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THE
General Baptist Repository;
COMPREHENDING
Biographical and Historical Memoirs,
ESSAYS,
THOUGHTS ON SELECT PASSAGES IN SCRIPTURE,
Anecdotes,
QUERIES AND SOLUTIONS,
Correspondence, Extracts,
DEATHS,
MISSIONARY and RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE,
ORIGINAL POETRY;
A REGISTER OF
GENERAL BAPTIST OCCURRENCES;
AND
Miscellaneous Information.

PUBLISHED

At the request of the MINISTERS and REPRESENTATIVES of the NEW
CONNECTION of GENERAL BAPTISTS.

BY ADAM TAYLOR.

VOL. VII.

London:

PRINTED FOR THE EDITOR, BY J. SKIRVEN, RATCLIFF HIGHWAY.

1817.

ADVERTISEMENT.

Ever since the Editor of the G. B. R. has had the honour of sustaining that character, it has been his great and constant aim to render the work subservient to the best interests of that Connection to which he is united, both by judgment and affection. He is deeply sensible of the imperfection of his attempts; and of the inconvenience which the undertaking too often suffers from his want of ability, leisure, and information; but the continued encouragement which he has, for more than fourteen years, received, inspires him with a cheerful hope that he has, in some degree, attained his object. For this persevering and friendly patronage, he embraces, with pleasure, the opportunity which the close of the seventh volume presents of returning his sincere and grateful acknowledgements.

In selecting subjects for this miscellany, it has been considered, that many of the readers are persons who occupy the lower stations in society; and having neither leisure to read nor ability to purchase expensive books, confine their chief attention to that best of books, *the Bible*. For the advantage of these, papers are sometimes admitted into this work, which, though they contain nothing new or perhaps very interesting to persons who have access to literary treasures, will both entertain and instruct such as do not enjoy these advantages. And the Editor is persuaded, that his best informed friends will not only excuse the insertion of papers that may enable their less favoured brethren to read their Bibles with more pleasure and understanding; but will cheerfully assist so laudable a design, by obliging him with occasional communications of this nature.

The introduction of controversy into a work intended for general circulation has been justly censured. Yet, when a difference of sentiment unhappily arises in the bosom of any denomination, and circumstances render it necessary that the point be debated to preserve internal union and harmony; where can the discussion be conducted with more propriety and effect than in a work supported and read by both parties? This will,

it is presumed, form a sufficient apology for the insertion of a few pieces of this description in the present volume: and it gives the Editor real satisfaction to learn, that the introduction of these papers has produced salutary effects. At the same time, he thinks it proper to observe, that, as protracted debates seldom produce much accession to the information on any question, but often foster heat and animosity, he shall think it his duty, in most cases, to admit only one paper on each side, and to suppress declamation, personal reflection, and whatever does not tend to the discovery or confirmation of truth.

The Editor cannot conclude this Advertisement, without returning his sincere thanks to those kind correspondents, who have favoured him with assistance in the prosecution of his plan; both to those who have furnished original compositions, and to those who have forwarded the interesting remains of deceased writers. Many of the latter description have been reserved for succeeding numbers; and will, it is hoped, render the next volume more worthy of the patronage of the Connection.

One hint more is respectfully suggested to those generous friends, who so kindly interest themselves in the success of the G. B. R. The unparalleled pressure of the times has rendered many of the purchasers of this work unable to spare even the trifle which it costs. This has reduced the sale. But, on the contrary, there are many individuals, and even churches, included in the New Connection, who are by no means properly apprized of the nature of this Miscellany, and probably several who are unacquainted with its existence. Now the commencement of a *New Volume* will afford its friends a very fit occasion to introduce it to the notice of such, and the Editor has already experienced too many proofs of their zeal to suspect that they will not use their most strenuous exertions to improve so favourable an opportunity.

SHAKESPEAR'S WALK,

Feb. 1st 1817.

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THE
GENERAL BAPTIST REPOSITORY.

No. XXXVII.—Vol. VII. *Nov 1822*

An ABSTRACT of the late JOURNEY of the Rev. J. CAMPBELL, in SOUTH AFRICA.

THE London Missionary Society, soon after its institution, turned its views towards Africa, a country of vast extent, which has long been involved in the grossest pagan darkness. Under its auspices, the venerable Dr. Vanderkemp, in 1798, accompanied by Mr. Kicherer, and other zealous christians, went to the Cape of Good Hope, on the southernmost point of Africa, to endeavour to introduce the gospel among the Hottentots, the Caffrees, and other tribes of savages who dwelt in the vicinity of that colony. After some unsuccessful attempts, at other places, he was directed by the governor to a spot near Algoa Bay, several hundreds of miles to the east of Cape Town. Here, in the midst of the wilderness, he and his friends formed a settlement; built a village, to which they gave the name of Bethelsdorp, and endeavoured to collect the wandering Hottentots, to induce them to cultivate the arts of civilization, and to instruct them in the great truths of christianity. Having succeeded in this first attempt, they extended their views. New missionaries from Europe joined them; and various new settlements were established in distant parts of that unexplored desert: as at Graaf Reynet, Zak River, Klaar Water, and in the Namacqua Country. These all prospered in a greater or less degree, under the superintendance of Dr. V. Messrs. Kicherer, Read, Anderson, Ulbricht, Albrecht, and others, who had devoted themselves to the salvation of the heathen.

It pleased God, a few years ago, to remove their valuable founder, Dr. Vanderkemp, to his reward; and in consequence of his death, the directors of the society thought it desirable that one of their own number should visit Africa, for the purpose of inspecting and assisting the existing missions, and of looking out proper stations for new attempts. They accord-

ingly requested the Rev. John Campbell, of Kingsland, to undertake this arduous task, and he cheerfully consented to make the attempt.

He embarked at Gravesend, June 24, 1812; and, after encountering several rough storms, landed at the Cape of Good Hope, October 24, following. Here he found Mr. Kicherer, from Graaf Reynet, who advised him to defer his intended expedition into the interior, till after the sultry months were past, as he feared the heat would injure his constitution. Other experienced friends joining in this advice, Mr. Campbell spent the months of November, December, and January, the summer season in that climate, at Stellenbosh, a place at twenty-five miles distance from Cape Town, and in short excursions in the vicinity. During this interval, he procured a license from the governor to preach, and obtained the use of a large meeting-house, where he frequently preached to congregations of three or four hundred, chiefly English soldiers. In November, he paid a visit to a Moravian settlement, called Groene Kloff, about thirty-five miles from the Cape, then under the care of a Mr. Smit. Here he saw crowds of Hottentots, advanced to a considerable state of civilization, joining in the christian worship with apparent zeal and affection. At Stellenbosh the London Society have a missionary named Bakker, who appears to be diligent and useful. "Mr. Bakker," says Mr. C. "is a humble, affectionate, gentle, quiet man; he prays much, and says little; is little known and little spoken of, except in his immediate circle; but God has greatly owned his labours." In December, Mr. C. visited two other flourishing Moravian settlements in the neighbourhood of the Cape.

In the beginning of February, the intense heat in some measure subsiding, Mr. C. prepared for pursuing his journey. He took with him two waggons, one drawn by twelve oxen, and the other by fourteen, driven by Cupido, a converted Hottentot, and three other natives of Africa; attended by two female Hottentots, as cooks and laundresses. As they had no inns to expect on the road, they were obliged to take provisions and necessaries of every description with them in their waggons.

With this train, Mr. C. left Cape Town, February 13, 1813. Their road lay either through deep sands, or over crags and precipices, which rendered travelling extremely fatiguing, and often dangerous. In ascending the hills, they were frequently

obliged to yoke all the oxen to one waggon, in order to drag it up to the summit; sometimes spending four or five hours in advancing only a few hundred yards. Descending the hills was still more dangerous, though not so tedious. Frequent rivers intersected their road, and they were forced to ford them as they could: sometimes driving the oxen through them when the stream ran over their bodies, and nothing but their heads were to be seen above the water. On several occasions they were two or three days together, and could not procure either water for themselves, or grass for their cattle; and were rejoiced to meet with a few puddles, though the water they contained was more dirty than "the thickest soapsuds." In these emergencies, the female Hottentots were peculiarly useful, as they could find water, in places where an European must have died of thirst. They generally travelled by night, when they enjoyed the light of the moon; and at other times in the evenings and mornings. When they halted, they kindled large fires, to protect them from the lions and other wild beasts, with which the desert abounds. Their females soon prepared them coffee and other refreshments, which were very acceptable after the toils of their march. They then joined in social worship; when Cupido occasionally preached to them. Sometimes Mr. C. pitched a tent, but more frequently appears to have slept in his waggon.

The first place at which they made any stay, was at a newly-projected town, begun by government about twelve months previous to Mr. C.'s visit. The situation is well chosen, and is called *George*, in honour of his present Majesty. At a Hottentot kraal, or village, in the neighbourhood, Mr. C. proposed to establish a missionary station, under Mr. Pacalt, a pious young man, whom the London Society had lately sent into Africa.

March 5, they set forward; but were soon stopped by incessant rains, which continued several days. On the 9th, however, they proceeded again; and after encountering all the difficulties already enumerated, arrived, on the 20th, in safety at Bethelsdorp.

The first appearance of this village did not realize Mr. C.'s expectations. The houses are mean, the ground barren, the inhabitants ill clothed, and the progress of civilization apparently slow. Our traveller endeavours to account for this,

from causes not under the controul of the missionaries; and adduces considerable evidence, that the settlers are in a state of progressive and real improvement, even as to their moral habits and outward circumstances: and, what is the principal object, religion prospers in this corner of the wilderness. Many ignorant savages have been brought, it is hoped, to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ; of whom nearly one hundred have been admitted into the church, on a personal profession of faith and repentance. Since the commencement of this station, 2547 Hottentots have been received into it, and taught habits of industry and morality. The number belonging to it, in April, 1813, when Mr. C. visited it, was 223 men, 338 women, 243 boys, and 248 girls. There were several public funds established among the settlers; one for supporting the poor and the sick, and another for defraying the expences incurred for promoting the general prosperity of the institution; besides seventy-six rix dollars, which they had collected during the past year, in aid of the Missionary Society. On the whole, it is evident, that the settlement is advancing towards respectability.

Mr. C. remained at Bethelsdorp, till April 9, 1813, when he set out, attended by Mr. Read, the minister of that place, who proposed to accompany him the rest of his journey. They proceeded as usual, till the morning of the 15th, when, on looking for their cattle, in order to yoke them to the waggons, they were all missing; and it was concluded that they had been stolen by the Caffrees, a savage tribe in the vicinity. They were therefore unable to move; and, to add to their perplexity, the rain poured down in torrents. Six men, well armed, were immediately dispatched in search of the oxen, and the company waited with great anxiety for their return. This suspense, however, did not continue long: in a few hours the men rejoined their friends, with all the cattle, which they had found in a neighbouring wood. This adventure taught them in future to keep a more vigilant eye over their oxen.

The country through which they were now travelling, is called *Albany*. It is described by Mr. C. as capable of high cultivation; but almost totally uninhabited. During a journey of five or six weeks, they met with no other inhabitants than a few military posts, where an European officer and a few

soldiers were stationed, to check the plundering incursions of the Caffrees. Two or three towns have indeed been recently planned by government, and some of them begin to assume the appearance of population. At one of these, called Graham's Town, Mr. C. was hospitably entertained, and found Mr. Vanderlingen, a pious minister, who had formerly been sent out as a missionary, by the Rotterdam Society, but was now chaplain to the Cape regiment; in which station he has been, and appears likely to be, a great blessing to Africa. Government having kindly offered to grant the society two or three places in this deserted region, for missionary settlements, Mr. C. fixed on several, which he supposed very eligible for that purpose; but it would require a considerable time to collect a number of natives.

May 1, Mr. C. and his company arrived at the missionary station called *Graaf Reynet*, which seems to be in a very flourishing state, under the care of Mr. Kicherer. It lies almost in the centre of the wilderness which we have just described. Here Mr. C. attended the various meetings for worship, and was well pleased with the seriousness and devotion which the auditors exhibited. The magistrates and land owners at this place, seem very favourable to missionary efforts; convinced that every thing that promotes the civilization of the natives of Africa, will add value to the occupation of the country.

Mr. C. continued at Graaf Reynet till the 11th, when they set out, in company with Mr. Kicherer and several of his friends, for Klaar Water, the most remote of the missionary settlements. They examined several places on their way, which appeared suitable for the establishing of new stations. On the 19th, they discovered two lions, which seemed to be lying in wait to attack them or their cattle. They immediately halted, and put themselves in a posture of defence. Thirteen men, with loaded muskets, drew up within fifty yards of the beasts, and after two vollies, killed one, and caused the other to run off. On the following day, the friends from Graaf Reynet took leave of our travellers, and returned to their station. About the same time, Mr. C. and his company passed the limits of the colony of the Cape, and entered the country occupied by the Boshemen, or, as Mr. C. calls them, Bushmen; a wild, cruel, and inhospitable people, the terror of all their

neighbours: they are however but few, and scattered. Mr. C. crossed the country, and, during a journey of ten days, saw only a single family. This family he providentially met on the day he entered their territory: it consisted of three sons, their father, and the wife of one of the sons, with a young child. Mr. C. explained to them, as well as circumstances permitted, the object of his journey to Africa, which seemed to give pleasure to the young men; and one of whom voluntarily offered to guide Mr. C. across the desert. This was a great acquisition; for this young man, knowing the country, led them to grass and water, when, in all probability, they could have found neither without his help. The country through which they now passed, must, Mr. C. observes, though its appearance is charming, remain a wilderness to the end of time, as for want of water it cannot be inhabited. He appears, in travelling through it, to have seen more lions than any other creatures; they being frequently observed in groups of four or five, and were kept at a distance only by the fire arms. A lake, which they passed on the 25th, and which Mr. C. supposes, had never before been seen by any European, and a plain surrounding it, form pleasing exceptions to this general sterility, and abound in various species of game.

They arrived, June 1, at the Orange River, which, on account of its size, is usually called the great river. They found it deep and rapid, and as wide as the Thames, at London; and, as they had neither bridge nor boats, the crossing of it with waggons was an affair of some difficulty. At first they thought of making a raft of trees to float them over; but, on being informed, that some days' journey higher, they might cross it without that trouble, they laid aside that design. They marched along its banks till the 8th, while their friends, who were come to meet them from Klaar Water, travelled in the same direction on the opposite bank. On the 8th: they all got safely over, with less difficulty than they expected; and, after a day's journey, arrived at Klaar Water, a missionary settlement, where Mr. Anderson labours with encouraging success. As soon as Mr. C. and his company had passed the river, it immediately began to rise, and in a few hours became impassable. Had they reached the ford twenty-four hours later, they might have been detained several days, when their provisions would have been entirely consumed. On the 13th,

Mr. C. sat down with the church at Klaar Water, at the Lord's supper; when English, Scotch, Dutch, Griquas, and Hottentots, joined in commemorating the death of the Saviour of all men.

Being now at the northernmost station, Mr. C. determined to visit *Lattakoo*, a city ten days journey further north, which was little known to Europeans; in order to examine whether there was any encouragement to send missionaries to the tribes who inhabit those distant parts. They accordingly left Klaar Water, June 15, and arrived at Lattakoo, on the 24th. Here the contrast from the solitude of the desert was very striking. They saw no inhabitants, except one, who acted as a guide, till they had advanced into the middle of the town; when they were conducted into a square, formed of branches of trees, in which were assembled several hundreds of people, round a body of tall men, drawn up in military order, and armed with spears. In a few minutes the square was filled with men, women, and children, to the number of more than a thousand; who all bawled with their whole might. It was some considerable time before our travellers were permitted to take any refreshment, or come to any explanation: at length, they pitched their tent in the midst of the square; and as soon as they had placed victuals on their table, the crowd immediately withdrew to a distance. They now learnt that the king was absent on a hunting party, on which they requested a conference with some of the principal men, in order to inform them of the real object of their visit, and remove some prejudices which they understood the natives had entertained against them. Two of the king's uncles, and seven other leading men, came in consequence to their tent; to whom Mr. C. stated, in a few words, the purpose of his coming. They declined giving any answer in the absence of the king, but promised to send a messenger in search of him, early next morning.

They had to wait till July 5, for the return of the monarch; whose name is Mateebe. This interval they employed in viewing the town, conversing with the principal men on the advantages that they would derive from the settlement of missionaries amongst them, and in making a vocabulary of as many words of their language as they could learn. On the arrival of Mateebe, they lost no time in soliciting a conference

with him; when Mr. C. presented him with a number of trinkets, furnished by the ladies at Kingsland: and then proceeded to inform the king, that he had come from the same country from which the missionaries had been sent to instruct the nations of Africa—that he came over the great water, in a wooden house, which the wind took four moons in blowing over to their country, to see how the missionaries were acting towards the Africans;—that, when he came to Klaar Water, he heard that Matcebe's people would be glad to have teachers as well as other nations—and that therefore, he had undertaken a journey to his country, to ask his permission to send instructors, and his protection for them when they were with them. At first the king started some objections, such as his people's want of time, the opposition of the truths which the missionaries would teach, to the customs of his country, &c. These, however, were removed by the explanations which Mr. C. gave; and the African prince concluded the interview, by saying, "*Send instructors, and I will be a father to them.*" This interesting conference took place on the evening of the first Monday in the month; when christians in most parts of the world, were met to pray for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom among men:* a time chosen by a heathen king, totally unacquainted with the concerns of christians.

The conversation on this occasion, was carried on through three interpreters; being first translated from the English into the Dutch; then from the Dutch into the Corunna, a dialect of Africa; and, lastly, from the Corunna into the Bootchuna, the language spoken at Lattakoo. It could not therefore be very rapid.

If we may depend on the accuracy of the map prefixed to these travels, Lattakoo is, at present, situated more than 150 miles north of the Orange River, in north latitude $26\frac{1}{2}$, nearly, and east longitude 26. But it is a moveable city; some years ago it was two day's journey nearer Klaar Water; and

* It may, perhaps, be necessary to inform some of our readers, that in all places, at home and abroad, connected with the Missionary Society, a meeting is held on the evening of the first Monday in every month, to pray for the success of missionary efforts.

It is proposed to remove it, in a short time, some miles more to the south. It consists of about 1500 houses, built, after the manner of the country, of mud, straw, and bushes; and contains, perhaps, 7500 inhabitants; besides, as the natives say, 1000 outposts depending on it. They have, apparently, plenty of cattle; but, like the rest of their countrymen, are in a state of disgusting barbarity. Of this, the following description affords convincing evidence. "The *royal family*, were at dinner," says Mr. C. "in the corner of their yard, outside the house. The king's distinction seemed to consist in his sitting next to the pot that contained the boiled beans, on which they were dining, and having the only spoon we saw, with which he helped himself and his friends, by putting a portion into the hand of each, as it was held out to him. One of the *princesses* was employed in cutting, with an axe, a dried paunch, into small pieces, and putting them into a pot to be boiled, either to complete that repast, or to serve for another soon after. One of the king's sisters was cutting up a filthy looking piece of flesh, and putting it into the same pot. Certainly an Englishman would be dying for want of food, before he accepted an invitation to dine with the king of Lattakoo." Yet the inhabitants of Lattakoo are fellow-men, and have immortal souls.

[To be concluded in the next number.]

The NATURE and ADVANTAGE of SUNDAY SCHOOL UNIONS.

The following ADDRESS is subjoined to the third Report of the South Lincolnshire and Isle of Ely SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION: it is hoped, that, by inserting it in the G. B. R. and thus giving it a wider circulation, its usefulness may be increased.

Having, with peculiar pleasure, witnessed the third general Meeting, since the formation of this Union, we cannot forbear expressing our highest satisfaction with the result. The lively interest which is hereby excited in our breasts, in behalf of the rising generation, makes us return to our infant charge with redoubled energy; and, at the same time, deepens our concern for the many poor children who are at present destitute of every means of moral improvement.

As the addition of new schools to our Union would extend this pleasing influence more extensively, and essentially contribute to forward our grand object, it is thought proper to call the attention of those schools within the district that stand unconnected with us, (if such schools exist), as well as those which are already in connection, to *the Nature and Advantages of the Union.*

This Union professes to embrace the following objects, viz. to stimulate and encourage each other in the education and religious instruction of poor children, on the Lord's Day; and, by mutual communications, endeavour to improve the method of that instruction; to promote the opening of new, and the increase of old schools, within the sphere of this Union; and to use every exertion in our power to afford the means of instruction to the children of the poor within its boundary.—Objects like these cannot but recommend themselves to every unprejudiced mind, while they open a wide field for the benevolent dispositions of our serious youth, who are either actually engaged, or are willing to employ themselves in so noble a work. “It is a maxim universally acknowledged, that man, in an individual capacity, is incapable of attaining any very important object, or render any considerable service to society: but when men of various capacities, acquirements, habits, and experience, unite in promoting one common cause, there is scarcely any difficulty which they cannot surmount, or any design they cannot, by perseverance, accomplish.” This has been abundantly evinced in those great societies which have sent missionaries to the heathen world, and in that society whose object it is to give the Bible to all mankind. These and similar institutions have raised our native land higher in the scale of eminence, than all the riches of her merchandize, or all the glory of her arms. Further proof is unnecessary to shew, that if there is any considerable progress to be made, or any important end to be answered, it must be by a combination of vigorous exertions.

This Union totally disclaims all interference with the religious opinions of different sects. It is open to all denominations of christians. Each society contributes its efforts in the general cause, without compromising its peculiar tenets; and adopts its own method of tuition. Uniformity is not the basis on which the Union rests: it is a union of effort, on the broad basis of giving *instruction to the children of the poor.*

Among the advantages which have already resulted from the Union, and which will, we doubt not, be increasingly promoted by it, we may distinctly notice the following.

First. An increased attention to Sunday School Institutions, particularly in the places and neighbourhood where the Union is held. It is lamentable, that, notwithstanding these institutions have existed thirty years in some of the manufacturing districts, they are of very late date in these parts, and the community in general remain ignorant of the nature of them. By the Union meetings, especially, the public attention is drawn to the subject, and the most lively feelings excited. Who, that has attended on these occasions, has not been deeply affected with those impassioned appeals on the behalf of the uneducated, and thereby miserable poor? How many a capable youth may be wrought upon, and feel his soul enflamed to that degree, as to volunteer his services in the formation of new schools, and thus employ that ardour of mind, which otherwise might be the victim of vice, or the votary of folly, in a pursuit the most beneficial to his fellow creatures!

Secondly. The establishment of new schools, is another advantage resulting from the Union. The Union has been so recently formed, that it has not yet had time to effect much in this way; but the subject is contemplated; it is a leading object ever to be kept in view: the Union will be ready at all times, when proper occasions offer, to lend assistance, according to its ability, in their formation and establishment; to give advice to young teachers, and direct them in the choice of books best adapted to the end, and in other respects afford them aid, as circumstances may require.

Thirdly. The Union excites emulation and diligence among the teachers, and tends to keep alive those generous feelings necessary to a steady and persevering exertion.

Where there is no competition, animation itself will grow languid, and exertion degenerate into sloth; a dull and lifeless conformity to the same round of duties prevents the effect which those very duties are designed to produce. But, where a number of schools are vying with each other, and the report of each comes under the cognizance of the collective body, it becomes a motive to diligence, and a stimulous to persevering exertion. The mechanism of the human mind requires such an impulse, and when directed to such a noble object, it is productive of the greatest good.

Fourthly. An improvement in the discipline and mode of tuition must necessarily arise from the Union. Improvements are, generally speaking, the result of practice and experience; and when an improved method of conveying instruction has been tried with effect in a school belonging to the Union, and hereby brought into public view, every school in the Union may be benefited by it; whereas, on the other hand, schools which stand unconnected with any institution of this kind, may remain ignorant of the best means of carrying their benevolent intentions into effect: or, supposing any of them may have discovered the very best means of instruction, its superior advantages become limited and confined; it is a "light under a bushel," the Union is the candlestick; or, it should be the chandelier, on which every light is placed to illuminate the whole.

Fifthly. Nor is it one of the least advantages of the Union, that it promotes cordiality and friendship among good men of various denominations. It seems that, in the present state of ignorance, there must be many things in which we differ in our opinions upon religious subjects, and these differences, excited by our own depravity, too frequently produce discord and strife on the one hand, and distance and reserve on the other: but there are many things in which we may all be united, and as, in respect to the distribution of the Holy Scriptures, such an union produces the happiest effect; so it may be in Sunday Schools. Here we may see eye to eye, and face to face—here we may provoke one another to love and good works—here we find, that, by a friendly communication with each other on some important subjects, and a co-operation in the same grand design, we feel an affection for each other, which otherwise would not have been excited; and happily find, that while we are forgetting our minor differences, we are brethren in our common Lord.

The Danger of CHRISTIANS turning POLITICIANS.

DEAR SIR,

If the following observations are deserving a place in the G. B. R. their appearance therein will oblige a friend.

The political affairs of Europe, have, for several years, borne a multiform appearance; and every eye has been looking forward to see the event; and every ear attentively listening to the news concerning the contending armies in the fields of

action. It is no wonder that so much anxiety should prevail, when we consider, that many have near and dear relatives, who are one night beat up in their trenches, and the next day exposed to perpetual firing; and, to close the day, have to make, or to sustain, a heavy and tremendous charge. We, who are at home, have our thoughts occupied in various ways. Sometimes, in idea, we see our friends falling under the loss of blood; anon we think we see them struggling in the agonies of death, with their limbs mangled and torn by the instruments of war; and left a prey to vultures, without interment, in a foreign land. I sincerely sympathize with such, and mingle my tears with theirs. But I have been pained to hear, (even from professors), intimations in favor of war; and have observed, that their minds have been nearly swallowed up in political things. Now, sir, if "we are begotten again to a lively hope, to an inheritance above."—"If we are pilgrims, and strangers"—"If we are not at home in this world; and the time of our sojourning but very short," we ought to be more anxious about heavenly objects, and less so about earthly ones. It is certain, that we brought nothing into the world with us; and it is as certain we shall carry nothing out. "For what hath it pleased God to call us from darkness to light, and from the power of satan to himself?" Certainly, "that we should shew forth his praise." We should always remember, that heaven is the reward of faithful and vigorous exertions; and these necessarily imply some important labour.—The labour of a christian is, to take care of his soul, to occupy his talent or talents well, to be upon his watch-tower, to have his lamp burning, and his loins girt about with truth; and himself waiting for his master's coming. What will political things do for us, when all the springs of life are broke? when all earthly scenes are closing, and eternity opening upon us? Will the reflection, that we have lost so much time about political things, give us any pleasure? I believe not. And, suppose that our dear children have been more instructed in political things than religion, through our example; will this be a source of comfort in the hour of our departure? Political things eat, like a canker-worm, every thing else; and so far as the mind of the christian is suffered to be employed in them, so far the best things decline. Wheresoever a declension takes place, 'tis through a neglect of christian duties; and these,

alas! are too much neglected by those christians who have an improper zeal for political things. God is the judge of the whole earth, and will do right; and at last, all the dreadful effects of war, and the combinations of princes, shall be found to further his wise design. 'Tis for christians, then, to live up to their dignity, and not to grovel so much below it, and thus to sink themselves to an equality with the children of this world.

OBSERVER.

On the ORDINATION of PASTORS.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

SIR,

In perusing the interesting Minutes of the last Association of the New Connection of General Baptists, I observed a complaint against some of the churches and ministers, for not attending to the scripture-rule respecting ordination; together with an affectionate request, that they would neglect it no longer. As the General Baptists have been noted for their strict regard to the scriptures, and have suffered much persecution, because they would not depart from the precepts of that sacred code, I was much surprised to find, on enquiry, what I little suspected, that several churches were "verily guilty." But I indulge a cheerful confidence, that the evil will soon be remedied; and that, in a short time, it will have no more existence. It might be easily shewn, that the primitive churches chose their own officers, and that they were ordained by persons in the ministry, by solemn prayer and laying on of hands. But as this has been so often proved by others, I shall only, with your permission, notice a few of the important advantages which the solemnities of an ordination are adapted to bestow.

First. It affords an excellent opportunity of maintaining and publishing the undoubted right of the people to choose their own ministers; and thus a protest is entered against that domination which prevails in the establishment, and among the methodists, by which ministers are *imposed on* the people, instead of being *chosen by* them. For, whenever an ordination takes place, the people's right is recognized by all present, and exercised by the people themselves.

Secondly. It furnishes an interesting opportunity for many to unite in fervent devotion. Those who have attended these

exercises, have experienced their hearts to burn within them with an ardent desire to promote the glory of God, and to unite themselves to a christian society, where there are many members of one body, and every one members one of another. The great Head of the church appointed "pastors," for the edifying of his body ; which is the church.

Thirdly. On these occasions, every person is either informed or reminded of the important doctrine of divine influence ; and every pious soul feels afresh the accomplishment of that delightful promise :—"The times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." The fervent prayers presented to God, and especially the ordination prayer, breathe so much of the spirit of devotion, as amounts to a blessed proof of the truth of the declaration, that "the spirit helpeth our infirmities." Thus the exercises of such days, have a powerful tendency to cultivate and perpetuate in the churches, a dependance on the promised aid of the Holy Spirit. A cordial belief in his assistance, will encourage every christian in the performance of every duty, and in the practice of every virtue ; being "strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man."

Fourthly. The solemn charge delivered to the minister, on his ordination, is of infinite importance, both to himself and to his people. He is reminded of his duty—of the greatness of his work—of the final account he will have to render to God—of the difficulties he must expect—the need of *faithfulness, watchfulness, perseverance, and prayer* ; and the absolute necessity of maintaining personal religion, lest at last, he should have to exclaim—"They made me keeper of the vineyard ; but my own vineyard I have not kept."

Fifthly. On these days, the members of the church are more informed of their duties, and more urged to a persevering and conscientious discharge of them, than on any other day. Their duty to their minister and pastor is too delicate a subject for *him* to dwell upon ; but the pastor of another church may point it out with plainness and freedom. He may charge them, as they wish well to the church, to the comfort and success of their minister, to the prosperity of their own souls here ; and, as they hope for the approbation of their Judge hereafter, to "know them that labour among them, and esteem them very highly in love for their work sake ; and to be at peace

among themselves"—to labour with them in their prayers to God for them. When these truths are set home by the influence of the holy spirit on the hearts of the members, the ministers of Christ are able to testify to the people of their charge, living and dying, "Ye are our glory and joy."

Sixthly. It would be well if pastors and members were solemnly to keep an anniversary of the day of ordination, by setting apart, at least some hours of the evening, for thankfulness, prayer, and humiliation before God; that all might be reminded of the solemn engagements of that day, and all renew their covenant with God, and with one other. By the cordial, united, and persevering exertions of ministers and people, the churches will evidence that God is with them, and thus peace will be within their walls, and prosperity within their palaces. "Righteousness shall go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof, as a lamp that burneth."

HAMPSHIRE.

J. K. L. D.

CHRIST'S KINGDOM NOT OF THIS WORLD.

The spirit of prophecy foretold the rise and declension of four universal monarchies, which, in the progress of time, should succeed each other: that the Babylonian would be supplanted by the Medo-Persian; that by the Macedonian; and in the issue, the fourth kingdom, that was strong as iron, breaketh that in pieces, and subdueth all. In the Roman, which is the last of these ponderous empires, another kingdom would arise, of a different nature; "a kingdom which the God of Heaven would set up, and which should never be destroyed;" Dan. ii. 44.—"A kingdom to be given with glory and dominion over all people, nations, and languages, to one like the Son of man; whom all should serve, whose dominion is everlasting, never to pass away, and whose kingdom that which shall never be destroyed." vii. 13, 14

In these predictions there is a manifest reference in that title which is given to the constitution of the gospel, which is so frequently denominated "the kingdom"—"the kingdom of heaven"—"the kingdom of God and of his Christ." The Jews mistook the nature of Messiah's reign; and, being full of the idea of a temporal king, by whom deliverance should be wrought, and Israel saved from the hand of her enemies, they rejected him, who, though "a prophet mighty in deed and

word before God and all the people, came short of their views," who trusted that it had been he which "should have redeemed Israel" by some miraculous interposition; or, like a second Joshua, carried all before him by the point of the sword.

