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Staughton was one of the greatest Baptist leaders in the United States at the beginning of the nineteenth century. He made a deep impression upon the Baptists of America. But the influences that made him what he was were those that played upon him in his formative years in England. The men who formed the Baptist Missionary Society in Kettering contributed most to the formation of William Staughton. And the confidence placed in him by those who recommended him to America was abundantly justified.

WALTER O. LEWIS.

Narrative of Andrew Leslie, 1823.

ON Tuesday, October 14th, 1823, at Coventry, Andrew Leslie, a student from Bristol College, was designated for work in connection with the Baptist Missionary Society. The service was lengthy and evidently deeply impressive. Those taking part included W. Hardcastle of Dudley, Francis Franklin of Coventry, and Dr. John Ryland. John Dyer, the junior Secretary of the B.M.S., asked questions of the candidate, as was usual in those days, and received in reply "a most interesting narrative of his early life, together with the confession of his faith." This narrative has been preserved in Bristol College Library, and through the courtesy of the Principal, Dr. Arthur Dakin, we are able to print it in full.

It may be well to precede it by stating that Andrew Leslie married the fourth daughter of Francis Franklin, and that on October 30th he and his wife embarked for India. The journey round the Cape of Good Hope occupied seven months, and they acquired the language on the long voyage. Andrew Leslie first laboured at Monghyr for seventeen years, and, following an extended furlough in England, arrived again in India in December, 1842, to undertake the pastorate of Circular Road Church, Calcutta, which he retained until his retirement in June, 1865. In writing of him after his death, the *Friend of India* said, "he was known as the ablest preacher among the Baptists in India, and as one of their most zealous missionaries. To the fervid spirit of his country [Scotland] he added the grace of a masterly English style, and the ability of an elegant scholarship." He died on July 24th, 1870.

S. J. P.

QUESTIONS.

1. *What grounds have you for thinking you are a Christian?*

In considering the various events of my life, I do not know that I can mention any one particular circumstance as the means in the hand of God of my conversion. From my earliest years I had been much accustomed to reading, having been sent to School when I should suppose I was little more than three years of age, the consequence of which was, that I gained very early, a knowledge of many of the principal truths of revelation.

Nothing however like a religious impression was produced on my mind till after my ninth or tenth year when I entered as a scholar for religious instruction in one of our Sabbath Evening Schools in Edinburgh. In that School my knowledge of the doctrines of revelation was greatly increased and altho I do not believe that any thing like the work of conversion was effected in me during the period of my attendance there yet I have no hesitation in saying that I firmly believe that the foundation of all I may have experienced in the divine life was laid whilst I was in the capacity of a Sabbath Evening School Scholar. As, Sir, I consider my admission into the Sabbath Evening School to have constituted a new era in my life you will bear with me whilst I state to you circumstances connected with that evening upon which I never can think without mingled feelings of wonder and gratitude. One Sabbath evening along with some others of my youthful companions I had gone into the Street in order no doubt to amuse myself in profaning the Sacred day. Whilst so engaged our attention was suddenly attracted by the singing of the Scholars in one of these Schools. Being curious to know who and what was going on within I drew near to the door, whilst, I think my companions stood at a distance.

Busily engaged listening to the youthful voices, some unknown but friendly individual happening to go into the School, took hold of my hand and drew me in along with him, whilst the others who were with me were left without—and some of them, persons dear to me, are till this day still without, being far from God and far from righteousness. Never shall I forget what I saw and heard at that time. I was struck with the appearance of both Teachers and Scholars—and was greatly surprised at what I heard the latter repeat and the former explain. What was called the task for the evening was part of the xxviiith Chapter of Matthew—and the subject explained and illustrated was, of course, the Saviour and his sufferings. Well I remember how deeply my attention was rivetted. I had often read and heard of this Jesus, but strange as it may appear, of his sufferings and the cause of them I was entirely ignorant. Pleased with the scene of

