A REVIEW

OF THE

BASE CONDUCT

OF

WILLIAM PARKINSON,

Pastor of the First Baptist Church,

IN THE CITY OF NEW-YORK;

As exhibited in a work published against him last Fall,

ENTITLED,

"Imposture and Deception Detected and Exposed,"

IN A LETTER TO THOMAS COTTRELL,

DEACON OF SAID CHURCH.

BY JAMES OSBOURN,

A Baptist Minister in the City of Baltimore.

Her priests have polluted the sanctuary.—Zeph. 3. 4.
Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.—Heb. 13. 4.

Baltimore:

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A REVIEW

OF THE CHARACTER AND

BASE CONDUCT

OF

WILLIAM PARKINSON, &c.

SIR,

I FOR some time past have had a desire to address a letter to you, and in a free and open manner to express my former and present views of William Parkinson, Pastor of the First Baptist Church, in the city of New-York, in which church I know you stand a member and a deacon. I also know that you have a perfect knowledge of the vast variety of iniquitous things, which have been and still are in circulation, in reference to Parkinson, and that you take a decided stand in his favor, and try to uphold him, notwithstanding the many and great crimes laid to his charge. And why I the rather say what I have to say on this wretched subject to you, in preference to one whose mind may be prejudiced against your pastor, is not so much, because I am intimately acquainted with you, as it is because I would not be guilty of the detestable conduct of acting clandestinely. You know very well that the different publications now out against P——n, are open for animadversion, and that people will think for themselves; and that it is at the option of the reader of these publications to take a stand for, or against the person of whom they treat, as it seemeth him good.

And as I have from the beginning, down to the present date, been a reader of these publications, so from reading them, and also from other things, I have formed my opinion of William Parkinson; and what this opinion is, I now intend to lay before you in a free, familiar manner, and without any base object or wicked design in view. I also shall in this, my address to you, take notice of some of the strange events in the life of your pastor, and especially of those recorded by the writer of "Imposture and Deception Detected and Exposed." A work which affords ample materials for a folio volume, but for the *present*, I shall only write a single letter to you, in a private way, which you may read over at your leisure, and answer it when convenience serves.

When I arrived in your city from Europe, I found P——n had lately become the pastor of the above church, and that by a certain class of men and women he was much admired and followed; and although I at that time was not a public professor of religion, yet I now and then went to hear him preach, but his manner was always disgusting to me, and I did really think that his *fawning* and *whimpering* in the pulpit, was not only beneath the dignity of a servant of God, but was done with a view of exciting the amorous passions of the young females, who you know used to hang about him, after preaching was over, in a very rude way, and follow him about by shoals, and of whom I concluded he was most amazingly fond; not as christians I don't mean, but as wanton and giddy girls. A witness on the trial of P——n for *assault and battery*, upon Mrs. Wintringham, in the year 1811, says that P——n was run after by "flocks and droves" of such sort of

females. Yea, says the same witness, "he was run over by day and by night, by them." Trial, page 45. And I knew then as well as now, that his crafty and insidious manner could not in the nature of things, fail to produce lewd effects, and that the liberties which he took with them, and suffered them to take with him, were repugnant to the gospel of the Son of God, but compatible enough with a feigned profession of Christ, and a carnal heart, and a lascivious mind. And sure I am that the chaste and virtuous mind of a servant of God, would have revolted at those very things, which to Parkinson's lascivious soul, possessed magnetic charms. And although lascivious smiles, wanton glances, amorous jokes, and lewd whispers, are not things that accompany salvation, nor traits which characterize a man of God; yet if these traits did not put forth themselves in your William, at an early period of his ministry in your city, I am willing that any person should "make me a liar, and my speech nothing worth," Job. 24, 25, And I concluded then, as well I might, that the wonderful accession of young females to his church was occasioned by the above traits appearing in him in the manner they did; for I felt confident that William well knew which was the "right side of the ship" to cast his net to catch young mermaids.

Nor was this lewd course of conduct new to him, or confined to your city; for when I first entered into the ministry and travelled through those parts of Maryland and Virginia, where he preached before he settled where he now is, I frequently heard of his lewd behaviour, wanton tricks, and sportive movements, by which things, many people were convinced that his designs

were base. And a witness on the above trial, says this much of him: "He told me that the first year after he had experienced religion, a young woman had come into his bed room, and he had a connexion. He then took a hymn book and read me a hymn which he had made on the occasion. That was the first time he had backslided. The next was with a young married woman." (Trial, page 8th.)

I have made this quotation with a view of showing how very analogous it is with what Parkinson told me in his own study, about five years ago, namely, That a baptist preacher was then circulating a report against him, of Parkinson having many years ago told him that his criminal connexion with a female was what gave rise to a certain hymn of his own, and which now stands in his collection of hymns, and that the report stated that the crime was committed by Parkinson in your city. But it seemed that the preacher had made a mistake in the time and place where the crime was committed. And P——n availed himself of this little mistake, and by it labored to convince me that the report altogether was a fabrication, by showing me the original manuscript copy of the hymn with the date to it; and he told me the place where he composed it was Fredericktown in the state of Maryland; and I knew by the date, that it was prior to his knowing your city. He then asked me what I thought of the report; and I without premeditation said that a mistake might easily have been made in regard to time and place, and yet the crime have been committed, or words to the same amount. He appeared greatly struck at my sudden reply, and dropped the subject abruptly.

Query. In case the above crime had not been committed, would he not have protested to me his innocence in that matter, instead of going that roundabout way to prove, and laying so much stress on the trifling mistake made by the baptist minister, seeing that mistake was neither here nor there in regard to the great importance of the report? And is not this catching at straws, and laying so much emphasis on such little things, instead of coming boldly to the main point on which all turns, strong proof of guilt? And as we have no good reason to think that a minister would tell so bare faced a lie, are we not bound to believe the report to be true in substance? and more especially so, as P——n hinted nothing to me of his not being guilty of the crime? But to return.

