "Whole Duty of Man"* a Prayer for the Peace of the Church, which says, "When thou didst mount up to heaven triumphantly, thou gavest gifts unto men of thy Spirit: renew again from above thy old bountifulness; give that thing to thy church, now fainting and growing downward, that thou gavest unto her shooting upward at her first beginning. And because thy Spirit hath the science of speaking, *give to the Bishops the gift of prophecy*, that they may declare and interpret holy Scripture, not of their own brain, but of thine inspiring. And thus the old dignity and tranquillity of the church shall return again with a godly order, unto the glory of thy name." This prayer the editor of the Record presumptuously says *cannot be acceptable to the Lord*.

If one set of persons have prayed for the Holy Ghost, and have received Him, it is not sound reasoning to say that that which they have received cannot be the Holy Ghost, because other persons, who have prayed for something else, and not for Him, have not received Him. The imputation is not against these persons, but against God. The character of the claimants has nothing whatever to do with the character of their inspiration; but it has every thing to do with their being entitled to credit, as to whether they are under supernatural impulse or not, or whether they are impostors. If the editor of the Record were to declare that he is speaking by a supernatural impulse, we would not believe him, because he has shewn us that his assertions are void of credit. It is not a question which admits of argument. No one can believe another who is known to be capable of wilful falsehood: no one could believe the assertion of a child, or any other relation, however tenderly loved, if it have a habit of lying. Faith is not in our own power: it must depend upon the character of the person to be trusted. It is right to refuse assent to any personal character respecting the nature of the inspiration: Balaam prophesied truly, and so did his ass. The only tests for the truth of the Spirit are those which God has given for that purpose, and to which the editor of the Record has never once alluded. The test for a super-

natural Spirit, and for the natural spirit of a man is, Does he confess that Jesus Christ has come in flesh ; in the very substance of Mary ? No, says the Record : the words, the very words (and let the reader mark them well, in order to bind the editor of the Record, and all who agree with him, to them, so that they shall not by any shuffle or evasion escape)—the very words for which the General Assembly condemned Mr. Maclean were, that he said “ that Christ had taken a body formed of the sinful flesh of the virgin.”

The denial of this essential truth in the redemption of mankind is the spirit of antichrist ; and let every reader take care that he contend against it with all his might : let him not fold his arms in supineness concerning it as about an immaterial point. It is the essence of the salvation of man : it is as essential as the verity of Christ's Godhead : let him shew antichrist no quarter. It is emphatically the description of antichrist ; of a man being truly the very child and servant of the devil, that he denies that the Son of God has come in exactly such flesh as he himself has. These heretics affect, as Judas Iscariot did, to honour Christ more than others. They pretend that it is derogating from the dignity of Christ to say that his flesh was not of a better kind than ours : that it dishonours him to say he took our very fallen and corrupt nature : Judas did the same ; he, too, could not betray his Lord without affecting more reverence than the true Apostles ; and so he said “ Hail,” and called him “ Master :” and he affected more love, also ; and so he kissed him. Yes ; but the very kiss was the sign of the betrayal, the proof that the devil was in him : so the affectation for Christ's honour, in the very act of denying his true manhood, is the proof that the devil is in these heretics.

In a subsequent number of the Record, the editor congratulated its readers that Mr. M'Neile had cautioned his readers against the delusion of modern miracles in Mr. Irving's church. Mr. M'Neile has preached as clearly as it is possible for man to do, that the manhood of Christ was fallen manhood : that for him to have come in unfallen manhood would have been ineffectual to redeem fallen sinners : that if Christ had only taken flesh of Adam, before he fell, it would have been only to come down half way to us. Now, this doctrine is what the editor of the Record calls heresy ; yet this heresy is freely forgiven, provided the man who holds it can be made use of as a tool for inflicting another wound on Mr. Irving. The commendation of the editor is perfectly ludicrous ; for what do the modern miracles consist in ? why, simply in this, that Miss Hughes, Miss Hall, Miss Greenwood, Miss Fancourt, Mrs. Maxwell, and a poor woman in Bedfordshire were ill, and say they are now well. If they are deluded ; if they are still really ill, and only deluding themselves with the

fancy of being well, it is surely not a delusion against which it requires much caution, or one of a very dangerous tendency.

