

A Letter From a Friend in America

by Job Scott

The sermon defends Job Scott's character and doctrine against Luke Howard's criticisms, highlighting the European testimonies and the Yearly Epistle from Friends of London.

Scripture: John 11:42, Acts 15:24, Acts 25:7, 1 Timothy 1:19, 2 Timothy 2:14, 2 Timothy 2:16-17, Titus 3:9

Topics: "Avoiding False Doctrine", "Maintaining Good Works"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher delves into the meaning of 'periistemi', which signifies standing around or being a bystander, but figuratively means to turn oneself about to avoid something. Paul instructs Titus and other church leaders to steer clear of foolish, unprofitable speculations that can corrupt the church and hinder the credibility of the gospel. The command to 'periistemi' is a call to continually shun worldly chatter and false teachings, reflecting a deliberate and habitual avoidance of such influences. The preacher emphasizes the importance of believers, like Titus, to distance themselves from controversies, genealogies, strife, and disputes about the law, focusing instead on maintaining good works and avoiding unprofitable arguments.

Transcript

A LETTER FROM A FRIEND IN AMERICA

to

LUKE HOWARD OF TOTTENHAM, NEAR LONDON,

in which the character of our late friend,

JOB SCOTT IS VINDICATED AND DEFENDED,

and his Doctrines shown to be consistent

with Scripture and sound reason.

in reply to a letter addressed by

Luke Howard to the Author

Am I therefore become your Enemy because I tell you the truth. Gal. iv.10

[1826]

Respected Friend,

LUKE HOWARD:

Thy Letter addressed to me bearing date 1825, was not received until about two months since. It was neatly printed in octavo form, and contains about 20 pages. Agreeably with thy entreaty, I have given it a patient and candid perusal and have carefully referred to the passages of Scripture quoted in the work: and having always had the highest esteem for the memory of our deceased friend Job Scott, I have felt a concern to send thee a few remarks and observations, as they occurred to my mind on perusing thy Letter.

In the first place, I was for some time at a loss, to discover any adequate motive for so much labour as this Letter must have cost thee. The subject of Job Scott's book is regeneration and the new birth: its title "SALVATION BY CHRIST": a doctrine which I believe is by all Christians admitted to be scriptural. -- It is treated by him a little, and but a little, differently from the usual mode. To those who have not come to rely entirely on the Holy Spirit for instruction, it may appear strange, and like Nicodemus, they may query, "How can these things be?" But to those who, by a total renunciation of the will and wisdom of the creature -- that "Wisdom which is from beneath," have come under the administration of the New Covenant -- I think the treatise will be easily understood. Perhaps the author may not always have been the most happy, in the choice of metaphors to illustrate his subject -- perhaps he did not conduct and support his Allegory with the most critical skill -- perhaps he did not sufficiently explain the deep spiritual views which his exercised mind had taken of the doctrine -- perhaps he may have applied some scripture texts, in a way thou canst not approve. -- Admitting all this, I cannot see in these circumstances, while we admit the doctrine to be scriptural, a sufficient ground for a Letter, calculated to prostrate his religious character, and to destroy, especially in the youthful mind, all confidence in his religious writings. If thy conduct be correct, who that has left written or printed memoirs of their religious labours and experience, may escape the fatal thrust of some posthumous opposer?

It appears by the memorial of his brethren, that Job Scott's moral character was remarkably correct. They say, "in the various duties of private life, as well as in the relations of son, husband, parent, and neighbour, he was truly exemplary." His literary attainments were probably superior to those of a large majority of his cotemporaries. The memorial says, "through his turn for literary improvement, he acquired both a competent share of common school learning, and made some progress in other branches of literature." The course of instruction, at that time, in the common schools in New England, was perhaps, superior to that in any other of the Colonies; and Job Scott, in his Essay on Baptism, as well as in his other works, gives evidence, that he was a man of strong mental capacities, as well as of considerable reading. But it was in the depth and consistency of his religious character, and his extraordinary qualifications as a Gospel Minister, that he stood most conspicuous. On these points his friends remark, "Being of strong and ready abilities, and his mind improved and enlarged by the sanctifying power of Truth, he was enabled, and zealously, and very usefully disposed for the promotion of the cause of Righteousness, in which he

was engaged. Having, in the School of Christ, measurably learned the mystery of the fall and restoration of man and to understand the scriptures, and pertinently to apply them; he was brought under the preparing hand of the Lord, for the work of the ministry; under which dispensation his soul was deeply baptized and brought under great sympathy with seeking souls, who were travailing in birth that Christ might be formed in them: to whom, he was at times and seasons enabled, powerfully to administer encouragement and consolation. Thus, for several years, by letters and epistles, for which he was eminently gifted with instructive and edifying talents, he laboured for the promotion of the cause of TRUTH." Of his MINISTRY, in particular, they say: "His appearance in the Ministry was not very frequent when at home, and he was frequently led into an example of silence when abroad; circumspect not to minister without fresh anointing, and careful in attending closely, to the turnings of the KEY of DAVID."

The Memorial of the National half-year's meeting of Friends in Ireland, says: "From genuine marks, evinced in the course of his religious services, we believe him to have been an instrument, fitted and prepared by the Great Master, through deep and repeated baptisms, for use and service in his Church militant - - called and sent forth by the immediate influence of his Spirit, to publish the Gospel." "He was a diligent waiter to experience renewed qualification for service, before he attempted to move, either in the Ministry or Discipline; well knowing, that without a fresh anointing, any endeavours to act must prove ineffectual, and tend to center in lifeless formality; against which he was zealously concerned to bear testimony. His conversation was coupled with fear, as well as seasoned with grace, and being deep in heavenly mysteries, he was cautious of squandering the same; yet, when at liberty for conversation, his communications were agreeable and remarkably instructive."

Such was the character of Job Scott, as portrayed by his brethren in America and Europe! It is the valuable influence of such an example, that thy Letter is calculated to destroy!