It was not long before I was well convinced that my suspicions of his lewdness were not ill founded. I now allude to the infamous affair of Parkinson and Mrs. Stewart, who you know testified under oath that P——n commited adultery with her; but as it however was not tenable in law, no evidence was received, and the trial ended. But enough was said and done in that affair to show the real complexion of the man s soul, especially when viewed in connexion with his manner and conduct among young trifling and wanton girls. And as for my own part, although as we say, I was neither bed nor bolster in the affair between William and Mrs. Stewart; yet from what I had from her own mouth, and from what she told Parkinson to his face in the presence of many Baptist preachers, viz, that if he would swear that he did not basely sport with her at three different times, she would say nothing more on the subject, but would be reputed a liar and bear all

the blame, and his refusing thus to swear; from all these things I say, I could not help believing him to be a guilty man. For no person who feared God and regarded his honor and the peace of the saints, and was innocent of the crime charged on him, would have objected to swear to his own innocency; especially when he knew that his oath would be the end of all strife, and remove the fears and anxieties from the minds of thousands of people.

Again—William having such a vast crowd of girls following him, and professing so much fondness for him, and talking so often about him in the *tone* they did, and being just about ready to pull caps for him; were things convincing to me that his greatness and goodness in their esteem, consisted, not so much in an extensive acquaintance with the gospel of Christ, as it did in an *experimental knowledge* of young females, and in the *satanic art* of working on their *amorous passions*, by fawning and whimpering in the pulpit. And were I here to say no more on this subject; and also admitting that these late publications had never made their appearance in the world against your pastor; his trial taken in short hand, and published by William Samson, counsellor at law, in that memorable year, 1811, is a sufficient comment on the subject of lewdness in relation to him.

But although so much is said in that trial, and so many beams of light thrown on the lewd character of William, yet I would just remark: that such were my views and thoughts of him, that even when that tremendous eruption broke out between him and Mrs. Wintringham, out of which affair the above trial grew,

as you very well know, I was by no means surprised; for all the dreadful abominations then brought to light in a criminal court, served only to confirm me in what I suspected of him before the trial took place. And yet notwithstanding all the infamy and base and lewd conduct charged on him, in open court, and many things alleged against him which never appeared in court, there were not a few people stood ready to support him through, and under all; and to believe, or they pretended to believe, that poor William was an innocent and an injured man. And you, sir, was one of those people. And I believed then, and so I do now, that countenancing of him in the manner you did, you strengthened him in his iniquities, and sinned against God.

It is true he was cleared in court, and so many a guilty man has been, guilty in the sight of God I mean; for there are crimes which the civil laws cannot touch; and so the Hon. De Witt Clinton says, in his charge to the jury, on the trial of your pastor, in 1811, whose words are these: "There are certain crimes beyond the ken of human laws, and left to the judgment of the Almighty. Such are fornication, adultery, lewdness, and other indecency, unless when they are committed in such a public manner as to injure the morals of the community by the example, they are not subject to criminal punishment. But if they are presented to the court in the shape of a breach of the peace, by which the hand of punishment can be made to reach them, then the violations of moral and religious duties will certainly be taken into consideration. And though the guilt or innocence must still depend upon the infraction of the peace, yet the punishment will depend upon the violation of good morals, and the degree of the enormity. You therefore are to consider this as a pros-

ecution for an assault and battery, in point of form, but substantially and essentially for an unlawful attempt by a minister of the gospel upon a female of his own congregation." (Trial, page 80th.)

Parkinson being cleared in court therefore, has but little to do with the subject I am now upon; which is, what he is in a religious point of view, and not what he was or is in the eye of the civil law. And we know that he was tried for an assault and battery on the body of Mrs. Wintringham, which could not, nor was not proved against him; nor was it necessary to prove him guilty of such a breach of the peace, in order to prove him guilty of a more heinous crime in the sight of God.

Besides, admitting there was nothing amiss between him and Mrs. Wintringham, there was proved in court and out of court, enough to establish the fact of his being to a very high degree, lewdly inclined. And most assuredly we are induced to believe that his lewd inclinations lead to correspondent acts, from many circumstances; and his own letter to L. Bleecker, Esquire, is no mean proof of it.

"Very dear brother,

If I may yet so address you; your affectionate letter, but doleful news, I received on Saturday evening. The Lord have mercy upon me! What shall I do? I have mentioned it to brother Duffie, who will see you. Be careful of mentioning it to too many—save if possible my credit in the Church, so that I may get a letter and go, if go I must, so that I may yet preach precious Jesus. William Parkinson.

May 13th, 1811." [Trial, page 25.]

Mr. Parkinson once told me that he was of opinion it would have been better for him if he had left the city as soon as his trial ended, for that affair was still fresh on the minds of many, though fourteen years had elapsed since that great tumult took place. But whether it would have been better for *him* or not, I cannot say; but it seems pretty certain that his absenting himself from your city at that time, would have been much better for *a poor defenceless young woman*, of which young woman I will now say a few things; but in so doing I will confine myself to such things and such only, as relate to the matter in hand, and which may tend to throw light on a subject so black and odious as the one now before us.

But little was said or known, in a public way at least, of the infamous line of conduct pursued by your pastor from 1811, until about a year and a half ago; when lo a most dreadful and destructive explosion took place; by which sudden concussion, mire and dirt were thrown up and brought to light, sickening to behold, and yet too plain to be denied by men who are not disposed to wink at iniquity and shut their eyes against *plain, candid, open and unequivocal testimony.* But to say nothing at present, either of the oath, under which a heap of things were before the public attested, or of the testifier—yet surely men's eyes cannot deceive them when gazing on a living object, on which little prattling object are indellibly fixed striking lineaments of a lascivious father, in whose foul and lewd embraces its ruined mother often fell. If testimony of this indubitable kind, and supported by a train of corroborating circumstances, is to be disregarded as futile and insufficient to establish a point to which it so

closely adheres, we may for ever despair of having any one thing satisfactorily proven in the whole current of events amongst men. And to set such testimony at nought, and to vindicate and support "the basest of men," Daniel, 4. 17, show clearly how much debauched the minds of men are, and how little they regard the honour and glory of God.