Disappointed in their expectations, and mortified with the righteous censures, which the Son of God cast upon the leading men among the Jews, exposing their hypocrisy, in setting aside the commandments of God, for the doctrines and traditions of men; they accused Jesus to the Roman governor, of making himself their king, and thereby setting up a claim in opposition to Cæsar. A charge so unjust in its principle, and without the least foundation in fact, led him to give a view of his office, and the nature of his kingdom, in which he openly professes himself a king; but, at the same time, shews that his kingdom was not of this world, and so could not interfere with the interests, nor injure the dominion of Cæsar.

"My kingdom is not of this world, not of a worldly nature, but the reverse of the kingdoms of this world, in every respect. It is entirely distinct and separate, and independent of them all; and is of such a nature as to exist under any and every form of civil government that may prevail in the world."

The kingdoms of this world owe their origin, their establishment, and defence, to worldly instruments:—they are erected by power and policy, defended by intrigue, war, and alliances with other states. Too often power has overcome right, and insatiate ambition has been the main spring of action. The choice of means, however diabolical, has been seldom weighed in the scale of righteousness, so the end might but be obtained. How different the kingdom of Jesus Christ: the only means by which his kingdom was erected, is "the word of the truth of the gospel," attended with "the power of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." "It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow into it. Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." The harbinger of the prince of peace prepares the way of the Lord, by calling the people to repent of sin, and saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand. The sound

of his master's feet is behind him; the mighty king of Zion comes to men, and takes out a people for his praise. Meek and lowly in heart, he uses no force but that of persuasion; no weapon but that of truth: all worldly force and violent means he utterly disclaimed. When the misguided zeal of James and John would have commanded fire from heaven to consume the inhabitants of a village that did not receive him, he turned and rebuked them, saying, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of, for the son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." "If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight."

Our Lord intimates to Peter, the great means by which his kingdom should be established in the world; and the rock on which his church should be built; viz. The belief of the truth, "That Jesus Christ is the Son of God," a confession of faith, comprehending all that had been revealed concerning him in his glorious person, and important work, as "written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms;" nor were any admitted as the subjects of his kingdom, under its administration by the apostles, without acknowledging the Christ the Son of God.

The apostolic commission teaches, that christianity, or the kingdom of Christ, must be propagated by the influence of instruction only; and that the apostles executed the same in all its parts, and, in the very order, in which it was delivered to them, by first teaching, then baptizing those who had been taught; and then teaching them to observe all things which Christ had commanded:—this is the only way in which the kingdom of Christ can be promoted, consistently with his will—the order being given for all succeeding periods. "Lo! I am with you always, even to the end of the world."

Its means of defence widely differ from all worldly kingdoms. The God of Heaven, who set up this kingdom, defends it by his power; he is known in all her palaces for a refuge—the highest shall establish her—the cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night, rest upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies; these being the defence of all its glory. Salvation is for walls and bulwarks; and the church thus built upon a rock, the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. No weapon formed against this kingdom shall prosper; and every tongue that riseth in

judgment against it, he shall condemn. His subjects have indeed a complete armour, and are called upon to fight, but not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. The christian warrior has his loins girt about with truth, and has on the breast-plate of righteousness, his feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, has the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. Thus equipped, he stands in the evil day.

The kingdom of Christ cannot be promoted by worldly policy. Craft and intrigue are engines commonly employed in the kingdoms of this world; and men, deep in cunning and duplicity, are the fittest instruments for extending such empires; but in the kingdom of Christ there is no field open for crafty deceit to display its intrigues. This is a kingdom of truth, peace, and righteousness; and truth, without disguise, is its sole weapon; every other is discarded with abhorrence. "We have," says the apostle, "put away the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but, by the manifestation of the truth, recommending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."—"Our exhortation was not of deceit, nor in guile; neither, at any time, used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness; God is witness."

Nor is the kingdom of Christ promoted by the influence of human wisdom and philosophy. The apostles declared the testimony of God, which consisted of a few plain facts of which themselves were eye and ear witnesses. Learning and philosophy are not necessary to enable a witness to declare facts which he has seen and heard; hence the apostles employed none. "I came not," saith Paul, "with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring to you the testimony of God; for I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." My speech and my preaching was not with the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in the demonstration of the spirit, and of power." The apostle avoided this, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect—that their faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God—lest men should be induced to believe on any other consideration, than its own weight and authority.

Human wisdom and philosophy have in many instances proved detrimental to religion, having obscured its beautiful simplicity, and have ministered questions rather than godly edifying which is in faith. And however valuable these may be for the interest of civil society, they cannot convey to the possessor the knowledge of the truth, or really advance the kingdom of Jesus Christ. Mere human learning cannot translate a poor sinner out of the kingdom of darkness, into the kingdom of God's dear son—cannot convert a soul to God. With respect to producing these effects, it may truly be said, "Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" It is only by the foolishness of preaching that God saves them that believe.

The kingdom of Christ is entirely spiritual, therefore worldly force can have no place in it. The sword cannot be used in its defence. A kingdom of a spiritual nature admits of no carnal weapons. The christian religion, mild and benevolent, cannot be promoted at the expence of the happiness and lives of mankind; and those must be ignorant of its genuine spirit, and of the merciful design of its author, in attempting it in such a way. When Jesus was apprehended by his enemies, Peter having a sword, drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his ear. The disciple shewed his wrath; but Jesus his love and compassion, by healing the wounded; and thus exhibiting a glorious example of meek and suffering kindness: while, at the same time, he tendered to his followers a direct prohibition against drawing the sword in his cause. "Put up thy sword into its place, for all that take the sword shall perish with the sword."

The followers of Antichrist have, professedly, under the banner of the prince of peace, killed with the sword and led into captivity; but the followers of Jesus Christ must have no other defence than faith and patience.

The kingdoms of this world, under the wisest and best administrations, can only promote the civil or temporal felicity of the subjects: their jurisdiction extends no farther than to the exterior of human department: they take no cognizance of the principles of the mind, otherwise than they become manifest by overt acts. Wise laws, properly administered, protect our lives, property, and liberty; and there is a common

participation of national blessings; but yet, valuable as all these appear, they are earthly in their nature, and limited only to time. But the kingdom of our Immanuel promotes both the temporal and spiritual happiness of all his subjects: "Godliness having the promise of the life that now is, as well as that which is to come." Under its jurisdiction, the mind is transformed, enlightened, and renewed: righteousness, joy, and peace in the Holy Ghost, are the blessings it imparts; grace reigns through righteousness, unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

If Christ's kingdom is not of this world, but in all respects a spiritual kingdom; and if the doctrine laid down concerning it be just, we are constrained to draw a conclusion, that all national establishments of christianity are subversive of its nature and exalted principles.

All national establishments of religion are, in their own nature, anti-christian: the apostle Paul, in reference to the great apostacy, tells the Thessalonians, that they knew what it was that prevented the introduction of Anti-christ;—the hindrance was the civil power remaining in the hands of the heathen emperor of Rome; and that when this should be taken away, then the anti-christian system, already beginning to work in his day, shall be made manifest. The heathen empire was destroyed; and the revolution that took place upon the pretended conversion of Constantine, by which a form of christianity was established as the religion of the Roman empire, points to the period of its commencement. Instead of viewing this great change as the most glorious æra of christianity, we must say with the apostle, "Then was that wicked revealed, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all the deceivableness of righteousness in them that perish; but whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."

National churches, however differently modified, are perfectly inconsistent with the New Testament church. The heavenly Jerusalem, the general assembly and church of the first born who are written in heaven; composed of the whole family of God in heaven and upon earth, whether jews or gentiles. redeemed from among men by the blood of the lamb, out of

every kingdom, tongue, and people, and nation—this is the kingdom in which Jesus reigns alone, and which is given to him for an everlasting dominion, that shall never be destroyed.

National churches acknowledge other authority than that of Jesus; set up another king beside him whom God hath anointed king in Zion. The executive power in the kingdoms of the world, give national churches their existence, prescribe laws, enforce obedience by temporal penalties: its privileges are held by its grant; offices and emoluments are at its disposal. Here we see a daring infringement of the authority of Christ, and an invasion of his royal prerogative; and the church becomes a political engine of the civil power.

National churches are directly opposed to the church of Christ, respecting its members; in which there is no discrimination between the good and the bad, all having access to divine ordinances. Are not the bulk of every nation of the world that lyeth in wickedness? How can that be the church of Christ, which embraces as its members a nation of this world? What can more justly deserve the name of Anti-christ, than a society of wicked men, falsely claiming the character of a church of Christ? Whereas, the members of Christ's church are chosen and faithful—born again, and spiritual.

National churches are the reverse of the church of Christ, as to its privileges and glory. The blessings possessed by the church of Christ are all spiritual, coming through the death of Christ, and bestowed by him, and received by virtue of union with him; and all the glory of the church is derived from Christ. But the harlot that sitteth upon many waters, is represented as a woman seated on a scarlet-coloured beast, arrayed in purple and scarlet, decked with gold, precious stones, and pearls. All this denotes the worldly splendour which surrounds her; all derived from the kingdoms of this world—the union of the church with the state. How unlike the spouse, the lamb's wife, who derives all her glory from Christ, her husband.

National churches are gathered and defended by other and different means from the church of the living God. Every national church in Europe has been established by the power and sword of civil authority. The form was first devised by the wisdom of churchmen, and the policy of rulers. Then it

was issued forth to be received by the nation; penal laws were enacted, and enforced by the severest punishments, with a view to give it strength and solidity. How different to the kingdom of Jesus Christ, where there is but one law giver—where no man, however exalted, possesses more power than the meanest christian; where office-bearers are servants of the churches, and where all are brethren.

PHILOS.

ORIGINAL LETTERS.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

At a time when certain dignitaries of the established church have openly declared their unwillingness to co-operate with sectaries, even in the distribution of the Bible, without note or comment, and have solemnly warned the inferior clergy, as they tender the reputation, the safety, and the very existence of the mother church, to keep at the greatest distance from the dissenters; you may perhaps think that the publication of the following Original Letters will not be unseasonable. The former was written by a venerable bishop now living, to a foreign lady, from whom I received it: and the latter, by the worthy, though eccentric, John Berridge, to Dr. Stangar, of Northamptonshire; and is now in the possession of a relative, who kindly permitted me to take a copy from the original. The liberal sentiments avowed by these worthy sons of the establishment may serve as an antidote against the intolerance of modern high churchmen.

PHILOS.

AN ORIGINAL LETTER,

From an ENGLISH BISHOP; written in answer to some enquiries of a Lady respecting the Greek church.

In answering Miss D.'s enquiries, I shall certainly do it with sincerity! My opinions on any subject, though sincere, are not infallible; I must act in conformity to them myself; but I am far from wishing any other person to rely upon them.

The christian religion is wholly comprised in the New Testament; but men have interpreted that book in various ways; and hence have sprung up a great variety of christian churches.

I scruple not giving the name of christian churches to assemblies of men, uniting together for public worship, though they differ somewhat from each other in doctrine or in discipline; whilst they all agree in the fundamental principle of the christian religion, "That Jesus is the Christ, the Saviour of the World." In this, the Greek, the Latin, and all the reformed churches have one and the same faith; they all too believe that Christ rose from the dead: that there will be a future state, in which all men will be rewarded or punished according to their works done in this world.

These are some of the chief points in which all churches agree: they disagree in matters of less importance:—and, each church, esteeming itself the true church, is apt to impute, not error merely, but crime, to every other. This imputation, I think, is extremely wrong. "It is judging another man's servant, it is assuming a dominion over another man's faith." It is presuming that we are rendering God service, when it may be, that we are merely supporting our own prejudices, flattering our own self-sufficiency, and paying homage to intellectual pride. I do not indeed agree with those who esteem it a matter of indifference what religion a man adopts, provided his life be good; yet I must think that this indifference is less exceptionable, than that want of charity for those who dissent from our own particular faith, which too frequently occupies the minds of well-meaning zealots in every church.

The doctrines of every church are best known from its public creed; because that is supposed to be the compendium of articles of faith adapted for general use. The Russian Greek church does not use in its public service what is commonly called the Athanasian creed; but simply that which is naturally denominated the Nicene creed; though it is not, in every point, precisely that which was composed at the Council of Nice, in the year 324. I do not presume to blame the Russian church for the exclusive use of the Nicene creed in its public liturgy, especially as it does not prohibit the use of the other two: nor do I blame it for differing from the Romish church in one article of this creed, respecting the Holy Ghost proceeding from the Father alone; though all the reformed churches agree with the church of Rome, in maintaining the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son, though it is well known that the words, "and the Son," were only added by a pope, in the

tenth century, without the authority of a council. The doctrine may be true, but not being a part of what was established at the council of Nice, it is not admitted by the Greek church.

The Russian church differs from the Romish church in not acknowledging a purgatory—in not denying the sacramental cup to the laity—in allowing their priests to marry—in explaining transubstantiation in a mystical manner—in not invoking saints and the Virgin Mary as mediators—and in many other points. In these, and many other particulars, the Greek church seems to have a leaning to the principles of protestantism, rather than popery.

On no occasion ought we to act in opposition to our consciences; but it does not follow, that, in obeying the dictates of conscience, we always act right: for there is such a thing as an erroneous conscience, and we may not be able to correct the error. I knew a gentleman, who had been brought up at Eton and Cambridge, who, from being a protestant, became a Roman catholic. This gentleman examined the foundation of both religions, and finally settled in the church of Rome. He acted properly in following the impulse of his judgment. I think he formed an erroneous judgment; but this is only my opinion in opposition to his opinion: and, even admitting my opinion to be right, it would be uncharitable in me to condemn him: for God only knows, whether, with his talents and constitutional turn of mind, he could have escaped the error into which he fell. With a similar degree of moderation should we think of the different sects of christians! Every sect believes itself to be right, but it does not become any of them to say, "I am more righteous than my neighbour;" or think that the gates of heaven are shut against all others.

R. L.

AN ORIGINAL LETTER,

From the Rev. Mr. BERRIDGE, to Dr. STANGER, of Harringworth, the Pastor of the G. B. church at Morcott.

*Everton, near Biggleswade, Bedfordshire,
July 27, 1770.*

DEAR SIR,

I am a poor old huntsman, belonging to a very good but despised master, who formerly dwelt at Nazareth; and I have been sounding a ram's horn in the church, in the fields, in houses and barns, on horse-blocks, and dunghills, for many

years past, and thirty miles round. The master has honoured me much by the gathering of many churches, and now is flogging me well. My true name is John Berridge; but my common name is the Devil of Everton, of which town I am vicar. Thirty summers I have been visited with a nervous complaint, more or less: but the last two summers and this, much afflicted; unable to ride, unable to preach at my own church in the summer. I am now better than I have been; yet good for nothing, because I cannot preach. My breast and stomach are so tender, they will bear no exercise. Last week I cut open the leaves of a new pamphlet, which so hurt my breast, as to overwhelm me for three or four days. I have tried many worldly physicians, and have taken abundance of bark, vitriol drops, &c. to bad purpose; and now I apply to Luke the evangelist. My master has given me a word, that he will renew my strength like the eagle's; and perhaps Mr. Stanger is the appointed instrument. Along with your medicines, I wish you would send a few directions respecting diet.

My house is fifty miles from London, and is near the new north road.—If you should ever travel this way, I beg you will make my house your inn; and, if you are disposed for preaching, a pulpit will stand ready for you. Gowns and bands are nothing with me; Christ is all in all. Any minister, whether of the clergy or laity, who heartily hates sin, and loves Jesus, is welcome to preach at my house. The Lord has given me more than a dozen lay preachers, who are my children, and who often blow their horns in the vicarage house. At times, my body is so fluttered, that I am not only restless, but fretful. Think of me, dear sir, in your prayers, and lay a feeble worm at the Redeemer's feet.—He knows that I love him, because he has taught me; and yet the old man within is ready to growl at him sometimes. Oh! for a larger supply of his spirit, and a daily application of his blood.

My servant is a christian man, and if you preach anywhere while he is at Harringworth, he would be glad to hear you. May the Lord preserve your useful life, and water your flock by your ministerial labours. Give my kind love to all that love dear Jesus. Grace, mercy, and peace, be multiplied upon you, upon your flock, and upon your affectionate servant, for Christ's sake,

JOHN BERRIDGE.

P. S. I have been trying this summer, to starve my disorder away, by drinking water at meals, and plenty of water-gruel; and this seems to have weakened my stomach so much, that it will not bear a spoonful of plain wine, and scarcely wine well diluted with water. Through the advice of many, I have laid aside malt liquor, but think myself the worse for it. What a blessed region is that, where all the inhabitants can say, "we are no more sick." Jesus has given you, dear sir, a peculiar skill, and made you a Bezaleel, in your way. I hope you give him all the honour, and believe you do, because he blesses your medicines with success. But does not this sometimes afford you, (it surely would me), matter for temptation. My heart is so corrupt, that I can do nothing well, but I presently feel self-complacency and vanity stealing upon me. This moment, perhaps, I am loathing myself; and the next moment, I am pleased with that which I loathed. Oh, what riches in the grace of God, and what virtue in the blood of Jesus, to save such wretches. But I weary you. Once more, dear unknown sir, farewell; the Lord be with you: and if we should never see each other in the flesh, may we meet at last, and join in singing eternal Hallelujah's to God and the lamb. Amen, and Amen.

THE POWER OF TRUTH.

AN ANECDOTE.

A few weeks ago, one of our ministers went to baptize five persons, at a village into which the G. B. interest has been lately introduced. The ordinance was administered in a rivulet, near a small bridge; and a discourse was delivered, on the occasion, at the water side. Above two thousand persons assembled to witness this novel spectacle. Amongst them was a farmer, who gloried in being an enemy to dissenters. In order to turn this solemn service into ridicule and confusion, he had given an old sailor a shilling to engage him to jump, from the bridge, upon the back of the first candidate that went into the water; and had drowned a number of young dogs, which he distributed among the spectators, with directions to throw them into the water, during the administration of the ordinance. Having made these preparations, feeling a curiosity to hear what could be said in defence of a practice which

appeared to him as madness, he placed himself directly in front of the preacher. He listened attentively, and appeared affected. As soon as the sermon was concluded, he stepped to the sailor, and forbade him to interfere with the solemnity; telling him to keep the money. He then went to his agents in the croud, and positively prohibited them from using the dead dogs which he had provided: threatening that he would throw the first person into the water, that dared to make any disturbance. The spectators, struck with the change, behaved with the strictest propriety: and there is reason to hope that many felt the power of divine truth.

*On REGISTERING the BIRTHS of the CHILDREN
of DISSENTERS.*

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

SIR,

I read the remarks in your last Number, on the best mode of registering the births of the children of dissenters; and must confess, that I was, by no means, satisfied with them. They seem to give up the point, as it respects the validity of our church registers; and recommend a substitute that would be inconvenient at best; and often, impracticable. The expence of registering the births, in our own congregation, for instance, at Dr. Williams' Library, would be upwards of five pounds per annum: and, in a large majority of cases, two persons who could write, would not be found among the attendants at a birth. If our church registers be not legal, we ought not to rest till they be made so: and you, Editors, would do well to bring the subject before the body of dissenters at large; that a regular and united effort might be made, by all concerned, to legalize our present mode, or procure some better method, under the sanction of the law; that so people might not be driven from us, because we cannot effectually record the births of our children, and thus, determine their relationship to our families. Hoping that this subject will arrest more general attention,

I am, &c.

EBORACENSIS.

*A DISPOSITION to COMPLAIN, a SYMPTOM
of SPIRITUAL DECAY.*

*Abstracted from Smith's "Signs of a Dying Christian."**

How apt are christians to be quickly apprehensive of that which goeth against the grain: the string of the heart is easily wound up to its utmost height, yea, beyond godly bounds in sorrow, and exclaims, "Give me children, or I die." We are ready accountants to complain of what we want and would have, or of what we have in point of misery, and would be rid of; but often strangely forgetful of the mercies we enjoy, or the miseries from which we are exempt. We seldom go into God's sanctuary and weigh our present estate in his balance: whether so much misery in the left hand be not counterpoised by three times as much mercy in the right. A tribe of mercies bestowed, have less effect in raising the heart and tongue to a thankful frame, than a single blessing taken from us has to excite complaint. We weep more, perhaps for the removal of one son, than we rejoice for the preservation of ten sons: full of sorrow for a less loss, and lean ingratitude for greater gain. Good David was sadly to blame here. Rebellion was crushed, his crown was regained, and his troops returned victorious over dangerous and politic enemies: yet David, instead of rejoicing in the mercies bestowed, can only enquire, "Is the young Absalom safe?" Instead of congratulating his troops on their courage and fidelity, and returning thanks to his God for their success, he retires to his chamber in deep sorrow, exclaiming as he goes; "O my son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom! would God that I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son." And is not this too common among professors wherever we come? Are not all places filled with our complainings of want, or loss?—our tongues nimble at reporting our less miseries; while dumb at praising for greater mercies?—our hands often lifted up in prayer for what we want; but seldom raised in praise for what we enjoy?

How many signal mercies, from evening till morning, and from morning till evening, are scarce taken notice of? Food to eat, and an appetite to eat it; clothes to cover us, fire to

* See G. B. R. vol. vi. page 256.

warm us, a bed to rest us : and yet, so brutish are we, as not to see these mercies in their worth, till we feel them in their want. How many nights, under the shade of death, are we preserved from the scythe of death ; and yet never the more thankful or fruitful next morning ? We enjoy a state of bodily health and strength for years together, and are less concerned to be grateful for it, than if it were all merited by us, and not the effects of clemency and mercy.

The fowls of the air, the beasts of the field, the fish of the sea, must surrender up their lives to support ours : they must be unclothed, that we may be clothed. The tender calf fetched from the stall, and the young lamb taken from the flock, the turtle dove stripped of its life, for a pampered, wanton, unthankful people. But what will be the end of all this ? What shall we answer, when the great Giver of all our mercies calls us to account for the use of them ? We shall be confounded, when God brings in his bill of indictment against us,—for the abuse of plenty in the year of plenty—for idleness—for turning riches into pride—for praying seldom, unless under the sense of some temporal loss—for sitting down to feed on God's creatures, and resting upon our beds with as little gratitude as the beasts—for murmuring under adversity—for dull-sightedness to the blessings we enjoy—for envy at our brother's welfare—for using our tongues to carry tales rather than to return thanks—for taking up a report against our neighbour—for every omission of good—for every commission of evil—for our grand sin of unthankfulness, &c. Ah ! christian, what shall we plead in the great day of account, when all this, and a thousand times more, shall rise up in judgment against us. When it will be proved, to our confusion, that we have spent more of our time and tongues in complaint than in praise.

But what is the cause of this symptom of decay ? The cause is fourfold.

First. We are too apt to measure our condition with what we would have it to be, not asking counsel of God : is this or that condition best for me ? Good Agur knew the deceitfulness of his own heart, and therefore durst not make any choice without God. Prov. xxx. 8, 9. If the young child have its will, it will crave a knife, and therewith wound itself ; it will eat to gluttony, and drink to surfeiting ; cry out against applying the plaster, or probing the wound. And how ready

have we been to complain of those circumstances, which, when once we have gone to the sanctuary to enquire, we have found pregnant with mercy, and subjects for thankfulness. O! it is good to let God alone, to walk in his own method; and take what he sends, whether it be physic or cordial.

Secondly. We often forget, that the pulse of sense beats higher than the pulse of faith; and measure our condition by seeing, not by believing. Abraham's sense could not see the son of the promise; but his faith could take the knife to slay his son, for a sacrifice to God. Sense would not direct Israel to march to Canaan, through the wilderness; but God saw that was the best way, and therefore faithful Moses chose it. Sense made Rachel cry, "Give me children, or I die;" while faith led old Eli, when made childless, to say; "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good." Faith esteems that condition to be the best which God appoints, be it ever so thorny, unpleasant, and bitter to sense, because she believes that he can and will make all things work together for good to them that love him.

Thirdly. We too seldom recollect, that the state of a christian on earth ought to be a thankful state: that it is his duty "in every thing to give thanks." This to sense appears a hard lesson. To thank God for affliction, for sickness, for the loss of husband, wife, child, house, land, and every thing, seems highly unreasonable. But the text is universal; and the reason is as universal: for every condition on this side hell is a mercy, and calls for thankfulness. Joshua and Caleb thought still the best of God's ways with them. And Job, when house, and substance, and cattle, and servants, and children all were gone, breaks out into thanksgiving. "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return: the Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord."

Fourthly. Another cause of this complaining disposition, is our not retaining a sense of the anguish we experienced under our first convictions, when we felt the guilt of our sins, in all their black aggravations; and passed sentence of death on ourselves. When we were beset with lamentations, mourning, and woe; and could truly say with David, "My sin is ever before me;" and if in this condition I die, I shall be lost to all eternity. Did not this burden, felt for sin, and feared for wrath, keep

down the spirit of complaint for small miseries? Would we not then have been affected with gratitude for a tenth part of the mercies which we now enjoy? The malefactor, when sentence is pronounced, and no hope of reprieve left, though once a palace could scarcely satisfy him, would then be willing to dwell in a dungeon, could he obtain a pardon. And shall not we lie much lower, under a sense of eternal death, deserved by our iniquities: and, in our greatest temporal afflictions, enquire, "Why am I not in hell?" This would make the tongue cease complaining; and changing its tone to grateful praise, cause it to exclaim: "It is of the Lord's mercies I am not consumed. Praise ye the Lord. Amen."

GENERAL BAPTIST OCCURRENCES.

CONFERENCES.

The LEICESTERSHIRE CONFERENCE assembled at *Hinckley*, March 28, 1815, and was but thinly attended. The Committee appointed at the last meeting* produced the scheme of Itinerancy and their plan for the support of ministers. It proposed the formation of the G. B. churches, in the midland counties, into seven districts, each large enough to maintain, at least, two ministers: one, the regular pastor of the district, and the other, an itinerant. Certain modes of itinerating and exchanging were recommended, and a scale of the salaries, necessary for the ministers, was proposed. But, as it was thought unadvisable to conclude a matter of so much importance, when the representatives of so few of the churches concerned were present, it was agreed to print the plan of the committee, and send it to each of the churches, with a request, that they would transmit their opinions of its eligibility, to the next conference.

This conference met again at *Loughborough*, May 16, 1815, and was well attended. Mr. Pike preached from Judges, v. 23. The plan for the revival and extension of the G. B. interest, which had been submitted to the churches, included in it, was again read, and the votes of the churches collected: when it appeared that ten of them had sent no opinion; that

* See G. B. R. vol. vi. p. 226.

three had not been able to come to a decision; and, that fourteen judged it to be impracticable. The plan was, of course, relinquished. Messrs. Folkin and Brand were requested to draw a case, and present it to the association, suggesting the propriety of the connections uniting in the support of a plan of Itinerancy. The propriety of purchasing the meeting-house at Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, was considered, and unanimously approved.

The next meeting of this conference was held, at *Castle-Donington*, Sept. 26, 1815; when Mr. Moss delivered a discourse from Luke xxiv. 26. The brethren engaged to collect for Mansfield were desired to hasten their exertions. Mr. Hoe reported that he had procured the renewal of the trust deeds of Knipton meeting-house. Several young brethren were engaged to supply Knipton during the next six months. And, it was agreed, to retain, for the present, the place we occupy at Burton-upon-Trent; but the friends there were advised to look out for more convenient accommodations.

The LINCOLNSHIRE CONFERENCE was held at *Boston*, June 6, 1815. when Mr. Jarrom preached in the morning, from Isaiah lxii. 4—7; and Mr. Everard, in the evening, from Acts xiii. 38, 39. The devotional parts of the services were conducted by Messrs. Bampton and Rogers. Met for business in the afternoon, when Mr. Bissil prayed. Mr. Jarrom was chosen chairman, and Mr. Bampton, scribe. It was resolved to suspend or alter our old rules for conducting these meetings: when Mr. Rogers produced several new ones, which, with some alterations, were adopted, and are as follows:—

1. These meetings shall be denominated *Conferences*, and not *Quarterly meetings*. 2. There shall be *four* of these Conferences in the year: the *first*, on the Tuesday before the anniversary of the Christian Fund, shall be held annually at Fleet, for the better conveniency of ministers and others who attend that institution, as also its central situation for the winter quarter. *Second*, the Tuesday in Easter Week. *Third*, on the first Tuesday in June. *Fourth*, on the first Tuesday in October. These conferences to be held in regular rotation, at the following places, which will bring them alternately into the same neighbourhood.

1815.

Boston, June 6.
Tydd, St. Giles, Oct. 3.

1816.

Fleet, Jan.
Gosberton, Easter.
Wisbeach, June.
Bourn, October.

1817.

Fleet, Jan.
Sutterton, Easter.
March, June.
Spalding, October.

1818.

Fleet, Jan.
Peterboro' Easter.
Boston, &c.

3. These conferences shall be open to all the members of our churches, but ministers, church-officers, and representatives shall be considered as members more especially. 4. In order to expedite business, dinner to be as early as possible, and business to commence at half-past two. 5. The minister of the place where the conference is held, shall be in the chair. The cases submitted to conference shall be in writing, and all read before any are discussed. Cases from the churches to be first attended to, and private cases afterwards. 6. Should there be time to spare after the written cases are disposed of, it shall be devoted to the discussion of some profitable question, especially two, viz. What difficulties have we to mention? and What more can be done to promote religion amongst us? 7. The secretary shall be chosen at the meeting in January, and shall continue in office two years. 8. There shall be two public services, the first to begin at eleven o'clock in the morning, the other in the evening. The preachers to be chosen by the churches where the meeting is held. N. B. The members of our several churches in this district are cordially invited to favour us as often as possible with their company, at these meetings, as tending much to their respectability; to strengthen the hands of their ministers; promote their own edification; and, by the mutual co-operation of ministers and people in the same work, to advance the interest of the blessed Redeemer in this world.

Mr. Bampton received the thanks of the meeting for his past services, as secretary, and was requested to continue them till January, 1817. Mr. Rogers is requested to draw up a few rules for the Ministers' Widows' Fund, about to be established in this district, and submit them to the annual meeting at Fleet. The missionary statement, drawn up by Mr. Morris, and in-

tended to be read at this meeting, was unhappily forgotten by the minister to whose care it was committed, and therefore is postponed until the next conference.

The YORKSHIRE CONFERENCE assembled at *Birchcliffe*, Dec. 26, 1814. Mr. James Hodgson preached from Psa. cxxii. v. 1. An extra-meeting of this conference having been held at Catherine-Slack, Oct. 8th, 1814, the minutes of that meeting were confirmed. The object of this extra-meeting was to consider the propriety of undertaking the supply of Staley Bridge, a G. B. church on the borders of Lancashire and Cheshire, which was become destitute of a minister; and a supply was arranged, till March 26, 1815. The ministers were desired to write their thoughts on the propriety of giving the right hand as a token of fellowship to such persons as are admitted members of our churches.

This conference met again at *Burnley*, Mar. 28. Mr. James Taylor preached from 1 Cor. xiv. 40. Appointed a supply for Staley Bridge, till Midsummer. Recommended a young man to the Academy committee, to be assisted in obtaining private instruction. Desired the Ministers to write their thoughts on the propriety of carrying the bread and wine of the Lord's supper to the houses of individuals in affliction, at their request.

The next meeting was at *Shore*, May 16. Mr. James Taylor preached from Matt. v. 47. Messrs. Hollinrake and Hodgson were desired to present a case to the association, in behalf of Staley Bridge, that they may obtain a preacher or some ministerial aid from the association. Ordered several dozens of D. Taylor's "Compendious Views of Baptism," to distribute in places where little is known on the subject.

This conference met again at *Queenshead*, Aug. 14. Brother James Taylor preached from 2 Cor. xii. 9. The case respecting giving the right hand, as a token of fellowship, to newly baptized persons was largely discussed. It was concluded, that the custom of shaking hands was not of divine appointment, but a natural and common method of expressing friendship, or engaging in fellowship of any kind; and that, in this sense, the first christians used it. Being informed that Mr. W. Pickering was about to remove to Staley Bridge, a supply was arranged till his arrival. Recommended to our churches to collect for the chapel at Mansfield before Christmas

ANNUAL ASSOCIATION.