Permit me now, to call thy attention to some parts of thy Letter, which seem intended to produce this unhappy effect; in a review of which, I shall occasionally contrast them with the authentic testimonies of the Society, on both sides of the Atlantic. In page 4, thou sayest: "There was certainly in the character of this dear friend, a perceptible excess, on the side of the imagination and the feelings" "such a temperament, in measure disqualifies a minister from being a competent judge of Doctrine and controversies." Now it is this "excess on the side of the imagination and the feelings" that constitutes a fanatic. An ardent imagination, and warm feelings on religious subjects, when governed and regulated by the holy Spirit, are no impediment to religious growth, or usefulness: On the contrary, they fit the instrument for more extensive and productive labour in the LORD'S vineyard. That such was the natural character of the Apostle Paul, is I believe universally admitted. There is scarcely a page of his writings, that does not give ample evidence of a warm imagination. His frequent illustrations of the typical law, and its figurative character, with relation to divine realities under the Gospel dispensation. -- His free use of allegories and metaphors -- his allusions to the customs, and practices, and amusements -- to the races, and sports, and games, of the people of that day -- his quotations from their Poets and Philosophers, are all incontestible evidences of a warm and vigorous imagination; which under divine influence, made him eminently useful, as the Apostle of the Gentiles. Of the ardency of his feelings there can be no doubt.

But when an ardent imagination, and warm feelings enlisted in the cause of Religion, are suffered to burst the bounds of truth and reason, and run out into "perceptible excess," what are then the consequences? The history of the Anabaptists of Munster, the riots in London under Lord Gordon, and many other circumstances, sufficiently answer the question. To one of the consequences, less terrible, but more fatal to the cause of pure and undefiled religion, thou has called our attention. "Such a temperament, in

measure disqualifies a Minister from being a competent judge of doctrines and controversies," and consequently, with respect to doctrines, no reliance should be placed in his judgment. Carried into excesses by his "imagination and feelings," he is an incompetent judge, and unworthy of credit -- He is a fanatic!

But, how does thy character of Job Scott, agree with that given him, not by individuals, whose judgment might be warped by esteem or dislike; but by the Monthly meeting, of which he was a member -- by Friends, amongst whom he resided, and who had long watched him, under those circumstances where the character of a minister is seldom mistaken -- by Friends, who must have been more competent judges of his character, than a Friend in London, who had seen him a few times during a visit to that city! "His mind," says the Meeting, "was improved and enlarged, by the sanctifying power of Truth" -- "He had measurably learned, in the school of Christ, the mystery of the fall and restoration of man; and to understand the scriptures, and pertinently to apply them" -- "His soul was deeply baptized" -- "He was eminently gifted with instructive and edifying talents." From all parts of the American continent, where he had laboured in the Gospel, his friends say, "he returned certificates of the approbation of those he visited, and we have good reason to believe, he has left many seals of his Gospel ministry, and impressions of near and dear unity and fellowship with him, as a brother beloved."

Now I would ask thee to say, if Job Scott was the man thou hast described him, would Friends, in all parts of this Continent, where he had travelled, have borne such a testimony of him If he had run into "excess on the side of the imagination," would they have had "near and dear unity and fellowship with him as a brother beloved"? To answer in the affirmative, is to say, that Friends in all the places he visited, had unity with a wild fanatical spirit!

But let us suppose for a moment, that Friends in this land, were so blind, that they never perceived this spirit in him; -- Or let us suppose, that he never indulged in any excesses of the imagination and feelings, on this Continent -- that he reserved all this false fire until he visited Europe! what then becomes of the European testimonies concerning him? Let us now recur to that of the National half-year's meeting for Ireland, and attend for a moment to some of its sentiments. It tells us, that "from genuine marks evinced in the course of his religious services, we believe him to have been an instrument, fitted and prepared, by the great Master, through deep and repeated baptism, for use and service in his Church militant" -- "He was a diligent waiter to experience renewed qualifications for service." -- "His conversation was coupled with fear, as well as seasoned with Grace, and being deep in heavenly mysteries, he was cautious of squandering the same; but when at liberty for conversation, his communications were agreeable and remarkably instructive."

Do we see any marks of fanaticism in all this? -- Is it through deep baptism, that this false fire is elicited? Is it by "diligently waiting to experience renewed qualification for religious service, that the "imagination" becomes heated and runs out into "perceptible excesses." I believe none, who are acquainted with such baptisms, and whose "conversation is coupled with fear, and seasoned with grace" will answer in the affirmative.

Perhaps however, our Friends in Ireland, being themselves naturally of a warm temperament, may have been mistaken -- Or, they may have wilfully thrown a veil, over a weakness; which, from self-love, they were willing to believe was a venial defect! Therefore, as a last resort, to defend the character of this self-denying and baptized servant of Christ, who is not here to speak a word for himself; let us now recur to the Yearly Epistle from Friends of London, in the year 1793, to the Yearly Meeting of Rhode Island. -- In

the Memorial of Providence Monthly Meeting, concerning Job Scott, I find these words: "He arrived at Dunkirk [in France] the fifth day of the First month, and after tarrying there about ten days, much to his own and Friends' satisfaction, he proceeded to England. Taking some meetings in Kent, went to London, attended the different Meetings in that City -- then into Wales, and attended the several Monthly and Quarterly Meetings, and the Yearly Meeting at Caermarthen; thence to Bristol, and returning to London, attended the Yearly Meeting there, who, [Friends of the Yearly Meeting] in their Epistle to ours, speak of him in a very satisfactory manner."

Thus we see, from authentic documents, that not only in the United States, but in Ireland, and France, and Wales, and England, Job Scott's character and labours, are represented in terms of the highest approbation. Even in London, near the place of thy residence, he is spoken of in "a very satisfactory manner." Can we suppose this would have been the case, if his labours and conduct had been marked by a fanatical spirit -- or if thou prefer the terms, by "a perceptible excess of the imagination and the feelings"?

From any thing that appears, thou art the only Friend who ever perceived this defect in Job Scott's character! It was left to thy penetration to discover it, and more than thirty years, after this excellent Minister, and devoted follower of Christ, was laid in his grave, thine was the task to proclaim it to the world!

I will now call thy attention to a portion of thy Letter, which, I think, not only evinces a lightness of spirit on thy part, but a disposition, by a degrading comparison, to propagate the idea that Job Scott was an ignorant man!

After speaking of that "perceptible excess on the side of the imagination and the feelings," which thou declares with great assurance "was certainly in the character of our deceased friend," thou makest the following remarks, which that I may not be misunderstood, I will quote in thy own language, page 4 -- "It," that is this perceptible excess in a minister, "is sometimes corrected by experience, and by an intercourse, in a spirit of charity, with others as zealous and knowing as himself. I remember an honest man's remark, who had been hired as a help from a distant country, and had had to follow his employer for the first time, through our crowded metropolis. 'I never saw such a place as London in my life! -- why, no body would get out of my master's way!' -- Just so it is with powerful but secluded minds, when they emerge from their circle of assenting hearers, and weak opponents, into a wider horizon, and have to compare the contents of their budget with the variety of conflicting opinions around them."