But it is not only true, that but little was publicly said and known of the improper conduct of William Parkinson with females from the year 1811, to a year or two ago; but it is equally as true, that many of those very persons who aloud protested against him in the matter of Susan Cahoon, Mrs. Stewart, and Mrs. Wintringham, thought that he was a restored backslider and was now going on well, and I myself thought perhaps it was so, knowing that a saint might be suffered to go astray, and that God could restore and forgive. And under an impression of this sort, I consented to preach for him when in your city; but still I all along had my strong suspicions of him, and viewed him as a mere carnal preacher, or as one who knew nothing of the grace of God in deed and in truth. At least these were my fears; and his dry and starched manner of talking about religion in private, greatly confirmed me in my fears of him; for there never was any thing, either in his preaching, or in his private conversation with me, that savored of holy unction, heavenly dew and the spirit of grace; or that was in the least calculated to convince me that he knew any thing of the grace of God in truth.

But as for any improprieties in his conduct at that time, I am free to confess I was under no unpleasant

apprehensions about; but whether he was a man that loved and feared God, I did very much doubt; and from the beginning I doubted it, and I doubt it yet. And as this was the light in which I viewed him, so I always stood pretty much aloof from him when I was in New York as a preacher, as many people there can testify.

But in regard to his being a restored backslider, as many hoped he was, and that he was going on well, was a mistake; for instead of things going on well, the greatest abominations were practised by him, providing only one half be true of what is stated against him in a book printed last fall entitled, "Imposture and Deception Detected and Exposed." In this work your pastor stands accused of *seduction* and of *bastardy*. And in such a way are these crimes laid before the public, that we are bound to believe them; and as no attempts are made to disprove them, we are confirmed in our belief; and indeed to believe otherwise under existing circumstances, would be doing violence to sound judgment and good sense. As for Parkinson saying that the Gospel forbids him going to law before the unjust, &c., must be viewed by every thoughtful man as a strong proof of his guilt; and especially as those people who charge him with these foul crimes, have not done it out of any dislike to the Gospel, or to P———n for preaching the same; but from a full conviction, and a thorough knowledge of the crimes alleged against him, having been committed by him at sundry times and in divers places.

And if indeed the man's character is to be blasted, and his reputation forever to sink in ignominy for the

want of a conscience that will let him take hold of the civil law, so as for him to retrieve himself from perpetual disgrace; I would, and I here do, purpose that the following plan be forthwith adopted, viz: Call an Ecclesiastical court, composed of twelve discreet and orthodox ministers of the Gospel, and let the Bible serve for their code of laws; and then let one man as mouth for all, call upon the God of heaven for wisdom to know how to act in all matters that may come before them; and then let a Moderator be chosen, and decorum and truth closely adhered to. And then let the principal accuser, Maria Shade, and the accused, come face to face; and then let a short, but an appropriate address be delivered by an able member of the court; and then cause that the whole subject, filthy as it is, of *seduction* and *bastardy*, be thoroughly canvassed, and all the evidences for and against, written and verbal, be distinctly heard, and duly weighed, and fairly understood, so that the court may decide according to its best judgment in the case, and innocence be placed on its proper basis.

I am confident that no God-fearing people can object to a plan like this, which is so plain and simple, and so well calculated to bring to light, and honorably to establish the righteousness of one who perhaps is injured by mortals, base and vile. Besides, the *cause* of God and truth demands as much as this of us; especially as this *cause* is at this present time, and has been at different periods prior to this, suffering martyrdom as between the upper and the nether mill-stone, from the various charges which have been brought against William Parkinson, who must be a most notoriously vile wretch, even if but one half, or indeed one

tenth part be true, which has been, and now is said of him in public print; and a most surprisingly injured man he must be, if all the charges out against him are false.

Again I observe—it would be unreasonable for us to think that P——n would remain in silence when stigmatized with infamy in public print, and positively charged with seduction and bastardy, unless he was guilty of the deep-dyed crimes with which he stands charged by the very same Maria Shade, whom he decoyed from the path of virtue, and kept for a base purpose, and forsook in an evil day. Good God! can a man who bears this character be countenanced by any person who fears God, or by any association of God-fearing men? I would answer in the negative, if my opinion was called for in this case. And I do insist upon it, that the above is the real character in which we are bound to view your pastor, until such steps are taken by him, whereby the reproach heaped upon him may be removed; for the very crimes alleged against him, do not more confirm us in the belief of his guilt, than does his profound silence, since this last book came out. It cannot be thought by any judicious men, that an innocent man would slumber and sleep, and remain in dead silence under such a load of infamy, and most disgraceful charges heaped upon him, since his character as a father, a husband, and a citizen, urge the absolute necessity of his clearing himself of the foul aspersions thrown upon him. And in the present instance, the honor of God should be tenderly regarded, and the mouths of gainsayers stopped, by making every exertion that can be made to wipe off the scandal, and to take away the reproach from Israel. And men that

fear God will insist on this course being taken by your pastor in preference to conniving at his atrocities, winking at his abominations, and keeping him in their connexion. If indeed he be innocent, let it be made to appear by a *combination* of circumstances; but if he be guilty, then "put away from among yourselves that wicked person," 1 Cor. 5, 13. God-fearing men would have acted in this way at the first onset, and never have rested until *innocency* appeared in its native simplicity and original upright attitude. But you, sir, and your church, and other churches and people, have not so acted, but have caught at straws and rested on them, (as you could get no better) as sufficient evidences of your disgraced pastor's innocence; and by so doing you have all given strong proofs of your not being on the Lord's side, but that you are taking part with, and acting on the behalf of, a *worker of iniquity*, a *deceitful man*, and a *hypocrite in Zion;* and for your so doing, I doubt not but God will put all of you to open shame; which will be serving you, as you have served him in the matter of William Parkinson.