The *Annual Association* of the New Connection of General Baptists was held, June 27, 28, 29, and 30, 1815, at Nottingham: it was attended by seventy-seven ministers and representatives from the various churches. Mr. D. Taylor was chosen chairman; and Messrs. R. Smith and J. Jarrom, moderators. On the 28th, in the morning, Mr. T. Stevenson opened public worship with prayer, and Mr. D. Taylor preached from 2 Cor. v. 18—21: and, in the evening, Mr. W. Taylor engaged in prayer; and Mr. W. Pickering preached from Rev. iii. 19. "Be zealous." On the following evening, Mr. J. Kingsford prayed, and Mr. J. Jarrom delivered a discourse from Matt. xi. 7—11. From the returns of the various churches, it appears that the connection consists of sixty-six churches; and the total number of members is 6296. The clear increase, during the last year, has been two hundred and fourteen. The cause of the Blessed Redeemer appears, in many of the churches, in an improving state; though, in a few others, there is reason to fear that it rather declines. Many pleasing instances have occurred, since the last annual meeting, in which Zion appears to be extending her bounds. On the whole, the state of things is encouraging. The next association will be at Boston, Lincolnshire; to commence the last Tuesday in June, 1816. Inn, the *White Hart*.

THE CHRISTIAN FUND.

The forty-first anniversary of this laudable institution was celebrated at Fleet, Jan. 24, 1815, and was as well supported as on any former occasion. The Fund-sermon was preached by Mr. James Smith, of Tydd, St. Giles, from Psa. cxiv. 10. "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee." In the evening, Mr. H. Everard, of Spalding, preached from John xix. 25—27. "Now there stood by the cross, &c." Nearly one hundred of the friends of the institution dined together: and, after dinner, a liberal subscription was made for several cases, which, though they did not come precisely within the design of the Fund, yet seemed to call for the exercise of christian benevolence. Mr. Rogers was appointed to preach at the next anniversary.

We hope in a short time to be able to present our readers with a view of the history and constitution of this excellent society.

AGED MINISTERS' FUND.

An ACCOUNT of the MONIES which have been received and expended during the last year, and also the present state of the FUNDS of this Institution.

RECEIVED.	£.	s.	d.	PAID.	£.	s.	d.
Bal. from last year	59	1	10½	To Aged and Poor			
Broughton	2	11	0	Ministers.....	18	0	0
Boston.....	7	0	0	To poor churches	} 40	0	0
Hugglescote	2	4	0	that are unable to			
Kegworth	1	12	6	support their Mi-			
Leake	2	14	6	nisters.....			
Loughboro'	5	5	0	Postage of Letters	0	0	7
Melbourn.....	2	0	0	Printing Letters	0	6	0
Kirby Woodhouse....	2	12	0	Bal. in the Trea- }	48	14	3
Nottingham	5	0	0	surer's hands. ... }			
Quorndon	3	3	6				
Woodhouse-caves	2	2	0				
Long Whatton	1	5	0				
Johu Ashwell, Esq....	2	0	0				
Mr. W. Stevenson....	1	0	0				
Mrs. Heard.....	1	0	0				
Mr. T. Bennett	0	10	0				
— Joseph Saunders...	0	10	0				
— James Smith	0	10	6				
— F. Boot.....	0	10	0				
— P. Bailey	0	8	0				
— J. Colham	0	5	0				
— T. Goodwin.....	0	10	0				
— Joshua Johnson ...	0	10	0				
— Kirkman.....	0	10	0				
— Fox	0	10	0				
Interest	1	18	0				
	<u>£107 0 10½</u>				<u>£107 0 10½</u>		

The Committee again beg leave, respectfully, to call the attention of the churches to the above Institution.—Applications are increasing; and unless its supporters be more widely extended, they are afraid they shall be under the necessity of withholding aid to cases, where the feelings of christian charity, and the welfare of the Redeemer's kingdom imperiously call for it.

Signed, on behalf of the Committee, **J. GAMBLE, Sec.**

MANSFIELD MEETING HOUSE.

On July 28, 1815, the Meeting-house, purchased by the Friends at Nottingham, as advised by the last Association, was opened by Mr. R. Smith, who preached in the afternoon and evening. The congregations were large on both occasions, and a collection was made, at the door, amounting to £21 10s. The place has been regularly supplied every Lord's day since; and on Oct. 8, Mr. Smith baptized five persons there, on a profession of faith. The ordinance was administered in a village, about a mile and a half from Mansfield, called Mansfield Wood-house, and a sermon was preached at the water side. There were supposed to be nearly two thousand spectators, who behaved with pleasing seriousness. In the afternoon, Mr. S. preached, in the Meeting-house, from Eph. iv. 32, and administered the Lord's supper. There were about twenty communicants, including the five baptized in the morning, and several members from Nottingham. The congregations were large and attentive, and the prospect at present is encouraging.

Mansfield is a large manufacturing market town, in Nottinghamshire, fourteen miles north of Nottingham. Some time ago several members of the G. B. churches in the vicinity, having settled in this town, they commenced regular preaching; and were chiefly supplied with ministers from Nottingham, Retford, and Kirby Wood-house. Many came to hear, and there appeared a probability of doing good. The friends soon had information of a meeting-house, in the town, which was to be sold: and on examination, found it a good stone building, with sashed windows, and roofs sufficiently high to admit a gallery, if it should be required. The situation too was thought very eligible: and the price was only three hundred pounds. The case was laid before the Association, and it was unanimously concluded to make the purchase. The purchase has accordingly been made, and the money is to be paid at Christmas next. Several persons in the various parts of the Connection undertook, at the Association, to bring the business before the churches, in their respective districts: and, if possible, to collect their shares of the money before Christmas. And, it is hoped, that the pleasing facts, mentioned in the beginning of this article, will stimulate them to exert themselves to redeem the pledge which they have given to their brethren. If the purchase money be paid at the time specified, it certainly

will give credit and freedom to the exertions of the friends of truth; and have the happiest effect on the future prosperity of the G. B. interest, in that populous neighbourhood. The object is important; and if the exertion be made generally through the whole Connection, the accomplishment will be easy.

SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION.

July 28, 1815, the third half-yearly meeting of the South Lincolnshire and Isle of Ely Sunday School Union was held at March, when Mr. Jarrom, of Wisbeach, was called to the chair. From the Report of the secretaries, it appears that this Union patronizes thirteen schools, eight conducted by the General Baptists, and five by the Methodists: in which 1064 children are instructed by 142 gratuitous teachers. The schools appear to be in a prosperous state, and the Union has been productive of much advantage. In consequence of the establishing of two schools, on the plan of Bell and Lancaster, for gratuitous instruction, in the town of Boston, the General Baptist church there has discontinued their Sunday School, which consisted of 130 children. Notwithstanding this reduction, there has been an increase of both teachers and children: three additional schools having placed themselves, during the last half year, under the patronage of this institution.

REVIEW OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

The DIFFICULTIES and ENCOURAGEMENTS attending the communication of RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION to the CHILDREN of the POOR: a SERMON, delivered in the Methodist Chapel, Halifax Lane, Nottingham, April 11, 1814, before the Nottingham Sunday School Union, by THOMAS STEVENSON. 8vo. pp. 44. Hodson and Dunn, Nottingham; and Kent, Hamilton, and Nisbet, London.

The Nottingham Sunday School Union, which commenced, April 23, 1810, "is open to all denominations who love the Lord Jesus Christ; but at present, is composed of Methodists, Independents, and the General and Particular Baptists." At first, it included thirty-two schools, containing 4834 children, instructed by 722 teachers; but when this discourse was addressed to its liberal supporters, it had increased to eighty-six

schools, in which 10810 children received gratuitous instruction from 1461 teachers.

At the earnest request of the Committee of this flourishing Union, this sermon was published. The text is Heb. vi. 10. "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love." The preacher proposes to shew that the faithful discharge of the duties of teachers in Sunday Schools—is a *labour*—a labour of *love*—and will be rewarded. In prosecuting this method, he describes the difficulties and discouragements that attend the communicating of literary and religious instruction to children, in a manner which proves that he has felt them. But while he does full justice to the obstacles that are to be expected in this arduous undertaking, he gives some useful hints how they may be surmounted. In treating of the principle, which ought to stimulate the exertions of his auditors, love to God and immortal souls, he makes many excellent observations. And the encouragement to perseverance furnished by the promise in the text, that God will not forget their labour of love, is placed in an affecting and animating light. The style of this discourse is, in general, good: though, perhaps, in one or two instances, there may be too great an affectation of oratorical flourishes. This, however, is a fault which, we trust, time will correct.

On the whole, we heartily recommend this sermon to the generous persons who are engaged in conducting Sunday Schools; persuaded that an attentive and frequent perusal of it will afford them both instruction and encouragement.

HYMNS, selected from a variety of AUTHORS, and suited for public or private devotion. Wilkins, Derby, pr. 2s.

"This small selection of hymns is primarily designed as a supplement to the Collection now chiefly used by the General Baptist churches, in the midland counties. It may not, however, be improper to observe, that the hymns are generally suited to the devotions of all who *glory in the cross of Christ*." Such is the Editor's account of the design of this compendium, which consists of 130 hymns, some of them pretty long ones, chiefly extracted from Watts, Cowper, Wesley, Doddridge, Newton, Steele, Robinson, &c. with a few that appear to be original. They form a handy pocket volume, and are neatly

printed. Many of the hymns are excellent; though the selection would not have been injured by the omission of a few which are of inferior merit. The sentiments in many of these compositions are highly orthodox; and therefore form a very necessary supplement to the Collection which they are designed to accompany.

OBITUARY.

Sept. 20th, 1815, Mrs. MARY HEARD, aged seventy-one years, was called from this imperfect state, to receive her reward. She had been a member of the General Baptist church in Nottingham nearly forty years: being baptized by Mr. W. Fox, who was the means of introducing the G. B. interest into that populous town; and at that time, preached in a garret.

Mrs. H. enjoyed the inestimable advantage of a religious education. Her father was an eminently pious man, of the independent persuasion; and very diligent in instructing his family in the way of the Lord.*

* Her mother's ancestor, Mr. W. Jackson, was a puritan minister, a good preacher, and an eminently holy man; who conformed and continued his labours, in his benefice, at Oxtou, Nottinghamshire, till he was above an hundred years old. He left many valuable manuscripts behind him. His son, John Jackson, the great grandfather of Mrs. H. was ejected, by the act of uniformity, in 1662, from the living of Bleasbey, in the same county: refusing to conform, though he had the offer of a much better benefice. He afterwards taught school at Morton, near Southwell; and preached in his own house. He was often disturbed by informers: and, though he escaped fines and imprisonment, was cited into the spiritual court, and excommunicated. He afterwards kept school at Keesall, and preached regularly till his death, Dec. 26, 1696, in the seventy-second year of his age. He was a sober, grave, and good man; circumspect and conscientious, and spent much time in his closet: strict in discipline, a bold reprover of vice, very temperate, and much weaned from this world. His funeral sermon was preached by Mr. S. Coates, of Mansfield, to a numerous audience, from John ix. 4.

Palmer's Nonconformist Memorial, vol. iii. p. 88.

The example and instructions of such a man could not be without effect. Accordingly it appears, that from early youth, the deceased had serious impressions of the importance of religion, and the worth of the soul; but did not seek the God of her fathers with her whole heart, till she was nearly thirty years of age. About this time the eyes of her understanding were opened to see the evil of her doings and the danger of her situation, in a new and affecting light. Burthened with a sense of sin, and anxiously enquiring, "What must I do to be saved?" she diligently attended upon the word, among the Calvinists. But the ministers whom she heard, as if afraid to say, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," exhorted persons in her state of mind, to wait for the saving influence of divine grace, in the use of the means. In this way she went on a considerable time, but received no comfort.

At length she attended upon the preaching of the General Baptists, in the garret; and soon learned from the highest authority, that God loved all mankind: that he gave his son to die for all: and that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. These glorious truths diffused light and joy through her soul. Such were her views of her own character; that if any one was excluded from the hope of mercy, she supposed it must be herself. The most unlimited invitations, the most gloriously extensive promises were necessary to encourage her approach to that God whom she had offended.

She has been heard to say, that the gospel was, at this time, so delightful to her heart, that no pleasure she ever enjoyed or had any conception of, in this world, was equal to that of hearing it preached. She has looked round the congregation and been amazed that any could sleep under "the joyful sound." She was soon baptized and added to the church, and continued to the end, a useful, a consistent, and an honourable member.

In the year 1783, she was married to that excellent man, Mr. Samuel Heard, whose equanimity and firmness of mind, contributed very much to her support and comfort in the ways of God; whilst, on the other hand, she promoted his happiness, by all that kindness and attention, which affection, joined with a sense of duty, can inspire. Few have lived so happily: and they did not live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them and rose again. Their example and influence contributed, in no

small degree, to the advancement of the dear cause of the Redeemer.

Though naturally rather irritable, yet her disposition was really kind and affectionate: and her temper, so regulated by the power of religion, that she made all around her happy. Her surviving children have to deplore the loss of one of the best of mothers. She possessed a good natural understanding and a feeling heart, and was not backward to relieve the distresses of the poor and afflicted. She took great pleasure in entertaining ministers and other friends. Many of the brethren can testify her readiness on these occasions. She did it with all her heart.

The two most striking traits in her character, as a christian, were humility and sincerity.

Those who have known her most intimately cannot recollect a single expression dropping from her lips, which savoured of pride. She never seemed to be conscious of any ability or excellency in herself, but cheerfully acknowledged the superior attainments of others, both in knowledge and holiness. The sentiment of the holy Apostle Paul: "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord," was perfectly congenial with the views and feelings of her inmost soul. She enjoyed most, that strain of preaching which represents the creature as wholly indebted to the grace of God for purity as well as for pardon, for a right disposition of mind as well as for deliverance from guilt and misery.

Sincerity was another prominent feature in her character. It was observed by a friend, that her mind was like a clear stream of water; you might see to the bottom of it. There were no pretences to humility, to compassion, or to friendship. In her, all was reality. Her speech was simply the utterance of her own conceptions and feelings. Her whole conversation and behaviour was without artifice and without disguise. She was an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile. After the death of her dear honoured husband, which took place in 1811, her strength and spirits gradually declined; but amidst the decays of nature, she found much pleasure in reading her Bible, and the works of Baxter, Doddridge, Dan Taylor, and other pious authors. Her faith in the divine testimony respecting Christ was never shaken; but her assurance of salvation was not so great as many Christians have expressed.

She was a constant attendant upon the ministry of the word. The last time she was present at the house of God, was to partake of the Lord's supper. She was particularly desirous to attend, on this occasion. With difficulty she reached the chapel, leaning upon the arm of her son; but the little bodily strength she possessed was so much exhausted, by this exertion, that in entering her pew, she sunk down upon the floor. She, however, was able to continue during the time the ordinance was administered; but the fatigue was too great for her feeble frame, and she was obliged afterwards to be carried home, and to bid adieu to scenes, she delighted to behold, and where her spiritual strength had often been renewed.

She was interred on the Lord's day following her death, in the family vault, in the General Baptist burying-ground. A sermon was delivered on the occasion, by Mr. R. Smith, from 1 Cor. xv. 26. "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

During her affliction, she sometimes felt discouraged from the recollection of her sinfulness and unworthiness. She did not wish to hear mentioned any services she had rendered to the cause of Christ: she thought them so poor, that they were not worthy of being named; and, like herself, required to be washed in the blood of Christ, to render them acceptable in the sight of God.

She possessed a strong conviction of the depravity of her nature, and of her total inability to obtain the divine favour by works of righteousness, which she might perform. And would often say, "A crucified Saviour is my only hope. He is able to save to the uttermost. I am sure I have no other foundation. But yet I want to possess a stronger assurance of interest in the favour of God." One day, her minister, after conversing with her for sometime, was preparing to supplicate the God of all grace in her behalf, when she said to him: "Don't pray for the continuance of my life; but that I may read my title clear to heaven." She felt timid when viewing death and eternity, which sometimes caused her to hesitate, and almost to start back; and then to re-examine the state of her soul, and the certainty of her title to the heavenly glory. Death was, with her, a most solemn and important affair; the consequences of which, she reflected upon, with the greatest seriousness: and could not feel, at all satisfied, without the clearest evidence of her accept-

ance with God. To obtain this desirable blessing, she was constantly supplicating the Father of mercies, and he was intreated of her. The hesitation which she had experienced, was removed, and a delightful stream of joy flowed into her soul, and caused her, triumphantly, to address her friends in the words of Isaiah, chap. xii. 2. "I will trust and not be afraid: for the Lord *Jehovah* is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation." And until the time when reason became extinct, which was about thirty-six hours before her dissolution, she appeared to possess confidence in her Redeemer, and to feel more pleasure in the prospect, which his dying love presented to her view, and a more certain assurance, that she should enjoy, beyond the grave, a state of everlasting felicity.

Thus concluded the life of our aged and highly esteemed friend. In that world, where she now resides, hesitations, doubts, and fears, can have no existence. The presence of her God and Saviour will banish them for ever from her mind. "In his presence there is fulness of joy: at his right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

SIR,

Looking over some of my old papers, I found the following account of *John Smith*, which was originally intended for you, but by some unaccountable neglect, was never sent. If it be not too much out of time, its insertion in the next number, will oblige,

T. R.

JOHN SMITH was a native of Leak in the county of Nottingham, his ancestors being members of the G. B. church in that place; but, for many years, he had been a resident at Beeston, where he finished his mortal course, Feb, 20th, 1813, advanced in years.

In the former part of his life, he was in respectable worldly circumstances; but, through an unsteady conduct, brought himself to poverty and indigence. Having been brought up among religious people, and amongst the religious disputes of that day relative to arminianism and calvinism, his head was filled with speculative notions, instead of practical principles; while his heart remained in a state of spiritual blindness, and estranged from God and religion. It is well known, that he very warmly espoused high Calvinistic notions, and with all the rancour

which too often is the companion of that system. He appears to have been a constant attendant upon those preachers that were highest in sentiment, and was very uncautious to others; while his own practices were wholly inconsistent with Antinomianism itself. Such was his prejudice, that there had been a General Baptist interest raised in his own village three years, and regular preaching four times a week, before he once ventured into their place of worship. At length, a report was in circulation, that Mr. R. their minister, was about to leave that church, and upon this he formed the resolution of hearing him once before his departure; and was induced, from this consideration alone, to attend. Whether the sermon, at that time, made any particular impression on his mind, is not known; but from that time he became a regular and steady hearer: nor is it known that he ever was absent from his place in the congregation, from that time to his death, whenever his health and strength permitted him to attend. He was baptized, June 21, 1807, and received into the church. He was no more engaged in wrangling disputes. He forsook the thorny maze of controversy for the peaceful walks of practical godliness, and became experimentally acquainted with the grace of God. He formerly read the scriptures for the sake of contention, but now he read them daily to become wise unto salvation: and they opened to his enlightened view a treasure of that wisdom which is from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. The precious truths of God's word, overwhelmed his soul in gratitude and love; so much that he could scarce read a chapter without being dissolved in tears. It has been said, that he lived several years with the horrible idea in his mind, that he was one of God's reprobates, according to his then views; and he had been known to complain of God on that account. But now he found, that God had chosen him to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and the belief of the truth.

During his membership with the church, his life was uniform and regular, adorning his christian profession. His attendance on public worship and private means were worthy of imitation; especially in this particular, that he was always in his place at the proper time: the preacher had never cause to complain that he came too late, after worship was began.

His bodily weaknesses had been increasing for some years past; and for the last twelve months of his life, was rendered incapable of his usual labours, and on this account, he was seldom able to fill up his place in the church. But no murmurs at the afflicting hand of providence ever escaped his lips. He always seemed resigned to the will of God, and ready, either to live or die, as it should please his heavenly father. His mind was seldom otherwise than tranquil and composed. His faith and hope were steadily fixed upon their proper objects. His holy joys were not the flights of enthusiasm, but built upon the knowledge of sacred truth. Though graciously supported under his afflictions, he often expressed his willingness to depart and be with Christ, which was far better. His desire was granted; for he fell asleep in Jesus. And we doubt not, but he is now, in songs of eternal praise, ascribing his salvation to God and the Lamb. By his desire, Phil. i. 23, was the subject of his funeral sermon.

CONFERENCE.

The LONDON CONFERENCE was held at *Wendover*, Bucks, Sept. 27, 1815. Mr. D. Taylor was chosen chairman, Mr. E. Sexton, moderator, and Mr. J. Hobbs, scribe. The state of the churches appears to be encouraging. Messrs. Sexton and Hobbs were requested to draw up and recommend a plan for obtaining proper compensation for the ministers who supply vacant churches. The propriety and advantage of introducing religious conversation in families, which pay little attention to the subject, was strongly recommended to private christians, but especially to ministers. In the afternoon Mr. Purcell prayed, and Mr. Bicknell preached from Phil. i. 27. last clause, "Striving together for the faith of the gospel." In the evening, Mr. J. Ewen prayed, and Mr. D. Taylor delivered a discourse, from Rev. ii. 10. last clause, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Mr. Purcell preached, at Chesham, on the preceding evening, from 2 Cor. viii. 9. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes, he became poor, that ye, through his poverty, might be rich."—The next conference to be at Chatham, on the Wednesday in Easter week, 1816; when Messrs. E. Sexton and D. Taylor are appointed to preach, or in case of failure, Messrs. Bicknell and Purcell.

POETRY.

PARTIALITY TO FAVOURITE MINISTERS
REPROVED.

At Corinth, so fam'd, Apollos and Paul,
 In concert; once preach'd, salvation to all:
 Not raising a party, to publish their fame;
 But baptizing each convert in Jesus's name:
 When, lo! a sad case appear'd to their view.
 Cry'd one, "I'm for Paul; but who will suit you?"
 "Give me sweet Apollos," the other reply'd;
 "I care not for Paul; I'll have him for my guide."
 "You care not for Paul? Why, that is the man
 Who can do more than all the rest of them can:
 He has plough'd up the fallow, and sown all the seed:—
 Apollos comes only to water and weed."

Poor Paul overheard them, with sorrow and shame;
 He said, "You are carnal: you're highly to blame."
 "I have laid the foundation. Apollos has try'd
 To build up a structure, which you would divide.
 I have brought you to Jesus, to rest in his love:
 He is training you up to meet him above,
 For the good we have done, we deserve your esteem;
 But God is the author—give glory to him.
 Have you edify'd most in the labours of Paul?
 You should feel an attachment; but that should be all.
 No doubt, there are some, whom Apollos has cheer'd,
 Whose hearts have rejoic'd when his voice they have heard.
 Now should Paul's great admirers, to shew their esteem,
 Pluck out both their eyes, and give them to him:
 While the friends of Apollos, enraptur'd, declare,
 He's the first and best preacher that ever came here;
 Disputes might run high, and the church might divide,
 And Paul and Apollos be puff'd up with pride:
 But, while hell would rejoice at a strife so unjust,
 The true friends of Jesus would mourn in the dust."

THE
GENERAL BAPTIST REPOSITORY.

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MEMOIR of the late Mr. SAMUEL DEACON, Fifty-two Years PASTOR of the GENERAL BAPTIST CHURCH, at BARTON, LEICESTERSHIRE.

THE subject of this Memoir was born at Normanton on the Heath, near Ashby-de-la-Zouch, December 3d, 1714, O. S. He was the youngest son of John Deacon, who, in the former part of his life, was a soldier under the illustrious William III: and fought at the memorable and decisive battle of the Boyne, July 1st, 1690. He afterwards settled at Normanton, and was several years the parish clerk of that village. He had four sons, John, Anthony, Thomas, and Samuel; and three daughters, Elizabeth, Mary, and Catherine. All these, except John, lived to a great age, in the enjoyment of remarkably good health, strength, and activity, of which Samuel possessed more than an ordinary share.

Samuel, in the early part of his life, was a servant in several respectable families in the county of Leicester. He lived with Mr. White, of Appleby; Mr. Tylecote, Nailstone; Mr. Clare, Ibstock: and last of all, with Mr. Lea, of Ratby. When a child, he had a narrow escape of being scalded to death. The marks of this misfortune, he carried to his grave. When about sixteen years old, he experienced another accident, equally dreadful in apprehension, yet miraculously preserved from the consequences, which seemed almost necessarily fatal. He was thrown down by the side of a team of horses, which were drawing a waggon load of lime. The waggon ran over both his legs, on the pit bank; and though he fell on the *lowest* side of the place where the waggon was passing, and consequently had the heaviest side of the waggon upon his legs, yet they were neither of them broken. Immediately after the waggon had passed over him, he rolled away from the spot where he lay, and fell into an empty lime kiln, which fall, of itself, would have been thought sufficient to endanger his life. He escaped, how-

ever, with very little injury, except the severe bruises on his legs.

Being very sober and steady, and exceedingly laborious, he was held in high estimation wheresoever he lived. During his servitude, he saved a little money, with which he purchased a small possession in Rathy. This was about the year 1741, during his residence with Mr. Lea. About this time he began to be religious. During the summer, while he was mowing in the field, he heard that a person had been preaching in the street at a village called Glenfield, about a mile distant from Rathy, and that the same person was going to preach at Rathy. He laid down his scythe, and went to Rathy to hear him. His name was David Taylor, who had been a servant to the Countess of Huntingdon, then residing at Donington Park, and whom the Countess had encouraged to preach in the villages around. Whatever effect might be produced on the minds of the audience in general, the sermon made a deep and lasting impression on Samuel. He reflected, and searched the scriptures with earnestness and diligence: and his attention was more particularly roused by observing the dissolute life of the officiating clergyman of the parish. This man was often so intoxicated, when he went into the desk, that he could not read the lessons, nor the prayers, without stammering, hiccupping, and often worse. At the burial of the dead, his blunders in reading, and his staggering over the grave, while it excited risibility in some, and disgust in others, awakened in Samuel Deacon a deep and alarming apprehension of his own danger, as being a part of the flock of so wicked a shepherd.

His mind, at this period, was exceedingly disturbed. He knew not what to do, nor what course to take. He had been long, and was at that time, exceedingly fond of ringing; so fond, that he often went alone to ring for amusement, after having done his day's labour. Being very strong, there was scarcely a bell in that part of the kingdom which he could not raise with ease; and would chime four bells himself, by having each hand and each foot engaged. To leave the church was a trial, but to leave the steeple was a greater. He reasoned, however, as he ought, and considered his soul of more value than either. He pursued his examination of the scriptures with avidity, and took every opportunity of hearing; where he thought he could profit. About this time Methodism began

and he had the opportunity of hearing several itinerants. Among the rest, he heard the celebrated John Wesley himself. He attended upon the methodists about four years, but was never united, as I understand, with their society.

In the year 1742, he was married, and had by his first wife, three children, Elizabeth, Samuel, and William. The first and the last of these died young: but Samuel is still living, and well known both as a minister, and as an author of several interesting and some humorous publications.—May he live long, and be useful to the end of his days!

As he had heard and read much concerning faith, or believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, he was very anxious to obtain it, and to make his calling and election sure. He laboured and prayed, but it seemed in vain, and he was greatly discouraged. At length he reasoned, and concluded that the Lord knew his state, and what he wanted, and if he pleased to give him that full satisfaction which he desired, he would receive it with gratitude; and if he did not give it him, he would be contented, and believe as well as he could: resolving, as a helpless sinner, to rely on Christ alone for salvation. To his great surprise, he immediately found peace and joy in believing: his fears were gone, his anxiety was removed, and he found rest unto his soul. From this circumstance, he began to explain the nature of faith or believing, to his friends, several of whom were in a state similar to that from which he had been so happily delivered.

From this period, he began to exhort in private houses, where he, and his friends could conveniently assemble. In time, their meeting insensibly grew to a public one, and he in a manner, undesignedly, but almost necessarily, became a regular preacher. But it was always, for some years, in private houses; for neither he nor his friends were able to raise a meeting-house; nor did they feel inclined to unite with the methodists entirely, nor with any society of regular dissenters.

Between the years 1744 and 1750, he became acquainted with Mr. Whyatt of Barton in the Beans, Mr. John Aldridge of Hugglescote, Mr. Joseph Donisthorpe of Normanton, and others in that neighbourhood, who like himself had been enquiring after the way of salvation; and who were forming, or had formed themselves into a kind of society. Their central place of meeting was Barton, at first in the house of Mr. Whyatt; and afterwards in

that of Mr. Aldridge, a farmer of that place. Mr. Whyatt, Mr. John Aldridge, and Mr. Donisthorpe had begun to exhort and to preach. They united their labours; and, in a few years extended their acquaintance to different parts of the county of Leicester: to Melbourn in Derbyshire, and to Kirby-woodhouse, in the county of Nottingham. They extended their labours also to Hinckley, and to Longford near Coventry, and laid the foundation of the churches now in existence at those places. In all these labours, Mr. Samuel Deacon bore a full and distinguished share; and, though the poorest of them all, received no pecuniary recompence for twenty years or upwards.

During the early part of his ministry, his labour was almost incredible: and indeed was far beyond what men in common can perform. On the Lord's day, he frequently travelled from twenty to forty miles on foot, and preached twice and often three times. He has repeatedly walked from Ratby to Melbourn, a distance of about twenty miles, on the Lord's day morning, and returned the same night, having to perform his journey home after the evening service, not reaching his humble habitation until two or three the next morning. And this he has done, when he has been obliged to go early to work that same morning as a labourer.

In the week-day also he frequently walked, after having done a hard day's work, to Barton, Hugglescote, and to Hinckley, to give an exhortation to his brethren, or to attend to the affairs of the society. The least of these distances from Ratby is eight miles, and Hinckley, eleven: and he seldom, if ever, tarried all night. This has been done, too, in the *winter*, amidst rain, snow, and dangerous floods, through which he often has waded deeper than to his knees in the dark. Instances of this kind, of a later date, are fresh in the memory of the writer of this narrative, who, when a little boy, and his companion in some of his shorter excursions, has many a time been carried over the floods on his back.

About the year 1753 he buried his first wife, and two years afterwards was married a second time; and by that marriage had one son and two daughters, John, Ann, and Elizabeth. The former, and the latter of these are still living. His second wife died in the year 1762, and in the year following he married a third wife, who was advanced in years, and lived to a considerable age.

As the church increased and spread very wide, and the number of preachers also increased in, perhaps, an equal proportion, it was mutually agreed in 1760, to divide it into several distinct communities. The preachers were generally appointed by two in each church, and were severally ordained as pastors over their respective societies. Samuel Deacon, John Whyatt, and John Aldridge, were set apart over the church at Barton and Hugglescote, which also comprehended, at that time, Hinckley, and Longford, and several other places, where they regularly or casually preached, viz. Markfield, Stanton under Barton, Ratby, Swannington, &c. But as Mr. Aldridge soon declined preaching, it fell to the lot of Mr. Deacon and Mr. Whyatt to supply these places themselves; until Mr. William Smith and Mr. George Hickling were raised up as preachers in the Hinckley and Longford division.

For a considerable time weekly exhortations were held at Barton, Hugglescote, and Ratby, chiefly for the edification of the members: and also conferences every Friday evening at Barton and Hugglescote alternately; for the ministers and elders to consult about the state of the church. At these exhortations and conferences Mr. Deacon was rarely absent; though to attend upon them he had to walk eight miles, and return alone the same night. On the Lord's day, too, in all kinds of weather, in the scorching heat of summer and amidst the stormy blasts of winter, did Mr. Deacon, after preaching in the forenoon in his own house, walk to preach at Barton in the afternoon. At other times he would walk to Barton or Hugglescote in the morning, to preach, or conduct a church-meeting, and go to the other place, which is betwixt four and five miles distant, to preach in the afternoon, and return to Ratby the same night. These labours he pursued for a considerable number of years; nor do I think there ever was an instance in which the weather prevented his attendance. But his strength and his health were such as few men can boast; for perhaps in all the ninety-seven years of his life, he never experienced so many hours of affliction.