In this paragraph Job Scott is compared to an ignorant hired servant who had to follow his master through the streets of London, in which "crowded metropolis he had never been before," and who was so stupid as to think the passing multitude ought all to get out of his master's way. It is plainly intimated that Job Scott's mind had been a "secluded" one and had never "emerged from the circle of assenting hearers and weak opponents" -- that he had never compared, what thou art pleased to call "the contents of his budget, with the variety of conflicting opinions around him"!

That he was not an ignorant man the memorial I have quoted, and his various publications, sufficiently attest. That he had not just emerged from a "circle of assenting hearers and weak opponents," the Journal of his travels published since his decease, and the well known character of the population of New England, clearly demonstrate. To those who are acquainted by personal intercourse with the people of our Eastern states, it will be vain to say they are "weak opponents" or "assenting hearers"; that they never were so, is evident from their history!

On the contents of the paragraph last quoted from thy Letter I will not detain thee long; but after a few remarks will leave thee to enjoy all the satisfaction that such comparisons may afford thee in moments of cool reflection. There runs through the whole passage a vein of irony and sarcasm, which thy readers cannot fail to perceive, and which is not only inconsistent with the gravity of a religious character, on such a subject, but is much to be lamented when employed by a Friend against a worthy deceased minister of his own denomination.

That thou shouldst suppose him to be an ignorant man, is perhaps very natural. Those who have seldom emerged from the narrow circle, and smoky atmosphere of any "crowded metropolis" seem, very generally, to suppose almost all the learning and knowledge in the world, are centered with them; and that the little which the rest of mankind possess, may be compared to the "gleaning grapes, or as the shaking of an olive tree -- two or three berries in the top of the uppermost bough, four or five in the outmost fruitful branches." I am inclined to think thy own countrymen are peculiarly subject to this error, especially as it regards the people of the United States. Until very lately, the people of England have acted as if they thought we could hardly get along well, unless they sent us Law, Physick, Philosophy, and Religion; whilst we at the same time, could not perceive in the professional character or qualifications of those that came amongst us, any superiority worth the expense and trouble of their transportation.

That the people of the United States ought not to be denominated "a circle of assenting hearers and weak opponents," is evident from all authentic histories of them since the first settlement of this country. They have always been apt to discern the spirit of encroachment, tenacious of their rights, and zealous in their defence. On religious subjects they have been engaged to inquire with great earnestness: and being unshackled with the yoke of an oppressive Hierarchy, and free from that seducing influence which the "dignified clergy" are constantly exercising to draw dissenters into their schemes, it is to be presumed the Americans have attained to as clear views of truth as any other people. With respect to the society of Friends, from a pretty extensive acquaintance with its members on this side the Ocean, I think I may say, they are an active, intelligent and thoughtful people, and too far removed from the weakness of infancy, to stand in need of foreign aid.

The following passage of thy Letter, page 6, seems intended to convey the idea that Job Scott was a man of a gross indelicate character. Nor do I wonder that thou could be easily persuaded to believe it. With ignorance we are apt to connect indelicacy. That the reader may judge for himself I will quote the passage verbatim. "I shall strive not to make this Letter the vehicle of improper thoughts by quoting expressions [from the Essay entitled Salvation by Christ] which could not be read, I think, in a mixed company of Friends of both sexes, without bringing confusion over some of their faces."

Now the doctrine implied by this censure is evidently this; that if any writer, under the solemn engagement of opening and illustrating divine truths, should use language that "could not be read in a mixed company of both sexes, without bringing confusion over some of their faces," such writer is censurable for making his work "the vehicle of improper thoughts." Upon this hypothesis, almost every scripture writer, from Moses down to the latest author of any book in the New Testament is guilty of gross indelicacy. In attempting to propagate such a sentiment, thou hast passed a severe censure on nearly all the scripture writers. Who does not know that there are hundreds of passages in the Bible far more indelicate than any thing in Job Scott's book? It is unnecessary to refer to them. Perhaps thy mind, refined and chastened by intercourse with the elegant and polite society of your "crowded metropolis," might think such reference indelicate! One thing however is obvious, that rather than not bring an odium on Job Scott's character thou art willing to involve all the scripture writers in the guilt of making their work "the vehicle of improper

thoughts," and like him, they must lay under the charge of grossness and indelicacy! And what adds to the singularity of thy conduct on this occasion, thou condemns in theory, what thou exhibits in practice; for the succeeding pages of thy Letter express all the ideas in Job Scott's book, that are calculated to bring "confusion over some faces in a mixed company of both sexes."

Having briefly noticed the charges of fanaticism, ignorance and indelicacy, preferred against Job Scott, I will now revert to some remarks, on the 3d page of thy Letter. Thou sayest, "having heard him preach with much power and energy when he was in England, I was interested and affected by the circumstances of his death in Ireland, soon afterwards; and the regard I have cherished for his memory, made me a little concerned for his religious reputation." I would not suggest a hint on this occasion to impeach thy veracity; but I cannot omit calling thy attention to the inconsistency of thy conduct with thy profession of "regard for his memory." I think it cannot be doubted that if thy Letter were generally to make the impressions which it is eminently calculated to produce on weak and ignorant readers, it would do more injury to his religious reputation than all that the open enemies of spiritual religion and worship, could ever effect. That thy Letter will injure his religious reputation in this country, I do not say. The "seals of his ministry" are yet thickly scattered up and down this land, and thousands of witnesses are yet living and ready to bear testimony to the sobriety, gravity, and steady deportment of this dignified ambassador of Christ -- that so far from being a fanatic, or ignorant or indelicate, his ministry, and his instructive and chaste conversation, were evident proofs to the contrary. Thy professions of concern for his memory reminds me of the famous Lacerta, that terror of the Nile, who is said to weep over his victim before he destroys it. Hadst thou omitted one little word in the sentence I quoted, and said the regard I cherished for his memory made me little concerned for his religious reputation; there would have been some correspondence between thy professions and thy conduct afterwards.