God will not be always mocked and trifled with in this manner by you, for he is jealous of his honor, even while you are treading of it in the dust, and pouring contempt upon it by supporting a man whose character through life has been a disgrace to the gospel of Christ. These are serious things, and they are facts, and you and others will by and by feel the divine displeasure of God for thus sporting with his glorious character, and trifling with the gospel for the sake of upholding a man of ill fame.

I verily believe from my soul, that your pastor's conscience is seared with a hot iron to such a degree; and that he is so given up of God to follow his own pernicious ways, that he can sin without remorse, and wallow in wickedness without dread, and tell lies systematically, and teach his lewd male and female *companions* to do the same, in order to hide his shame and to destroy all testimony that may be brought against him. Mr. Cottrell, permit a servant of God to ask; have not you acted like one of his *companions*—one of his *aids-de camp*—one of his *systematical liars?* Or what is the same thing, one who winks at his infamy, and countenances him in his villany, and puffs off his lies in public market? A perilous path! a hazardous course! a desperate adventure!

But your pastor not only commits crimes of a foul and filthy nature, but in order to conceal his guilt, he makes a lie his refuge, and you concur with him in concealing it. In order to make it appear that he could not have been the father of Maria's child, he states that he was on a tour to the state of Ohio, in the winter of 1819—20, which was the winter in which Maria became pregnant. But this statement is false, for it was in the winter of 1818—19, that he was in the Ohio state, and I saw him and spoke to him when he was on that tour; and his text book proves the same thing, and you know it, and G. W. Skellorn, your other deacon knows it also, and Parkinson likewise knows the same thing, and has acknowledged the fact before you all, at one of your church meetings. And if you or your pastor can deny these things without shuffling, lying, and false swearing, do so; and I upon the strength of it, shall be just as fully convinced that Maria Shade has sworn her child to

the wrong man, as now I am that William Parkinson is the illegitimate father of it.

But in relation to the concealing of this lie, I would say to the pastor and deacon, "Why did you conceive this thing in your hearts? you have not lied unto men, but unto God," Acts 5, 4. But seeing "satan filled your hearts to lie to the Holy Ghost," it would not be such a very strange thing, should the wrath of God be kindled against you, and your consciences smitten with so sore a plague, as for you to be "driven from light into darkness, and chased out of the world," Job 18, 18; for God will not be always insulted and trifled with by such "hypocritical mocker in feasts," Psa. 35, 16, as you have fully demonstrated yourselves to be, by "agreeing together to tempt the spirit of the Lord," Acts 5, 9.

We read of the "bond of iniquity," Acts 8, 23; and if William and Thomas, and those connected with you in these scenes of "wickedness in high places," Eph. 6, 12, are not united together in this iniquitous bond, nothing in nature is true: and perhaps it would have been better for you, sir, if you had never been born, than to have abetted a man so notoriously infamous, and a cause so disgraceful. But you no doubt will under some pretext or other, excuse yourself and clear yourself of wrong in this matter; yet still your conduct in this lying affair is of such a complexion that it can never fail to hold you up to view, as having acted dishonestly for the Lord of hosts, and as though you would rather screen a guilty wretch, than act honorably for God. Base and perfidious conduct!

How amazingly serious it is for a bishop and his deacons to become confederate together in wickedness, and to strengthen each other's hands in sinning against that very God whom they hypocritically worship! And this, sir, is the perilous course which you and the rest of your deacons have pursued in order to support your unfortunate pastor; and I, as a servant of God, do now in the fear of the Lord, charge these abominations on you; and your consciences testify to your guilt, your desperate guilt! and a righteous God will hold you responsible for these outrages committed under a shew of sanctity. "Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished," Prov. 11, 21. I here allude to your winking at the crimes of your pastor; and you as deacons have much to dread from the hand of him whom you have insulted by vindicating the character of one of the vilest of men. And what adds to your guilt, is that of your doing all that you have done against God, in vindicating your pastor, with your eyes open, and under full conviction of his being a guilty man; and of his having told lies, and acted in disguise, and with deceit, and made false statements, and used violence, in order to cover his lewdness, hide his guilt, and to clear himself. You know what deceit and violence your William used in the affair of cutting off from your church, Mr. Moore, of whom at present I shall say nothing, as I intend to keep on hand, "an army of reserve," in case of a second attack. And not a few things on this awful subject can be easily brought to light when ever they are called for.

Were I in this case, and in this place, to appeal to the judgment and conscience of your pastor, it should be after this wise--Mr. Parkinson, in your more retir-

ed moments, what are your thoughts, and views, and feelings, concerning the great hue and cry out against you; because they are facts, or they are not. If they are facts, do they not press with considerable weight on your mind, and cause your spirits to bow down heavily? Or is your conscience so hardened through the deceitfulness of sin, that you are proof against fear, remorse, and terror, and can stand unmoved, and be regardless of all the heavy charges of infamy brought against you by females whom you have baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost?