It has been well remarked, that if God were to move out of the ordinary course of His proceedings at the present time for the benefit of His church, it must be by some act which would outrage all the most received maxims and practices of the Religious World. It is indispensable to the evidence of any manifestation being of God, that the rulers of spiritual wickedness—they who make the number of persons agreeing with them the test of their orthodoxy, as well as all the open infidels—should unite together in one confederacy to deny it: this evidence is afforded on the present occasion. A further necessary point is, that it should pour contempt on the vain babblings of modern sermons, reviews, commentators, church ordinances, ceremonies, and rules of human invention: this evidence is also afforded. A further point is, that it should have few abettors, and that those few should be accounted the offscouring of all things, and to be possessed of devils: this evidence is also afforded. It was seen, at the commencement of these observations, that the real ruler of the state in matters political is the unseen, malignant, and slanderous press: the real ruler of the church, in matters of faith, is an equally unseen, malignant, and slanderous press. Many persons have remarked lately that the only true political courage, as well as safety, is to be found in manfully opposing and standing up against that portion of the press which is thereby lashed into decency at least, if not into silence. The press of false religious profession is to be treated in the same manner; but far more persevering efforts are necessary to effect its controul. Every vice which disgraces mankind puts on a more aggravated form whenever it can ally itself with hypocrisy in religion, as the infidel is a far less abandoned character than a Jesuit. In all the outrages which the mob commits, it is the newspapers which encourage, and justify them, until the property of the proprietors is endangered, when the papers turn round upon the victims of their own false doctrines. The tyrant of the day is the mob; this tyrant is trampling upon God's rights in the state, and trampling equally upon God's rights in the church. The mob, forsooth, decrees that the manifestations of supernatural power in Mr. Irving's Church are not of the Holy Ghost; and accordingly Carlile shuts up the Rotunda and fills the aisles, and the editor of the Record aids the satanic yell. Even if it were all imposture, the impostors would be the veriest cravens to allow themselves to be put down by such adversaries as these: but it may be taken as a fixed principle, that if the assumption were really dishonouring to the Holy Ghost, neither Carlile nor the writers for the periodical press would be so hostile to it.

The friends of Mr. Armstrong have published an exposure of

the falsehood of the Record with respect to him ; from which document we now give the letter which the editor refused to insert.

To the Committee of the British Society for promoting the Religious Principles of the Reformation.

December 1, 1831.

Gentlemen,—I desire to bless the God of all grace and wisdom, for the decision which you were enabled to arrive at, in your last meeting of the Committee, Nov. 16, when the restrictions to be imposed upon your agents were the subject of consideration. May the presence and guidance of the same God be with you this day !

I feel myself impelled to withdraw from the Society on account of the protest against your decision and my advocacy, which has come before you from certain influential, and esteemed, and beloved members of the Society ; and in consequence of the disapprobation expressed by the Dublin and Cork Auxiliaries ; with other friends and branches of the Society. I also feel much embarrassed by my situation, as the agent of a Society which attempts to combine elements that cannot be united, even the conflicting divisions of the Protestant world. But as I have been by the providence of God, introduced into the situation, and as his mercy has much favoured and followed me whilst occupied in it, I feel great reluctance to separate myself from your Society, until my way, by the same good providence of our God, be most clearly demonstrated. I, also, feel that my withdrawal, *just now*, would be, in some measure, an assent to the truth of the remonstrance which has been presented to you against your late decision ; and I am, also, very anxious that I may take no step, which shall, in any way, present me to your Committee, and the Society at large, as acquiescing, or appearing to acquiesce, in the justice of the accusation preferred against my advocacy of the principles of the Society, as irrelevant and dishonest.

As an advocate of the principles of the Holy Scriptures against the corruptions of the Papal system, I was quite justified in my line of procedure, and would prove but a very incompetent and *ex parte* vindicator of the truth, were I satisfied with a mere overthrow of the lie, without bringing out the truth which it counterfeited. If your Society be one of demolition merely, and not also of edification, then, indeed, I have not fairly represented you,—if *overturn*, and not *return*, be your Society's motto, then have I overstepped my instructions ;—but if to build Jerusalem as well as to break down Babylon, be your object—to bring forward the whole mystery of godliness, as well as to cast out the whole mystery of iniquity, then have I been, by the grace of God, in a little measure, your faithful and honest servant. The Papacy has worked by abusing truth, and not by casting it away entirely. The duty of the Protestant is to disentangle the truth from the lie with which the Papacy has embarrassed it, and not to renounce the lie and the truth together. If your Society do not this true Protestant work—if it stop short at the rejection of the falsehood, and proceed not further to the confession of the truth—then will it be rather a curse than a blessing in the midst of the churches—it will be not the handmaid of Jesus, but the pioneer of antichrist.