Connected with the quotation I last made from thy Letter, is the following remark respecting the book under thy review. -- "Had he [Job Scott] lived to near the present time," "my own decided opinion, after mature deliberation, is that he never would have published it as it now appears nor probably, at this time of day at all." To the former part of this opinion, I can very fully assent. It is very probable, had he lived, he would have done what every author, who has time and opportunity, ought to do -- he would have revised and corrected it for the press. -- To use his own language, he would have had it "properly digested," and "a good deal better guarded," -- that so no after critic, who might be disposed to invalidate his character, or cavil at his doctrine, should have had a pretext however flimsy, to make his book appear the work of an ignorant or indelicate writer. But he was prevented from effecting his purpose, by an early transition to a better world; and thou hast taken advantage of this circumstance to destroy his reputation! and thus it appears, that this dying martyr in the cause of truth, had good reason to desire that his writings might be "properly digested, and better guarded."

But why should thou think he would not have published it at all? Thou acknowledgest that on his death bed, alluding to the doctrines advanced in his essay, "he still regarded them as true." Dost thou suppose that after he had said, "I am deeply grounded in them, as being the very life and substance of Christianity, indeed of all true religion," he would now, like many of our polite modern Quakers, have receded from this ground, and exchanged the joys and consolations and support of spiritual religion and worship, for the dry husks of a barren and lifeless theology? Dost thou think he would have followed the example of those, who have sold and are selling their birth-right to the invaluable inheritance of our faithful predecessors, for what is far worse than "a mess of pottage"? Canst thou admit the idea, that he would have gone creeping to the world, and have bartered any of our noble testimonies, for the transient honours and applause of a

day? For my part I cannot; -- I think he was too "deeply grounded" in the truth! Could I think otherwise, I should rejoice in his timely escape; and thank an allwise Providence, that he had taken him from us while his lamp was burning in brightness, with this language on his dying lips -- "Follow me as I have endeavoured to follow Christ, the Lord of life and glory, and the Rock of my eternal salvation."

Thou thinkest it probable, he would not have published his essay, at this time of day at all. But why not at this time of day? -- Has any new or better light appeared since his death? or have we so much improved the light we had, that to publish it would be supererogatory? Look at the state of society in England, and Ireland, and Scotland and Wales. Do "the fruitful fields laugh with abundance" -- has "the parched ground become a pool, and the dry land springs of water?" -- Is the doctrine of regeneration and the new birth so well understood, that there is no further need to call the public attention to the momentous subject? Have commentators and critics so perfectly opened and explained it, that our religious society have no cause to proclaim it, in the deep spiritual manner of our early Friends?

Well I think he would have published it. Thou has given me no reason for thy opinion; I will give thee one for mine. Many of the members of the society to which he belonged, have since his time "receded from genuine Quakerism" in doctrine and practice, and have approached what are called "the reformed churches." Of this they are publicly reproached by our adversaries, in books published on purpose to bring the society under odium.* And the reproach is but too well founded. Our country is teeming with pamphlets, couched in intemperate and scurrilous language, written by members of our society, advocating the most irrational and unscriptural doctrines; drawing the attention from the inward, potential, and only means of salvation, "the light within;" the holy spirit in the soul; "God manifest in the flesh"; in our flesh -- to outward and carnal objects, to outward blood, outward laws, an outward sacrifice, an outward mediator, an outward intercessor, an outward redeemer, in fine, to an outward religion -- a scheme of redemption, of which Job Scott said, "It is as dark as Egyptian darkness" -- a scheme with which his enlightened and redeemed mind was disgusted; and which he faithfully laboured, by his ministry and writings, to expose in its own natural deformity! -- and in no work more than in the essay entitled, "Salvation by Christ." For these reasons I think if he had lived to near the present time, he would have published it, if not long before.

Now if I mistake not, thy opposition to Job Scott's work and thy desire to lessen his character have originated from the fact, that he was an enemy to this outward scheme of redemption; and, in a clear and lucid manner, preached and illustrated this eternal truth, "except man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." For this sentiment, it is but just that I should give thee my reasons; because thy real object is not very obvious to a superficial or hasty reader; it lies indeed perceptible through every part of thy Letter, but is so mixed up with other matter, that an unsuspecting reader might not discover it.

In the first place then as the doctrine of Job Scott is undeniably true; and so admitted, even by thyself; the mere circumstance of an alleged defect in the manner of illustrating it, could hardly be an adequate motive for assailing the religious character of a deceased friend, and holding him up, as an object of public censure.

Secondly. If the mode taken to illustrate and explain his doctrine, had been defective, and such as thou thought worthy of public attention, thy object might have been accomplished without impeaching him of fanaticism, ignorance, indelicacy, and several other capital defects not yet noticed.

Thirdly. In thy prologue, page 3, it is made evident, that thy Letter was intended for circulation amongst Friends in this country, for whose use "it was exclusively written"! But at the same time thou seemest anxious we should be explicitly informed, that it "is not the result of any correspondence, previously had, with any Friend in the United States"! Why this anxiety?

From what I have said I think it appears: 1st, Thy object was not to refute the doctrine of the "New Birth." 2d, It was not mere criticism, nor explanation. 3d, It was something offensive, in which American Friends were not to appear! It required an apology, a veil to cover its deformity, something to make it pass current, for error when naked does not travel well!

It is very obvious, from several late publications of Friends in England, and still more so by the oral communications of several ministers from thence, that this outward, carnal scheme of redemption, has been adopted by some of the wealthy, influential, leading men and women amongst them; and by thy Letter it as plainly appears that thou art united in principle with them, as will more plainly be seen in the sequel. Job Scott was a noble testimony- bearer against this dead image, and its worship; and while his reputation and influence remain unimpaired, many will never bow at its altar. It is therefore an important point to remove him out of the way.

The society of Friends in England were originally planted, "a noble vine." Under the guardian care of the great husbandman, it struck deep its roots, and spread wide its branches -- and being watered with the dews of heaven, it became fruitful, to the praise of that grace, by which it stood unhurt through every storm. But alas! trusting to the frail supports of human contrivance and worldly policy, it has bowed its noble head, and many of its branches have become as "the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto its Lord." This is so obvious, that many of the weighty members of the church, on both sides of the Ocean, have had to take up the plaintive language of the prophet, "I will bewail with the weeping of Jazer, the vine of Sibmah (conversion) I will water thee with my tears, O Heshbon (invention) for the shouting of thy summer fruits, and thy harvest is fallen; all gladness is taken away, and joy out of the plentiful field; and in the vineyards there can be no singing, neither can there be shouting, the treaders can tread no wine in their presses, the vintage shouting hath ceased."

I say many of its branches have become degenerate, for I trust and believe, that amongst the constituent members of the society in Europe, there are not a few who are maintaining its simple doctrines and noble testimonies, in humility and faithfulness. It is, nevertheless, too obvious to escape attention, that some of its most active members, have mournfully lapsed in doctrine and practice, from the example of our primitive Friends; and that in many places the society has become a desolation.