But admitting your conscience to be thus stupified, yet the God before whom you have played the hypocrite and acted a wanton part, can rouse you from torpor, and open the flood-gates of his wrath, and invade your soul with his terror, and thereby to cause you to stand like a frighted ghost, and fill you with wild dismay, and render your life a burden to you, and cause your latter end to be despair, and your death more bitter than wormwood. What are your future prospects, Mr. Parkinson, in relation to your soul? You know whether, through the life of your ministry, you have "worn a rough garment to deceive," Zech. 13, 4; and whether or not your line of conduct among females has been discreet, chaste, virtuous, upright, decent, and becoming; or whether it has been of that kind which designates you an "unclean person," Eph. 5, 5; an "adulterer," 1 Cor. 6, 9; and "a deceiver," Mat. 1, 14. You also know whether Maria Shade has sworn against you falsely or not, in swearing that you seduced her, &c. &c. You likewise know that it will go hard with that man who passeth through life under the name of a minister

of the gospel, and yet when the grand assize comes on, he is found standing before the Judge of quick and dead, with a conscience polluted with guilt, a life stained with infamy, and blackened with crimes of the foulest kind. You also know, that to trifle with sacred things, to wanton with the name of Christ, to make religion a handmaid to vice, and to turn the grace of God into lasciviousness, is most dreadfully dangerous, and that they are crimes of a frightful form, and if persisted in, they cannot fail to constitute the very *empathis* of hell. And if *these things* and *this character* do not belong to you, and are no way applicable to you, to your conduct, and your case; you, Mr. Parkinson, are in duty bound (and if you are innocent, you will do it) to invalidate, and to overthrow the statements made by Maria Shade, under oath before William H. Bogardus, Esquire; and also those statements made by her since the above, in a long letter to you, which letter is now in print, and in my possession, and which exhibits such a scene of infamy and lewdness, as is without a parallel. And yet this long letter, this astonishing letter, you, Sir, pass over in dead silence. *And no wonder!*

Furthermore.—As there is no better way whereby a man's innocence can be made to appear, if he be falsely accused and wrongfully judged, than by a fair and open investigation of that very subject by which he is exposed to the scorn and contempt, and derision of the public at large; so on the other hand, there need no stronger proof of a man's guilt, than of his being determined not to come to the light, nor to have the subject fairly and fully discussed, but is trying all he can to get every thing hushed up, and remaining in silence, and saying it is not right for a clergyman to go

to law. Query. Admitting that in some cases it would be wrong to go to law, and the present case to be of that class; would not the wrong, in this instance, be less to go to law, than to remain silent? But I see no real need of going to law, as all could be settled by an ecclesiastical court, as I have already shown. But if it would be necessary to seek redress at an earthly court, surely the opportunity is a good one; for nothing under the sun can be more libellous than are the statements made in the book and affidavit above referred to, admitting at least they are not correct, nor cannot be substantiated in an ecclesiastical or judiciary court. And what man that regards his own credit, and worth as a laborer in the garden of God, and that feels for the cause of Zion and the honor of the Lord, that would not avail himself of so fair an opportunity of clearing his character and Zion's cause and the Lord's honor, and at once expose such *vile miscreants* as all such must needs be who will testify under oath to arrant lies, and then industriously circulate them far and near in public print;—I say what man of God would not do so, was he conscious of his own innocence in these matters, and knew he had a God of mercy and grace to fly unto, who would protect and defend him against his enemies and vile calumniators, and cause that his innocency and righteousness might shine forth as the light?

When I fisrt read the above work through, I felt confident in my own mind that the author would be sued for a libel, by William and his cronies, understrappers, quacks, and pettifoggers; if by so doing they thought any advantage would accrue to them: but if William was a guilty man, I also felt persuaded he would treat

the whole developement with silent contempt; knowing in his heart that the more the subject of Maria's illegitimate child was stirred, the worse it would appear. And now as I have read the work, I, as a kind of a reviewer, will just observe in a mild and modest tone of voice becoming a reviewer, that I have ere now read works of the same comical kind, and discovered in them, a great deal of intrigue, base craft, and low cunning, carried on by the infamous seducers. But with all things taken into view, and duly considered, never did my eyes behold such a *picture of iniquity*--such a *scene of abominations*--and such an *exhibition of obscenity* in public print, as I last fall saw in a work entitled, ' Imposture and Deception, Detected and Exposed." And as I said before, we are bound to believe the book, till invalidated by your pastor.

But I find that there are people lewd enough in mind, if not in practice, to try to support the man who is made a public example of, both in America and in Europe. And you, sir, are one of those base mortals; and not you only, but all the rest of your deacons. But how your conscience feels under such a line of conduct which you have pursued in reference to countenancing Parkinson, is impossible for me to say, as I was never, since I have been a professor of religion, so unfortunate as to be left to justify an evil doer, and I am truly sorry that Thomas Cottrell should be so left to himself: and it may be that he will also be made truly sorry for persisting so obstinately in a course which is not good, and especially as he has so acted when, according to his own acknowledgment, his own prayer and God's answer to it forbade him. If God should "open his armoury and bring forth the weapons

of his indignation," Jer. 50. 25. against the man who hath committed whoredom in Israel, and used God's name as a cloak to hide the offence from men, it surely will make your ears tingle and your heart faint, for fear that the rod of his anger should also rest on him who has strenuously vindicated the poor unfortunate wretch, who is now singled out as a mark for the arrows from the quiver of God to be levelled at. Divine vengeance will not always slumber!

But as you thought me a poor presumptuous creature for saying what I did to you, about eighteen years ago, against Parkinson; so it is likely that you will now think me the same presumptuous creature for writing what I do against one whose wretched life has been a disgrace to society, if what is alleged against him be true. But whether I am presumptuous in this matter, God is the best judge; and he knows, and I can now truly and sincerely say to you, that I only just write what I believe to be true in reference to your William, and if I am wrong, do, sir, try to correct my errors. But until this be done by you or your pastor, I must and I verily do think, that that man is deeply sunk in disgrace who is guilty of the crimes which under oath are alleged against him by Maria Shade; and that he is guilty of them, I again say we are bound to believe, till he fairly and clearly proves to the contrary. I am aware that we ought not to be premature in receiving accusations which may be out against a minister of the gospel, which accusations are often put in circulation by mere wags, with a view of scandalizing the gospel and the preacher of it. But when accusations against a minister are brought forward by *friends and real lovers* of the gospel instead of enemies, and not done