the Evening I committed to memory in the course of the week the task appointed for the following Sabbath night, went to the School, stood up unsolicited, and repeated the task with the other Scholars, asked that my name might be enrolled amongst their number, and for a considerable time afterwards became a regular attendant. Here it was, Sir, as I have already stated to you, that the basis of all I may have felt in Christianity was laid. The habits of reading and repeating the Scriptures, of perusing religious Books, and of attending regularly at the House of God, and I may add of praying, were principally observed. When I think of this, Sir, I wonder at the peculiar and distinguishing grace of God to me a Sinner, and this especially when I think of those that were with me on that memorable Sabbath Evening when I first entered the School, how that I have been taken and they are as yet left, and never I think shall I fail to remember whilst recollection remains, the affectionate manner, and some of the earnest addresses of our beloved Teacher. There were none of us who could doubt of the importance of religion whilst he talked to us. His heart was always full on the subject, and his endeavours to make us understand the Scriptures were many, and condescending and ardent. And I am glad to be able to say, that, under the blessing of God, his addresses won their way to the hearts of many of my School fellows as well as my own, some of whom I believe have gone to heaven to wait his arrival there, and some I yet know are walking with Christ upon the earth.

The next particular event in my life connected with my religious history, was my being sent to learn the printing business at the early period of between 11 and 12 years of age, an event big with the most disastrous circumstances to me, in a moral point of view. And here, Sir, I cannot refrain from saying that if I do not recollect the event of my going to a Sabbath School without wonder and gratitude, I cannot think of the period to which I now refer without shame and confusion of face. Before I went to my business, if I might not have been called a religious youth, yet, I think, I might have been called a moral one. I was particularly distinguished for good behaviour and correctness at School. I was diligent and regular in my attendance at meeting and I think I prayed often. But alas, the very reverse of all this took place before I completed my 13th year. The workmen in the printing office where I was placed were men of no religious principle, and I soon found by woeful experience that I could not remain amongst them unpolluted, and that "evil communications corrupt good manners." I think that there was very little that was bad that I did not soon learn. I can remember often going home to my father's house from amongst them in a state of intoxication, walking the streets with them where my conduct was

too bad to be described to this audience, and I remember once being sunk so low in deplorable wickedness that I actually in the presence of many of them took up the Bible, read passages from it, and then held them to ridicule as absurdities and nonsense. I was indeed awfully depraved. I engaged in Gaming—I remember uttering Oaths tho I did this but seldom. I forsook wholly every place of worship. In a word, I was on the broad road of destruction. O had not the Almighty rescued me from the depths of wickedness into which I had fallen he alone can tell where I should at this moment have been. So very far was I from the ways of righteousness that I have been frequently reminded by various individuals since I began to think of religion, of what I formerly was. I was an unjust and an ungovernable apprentice, so much so that I remember my master once threatening to put me in prison, and another time his calling me before him and reading to me my indentures in presence of two witnesses and justly charging me with flagrant breaches of them. And I was yet more wicked than all this and wicked too in a way which now grieves me more than all the other acts of my life. I was a disobedient and cruel Son.

I lost all respect for an affectionate mother, a mother who had been kind to me beyond what I can tell, and remember more than once grieving her with the most insulting and unbecoming language. O could I bring her back I would mourn before her again and weeping ask her full forgiveness. But she is gone to return no more. During this period, too, I was twice within a step of death, once of being drowned whilst bathing, and another time of being killed by a coach. But I thought not of the goodness of God, nor of the deliverances wrought by his hand—so hardened was I in sin. Still, however, while thus so deeply immersed in such awful depravity, a depravity which lasted from before my 12th to nearly my 16th year, I was often the subject of the most acute pangs of spirit. The instructions received at the Sabbath School could not be obliterated from my mind, and never did they come in such vivid recollections before me, as at the close of a Sabbath day which may have been violated with wicked companions, a sin which I was prone to commit. Frequently have I sat down when the shades of the sacred evening had drawn themselves around me and been ready to cry as if mourning the departure of a beloved friend, whom I could never bring back. Willingly would I have given anything that I might live it over again; and my resolutions were strong that if spared till another Sabbath my conduct would be different. But alas! my vows were like the morning cloud and like the early dew which soon passeth away. When the next Sabbath arrived I was the same if not worse than before.