This fact I presume will not be denied. The great causes are unfaithfulness, the love of the world, a reluctance to bear the cross, a want of magnanimity to despise the shame. Amongst the secondary causes, the great accession of wealth, has been a fruitful source of degeneracy. This has led to associations with the world, and an amalgamation with its spirit; hence, not only a fear to offend, but a desire to please the great, the noble, the rich, and the learned has been the consequence. -- The nature of the Government has also had its influence. The titles and the splendour of nobility, are very dazzling to the natural eye. They who regard them with unceasing gaze, especially the rich, should have their eyes frequently anointed with the eyesalve of the kingdom, to prevent partial, and even total blindness. A learned and numerous body of the clergy, scattered through the land, of all grades, from the mitred prelate, to the gentleman priest; flattering and fawning, to draw Friends into their popular schemes, for spreading religion, as they call it has had a very visible effect, on the characters of many of the opulent

and accomplished members of the society in England; and through them, on the character of some Friends on this side the Ocean.

Soon after the coalition of Friends with the nobility, gentry, and clergy, in order to send bibles over the world, we began to hear the excellence of charity preached up, and a narrow sectarian spirit decried. This met the ear like music. Charity is so exalted a virtue, that the very name is sweet; and what can be more odious than bigotry? Soon after this, we heard that Friends, the once despised Quakers, were permitted to sit in the same room with Dukes, and Earls, and Lords, and Gentlemen -- not exactly on the same side of the room, but actually within the same walls! Next we heard that some of our ministers had been invited to address the honourable assembly: On which they took the floor, made florid speeches, and were actually complimented and applauded by some of the nobles, for their eloquence! -- and then we heard, that in return for all this civility, our grateful Friends had adopted the use of titles, and that the hireling ministers of an oppressive hierarchy, were saluted by the style, of the "dignified clergy"!!!

Thus things went on for several years. Quakerism in England began to lose its awkward gait and uncouth appearance. It was no longer that rustic "secluded" thing, neither willing nor fit to mingle in the politer circles of society. Clarkson had published its "portraiture" in flattering colours -- the news-papers rung its praise. It had shaken off the fetters of bigotry and superstition, and its avowed principles, except a few "peculiarities," were the delight and admiration of the world! From what I have heard and seen, I apprehend many friends in England, and a few in America, began to think the millennium was at hand; when kings should be the nursing fathers of the church, and Queens its nursing mothers; when even emperors should come bowing at the foot of the cross. It is said that the emperor Alexander, of Russia, when on a visit to England, after the sanguinary conflicts at Waterloo and Paris, attended the meetings of Friends in London, and that many thought they had nearly converted this hardy warrior, just reeking from the slaughter, and drenched in gore, into a peaceable, polite Quaker! But, somehow or another, he escaped to his native country, and soon raised an army of several hundred thousand men, to keep down the rising spirit of freedom in Europe. It is uncertain, to this day, whether the HOLY ALLIANCE, was not the fruit of Alexander's religious impressions, received while in England.

But the spirit of reform did not end here. Our "peculiarities," as they have been termed by one of thy friends in England, were found to be offensive to the new colleagues; it was therefore desirable to soften them down, and Joseph John Gurney wrote two or three books, to explain the doctrines of Christianity, in which the leading features of the trinitarian scheme, were openly advocated; and so acceptable were the books to other religious societies, avowed trinitarians, that they paid for many thousands of them to distribute for the public good!

Now the doctrine of a TRINITY had been publicly disowned by Friends. They denied any distinction in the divine nature. Penn's "Sandy Foundation Shaken" had been adopted by the society and published over and over in his "Select Works." -- Barclay had declared "God is a most pure, simple Being, void of all composition or division. As if to shew that this doctrine did not, in his estimation, belong to the Christian system, he did not in his "Apology for the true Christian divinity" ever treat on the subject -- he did not even admit the term 'trinity' into his book! The ATONEMENT as preached by Fox, Penn, Whitehead, Pennington, and the great body of Friends in their day, was not an outward atonement, but an inward and spiritual one, to be accomplished in the soul of every candidate for salvation. It was the reconciliation of the sinner unto God by repentance and obedience -- not any change wrought in the unchangeable nature of the Deity! It is true George Keith opposed them in this point, but becoming turbulent, as these outward satisfactionists are very apt to be; he was disowned, and by an easy accommodation joined the Episcopal

church. The SCRIPTURES had always been considered by Friends, not the "word of God" nor the words of God, but a record of things known, or believed, or predicted, or done -- written by faithful men, under divine influence or inspiration. Barclay had declared, that "the letter of the scripture is outward, of itself a dead thing; a mere declaration of good things, but not the things themselves." Ap. Prop. III. Sec. 2. We now hear from the gallery, this doctrine contradicted by ministers from England. When the Apostle declared, "the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life," we are told he only meant by "the letter," the old law of Moses; and in thy Letter, page 16, the same false opinion is advocated. Thou say'st 'It was plainly not the letter of this book [the New Testament] to which the Apostle applied the text!' Thus we are taught that "the letter of scripture" which Barclay says "is outward of itself a dead thing" is now come to life, and is that on which we are to depend for religious instruction. Now though we cannot receive thy doctrine, yet we can perceive its inconsistency with scripture, reason, and the testimony of our early Friends. We know from experience and the history of the church for the last fourteen centuries, that a dependence on the letter of scripture, brings death, division, contention, detraction, debate, persecution, and even a disposition to defame the illustrious dead: of which thy own Letter furnishes some corroborative evidence.

But these "peculiarities" which I esteem fundamental principles of the society, were found to be as stumbling blocks in the way of a perfect union, between the parties to the new coalition; and an ardent desire was felt to remove them out of the way; hence in addition to other means, a system of preaching, quite new to us, was adopted by many of your ministers. The plan was to quote the figurative or metaphorical language of the scripture, and apply it in an outward and literal sense, contrary to the views and well known practice of our primitive Friends. And then, if any honest hearted, practical Friend, denied their interpretation, he was to be denounced as an unsound member of society. This plan was soon put in operation, and is now producing its natural fruits -- fruits which it has always produced, from the time of Constantine, down to the present day -- intolerance on the one hand, and opposition on the other. And now these ministers and their adherents, having left the broad and plain ground of George Fox and his coadjutors, have gradually slidden from our original principles, and are landed in the dark and intricate mazes of a lifeless, irrational, and barren theology. They have been "receding from genuine Quakerism, and approaching the reformed churches" until all the difference in doctrine, between them, is scarcely worth the trouble of pointing it out!