by way of reproaching the gospel or the preacher of it, but with a view of detecting and exposing an impostor; we are in duty, and in conscience, and in the behalf of the honour of God, bound to pay attention to them, and closely to investigate the matter. And more especially ought this to be done, when accusations come before us under *oath*, and with such *strong* proofs and evidences of their correctness, that it not only requires a large stock of impudence to resist, and deny them, but many lies told, and a great deal of fraud carried on, and much deception used, and many things winked at, and a deal of shuffling and unfair work practiced in order to invalidate the evidences, and destroy the proofs. And yet, has not this course been pursued by Parkinson and his colleagues? Ungodly colleagues. But would such steps have been taken if his cause had been a good one, and if the men or colleagues, who acted for him had been God-fearing people? No, for a righteous man and his righteous cause, can be righteously defended; but where the man and his cause are suspicious, and the proofs against him and his cause, strong and pertinent, recourse must be had to juggling and to low petty things if you are determined to support him. But to pursue a course of this kind in order to support a favorite preacher, is a desperate outrage on the gospel of the Son of God, and indicative of hearts seriously debauched. And how deeply you, Sir, and many others have been engaged in this juggling work with a view of upholding that poor miserable mortal William Parkinson, a coming day will decide. But if you say he is not a miserable mortal, but an innocent man, I demand of you, or of William Parkinson, direct answers to the following questions.

1. In what way are we to account for his being singled out in the manner he all along has been, as an object on whom *women* should heap so much scandal, if there never was any thing done by him which lead to, and induced them to bring such foul and indelicate charges against him?

2. How comes it to pass that there is so great a semblance of truth in those different charges brought against him? and why are they alleged under oath? and why such bold assertions made, and such honest appeals to his conscience and judgment for the truth of all that is asserted, if the whole of it be a mere fiction?

3. How could time and place where these abominations were practised, be so accurately pointed out? and the very manner in which they were performed, so prescisely described? and the conversation which passed between the parties concerned in these diabolical matters, preserved and stated in print with so much candor and fairness, if all was a farce?

4. How is it that so many of the Lord's people, who are pained at heart from hearing these things, and who would be glad were they not true, feel constrianed to believe that they are realities, if they are all mere fabulous tales?

5. How is it that most of those persons who uphold P——n, should be so greatly afraid, and so strongly suspect that the charges alleged against him are facts, if there is no truth in the charges which are out against him?

6. What proofs would be considered sufficient to establish facts, if these in this case are insufficient? And can we expect, or need we ask for more proofs, or clearer proofs, or proofs more directly to the point, than what we are here furnished with to establish the guilt of your pastor? And must not these proofs be considered valid, till made void by the person against whom they are alleged?

7. As we cannot well expect a man to give judgment against himself in a criminal case, how comes it to pass that Parkinson's testimony in his own behalf is viewed as valid, while the whole mass of testimony against him is looked upon as nothing worth?

8. If your pastor be innocent, why does he refuse an interview with the accuser, seeing by an interview with each other, with three persons in company with the accuser, and three with the accused, much might be decided on, one way or the other.

9. Can we for a moment suppose that this young woman contrived, invented, and coined such a set of words and phrases which she in print says Parkinson was in the habit of using before her when in private, seeing they are not common place saying, but of a technical complexion, and the native and genuine language of a debauchee?

10. Is it not peculiarly remarkable, that all Parkinson's difficulties about women should have grown out of his own church and congregation, and not from other churches, or from the world at large? And as all the foul charges and black complaints made against him under

oath and otherwise, have been from females immediately in his own connexion, is not the ground on which a belief of his being a guilty man rests, much more solid and indubitable, than though the same charges and complaints had been brought against him from a remote quarter? And in connexion with the two last questions, I would again ask; In what way, and on what just principle, can I or any other person, account for the innocency of P——n, and of all the crimes laid to his charge, being false, and of the firm belief of many of his own friends of his guilt, being ill founded? And if so be, he is innocent; and all that is out against him is founded in lies, fraud, and deceit; and the belief of his friends of his being a guilty person, the result of ignorance; must there not be some easy and plain way yet left for his innocency to be fairly established, and his vile opposers to be proven liars and perjured persons, and the minds of men at large, wholly divested of suspicion of his guilt?

The above are plain and simple questions, and easily understood; and I have proposed them with a view of coming at truth: for I can appeal to a righteous God, that I wish it may be found in the end, that your pastor is an innocent man; but he is not;—so sure as the bible is true—he is not. And I am sorry to say that the Baptist denomination in America, was never so much disgraced by any one man, not excepting that poor mortal, William White, of Philadelphia, as it has been, and still is, by the irreverent William Parkinson, of New York. And what has greatly tended to finish off the temple of infamy, is that of his having all along been abetted by baptist preachers. And that of his being acquitted of the charge of *seduction*, &c. &c. by a

committee, and concurred in by a company of baptist preachers in your city, is a gross libel on the bible, which book forbids our biding such a man as Parkinson, "God speed," 2 John 10.

It however must be highly gratifying to thousands of people, to find that those baptist clergymen in New York city, who occupy high ground, and are of notoriety among us, have not thrown a dark cloud over their characters, by suffering their names to be enrolled with those who in the frivolity of their minds say in public print, that "the subscribers having been requested by the committee of the first baptist church and congregation, in this city, to examine their report respecting the slanderous charge of Maria Shade, against their pastor, the Rev. William Parkinson, and the affidavits by which it is supported; they express the opinion, that, the affidavits were made by persons whose truth and veracity are wholly unimpeached; and they therefore consider them entitled to full credit." It is truly ludicrous, and yet very serious to think, that these six grave seers should give it as their decided opinion, that the *truth and veracity* of the above deponents where *wholy unimpeached*, and entitled to *full credit*, when concerning one of those respectable deponents, it is thus written: "Eloped yesterday, from my bed and board, my wife Margaret. I do hereby caution all persons not to trust or harbor her on my account, as I will not pay any debts of her contracting after this date."

EDWARD ACKERSON.