Besides the labour attendant on his own particular province, he frequently supplied Kirby-woodhouse, in Nottinghamshire, which is not less than thirty-five miles from Ratby. The sum allowed him for this expedition, was *four shillings*. Ashford, near Bakewell, in the Peak of Derbyshire, he also supplied as

occasion required, which is more than fifty miles from his residence. Nor was his reward for this service much greater than the other. On one occasion, he walked to London and back, and travelled proportionably cheap. His *temperance* was as remarkable as his labour, for he scarcely ever drank any thing stronger than small beer, and frequently nothing but water. He never indulged in spiritous liquors. Tea was his favourite beverage: and a pipe of tobacco was never seen in his mouth.

He was very diligent in business, and peculiarly economical in his time. Seldom did he fail rising before five in the morning, even to a late period of his life: nor do I ever remember him spending an hour in sauntering and idleness.

Though he was poor, he was given to hospitality. His house was frequently the rendezvous of friends, who too often were inconsiderate in their visits, and imposed a burthen which he was scarcely able to bear. He bore it, however, with fortitude: and, by exertion, almost more than human, sustained what would have crushed multitudes to atoms.

About the year 1754, he learned the art of wool-combing, which business he pursued almost as long as he was capable of business at all. He also kept a small shop of groceries during his continuance at Rathy; and being amazingly strong, carried most of his goods from Leicester, on his back, which was a distance of about five miles. On these occasions, he had little mercy on himself, for he would often carry a load which would have been sufficient for a horse. For a short season, by the advice of his friends, he kept a small horse; but being so greatly inured to labor, and the horse, when in the field, being difficult to catch, he often saved his horse, and used his own legs.

For some years he continued to labour in the ministry in conjunction with Mr. Whyatt, his only colleague, until Mr. Whyatt discontinued the ministry: and after that event, Mr. John Yates of Hugglescote was raised up as a minister, and thus supplied the place of Mr. Whyatt. Mr. Yates appeared likely to be useful in an eminent degree: but he died December 10, 1773, and the church was again left half destitute; having no other minister than Mr. Deacon. Providence, however, which over-rules all human affairs, raised up a successor to Mr. Yates, in the eldest son of Mr. Deacon, who had lately fixed his residence at Barton.

Mr. Samuel Deacon, junior, having begun to preach, and becoming very acceptable, laboured with his father until he was called to the pastoral office. He was ordained co-pastor with his father, at Hugglescote, September 15, 1779. The charge was delivered by the Rev. Dan Taylor, from 1 Pet. v. 2—4. Mr. Francis Smith addressed the church, but through some unaccountable inattention to the *design* of the address, omitted the whole of the duty of the church to its pastor. This was matter of surprise to many, and by Mr. Deacon, the newly ordained pastor, was felt with peculiar sensations of pain. The father and son, however, continued to discharge their duty together, until the burthen of years rendered the elder pastor incapable of ministerial duty.

In the year 1782, Mr. Deacon, sen. removed his residence from Ratby to Barton, the latter place being more convenient for the main body of his public labours; and being also the residence of his son, rendered it more convenient and agreeable to both. Here he continued till his death, in the steady performance of his duty, so long as he was able to move; universally esteemed as a man of inflexible integrity, of genuine piety: living and dying in the enjoyment and illustration of the doctrines he had taught.

He was a man of rather low stature, strongly built, of a fine ruddy complexion, and very active, even till near ninety years old. When above eighty he walked thirty miles in one day, carrying a load of about half a hundred weight, in a very cumbersome form, one half of the way.

During the latter seven or eight years of his life he became unable to preach, and for three or four years previous to his death, was too feeble to walk to public worship. His mental faculties and his speech failed him, and at last he became almost helpless, but still retained to the last his confidence and hope in his saviour: and after one day's affliction was removed to the joys of his Lord, March 19, 1812, in the ninety-eighth year of his age.

Thus ended the course of one, who, though of no note among scholars and divines, yet lived a life, not only of uncommon length, labour, and activity; but a life of considerable usefulness, both in the conversion of sinners and the edification of Christians. A life doubly valuable by the quantity of labour performed in the course of his pilgrimage, and the number of

hours he was constantly employed in each day. A life, which, without a doubt, in those who knew him best, will be crowned with a glorious recompence at the appearance of Jesus Christ.

It will naturally be supposed, from the manner of his life, that he possessed no advantages of a literary education. He could from early life, read and write moderately well. This was about the sum of his education. But he was indefatigable in searching the scriptures, and was undoubtedly one of the best Textuaries of the age. Few men possessed a better memory, or applied it to better purposes: for there were few texts of importance, of doctrine, practice, or history, to which he could not give an immediate and pertinent reference.

As a preacher, however, he was not considered eminent. His sermons chiefly consisted of one class of subjects: the fall of man, his depravity and ruin, salvation through faith in the death of Christ, the necessity of regeneration, and holiness of life. Whatever was his text, this was generally his sermon, nor was he ever at a loss for variety of passages of scripture to prove the doctrine he taught, or to inculcate the duty he recommended.

Leicester, Nov. 11, 1815.

J. DEACON.

An ABSTRACT of the late JOURNEY of the Rev. J. CAMPBELL, in SOUTH AFRICA.

(Concluded from page 9, of last Number.)

July 7, 1813. Mr. CAMPBELL and his party left Lattakoo. During their stay in that town, they had gained much information, respecting the tribes to the northward; which will be useful to future missionaries. They now directed their course eastward, into a part of Africa hitherto unexplored by Europeans: but having heard that a considerable number of people inhabited that country, they resolved to visit them. They took therefore, eight guides from Lattakoo; and, in four days arrived at a town called Malapeetzee, consisting of fifty-six huts, and about three hundred inhabitants, who, possessing numerous herds of cattle, have little other employment besides milking their cows. The natives here are very filthy and indolent, and did not appear desirous of instruction; though the females assured our traveller that they had long wished for missionaries.

July 13, they proceeded southwards, and soon advanced into a most charming country, covered with grass and trees, and watered by a pleasant river. Here they found a kraal consisting of a few huts, which was then occupied by a Bushman, who said that he was the chief of all the Bushmen, on that river. He seemed very desirous that missionaries might be sent to instruct them, His name was Makoon, and the river's Malalareen. Leaving this place, they came to a considerable stream, called the yellow river, which after receiving the Malalareen and two other rivers, assumes the name of the great river. The natives not having names for the two rivers which join the yellow river below the Malalareen, Mr. C. called them the Alexander and the Cradock rivers, in compliment to the governor and secretary of the Colony at the Cape of Good Hope, who had been very friendly to the undertaking. The country, at the junctions of these streams, is described as peculiarly fruitful and picturesque. On the 21st they reached a village connected with Klaar Water; to which the natives had given the name of Campbell; and early on the 26th, they reached Klaar Water.

Here Mr. Campbell undertook the office of legislator. The natives at this settlement, are a mixed breed, and have usually been termed *bastard* hottentots. Indeed they adopted this denomination themselves, without any suspicion of its offensive meaning: but when this was explained to them, they were anxious to assume a new name. Finding that many of them had descended from a person named *Gricqua*, they took the name of Gricquas, called their principal station Gricqua-town instead of Klaar Water, and styled their country Gricqua-land. They chose magistrates, and adopted a code of laws, drawn up by Mr. Campbell, as the basis of their government. At this settlement and the outposts connected with it, there are twelve hundred and sixty-six Gricquas, young and old: besides upwards of thirteen hundred of the *Corunnas*, a neighbouring tribe who consider themselves as united with the Gricquas, and occasionally attend for instruction. The church consists of twenty-six men and sixteen women. It is but lately that these people have become stationary. They formerly wandered about the deserts like the wild Arabs: and the missionaries, for five years, were obliged to follow them from place to place. At length they persuaded the chiefs, and, by their influence,

the people, to settle and cultivate the land: since which time, their cattle, sheep, goats, and all their outward comforts have considerably increased. They have built a meeting-house, and appear prosperous.

From Gricqua-town Mr. C. and his companions set out, Aug. 9, to visit a missionary station in Namacqua-land, on the western coast of Africa. In order to save time and more effectually to explore the country, he determined to cross the continent by a way, which, having been twice attempted without success, was judged impracticable. The second day's journey brought them to Hardcastle, a station connected with Gricqua-town, at which there were eight hundred and eighty-five natives, who all willingly submitted to the laws adopted at Gricqua-town. They proceeded on the 13th, and suffered much, in passing the sandy plains, for want of water and grass; till on the 17th they reached the great river. When they were preparing to cross it, they found that their spare oxen had strayed: which caused them no small anxiety. Having sent out persons in quest of them, they halted two days, and then crossed the river, and waited other two days before they recovered them. They set forward on the 23d, and struggled on till Sep. 7, when having travelled for two days without water, they halted in a sandy soil: where by digging in the dry bed of a river, they found water sufficient for themselves, but could obtain none for the cattle. They were obliged therefore to send them forwards under the care of three Hottentots, in search of the river. They waited the two following days but heard no tidings of either oxen or men. At length, on the close of the evening of the third day, the men returned, one of them severely wounded with a poisoned arrow. They reported that the wild Bushmen had attacked them, and carried off all the cattle. Ten men well armed were immediately sent off in quest of the robbers, and the remainder of the company put themselves in the best state of defence the circumstances allowed. They then committed themselves to the protection of that God who is every where present; and waited in silence for the event. Towards morning the men returned with all the oxen, which they had found straggling in the desert, and brought away without discovering any traces of the Bushmen. Probably those robbers were not aware of the smallness of the escort, and fearing a surprize, had never

ventured to take possession of the cattle. The wounded man died on the 10th, in great agonies, and sadly disfigured with the effects of the poison: but calling on Jesus for mercy. He had a wife and three children at Bethelsdorp, and followed Mr. C. as far as Graaf Reynet, to request that he might be one of the guides. Nor was he desired to go with the cattle when he received the fatal wound; but, observing one who had been directed to go, grumbling at the appointment, he went up to him, asked him for his gun, and offered to go in his stead. The survivors named the place Death-vale.

They left Death-vale, Sept. 11; and the next day arrived at Pella, a missionary station in Namacqua-land, under the superintendance of Mr. Albrecht. It is but a small station, exposed much to the incursions of the roving tribes, and will probably soon be removed.

Having introduced the laws of the Gricquas among the inhabitants of Pella, and obtained all the information he could respecting the more distant countries, Mr. C. left that place, September 23d, and turned southward towards the Cape of Good Hope. They travelled incessantly till the morning of the 25th, before they found any water. When they reached Quick Fountain, which supplied them with water; but furnished no grass. This obliged them to push forwards early the next: and, in the afternoon, they met with grass but no water. Here they halted a few hours; and while the oxen were feeding, engaged in social worship. They then pressed on and reached Silver Fountain the same evening.

Silver Fountain was the temporary residence of the missionaries, Mr. and Mrs. Sass, who received Mr. C. with much pleasure. They appeared zealous in their work, as far as circumstances permitted. Mrs. Sass was a lively well informed christian, remarkably well fitted to be the wife of a missionary: but, early on the morning of the 29th, she was seized with an illness of which she died in the evening of the same day. This affecting dispensation induced Mr. C. to suspend his departure till Oct. 1.

In their subsequent travels they suffered much from heat, sand, and fatigue. Their oxen were nearly worn down with the toils of so long a journey, and seemed hardly able to drag their waggons. All their inconveniences were heightened by the scarcity of water, and the bad quality of the little which

they found. At one place, after toiling for a long sultry day, through deep sand, Mr. C. declares that the water of the dirtiest puddle in London streets would have been a treat to the water they found at the fountain: and that, at the time, he would have given a dollar for a tumbler full of the former. However, on the 9th, they reached Elephant river, and drank plentifully of its pure streams. But when they left it, two days afterwards, their toils and privations returned. Their oxen were now so spent that they were obliged to leave several behind them: some to die in the desert, and others to recruit their strength at the various stations which they passed. At last, as they approached the Cape, the country became better inhabited, and they found friends willing to help them forward. Mr. C. arrived at Cape Town, Oct. 31, after an absence of nearly nine months; in better health than when he set out on his expedition.

Mr. C. remained at the Cape till Feb. 13, 1814, when he embarked on board the *Venus*, Captain Kilgour; and, after a rough passage, arrived at Plymouth, May the 4th. He reached London in time to attend the missionary meetings: and gratified the numerous congregations, which assemble on that occasion, with an account of the principal circumstances of his journey, and the various instances of the gracious interposition of Divine Providence in his favour. This relation was received with pious gratitude, by those who are labouring for the salvation of the heathen: and it was thought, that the discoveries and arrangements made, during this journey, will materially facilitate the introduction of the blessed gospel and the cheering influence of christianity, among the deplorably ignorant and wretched inhabitants of South Africa. May this be the happy result.

As many of the places which were visited by Mr. C. had never, as far as he could learn, been distinguished by any particular designation, he took the opportunity of giving them names after the most active friends of missionary exertions. Thus in running the eye over the map, prefixed to his volume, we meet with *Burder's Lake*; *Hardcastle Station*; *Campbell-dorp*, *Rowland-Hill-dorp*; *Read's Ford*; *Reyner, Wilberforce, Taignmouth, and Vansittart Mountains*; *Wilks and Burder's Plains*; *Hardcastle's, Ewing's, Steven's, Townsend's, and Waugh's Fountains, &c.* If these titles should be

permanent, the gentlemen will owe the friendship of their associate, a monument more durable than marble.

On the LORD'S PRAYER.

No. VI.

Mat. vi. 11. *Give us this day our daily bread.*

It is remarkable that in this brief and solemn prayer, this is the *first* petition we are directed to offer for *ourselves*, and that this relates to the bread that perisheth, and not that which endureth to everlasting life. But the blessing itself being of the first necessity, and first in the order of nature, though not in point of importance, it is here allowed to take precedence of all the rest. Our heavenly Father is not unmindful of our temporal wants, nor does he require that we should be indifferent towards them; we are the rather encouraged to ask for them, because "he knoweth that we have need of these things." Those who teach that temporal blessings were promised under the law, but are not included under the present dispensation, on account of its superior spirituality, do not understand the gospel; for its leading article is, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us *all things*?"

In placing this petition first, our Lord also designs to teach us our dependence upon God as creatures, as well as our obligations to him as sinners. It is in him we live and move, and have our being, as well as by his grace that we are what we are as christians; and as we are more immediately sensible of our temporal necessities, and are made to feel these before we can possibly feel any other, it is with infinite propriety that we are allowed to offer this as our first request, with regard to ourselves. Yet it must be observed, that in the arrangement of this prayer, it is preceded and followed with supplications for spiritual blessings; to teach us, no doubt, that they must be first and last in our thoughts. There is also only *one* petition for temporal mercies, while there are many for those which are spiritual; for as the latter include the former, in possessing them we possess all things, and have less need to be solicitous about the things of the present life.

We are here instructed to ask of God, only what is absolutely needful, and nothing that is superfluous. *Bread* is mentioned as equivalent to the necessaries of life: this the Lord has promised, and nothing more. "My God shall supply all your *need*—Trust in the Lord, and do good, and verily thou shalt be *fed*—Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have *need* of all these things—He hath given *meat* unto them that fear him; he will ever be mindful of his covenant." We are not warranted to pray for any of the superfluities of life, nor even to desire them. "Seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not." If God be pleased to give us them, it is well; and our concern should be to devote them to his glory. But to covet wealth, or set our hearts on these things, as the means of personal gratification, is highly dangerous. "Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content; for they that *will* be rich, fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drowu men in destruction and perdition." This spirit indicates a desire of being independent of God, and of possessing something in which we ourselves may glory. This is what Agur dreaded and prayed against, saying, "Remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches, feed me with food convenient for me." That which causes men to covet riches is generally a spirit of ambition, or a desire to vie with their superiors, which leads to ruin both in this world, and that which is to come. There are very few men that do not make a foolish use of riches; the generality who gather them together, are only heaping up to themselves wrath, against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. Oh, how much better is it to feel as Jacob did, when he made a vow and said, "If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go; and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on; then shall the Lord be my God!" Gen. xxviii. 20—22.

In teaching us to pray, 'give us *this day* our daily bread,' our Lord would have us be without carefulness, and without anxiety about the future. We must exercise an habitual dependence upon God, asking not for years to come, but *this day* for daily bread. In this way the Lord fed his people in the wilderness, giving them manna to gather every morning round about their tents; and thus must all his saints depend on him. It is suitable to a state of trial, and to a life of faith, to live

daily upon the divine care, in whatever circumstances we are placed, whether in affluence or in poverty. It is not improper indeed to exercise a prudent forethought about futurity, with respect to the things of this life; but all that kind of corroding care which destroys our dependence on God, and nourishes our impatience and unbelief, is both sinful and injurious. By dividing and distracting our thoughts, it incapacitates us for holy duties, or renders us unprofitable in them; and nothing is more inimical to the religion of the heart, than to be drunken with the cares of this life. So precarious also is the present state of things, that we know not whether we shall live till to-morrow; of what avail is it therefore, to be anxious about futurity. Diseases stand thick through all the ground, to hurry mortals home; and we know not what a day may bring forth. The rich fool in the gospel was full of anxious care about the future, when lo, that very night his soul was required of him! Innumerable evils are feared, but not felt—anticipated, but never realised; so little do our cares avail. On all these subjects, the Lord knoweth the thoughts of man; that they are vanity. Take therefore no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself; sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. To live daily on the divine bounty is to live secure. “Lord, give us this day our daily bread!”

This inimitable prayer also teaches us to feel for the wants of others, as well as our own; every petition of which is to be offered up with fraternal affection, and in behalf of all the family of our heavenly Father. Give—not *me* only—but *us*—our daily bread. Nothing is farther from the gospel than a spirit of selfishness, or a desire to eat our morsel alone. We must love our neighbour as ourselves, and seek his good in connection with our own, or we cannot be christians. In being directed to pray that the wants of others may be supplied, as well as our own, we are forbid to envy those who possess more of the comforts of life than ourselves, while we are expected to feel benevolently towards such as are in circumstances of poverty, and distress. Humanity indeed would teach us to feel another's woe, much more the spirit of the gospel; but to prove our prayer to be sincere, it becomes us to pity and relieve the poor and needy, as far as within our power, and by no means to injure or oppress them. “Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down

our lives for the brethren." "But whose hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"—In praying for *our* daily bread, we are also reminded that industry and uprightness is required of us; that we may not eat the bread of idleness, but that which is our own, and which is procured by lawful and honourable means.

All our common mercies, as well as our superior ones, are the effect of free and unmerited favour; and hence we are taught to pray that God would *give* us our daily bread, as a boon which we could not demand. We are dependent on the bounty of God for all that we possess; the least, as well as the greatest enjoyment, is alike from him. He is the God of all comfort, and the Father of the whole creation; he is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works. The eyes of all wait on thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season; thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing. As creatures we are dependent upon him; but as sinful creatures, still more so, and all we receive is a free gift. Every blessing is forfeited by sin: we are poor and wretched, it is true; but having no claim on the divine bounty, we might have remained so for ever. By our daily provocations, we forfeit our daily mercies; and nothing but unmerited goodness repeats and continues their bestowment.

Though our supplies do not come immediately from the divine hand, but through the medium of second causes, yet we are not less dependent than we should be, if our food were produced by miracle. God is the father of a great family, and all second causes are his servants, whom he employs to feed his children, while he himself is the giver of all good. Many indeed earn their bread by hard labour before they eat it; but it is God that gives them health and strength for labour, and who in his providence furnishes the means of employment. Others derive their support from prudent management, as well as from labour; yet are they not less dependent upon God for the abilities which they possess. If the ploughman open and break the clods of the ground, and after having made plain the face thereof, he cast abroad the fitches, and scatters the cummin, and cast in the principal wheat, and the appointed barley, and the rie in their place—it is because his God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him. Or if we have property of

our own, sufficient for all the necessaries and comforts of life; yet whatever we possess in this world is from God, who dispenses his favours as he pleases. He could have given that wisdom, or that wealth to another, or have sent destruction on our property in a thousand ways, and left us as destitute as Job. Every thing tends to convince us of our entire dependence upon God, and of the propriety of constantly offering up this request—"Give us this day our daily bread." Deut. viii. 10—18. Isai. xxviii. 23—26. Eccles. ix. 11.—xi. 6.

It will be our wisdom to see and acknowledge the hand of God in all that we possess; the more we see of this, the sweeter will all our enjoyments become, and the more grateful shall we feel. Without this, riches may be given us for our hurt. And how happy for the believer, that he is permitted to make God acquainted with the meanest of his concerns, assured that in every thing he careth for him. Oh, to have such a Father, and such a friend, in this world of trouble; who would not but be a Christian! He not only provides us bread to eat, and raiment to put on, until we come to our Father's house in peace; but he also gives us the true bread that cometh down from heaven, that we may eat and live for ever.

PAULINUS.

ORIGINAL LETTERS.

A number of papers, the remains of the late venerable GILBERT BOYCE, having been kindly handed to us, it is proposed to publish selections from them occasionally, in the G. B. R. We insert in the present number, a Letter from Mrs. PHILLIPS of Salisbury, to Mr. BOYCE, announcing the happy death of her husband, and an Epistle of consolation, from Mr. B. to her: only premising, that one short letter from each, appears to have passed between the dates of the following.

I. *From Mrs. PHILLIPS, to Mr. G. BOYCE.*

Sarum, Sep. 9th, 1789.

MY DEAR SIR,

It is more than a fortnight since I have wished to address you, agreeable to the request of my dearest best of husbands and of friends, who perhaps you might have heard before now, has entered into his rest. He has not been well for more than

a year, yet was strengthened to preach sometimes twice, but oftener three times every Lord's Day, till the three last before his death. On Wednesday, the 29th of July, he awaked in the morning, and on attempting to get up, he found his left hand very weak; but retained his feeling in it. He was not ill otherwise, but walked about and sat with his poor children in the school, only I was obliged to rule the copy books for them. Thus he went on 'till the next Saturday, when a total weakness seized his whole frame, so that he could not walk without help. In two or three days he could not stand; and the last week of his life he lay in bed, only was moved in the sheet to another little bed, that we had by the side of his own. This we did, 'till the day before he died; and at last he grew so weak as not to be able to be moved the least in the world; 'till he sweetly breathed his last, and fell asleep in the arms of his beloved, on Thursday Morning, the 20th of August: being confined about three weeks. But you will ask, what did his soul experience all this while? Now comes the only consolation I have on reflection respecting him. The moment he was taken, he thought it was the messenger to summons him away; but said it had no terrors, repeatedly saying "Can this be death?—I always thought death to be a frightful monster, but he doth not appear to be so to me, but no-wonder, when Jesus smiles—No cloud is permitted to intervene between me and the sun of righteousness, I find the blessedness that David speaks of in the 32nd Psalm; Christ is a rock, I am upon it—I bless the Father also: I know he has loved me. Holy Father, why me? blessed Jesus, why me? Goodness and mercy hath followed me all the days of my life—I leave my dear people in the hands of a dear Redeemer. He will take care of them, he will provide for them. He will take care of my beloved wife: he will never leave her, nor forsake her." Such was his language, from day to day. His room was crowded from morning to evening; and many of our friends sat up all night with him. He retained his senses perfectly clear, to the very last moment, though his speech forsook him near twelve hours before he died: but by signs, his senses and his comfort continued. Thus his God upheld him in his dying hour, and his dying hour brought glory to his God. I find this a most severe trial, I have lost a most affectionate, tender husband, the church has lost a faithful loving pastor, and this city has lost

a worthy good man, who made it his constant study to be useful, and to win souls to Christ. He longed to enter into rest—that rest which remains to the children of God. His funeral sermon was preached by Mr. Horsey, of Portsmouth, a man he loved, and who had been intimately acquainted with him upwards of twenty years, from those words, John xviii, 1. “Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them unto the end:” to the largest congregation ever seen in Salisbury, by the oldest person in it. He requested me on his dying bed to write to you, and to give his love to you, and to tell you *all was well with him*, and that it would not be long before he should meet you in glory. O, that we may all meet together there, where the pangs of parting will no more be felt—no sin there to mingle with our services—no sorrow to make our joy incomplete. But above all we shall see Jesus. O that I could love him more, as my dear husband often exhorted me, and those about him, “O, love,” said he, “cleave unto him with all the powers of your soul: you will never repent loving him too much.” I could go on, and say much more; but I must forbear—my paper obliges me to conclude. But I have one request to make you, as my friend, the friend of my dear departed husband, and that is, an interest in your prayers. When you are favoured with a near access to God, do remember your ever affectionate friend, and, I trust, daughter in Jesus Christ, the best of friends.

I should esteem it a favour to hear from you.

PEGGY PHILLIPS.

P. S. My dear husband felt no pain in his last illness, which made him think it could not be death. He always thought the stone and gravel would be the messenger; but the Lord, in his infinite mercy to him and to me, suffered not the least pain to hurt him. He was not like a building thrown down by a hurricane, nor swallowed up by an earthquake, but his tabernacle was like a *favourite* building, taken down with gentleness and care, to be removed, and to be preserved with care, in some other place. Precious in the eyes of the Lord are the death of his saints. His church lay near his heart, and he was enabled to pray in a very extraordinary manner for them, and for all about him. I have reason to bless God, that he favoured me for upwards of seven years, with the company of one of his servants—it was a happy union, it was one of his own. I trust

we could both say, we called Jesus and his disciples to our marriage, and even now, I trust we are not disunited.

II. From Mr. BOYCE, to Mrs. PHILLIPS.

Coningsby, Dec. 10, 1789.

DEAR MADAM,

My very esteemed Friend and Sister in Jesus our Lord.

Since I received your last, I have had many indispositions, and met with many hindrances, or you would have heard from me sooner. I am glad my last to you met with your acceptance. It is a certain fact, than real christian friends sympathise one with another; especially under peculiar circumstances, whether of joy or sorrow. Yours is a mixture of both. Of joy, that you have a husband in heaven; of sorrow, that you have lost his company on earth. You mourn for awhile his absence; but you rejoice that he is in the presence of Christ; "which is far better" for him than in yours. You will patiently wait for the happy day, when you shall be where he is, and then you will mourn no more: "your sorrow shall be turned into joy." How sensibly soever the dear people he left behind, may feel their loss of him, and you yourself much more, that they have lost a faithful pastor, and you a loving and beloved husband; yet, I doubt not, but HE who hath a sovereign right to dispose of us all, and all things: will, in his own time and way, provide both for them and you. To him for *this*, you all pray; to which, one of the least and most unworthy of the servants of God, will join with you all, though quite unknown, except the little knowledge you have of him.

But come,—should not all of you cheer up your hearts, and lift up your eyes of *faith* to heaven, and see him you all once dearly loved, seated among the happy ones in that celestial world of light and glory? Don't you believe he is there exalted among those happy beings?—You do. Why then for him you mourn no more: 'tis your own loss of him you mourn. You know the dearest friends must part: the closest ties must be dissolved: we all must take our leave one of another. Many have done this to go to a far distant country, here on earth, there to dwell during life, and have never seen one another more. Your dear husband lately took his leave of you, and is gone into a far distant country indeed, from whence he

never will return, but there remain during life, which will be eternal. Are you sorry for that?—You are not. For where he is, there you, ere long, shall be. Whither, into what country is he gone?—Into the “heavenly country,” which is infinitely better than this, in which he lately dwelt. And truly he will never be mindful of it; never seek, no, not so much as desire to have an opportunity to return to it again. For he has found the city he looked for when here, whose builder and maker is God; and in it, he will for ever dwell. On this account, you do not mourn, much less “murmur.”—I am sorry you used that word. What, though you “feel your loss more and more,” you ought not to repine and be discontented. It was a wrong word. But indeed you appear to be sensible of your mistake, for you immediately add: “But it is the Lord, he says, be still, and know that I am God:” you further add, “it is my place to be still and humble under every dispensation.” This is very right and true. You ought—I ought—all ought. I wish this was more thought of, and better observed by every christian professor.

You do not wish him back again—that would be cruel. Nor will he come by wishing, wish all you can;—you know this. Well then, do you wish to go, and see, and be with him, where he is?—You do: and much more than *wish*. Wishing will no more bring him back, than it will carry you up to him. Have patience, my dear friend, a little more time will bring you into the same place where he is gone before you. Heaven was prepared for him before he went thither. Is it not also prepared for you?—It is: and for all the beloved faithful ones: the sons and daughters of God. Are we prepared for it?—A great, a close, an important question this, which concerns us all. But how prepared?—By nothing less than Grace. Without grace, no glory. Now for a volume, nay volumes cannot contain the wonders, the glories which arise, flow from grace. Grace now given, leads to glory hereafter to be given. This is a subject delights us now, but how much more shall we be delighted when grace shall have its full accomplishment in glory! Glory all eternal! Where are the eyes, the ears, the hearts, that ever saw, or heard, or conceived the glorious things prepared and laid up in heaven? None to be found on earth. Only those in heaven can tell what things are prepared and only there enjoyed. May you, my dear friend, may I, with

all the dear children of God, meet and live together there. Then we shall know in heaven, even as we are now known on earth. Christ knows us perfectly, we shall *then* know him perfectly. Whatever we *now* know of him as ours, we shall then know him to be ours eternally, as certainly as he now knows us to be his; and then shall we know angels and saints too, as well as they know us now. In a word, we shall then know God to be our God, as certainly as he now knows us to be his people. We know him to be our Father, and Jesus to be our Saviour, but not so perfectly as we shall then. The knowledge we now have of God as our Father, and of Jesus as our Saviour, wonderfully supports and bears us up under all our pressures, afflictions, &c. Did we not know God and Jesus in the above sense, we must inevitably fall and perish too. Let us most highly prize the grace received, and unweariedly, zealously, continually use it to the glory of him that gave it. 'Tis wonderful all! beyond compare, that we should ever be called and made partakers of it! What shall we render unto the Lord for this peculiar distinguishing favour, this most extraordinary gift, this inestimable blessing and benefit! No praises in any language can ever be sufficient. O, my dear christian friend, let us at least employ our thoughts more and more on the pleasing and most delightful subject.

The grace of God!—it can never be exhausted. It is the fulness of all felicity!—of all perfection! Glorious happy day, when we shall all be made perfect in love!—when nothing contrary thereto will ever be seen, heard, or known. What harmony, peace, and unity will be found, and for ever remain among all the blessed inhabitants! Joyful all! No discord, strife, or envy; no pride, ambition, or self exultation; none to disquiet, disturb, or molest them in their adorations, praises, and thanksgiving to their God and Saviour! Glorious all indeed! Then, with one uninterrupted voice, shall they universally proclaim and say, “Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.” Rev. v. 13 and vii. 10.

May God our Father grant us such a plenitude of his rich grace, that in his due time we may join the sacred, happy company in everlasting songs of highest praises; rejoicing in the presence of God and the Lamb, for ever and ever, Amen. I lift my heart to God on your account, my dear respected friend, and

heartily pray for every blessing needful for you, that you may live to his glory on earth, and with him in glory for ever in heaven. And may God, of his great mercy, in his infinite wisdom, provide and send a faithful pastor that shall feed, with substantial food, the flock over which my dear departed friend and brother was once the overseer. And O, that it may please our heavenly Father to provide for the whole flock wherever dispersed, and abundantly supply the wants of all his people, with grace here, to fit them for glory hereafter. This shall be my incessant prayer while I live. For I dearly love the church of our Lord Jesus. Your very affectionate friend and christian brother.

G. BOYCE.

The UTILITY of SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

The following *Extract* from a letter, written to one of her teachers, by a young woman, who had lately left a Sunday School and entered into service, is inserted, as an encouragement to the worthy conductors of those excellent Institutions, and as an example to other young persons; in circumstances similar to those of the writer.