Happy would it have been for our peaceful country, had this plan been confined to the land of its origin. But the spirit of proselytism has ever been observed to connect itself most closely, with the most erroneous systems, the advocates of which, wanting the support that truth gives, seek, as a substitute, the sustaining power of numbers. Hence, strenuous efforts have been made to extend the system; so as to include within its limits the numerous meetings of this extensive continent; and, within a few years, an unusual number of ministers from England, have landed on our shores. I would be very sorry to attribute to any labourer in the gospel field, an improper motive; but there has been so marked a difference between the temper and conduct of some of our late visitors, and of those who, during the forty preceding years, have laboured amongst us; that viewing their measures in connection with well known facts, no reasonable doubt can remain, that they have acted upon different principles and with different views.** But all this shows they did not understand the general character of the visited; nor did they consider how widely, in many respects, our circumstances differ from those of our Friends in England. They have sought to convert us to the principles of the new coalition, while the motives to a junction are repugnant to our feelings. It may be very desirable to our trans-atlantic brethren, to stand upon good terms with the nobility, gentry and clergy. But our case is different. We have no noblemen to oblige us by their favours, or flatter us with their praise. Here all men are equal in the eye of the law. We have no hierarchy to oppress us -- no

titheman to conciliate -- no priest to pay! Every man in the land may worship his Creator as his conscience dictates, without buying the privilege. This is not a "toleration;" -- it is a right, guaranteed by the Constitution of our country, and never infringed except when the leading members of some self-constituted society, forgetting their own frailty, attempt to impose upon us their own private views. Unhappily, this kind of attempt, is now made upon many in this land; through, as we believe, the influence of foreigners. It is painful to state the fact, that some of these, not content with the liberty which our country amply affords, to propagate their own opinions, are so regardless of the rights of others, that they go from house to house, bearing "evil reports," tending to destroy the religious influence of our most exemplary ministers. Now, to us this is grievous. We consider it a violation of the good order of society; and though we wish them no harm, and can regard them with charity, and even with pity, yet we cannot but regret they did not remain at home, until sent by the head of the church, not to preach contention, but the gospel of peace!

Hitherto however they have failed in their object, and indeed, from appearances, are not likely to succeed. Friends in this country do not drive well, and there has been no attempt to lead them. Indeed, I have my doubts whether they would lead well. They are a people who are very much accustomed to think for themselves, and such a people will not implicitly embrace the doctrines and opinions of a fellow creature, who has no other, nor better means, of coming to a knowledge of the truth than themselves!

I have said that within a few years a number of your ministers have landed on our shores for the purpose, no doubt, of instructing us on religious subjects; but I believe thy Letter printed here, is the first book written on your side of the water, expressly with that design. Like some of your living itinerants, it is going from house to house, bearing evil reports, to destroy the religious character of a faithful minister of Christ. In one point however, their object is different. The former impeach the characters of the living -- the latter strikes at the character of the dead! This I think is carrying matters one step farther than any you have heretofore taken; but I doubt whether it will answer the purpose. There is something so offensive to most minds, in the bare idea of violating the grave, that it is more likely to produce disgust than conviction! The living can answer for themselves, and when openly attacked, can act on the defensive. -- But the tongue of the dead is dumb -- his arm is nerveless; and therefore, where the spirit of party has not hardened thy readers, every feeling of sensibility will rise in his defence. Were it not that experience has taught us, to what unbounded lengths this desolating spirit will sometimes carry men, otherwise amiable, I should wonder that any Friend in our country could submit to be the bearer of thy Letter, or condescend to aid in its distribution amongst our members!

It is far from my intention to censure Friends of England as a body. I have great pleasure in believing there are many in your island, who are honestly concerned, to support our original doctrines and testimonies; and who will reprobate the design and spirit of thy letter, as sincerely as I do. Friends, who are labouring in great sincerity, though under much depression, to promote the cause of truth. So far from casting any reflection on these, I would rather offer them a word of encouragement; and in the language of scripture, say "Fear not little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" -- "Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." But many who ought to have been standard bearers in our society, have deserted their colours, and gone over to the enemy. Under the garb of a concern for spreading religion, are breaking down the barriers, raised in Divine Wisdom, to separate us from the world. It is against such that I would guard my fellow professors; and if Friends, however obscure their allotment, keep faithful to the light of truth, they will be enabled to perceive and detect these deserters. Our testimony to the simple truth, will again be exalted, and its standard lifted up to the praise of Him who hath called us

-- not for our own sake only, but for his own glory in the happiness of the human family.

In a former part of this reply, I have intimated that thou hast impeached Job Scott of several capital defects, not yet noticed. Permit me now to draw thy attention to another part of thy letter, page 15. After trying to prove, that several of his opinions are incorrect, when squared by thy literal notions of scripture truth, thou has drawn the following conclusions; which, for the purpose of exposing the object and character of thy work, I will give in thy own words -- they are as follow: "Such are the consequences of affecting to be wise above that which is written -- of making that real which is metaphorical -- that figurative or mystical which is literal -- of not being content, to take the plain text along with the context, and draw from both, in humility and faith the instruction they may thus well afford -- in short of rejecting, from an apprehension of our own superior attainments, and greater spirituality, the doctrines deduced from scripture, by christians in all ages, concerning salvation by Christ!"

In this short paragraph there are several imputations on Job Scott's character, wholly inconsistent with the one given him by his most intimate associates, and utterly opposed to the testimonies of Friends in America and Europe.

In the first place, he is accused of affecting to be "wise above that which is written." Now the justice of this accusation entirely depends on one point; that is, whether Job Scott or Luke Howard had the most correct views of the meaning of the scripture writers. Thou assumes the point at issue. "I, Luke Howard, have the most correct views of the meaning of 'that which is written,' I am right and Job Scott is wrong, and consequently Job Scott affects to be 'wise above that which is written'!" This assumption is gratuitous, and if Job Scott were living, he might say, with equal propriety and more truth, Luke Howard pretends to be wise in that which is written -- he makes that metaphorical which is real, that literal which is figurative or mystical! Nothing further need be said to show that thy assumption arises from an overweening confidence in thy understanding of the scriptures -- that thou thinkest thy self wise; in that which is written. Now I can see no proof of spiritual pride, in Job Scott's case, more than in thine. The difference between you lies in this; Job Scott depended upon the illumination of the holy spirit, for his views of scripture truth, thou depends on thy own understanding, aided by critics and commentators. Of the superiority of thy qualifications for explaining the scriptures, we have no evidence, except that furnished by thyself; and from the specimen thou hast given, I suppose our readers will not value it very highly -- but of Job Scott his friends, in their memorial say, "he had learned in the school of Christ to understand the scriptures, and pertinently to apply them." With this kind of evidence in his favour, I leave my readers to judge, whose interpretation of the scriptures is most to be relied on!