N. York National Advocate, Sept. 28th, 1814.

And besides this little trifling affair of elopement, this same worthy deponent swore to two arrant lies, which

I hold myself responsible to prove. And when the statements made by the other deponents are fairly analysed, and closely looked into, it will be found that they are so contradictory, and so little to the point, and of so little account, that the whole mass of testimony in that petty work called "The proceedings of the First Baptist Church in the city of New York," is rendered *nugatory*. But I cannot help thinking of these six seers. I am glad the name of James Osbourn is not found registered in that catalogue; because he that vindicates the cause of an *adulterer*, "is like one that taketh a dog by the ears," Prov. 26, 17. And that your pastor is an adulterer of the very worst kind, appears evident enough from what has been testified against him under oath by different persons and at different times. And that he is of the very *worst* kind of such people, is plain from his acknowledging that lewd acts are *venial* sins, and so of course to be passed over with impunity.

But if adultery and all kinds of lewdness are *venial*, that is to say, *allowable*, then instead of his endeavoring to inculcate principles of chastity on the minds of youths, it is no wonder that he should commit acts of lewdness, and talk obscenely before young females, as his trial and other books out against him, clearly prove that he does. But for such a wretch to be received as a minister of the gospel, by men who profess to know what the gospel is, is doing violence to christianity, and offering a most cruel insult to the Majesty of heaven. Nor do I believe that men who love and fear God, and are in possession of Parkinson's character, ever did, or do now, or ever will countenance him as a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is true that many preachers have countenanced and supported him,

guilty as he has been. But still this has nothing to do with what I have now said, since ministers of the gospel in name only, and ministers who love and fear the Lord indeed and in truth, are two distinct people.

And you, Mr. Cottrell, know very well that by one of these classes of ministers and people, P——n have been countenanced and upheld for many years. And you also know that the whole of that little work called "The proceedings of the First Baptist Church in the city of New York," and the report of the committee, were intended to clear your pastor; but instead of accomplishing their end, they have made bad matters worse; and that William Parkinson now stands in the eye of the public at large, as guilty of *seduction*, &c. &c. And you believe all this as much as I do; nor are you ignorant of the falsehoods which have been told, and the deceit, and fraud and base hypocrisy which have been used by your pastor, and I may say by yourself, and your church, in order to keep from public view those great abominations which now stare us full in the face, and which for years past have caused, and are now causing such sore heart rending, and grief of mind, and sad divisions among the sheep of Christ, both far and near.

We are told that bishops and deacons should be "patterns of *good* works, and examples of the believers, in conversation and in purity." Titus 2, 7; 1 Tim. 4, 12: but the bishop and deacons of your church have been patterns of *evil* works, for the bishop has gone astray, and his deacons have tride to hide it.

But it is wonderful to see with what precision the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of Peter, has marked the character of your pastor in these words: "Many shall follow their own pernicious ways."

How pernicious the ways of P——n has been, and how closely followed, Maria Shade, and many others in your city, have publicly testified.

"By reason of whom the ways of truth shall be evil spoken of."

Not a few have spoken evil of Zion's ways, and turned from them, and doubted the reality of them, through the infamous conduct of your favorite William.

"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished; but chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness."

They who wish to satisfy themselves on the subject of P——n's walking after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, let them read the printed letter, written to him last fall by Maria Shade, and also the work entitled "Imposture," &c.

"These as natural bruit beast, made to be taken and destroyed."

Here your pastor, who pretends to be a minister of the gospel of the Son of God, is spoken of under the term of "bruit beast." And how brutish he has be-

haved himself, the seduction of females, and an illegitimate child, and other things, loudly testify.

"Having eyes full of adultery, and cannot cease from sin."

That both the eyes and heart of your pastor have been full of adultery, I need no farther proof than what you, and the rest of your deacons could easily furnish me with, were you honest enough so to do. And that he cannot cease from sin, is evident from the length of time he has lived in the practice of it.

"Beguiling unstable souls."

Poor Maria and others have already testified to this awful trait in the character of William Parkinson.

What a frightful picture is the above! especially as it is applicable to one, who for many years hath palmed himself on the church of Christ for a minister of the gospel.

Of Saul it is said that he "*breathed out* threatenings and slaughter," Acts 9. 1. And if I may judge of Parkinson's conduct by what is said of him in different publications, I would say that he has *breathed out* a lascivious spirit on the people of his charge, and that the infection has spread through his congregation to the poisoning of many.

And such it appears has been the powerful effects produced on the minds of the female part of his congregation by his examples, and intrigues, and lustful

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spirit, that his church may be viewed as a nursery for "people of unclean lips and eyes full of adultery." Isa. 6. 5. 2 Peter, 2. 14. And here again I am unavoidably lead to advert to Maria's long letter to your pastor, for it is a most marvellous production, and I wish you to read it over again, and in it you will find such a chain of abominable things; yea, such a list of lewd acts—such a concatenation of vices, and such a complete system of wantonness brought to light and charged upon your William, as would disgrace a pagan and make an infidel blush.

Nothing that was ever before said against Parkinson in public court, or out of court, under oath, or without oath; by friends, or foes; by males, or females; by sinners, or saints; in New York, or in Fredericktown; has amounted to half the weight and importance as Maria's letter. In all other cases, and oaths, and charges, P——n has conjured up some sort of defence. But this letter maugres all. It takes him by the throat and throws him in a panic.—The Levite has nothing to say, so he openeth not his mouth.—It is a blow at the root; it cites chapter and verse, date and place, method and manner, times and seasons, and holds the aggressor at defiance. He feels the shock—withdraws from the scene—sinks down in sadness—and remains dumb. From bastardy he finds a retreat in Ohio; but this letter, in a most pointed manner speaks to his heart, holds him by the girdle of his loins; and while it dares him to advance, it effectually cuts him off in the rear, exposes his nakedness, and consigns him to perpetual ignominy.

And hence in this case he stirs not, nor will he suffer his officers to sound to arms or to prepare for battle for fear of worse to come. Were it not for this *fear*, his remaining in such profound silence as now he does, would be mysterium tremendum. Thus Maria's letter has done wonders; and because it has effected tenfold more than any thing heretofore said or done, I would by way of distinction call it, THE IMPOSTER'S DEATH WARRANT.

How highly provoking must these abominations be, which are practised and indulged in, under a clerical garb! And how desperately depraved must be that society of professed christians, who can wink and connive at such heinous crimes in their pastor! Crimes! equivalent with those of Sodom, and which are an additional slur to the common drunkard, and which tarnish the character of the infidel, and disgrace the rude pagan, and ripen the soul for the curse of God!

In holy writ the sin of adultery is marked as a crime of the foulest kind; and it may be viewed as the spawn of Satan, the sediment of hell, the bane of society, and the ruin of men! By it whole families have been ingulphed in wretchedness; and out of it have grown rapine, murders, bloodshed, perjury, suicides, the gallows, and every species of misery known amongst men. And where is the scholar that can rightly calculate its turpitude, or correctly paraphrase on its atrocity, or give a just definition of its dreadful pollution?

But you, sir, need not think that I, by writing to you in this open and free manner, am seeking revenge, either of you or of your pastor; for "vengeance is mine;

I will repay, saith the Lord." Rom. 12, 19. A sense of the duty I owe to God as a labourer in his vineyard, induces me to interest myself in this iniquitous affair, and to write to you as I now do. David in his zeal for God said "I will early destroy all the wicked of the land, that I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of the Lord." Psa. 101, 8.

The case in hand is not of an ordinary kind, but of an unusual turpitude, and requires to be treated with promptitude and energy; and hence the severity and warmth which you perhaps will discover in some parts of these communications, are to be attributed to the nature of the subject of which they treat, and to that holy fervour, which crimes of such magnitude call for.

When the nature of the case required severity, Paul could say, "Thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness." Acts, 13, 10: but in a case of less aggravation, he says, "Shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?" 1 Cor. 4, 21. And for men who call themselves ministers of the gospel, not to protest against the base conduct of your dear William, would be a delinquency that loudly called for the "furious rebukes" of God. Ezek. 25, 17. And if the association to which your church belongs, does not recognize him in her minutes, as "the vile person who speaks villany, and works iniquity, and practises hypocrisy, and commits lewdness and folly in Israel;" may it not be said of her, that "when thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers." Isa. 32, 6; Judges 20, 6; Psa. 50, 18.

In a case of this nature I hope never to be a defaulter; for a labourer in the Lord's vineyard had better be found "a wise reprover" Prov. 25, 12, than to stand a delinquent before his God. I bless the Lord for affording me fortitude of mind sufficient to bear my protestation against vice in a carnal preacher—a hypocrite in Zion. But in this my so doing, great offence no doubt will be given to all such preachers and professors who, I fear, have drank too deeply into the spirit of Parkinson.

To contend for the honour of God, and for "the truth as it is in Jesus," Eph. 4, 21 in "this day of rebuke and blasphemy," Isa. 37, 3; and to protest against errors in practice and errors in doctrine; and against hypocrites in the church and carnal men in the pulpits; is, I am persuaded, what the Lord hath raised me up for. And so long as there remains any work of this kind for me to do, "no man shall set on me to hurt me," as said the Lord to Paul, Acts 18, 10. My "strictures on Zion's call" has offended many graceless professors, and in all probability, this my testimony for God will produce the same effect on the same soil. But I can say that "none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God," Acts 20, 24.

To me, this world with all its great apparatus, appear as trifling and as light as froth upon the water. Also, the world of carnal professors, who are now crowding about Zion's gates, and who constitute the outworks of the building of mercy; these with all their false light and blind zeal, are in my view, as insignificant as stub-

ble driven before the northern blast. And permit me to say, that if the fear of God had been before your eyes, and you had a due regard for his inestimable honor, and estimated the gospel as it deserves, you long ere now would have testified against that spiritual Babylon, that mother of harlots; alias, The First Baptist Church in the city of New-York. For great have been the abominations which you have wickedly shut your eyes against, and it will be well if God does not reward you, as you have rewarded him.

For my own part, I am free to confess, that with the fear of God before my eyes, I would rather die under the gallows, and be gibbetted at some public cross road, than under a garb of sanctity, to wink at what you have winked at, and continue to support an iniquitious pastor, and to "remain in the congregation of the dead," Prov. 21. 16, or in a church where "all uncleanness is wrought with greediness," Eph. 4. 19," and the crimes considered to be "venial."

Mr. Cottrell, believe me, when from my soul I can and do say, that I have no more malice against you or your pastor, than I have against one of my little daughters. Revenge I seek not; but the honor of my God I am compelled to vindicate, let the consequence be as it may. And in doing this I have been constrained to say some hard things, and to use many *low* expressions, which I should have been glad to have avoided, if the nature of the subject would have admitted it. The cause of God, especially in your city, and in your association, and sister associations, is bleeding from the deep wound inflicted by the base conduct of your unfortunate William; and from hence I have felt myself

bound to say to you what in this letter I have said: Could I be convinced that Mr. P——n is an innocent man, I would much more readily proclaim it abroad, than now I declare his guilt.

I close by observing—My long letter, four years ago, to Elder Daniel Dodge, in which I exposed his perfidious conduct in relation to Dr. Holcombe of Philadelphia, you said you admired and thought me perfectly right in saying what I did. But it may be you will not say so much of this long letter. But be that as it may, I shall acknowledge myself a lover of truth and good men.

JAMES OSBOURN.

Baltimore, March, 1830.

P. S.—When I commenced writing this letter, I had no thought of its going to the press, though while it was on hand, an idea of this kind presented itself to my mind; and when I had finished it, and submitted the perusal of it to my friends, and found that they were determined on having it printed, I readily came into their measure. And hence, instead of your receiving it from me in a manuscript form, and altogether in a private way, you will receive a printed copy of the same work.

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