DEAR and HONOURED FRIEND,

"I have to complain with just Lot, grieved with the filthy communications of the wicked from day to day: you do not know what vain and foolish conversation I am often obliged to hear. I am often filled with indignation, and feel it my duty to speak of the impropriety of such conduct, and then I directly become the object of ridicule and reproach. Last night Mr. and Mrs.— went out to spend the evening; so the other servants proposed enjoying themselves at cards, they pressed me very much to join them, but I told them I did not approve of them, and therefore I did not chuse. After a while, they proposed singing, and asked me if I would sing them a song, I felt very much agitated to know how to act, but I begged of the Lord to direct me: and after many solicitations, I summoned up courage and told them, I would sing one of the songs of Zion if they would not interrupt me:" and they promised they would not. The hymn came to my mind; the first line of which is "Ye glittering toys of earth, adieu." I think it was one of the first hymns I learnt at the Sunday School; and it has been precious to me ever since, because it speaks the sen-

timents of my heart. They thanked me when I had done, and said nothing against it; but afterwards began some of their own carnal songs. I sat a few minutes, then slipped away and prayed that the Lord would take away all timidity. When I came down again, they asked me to sing them another; I then sang "Ye hearts with youthful vigour warm, In smiling crowds draw near, &c." This I also learnt at school. I spoke to them a little as the Lord enabled me. One of them sleeps with me. I mentioned to her living without prayer. So when we went to bed, she asked me if I would tell her how to pray, and lend her my hymn-book, to learn those hymns. My dear friend, you do not know how this made my heart rejoice. This morning she got up with me, at half past five o'clock, to read, while I am writing this to you, and who knows but the Lord may make it a blessing?

*On the IMPORTANCE of MISSIONARY
EXERTIONS.*

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I now propose to throw a few thoughts together on a subject to which my heart again recurs, and to which my conscience almost directs me to attend. It is the HEATHEN. In behalf of *five hundred millions* of the heathen, I would endeavour to call forth the prevailing prayer of faith, and the helping hand of love. *Five hundred millions* (it almost makes our blood run chill to repeat the words) five hundred millions of immortal beings involved in the deepest night—a night almost as dark and hopeless, as the eternal night of hell. How dreadful is the idea! Yet dreadful as it appears, we feel not a thousandth part of its horror; for we gain no clear comprehension of so vast a number. Let me remind the English Christian that *fifty times* as many human beings as there are inhabitants in Great Britain, are at this moment the worshippers of stocks, or of stones, or of devils. O, could we mount as on an angel's wing, and see Great Britain stretched beneath our feet; could we then extend our view from its northern to its southern point, from its eastern to its western extremity; and could we behold no temples but those of idols, no worship except a medley of folly, cruelty and lust, and no human beings free from the chains of

Satan;—could we see this, what a distracting picture would poor Britain yield; and were it fifty times as large, the view would be fifty times as distracting. O, let me repeat the dreadful idea, that fifty times as many persons, as are to be found in Great Britain, are, at this hour, in the dismal state just described. Were these millions of wretched beings distributed into cities, *five hundred* cities as large as London would be formed; were towns to be peopled by them, *fifty thousand* considerable towns would arise; were villages to be planted, *one million* of respectable villages would appear. O, ye who weep over the inhabitants of *one* city, who mourn the depravity of *one* town, who lament the state of *one* village, weep here! Our hearts are ice, or these views would call forth floods of sorrow.

To this painful view, how awful is it to add the consideration, that the generations of men are in a continual flow; and swift is the succession in which they hurry to eternity. O, that, in heathen lands at least, this succession were not so rapid! Then Satan's empire would not fill so fast. The hundred of millions of idolators that now cover the earth, must soon give place to as many hundred millions more. How sickening is the thought, that, in the short compass of a century, several generations are trained for perdition, and die in sin. It is sickening: but is it not upbraiding too? Oh! If conscience did its office, conscience would change all religious professors that are indifferent, or even lukewarm as to missions, with being *wilful accessories to the murder of immortal souls*.

Would to God that conscience might unceasingly thunder in the ear of all who are careless of the heathen, that *inactivity is sin*. This is a truth, I fear, but too little regarded, by many who are themselves at ease in Zion; yet it is a truth that mere reason unfolds, that Scripture declares, and that eternal judgment will confirm. Inactivity, where millions are perishing, is sin—the diabolical sin of cruelty is in it. It is the crime for which the Priest and the Levite, in the parable of the good Samaritan, are stigmatized with eternal disgrace. They came, they looked on the sufferer, and they passed on; multitudes of religious professors imitate them—they see the extent of heathen ruin, they look on heathen wretchedness, and pass on. Doubtless, the Priest and Levite had excuses for their cruel neglect; they would have exposed themselves to danger, they might have run into expence. Professors of the gospel, do

you bring the same, precious excuses! The judgment-day will tell you their worth. "If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and ready to be slain; If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not: doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth he not know it? and shall he not render to every man according to his works?" Prov. xxiv. 11, 12. Inactivity is sin, for it is a daily violation of that one command, which includes all that refer to social life. "Whatsoever ye would that others should do to you, do ye even so to them." Let us in imagination, change places with the heathen: let us suppose them blessed with our advantages, and ourselves loaded with their miseries. If then possessed of a knowledge of our situation, should we think it bearable, that they should deny us the bread of life, sooner than deny themselves the least convenience or gratification? Should we not think it rebellion against heaven, that many of them should have pounds at command, to please their fancies, to adorn their persons, or ornament their houses, and hardly pence to help us to the knowledge of salvation? Do not the words abovementioned, say to us? "Do now for the heathen, what, if you were in their situation, you would have them do for you; exert yourselves as much for their salvation, as if you were heathens, you would wish them to exert themselves for yours."

Allow me to observe further, that inactivity respecting this sacred cause, is sin of a crimson dye; for in it is the guilt of alliance with the great enemy of God and man. Were the prince of hell to address us, he might say; "Sleep on, sleep the sleep of inactivity, and you are my friends. My empire is established; but my rival's has to rise. All my fears are, lest mine should be overthrown: it wants not your aid to raise it, for it covers the earth. *Your neutrality is all I want*: sleep in carelessness, and you will do your best to keep my empire firm." If we were the professed allies of Satan, it might be expected we should listen to advice like this: but O, awful inconsistency! when we profess to be his enemies, and in this respect, act as his friends. "Curse ye Meroz," said the Angel, "curse ye *bitterly* the inhabitants thereof; *because they came not to the help of the Lord.*" They stood neuter: and thus many now stand *idle spectators* of the war, which heaven is waging against hell.

If it be enquired what are the specific objects that I would recommend, I would take the liberty of suggesting the following.

I. That a monthly prayer meeting, for the extension of the Kingdom of Christ, be established in each of our churches; and that, on those occasions, the minister, or some other person, should be requested to spend a short time, in giving some detailed account of the state of the heathen world, the success of missions, &c.

II. That the friends of the perishing heathens, should endeavour to form themselves into a missionary society, and that, careless of reproach or blame, careless of being deemed visionaries, and having their exertions pronounced wild-goose, romantic, and enthusiastic; they should remember that the Lord despiseth not the day of small things. If this be once done, it will then be matter of consideration, what other steps should be taken.

I doubt not, but objections will be started to this proposition. One of the most plausible, that I have heard, is, the scarcity of ministers in our connection. This objection, plausible as it appears, is founded on a mistaken supposition: it seems to be taken for granted, that missionaries abroad, should have been ministers at home, or at least, have possessed talents for the pulpit. But the fact is, that few of the missionaries abroad, were previously engaged in the ministry, Carey, indeed, that star of the East, was: but he, pre-eminent as he appears in his present station, was by no means popular in his former one. Talents, a missionary must possess; but, in a great measure, talents of a different kind from those which the ministry at home requires. Instead of the regular and continued addresses of the pulpit, the missionary must chiefly instruct his ignorant hearers by conversation. Some will discourse with him, others stand by and listen. Again, and again, must he repeat the same simple tale, to satisfy the inquiries of his various auditors, while he refutes the objections of others.

Some objectors to missions plead, that there is as much need to evangelize some parts of England, as there is to send the Gospel to Africa, or Asia. Allow me to ask these admirers of the miser's golden maxim, that "charity begins at home," What would your situation now have been, if the eleven Apostles had continued in Jerusalem, till all the Jews had been

converted? and Paul abode at Damascus, till all its inhabitants had believed in Jesus? Had the lives of the Apostles lasted from that day to this, the Gospel would still have been confined to Jerusalem, and Damascus. It is absurd to plead, that in this land of Gospel light, its truths are needed as much, as in the dark and cruel abodes of heathen superstition. In the most benighted parts of England, an awakened sinner may have the scripture to guide him, or hear of some place, whither he may go, to listen to the Gospel. Not so in Pagan lands. If a mourning penitent be there, no comfort to the mourner is there proclaimed; if an enquirer for salvation be there, none there can satisfy his inquiries: all around is baleful darkness.

After all, perhaps, the most formidable objections are, "we have neither men nor money." How do you know, you have not men? The Lord raises workmen for the work. What were the missionaries now abroad, when in England, but diamonds in the rough? When Carey sat on his shoemaker's bench—when Ward was employed in Drury's printing office—when Marshman was teaching the English alphabet—was it ever imagined that Carey would become professor of Shanscrit, in an East Indian college—that Ward would superintend the printing of the Scriptures, in thirty languages—that Marshman would unfold the secrets of the Chinese tongue? Was it ever suspected, that Carey, Ward, and Marshman, would unlock the stores of divine knowledge to half the world?

"We are too small a body to do any thing."—Think of the Moravians, they are a small body: yet honour be to them, for their zeal in this heavenly war.

"We have not money."—How do you know you have not? We can do, when we try, much more than we imagine. The writer knows a church, which for many years was asleep, as to this subject; yet lately, within less than four years, it has, by private or public subscription, raised upwards of £60. for missionary or bible societies; and would have raised more, if it had not been burthened by other exertions; and yet it is a church composed chiefly of the poor.

And now, blessed Lord, let me turn from man to Thee; arise, thou God of love, restore thy ruined work; destroy Satan's empire, and erect thy own: and O, stir up our hearts, and strengthen our hands, for this heavenly war.

Derby, Oct. 6th, 1815.

P.

A CONJECTURE on REV. xi. 1. 12.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

SIR,

As I was preaching to a neighbouring church, Nov. 5th "on the Downfall of Popery," I was led to mention an opinion, which I had long entertained of the Two Witnesses, described in the eleventh chapter of the Revelation. This opinion met with so much acceptance, that I was encouraged to review it; and offer it to the public, through the medium of your Repository.

If I had more leisure, and you had more room, I might mention many interpretations of this passage, and endeavour to refute them; I might also make many just apologies, to prepare the way for the following remarks: but if they appear absurd, no apology can save them from contempt; if they assist the reader, to understand Prophecy and Providence better, and encourage his mind to faith, and patience, let God have all the glory.

Probably, I have been led into the following train of thought, by reflecting on Dr. Newton's luminous dissertation on the subject. Many of his ideas I highly approve; and where I differ from him, it is more in the way of addition, and arrangement, than to direct opposition. One great difficulty, that has embarrassed commentators, has been, to fix on names for the two witnesses; and instead of *two*, they have had many, equally unsuitable. The names I venture to give them are, *Preaching and Publishing*.

It is not my design, to give a regular exposition of the account of the two witnesses; but to suggest a few considerations, which lead me to think, that the Lord Jesus, by them, intends to set forth the origin, progress, and power of Preaching, and Publishing.

1. It is reasonable to suppose, that he intends to speak of what are specifically, distinctly, and emphatically *two*; if not, there is a great laxity in the expression; such a laxity, as is not to be found in other sacred prophecies. Nothing, but the difficulty of finding suitable epithets, would have suffered divines, to admit of such ambiguity, as they have introduced into their expositions, The terms, Preaching and Pub-

lishing, are sufficiently explicit and distinct, to answer all the purposes of proper names.

2. The general term *witnesses*, coincides with the names for which we are pleading; and the work assigned them in the prophecy, is the peculiar work of Preaching, and Publishing. These witnesses are appointed to prophecy, that is, to preach, and foretel future events, and to bear testimony to the truth. Rev. xi. 3. 7. In these employments the ministers of the gospel, and the prophets of old, and all that have written as they should, have been regularly engaged. The beauty and use of these witnesses are set forth, by the symbols of candlesticks, and olive-trees, (ver. 4.) by which light, food and fatness are communicated. The same symbols are employed, to represent the two anointed ones, Zech. iv. 14. and perhaps, there is a reference to these in this passage. Preaching and Publishing, are messengers of peace, they enlighten the world; whilst they beautify and adorn it by themselves, and the effects they produce.

3. As messengers, and witnesses, it is natural to consider them as employed by some one. There are many witnesses, on different occasions; but these are God's witnesses, or Christ's witnesses. (ver. 3.) All who deserve the name of preachers, have been sent by God, and employed by him for testifying the truth: for the same purpose, he hath made many publications. He is the inventor of the art of publishing; and actually made the first publication, Exo. xx. 1. which was the grandest and plainest testimony of universal truth and duty extant. Exod. xxxi. 18.—Deut. ix. 10.

4. Every circumstance in the account of these witnesses, confirms the denominations I have given them. When they are explained, of John Huss and Jerome, of Prague, how absurdly, the terrible power which they possess, is applied to those two valuable, yet obscure and meek, servants of Christ. (ver. 5. 6.) Preaching and Publishing figuratively, possess all the amazing power of destruction and denunciation, ascribed to the two witnesses. The power of horses, breast-plates, or swords, is not mentioned; but the power of words is represented, by fire proceeding out of their mouths; the power of prayer, like that of Elijah to shut heaven. Jam. v. 17. The power of teachers is set forth, by their influence on the waters. Great have been the effects of Preaching, and Publishing, in

every age; wonderful alterations, in the civil and religious establishments of the nations; and millions, no doubt, have been brought to the knowledge of the truth. 1 Cor. 1. 21. No wonder if their words of fire, and severe reproof, have tormented the adherents of antichrist. (ver. 10.)

But if we are allowed the use of our English version,* the phrase, "I will give power. &c." (ver. 3.) seems to intimate some particular communication of power. This was directly fulfilled at the reformation, and by the discovery † of the art of printing, which took place about the same time. Preaching and Publishing, are God's witnesses: to them he has unfolded his will, he has enabled them to retain it, in valuable manuscripts and ancient books. He has, by wonderful methods, assisted them in multiplying, diversifying, and communicating their testimonies.

5. That which has most confounded commentators, in their exposition of the two witnesses, will, I hope, afford most support to my conjecture. It has been usual, to apply these prophecies to the Reformers; but the period of 1260 days, or years, added to 1500, brings us beyond 2000, which confounds all the chronology of the Revelation. The prophecy

* I am not ignorant that the word "power" is supplied by our translators, and that the ellipsis is filled up differently by others. Beza inserts "illam" probably, referring to "Urbem" above; but the "Urbem sanctam" is given to the Gentiles. Castalio paraphrases it, "Mandaboque duobus meis testibus," but this does not so well accord with the original; and upon the whole, our own translation appears most plain.

† As I have hinted above, that the first publication, was that of the two tables of the law, which is expressly called the work, and the writing of God, Exod. xxxii. 16. so I have no doubt, but the writing of the ancient heathens sprung from this copy, or the instructions which Moses received at the same time. As God poured out his spirit, on the day of Pentecost, to enable the Apostles to preach in different languages, may we not suppose, that He, with whom is the residue of the Spirit, communicated the art of printing, at the favourable æra of the Reformation, to enable his servants, to disperse the scriptures more easily, in the various languages of the world.

in this eleventh chapter, gives not the least ground to suppose, that these witnesses should be born, or raised up in the period of which it speaks; but evidently considers them, as in existence before the time of which it treats. The Lord Jesus says, "I will give power to my two witnesses, and they shall prophecy 1260 days, clothed in sackcloth." "These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth." Our God is the Governor of the whole world, and he hath planted these trees, and lighted these candlesticks, which are constantly supplied, and maintained by him. Preaching has existed, at least, since Noah's time, 2 Pet. v. 5. and Publishing since Moses's time. The object of the Revelation in this chapter is, to foretel their prophesying in sackcloth, and the time of this sackcloth prophecy. This idea will, I think, wholly rectify the chronology.

Preaching and Publishing, put on sackcloth when the Pope of Rome prohibited them from bearing their testimony freely. Probably this is particularly pointed at by the number 666. Rev. xiii. 18. There appears a double mystery in this number, it not only, by the numeral letters, *Lateinos*, points out the *Latin man*, or the Pope: but, from the remark that no one is allowed to "buy or sell" without using in their contracts "the number of his name," leads me to suppose, that the number coincides with the Roman calendar, which the popes enjoyed. On this foundation the appearance of popery, may, perhaps, be fixed to A. D. 666. Then the witnesses began to wear mourning, and continue in sackcloth 1260 days, or years: that is, until A. D. 1926. Still the importation of power, may apply to the Reformation, and other displays of providence in their favour; but, notwithstanding all their power, they are yet generally seen in sackcloth, throughout Asia and Europe.

Another important circumstance presents itself to us in the history of these two witnesses. As they are about to finish their state of sackcloth, and sorrow, the beast which so long opposed them, shall overcome and slay them; that is, according to the above remarks, the liberty of Preaching and Publishing, shall be wholly destroyed, and popery; revail for three years and a half. (ver. 9.) Perhaps the restoration of the Pope, the Jesuits, and the Inquisition, may be making way for this awful event. However that be, the abuse of these great blessings, will induce the God of the whole earth, to re-

move these candlesticks out of their place. Let us all endeavour to improve them, while they are *standing*. Such, I hope, will be the exertions of many, to enlighten mankind in the present century, that popish darkness cannot soon return: these exertions are God's work, and signs of the times. In the short space just mentioned, God will revive preaching, and publishing, and divest them of sackcloth, and light, and instruction, will shine forth as the sun: whilst popery, and tyranny, are driven from the face of the earth. Rev. xvii. 8. 11.

Anesis, Jan. 18th. 1815.

KERUX.

GENERAL BAPTIST OCCURRENCES.

OBITUARY.

MR. JOHN SHIPMAN, lately ruling elder in the G. B. church, Hinkley, was born either at Hinkley, or Leicester, October, 5th. 1732, and lived the first eight or nine years of his life, with his grandfather, at the latter place. He then lived with his father, at the former, until his eighteenth, or nineteenth year. His father taught him his own profession, which was that of a stocking needle maker, and which he regularly pursued to the end of his life. About the age above-mentioned, he removed to Sheepshead, where he became acquainted with some young men of loose principles, who would soon have led him into bad habits; he therefore left that place, and removed to Nottingham. While there, he was induced to be present at an awful spectacle, (a spectacle, alas! much too frequent) the execution of two of his fellow creatures. When beholding this scene, or contemplating it afterwards, he was powerfully impressed with the thought, that if he continued in that place, it might probably be his own untimely and disgraceful end; he therefore immediately resolved to return home, and give up his mind to religion. On his return home, he formed an acquaintance with some of the people, who were afterwards denominated General Baptists, but were then called Methodists. He soon became a serious and stated hearer among them, and afterwards an active and useful member. He was very zealous and diligent in reading the scriptures; liberal in supporting the cause and relieving the distressed, and free in conversing with others on religious subjects; so that his house became a place of resort to persons under conviction, or to

such as desired instruction, advice, or consolation. As the people with whom he was connected were few in number, and widely dispersed, they held their meetings for the ordinances and discipline, at Barton, and Melbourn. These he regularly attended, although, on account of the distance, it would be sometimes midnight before he and his companions could reach their homes. Such were the zeal and diligence of our brethren in those days. He pursued his course to the close of his pilgrimage, with steadiness, uprightness, and faithfulness. He possessed a good natural capacity, was disposed to read, and his mind was well stored with scriptural knowledge. His bodily temperament was hypochondrical, from which he suffered much, at some periods of his life. He was never regularly employed as a preacher, but was generally ready, if the minister failed, to supply his place; which he could do with a good degree of acceptance. For many years, he sustained the office of ruling Elder, and was very useful in visiting the sick, admonishing the disorderly, and instructing the enquirer. He was respected by all denominations; and the ungodly would speak well of him. If one of this description has been seized with remorse and terror, on his sick or dying bed; no one was sooner thought of than our departed friend: and many of this description has he visited in the course of his long and useful life. Such is the importance of consistency and uprightness: he had a good report of them that were without. Those whose prejudices ran high against dissenters, would speak well of him. His established character, brought an unusual number together at his funeral. His liberality was great; his *heart*, his *house*, and his *hands*, were always open for the accommodation or relief, of his Christian friends, or to promote the Redeemer's interest. In the earlier part of his life, he has sometimes been under the necessity of considering, when called upon, to contribute a few pounds to some public measure, whether he could do it without risk to his creditors. The love of accumulation was no part of his character. His aim was to do good, and to serve his master; not to grow rich. A judicious friend, who was intimately acquainted with him, for nearly forty years, and a very competent judge, has informed the writer, that if he had been as careful to save money, as some christians think it their duty to be, he would have died possessed of several thousands: though he possessed

not more than sixty or seventy pounds. He was never married, and had a good business, the article he manufactured, being in great repute. To the close of his useful life, he steadily adhered to those important doctrines, with which he began his christian course; to "win Christ, and be found in him, possessing the righteousness which is of God, by faith," was his highest aim, and most fervent desire. It is not meant to represent him as perfect he had his weakness, and failings; and these, he was neither insensible of, nor backward to acknowledge. His constancy in attending the house of God, evinced his sense of duty, and his love of devotion. His funeral discourse was preached to a very crowded audience, from Nehemiah vii. 2. "He was a faithful man, and feared God above many." May we follow him, as he followed Christ. He was interred, March 22nd. 1812, aged nearly eighty.

Sept. 14, 1815, Mr. SAMUEL IBBOTSON, a worthy member of the G. B. church, at Quenshead, Yorkshire, was released from a scene of heavy affliction, and called to the place where the weary are at rest. He was buried, Sept. 20, in the G. B. chapel, in the family vault, made four years ago, at the death of his late venerable partner. (*See G. B. Repository, vol. iv. page 129.*)

The parents of our respected friend were members of the particular baptist church, at Haworth, which was then under the care of that worthy servant of Christ, Mr. James Hartley. This good minister used frequently to visit old Mr. Ibbotson, though he dwelt seven miles from Haworth. And the subject of this Obituary, who was then only a child, often mentioned with pleasure, after he arrived at the age of sixty, the prayers and admonitions of the pious Mr. Hartley. These admonitions were impressed more deeply on his young mind, by the instructions of his parents, who were honourable christians, very affectionate to their children, and anxious to implant in their hearts, a sense of the importance of everlasting concerns. Notwithstanding the great distance, they frequently took their children with them to their place of worship: carrying some and leading others. A laudable part of their conduct, which may reprove those parents, who, though regular themselves in attending the means of grace, yet, too often suffer their children to wander abroad: especially now, when places of worship are so much nearer, and more easy of access, to the

inhabitants of Queenshead, than they were fifty years ago. The pious care of his parents, especially of his mother, were not lost on young Samuel. He often acknowledged, that her warnings and prayers were so deeply impressed upon his mind, and so often recollected by him, that they were, by the divine blessing, the means of frequently awakening his conscience, and preserving him from sinful practices and wicked companions.

When Mr. Ibbotson arrived at maturity, he engaged in the cares and business of life, and appears for many years, to have paid little attention to religion; except going pretty regularly to the worship of the independents. In this state he continued till about forty years of age; when he began to attend occasionally at Queenshead: and approving the preaching and the people, he, at length, chose it for his spiritual home. Here he gained considerable knowledge of divine things, and, though he never studied controversy, yet he was well convinced, that Jesus Christ died for the sins of all men; and that none but believers in him would enjoy eternal salvation. But it was long before he applied these truths to his own conscience.

His mind, however, was, at last, awakened to a sense of his own danger as a lost sinner: and for a long time he experienced great distress. His anguish was heightened, by being brought to the very brink of the grave, by the rupture of a blood vessel, from the effects of which he slowly recovered. A little afterwards, his dear wife gave herself to the Lord, and then united in church fellowship. This rendered him still more miserable. The language of his burthened soul, and sometimes of his tongue, was, "I have thus far spent my precious time, and neglected my everlasting concerns; I am a poor lost sinner, and am tempted to fear, that I must end my life, without a comfortable sense of the favour of God. My dear wife must now enjoy the privileges of religion: she must stop at the Lord's supper; but I must go mourning home. She must, I have no doubt, be accepted of her Saviour, and taken to heaven when she dies; but I dreadfully fear, that I must then stand at the left hand, and hear that awful sentence, which shall fix my abode with the devil, and his angels for eternity."

Being intimate with the minister, he opened his case to him: who, conceiving that encouragement was what he principally needed, exhibited to his desponding mind, the mercy,

of God, and the undertaking of the Lord Jesus, for every poor sinner. A number of texts were selected, and proposed to him; and earnest-prayer was offered for him. By the influence of the holy spirit, without which no man can come to Christ, these means were so blest, as to enable him to rely on the mercy of God, in Christ. His mind experienced peace in believing, and the other blessed effects, of justification by faith; and a very pleasing change was manifest, both in the state of his mind, and in his deportment among his friends. He was baptized in the fifty ninth year of his age, and admitted into the fellowship of the church; of which he continued an honourable member, till he was, as there is encouraging reason to hope, called to the church triumphant in heaven.

For several years, previous to his decease, his health and strength declined, and his friends saw, with painful apprehension, the symptoms of decay. His last illness, which lasted six months was peculiarly distressing. The hearts of his friends and relatives were agonized in witnessing his sufferings. The medical gentlemen who attended him, from a distance of five miles, were commendably regular and punctual in their visits, and in unavailing attempts to arrest the progress of his disorder. His daughters, by their incessant and affectionate attention, by day and night, to the comfort of their afflicted parent, and by their anxious solicitude to supply his wants and prevent his wishes, exhibited a most pleasing evidence of their filial piety; which will be long remembered to their honour, by those who were the spectators of their conduct. But their dying father, was the most edifying object in the house of sorrow. His patience was astonishing, both in degree and constancy; in the intervals of ease, his countenance was peculiarly cheerful, and his conversation strikingly pleasing; gratitude to God, for enabling him to support his pains, or mitigating their tortures, was so common, and so evidently sincere and affectionate, as both delighted, and astonished all who witnessed it, especially his sympathizing children.

His affliction was sanctified to his own benefit. It greatly increased his knowledge of himself, of the way of salvation, and of the office of Christ, as a mediator. He felt more of the infinite mercy of God, and of his readiness to exercise it, towards the most unworthy of his creatures. Thus he became

much better prepared for death. The precious declarations and promises, contained in the word of his God, became, under the powerful influence of the divine Comforter, more dear to his soul : and upheld him, as he walked through the valley of the shadow of death. He had many of them on his mind ; and frequently repeated them to his friends and family. His evidence of his own interest in the divine favour grew daily more plain, solid, rational, and settled. " I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," evidently supported him to the last. And blessed be the Giver of all grace, we have abundant reason to believe that " This God, was his God, even unto death." He died in the sixty seventh year of his age.

It would swell this article to an inconvenient length, to attempt a delineation of the general character of our deceased friend. His tender affection and liberal attention to those in distress, were highly conspicuous ; and will long be remembered with gratitude, by the poor in his neighbourhood. The prosperity of the church lay near his heart : and his house and heart were always open to receive the ministers of the gospel. May the blessing of God be on his property and on his family : and may all his dear children walk in his steps on earth, and follow their honoured and worthy parent to heaven !

On July 31st. 1815, died, at Birmingham. Mrs ELIZABETH COTTRELL, widow of the late Mr. William Cottrell, deacon of the G. B. church in that town. Though naturally of few words, in her last illness she expressed herself freely on the great truths of the gospel. A steady faith in the Saviour's atonement produced in her mind, joy unspeakable, and full of glory. She frequently recollected, with deep gratitude, the goodness of God through a widowhood of nineteen years : and this long experience of his love and faithfulness strengthened her courage in the prospect of death. During a long indisposition, her mind was tranquil : though not always equally elevated, yet she was preserved in perfect peace. Death was to her disarmed of its terrors, and she sweetly expired under the smiles of her Redeemer. Her funeral discourse was founded on the Apostle's description of a " widow indeed." 1 Tim. v. 5. A character which she fully exemplified.

Dec. 4th. 1815, died Mrs. MARY FAULCONBRIDGE, of Birmingham, aged fifty two years. She had attended the means

of grace, as usual, on the preceding day: and on the night of her death, left her own house, to go to a monthly prayer meeting for the spread of the gospel: observing, as she set out, how well she felt. But an apoplectic fit seized her, as she was proceeding, and she fell down in the street: she was carried home, and expired in about three hours. The affliction of her husband, with whom she had lived, in true conjugal affection, for thirty three years, and the sorrow of her children, at this unexpected calamity, may be better conceived than described. The suddenness of the stroke excited the tenderest feelings in all who knew her: and brought many to hear her funeral sermon, which was preached the next Lord's day, at the request of her weeping husband, from Isa. xxxviii. 1. "Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die, and not live." Though the manner of her death, allowed no opportunity of edifying, by her dying experience, yet it is a pleasing thought, that she was seeking the assemblies of the saints on earth, when her happy spirit was called to join the general assembly, and church, of the first-born in heaven.

CONFERENCES.

The LEICESTERSHIRE and NOTTINGHAMSHIRE CONFERENCE was held at *Kegworth*, Dec. 20. 1815. At this conference, by the desire of the church at Quorndon, the state of the Protestants in France was taken into consideration: and it was unanimously resolved—that something should be attempted to alleviate their distresses:—that, in order to this, Mr. Stevenson should be requested to procure a few copies of the printed statement of their case, for distribution among the churches: and that it be strongly recommended to the churches to make immediate subscriptions for their relief, and forward them to Mr. Pollard, of Quorndon, that he may remit them to the committee in London, for the benefit of the sufferers. This conference also learnt, with grief, that the friends at Nottingham, who had generously made themselves responsible for the purchase of the meeting house at Mansfield, have suffered great inconvenience, in consequence of the collections not having been made in due time: and this meeting earnestly request the churches to attend to this business without delay, and to forward their contributions to Notting-

ham. Advice was likewise given to the friends at Austrey, respecting the hiring of a house for preaching, and to the friends at Knipton, on the settlement of a minister.—and it was agreed to recommend the case of the supplies for Knipton to the Itinerant fund. On this occasion, the new meeting-house at Kegworth was opened; when Mr. Orton preached from John i. 14.; and Mr. R. Smith, from Hag. i. 19. But we hope to be able, in our next number, to give a more particular account of these services, and the occasion of them. The next conference to be at Hugglescote; Messrs. Felkin and Stevenson to preach.

The YORKSHIRE CONFERENCE was held Nov. 6. 1815, at *Staley-Bridge*, when it was concluded, that it is improper to carry the bread and wine of the Lord's supper to the houses of individuals. In compliance with a case from Shore, it was resolved to attempt preaching at *Lidgate*; and a supply was arranged till next meeting.—Mr. W. Pickering was requested to write to Nantwich, to inquire into the state of the cause amongst our friends in that town.—In the evening, Mr. Holliarake opened public worship with prayer; and Mr. G. Andrews preached from Acts x. 43.

This conference met again, Dec. 25, at *Heptonstall slack*, when Mr. R. Ingham of Duffield preached, from Amos vii. 2. It was agreed to recommend it to the churches in this district to collect for Kirton, during the ensuing summer.—A supply was arranged for Lidgate till next meeting.—Mr. Ingham was desired to represent the low state of religion at Nantwich, to the Leicestershire Conference, that it might lend the friends there some ministerial aid—and the brethren present were requested to write their thoughts on the propriety of laying hands on persons newly baptized.

We are requested to state, that, it is determined to publish an improved edition of the *Brief Supplement to Watts*, lately printed in Yorkshire. (See G. B. R. vol. iv. p. 90.) Those G. B. churches which use the Psalms and Hymns of Dr. Watts, and wish to countenance the Supplement, are respectfully requested to send information of their intentions, and of the number which they propose taking, either to Mr. *James Taylor*, of Heptonstall-slack, near Halifax. Yorkshire, or to the *Editor* of the G. B. R.