In the second place, thou accusest him "of not being content to take the plain text along with the context." The validity of this charge lies, like the former, in the understanding to be put upon "text and context." If they have a figurative meaning, and thou givest them a literal one, thou wouldst be as far in the wrong as Job Scott would if they had a literal one and he should explain them figuratively! Thus, nothing at all depends upon thy assumption "I am right and Job Scott is wrong," but all upon the capacity you may have respectively possessed, for the high office of an expounder of the scriptures! For my own part, notwithstanding the opinion thou hast tacitly given of thy superior claims to that office, if I were to depend on any human authority, I would prefer Job Scott's to thine. He has, at least, one claim to that preference -- the testimony of his brethren that he had "learned, in the school of Christ, to understand the scriptures, and pertinently to apply them."

In the third place, Job Scott is accused "of not being content to take the plain text along with the context, and to draw from both, in humility and faith, that instruction they may well afford." I need not say much on the subject of this charge. -- Whether Job Scott or Luke Howard have evinced most of the fruits of humility and faith, I leave our readers to determine. It appears however by the testimony of his brethren, that Job Scott had learned to "understand the scriptures in the school of Christ." Luke Howard understands them by comparing the text with the context -- the consequence I think has been, that the former had learned to draw spiritual instruction from the scriptures -- the latter is content with that kind of instruction which learned commentators can afford. The one takes the kernel the other the shell!

In the fourth place, the deceased is accused "of rejecting, from an apprehension of his own superior attainments and greater spirituality, the doctrines deduced from scripture, by Christians, in all ages, concerning Salvation by Christ." This accusation is partly grounded, I apprehend, on the supposed accuracy of another charge, which is repeated several times in thy Letter, and dwelt on with very evident marks of satisfaction! This will appear from the following references. In page 6, thou sayst "Job Scott insists again and again that those things are real which sober christians have regarded only as lively and apposite metaphors in the sayings of Christ, and his Apostles" -- the same idea is twice expressed in p. 14 -- and again in the paragraph quoted, p. 15. From the notion, that those things which Job Scott considered real, are only [mark, only,] "lively and apposite metaphors," thou drawest a long string of consequences, of thy own making -- some of them intended to make Job Scott appear ridiculous, and all, entirely founded on thy own misapprehension of the meaning of the word real. Now I think, a little examination of this subject, will show that Job Scott understood the English language, at least as well as thyself!

Our lexicographers render "real," by the words "true, certain, sure" in opposition to "untrue, uncertain, fictitious -- having no reality." But "real," is not opposed to spiritual, otherwise all the things of the spiritual world, would be but phantoms! According to thy position, the "new birth" is no reality! it is a mere fiction -- "only a metaphor"! and thus, when Christ taught Nicodemus this important doctrine, he was merely amusing him with a figure of speech! -- declaring of a new birth and the kingdom of heaven, in which there was no reality! Into such palpable inconsistencies hast thou been betrayed in thy zeal to lessen the influence of Job Scott's writings -- in all which there is not one error, either in matter or manner, half so gross, as thine on this point.

The truth is, spiritual things are the only everlasting realities. "The fashion of this world passeth away," -- Here all is mutation, revolution and change. The body I now possess, is not precisely the same I had yesterday. It has lost some of its component particles, and has had an accession of others. In the spiritual world all things are real, unchangeable, and certain.

Now, spiritual things being invisible, are best described by metaphors, parables, similes, and other figures, representing things unseen, by things known through the medium of the senses. Hence, it was as I apprehend, that Christ seldom spoke on religious subjects, except in this way. With respect to the multitude, Matthew expressly says, "Without a parable spake he not unto them. Ch. xiii.34"; and Mark says, "and with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it, but without a parable spake he not unto them." Ch. iv.33,34. Indeed it must be obvious to the attentive reader, that even to his immediate followers, his language was almost always metaphorical. When the metaphor figured to them any divine truth already known by experience, they understood him clearly; and so it is with all his true disciples to this day. They know these things by experience, and thus are prepared to declare, they are eternal realities. When his figures represented any truth not known in this way, they were at a loss to comprehend the real sense of them, and were often offended. On one occasion, when he had

taught them by the very singular figure, of eating his flesh and drinking his blood; it is said "from that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him." John vi.66. These were carnal hearers, the literal men of that day. They were, however, a better sort of professors, than the literal men of our own. They turned back it is true, but they neither persuaded, nor drove others back. Our literal men endeavour to do both!

But we are told that Job Scott, "from an apprehension of his own superior attainments, and greater spirituality, rejects the doctrines deduced from scripture, by christians in all ages, concerning salvation by Christ." This accusation lies with equal weight, against John Wicliff, John Huss, Jerom of Prague, John Calvin, the martyrs under queen Mary, George Fox, and thyself! Was it not from an apprehension of their own superior attainments, and greater spirituality, that all these rejected the doctrine of the "real presence"? -- a "doctrine deduced from the scripture, concerning salvation by Christ." Was it not from the same "apprehension" that George Fox and his brethren rejected the Eucharist -- water Baptism -- singing Psalms -- a hireling Ministry, and divers other things, "deduced from scripture?" In short, do not all Christian societies, "deduce from scripture," all their doctrines, however absurd, or repugnant to the spirituality of the gospel dispensation? Thy conduct brings to mind the fable, where a man is represented as being willing to lose one eye, so that his adversary might be made blind! In censuring Job Scott thou condemnest thyself and thy friends.

The Church militant has always been, and ever will be, a progressive body. Light is rising. And Spiritual Light, like the Orb of the natural day, does not attain its meridian all at once -- as it regards individuals, who are faithful to its discoveries, it is always on the ascent. Look back, through the vista of a thousand years, what was the state of the Church then? Wrapt in Cimmerian darkness -- in darkness that might be felt -- groping her way in a ditch, where she had been led by her blind leaders -- deluged in her own blood, spilled in fighting for a creed! And are we now to be referred to the doctrines of such a Church, for a proof, that Job Scott was a presumptuous man? Thou assumest that "Christians in all ages" interpreted the scriptures in a certain way. This is not true; but suppose they did, is that any proof they were not mistaken? Or is it a reason, that when the "sun of righteousness," has risen above the horizon, and discovered an error which our predecessors had not light to see, we should shut our eyes, and refuse to be benefitted by his beams?