I cannot help submitting to you, gentlemen, as to Christian brethren—in whom I have witnessed wisdom, and reverence, and tenderness of conscience—my conviction that the doctrines with which my name has been connected, since your last meeting, in that newspaper which affects to be the organ of the intelligent piety of the land, are the very fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion. The denial of Christ's true flesh is the Alpha and Omega characteristic of antichrist ; the denial of the pardoning love of God to all men, is the device of Satan to erect an impassable barrier between the sinner and his God ; and the denial of the power of the Spirit in the church by His gifts, as well as his holiness by His graces, is, in my estimation, nothing less than an attempt to quench the Spirit of God ; the sin for which the old world was drowned, Jerusalem was

trodden down, and the Antichristian confederacy of Christendom will be given to the burning flame. The love of the Father, the mercy of the Son, and the power of the Holy Ghost, are the truths for which my name is cast out. If your Society cannot endure my full utterance of them, I cannot, under any circumstances, continue to be your servant. I, also, cannot join in the outcry against the small party, the little flock in the church, which are peculiarly honoured of God, in the testimony for these truths at the present day.

I desire to be very ingenuous with you ; any other course would be unworthy of you, most painful to myself, and, above all, most grievous to the Holy and true Spirit of our blessed God and Saviour Jesus Christ. I conclude, with a sincere prayer, that your deliberation to-day may be guided by that Holy Spirit ; and that the result of it may bring great peace to your own souls, and deliverance to, gentlemen,

Yours, most gratefully,

NICHOLAS ARMSTRONG.

The Record newspaper, in the notices to correspondents on the 22d of December, began with the following passage :—‘ In reply to several correspondents, who address us with regard to the Rev. N. Armstrong, we have to observe, that the letter which we declined to insert was one which he had addressed to the Reformation Society, and *entered into no defence of the heretical opinions* which he has been unhappily led to adopt. *His sentiments were stated in a few measured words, fitted to produce an erroneous opinion of their actual character ; but there was no explanation nor defence of them.* Such an explanation or defence we should probably not admit ; for we would not, on any common occasion, consent to be the medium by which the faith of some might possibly be overthrown. To our correspondents we have to say, therefore, on the one hand, that they could not formerly value the ministry of Mr. Armstrong more than we did, for we valued it most highly : on the other hand, *they may receive our testimony* (AND THEY KNOW WE HAVE NEVER DECEIVED THEM), *that Mr. Armstrong has departed from the faith in the way and to the degree we have stated he has done.*’

Never was insolence equal to this : at the very moment he was publishing the falsehood that Mr. Armstrong in his letter *had entered into no defence* of his opinions, he coolly assures his readers that *they know he has never deceived them*, and on the strength of this assurances goes on to utter another untruth, which is, that the Bishop of London prohibited Mr. Armstrong’s preaching *on the ground of his having departed from the faith.* The letter of the Bishop of London proves the falsehood of the editor’s assertion. The fact is, that the Bishop acted with Mr. Armstrong precisely as he did on a former occasion with Mr. M’Neile, when as Bishop of Chester he interdicted that gentleman from preaching at Liverpool ; the sole ground being that he was not licensed in his diocese ;—a very proper ground, and a very sound exercise of the Bishop’s authority, so long as the present regulations exist in the church. We pity the readers

who can take the dogmatical assertion of an anonymous libeller, that a clergyman is a heretic, when the libeller at the same moment is afraid to enter the lists, in fair argument, with the object of his calumny, or even to insert the statement of his adversary's opinion; while he gives a false account of that statement which had been sent him.

But bad as all this is, it is not the worst: being at length compelled to insert the Bishop's letter, which gives a direct contradiction to his assertion, the editor feels it "due to the cause of truth," to do—what? why to tell another falsehood.