*Some ACCOUNT of the BAPTIST SOCIETY for
PROMOTING the GOSPEL, in IRELAND.*

While so much commendable zeal is shewn, to send the gospel of salvation to the pagan tribes of Asia and Africa, we feel great pleasure in noticing the increasing attention, which is excited among our countrymen towards their fellow subjects in Ireland. The real situation of the poor natives, in that hitherto neglected Island, has not, perhaps, been sufficiently explained to the British public—It has been ascertained—that there are, at least, upwards of *fifteen hundred thousand*; probably *two millions* of the inhabitants of that kingdom, who understand no other language than the native Irish:—that, very few of these are capable of reading, even in that language:—that, if they could read, there are, at present, only three thousand copies of the Irish New Testament in circulation among them all;—that the old Testament in Irish, of which there has not been an edition for more than a century, can now scarcely be found, even in the cabinet of the antiquarian—and, that these benighted people are equally destitute of all other means of religious instruction: having no ministers of the gospel, who can teach them, in the only language which they can understand, the most necessary truths of Christianity; except their Popish priests, who, in general, are as ignorant, and as bigotted as themselves. Such being their situation, it is evident, that in order to diffuse the divine Revelation among them, it will be necessary to devise means for teaching them their own language:—to furnish them with an adequate supply of copies of the Holy Scriptures in the Irish language:—and to send among them a competent number of faithful preachers, who can “*speak, in their own tongue, the wonderful works of God.*” The enthusiastic attachment of the natives, to their vernacular language, and the consequent dislike which they entertain against the English, render it highly desirable, that the former should be used as the primary medium of conveying religious instruction to their untutored minds.

Amongst various other attempts to accomplish these highly interesting objects, “the Baptist Society for promoting the Gospel in Ireland,” claims our present regard. This society was formed, at a public meeting, held at the New London Tavern, Cheapside, April 19th 1814, J. Butterworth, Esq.

M. P. being in the chair. At this meeting, it was resolved, 1. "That a society be now formed and designated, the Baptist Society for promoting the Gospel in Ireland—2. That the principal objects of this Society be, to employ Itinerants in Ireland, to establish schools, and to distribute Bibles and Tracts, either gratuitously, or at reduced prices." After settling the terms of subscription, &c. *W. Burls, sen. Esq.* was chosen Treasurer; and the *Rev. Joseph Ivimey*, Secretary. Though the company present was not numerous, a subscription of more than £. 120, was immediately made.

Soon after this meeting, the secretary made an excursion to Ireland, in company with Mr. Anderson, an intelligent minister in Edinburgh. The object of this journey was to gain accurate information of the real situation of the native Irish; and to endeavour to make arrangements, for carrying the designs of the Society into effect. They succeeded, in an encouraging degree, in both these objects, and soon after their return, the Committee began their operations.

June 23rd. 1815, the first annual meeting of this Society was held, at the New London Tavern, and Jos. Butterworth, Esq. M. P. again presided. At this meeting, the first Annual Report of the Committee was read and unanimously approved. From this Report we shall make a few abstracts, illustrative of the progress made towards accomplishing the designs of this Association.

It reflects credit on the projectors of this design, that they adopted, as the model of their future proceedings, that very excellent and useful institution, "the Baptist Missionary Society," and solicited the counsel and assistance, of its experienced and pious Secretary, *Andrew Fuller*. The first donation of five pounds was received from that venerable man: accompanied with a letter of advice, of infinitely greater value. The sentiments, contained in the following extracts from this epistle, are so excellent, and may be so usefully applied, in almost every similar undertaking, that we are persuaded, our readers will thank us for inserting them.—"I have," he says, "only a few pieces of advice to offer."

Be more anxious to do the work, than to get money. If the work be done, and modestly and faithfully reported, money will come. We have never had occasion to ask for money but once; namely, in 1811, which was a very expen-

sive year, and our funds were considerably more than exhausted: and then all that we said may be seen on the blue cover of the "Periodical Accounts, No. xxi," which more than answered the end.

"Further. *Be choise in the selection of Itinerants* Itinerants, as well as those who direct their labours, should understand the Gospel, or their zeal will be like that of Ahimaaz. They should not only be men of heart, but of gentle, prudent and ingratiating manners; and well affected to the constitution and government of their country."

"Finally. *Be less eager as to doing much, than doing it well.* Begin on a small scale in every thing, and enlarge as God prospers your way. It was thus, that God himself began, both the Jewish, and the Christian church. Isa. li. 2. Matt. xiii. 31. I was happy to find that the first contributions at your meeting, were much beyond £13 2 6. with which we commenced. Money was one of the least of our concerns: we never doubted but that if, by the good hand of our God upon us, we could do the work, the friends of Christ would support us."

We proceed now to notice the exertions of this society, during the first year—in employing Itinerants—establishing schools—and distributing Bibles and Tracts.

They have engaged Mr. Isaac Mc. Carthy, to *itincrate* in the county of Westmeath, and provided him a horse. He preaches regularly at about twenty different towns, and villages; and his labours appear to have been both acceptable and useful. In one town, the committee have hired for him a commodious place of worship, at the yearly rent of six pounds. At another large town, the magistrates have accommodated him with the Town Hall. At one place, ten persons have been baptized, on a profession of faith, and formed into a church. Mr. Mc. Carthy is esteemed a zealous, prudent, affectionate and indefatigable minister, ; and preaches seven or eight times a week. Mr. R. Dunlop, another respectable minister, has engaged to *itincrate* in the north of Ireland. He has preached, on the Lord's days, for six months, at Sligo, where there is a small destitute Baptist Church: and, at six places in the neighbouring villages, regularly, during the week. His character is good; and, in several instances, his labours have been blest to the conversion of sinners.—Besides these stated

Itinerants, several respectable Baptist ministers in Ireland, have entered cordially into the views of the Society; and extended their labours to adjacent villages. And Mr. Palmer, of Shrewsbury has, at the request of the committee, visited Ireland; and preached at various places, both in the north and south.

The committee found considerable difficulty in *establishing schools*. It was not till Nov. 1814, that they could hear of any Irish teachers. At length they engaged a worthy man, a paedobaptist minister, and a good Irish scholar, as a *Reader of the Irish Scriptures*: and left it to his discretion, to labour where providence opened a door for usefulness. This zealous man has travelled through the counties of Sligo, Mayo, and Roscommon; reading the Scriptures, establishing evening schools for teaching the Irish, and employing others to read the Scriptures, in that language, on a Lord's day, to their neighbours. There are sixteen evening schools, each of which costs the Society about two shillings weekly; and as many sabbath readers, who receive each about the same sum. Most of these readers are Roman Catholics, who feel a pleasure in reading, and teaching others to read the Scriptures. The happiest effects have already, in many instances, resulted from these measures.—In addition to these evening and sabbath schools, ten *day schools* have been established, for teaching the Irish language: the masters of many of which had been previously employed as sabbath readers. Considering the shortness of the time, the prospects of usefulness are encouraging.

The Society has also commenced operations in the *distribution of Bibles and Tracts*. As the old Testament in Irish cannot be procured, they have confined their bounty to the distribution of a few English Bibles. But, having been liberally presented with two hundred and fifty Irish New Testaments, by the British and Foreign Bible Society; with fifty pounds for the purchase of Irish Testaments, by the Edinburgh Bible Society; with one hundred English New Testaments, by the Hibernian Bible Society; and with one thousand Irish Tracts, by the Religious Tract Society, they are preparing to adopt active means for dispersing these treasures over the wilds of Ireland. And it gives us sincere pleasure to add, that, the British and Foreign Bible Society have resolved to print a large edition

of the Old Testament in Irish: so that the whole volume of Revelation will soon, we cheerfully hope, be opened to the perusal of two millions of British subjects, in the only language which they understand, and to which they are zealously attached.

The *Funds* of this Society were, at the date of the first report, in an encouraging state. The whole *receipts* in donations, subscriptions, and collections, in the preceding year, amounted to £886. 2s. 3d. $\frac{1}{2}$: and the disbursements to £554 16s. 2d. $\frac{1}{2}$: leaving a balance in the Treasurer's hand of £311 6s. 1d.

We shall observe the proceedings of this Society, with particular interest: and take proper opportunities of laying them before the readers of the G. B. R.

The PERSECUTIONS of the FRENCH PROTESTANTS.

The attention of the religious public, having lately been excited towards the unfortunate situation of the persecuted Protestants, in the south of France, we subjoin the following *Extracts*, from the Resolutions of two very respectable Societies, as descriptive of their sufferings: only premising, that, as these Resolutions were agreed to, after much investigation among intelligent and well informed persons, they may be considered, as exhibiting a faithful picture of the melancholy facts.

The "general Body of Protestant Dissenting Ministers of three Denominations," assembled at Dr. Williams's library, Nov. 21. 1815, say, "We have learned, with astonishment and grief, the state of our Protestant brethren in the south of France, who are suffering under the horrors of persecution—their dwellings and property ravaged or consumed, numbers of them driven into exile, their pastors silenced, their temples shut up, their children dragged from the arms of their parents, in order to be re-baptized according to the Romish ritual, and whole families massacred."

The Committee of the "Protestant Society," at a special General Meeting, held the same day, resolved, "That the Committee have learnt, with astonishment and deep regret, that, at Nismes, and other places in the south of France, a

systematic and cruel persecution of Protestants has existed, since the restoration of the present monarch to the throne of that country; that their property has been seized or destroyed; that many persons, interesting for their youth and sex, or respectable for their industry, their loyalty, their virtue, and their piety, have been assassinated; that an aged, venerable, and excellent minister of religion has been put to death; and that the enormities which superstition, interest and cruelty, have effected in former ages, have there been re-performed: and that they have learnt, with augmented sorrow; that these barbarities yet continue to be perpetrated, as they have not been suppressed, with that promptitude and firmness, which wisdom, gratitude, benevolence and christianity indispensibly require."

A remonstrance containing similar sentiments, was also transmitted to the Prince Regent, from the Deputation for the protection of the Civil Rights of Dissenters."

It appears that the general expression of deserved indignation, which has been manifested throughout the British empire, against these impious and ungrateful proceedings, has made a considerable impression in France. Great pains have been taken to cover or palliate the excesses that have been committed, and some steps towards preventing the recurrence of similar atrocities in future. But these measures appear to be adopted very languidly. Time will discover how far they are sincere; and whether the effects are likely to be permanent.

POETRY.

THE HINDOO AND THE MICROSCOPE.

A TALE.

The Hindoos do not think it good
 An animal to slay for food:
 And so on vegetables feed,
 That neither bird nor beast should bleed.

A Briton to an ag'd Hindoo
 A Microscope expos'd to view,
 And in its crystal full display'd
 The smaller wonders God hath made,
 The fly, the mite, the louse, the flea,
 Sections of many a curious tree,

The salts, as they in chrystals shoot,
 The down of birds, the hair of brute.
 With admiration all he saw,
 Express'd his wonder and his awe :
 And, offering its utmost price,
 Was the possessor in a trice.
 Within its focus straight was plac'd
 A Peach he was about to taste ;
 But, scarce had held it to his eyes,
 Than—back he started with surprise ;
 And dashing it against the ground,
 The broken fragments flew around.

Astonish'd at so strange a sight,
 The Briton ask'd—as well he might—
 What motive could have urg'd him thus
 To serve an instrument of use ?
 The Hindoo, then, the Briton ey'd,
 And, fill'd with horror, thus repli'd,
 “ That ne'er my eyes may more behold
 A herd of creatures young and old,
 Such monsters, both in size and shape,
 More hideous e'en than sloth, or ape,
 Than Tiger, or rhinoceros,
 Than Bison, or the fiery horse.
 Is it, alas! without a heed,
 That thus on *life* we Hindoo's feed ?
 If, thus, we ev'ry mouthful try,
 We must abjure all food and die.
 I've seen them once, and ne'er again
 I'll brave the sight of such a train.
 Blest in my ignorance, I'll live,
 Nor like offence to others give.”

You smile, my friend :—and, in your mind,
 Condemn at once *the wilful-blind*.
 But, ere you final sentence pass,
 Consider well how stands the case.
 A *microscope* there is of ours,
 Of wond'rous magnifying powers,
 Which, if with care we will apply,
 With that rare grace, a *single eye*,

Against "the naked human heart,"
 Most fearful truths will it impart,
 It will exhibit with much ease,
 A train more hideous far than these ;
 Not "hydras and chimeras dire,"
 But *sins* which set the world on fire.
 SCRIPTURE'S the MICROSCOPE I mean.
 Disclosing such a fearful scene.
 Too many, who the truth have found,
 Dash'd it, indignant, on the ground,
 And on the instrument have dealt
 The anger a gall'd conscience felt :
 And, when truth loudly cries "*Abstain,*"
 Avert their eyes—and sin again.

The Hindoo was indeed convinc'd,
 His conscience saw,—but only winc'd :
 And, ere his conduct thou shalt blame,
 Pause—*Hast not thou too done the same ?*

HOPE IN DARKNESS.

(*Composed by a poor Irishman, to the tune of
 Erin-gu-bragh*)

Tho' the morning of life should be gloomy and clouded,
 The noon-tide in storms and tempests should rave,
 The ev'ning in darkness, thick darkness, be shrouded,
 And close, late low'ring, in the night of the grave ;
 Yet the faithful, undaunted, with hope strong and cheering,
 Proceeds through the dark vale, ne'er doubting nor fearing,
 With transport he looks to the joyful appearing
 Of him, who came, lowly, to seek and to save.

Tho' the world, in the depth of affliction, should leave us,
 And those we relied on, stand aloof in our woe ;
 Tho' foes should combine, whilst false friends deceives us,
 And darken the cloud that surrounds us below ;
 Yet the day-star shall rise on the gloom of our sorrow,
 Woe reigns to-night here, but joy comes to-morrow,
 From the Fountain of life, we may comfort still borrow.
 Which earth and her princes could never bestow.

THE
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*SELECT PASSAGES of SCRIPTURE illustrated
from the SCENERY, CUSTOMS, and MANNERS
of the EAST.*

IT frequently happens in reading the sacred volume, especially the Old Testament, that the full force and spirit of a passage cannot be fully perceived, without some acquaintance with the local or temporary circumstances to which it alludes. Many learned men have endeavoured to assist the unlearned, by collecting and applying such facts, as the diligence of travellers has furnished. Among these, Harmer's "Observations," contain many useful and interesting remarks. As this work, probably, is not in the hands of many of the readers of the G. B. R. it is hoped, that the following brief hints, chiefly drawn from this source, will afford those who do not possess it, some assistance in their perusal of the sacred volume. Should this article be approved, papers of a similar nature, collected from other authors, may occasionally be inserted in future numbers.

The winters in the east are sometimes very severe; especially on the mountains. Many persons perish, and beasts are lost through the inclemency of the weather. Tempests of rain, hail and snow, are not uncommon: when the snow sometimes falls in flakes as large as walnuts, which, at a distance, look like locks of wool; and the hail resembles small pieces of broken ice. Well, therefore, might the Psalmist say of the Almighty: "He giveth snow like wool, and casteth forth his ice like morsels; who can stand before his cold?" Psa. cxlvii. 16, 17. Important also was the advice of our Saviour to his disciples: "Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter." Matt. xxiv. 20.

Though the returns of rain in the Holy Land, even in the winter season, are not frequent; yet, when it does rain, the water sometimes pours down with great violence for several successive days. The country is very mountainous, and the ground consists of rocks covered with a thin surface of earth or sand. When these violent rains happen, impetuous torrents are formed down the sides of the hills and in the vallies, sufficient to wash away this covering of earth, and leave the rocks bare. Builders, therefore, who wish their structures to stand, dig through the earth or sand, and lay their foundation on "the solid rock." These circumstances give a peculiar force to the awful comparison of our blessed Lord. "He that heareth my sayings, and doeth them, is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock; and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it; for it was founded on a rock. But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that, without a foundation, built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and it fell, and the ruin of that house was great." Luke vi. 47—49. Matt. vii. 24—27.

Rain, in these countries, is frequently preceded by a brisk gale of wind; which, in the deserts, raises such quantities of sand as to darken the air. This circumstance shews the propriety of Elisha's telling the kings, who were perishing for want of water: "Ye shall not see wind, neither shall you see rain; yet this valley shall be filled with water." 2 Kings iii. 16—17, see also 1 Kings xviii. 45. It assists us also in determining the meaning of the wise man. Prov. xxv. 14. "Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift, is like clouds and winds without rain:" that is, he that, by magnificent professions, raises expectations which he does not satisfy, is like a gale of wind, and a collection of clouds, which promise to refresh the parched ground with a plentiful rain, but drive away without the expected showers.

About the season of the equinoxes, seldom a night passes, in Palestine, without much lightning unattended with thunder, in the north-west part of the heavens. But when the lightning appears in the south-west, and is followed with thunder, it is considered as a certain prognostic of approaching rain, which

as hinted above is usually preceded by a brisk wind. How circumstantially do the inspired penmen describe these phenomena! "When God uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens; and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures." Jer. li. 16, See also, chap. x. 13, and Psa. cxxxv. 7.

In many of the eastern countries, there is an astonishing difference in the temperature of the air by day and by night. When the heat is so excessive, in the day, as to scorch the body and raise blisters, it is necessary, in the night, to guard against the cold and dew, by wrapping in thick coverings. Well might Jacob, therefore, reckon it among the hardships of Laban's service. "That by day the drought consumed him, and the frost by night." Gen. xxxi. 40, See also, Jer. xxxvi. 30.

The bottles of the Arabs are composed of the skins of goats and kids, formed by stripping off the skin of the animal entire, and drying it. In these leathern bottles, they carry both liquids and solids, and they make a constant part of their domestic furniture and travelling equipage. It is easy to conceive, that such utensils would be liable to be rent by various accidents—that when they had been, for any length of time, filled with wine, the leather would be so injured by the moisture, as to be unable to resist the fermentation of fresh wine, and that by hanging in the smoke, they would become black and wrinkled. Thus we can understand how the "wine bottles" of the Gibeonites were "old, rent, and bound up." Josh. ix. 5.—what Job means when he says, "My belly is as wine which has no vent; it is ready to burst like new bottles." Job xxxii. 19,—the propriety of our Saviour's assertion. "Neither do men put new wine into old bottles," &c. Matt. ix. 17,—and the situation of the Psalmist, when he says, "I am become like a bottle in the smoke." Psalm cxix. 83.

The houses in the east are flat roofed, and the inhabitants, in the summer, spend a great part of their time in walking or sitting on the roofs of their houses, and frequently pass the whole night there in separate closets, made of wicker-work for the sake of admitting a free circulation of air. Thus "Sa-

much commended with Saul upon the top of the house." 1 Sam. ix. 24, 25. David walked upon the roof of the king's house, 2 Sam. xi. 2. And "Nebuchadnezzar walked upon" (not in) "the palace of the kingdom of Babylon." Dan. iv. 29.

But though these wicker-closets on the roofs of the houses, were very pleasant in the summer, they would be very uncomfortable in the wet season, and exposed to the continual droppings of the rain: yet Solomon declares, "It is better to dwell in a corner of a house-top, than with a brawling woman in a wide house," for "the contentions of a wife are a continual dropping." Prov. xxi. 9. xix. 13.

Many of the houses in the east, even in their cities, are built of bricks made of mud, and baked in the sun. They make their walls of great thickness, to compensate for the frailty of the materials. The surface of these walls in dry weather moulder into dust, which the wind blows in vast quantities into the streets; and, in wet weather, the rain washes off the loose parts of the bricks, and forms mire on the ground. In Damascus, where these buildings are numerous, the streets in winter become almost impassable, being up to the ankles in mud. This gives a superior force to the prophet's description of the riches of Tyre; "who heaped up silver as dust, and fine gold as the mire of the streets." Zech. ix. 3. It enables us also to understand how the adulterers, in the days of Job, could "dig through houses." Job xxiv. 16.

The nails, in the east, are not driven into the walls, which would be but a slight fastening in structures built of mud. Their nails are large, and are turned up at the ends that enter the walls. These they fix into the bricks as they build them; and thus secure them so completely, that it is difficult to displace them without materially injuring the building. This explains the prophet's comparison, "I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place." Isa. xxii. 23. Thus also, to have a nail in any place, means to be fixed and settled there. Ezra ix. 8.

In some parts of the east, the houses are never without lights. They burn lamps, not only during the whole night, but in every inhabited apartment in a house. This is such an established custom, that the poor would rather retrench part of their food than neglect it. Hence a house without lights is

considered as desolate, and the destruction of a family is often represented by extinguishing its lights. The scriptures frequently adopt the same mode of speaking. "How oft," says Job, "is the candle of the wicked put out? and how oft cometh their destruction upon them?" Chap. xxi. 17. That is, how often are their families cut off? "The light of the wicked shall be put out," observes Bildad, "and the spark of his fire shall not shine. The light shall be dark in his tabernacle, and his candle shall be put out with him." Job xviii. 5, 6. "Whoso curseth his father or his mother," the wise man declares, "his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness." Prov. xx. 20. His family shall be utterly destroyed, and his memory perish from among his cotemporaries. Thus David's friends advised him not to go out to battle lest "he should quench the light of Israel." 1 Sam. xxi. 17. And the Lord promised to preserve one tribe in subjection to the descendants of that monarch, "that David might have a light always before him in Jerusalem." 1 Kings, xi. 36.

The rich distinguished themselves from their poorer neighbours by burning oils which gave a more brilliant and cheerful light. In conformity to this custom, Solomon observes: "The light of the righteous rejoiceth; but the lamp of the wicked shall be put out." Prov. xiii. 9.

In Palestine and the neighbouring countries, they grind their corn by hand-mills, at which two females generally work together, and amuse themselves by singing. Their first business in the morning, is to grind a certain quantity of corn for the supply of the family during the day: so that whoever goes out early, hears, on every hand, the noise of the mills and the songs of the grinders. This, in connection with the foregoing remark, enables us to understand the import of the threatening against Judah. "I will take from her the sound of the mill-stones and the light of the candle." Jer. xxv. 10. That is, I will render her desolate.—This grinding of corn is considered as the lowest employment in the house, and the vilest of the slaves is employed in it. It was so in the days of Moses; and the monarch and corn-grinder were considered as the two extremities of society. "All the first-born in the land of Egypt shall die," said the Lord by his servant, "from the first-born of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the first-born of the maid-servant that is behind the mill." Exod. xi. 5.

The manner of sowing rice in the east is thus described. While the lands contiguous to the rivers are still overflowed with water, they cause the ground to be well trodden by oxen, horses, and asses; and thus prepare it for receiving the seed, which they scatter on the water. Does not this explain Isa. xxxii. 20? "Blessed are they that sow beside all waters; that send forth thither the feet of the ox and the ass."

Milk forms a principal part of the diet of oriental nations: but, in many countries, the milk of the cow, which is generally kept in the gardens and fed with the refuse, is poor and ill-tasted; while that of the goat, which ranges at large, is sweet and rich. This superiority appears to have been alluded to by Solomon, when he reckons it as one of the rewards of the diligent man, that he should have goat's milk enough for the food, not only of himself and family, but even of his servants. Prov. xxvii. 27.

*The AGED CHRISTIAN'S REFLECTIONS,
SUPPORTS, and RESOLUTIONS.*

*The Outlines of a Sermon by Dr. Doddridge: taken in
short hand by one who heard it.*

Psalm. lxxi. 17, 18. "O God thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. Now also, when I am old and grey-headed, O God, forsake me not, until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come."

God has been pleased, in the course of his Providence, to take away from us an aged christian: the scripture I have now read was mentioned by him as the staff of his advanced years, and I believe, he was through grace, well entitled to the consolation, which it affords. God enabled him to walk worthy of his profession, and he is the support of good men in a peculiar manner. He has now finished his course with joy, so that he is now like pious Abram, "come to his grave in a good old age, being old and full of years," Gen. xxv. 8. I shall not enlarge in his praise for you know, that it is not my way so to do; but I shall endeavour to offer some remarks, which may be more useful to the living, than any encomium, which could be made upon the dead. As I have frequently addressed myself to my

young friends, so I do peculiarly dedicate this discourse, to my fathers in Christ; even to those aged christians, whose hoary head is a crown of glory, being found in the way of righteousness, Prov. xvi. 31. I bless God, that there are so many such to be the ornament, and still in some considerable measure, the support of our assemblies. As I highly honour them, and tenderly love them, it is with great pleasure and cheerfulness, that I address myself to a subject, which, I hope, will give me fair occasions of offering some seasonable and comfortable considerations, which may be their joy and their song, in the house of their pilgrimage, and quicken them in the way to that blessed world, to the borders of which they are so nearly approaching. Attend, my fathers, to the instructive words of the sweet Psalmist of Israel, and probably to some of his last words; for the infirmities of age were now upon him, and an additional weight of external calamities threatened quite to overwhelm him. Yet he raises his head with a comely air of confidence and triumph: he looks back with pleasure upon former experiences, and he looks forward with a courageous hope in God, as well as a steady resolution of continuing his adherence to him, saying: "O God, thou hast taught me from my youth, and hitherto I have declared thy wondrous works; now also that I am old and grey-headed, forsake me not; until I have shewed thy strength to this generation, and thy power unto every one that is to come." These words present us with *three* particulars, which are very well worthy of our most attentive regard, viz: 1. *A pleasing reflection on past experiences*; "O God, thou hast taught me from my youth," &c. 2. *A cheerful declaration of present dependance*; "now also that I am old and grey-headed, forsake me not: and 3. *A pious resolution of continued fidelity and zeal*; "to shew God's strength to this generation, and his power to all that are yet to come." Give me leave to illustrate each of these particulars, and to recommend the temper, expressed in them, to the serious imitation of my aged friends.

1. In the words you have a *pleasing reflection on past experiences*. David was remarkable for the concern which he frequently expressed, that he might preserve the memory of God's goodness to him: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits," Psalm. ciii. 2. He now goes back a great way in his review: and with delight he recollects, not

only the favours, which he had received in his riper years, but also in his tender infancy. He reflects on two particulars; to wit, that God had instructed and supported him, and that he himself had endeavoured to honour and glorify God.

He reflects with pleasure, that God had long been instructing and supporting him, "O God, thou hast taught me from my youth," He began betimes and continued his favours. He was a child of religious parents. He could say, "Thou art my God, and I will praise thee:" and, in another place, "I am thy servant, truly I am thy servant; the son of thy handmaid." Psalm. cxvi. 16. Without doubt they early trained him up in the way he should go, as it was his desire, that, now he was old, he might not depart from it. Proverbs xxii. 6. Nevertheless you see, that he ascribes to God, what he had learned. It is as if he should say: "It had been in vain, that my pious parents bestowed such early, such tender, and such constant care, unless thou hadst been pleased to bless it to me; unless thou hadst opened, not only my understanding to receive it, but my heart to embrace it. Lord, there is not one that teaches like thee. Blessed be thy name, that thou didst so soon begin to teach me a lesson, which corrupted nature finds so hard to learn." But I also apprehend, that it farther refers to the continued care, which God had graciously taken for his direction and guidance; and so it is as if he had said: "Lord, thou wast pleased early to lead me into the good way; but how soon should I have wandered from it, if I had not been supported in it by thee, Lord thou hast brought me into a variety of difficulties; and I have been surrounded with a great many enemies, and I have been observed to cry to thee to lead me in a plain path; and blessed be thy name, thou hast done it. Psalm. xxviii. 11. Thou hast directed me to the way of duty and of safety, and hast graciously made my path plain, through many a difficulty, which was ready to upset me.

I would hope, my pious Friends, that there are many of you who are looking back to distant years, before the younger part of us had any name or being, and are saying that you were thus taught from your youth. I hope there are those of you, who made early choice of the ways of God. While your pious parents and ministers of former ages were speaking to your ears, God was, it may be, speaking to your hearts, and adding a divine energy to these instructions which were given. And

must you not acknowledge, that this was a great favour, not only that you should be taught of God, but taught so early: while multitudes were wandering in the path of the destroyer? By these means how much guilt and sorrow has been prevented? How much more glory has been brought to God? How much more done in life? And, how much are your own souls improved in a meetness for glory, beyond what you might have been, had this great and blessed work been longer delayed? But give me leave to ask you farther. Must I not add, that God has taught you hitherto, that he has given you directions both by his word and providences in many of the perplexities of life, so that, when you have not known whither to go, and your eyes have been up to him, you have heard, as it were, a voice behind you saying, this is the way, walk in it? Can you not say, "Here I had fallen, if God had not supported me; here I had judged wrong, and had acted in the most foolish and unhappy manner, had not divine teachings interposed?"

But the Psalmist farther reflects with pleasure, that he had been endeavouring to serve and glorify God. "Hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works." He did not receive the grace of God in vain; he did not centre his main concern in himself, but he considered his relation to God and his fellow-creatures, and therefore he was solicitous at once to honour his Maker, and to do good to his brethren; by doing his utmost to promote a sense of God among all those, over whom he had any influence. A blessed work it was, a work not even below the dignity of a king; O! it must give him unalterable delight to be able, in effect, to borrow the words of the holy Apostle Paul, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

And surely there are those of you, my aged friends, that can borrow these words with pleasure in your degree: and though you have not been called out to honour God in so public a character; yet I hope, that you have been fighting the good fight. O, it is matter of abundant joy! If you should now stand still in the journey of life, and look back upon the way, which you have trod, you will indeed see reason to humble yourselves before God, that you have done no more for him, that you have dispatched no more of your journey towards Zion; yet it will be a matter of pleasing reflection, that it has

not been entirely neglected, that the honour of God has not been utterly overlooked; that you have been enabled to bear your testimony for him, and to declare much of the wonders of his grace, and of his power manifested towards you, let God have the glory of these things, and humbly take to yourselves the comfort of them.

2. This may suffice to be said on David's reflection upon past experiences: and I proceed to consider the *declaration of his present hope and confidence*—"Now, Lord, when I am old and grey-headed, forsake me not." He prays, that he would not forsake him, and he thereby intimates a persuasion, that he would not, considering how it is connected with former experiences. It is as if he had said, "Lord, what wait I for? truly my hope is in Thee: Thou wert the guide of my youth, and to Thee do I now humbly and cheerfully look for thy aid, to be the support of my age; O, forsake me not!" This implies support under weakness of body, and sorrow of mind. It implies support under bodily infirmities; for this is often the portion of aged saints. It was a very peculiar favor, which was granted to Moses, that his natural vigour was not abated, or his eye dim, even at the age of one hundred and twenty years. But it is generally otherwise; and it was particularly so with David. That vigorous hero was reduced to a very weak and languishing condition, and so weakened, that, as his son afterwards expressed it, perhaps on account of what he observed in his aged father, "while the almond-tree flourished, the grasshopper was even a burden." Eccle. xii. 5.

Perhaps it is so with many of you, that bear me this day: perhaps, as Solomon there elegantly describes it, with some of you, "the keepers of the house tremble, and the strong men bow themselves." You think to shake yourselves, and go forth as at former times; but you feel your nerves as it were unbraced, your hands tremble, and your knees totter: and perhaps those that look out of the window are darkened, or your precious eye-sight begins to decay, if not to be quite lost. Desire, as a sensible enjoyment fails, and the daughters of music are brought low. Upon the whole, the days are come, in which, with regard to many of your present comforts, you may say, that you have no pleasure in them. Well, if it be so, learn of David to say, "Lord, now that I am old and grey-headed, forsake me not!"—"Lord, support my feeble nature so far, as that my

life may not be entirely useless to others, and tasteless to myself; and, above all, lift up the light of thy countenance upon me, that by it I may walk through darkness, and the valley of death."

This leads me to observe, that it may relate to inward strength against mental distresses, as well as corporeal disorders; for we know that the body has a very great influence upon the mind. When those external organs are disordered, the rational inhabitant finds itself much more unweildy than it formerly was. The deadness of the animal spirits particularly affects the mind, as it renders the impressions which divine objects make upon it, less lively than they formerly were. The christian finds that he cannot hear, that he cannot pray, that he cannot converse, that he cannot meditate with that life and spirit, with which he once did, and that is, perhaps, a discouragement to him in his declining days. Yes, I believe, that it is often the most painful part of his trial. Sometimes the view and prospect of approaching death appear gloomy to him, when he comes near the king of terrors, and sees himself standing on the borders of the grave. It requires great intrepidity of mind, when nature is so weak, not to shrink back from the encounter, and to wish a longer time to drag on this burden of life, heavy as it has sometimes appeared. Perhaps, christians, some of you experience these things: but let me recommend to you David's support: "Now also, O Lord, when I am old and grey headed, forsake me not." If God be with you, to protect and secure you, if that everlasting covenant, by which he is united to your souls, still keeps its force, you need not, you ought not, to be greatly discomposed. What, though some of those pleasures, which you once found in your way, be abated, when you get to your father's house, they will not only return in all their vigour and sweetness, but they will be improved to infinite and unknown degrees. And when you are encountering your last enemy, if you have any assurance that God is with you, you will fear no evil, but will go out of life, filled with joy as well as peace, in believing.—Thus you see, what a suitable dependance this was—let me now briefly shew you also, that it was just and reasonable. For, say not, so great and so eminent a saint as David was, might have this comfort, but that it is not for you. Yes, blessed be God, as they, who are of the faith, are blessed with faithful Abram, so they shall also share

in all the covenant blessings, which other saints of former ages enjoyed.

To convince you that I have reason to hope, that God will not leave nor forsake you, consider that your circumstances render you the peculiar objects of his compassion. Your former experiences seal your hopes; and the regard which he has expressed to the aged in his word, is a farther and most reasonable encouragement to it. But I must only touch briefly on these things. To begin with the first of them: your circumstances render you, in a peculiar manner, the objects of God's compassionate regard. It must be a great degree of inhumanity, in any of your fellow creatures, when they see you sensible of weakness and decay, not to compassionate you; especially, if they saw you in all your difficulties, and knew every circumstance, which sometimes lie heavy on your mind. Well: comfort yourselves in this, that the great God knows them all; and, as a father pities his children, so the Lord pities them that fear him. Nay, as the heavens are high above the earth, so are his thoughts and ways above ours. Psa. ciii. 13, and Isa. iv. 8. 9.

You may farther plead, from the experiences which you have already had of his goodness to you. Has not his care attended you in a long succession of years, both in temporals and spirituals? Can you not look back to your feeble infancy, and say, that it was he who took you out of the womb; and caused you to hope, when you hung upon your mother's breast? And, when you ran on with slippery steps in the paths of childhood and youth, did not he take you by the arm, and teach you to go, and confirm and guard you, and take care of you? When you took little care of yourselves in succeeding stages and relations of life, has not his Providence wrought for you? Can you not set up your stone of remembrance and thankfulness, and say: "Hitherto the Lord my God has helped me?" So many days, so many months, and so many years, the Lord has been, and still is with me, to supply all my wants, to deliver me in my dangers, and to comfort me in my sorrows. Besides all this, he has been visiting me with his grace, bringing me into the bonds of his covenant, supporting me in my combat with my spiritual enemies, and strengthening me for the discharge of many of my spiritual duties. And will he now forget me? Has he brought me thus far in my journey of life to cast me off in these helpless days? God forbid, that I should ever entertain

NO injurious a thought. "For he has delivered, and does deliver, and in him we trust, he will still deliver." 2 Cor. i. 10.

Consider also the regard which God has expressed towards such in his word, as a farther encouragement to them. I will not now insist on the general promises, which he has made to all his people, of strength and help in proportion to their day; I will not plead that promise to Joshua, which is quoted by the apostle in his epistle to the Hebrews, in which he has said to that pious Israelite, and in him, to every saint; "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." But I would mention, what is more peculiar to the present case, not merely those passages of scripture, in which he asserts, that age lengthened out, is an honour, and particularly declares, that the hoary head is a crown of glory, Prov. xvi. 31; but three remarkable promises, which seem expressly to relate to the present purpose. It is said in one place, that "those, who are planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of their God, and that they still bring forth fruit in old age." Psalm xcii. 13. 14. &c. and elsewhere, that, "while the young men faint and are weary, and while youths do utterly fail, they, I say, that wait on the Lord, shall renew their strength;" alluding to what was said of an eagle, of having two youths, to express the extraordinary vigour of that bird in age. Isaiah. xl. 30, &c. Once more, "Even to your old age I am he, that will lead you, and even to your hoary hairs will I carry you," Isaiah xlvii. 4. If this be the case, surely you may comfortably go into the presence of God, and plead his word unto his servants on which he has caused you to hope.

3. I hasten briefly to consider the Psalmist's *pious resolutions of continued fidelity and zeal*. "Forsake me not," says he, "till I have shewn thy works unto this generation, and thy power to every one, that is to come." As if he said, "Lord, I am determined by thy grace, that, while thou continest me in life, I will according to my poor feeble abilities be acting for thy salvation, as I have formerly done. I will endeavour to speak for the glory of thy name, to bring young persons to thy fear and thy love: and so will labour to the utmost, that thy cause may be transmitted down from one generation to another, even to all, that shall hereafter arise." This is a wise and good resolution, which I would, on this occasion, recommend to my aged friends. In order to enforce it, I would entreat them

to consider,—that the necessity of young people requires it—and that it may with some peculiar reason be expected from them.

Consider, that the necessity of young people requires it. O, my friends, the character of the rising generation is of the highest importance. If the minds of young people be tinctured with the sense of the perfections of God, as they shine forth in his works of nature and providence, but especially in his works of grace, it will be happy indeed: happy for themselves, and happy for the family to which they are related, and happy for the church of Christ in general. For it is a good work, and you may comfortably hope that you will be accepted of God in it. But I add, that you ought to consider, that you are, on some account, peculiarly fit for it. Your experiences may have furnished you with matter, and it will come from you with peculiar weight, when you can say: "So have I heard, and so have I found; this is the good which I have myself chosen; and I bless the Lord, who has given me counsel to make that choice, in which I have found rest to my soul. Therefore I recommend it to you." As good old Polycarp, when he was tempted to renounce christianity in his old age, said: "Eighty-five years have I served Christ, and found him always a good master, and I will not forsake him now at last." There is something in the aspect and circumstance of an aged christian, when he seriously and tenderly discourses with young men on such subjects, which tends to command reverence and attention, and to impress the mind. On all these accounts, as Elihu expresses it, Job. xxxii. 7, "Days should speak, and the multitude of years should teach knowledge."

These, my friends, are the considerations, and these are the exhortations, which I thought proper to offer you from this portion of scripture; and now it only remains, that I conclude all with a brief application to other persons: and particularly to such aged persons as have hitherto neglected religion; and to those who are entering upon life, or in the vigour of their days.

Are there, in this assembly any aged persons, who have lived in the neglect of God and their souls? The condition of such is most melancholy: alas! my friends, it grieves me to think, how many favours you have received of God in vain; what a long course of rebellion you have run through; how much guilt you have heaped up; and how near you seem to be to a mise-

nable eternity. Your present condition is indeed melancholy. Under your infirmities and your sorrows, you have no God to go unto; and, if divine grace does not prevent it, your future condition will, in a very little while, be unspeakably worse. O! let me entreat you to-day, after so long a time, while it is yet called to-day, seriously to bethink yourselves of a forgotten God. Think of a despised Redeemer! O, think of your eternal state. You are just upon the borders of the grave. May God awaken you by his almighty grace, and may he pluck you as brands out of the burning, that you may not go to the tribunal of God, with the guilt of such a long train of aggravated sin upon those helpless heads. Even that God, who has now required some veneration to be paid to your age here, will not then shew any regard to it. For he has said, that the sinner, who is an hundred years old, shall be accursed.

I conclude my discourse with an address to my young friends. And here I must but just mention the admonition which I would take occasion to give you. Let it be your prayer, that you may be taught of God from your youth, and for that purpose apply yourselves to the instructions of his word, and earnestly pray for those of his spirit. Improve the vigour of nature for his service, as what will lay the surest foundation for pleasing reflections in the evening of life. As for future events, cast yourselves quietly upon the Lord, and be not discouraged, whatever may happen. It is indeed certain, that either you must see the decay of nature, or else be taken away in the vigour of it. But if your souls are found in the hands of Christ, you need not be anxiously solicitous. If you can say, that it is your desire, whether you live, to live to the Lord, or whether you die, to die to the Lord, Romans xiv. 8; then you may be comfortably assured, that whether you live or die, you will be the Lord's. And if you attain to an advanced age, you will have the experience of your better days for your support, and the remembrance of this service will procure you honour. So that, if God cause your sun to go down in the evening, or in the noon of life, it will be only to make way for a brighter day, where it shall set no more; where all the time, taken from a mortal life, shall be added to a blessed and glorious eternity.

The UNDISTINGUISHING CRUELTY of PERSECUTION.

To the Editor of the G. B. R.

SIR,

In turning over Fox's Acts and Monuments, I met with some relations which affected me. I was led to admire, on the one hand, the condescending power of divine grace, which enabled such weak and simple mortals, to act with such glorious intrepidity and greatness of mind: and, on the other hand, I could not forbear detesting the cruel and unmanly dispositions of their persecutors, who could sink so low as to wreak their vengeance on objects, whose insignificance might have shielded them from observation. Thinking that these facts might promote the entertainment, and excite the gratitude of the readers of the G. B. R. I have sent you the substance of them: and if they meet with your approbation, I shall be glad to see them in your next number.

Two aged martyrs suffered together, in the spring of 1556. One was Hugh Laverock, of the parish of Barking in Essex, a poor lame cripple, sixty-eight years old; and the other, John Apprice, an aged and infirm old man, totally blind. These pious though illiterate men had obtained clearer ideas of the gospel, than many of their neighbours: some of whom officiously informed against them to Bonner, the bishop of London. He sent orders for them to be instantly conveyed to London; and on May 1, they were delivered into his hands. He examined them in his palace; and questioned them respecting their belief of the popish doctrines of the seven sacraments, transubstantiation, &c. when they avowed explicitly their disbelief of them. They were then committed to prison for several days, during which they were frequently brought to the bishop and re-examined. At length, May 9, they were brought to their final hearing, and considerable pains were taken to induce them to recant their opinions: but they stood firm. H. Laverock said, "I will stand to mine answer, and to what I have confessed. I cannot find in scripture that the priests should lift up over their heads a cake of bread," alluding to the popish ceremony of elevating the host, as they style it. The bishop then turning to the blind man, demanded his final answer; and he boldly replied: "The doctrines which you teach are so

agreeable to the world, and so eagerly embraced by it, that they cannot be agreeable to the scriptures of God. Ye are not of the catholic church: for you frame laws to kill men, and make the queen your hangman."

Bonner was greatly nettled at these free speeches, and immediately closed the examination; ordering that the prisoners should be sent after him to Fulham, whither he was going. They were accordingly conducted to Fulham church: where, in the afternoon, Bonner passed sentence of death upon them with great solemnity: and delivered them over to the civil power. They were kept in Newgate till the fifteenth of the same month; when they were taken away in a cart, very early in the morning; and carried to Stratford near Bow, where a fire was prepared to burn them as heretics. These two helpless confessors were accordingly chained together to the stake, and the fire lighted: when Laverock threw away his crutch, and with a cheerful voice, said "Be of good comfort, brother: for the bishop of London is our good physician. He will cure us both shortly: thee of thy blindness, and me of my lameness." They continued, amidst the fury of the flames, praising God, and manifesting a lively faith in their saviour: and, at last, quietly yielded up their spirits into his hands.

Thomas Drowry, a poor blind boy, suffered about the same time at Gloucester. This youth had been imprisoned for religion in the preceding year, and had obtained his liberty only a short time before the pious bishop Hooper was carried to Gloucester to be burnt. Forgetful of his late danger, this boy applied to the guards of that holy man, and with much importunity, obtained permission to see him. The martyr, being informed of his former sufferings for the truth, examined him as to his faith; and afterwards looking earnestly on him, exclaimed, with tears of affection in his eyes, "Alas, poor boy, God has taken from thee thy outward sight, for what reason he best knows: but he has given thee another sight much more precious, for he has endowed thy soul with the eye of knowledge and faith. God give thee grace continually to pray unto him, that thou lose not that sight; for then shouldst thou be blind both in body and soul."

On the day following this conversation, bishop Hooper sealed the truths he had taught, at the stake. A deep impression was made on the mind of this youth, and he was much

confirmed in his attachment to those blessed doctrines for which that venerable martyr suffered. He was soon after apprehended a second time; and, having suffered a tedious confinement, was at length brought to a final examination before Dr. Williams, the chancellor of Gloucester, who, in king Edward's time, had been a zealous protestant. The chancellor put the usual interrogatories to the prisoner and especially insisted on the article of transubstantiation. This gave rise to the following dialogue. *Chancellor*. "Dost thou not believe, that, after the words of consecration spoken by the priest, there remaineth the very real body of Christ in the sacrament of the altar?" *Boy*. "No: that I do not." *Chancellor*. "Then thou art a heretic and shalt be burned. But who taught thee this heresy?" *Boy*. "You, master Chancellor!" *Chancellor*. "Where, I pray thee?" *Boy*. "Even in yonder place:" pointing with his hand towards the pulpit. *Chancellor*. "When did I teach thee?" *Boy*. "When you preached there, (naming the day,) a sermon to all men, as well as to me, upon the sacrament. You said, 'the sacrament was to be received spiritually by faith, and not carnally and really, as the papists have heretofore taught.'" *Chancellor*. "Then do as I have done, and thou shalt live as I do, and escape burning." *Boy*. "Though you can so easily dispense with yourself, and mock God, the world, and your conscience; yet I will not do so." *Chancellor*. "Then God have mercy on thee: for I will read the condemnation sentence against thee." *Boy*, "God's will be fulfilled!"

On this, the register of the court, being much affected, exclaimed to the chancellor: "Fie for shame, man! will you read the sentence against him, and condemn yourself? Away! away! and substitute some other to give sentence." But the chancellor unmoved, replied: "No, register, I will read the sentence myself, according to mine office." And accordingly he condemned the poor blind boy to the flames. On May 5, he was brought to execution and burnt to death, together with Thomas Croker, a bricklayer, who suffered for the same crime. They behaved with great constancy: and joyfully yielded their souls into the hands of Lord Jesus.

EXCERPTOR.

SOME ACCOUNT of PHILLIS WHEATLEY, the AFRICAN POETESS; with select ORIGINAL LETTERS.

In the year 1761, a young negro girl, about seven or eight years of age, was conveyed from Africa to America; probably kidnapped from her relatives by the inhuman agents of avarice that infest that unhappy country. She was sold for a slave to Mr. John Wheatley, of Boston, in New England; who treated her with humanity, and gave her his own name, calling her *Phillis Wheatley*. Though entirely unacquainted with letters and ignorant of every tongue but the idiom of the negroes, at the time of leaving Africa; yet, without any other assistance than the friendly instructions she received in the family of her owner, in sixteen months, she obtained such a knowledge of the English language, as to be able to read, with ease and propriety, the most difficult parts of the holy scriptures. She soon felt a desire to acquire the art of writing, and, by her own efforts quickly made herself competent in it. In 1765, she wrote a letter to the Rev. Mr. Occom, an Indian minister, who was then in England. In a short time, she discovered a considerable genius for poetry; and before 1773, wrote many compositions, in different kinds of verse, which, considering her circumstances, excited the admiration of her friends, and attracted the notice of the learned.

But this African girl possessed still superior excellencies. Through the pious care of her worthy master and mistress, she was early instructed in the truths of the christian religion. These instructions, under the influence of divine grace, were crowned with success; and this young heathen became a sincere disciple of the holy Jesus. Her compositions and letters breathe the spirit of piety and devotion, and her conduct adorned her profession. This increased the solicitude of the wise and good, for the welfare of this interesting stranger, and procured her many valuable friends.

In 1772, her health began to decline, and she was enabled by the kindness of her friends and the permission of her owners, to make a voyage to England for the purpose of recruiting it. She spent six weeks in London, and was introduced to many eminent characters in the literary and religious circles. A small volume of her poems was published under

the patronage of the Countess of Huntington; and she was much noticed by the worthy and benevolent John Thornton, Esq. of Clapham.

The following year, she returned to America; and soon after her arrival at Boston, death deprived her of her beloved mistress, whom she styled "her best mortal friend." In consequence of this event, her master generously presented her with her freedom; and she entertained some thoughts of re-visiting England.

As a specimen of the poetry of this self-taught African, we select, merely on account of their brevity, the following,

"LINES on being brought from AFRICA to AMERICA."

"'Twas mercy brought me from my pagan land,
 Taught my benighted soul to understand,
 That there's a God, that there's a Saviour too:
 Once I redemption, neither sought or knew.
 Some view our sable race with scornful eye,
 "Their colour is a diabolic die."

Remember, Christians, Negroes black as Cain,
 May be refin'd and join th' angelic train."

We shall insert, for the gratification of our readers, two original letters from Phillis Wheatley, both written after her return from London to America; one to the late Mr. William Thompson, of Boston, Lincolnshire; the other to the late John Thornton, Esq. with an extract from that worthy gentleman's reply. These documents have been kindly communicated to us, by the friends of the late Mrs. Thompson, of Fleet; who, in her youth, maintained a friendly correspondence with this extraordinary African. We reserve for a future number the interesting letters that passed between these pious and poetical young females.

A LETTER from P. WHEATLEY to Mr. THOMPSON.

REV. SIR,

It was with the utmost pleasure I received your condescending letter of Nov. 15th, with Miss B.'s—What you offered with regard to that lady is altogether agreeable. I dare say her poems would afford me equal delight, as she and you are pleased to signify in respect of mine. I presume it gives you

much satisfaction in seeing her, and others in their youth, as olive plants round the table, and at the banquet of Christ; and an ornament to their profession of the doctrine of God their Saviour, who has for them ascended into the heavenly places, and never forgets to make intercession for us. I hope it is my most earnest desire, to leave sublunary things behind, in my affections, and to press forward to the mark for the prize. What prize? "The high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Happy are the souls that have made such advances in the Divine life!

I am glad my poor performances afforded you pleasure. These are some of those weak instruments, which God sometimes uses to subdue the things that are mighty. The acquirement of the various branches of useful knowledge, has not yet been in my power, though I have been, and yet am, desirous of it. 'Tis from want of opportunities of learning, which others dispense with in a lavish manner; but which I would have employed as I think, in the acquisition of a mental treasure. But now I am not so much as possessed of any but the English language—my own native language entirely forgotten.

I am exceeding sorry I can give you no better account of the state of religion amongst us, than that it is in general exceedingly low. The wise, as well as foolish virgins, are overcome with spiritual slumber; yet I trust there are a great many here, who truly follow Jesus in the regeneration. I wish the time may soon come, when their righteousness shall be conspicuous to the wondering world. I hope Miss B. will not forget me. When quite unknown to each other, by personal acquaintance, she first favoured me with a poem and epistle. I dare say she has wrote many: and the specimen she has sent me, shews her well acquainted with the art of poetry, which doubtless will encrease more and more. I only wish for a farther acquaintance with the muses, to arise in the same degree to Parnassus. But I hope to accompany her in desires to the holy hill of Zion. I am,

Reverend and honored Sir,

With dutiful affection, and unfeigned Friendship,

Your humble Servant,

Boston New England,

March 22d, 1774.

P. WHEATLEY.

A LETTER from P. WHEATLEY to J. THORNTON, Esq.
HON. SIR,

It is with great satisfaction, I acquaint you with my experience of the goodness of God, in safely conducting me over the mighty waters, and returning me in safety to my American friends. I presume you will join with them and me in praise to God for so distinguishing a favour. It was amazing mercy altogether unmerited by me; and if possible, it is augmented by the consideration of the bitter reverse, which is the deserved wages of my evil doings. The apostle Paul tells us, that "the wages of sin is death." I don't imagine he excepted any sin whatsoever, being equally hateful in its nature in the sight of God who is essential purity. Should we not sink, Hon. Sir, under this sentence pronounced on every sin, from the comparatively least to the greatest, was not this blessed contrast annexed to it, "But the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord?" It is his gift. O let us be thankful for it! What a load is taken from the sinner's shoulder, when he thinks that Jesus had done that work for him, which he could never have done, and suffered that punishment of his repeated rebellions, for which a long eternity of torments could not have made sufficient expiation. O that I could meditate continually on this work of wonder in the Deity itself. This which kings and prophets have desired to see, and have not seen. This which angels are continually exploring; yet are not equal to the search. Millions of ages shall roll away, and they shall try in vain to find out to perfection, the sublime mysteries of Christ's incarnation. Nor will this desire to look into the deep things of God cease, in the breasts of glorified saints and angels. Its duration will be coequal with eternity. This eternity how dreadful, how delightful! Delightful to those who have an interest in the crucified Saviour, who has dignified our nature, by seating it at the right hand of the Divine Majesty. They alone who are thus interested have cause to rejoice, even on the brink of that bottomless profound: and I doubt not, without the least adulation, that you are one of that happy number. O pray that I may be one also, who shall join with you in songs of praise at the throne of Him who is no respecter of persons; being equally the great Maker of all, and therefore disdains not to be called the Father of humble

Africans and Indians. Though despised on earth on account of our colour, we have this consolation, if he enables us to desire it, "that God dwells in the humble and contrite heart." O that I was more and more possessed of this inestimable blessing, to be directed by the immediate influence of the Divine Spirit in my daily walk and conversation. Do you, my honoured Sir, who have abundant reason to be thankful for the great share you possess of it, be always mindful in your closet of those who want it, and of me in particular.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c. &c.

Boston New England, 1773.

P. W.

Part of a LETTER from J. THORNTON, Esq. to
PHILLIS WHEATLEY.

You request my prayers, you shall have them. Two blessings I will ask of God for you. That you may have increasing views of redeeming love, and that you may have more humble views of yourself. If upon examination of yourself, you find things thus in your soul, I hope you may conclude that the grace of God is upon you of a truth. I generally judge of myself and others by these two marks: but as in every thing else, so in these there may be danger. When I want you to have increasing views of redeeming love, I do not mean that you be able to talk more exactly about it, because ideas and language of this kind may be greatly enriched by reading the scriptures, and joining in the conversation of the righteous; and I too well know it is very possible to talk excellently of divine things, even so as to raise the admiration of others, and at the same time, the heart not to be affected by them. This is too common a deception amongst the people of God. The kingdom of heaven is not in word but in power. How many extol free grace, whose *walk* is very far from what it should be? When I wish you to have increasing views of redeeming love, I would have you thrown into silent wonder, and adoration of the wisdom and goodness of God. Look at yourself—Look at Jesus—Look at the law—Look at the world—Look at your own peculiar situation; these are all wonderful subjects; then with Mary ponder them in your heart. This

will always make you thankful and humble. Many a good man is often a snare to another, by too openly commending his good qualities, and not aware how undesignedly he spreads a net for the feet of his friend. Your present situation, and the kindness you met with from many good people, and the respect that is paid to your uncommon genius, extort this friendly hint from me. I have no reason to charge you with any indiscretions of this kind, I mean only to apprise you of the danger. I feared for you when here, lest the notice many took of you should prove a snare: for half our religious folks kill one another with kindness. That is, they get into a religious gossiping, they commend each other's good qualities; praise is agreeable to corrupt nature, and the consequence is, we begin to be of the same opinion, are off our guard, become proud of our graces, the power of grace gradually dwindles away, and little more than the empty name and profession remains.

London, 1774.

J. THORNTON.

On ORDINATION to the PASTORAL OFFICE.

To the Editor of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

It will be recollected, that the following case from Queenshead was considered at the last annual Association. "Is the method of persons taking upon them the office of pastors without being ordained to that office, sanctioned by primitive precedents, or the New Testament?" when such conduct was decidedly disapproved; and some worthy brethren spoke with considerable warmth against the inconsistency and sin of those who indulged in this practice. Now, as for a considerable time, I have been, though very unwillingly, one of these offenders, I have felt increasingly uneasy. Ignorant as I am of the line of duty, in the delicate circumstances in which I am called to act, I should esteem it a peculiar obligation, if some of your able correspondents would, through the medium of the next number of the G. B. R. favour me with a plain and scriptural answer to the following query: viz.

What steps ought an unordained preacher to take, who, labouring for a people that disapprove of ordination, has been in

the habit of administering the ordinances among them: their disapprobation of ordination arising from a fear, lest they should confer too much honour or authority on their SERVANT?

Your's, &c.

A PREACHER.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

SIR,

In your Miscellany, you have, at different times, introduced observations respecting the ordination of ministers to the pastoral office. The subject is one of great importance; and no doubt for ministers and churches to act properly concerning it, must be of advantage to religion. In the thirty-seventh number of your work, a correspondent, who signs himself J. K. L. D. points out, from various circumstances, the *utility* and *propriety* of ordination. One advantage attending it, however, which has long appeared to me an important consideration in it, your correspondent has not noticed, viz. The influence which it has, when properly conducted, in preventing improper characters from being placed over churches.

It is usual for one or more respectable ministers to be engaged on such occasions; and if any individual who is evidently unfit for the station, is unhappily wished to be ordained, they have an opportunity of preventing it. The circumstance respecting ordination here suggested, is noticed by Mr. Andrew Fuller, in a Letter to a young minister, published in the last volume of the Baptist Magazine. As many of your readers have probably not seen it, and have not the work at hand, I have transcribed it; and shall be happy to see it inserted in the ensuing number of your Repository.

J. W.

LETTER from the late Rev. A. FULLER, to a young Minister in prospect of Ordination.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

“Relative to your question, I must say, it appears to me very wrong, to administer the Lord’s supper without Ordination, as it goes to render void that ordinance. Ordination of

M

elders, in every church, was a practice of the first churches, Acts xiv. 23, and we should not make light of it. It is calculated to keep out unworthy characters from the church.

“ There was a Mr. —, that would have settled at —, if we, as ministers, would have been at his ordination; but we knew the man to be of a bad character, and refused it. The consequence was, he stopped awhile, and then left, and went into —, where he made great havock of some of their churches.

“ Ordination seems originally intended for guarding against bad characters, 1 Tim. v. 22. I have, therefore, been much concerned, to see the practice of the Lord’s supper obtain prior to it, which tends to set it aside, and will, I am persuaded, be a source of many mischiefs in the churches.

“ I am told of a very respectable church, which has fallen a prey to a designing man, whom they have ordained. As none of the neighbouring ministers would attend, they determined to do without them. The consequence, I doubt not will be mischiefs incalculable. I do not suppose these would occur in your case; but you should not make light of an ordinance of Christ, and which, in other cases may be of great importance.”

Affectionately yours,

Kettering, May 9th, 1815.

A. FULLER.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

As ordination to the pastoral offices become a topic of serious conversation in many of our churches, in consequence of its being warmly recommended at our last Association, many have, in the spirit of the noble Bereans, been led to examine the scriptures on the subject. Among others, I have, I trust with a sincere desire to be guided by the oracles of truth, taken some pains to ascertain the true nature of that duty. But although I am an advocate for ordination, if performed according to the precepts and examples of the word of God, yet I am not able to discover, that the laying on of hands was either commanded or practised in cases of ordaining a person merely for the work of the ministry, or is, at all necessary to

qualify him for preaching the gospel or administering the ordinances. I hope I shall always be ready to pay a proper deference to the superior judgment and piety of my honoured brethren in the ministry; but I must beg leave to observe, that it is the duty of every one to read the scriptures and judge for himself; and not to adopt any practice till he sees its coincidence with that divine standard. Permit me, then, through the medium of your much esteemed publication, to state the grounds of my present opinion: hoping that, if I mistake, some of my respected brethren will do me the favour to point out my errors from plain scripture; as I sincerely wish both to believe, and act in conformity with scripture.

It appears, that whenever hands were laid on any person recorded in the New Testament, the transaction was either attended by a miracle, or power was given to those on whom hands were laid to work miracles, though they were not previously endowed with that power. Thus in Acts vi. Stephen is described, before his ordination, as "a man full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost." ver. 6. But, immediately after hands had been laid on him, he is said to be "full of faith and power, and to do great miracles and wonders among the people," ver. 8. When the Apostles laid their hands on the Samaritans, they received the Holy Ghost, the effusion of which was evidently attended with some striking and visible effects. For, "when Simon saw, that through laying on of the Apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money," that he might possess the same power. Acts viii. 17—18. Ananias, by the direction of the Lord, went to the praying Saul, and put his hands on him, that he might receive his sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost. The text itself repeatedly informs us, for what purpose, in this instance, hands were laid on Paul. Acts ix. 12—17. Some time after this, the Lord said, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have chosen them." And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away." Acts xiii. 2—3. The new work to which God had called them, could not be preaching the gospel simply; because both of the ministers had, if I reckon right, preached the gospel about ten years before this separation took place. But we do not find, that either of them had ever performed a single miracle before this imposition of hands, though they after-

wards fully manifested their power to work wonders. Acts xiii. 11.—xiv. 10.—xv. 12. Lastly. When Paul laid his hands on the twelve newly baptized Ephesians, “they received the Holy Ghost, and spake with tongues and prophesied. Acts xix. 6. Thus we see with astonishment, the glorious effects of the imposition of hands, as recorded in the New Testament: and we have not found one instance in which that ceremony was used without these wonderful consequences, merely to ordain a person to the work of the ministry.

On the contrary, our blessed Lord sent forth, on one occasion twelve, and on another seventy, of his disciples to preach the gospel; but no mention is made of hands being laid on any of them. And when Paul and Barnabas made a circuit through the churches, and ordained elders in every city, they “prayed with fasting, and commended them to the Lord:” but there is no allusion to imposition of hands.

I may just add, that though Paul’s advice to Timothy, “Lay hands suddenly on no man,” might seem to refer to imposition of hands at the ordination of elders to their office; yet, when the same apostle exhorts his young brother, “to stir up the gift of God which was in him, by the putting on of the apostle’s hands,” and tells him, that God had given not a spirit of fear but of *power*, a word frequently used to express miraculous gifts, it may perhaps limit the extent of the former advice.

Respectfully submitting these hasty hints to the consideration of your able correspondents, and earnestly entreating their instruction and correction,

I am, Your's sincerely,

SYNONIMOUS.

***The EVIL of FORSAKING the ASSEMBLIES of
OUR OWN CHURCH.***

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

Permit me to call the attention of your readers to a practice, which is too common among professors of religion in general, and which may be too often observed in our congrega-

tions. I allude to the custom of members of churches frequently leaving the public worship of their own congregations, and attending with other denominations. This is an evil which requires animadversion: and happy should I be if any thing could be said to lessen it.

Various pleas are advanced by those who are guilty of this irregularity to justify their conduct. One complains, "The fewness of the hearers, at my own place, deadens my devotion, and prevents my edification." Now it is not very easy to trace the connection between a numerous congregation and the profiting of an individual; or to explain how the same discourses should be more edifying or instructive to me, when many join in hearing them, than when only a few are present. But it is obvious enough, that such conduct must increase the cause of complaint; as every one who absents himself makes the number less. If therefore, you have not determined totally to forsake a congregation, and eventually to hasten its dissolution, you ought to fill up your place in it; both to add to the audience, and to avoid setting an example which, if followed, must ruin any church.

Another of these deserters will say, "I like the preaching of a certain minister of a different denomination, better than I do the preaching of my own pastor." Possibly the strange preacher may have a more dignified figure, or a greater flow of eloquence than your own: though, at the same time, he advances doctrines and advocates practices which, if you be honest, you must disapprove. And can error, though delivered ever so gracefully, be more edifying than truth? Can you really reap more advantage, or even enjoy greater pleasure in hearing what you profess to believe to be the doctrines of the scriptures exposed as heresies, than you would in listening to a rational and solid defence of them, though, it might be, in periods less harmoniously constructed? Is not this preferring sound to sense? Will it not be likely to produce a laxity of sentiment of the most pernicious tendency? Does it not, indeed, proceed from a heart not sufficiently impressed with the importance of a consistent support of truth, and opposition to error? It may possibly be pleaded, that there are many important subjects on which all christians are agreed; and that therefore in hearing a preacher of another denomination it does follow, that I am always under the necessity of

hearing what I disapprove. Granted. But are not those common subjects treated by your own minister, and at your own place of worship; without any of those mixtures which, if sincere, you must esteem as heresies of no small magnitude? Will then the mere gratification of a fastidious, or if you please, elegant, taste justify you in refusing to sit down, at your own table, to food which, though perhaps not prepared exactly to your fancy, is wholesome and nutritive? or sanction your intrusion to the banquet of a stranger, which, however elegantly it may be dressed, or superbly served up, consists in part of articles which you esteem to be pernicious and poisonous? Surely common sense and common prudence would answer: No.

But this dereliction of duty is the most common, and, at the same time, the most unjustifiable when the age of the pastor, and its necessary consequences are the pretended reasons for it. Some veteran in the service of Christ and his church, who for forty or fifty years has borne the burden and heat of the day, who has spent the prime of his life, and the vigour of his strength in diligently, acceptably, and very successfully promoting the cause of his Redeemer among men—begins to feel the decays of nature. He loses part of that vivacity with which he had long pleaded the cause of truth,—he becomes less able to state, with his usual clearness and accuracy, those arguments by which he had often ably defended the doctrines of the gospel, and put to silence gainsayers—something of that glowing ardour which formerly animated his discourses is abated—his invention is not so fruitful, and he cannot introduce all that variety into his public labours with which he has been accustomed to enrich them. Yet, still he can and does exhibit the gospel plan of salvation clearly and forcibly to sinners—he can and does explain and enforce, in a scriptural manner, and on scriptural principles, the duties that ought to adorn the christian profession—he is able still to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. Now, it is not so surprising that strangers should prefer the labours of a younger minister to those of such an aged servant of God—but for his own friends to forsake him, in such circumstances—for those who probably owe to him, under divine grace, not only their first serious impressions, but all their improvement in the divine life, to abandon him when his youthful vigour decays—for

those, whose interest has lain near his heart, and for whose sake he has laboured, and watched, and prayed, whom he fondly hoped would be his crown and rejoicing in the day of the Lord, for these to leave him when he most needs solace and support is ungenerous—is cruel—is ungrateful.

But it ought also to be remembered, that such a desertion of our places is as unfaithful to the church as it is ungenerous towards the pastor. When a person unites in fellowship with any christian society, he enters into a solemn engagement to use all proper means to countenance and support that society. By voluntarily joining it, he declares that he believes its doctrine and discipline to be conformable to the mind of Christ, and that he chooses it for his spiritual home. Whatever others do, therefore, he is pledged, under the strongest sanctions, to seek the prosperity and promote the interests of that society. But can any thing more effectually destroy it, than the conduct of which we complain? It distresses and discourages the minister, and weakens the hands of those who are endeavouring to build up the walls of Zion—It sets an example, and furnishes an apology for conduct which would most effectually ruin the most flourishing cause.

In short, circumstances may arise which may make it necessary for a church to exclude its pastor, and a conscientious christian may sometimes find it his duty to withdraw from the fellowship of a particular society; but no case can ever happen, that will justify a person, while he continues in communion with a church, in voluntarily and habitually absenting himself from her stated assemblies.

CASTIGATOR.

GENERAL BAPTIST OCCURRENCES. OBITUARY.

Mr. RICHARD ANDERSON, late of Sutton Marsh, in the County of Lincolnshire, and a Deacon of the General Baptist Church, at Fleet, descended from pious ancestors, who for several generations back had distinguished themselves among the General Baptist Churches in Lincolnshire.* He was born

* Mr. Crosby, in his History of English Baptists, has recorded a strange story respecting the great grandfather of the

at Brough, Dec. 25th, 1767, and from an infant was remarkably weak and sickly, and seldom enjoyed perfect health during the first thirty years of his life. It is not known when he received his first serious impressions; but it is most probable that they were early and gradual. In his letter to the church for admission to its privileges, he says, "I feel sorry that I have so long neglected that positive ordinance of the Lord, believers' baptism, and thereby so long deprived myself of the great privileges of the gospel; and which must I fear have been an addition to the many sins and imperfections attending me. But being sensible of my own insufficiency to make atonement for one sin, I desire, in sincerity of heart, to fly to Christ and plead the merits of his blood as my all atoning sacrifice; and, in love to him for what he has done for me, I desire to give myself up entirely to him, to follow him in all his appointed ways and ordinances blameless, so far as by his grace I shall be enabled in this imperfect state. And, at all times, to take the scriptures of truth for my rule in faith and practice, knowing that they are able to make me wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus—which faith I shall maintain steadfast to my life's end."

He was baptized April 27th, 1800, and became a member of Fleet Church; was chosen into the office of Deacon, Sep. 26th, 1802, and ordained to the office by Mr. Binns, Jan. 7th, 1803. The duties of a Deacon he faithfully discharged until within a few months of his decease. His constitution was always weak, but, about four years since, from a thin spare habit of body, he became remarkably bloated, and shewed evident marks of declining health, although enabled to attend upon his business. From repeated colds acting upon a complication of diseases, about Midsummer last, some apprehen-

deceased, to which our correspondent, who has favoured us with this article, calls our attention. But we had previously examined the subject, and perused the pamphlets published on both sides; and the result of the investigation is, a conviction, that bigotry and enthusiasm had magnified a very natural occurrence into a miracle; and that it will be for the credit of all parties to suffer the affair to fall into oblivion. If however, any of our readers have a curiosity to see it, they may find it in Crosby, Vol. II. page 311.

sions were entertained that his course would soon be run. In the autumn, these symptoms become more alarming, and, by the advice of friends, he was induced to enter upon a different course of medicine; and removed to a medical gentleman, at a distance, where he continued several weeks without any real benefit. Indeed he grew worse, and entered upon the last stage of a rapid consumption. With difficulty, he returned into the bosom of his family; and, in less than a fortnight, was finally removed, we hope, to the bosom of his God.

The state of his mind while from home was tranquil and composed. Much of his time was employed in reading the scriptures. He said that the blessed volume had been too much neglected by him; and, if his life was spared, on his return home, he would read it with more care and attention. In the devotions of the evening, he was remarkably spiritual and fervent; his mind was much affected, and he entered deeply into the spirit of prayer. The concerns of this world seldom employed either his thoughts or conversation, while his patience under his great afflictions shewed how his mind was supported by the precious promises of God's word.

His pastor had the painful pleasure of being with him after his return home, during the remaining part of his pilgrimage on earth, and closed his eyes in death. It did not appear that he had any apprehension, that his race was so near run; but, at the same time, felt it his duty to "set his house in order lest he should die and not live." The greater part of the first week, while his strength permitted, was employed in settling his temporal concerns; yet, with frequent attention to his eternal affairs. In disclosing the state of his mind, he would say, "I have no transports, nor so much joy as I wish to experience; but I hope, I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded he is able to keep what I have committed to him." Indeed his intellects were so frequently affected by his disorder, that transports of joy could not reasonably be expected. His mind however was kept in a tranquil state and remarkably patient; not one murmur or complaint under the hand of God escaped his lips, and in the exercises of devotion, his soul appeared to be deeply engaged. A few days previous to his departure, a visible change took place in his disorder; and the most evident symptoms of approaching dissolution, wholly incapacitated him for any further attention to

his domestic concerns. He was seldom disposed for conversation; a kind of stupor and lethargy had taken possession of his frame; yet there were short intervals when his mind resumed its exercise, and his thoughts were employed in grateful acknowledgment of the Divine goodness. Detached parts of the twenty-third Psalm were recited by him, in a truly devotional frame of spirit. As he sat in the chair of sickness, with eyes closed to all surrounding objects, he would recite, with peculiar emphasis, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want;" and when he retired to bed, the whole of this Psalm was repeated, with an holy fervour of soul expressive of its suitability to his own views, and experience in the approach of death. The next day he was confined to his bed, was much convulsed, and his faculties became more impaired, so as to take little notice of his family and friends; yet while administering to him the consolations which the promises of God supply, he assented to them; and upon his minister saying, "You are approaching towards the close of life, and I hope, near the heavenly world;" he replied, "I expect I am," and soon after said to a relative that called upon him, "I have a good foundation." On another occasion, the day preceding his death, his pastor said to him, "Brother Anderson, do tell us the ground of your hope:" when he answered, "The Lord Jesus Christ." Have you any more joy? he said, "No." "Have you any doubts and fears of your acceptance, or are you afraid to die?" to which he answered, "No, my confidence remains." During the last night, his speech faltered, and on the following day, the awful visage of death presented itself to view: for the most part he was insensible; for a few minutes, he glanced his eyes towards his minister who was reciting some precious promises to him, and gently squeezing his hand, endeavoured to speak; but, the tongue had ceased to do its office, he could only make signs of assent, when asked if his mind was comfortable. In a few hours he fell asleep, we trust, in Jesus; having served his generation by the will of God, in the forty-eighth year of his age, leaving a beloved partner with eight children; one of whom, a promising youth of thirteen, only survived his dear parent a few weeks.

As a man, he was universally esteemed and beloved by all who knew him. He possessed a variety of excellence much to be admired, and worthy of being imitated. He was an

ornament in the discharge of his relative duties as a husband, a father and a master; a kind neighbour, and a faithful friend. He diligently attended public worship with his family, in all weathers, though living six miles off. He faithfully discharged his official duties in the church, with humility and affection. By his death the cause at Fleet has sustained a great loss. He died, Dec. 7th, 1815. A large congregation attended his funeral, which was attempted to be improved from 1 Thess. iv. 13—18.

JANE THOMPSON, relict of the *Rev. William Thompson*, formerly of Boston, was born at Nottingham, and the daughter of the Rev. Mr. Bull, minister of the General Baptist Church at Monkthorp, in the County of Lincoln. As early as fifteen years of age, she made a profession of religion, and became a member of the church of Christ, a profession which she adorned through a long and useful life. She possessed an highly cultivated mind; had a taste for poetical effusions, and very early employed her talents in that way, as well as in epistolary writings. Some of these early productions of her pen, from seventeen years of age to twenty-two, gave evidence of talents above the ordinary size, and bespeak an unusual attention to the superior embellishments of the mind.* Notwithstanding her early predilection for a single state, which was the subject of one of her poetic pieces, yet when advanced beyond middle age, and experience had corrected her youthful fancies, she became the wife of one of our most eminent ministers—a station which she adorned with christian virtues till death dissolved the union. After the death of Mr. Thompson, she removed to Fleet, with an intention to live with Mrs. Garfit her sister, a woman of the most exalted piety, with whom she hoped to spend a portion of the remnant of her days. But this comfort was providentially withheld: as, in less than three months, her honoured and highly esteemed sister was removed to another and better world. Her grief was now better to be conceived than described. It was some relief to her mind however, to be near her relatives and highly esteemed friends, Mrs. and Mr. Stanger, from whom her sister had re-

* For a specimen of this young lady's productions, we refer our readers to the poem on *Redemption*, printed at the close of this number of the G. B. R.

ceived much kindness, and at whose house she had died. After living near twenty years alone she experienced the same friendship under their hospitable roof, and closed her days with them. For several years past her faculties became impaired; and, without any previous indisposition, except a regular decay of nature, she left our world for the society of the blessed, Feb. 6th, 1816, in the seventy-eighth year of her age; being, within a few hours, the survivor of her husband twenty-two years, and was buried on the same day of the year with him.

She was an honourable and useful member of the church at Fleet; a sincere friend to peace. She spent much of her time in reading the scriptures, of which she acquired considerable knowledge; and is reported to have read Matthew Henry's Commentary over more than once. It is more than two years since she was able to attend public worship; the loss of which was made up by reading and meditation at home. Towards the close of her mortal life, she appeared in a comfortable waiting posture; looking daily for her change, and ardently longing after eternal rest, expressing her confidence in Christ as her Saviour. In her experience, death had no terrors: but, like a welcome friend, kindly conducted her to the presence of her God. Her funeral sermon was preached, on Lord's Day evening, Feb. 11th, 1816, from Phil. i. 23. "Having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better."

CONFERENCES.

The LINCOLNSHIRE CONFERENCE was held, at *Tydd St. Giles's*, Oct. 3d, 1815. In the forenoon, Messrs. Bolton and Ewen were ordained to the office of Deacons in the church at Tydd. Mr. Jones commenced the service by reading and prayer. Mr. W. Taylor offered the ordination prayer, and laid hands on the candidates; in which Messrs. Binns, Ewen, and Rogers joined. Mr. Jarvum delivered the charge from 1 Tim. iii. 13; and, in the evening, Mr. Rogers addressed the church, from Phil. i. 27. At this conference, a supply was arranged for St. Ives and Gedney Hill, and some advice given to the friends at the latter place respecting pecuniary difficulties. Some conversation took place also on several cases of a more private nature.

This conference assembled again, at *Fleet*, Jan. 9th, 1816. Mr. Rogers opened the meeting with prayer. The address on missions, referred to in a former number, was read, and the subject considered; when it was resolved, 1. That as a body we cannot undertake any foreign independent mission. 2. That we wish to cherish a missionary spirit, and recommend it to our churches to aid the exertions of other denominations, by making collections for missionary objects. 3. That as many of the churches as approve of this, signify it to the next conference: and that a baptist minister be requested to visit them. A supply till next conference was arranged for St. Ives. In the evening, Mr. W. Taylor prayed, and Mr. Bissill preached from Isa. xl. 31.

CHRISTIAN FUND.

The forty-second anniversary of this excellent institution was held at *Fleet*, Jan. 10th, 1816. When Mr. Rogers preached from Luke x. 37. "Go thou, and do likewise." This meeting was numerously attended; and the design appears to enjoy the blessing of heaven, and the approbation of the brethren. There are at present upwards of two hundred subscribers, composed of the members of various neighbouring churches. In the evening, Mr. Jones prayed, and Mr. Jarrom preached, to a numerous auditory, from 1 Cor. xiii. 13. "Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." At the close of the service, a collection of more than eleven pounds was made for an aged widow, in low circumstances, who is well known to have been "a mother in Israel," Mr. Bampton is appointed to preach at the next anniversary.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION.

We earnestly recal the attention of our readers to the subject of *Religious Benefit Societies*; being well persuaded that they may, if properly formed and conducted, be of singular advantage to the cause of religion and morality. We have heard of several that are established in our churches; and we solicit the friends of such institutions to communicate to us the particulars of the Rise, Progress, Regulations, and

present state of their respective societies, that they may be recorded in the G. B. R. as a memorial of their exertions, and an example and incentive for others to "go and do likewise."

Mr. Jarron, of Wisbeach, has in the press a *Selection of Hymns*, intended as a supplement to the collection now used in many of our churches. It will contain nearly three hundred hymns, and be sold for eighteen-pence. Though it is primarily designed for the use of his own congregation; yet if any other society wish to introduce it into their public worship, he will cheerfully execute their orders.

Mr. John Mann, of London, is preparing a *Catalogue of the books which he has on sale*. It will be arranged on a new plan, and comprise many valuable and scarce theological articles particularly some interesting remains of the English General Baptists of the seventeenth century.

The G. B. church at Barton Fabis, has lately been deprived of both its ministers, Mr. Samuel Deacon and Mr. Brewin, who were called away by death within a short time of each other. We hope, in our next, to be able to lay before our readers the particulars of these affecting events, and some account of the deceased.

RELIGIOUS STATE PAPERS.

Among the many remarkable occurrences of the present eventful period, we think the following very extraordinary Treaty between three of the leading powers of Europe deserves particular notice. What may be the real motives of the high contracting parties, or what effects may be produced by this singular convention, we presume not to say; but the testimony borne to the excellence of christianity, by these "rulers of the earth," must be pleasing to every sincere christian, and ought to be preserved.

PACIFIC CONVENTION.

' In the name of the most Holy and indivisible Trinity.
' Their Majesties, the Emperor of Austria, the King of Prussia, and the Emperor of Russia, having, in consequence of the great events which have marked the course of the three last years in Europe, and especially of the blessings which it has pleased divine Providence to shower down upon those

States which place their confidence and their hope on it alone—acquired the intimate conviction of the necessity of founding the conduct to be observed by the Powers, in their reciprocal relations, upon the sublime truths which the holy religion of our Saviour teaches.

They solemnly declare, That the present act has no other object than to publish, in the face of the world, their fixed resolution, both in the administration of their respective states, and in their political relations with every other government, to take for their sole guide the precepts of that holy religion, namely, the precepts of justice, Christian charity, and peace, which, far from being applicable only to private concerns, must have an immediate influence on the councils of princes, and guide all their steps, as being the only means of consolidating human institutions, and remedying their imperfections.

In consequence, their Majesties have agreed on the following articles:—

Article I. Conformably to the words of the holy Scriptures, which command all men to consider each other as brethren, the three contracting monarchs will remain united by the bonds of a true and indissoluble fraternity; and considering each other as fellow-countrymen, they will, on all occasions and in all places, lend each other aid and assistance, and regarding themselves towards their subjects and armies, as fathers of families, they will lead them in the same spirit of fraternity with which they are animated to protect religion, peace, and justice.

II. In consequence, the sole principle in force, whether between the said Governments, or between their subjects, shall be that of doing each other reciprocal service, and of testifying by unalterable good-will, the mutual affection with which they ought to be animated, to consider themselves all as members of one and the same Christian nation; the three Allied Princes looking on themselves as merely delegated by Providence to govern three branches of one family, namely, Austria, Prussia, and Russia: thus confessing that the Christian nation, of which they and their people form a part, has in reality no other Sovereign than him to whom alone power really belongs, because in him alone are found all the treasures of love, science, and infinite wisdom—that is to say, GOD, our divine Saviour, the word of the Most High, the word of Life. Their

Majesties consequently recommend to their people, with the most tender solicitude, as the sole means of enjoying that peace which arises from a good conscience, and which alone is durable, to strengthen themselves every day more and more in the principles and exercise of the duties which the divine Saviour has taught to mankind.

‘ III. All the Powers who shall choose solemnly to avow the sacred principles which have dictated the present act, and shall acknowledge how important it is for the happiness of nations, too long agitated, that those truths should henceforth exercise over the destinies of mankind all the influence which belongs to them, will be received with equal ardour and affection into this holy alliance.

Done in triplicate, and signed at Paris, in the year of Grace, 1815, 14—26 September.’

(L. S.) FRANCIS.

(L. S.) FREDERICK WILLIAM.

(L. S.) ALEXANDER.

Conformable to the original.

(Signed) ALEXANDER.

Done at St. Petersburg, the day of the birth of our Saviour, the 25th of December, 1815.

MANIFESTO.

The following manifesto was issued at St. Petersburg on Christmas day :—

“ We, Alexander I. by God’s Grace, Emperor and Autocrat of all the Russias, &c.

“ Make known, as we have learned from experience, and its direful consequences to all the world, that the course of former political connections between the powers of Europe had not those true principles for its basis on which the wisdom of God, in his revelation has founded the tranquillity and prosperity of nations, therefore We, in concert with their Majesties the Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia, have proceeded to establish an alliance (to which the other Christian Powers have been invited to accede) in which we mutually bind ourselves, both for us and our subjects, to adopt, as the only means of attaining that end, the principle derived from the words and religion of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who teaches mankind to live as brethren, not in hatred and strife, but in

peace and love. We pray the Almighty that he may send down his blessing thereon; yea, may this holy alliance be confirmed between all Powers for their general welfare; and may no one, unrestrained by the unanimity of all the rest, dare to depart therefrom. We therefore order a copy of this alliance hereunto annexed to be made generally known, and read in all the churches.

“ St. Petersburg, on the day of the birth of our Saviour, 25th December, 1815.”

“ The original is signed by his Imperial Majesty's own hand.”

“ ALEXANDRR.”

MISSIONARY INTELLIGENCE.

SOUTH AFRICA.

As some interesting intelligence from this long neglected country has arrived since the return of Mr. Campbell from his tour, we presume that our readers will be pleased with an abstract of the leading particulars.

When Mr. C. was in Africa, a lawless and powerful chieftain in Namacqualand, named Africaner, had driven the missionaries and their converts from some of their stations, and declared his intention of expelling them from the country. In order to make an attempt at least to avert the ruin that threatened the missionary cause in those parts, Mr. C. wrote a letter to him to persuade him to lay aside his hostility, and admit a missionary to labour among his followers. For some time, no one could be found who would carry the letter, for fear of falling a victim to the well known ferocity of this savage; but at length, Mr. Albretch a missionary at Pella undertook the journey. After surmounting many obstacles, Mr. A. succeeded in obtaining an interview; when Africaner seemed desirous of embracing the proposal, and engaged to make peace with them if a missionary would go and reside with him. It was therefore agreed, that Mr. Ebner, Mr. A's. associate at Pella, should settle with him. It is hoped, that this arrangement will ensure a lasting tranquillity, and open a door for the further spread of the gospel in these deserts. When the last accounts from

Africa arrived, it was reported, that two of Africaner's sons, and many of his people had embraced christianity.

But this mission has sustained a very great loss in the death of Mr. Albretch, who was employed in negociating this pacification. His health had been some time on the decline, and soon after his return from his visit to Africaner, he went to the Cape for medical advice. On his arrival, he was able to preach, transact business, and go about the town; but his illness increased, and he died on the evening of July 25th, 1815; and was buried by the side of his highly valuable brother, Dr. Vanderkemp, whose grave he had visited a short time before his death.

The mission in Namacqualand, however, will not be neglected, though Pella for the present is left destitute; Mr. Albretch being dead, and Mr. Ebner gone to reside with Africaner. Mr. Schmelin, a young missionary from the continent, has made a tour through this district to reconnoitre the country, and preach the gospel. His labours have been very successful, and he has baptized fourteen adult converts. The directors of the Missionary Society are preparing to send forth additional preachers into this part of South Africa.

Gricquatown where Mr. C. assumed the character of a legislator increases in importance, and is now considered as the centre of all the missions beyond the Orange River. Mr. Helms has removed to this station, where it is proposed to establish a printing press.

In consequence of the encouragement received by Mr. Campbell, several missionaries have been sent out to labour at Lattakoo, and are probably arrived there some months ago. They left Bethelsdorp for Lattakoo (towards the close of December, 1815, accompanied by a deacon of the church at the former place as an assistant. They appeared full of zeal for the cause which they had undertaken, and went forwards depending on the protection of their heavenly master.

Betheldorp appears to be rapidly improving. The natives increase in habits of industry and economy; and their conveniences and accommodations increase in proportion. Religion also prospers; many are added to the church, and the conversation of the greater part is consistent and honourable. "We have had a most glorious revival of religion at Bethelsdorp, this last year," says Mr. Read, their worthy pastor, in a

letter dated Oct. 4th, 1815. "More than three hundred souls have been added to the church, who, with very few exceptions, have been walking before the Lord blameless. The knowledge of Christ is encreasing in every direction."

An anxious desire has been expressed by the Caffres, the most savage people in South America, to have missionaries sent among them; and measures are taking to grant their request. An opening has also been made for introducing the gospel among the Bushmen.

We close these hints with two anecdotes, connected with the subject :

As the missionaries destined for Lattakoo were travelling thither, they arrived, one day, at a place where the miserable natives were sold by auction. In assorting the articles for sale, a man was entered as one lot, and his wife and children as another. When the wretched woman saw her husband put up by himself, she fell prostrate on the ground, and her poor children round her, overwhelmed with the thought of separation. The man, observing her agony, addressed the company in the most distressed tone, to this effect. "If I am to be sold alone, the buyer, whoever he may be, will not be profited; but sell us all together, my dear wife, my children, and myself, and we will exert ourselves to the utmost of our powers to serve our master." Self-interest induced the owner to comply; and they were sold to one purchaser. This event filled the whole family with an extacy of joy, which fully to conceive, must have been witnessed.

It is customary among the slaves, in the neighbourhood of the Cape, to work on the Sundays for their own emolument. This custom has proved a great hindrance to the success of missionary labours by preventing many from attending the means of grace. And it has sometimes been found difficult, even after they have professed christianity, to guard against this habit. Mr. Smith, a zealous missionary at Stellenbosch, feeling the obstacles presented to his efforts by this, on Aug. 23, 1814, represented publicly the breach of the solemn command of God, which such conduct was, and the certainty that he would not bless any such labour: concluding by advising them to ascertain their present property, and desist from the practice; promising, that whatever they lost by not working on the Lord's days, should be paid by him, at the year's

end, to each loser. This had great effect on many, and the practice was, in a good degree, discontinued. January 22, was the first opportunity, after the commencement of the new year, which he had of addressing them collectively, and he told them that he desired every one to step forward and state his losses; as he was ready to repay them. All continued silent for some time: at last a few got up and said, "Sir, you do not owe us any thing at all. The Lord has taken care of us—we have no want whatever: and are richer than we were last year." The minister told them that he was happy to hear it from themselves: though he was well persuaded beforehand, that it would be so; and renewed his exhortations to perseverance.

The SOUTH SEA ISLANDS.

In Eimeo, where the Missionaries settled when they were driven from Otaheite, their labours have lately been very successful. Their congregations amount regularly to upwards of three hundred; two hundred and ninety-five scholars, chiefly adults, attended their school, Jan. 1815, and more than two hundred had given in their names as professed worshippers of the true God. Four of these died lately: all of whom acknowledged their sinfulness, and professed to make Jesus Christ and his atonement their only ground of hope.

Besides this congregation at Eimeo, there are numbers in the neighbouring islands, who have renounced idolatry, observe the sabbath, and meet together for social worship; who are known among their countrymen by the appellation of *praying people*. So that the whole number of persons in the various islands, who have professed christianity, amounts to upwards of five hundred: among whom are many of the chiefs. In Otaheite, these praying people are numerous; and have suffered considerable persecution. The house in which a number of them used to meet for worship was burnt down and several other houses destroyed. Many have been banished from their country, and one man was pursued with an intention of offering him a sacrifice to Oro, their idol. Some, however, of the chiefs, of Otaheite, though retaining their profession of paganism, have generously stepped forwards as the advocates of these praying people; declaring that they were innocent persons and ought not to be ill-used.

A POEM ON REDEMPTION.

By the late Mrs. THOMPSON.

(See page 131 of this Number.)

Shall kings, and heroes, states and empires, shine
 With deathless glory in the muse's line?
 Shall the proud conqu'ror live in tuneful lays,
 And flatt'ring bards immortalize his praise?
 But while heav'n's King achieves, of mighty name,
 Deeds far transcending all the rolls of fame;
 Deeds, which the pow'rs of song can ne'er display,
 Nor seraph tell in an immortal lay:
 Shall then the muse's winged coursers tire,
 And lose, when such the theme, their wonted fire?
 Blush, earth's degenerate race!—O! muse ascend
 To Zion's hill, and thy blest tribute lend.
 No more on Pindus, chant the vocal rhyme,
 Nor gather flow'rets from her fabled clime;
 With fire Divine on soaring pinions rise,
 And ask the sanction of the purer skies.
 Attach'd no more to sublunary things,
 No more let airy trifles tune thy strings:
 To sacred themes hence consecrate thy lyre
 And far beyond earth's grov'ling scenes aspire.
 To aid her flight, descend celestial Dove
 And from her views, the dusky shades remove;
 With thy bright rays illumer her sable night,
 O! while she sings, give intellectual light;
 With holy energy inspire her tongue,
 And teach her *heart* to glow, as well as *song*.
 Of man's sad fall, in tuneful numbers tell;
 How from his God, and innocence he fell:
 Tell how the Godhead left the realms of day,
 From love to man, assum'd a form of clay,
 Triumphant o'er the pow'rs of darkness reign'd.
 And Paradise for exil'd slaves regain'd.
 Hence, range in thought, to Eden's pristine bow'rs
 Where spring unwith'ring and untainted flow'rs,
 No storms, no ruffled elements prevail,
 But soft and gentle breathe each fanning gale:

There man was fix'd, its fair and lovely guest,
 In innocence, and heavenly tempers drest:
 Each wish compos'd, and each desire resign'd,
 A beauteous transcript of the eternal mind:
 His great Creator's Law, within his breast,
 Unrivall'd sway and Empire there possess't:
 With light, with truth, with will and pow'r endow'd
 All ill to conquer, and to chuse the good.

Hail spotless state! Hail happy peaceful clime;
 Where, pleasure blossom'd in unsully'd prime;
 Where, pure delight fix'd its serene abode,
 And man convers'd familiar with his God.

But gath'ring storms, and threat'ning tempests rise,
 And shade the brightness of serener skies:
 Peace, love, and order, hence withdraw their light,
 And sin and guilt, involve the world in night:
 That holy* covenant which once insur'd
 Life to the soul, from hence its death procur'd.
 Man once the favourite and the friend of Heav'n,
 Now tramples on its sacred mandates giv'n;
 His Maker's law, imprinted on his breast,
 No longer *there* remains the happy guest:
There violated, broke, and *thence* expell'd,
 His mental pow'rs are each in fetters held:
 An abject slave become.—Hence *there* maintain
 The pow'rs of darkness, an usurp'd domain:
 Hence, lost to good, to purity, and peace,
 The smiling scenes of joy and pleasure cease:
 For, banish'd from tranquility and rest,
 Nor longer by his Maker's presence blest,
 He proudly now withholds the homage due,
 And distance, shyness, enmity ensue.
 The *human frame* once sprightly, lightsome, gay,
 From hence becomes a mass of dying clay;
 The *mind* that glow'd with bright celestial fires,
 To earth, to sense, to dust alone aspires.
 Unshelter'd from the bolts of wrath to come,
 He lies condemn'd beneath its awful doom,

* The covenant of works.

And downward sinks with ev'ry fleeting breath,
To all the dreadful bitterness of death.

Muse! pause awhile—the mournful change descry,
View the sad contrast with a pitying eye;
With heart-felt woe, man's fatal fall deplore,
While Eden's beauteous prospects are no more.

But glow thy numbers with sublimer fire,
And loftier strains give music to thy lyre;
Catch the high cadence of a seraph's song,
For heav'nly notes to heav'nly themes belong.
Behold, a blaze of glory round thee spread,
And heav'n its kindly healing influence shed;
See, boundless Mercy from the skies descend
And God to man a reconciled friend!

When the eternal Son; his advent made
To this inferior world, in flesh array'd;
Lo! flaming cherubs pass the yielding air,
Below the wond'rous embassy to bear;
Celestial envoys tell the list'ning earth,
What glories triumph in a Saviour's birth.

Sinners! behold a scene august, and great,
A scene with grace and majesty replete!
View God himself, your feeble cov'ring wear
And for your sakes, its painful suff'rings bear!
For you alone, he Sinai's law obey'd,
For your release, your pond'rous debt he paid.
Expressless gift! Himself he freely gave,
Rebellious stubborn enemies to save,
To ransom Sinners from the shades of night,
To purchase freedom and restore the light.
O! view enraptur'd, the amazing plan
Of love supreme, of grace divine to man;
See the high councils, and decrees of Heav'n,
Display'd and open'd in its blessings giv'n:
Schemes by the Eternal *Three* that long were laid,
Before the skies, or earth, or seas, were made.

In the redemption of a ruin'd race,
Are seen the wonders of Almighty grace;
Stupendous skill and matchless wisdom shine,
And truth and mercy, harmonize and join.

Could greater honour to the law be paid
 Than when the Saviour its demands obey'd?
 When did the mandate that from Sinai came
 An equal height of Majesty obtain,
 As when Immanuel, in our form and stead,
 A pure obedience to its precepts paid?
 And when—O! when, did justice e'er receive,
 Or a more ample satisfaction give,
 Than when the mighty God, the Prince of Peace
 Hung on the cross, a spotless sacrifice,
 To gain for us release—and to atone
 For sin's enormous guilt, and crimes which we had done!
 From that dread scene, on Calvary's mount display'd,
 When all our debt was on our surety laid;
 From such a depth of agonizing woe,
 O'er all the mind, what vast ideas glow!
 Shall greater wonder, or shall greater love
 Inspire the heart, and every passion move?
 Victorious Grace! What *human* skill can sound,
 What *Angel's* reach, can fathom thy profound?
 Do the bright seraphs in the climes above,
 Long to explore this vast abyss of love:
 And shall the objects of redeeming grace,
 The mighty scene with cold indifference pass?
 Jesus! Forbid such an ungrateful part,
 With sacred fire touch the degen'rate heart;
 Let holy incense from its altars rise,
 And flame in thankful off'rings to the skies;
 Let the salvation which thine arm hath wrought
 In triumph rule, and conquer ev'ry thought.
 Go forth with thine omnipotence, and show'r
 The genial influence of thy healing pow'r.
 O! send thy light and truth to every land,
 'Till ev'ry nation owns thy potent hand;
 'