uſe theſe three works, and impartially weigh the force of their arguments, will be in no danger, unleſs his pride be very great, or his temper uncommonly irritable, of thinking un­charitably of thoſe from whoſe principles the love of truth may compel him to diſſent.

In theſe directions for the ſtudy of theology, we might have enumerated many more books on each branch of the ſubject well deſerving of the moſt attentive peruſal ; but he who ſhall have gone through the courſe here recommended, will have laid a foundation on which, if he continue his di­ligence, he may raiſe ſuch a superſtructure as will entitle him to the character of an accompliſhed divine. His dili­gence muſt indeed be continued through life ; for when a man ceaſes to make acquiſitions in any department of learn­ing, he ſoon begins to lose thoſe which he has already made ; and a more contemptible character is nowhere to be found than that of a clergyman unacquainted with the learning of his profeſſion. This learning, however, is not to be acqui­red, and indeed is hardly to be preſerved, by ſtudying *bo­dies* or *institutes* of *theology ;* and though we have mentioned a few generally approved by two rival ſects of Chriſtians, and muſt, in conformity with the plan of our work, give another ourſelves, we do not heſitate to declare, that the man who has carefully gone through the courſe of ſtudy which we have recommended, though it be little more than the outlines on which he is to work, may, with no great loss to himſelf, neglect ours and all other ſyſtems. For as an excellent writer @@\*, whom we have often quoted, well obſerves, “ to judge of the fact whether such a revelation con­taining ſuch a principle, with its myſteries and credentials, was actually ſent from God and received by man, by exa­mining the *evidences* and *circumstances* which accompanied it —the time when, the *place* where, the *manner* how, it was delivered—the *form* in which it deſcends to us—and in what it is *contained*— together with the particular s*ubstance* and *burden* of it— and how every part is to be rightly *understood :* theſe are the various and extenſive ſubjects which conſtitute the ſublime office of theologic reasoning and the proper study of Divinity.” On this account we ſhall paſs over ſlightly, and ſometimes perhaps without any notice, many things which every clergyman ought tho­roughly to underſtand, and confine ourſelves, in the ſhort compend which we are to give, to the prime articles of Chriſtian theology. In doing this, we ſhall endeavour as much as poſſible to diveſt ourſelves of party prejudices ; but as we are far from thinking that this endeavour will be com­pletely ſucceſsful (for we believe there is no man totally free from prejudice), we cannot conclude this part of the article more properly than with the following ſolemn Charge, with which a very learned divine @@\* always prefaced his Theological Lectures.

I. “ I do solemnly charge you, in the name of the God of Truth, and of our Lord Jesus Chriſt, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and before whoſe judgment-seat you muſt in no long time appear, that in all your ſtudies and inquiries of a religious nature, preſent or future, you do constantly, carefully, impartially, and conſcientiouſly, at­tend to evidence, as it lies in the Holy Scriptures, or in the nature of things, and the dictates of reaſon ; cautiouſly guarding againſt the ſallies of imagination, and the fallacy of ill-grounded conjecture.

II. “ That you admit, embrace, or aſſent, to no principle or ſentiment by me taught or advanced, but only ſo far as it ſhall appear to you to be ſupported and juſtified by pro­per evidence from revelation or the reaſon of things.

III. "That if, at any time hereafter, any principle or ſentiment by me taught or advanced, or by you admitted or embraced, ſhall, upon impartial and faithful examination, appear to you to be dubious or false, you either ſuſpect or totally reject ſuch principle or ſentiment.

IV. “ That you keep your mind always open to evi­dence ; That you labour to baniſh from your breaſt all pre­judice, prepoſſeſſion, and party-zeal : That you ſtudy to live in peace and love with all your fellow Chriſtians ; and that you ſteadily aſſert for yourſelf, and freely allow to others, the unalienable rights of judgment and conscience.”

Part I. Of NATURAL THEOLOGY.

Sect, **I.** Of the Being and Attributes of God.

HE who cometh to God, ſays an ancient divine @@\*, deeply read in the philoſophy of his age, muſt believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them who diligently ſeek him. This is a truth as undeniable as that a man cannot concern himſelf about a nonentity. The exiſtence of God is indeed the foundation of all religion, and the firſt principle of the ſcience which is the ſubject of this article. It is likewiſe a principle which muſt command the aſſent of every man who has any notion of the relation between effects and their cauſes, and whoſe curioſity has ever been excited by the phenomena of nature. This great and important truth we have elſewhere endeavoured to demonſtrate (see Metaphy­sics, Part III. Chap. vi.) ; but it may be proved by argu­ments leſs abſtracted from common apprehenſion than the nature of that article required us to uſe. Of theſe we ſhall give one or two, which we hope will be level to every ordi­nary capacity ; whilſt, at the ſame time, we earneſtly recom­mend to the young divine a diligent ſtudy of thoſe books on the ſubject which we have mentioned in the preceding directions.

We ſee that the human race, and every other ſpecies of animals, is at preſent propagated by the cooperation of two parents ; but has this proceſs continued from eternity ? A moment’s reflection will convince us that it has not. Let us take any one man alive, and, to avoid perplexity, let us ſuppoſe his father and mother dead, and himſelf the only person at present exiſting : how came he into the world ? It will be ſaid he was produced mechanically or chemically by the conjunction of his parents, and that his parents were produced in the ſame manner by theirs. Let this then be suppoſed ; it muſt ſurely be granted, that when this man was born, an addition was made to the ſeries of the human race. But a ſeries which can be enlarged may likewiſe be diminiſhed ; and by tracing it backwards, we muſt at ſome period, however remote, reach its beginning. There muſt therefore have been a firſt pair of the human race, who were not propagated by the conjunction of parents. How did theſe come into the world ?

Anaximander tells us @@\*, that the firſt men and all animals were bred in warm moiſture, incloſed in cruſtaceous ſkins like crab-fiſh or lobſters ; and that when they arrived at a proper age, their ſhelly prisons growing dry, broke, and made way for their liberty. Empedocles informs us, that mother Earth at firſt brought forth vaſt numbers of legs, and arms, and heads, &c. which, approaching each other, arranging themſelves properly, and being cemented toge­ther, ſtarted up at once full grown men. Another of theſe philoſophers relates, that there firſt grew up a sort of wombs,

@@@[m]\* Tatham.

@@@[m]\* Dr. Taylor of Norwich.

@@@[m]\* St. Pau'.

@@@[m]\* See Bentley's Boyle's Lectures.