

Down to  
all  
particulars  
to name

Boston May 3. 29

X

I should have written, dearest Virginia, immediately on the receipt of your last letter, but Spring is a busy season, and I so had an economist of time, that I can never contrive to make the two ends meet. I remember how I used to laugh at poor Aunt Mardolph's long harangues in praise of method & order, but I have come round to her way of thinking, and willingly acknowledge that they are virtues of primary importance. I have then not myself, and fear I shall all my life suffer for the want of them. Habit is a stubborn thing, and after having been careless and irregular for eight and twenty years there is but small hope of my ever becoming what Jeremy Taylor calls a curious and prudent spender of time. Before I was married the false glare which quick parts and the love of literature threw around me dazzled my own eyes, and I never knew how deficient I was in useful qualities until called on for the exercise of them; I then found that like Cardinal Mazarin's niece I had "plenty of diamonds and no chemise" and my object ever since has been by pawning my jewels to procure my linen, or in other words I am constantly trying by the sacrifice of my brilliant qualities to acquire those of ordinary usefulness, which it is equally disgraceful and uncomfortable to be without.

You are right in supposing that I have no desire to make converts to my own peculiar views of religion. I consider it as the most important study in which we can engage, but my own progress by no means equals my sense of its value or my desire of improvement. I am not however so much troubled by a difficulty in forming my opinions as in acting up to them, and my faith is less wavering than my practice; perhaps because it is easier to receive assistance in the one than in the other. The lights of others may aid open in determining your belief, but it depends on your own exertions to carry it into effect. There are some points however on which my opinions are not fixed, and the nature of Christ is one of these. That he was divinely commissioned is a truth on which the whole fabric of Christianity rests, by whom and for what purpose sent he distinctly tells us, but who and what he was in his own person,

I think, he no where so expressly declares as to leave no room for doubt, that he was not God, never called himself by that name, and was never so called by his followers with any reference to his being one with the supreme being, it appears to me most perfectly evident. The text from the first epistle of John, of the three heavenly witnesses, is an acknowledged interpolation. perhaps a wilful forgery, but more probably a marginal note of some commentator, afterwards by accident or design, embodied in the epistle. The fact of its being spurious is so perfectly known, supported by such irresistible weight of proof, that the trinitarian who should ground an argument upon it, would show either most shameful ignorance or a most disingenuous reliance on the ignorance of others. This point is no longer contested, and the text in the last editions of the Greek testament is either omitted or marked as more than doubtful. The Unitarians themselves, however, are divided in opinion on the nature of Christ, and incline to different views of it, according as they <sup>put different</sup> interpretations on some particular texts. Among them, (Dr Chauncy, one of the most remarkable men of our country, is of this number) believe him to have been a pre-existent being, incarnate for the redemption of man. For my own part, I acknowledge myself inclined to think that Jesus never intended to give us a distinct idea of his own nature, and of course that certainty on this subject is not expected to our well-being here or hereafter. It is enough that we know him a divine messenger, and that he has most fully and clearly explained the nature of his commission. He tells us of the life to come, he instructs <sup>us</sup> in our duties to God and to each other, he teaches us how to pray, and that ~~we are to~~ we are to make our petitions <sup>in his name</sup>, and that we shall be saved through faith in him, whilst he constantly declares that the words he speaks are not his but his Father's. "All things are delivered unto me of my Father, and no man knoweth the son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the son, and he to whomsoever the son will reveal him." This text contains my creed; I know the son as sent by the Father, and the Father as revealed by the son. "for one is our master even Christ, and one is our Father in Heavens."

The New Testament was evidently not intended as a perfect revelation, since there are many things which are not <sup>fully</sup> explained to us, and the Trinitarians, of all people, must acknowledge this, since their own unintelligible doctrines, even could they find warrant for them in scripture, are clearly not ~~adapted~~ adapted to the comprehension of man, as he exists on this earth, but without taking them into consideration, the ~~most~~ least reflection recalls to us the many great points on which we are left in darkness, but there is light sufficient, and what there is comes from Heaven, and is <sup>enough</sup> enough if we follow it, to guide us along the narrow path & through the strait gates: the atonement taken in the Calvinistic sense, the depravity of the human heart, and the worthlessness of good works, with other similar doctrines I look upon as errors, partaking of the barbarous character of the age which <sup>gave them</sup> produced birth — the Reformation begun by Luther, is still going on, & much remains to be done ere Christianity, restored to what it was in the days of the Apostles shall be wholly freed from corruption & mysticism. in the mean while, let us by a diligent and honest enquiry after truth, with perseverance in prayer & a pious resolution not to be turned aside from our purpose of religious improvement, do the best we can for ourselves, & leave the rest in His hands, who best knows the difficulties we have encountered & the sincerity of our exertions.

My opportunities for information on the subject of obscure or disputed texts <sup>in the old</sup> new Testaments are greater than yours, dearest Virginia, and if you will freely apply to me whenever you think I can assist you, it may be of advantage to us both. I can <sup>sometimes</sup> tell you what has been the result of the researches made by persons of leisure and learning, as well as <sup>pure and fervent</sup> piety, and you will, by your very inquiries, keep my mind at work on a subject <sup>to which</sup> I would willingly give an undivided attention, but the cares of the world do choke the good seed, and it is wonderful how satisfied we are to slumber, though we know <sup>not</sup> how soon the bridegroom may come.

Upon reading your letter over, I find I have not answered it so much to the purpose as I might have done, but in our future correspondence, perhaps I may remedy my deficiencies. There is another point on which I would touch; I have not room for what I would say, but do not like to pass it entirely over. you say your friends in Virginia fear your income will not be sufficient for your maintenance and exp<sup>ts</sup>, as <sup>indeed</sup> ~~because~~ that there has been a <sup>want</sup> want of confidence in your

economy. Do you know that I have the same fears and the same doubts? I am sure you will do your best to avoid running in debt, but you know not how difficult it is to make the exact calculations, & exercise the rigid self-denial which strict economy requires. you can abstain from the luxuries, the elegancies, in many instances you can sacrifice the comforts, almost the necessities of life, but do you know that it is possible to do all this, and yet spend more money than people whom you see in the full enjoyment of all that you give up. economy is an art not to be acquired without great study & pains, and we southerners know little enough about it. we live at home in a sort of rude plenty which gives us habits of waste and disorder. we never turn our minds to the various ways of making a little

well, and you know me well - for those to be the smallest  
 been of his opinion. I hope to be better. Will & help  
 have the best of both to fighting. I hope to be very strong  
 then 10th some day. I'll be certainly put him up to it.

Mrs Nicholas P. Trust  
 Edge Hill  
 near Leesville  
 Allemanle  
 Virginia



go a great way, and small savings we are apt to regard as useless or even mean. you must learn to take care of every thing, make every thing go as far as possible, and do absolutely without what you have not money for to pay for. do not be too fond of make-shifts and little expedients; they pitter away your means and leave you nothing behind. in your dress if you can make old things look "almost as well as new" by your own ingenuity & with the materials you have on hand it is praiseworthy economy, but if you have to buy a yard or two of one thing and another thing, and to pay a girl to put them together for you, then it is the worst kind of extravagance, that which spends your money without ever giving you any thing <sup>worth having</sup> in the room of it. but dress will be the smallest of your expenses & you must learn to weigh and calculate them all. farewell my dearest sister, I make no apology for speaking with the utmost freedom. I know you too