

society; it particularly tends to make all men of sense and learning bury their talent in the earth, the natural effect of continually declaiming, in a loose and indiscriminate manner, against reason and learning.

It strikes at the root of all revealed religion, by making men think meanly of the Bible; a natural effect of thinking Behmen more highly illuminated than any or all of the Apostles. So Mr. S. frankly acknowledged, "While I admired him, I thought St. Paul and St. John very mean writers."

Indeed it quite spoils the taste for plain, simple religion, such as that of the Bible is; and gives a false taste, which can relish nothing so well, as high, obscure, unintelligible jargon.

*December 22, 1780.*

---

## A SPECIMEN

OF

### THE DIVINITY AND PHILOSOPHY OF THE HIGHLY-ILLUMINATED JACOB BEHMEN.

---

In the late edition of his Works before the second volume, we have the following advertisement:—

"As he and Mr. Law were raised up by God, and highly qualified as instructors of mankind in divine wisdom, so all who are followers of Christ in simplicity of heart, and seek only the salvation of their souls, will find in their writings everything relating to their essential happiness. And all the efforts of human wisdom to depreciate them, can be but like sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal."

Mr. Law's writings are entirely out of the present question: We are only concerned with those of Jacob Behmen; a speci-

men of which I beg to lay before those who really seek the salvation of their souls :—

“ AN EXPLANATION OF THE LORD’S PRAYER.

“ <i>Unser vater</i>	<i>im himmel :</i>
“ Our Father	in heaven :

“ 41. *Un* is God’s eternal will to nature ; *ser* comprehends in it the four forms of nature.

“ 42. *Va* is the matrix upon the cross ; *ter* is Mercury in the centre of nature. And they are the two mothers in the eternal will. The one severs itself into fire, the other into the light of meekness and into water. For *va* is the mother of the light which affords substantiality, and *ter* is the mother of the fire’s tincture.

“ 43. *Im* is the heart : For the syllable *im* goes forth from the heart, and soundeth through the lips.

“ 44. *Him* means the creation of the soul ; *mel* is the angelical soul itself : Which the heart on the cross in the centre between the two mothers has comprehended, and with the word *him* framed it to a creature, viz., into *mel* : For *him* is the habitation of *mel*.

“ *Dein nahme werde geheiliget :*  
“ Thy name be hallowed :

“ 45. When we say *dein*, we understand how the poor soul swims in the water of this world.

“ 46. In the syllable *nah* it inclines inward ; and in the syllable *me* it comprehends the heavenly substantiality.

“ 47. When we say *wer*, the whole creature goes along in the will : For *wer* has the whole centre ; and with the syllable *de*, it lays itself down in obedience to the meekness, and will not kindle the *wer* in the fire.

“ 48. And when we say *ge*, the soul goes into the heavenly substantiality ; and then *hei* is the powerful entering upon the cross into the number three. With the syllable *li* the soul’s will has comprehended the Holy Ghost. *Get* : There the soul will go forth with the Holy Ghost.

“ *Dein reich komme :*  
“ Thy kingdom come :

"49. *Dein* : Then the soul gives itself into the will of God.

"50. *Reich* : Here it gives itself into the virtue of the angelical world.

"51. In the syllable *kom*, it goes into the virtue ; and, with the syllable *mæ*, it goes into the kingdom as a sprout: For the *me* makes the lips be open.

"*Dein wille geschehe, wie im himmel* :

"Thy will be done, as in heaven :

"*Also auch auff erden* :

"So also upon earth :

"52. *Dein* : Here the will casts itself into God's will.

"53. *Wil* is its desire to will the same with the Holy Ghost. *Le* : With this syllable it takes in the will with the spirit into the centre.

"54. *Ge* : With this syllable it goes into the will. *Sche* : With this syllable it worketh the work of God. *He* : In this syllable it bows itself as a child.

"55. *Wie* : There it goes again into the voice of God ; *im* is the heart of God. *Him* is again the creating of the creatures : *mel* is the soul willing the will of God.

"56. *Al* : There it drives on that will, with the syllable *so*, out of its centre into the outward principle. *Auch* : There it affords all it has in itself out into the outward.

"57. *Auff* : With this syllable it apprehends the same again, and desires its substance should not be dissipated.

"58. *Er* : With this syllable it brings its substance into the spirit of this world, and there the will shall work wonders. *Den* : With this syllable it shows that it must not be done in the fire of the anger : For this syllable does not break up the centre. They should be done in meek love, and yet taken out of the *er*.

"*Gieb uns unser taglich brodt heute* :

"Give us our daily bread to-day :

"60. *Gieb* : There the will sticketh in the heart, and presses outward, and the mouth catches it.

"61. *Uns* : With this syllable the soul desires food for all its fellow-members.

"62. *Un* : With this syllable the soul goes into the internal wisdom, wherein, before the creation in the seed, it

was discerned in the eternal will. *Ser*: With this syllable it takes the original of nature in the will, where one form in the original penetrates, fills, and preserves the other. And that is the bond of the soul, whereby it eternally subsists. And that the will of the soul desires; else it would be dissolved.

“63. This is the true ‘doctorship of the Holy Ghost.’ The outward is but foppery.

“64. *Tag*: With this syllable the heavenly number is understood, as wherein the spirit on the cross in the holy matrix comprehends the genitive in the multiplication. *Lich*: In this syllable the soul quickens and strengthens itself with the heavenly number, which springs up out of the Divine Majesty infinitely; and herein the soul is acknowledged for an angel.”

Whoever desires it, may read the rest of this explanation at his leisure. I will only add the conclusion of it:—

“*Amen* :

“95. *A* is the first letter, and presses forth out of the heart, and has no nature; but we clearly understand herein, the seeking, longing, or attracting of the eternal will, without nature, wherein nature is generated, which has been from eternity.

“96. Now, as the *A* generated out of the heart, that is, out of the eternal will, so out of *A* afterwards comes the whole alphabet with four-and-twenty numbers; for the *A* begins to number, and comprises the whole number in the syllable *men*.” (*Behmen's Works*, Vol. II., p. 165, &c.)

Now, here I fix my foot. Upon this ground I join issue with every admirer of Jacob Behmen in England.

I appeal to every candid man, every man of piety and common sense, whether this explanation deserves those violent encomiums contained in the Advertisement.

I ask any person of understanding, First, whether any man in his senses, from the beginning of the world, ever thought of explaining any treatise, divine or human, syllable by syllable. Did a more absurd imagination ever enter into a madman's brain? Is it possible by this means to make sense of any text from Genesis to the Revelation? Must there not be a very high degree of lunacy before any such

design could be formed? I ask, Secondly, If any scripture could be thus explained, if any meaning could be extracted from the several syllables, must it not be from the syllables of the original, not of a translation, whether German or English? I ask, Thirdly, whether this explanation be any explanation at all; whether it gives the meaning of any one petition; nay, whether it does not reduce the divine Prayer, all the parts of which are accurately connected together, into an unconnected, incoherent jumble of no one can tell what! I ask, Fourthly, whether we may not pronounce, with the utmost certainty, of one who thus distorts, mangles, and murders the word of God, that the light which is in him is darkness; that he is illuminated from beneath, rather than from above; and that he ought to be styled a demonosopher, rather than a theosopher!

JOHN WESLEY.

END OF THE NINTH VOLUME.

79 1394 13