**ther; and** tells **them, that** he ought **to be excommunicated.** He alſo exhorts the Chriſtians not to aſſociate with any perſon who led ſuch an openly profane life,

3. He cenſures the Corinthians for their litigious diſpoſition, which cauſed them to proſecute their Chriſtian brethren before the Heathen courts. He expreſſes much warmth and ſurpriſe that they did not refer their differences to their brethren; and concludes his exhor­tations on this ſubject, by aſſuring them that they ought rather to allow themſelves to be defrauded than to ſeek redreſs from Heathens (chap. v. 1—9).

4. He inveighs againſt thoſe vices to which the Co­rinthians had been addicted before their converſion, and eſpecially againſt fornication, the criminality of which they did not fully perceive, as this vice was generally overlooked in the ſyſ**tems** of the philoſophers, (ch. vi. 10. to the end).

Having thus pointed out the public irregularities with which they were chargeable, he next replies to cer­tain queſtions which the Corinthians had propoſed to him by letter. He, **I.** Determines ſome queſtions relating to the marriage ſtate; as, 1ſt, Whether it was good to marry under the exiſting circumſtances of the church? And, 2d, Whether they ſhould withdraw from their partners if they continued unbelievers? (ch. vii).

2. He inſtructs them how to act with reſpect to idol offerings. It could not be unlawful in itſelf to eat the food which had been offered to idols; for the conſecration of fleſh or wine to an idol did not make it the pro­perty of the idol, an idol being nothing, and therefore incapable of property. But ſome Corinthians thought it lawful to go to a feaſt in the idol temples, which at the ſame time were places of reſort for lewdneſs, and to eat the ſacriſices whilſt praiſes were ſung to the idol. This was publicly joining in the idolatry. He even adviſes to abſtain from ſuch participation as was lawful, rather than give offence to a weak brother; which he enforces by his own example, who had abſtained from many lawful things, rather than prove a ſcandal to the goſpel, (chap. viii. ix. x.)

3. He anſwers a third query concerning the man­ner in which women ſhould deliver any thing in pub­lic, when called to it by **a** divine impulſe. And here he cenſures the unuſual dreſs of both ſexes in propheſying, which expoſed them to the contempt of the Greeks, among whom the men uſually went uncovered and the women veiled.

Being thus led to the conſideration of the abuſes that prevailed in their public worſhip, he goes on to cenſure the irregularities which were committed at their love-feaſts, or, as we term them, the *Lord’s Supper.* It was a common practice with the Greeks at their ſocial ſuppers for every man to bring his own proviſions along with him, not, however, to ſhare them with the company, but to feaſt upon them in a ſolitary manner. Thus the rich ate and drank to exceſs, while the poor were totally neglected. The Corinthians introduced the ſame practice in the celebration of the Lord’s Sup­per, thus confounding it with their ordinary meals, and without ever examining into the end of the inſtitution. It was this groſs abuſe that Paul reproves in the 11th chapter. He alſo cenſures their conduct in the exerciſe of the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghoſt; he ſh**ows them they all proceeded from the ſame ſpirit, and**

**were** intended **for the inſtruction** of Chriſtian ſ**ocieties;** that all Chriſtians ought to be united in mutual love; and that tenderneſs **ought** to **be** ſhown to the moſt **in**conſiderable member, as every one is ſubſervient to the good of the whole (chap. xii). In the 13th chapter he gives a beautiful deſcription of benevolence, which has been much and juſtly admired. He repreſents it as ſuperior to the ſupernatural gifts of the ſpirit, to the moſt exalted genius, to univerſal knowledge, and even to faith. In the 14th chapter he cautions the Corin­thians againſt oſtentation in the exerciſe of the gift of languages, and gives them proper advices.

4. He aſſerts the reſurrection of the dead, in oppoſition to ſome of the Corinthians who denied it, found­ing it upon the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt, which **he** conſiders as one of the moſt effential doctrines of Chriſtianity. He then anſwers ſome objections to the re­ſurrection, drawn from our not being capable of underſtanding how it will be accompliſhed, (chap, xv.) **He** then concludes with ſome directions to the Corinthian church concerning the manner of collecting alms; promiſes them a viſit, and ſalutes ſome of the members.

The ſecond Epiſtle to the Corinthians was written from Macedonia in the year 57, about a year after the former. See 2 Cor. ix. 1—5. viii. and xiii. **1.**

St Paul’s firſt Epiſtle had wrought different effects among the Corinthians: many of them examined their conduct; they excommunicated the inceſtuous man; requeſted St Paul’s return with tears; and vindicated him and his office againſt the falſe teacher and his adhe­rents. Others **of** them ſtill adhered to that adversary of St Paul, expreſsly denied his apoſtolic office, and even furniſhed themſelves with pretended arguments from that Epiſtle. He had formerly promiſed to take a journey from Epheſus to Corinth, thence to viſit the Macedonians, and return from them to Corinth (2 Cor. i. 15, 16). But the unhappy ſtate of the Corinthian church made him alter his intention (verſe 23.), ſince he found he muſt have treated them with ſeverity. Hence his adversaries partly argued, 1. That St Paul was irreſolute and unſteady, and therefore could not be a prophet: 2. The improbability of his ever coming to Corinth again, ſince he was afraid of them. Such was the ſtate of the Corinthian church when St Paul, after his departure from Epheſus, having viſited Macedonia, (Acts XX. 1.) received an account of the above parti­culars from Titus (2 Cor. vii. 5,6.), and therefore wrote them his ſecond Epiſtle about the end of the ſame year, or the beginning of 58.

But to give a more diſtinct view of the contents of this Epiſtle:

1. The apoſtle, after a general ſalutation, expreſſes his grateful ſenſe of the divine goodneſs; profeſſing his confi­dence in God, ſupported by a ſenſe of his own integri­ty; makes an apology for not having viſited the Corin­thians as he had intended, and vindicates himſelf from the charge of ſickleneſs, (chap. i).

2.He ſorgives the inceſtuous man, whoſe conduct had made ſo deep an impreſſiou on the apoſtle’s mind, that one reaſon why he had deferred his journey to Co­rinth was, that he might not meet them in grief, nor till he had received advice of the effect of his apoſtolical admonitions. He mentions his anxiety to meet Titus at Troas, in order to hear of their welfare; expreſſes