One circumstance occurred which made me think very seriously about my conduct in this respect, and that was a fall which I had when wickedly violating one of those sacred days—which displaced a bone in one of my arms and which caused me much pain as well as galling reflections.

The accusations of my conscience were sometimes beyond description and I knew indeed the truth of that Scripture "The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity but a wounded Spirit who can bear!" Thus I continued pained, and resolving and re-resolving and sinning as wickedly as ever, till about my 15th year when a circumstance occurred which led me once more to enter after a long absence—a place of worship.

I had been informed a private soldier in the Norfolk Militia, a regiment which was at that time stationed in Edinburgh Castle, would preach in his regimentals in the Methodist Chapel. The circumstance was entirely novel and interesting to me and operated once more to hear the word of God proclaimed. The words of his text were "As I live saith the Lord God I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways, for why will ye die." The only part of the sermon that affected me was a very pathetic exclamation concerning what would be the awful doom of Edinburgh because of her blessings and because of her great wickedness. I felt the force of the exclamation and was so impressed that on going home, I retired into a field although the night was very dark, and began to pour out anew my heart in prayer to God—and I believe I prayed till I was overcome with fear owing to the darkness of the night and the state of my own mind.

This event again constituted a third era in my religious history. And although I do not think it was the means of my conversion to God, for I continued some time after this doing very wickedly, yet it laid me again to attend regularly the preaching of the Gospel and consequently to think more on the wickedness of my life. I had no stated place of worship at which I attended, indeed I made it a point with myself to hear all the varieties of Christian Sects in Edinburgh. And among the many places at which I attended I went very often to hear the Sabbath Evening Lecture at what was called the Magdalene Chapel and which was preached by the Ministers of the different denominations in that City. But being one evening rather late and being very near the Chapel of Christopher Anderson, an eminent Baptist Minister there, I went to hear him. After the opening Services were finished he read as his text the solemn words "And the fearful shall have their part in the Lake that burneth with fire and brimstone." The discourse though very affecting yet affected

me not, and the only thing which attracted me was the peculiarly interesting manner of the preacher. This, however, so fixed itself upon my mind that it operated in leading me to hear him again and again, till I became a regular attendant upon his ministry on the Sabbath evenings. And such was the nature of his ministry and such were its effects upon my mind, that, though I was attracted only with his manner at first, yet when the novelty of that had passed away his discourses came home with such power to my heart that I have often trembled when hearing him.

I was now completing my 16th year and now also commenced under the preaching of Mr. Anderson a series of feelings painful in the extreme, but which ended I believe in my conversion to God for so deeply was I, at times, affected that I remember ceasing for almost days together speaking to my own friends. My impressions, however, though deeper than ever before, were often transitory. After hearing Mr. Anderson they would almost invariably have continued almost all the Monday and the Tuesday, and often times till the Wednesday, yet it was as invariably the case that the last three days of the week were spent in my former habits of wickedness. Never, perhaps, could there be a greater contrast, than there was between my conduct in the former and latter parts of the week. But this could not continue always. The impressions received under Mr. Anderson's ministry were too strong and acute to allow for any length of time these extremes of reformation and depravation. My crimes and my punishment began to have greater command over my heart and the horrors of spirit that were the consequence began to be insupportable. Nothing I saw would do but decision in Religion: and I was therefore compelled to give up my evil practices and attend to the commands of God. In consequence of this decision, there began a seriousness in religion that was carried to an extreme, as much, if not more so, than I had been extremely wicked. I was early and late at religion, for often did I retire in the dark night into the fields and other retired places to pray to God. I rose very early in the morning and went away to similar spots in order to read the Bible and engage in devotional acts.