'The correspondence with the Bishop of London *does not*
' *at all invalidate the truth of our statement*: we never professed
' to be authorised by his lordship to make the announcement that
' Mr. Armstrong was interdicted from preaching in this diocese.
' The fact had previously been noticed in several of the public
' prints; and having taken care to *ascertain* its accuracy, we then
' copied it into our paper. It will be seen also that the Bishop's
' letter by no means impugns the accuracy of the alleged grounds
' for the interdict against Mr. Armstrong.'

The statement was, that the Bishop had prohibited Mr. Armstrong from preaching on the ground of heresy: this statement the Bishop says is false. The question was not whether the Bishop *had authorized* the editor; no human being ever supposed that the Bishop would *authorize* any newspaper to make a statement of the sort. This shifting of the case is therefore an act of meanness, which gives to the whole of it a still baser character.

The same falsification of facts pervades every other subject where Mr. Irving is concerned. Mr. Armstrong, in preaching for the Reformation Society, bore a noble testimony to the perpetuity of the power of the Holy Ghost being manifested in the church, and assailed the slanderers of Mr. Irving. The Times newspaper contented itself with sneeringly begging that the friends of Mr. Armstrong would shut him up in a madhouse: the Record newspaper set to work more seriously. It inserted every attack against him which was sent for that purpose: it followed these up by remarks of its own; and it appears by a statement which Mr. Armstrong's friends have published, that it refused to admit the defence made for him by the Chairman of the Committee of the Reformation Society, and also his own defence of himself. But the unfairness of the editor did not stop here. He had accused Mr. Rhind of dishonesty, in propagating opinions which were not in accordance with his duty. Mr. Rhind wrote a defence of himself, and sent it to the editor, who inserted the letter, *but omitted the whole paragraph which contained the vindication of his honesty*. Mr. Rhind complained of this act of most unfair dealing; but the editor still refused to insert the defence. Upon hearing this account we made a point of

desiring a friend to inquire of Mr. Rhind whether these be facts or not, and they were confirmed by that gentleman.

A celebrated convert from Heathenism, now in London, was in company with a large party of Evangelicals lately, where, as usual in such society, the Christianity of the meeting was displayed by the profane abuse of Mr. Irving. The Heathen, having heard that gentleman preach, knew that much which was said respecting his doctrines by these persons was palpably untrue, and in stating his conviction of this defended Mr. Irving. At length he told them, that he now perceived plainly that they were not only opposed to his doctrines, but that they had a personal antipathy to the man; and that, if they had the power, they would crucify him as willingly as the Jews crucified Jesus Christ. This witness is true.—We know not who the editor of the *Record* is. We once met a person having that character, but have been informed that he no longer resides in London; and from that single interview we should doubt that he would be a party to the wickedness which it is now propagating. The editor may not be the author of the articles on which we have been commenting; but he is guilty at least of conniving at them. In all probability Scotch Calvinists are at the bottom of it; and from their present malignity it is further probable that they at one time or other have either been under personal obligation to, or professed private regard for, Mr. Irving. We know such people well. These are the desperadoes of the religious world: they will not only plunge their dagger in their victim, but will rake it about in the wound, to feast their eyes with his agonized condition.

We hope that no one will charge us with want of Christian love for the parties on whose conduct we have felt it our duty thus to animadvert. We avow openly, that the love we have for them is precisely that which we have for enemies, whom we must love, and which we have for all, the most abandoned of, mankind. We deny them to be Christian brethren at all. The time is come when cant and hypocrisy respecting love must be separated from genuine love: when the violator of every principle of honesty and veracity, and the practice of bearing false-witness, defamation, and falsehood, is not to be voted a Christian because he listens to Evangelical sermons on Sundays, subscribes to religious societies, and tries to be a leader in the religious world. True love is that of Christ, who twice with his own hand drove out the defilers of the temple; who denounced in the sternest manner the pretenders to sanctity, “Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites;” and yet prayed for his murderers, “Forgive them, for they *know not* what they do.” True charity rejoiceth not in iniquity, but ever and only in the truth; but, if Paul or an angel from heaven should preach other than THE TRUTH, will say, “let him be accursed.”