I apprehend thy errors on this subject have originated from one of the principles of the new coalition, that "THE SCRIPTURES are the light of the spiritual church." "The scriptures of the New Testament," say they, "are not a dead letter" -- Of course they must be a living letter. "They may be understood by comparing the "text with the context"; and by taking them along together, we may arrive at the truth!" This is thy doctrine, as expressed in the paragraph I have just quoted. It is a doctrine thou hast preached and defended, in the fifth page of thy Letter. By this test thou sayest "I will proceed to try some opinions of Job Scott." And memorable is the result! It furnishes an evidence of the falsity of thy scheme, as clear as the most lucid demonstration of a mathematical problem. It has added another proof to the vast mass of evidence, accumulated during eighteen centuries, that the scriptures, in their literal sense, or expounded by human wisdom, never have been any test of doctrines at all; and that, notwithstanding thy assertion to the contrary, they are a dead letter, incapable of themselves of giving either light or life. And this thou well knowest was the judgment of our primitive Friends. It was a testimony, uniformly maintained by them -- it was emphatically, a doctrine of the society! -- and is a truth so plain, that any one who has an eye to see and a mind to think, cannot doubt it for a moment. Only look over christendom -- see the innumerable sects into which she is divided, all claiming the scriptures, as the ground and foundation of their doctrines

and opinions, however contradictory and absurd; and all defended by learned men with the bible in their hands, as the source and origin of every jarring and opposing creed! -- men as capable as Luke Howard, of comparing the "plain text with the context." and of drawing conclusions from both, to support their views! What plainer evidence can we have, of the futility of thy scheme, or the solidity and excellence of that which opposes it? See Barclay's Apol.. Prop. III. Sec. 1,2.

I would now invite thee to review another part of thy letter, page 15. After representing Job Scott as a man puffed up with spiritual pride, "from an apprehension of his own superior attainments, and greater spirituality," thou sayest, "It is greatly to be feared that a spirit of self- righteousness, may sometimes be lurking under these exalted pretensions. For how can a man be supposed to entertain and feed his mind upon such doctrine, without applying it to his own case, and to his neighbors? -- He himself, forsooth, is regenerate, and born again -- he has in him the only begotten, the son and heir of the promises; who ever beholds the kingdom, and dwells in it." &c., &c.

Let us suppose, for a moment, that Job Scott was this "exalted pretender, this self-righteous man -- that this caricature, is a true portrait, and all thy sarcasm well applied! -- Let us also suppose, that Luke Howard really disclaims and detests all such "pretensions," and all those who make them; then, I suppose, the following consequences will necessarily follow; 1st, To the defects of Job Scott's character, already noticed, we must add, spiritual pride, exalted pretensions, self-righteousness. -- Thy charges will now stand against him in the following order, "fanaticism, ignorance, indelicacy, spiritual pride, exalted pretensions, self- righteousness."

2d. Friends in America, France, England, Ireland and Wales, were all greatly deceived by him, and he was a plausible, artful, consummate impostor!

3d. Luke Howard disclaims any pretensions to the new birth -- he does not acknowledge that "he himself forsooth is regenerate and born again"; such a profession would be an "exalted pretension" -- he does not profess to have "in him, the son and heir of the promises"! -- he does not "feed his mind upon such doctrine," nor "apply it to his own case!"

4th. The Apostles and primitive Christians, were exalted pretenders; they professed to have experienced the new birth -- that Christ was in them, "the hope of glory" -- that the son "was revealed in them."

5th. The primitive Quakers were all in an error, which has lately been discovered for the first time by a fellow professor. They entertained and fed their minds upon such doctrine -- they applied it to their own case -- they declared they had "the son in them," and life by him.

6th. That according to thy notions, a new era in the annals of Quakerism has opened. We are now to be so modest, as to decline an open acknowledgment of the truth, and to satirize those who make it.

7th. That the primitive christians and early Quakers, having made these "exalted pretensions," Luke Howard disclaims them and their doctrine.

As the above conclusions are the necessary result of the premises, they need no comment; yet there is one question to which I would call thy attention, as naturally growing out of them. I am not acquainted with thee, nor do I know what is the opinion of Friends in England concerning thee. I do not know, for instance, whether they rank thee among those we term "the solid, weighty members of society." or whether they consider thee a worldly minded, nominal Quaker. It is however evident, that no man is a competent judge

of the deep and weighty subjects of which Job Scott has treated, who has not been "regenerated, and born again"; who has not "in him, the only begotten, the son and heir of the promises": for the Apostle expressly declares "He that hath the son hath life, and he that hath not the son of God, hath not life"; and thou disclaims those who "feed their minds upon such doctrine"! How then couldst thou attempt to sit in judgment on Job Scott and his writings? That thou hast not the "life" here mentioned, I do not say, though it seems to result from the premises; but it may safely be said thy Letter gives us no evidence of a lively renewed mind; of that tender state, which always marks the character of a regenerated man! It is I think, a very invidious, dry, dark production; and I am very glad thou hast told us, that "the society of Friends in England, is not responsible for its contents."

Thou introducest the subject of Job Scott's treatise, in the following words, (page 5.) "The subject of this pamphlet is regeneration and the new birth" that doctrine which our Lord chose to propound but to one person, and that in privacy; as if on purpose to instruct us, that it should be learned in secret, and brought to the test of individual experience; not talked of in crowds, or discussed in religious assemblies" -- "a subject, which he who is clothed with right authority, under the influence of the holy spirit, may at times, profitably impress upon the minds of serious hearers, in the solemnity of public preaching; but which, when cast before the sensual and worldly minded, is as pearls among swine; and may serve to bring the great and precious truth, which lies under it, into doubt, if not into derision."

In this paragraph, the first thing that strikes our attention is the acknowledgment that the doctrine is scriptural! It was "propounded by our Lord himself" -- it may be "profitably impressed upon the minds of serious hearers" -- "it is a great and precious truth." One would therefore suppose, that Job Scott's attempt to illustrate and unfold a truth so "precious," might have met thy cordial approbation! But, not so. Steady in thy attempt to depreciate his character, it is insin

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