I was sincerely sorry if ever I found myself at any time very joyful. I could endure nothing like innocent pleasantry. I gave away almost every fraction of money I at any time possessed for religious purposes. In a word I was strict, austere and gloomy. Wrapt up in myself I communicated my feelings to none. I had formed no religious acquaintance and actually knew not a pious soul to whom I could tell the impressions of my mind. But in all this I knew not Christ. I indeed knew myself to be a sinner, but him I knew not as the Saviour of sinners. Burdens heavy to be borne did I lay upon myself but instead of becoming more happy

I became more melancholy and my health being then very much on the decline I was often very miserable. Gloom seemed to have taken up a continual abode in my soul. However in the midst of all this God had mercy upon me by raising up a young man, a member then of Mr. Innes's Church of Edinburgh but now a preacher in America, who observing my circumstances began to speak kindly unto me. He took me to his home with him, introduced me to several religious friends and dealt most affectionately and tenderly with me. Had he not been raised up at this time in my behalf I know not what would have been the consequences of my melancholy state of mind. Amongst others to whom he introduced me, he pointed me out to Mr. Innes, and got him to ask me to come and converse with him which I did. Mr. Innes entered very feelingly into my circumstances, and as I had for some time attended his ministry perhaps principally through my attachment to this young man and others of his members to whom I had been introduced, he asked me if I had any desire to join the Church. I immediately shrunk from the question, and told him that I thought myself very unfit to become a member of a Church owing to my ignorance and sinfulness. He immediately replied to me, that all the knowledge and fitness requisite for this was that we saw ourselves to be lost sinners and Christ to be the only Saviour. I made no reply but on rising to leave him, he made me kneel down with him and prayed for me in a manner which deeply affected my heart and drew my affections towards him. Never shall I forget the way in which he noticed my circumstances as it regarded the difficulties with which I had to contend in following Christ. Taking into consideration what Mr. Innes said to me concerning the qualifications of Church membership, and wishing to enjoy more intimately the fellowship of Christians, and believing it to be a duty to make a profession of attachment to Christ, and thinking that I both saw and knew myself to be a Sinner and Jesus Christ to be the only Saviour I, in a very short time afterwards, made known to him my wish to join his Church. With much kindly feeling I was received in amongst them and truly enjoyed their fellowship.

This took place about a month after I had completed my 17th year. But notwithstanding all this I had not as yet received peace to my wounded mind. I knew and felt myself to be a great sinner, and I knew Christ to be the only Saviour, but my views of the plan of mercy were as yet dark and confused and my soul was as yet in consequence in trouble and in sorrow. Never could I sit down at the Lord's Table without great fear and great gloom. To me it was always a place of dispeace and not of consolation. My religion was as yet to me the cause of great unhappiness of mind and I could tell my distress to none. But the Lord looked

with compassion upon me, and helped me out of my distresses. By little and little I was led, first under the preaching of Mr. Innes and afterwards under the preaching of Dr. Wardlaw of Glasgow (to which place I was removed in consequence of business) to understand the Gospel and to feel its suitableness to my circumstances. I was always looking at my conduct and into my own heart for evidences of my Christianity, but the more I looked the more wickedness I saw and the farther I felt myself removed from peace, and it was not until my attention was turned off from myself and fixed upon Christ through the ministry of these two good and able men, especially that of Dr. Wardlaw that I understood what was meant by peace and joy in believing. Their Churches were indeed nurseries to me—places which I shall remember till Life's latest hour.

And now, my dear Sir, my soul rests upon the finish'd work of Christ. I have had many dark and gloomy periods since I first entered upon the Christian journey, and many declensions in heart from God, but I think I can safely say that no grace of the Spirit ever was in exercise in my breast which is not in exercise there now. And I therefore wish to go forth and make known to the perishing heathen the riches of the grace of him who had mercy upon me a miserable sinner, and redeemed me from the Pit of destruction.

II. *What reasons have you for thinking that you are called to preach the Gospel to the Heathen?*

With regard to any peculiar qualifications or any thing like an internal monitor telling me that it is my duty to go to the Heathens I can make no pretensions. Indeed I hardly understand what is meant by a Call and I have not been without many doubts whether I were not running without being sent. However I can at times think and do fondly hope that God has sent me into his vineyard. A few circumstances however I think it right to state in answer to your question as connected with my coming into the ministry and especially as connected with the work to which I hope now to be designated, but I do not wish you to think Sir, that I place any dependence upon them as constituting what is styled a Call to preach the Gospel. And I do this for the following reason, viz., that I have known the same circumstances connected with other individuals, excepting that their applications to be brought into the ministry were rejected and mine was received. And when I call to recollection the many instances of individuals whose applications have been received but who have shown afterwards by their conduct that their vocation was not to preach Christ I cannot place the least dependence upon the circumstance of my being thought by others a person fitted to preach the Gospel.

I believe Sir that it is the case with most young persons when they first see the value of the Gospel to wish to be the instruments of making it known to others. And such was the case with me : only it was with me as it is not with all, that the first desire which I can recollect having with regard to preaching the Gospel was to preach it to the Heathens. Sometime, I think before my 16th year when I had just begun to be so deeply impressed with religion, I went to hear Dr. Waugh of London and Mr. Slalterie of Chatham preach, who had come to Edinburgh to plead the cause of the London Missionary Society. When I entered the Chapel I lifted up one of a number of printed papers which were distributed in the seats and which contained an account of the deplorable state of the inhabitants of the different Countries in the world, specifying the various numbers of Jews, Christians, Mahammedans and Pagans.

The information to me was totally new, and feeling surprised at, and impressed with what I read, the desire almost immediately or shortly after sprung up within my breast—Could I do something for the benefit of this overpowering number of men? Thinking what I could do it occurred to me that as I was a printer I could go and help to print the Bibles and other religious books that were translating into the various languages of the world. From that day the desire never was extinguished in my breast although many circumstances occurred to quench it.

Almost a year after I had joined the Church I mentioned to Mr. Innes my earnest wish to make known the Gospel to the heathens and also to help in printing the Bible for them. He, however, although he encouraged me in my desires did not see fit to take any speedy steps to get me engaged in such a cause. No doubt he had his reasons for doing so. Perhaps he thought me too young and unexperienced and, if he did so, I think now that he was right in so thinking. About a year after I had express'd my wish to Mr. Innes my business rendered it necessary that I should go and reside in Glasgow and, as I was totally unknown there, and as Mr. Innes had not done anything to bring me forward, my hopes of ever being permitted to preach the Gospel to the heathens were almost destroy'd. Providence, however, having quite unexpectedly directed my way to a circle of the excellent of the Earth and to the ministry of Dr. Wardlaw, I found myself under a preacher I enjoyed and amongst friends whom I loved. My desire began to revive and I ventured to express it to an individual who approved of it and who introduced me to Dr. Steadman and Mr. Kinghorn when they came to Glasgow in the year 1818 to preach in behalf of this Mission. They however said nothing to encourage or discourage me in my proposal, yet I hoped they would mention my application when they returned to England.

Whether they did or not I cannot tell, but I waited patiently for almost another twelvemonth and nothing was done. I began almost to despair again. Amongst other friends with whom I became acquainted almost immediately after I went to Glasgow was the Rev. Mr. Wadrow, Independent Minister in Carlisle, but who was studying at that time at the University here. We became very intimately acquainted with each other and even agreed to live with each other which we did as long as either of us lived in Glasgow. Of course I mentioned my desire to him and he repeated it again to Dr. Wardlaw who immediately interested himself in the circumstance and wrote in my behalf to Dr. Ryland, and I believe, Sir, [Mr. Dyer] you answered the letter. You know the result. I was called to England to spend some time in preparation at Bristol Academy. Since I have been here, you know, Sir, I have been the subject of many doubts as to whether it was my duty to go as a missionary or stay at home. In moments of depression my spirits have sunk in the prospect; and in the contemplation of leaving all in this Country I have had many painful feelings. But I think I may venture to say that here my shrinking has been but momentary, and they have only been when I have lost sight of the millions of my perishing fellow men and the Glory of my Redeemer. I feel, Sir, that if I were to desist from going to the Heathen I should be unhappy. It is a path which approves itself to my own conscience. I believe it is to be the Will of God concerning me, and I do with the greatest willingness determine to spend and be spent for Christ. I am grieved now that ever I should have felt the least reluctance to go far hence to the Gentiles but reluctant feelings now no longer exist, and I will go if you will send me, for my spirit indeed is willing though in the prospect of bidding you all farewell my flesh is weak.

III. *What are those Doctrines you believe and intend to Preach?*

To give a lengthened detail of the doctrines which I believe and intend to preach would be tedious and unnecessary especially when I know that if I give you a few of what I believe to be the essential truths of the Bible you will be satisfied as to a knowledge of my sentiments in general. As I stated to you in answering your first question that it was not till after a long period and after suffering much depression that I attained clear views of the way of Salvation—at least views which brought peace to my Soul—so it has been thro a number of painful exercises of mind that I have been brought to see the correctness of many other Truths revealed in the Bible. That you may be satisfied that my opinions are founded on conviction I will in stating them recall a few circumstances connected with my being brought to embrace them.

Being accustomed at the Sabbath evening School to an exercise which is common in Scotland that of proving the Different Doctrines by passages of Scripture the habit of receiving no Doctrine but on evidence was very early engendered in my mind, a habit good in itself but very often painful in its exercises.

When I began after a long absence to attend places of Worship again, I made it a point tho only 15 or 16 years of age to hear as I have already stated to you nearly every denomination of Ministers in Edinburgh and as far as I could to ascertain the various points on which they differed. Amongst others on whom I attended I went very often to an Universalist and Socinian place of worship where I drank deep of the former doctrine the arguments for which appearing to me to be in unison with the best feelings of my nature—to render the character of the Divine Being amiable and lovely and to accord with the statements given in the Bible. I listened to the greater part of a course of Lectures on the subject.

I examined I think every passage of which I had any knowledge that bore upon the doctrines and conversed and disputed with whomsoever I could find who would converse or dispute with me on the topic—and the result was that I became as far as I could be a confirmed believer in the doctrine of Universal restoration. Shortly after this I began to attend Mr. Anderson's ministry and consequently to feel the bitterness of Sin. Having felt this and knowing that there was nothing of what I knew amongst the Universalists that would alleviate the sorrows of my wounded mind—and knowing also that I had never seen anything among them like repentance and walking holily with God (for I was acquainted with some of them) I began to doubt the truth of their system and indeed felt almost persuaded that it must be wrong. Mr. Anderson's preaching too led me to read my Bible in a different way to what they had done and I consequently saw things in a different light. Nevertheless the struggles of mind I experienced before I could part with my former notions were very severe. Some of the arguments for Universal Restoration gave way almost as soon as I began to doubt and tho I became convinced of the error of the system yet others of its arguments troubled me much, and would come in at times like a flood upon my soul.

A Sermon however preached by Mr. Simmons (a Baptist Minister somewhere in England at this time but who was studying at that time in Edinburgh) from John iii. 36 did much to set my mind at rest on this point. Since then I have examined afresh the Lectures I heard preached on the subject in Edinburgh and which were afterwards published, and tho I should be sincerely glad if the Doctrine were true (for the thought to me is truly awful of

millions of my fellow creatures being tormented eternally) yet, Sir, I feel that I must bend to the overwhelming evidence of Scripture on this topic. I calmly acquiesce in the decision and judgment of God.

A few months after I joined the Church I was seriously led to entertain doubts of the genuineness and authenticity of the Bible and was brought into such a state of mind that I could hardly pray. I had doubted before of the correctness of the opinions of men respecting what were the truths of Scripture but I had never before doubted the truth of the Bible itself. This to me was a new mental trial. I sat down to examine the subject and after much pondering and much writing my doubts thro the mercy of God gave way to what I then considered to be irresistible evidence for the truth of the Scriptures as a whole, and peace was again ushered to my mind. From that time till some time after I went to study at Bristol I do not remember ever having had any doubts of the truth of Revelation. But whilst there being led to think more closely on different subjects and becoming more conversant with the arguments for infidelity my faith gave way again and my mind was brought into such a state that I thought I must give up having anything to do with the Ministry, and leave the Academy. I remember once, while in this state having had to preach; when I preached not because I believed what I was preaching was true, but because I tho't such sentiments constituted the religion of the people and I might as well occupy their time in telling them what they tho't they believed as otherwise, and likewise because I could get no one at that time to preach for me.

However the effect of such a state of mind was, that I was led to sit down afresh and thoroughly to examine the evidence of Christianity. And, Sir, my conviction now is, not only that a necessity for revelation exists, but that a revelation actually does exist, and that it is no other than that book in our possession called the Bible. I have to some degree examined the claims of other books to inspiration, such as the Koran and the Hindoo writings and my firm conviction is, that all the evidence adduced for their inspiration is weak, unsatisfactory, and erroneous, and that the Bible is the only book which I know that I can admit to be the book of God.

Regarding what I deem to be the essential doctrines of that book I will state to you in the words of the confession of the late Mr. Ward; a confession which he delivered when he was ordained as a missionary in the year 1799 at Olney.

“The being and attributes of God, The total depravity of Man, free and full Salvation by the Grace of God thro' a Mediator, the deity of Christ, the work of the Holy Spirit

in regeneration, and the final Salvation of Believers, are Doctrines which I believe and consider as inclusive of all others. It is the Doctrine of the Cross to which I look for success in the Conversion of the Heathen."

To this confession I can subscribe with the greatest readiness as what I firmly believe, and on no article of which do I ever recollect entertaining serious doubts; excepting it be the Doctrine of the Deity of Christ; and I mention this, both because I conceive it to be important that you should be satisfied with my views on this subject, as it is my firm belief that if this point be given up every other Article of my Confession will fall to the ground, and likewise because I know that some persons have expressed fear on my account, lest I should ultimately slide into Socinianism.

Before I went to Bristol I had thought very little of the Socinian controversy, indeed I felt somewhat afraid of the subject; for if at any time I happened to take up any of the Socinian writings (which was sometimes the case) my peace of mind instantly departed and I began to doubt. However, I did bring myself to read and think on the subject and in order to understand the controversy as well as I could, I went and heard one or two special lectures in defence of the Doctrine, delivered by one of their learned and most eminent Preachers. Now I know not if the arguments he adduced had any weight with my mind, being such as had previously suggested themselves to my own reflections. And altho in the reasonings of my own breast I have sometimes felt puzzled on the subject, yet I have felt it to be invariably the case, that when I have taken up the Scriptures unattended with comments, or any thing else, and read them in their simple state with a wish to be instructed, that my doubts have all been dispersed.

At one time I felt so overpower'd with the mysteriousness and contradictoriness of what is called a Trinity in Unity—if it be proper to use such terms—that I endeavoured for some time to prove Sabellianism to be true, but this too the evidence in the Scriptures for the opposite opinion compelled me to give up, and I may add likewise that in confirming me in the Doctrine of the Deity of Christ.

The preaching and instructions of my esteemed tutor Dr. Ryland have been peculiarly useful to me. I have often listened to his remarks on this subject with the greatest satisfaction; as remarks which were at once judicious, founded on correct reasoning and calculated to remove every doubt from my mind. And I take this opportunity of thanking him not only for these instructions, instructions truly valuable to me, but for all the instructions he has given me. I deem it one of the happiest

events of my life that I was placed under the care of such a man—a man whom I shall never forget, I use no vain or flattering words when I say that he has acted to me as a Father, and has loved me as a Son. May the Lord be with him now he descends the declivity of life and when he ascends on high, may his mantle fall on me and all his other Sons in the ministry that we may with the same diligence and perseverance prosecute that work which has been so dear to his heart.

And now, my Dear Sir, I have endeavoured to answer your questions; whether to your satisfaction or not I leave you to determine. The Glory of Christ and the efficacy of his atonement I intend to make the grand theme of my ministration and whilst I shall deem it my duty when occasion demands to endeavour to deprive the Hindoo writings of the claims of inspiration which they assume—by producing the irrefragable and diversified evidences of Christianity, and whilst by processes of reasoning I will endeavour to show them the absurdities of Polytheism and Idolatry and that their sacrifices and works from their polluted nature cannot be pleasing to the God who made all things, yet it will be my grand aim to lead them to the Cross of Christ. Pray therefore for me, that this may ever be the case, that I may be kept from falling and that the word of the Lord thro' my ministration may run, have free course and be Glorified. Amen.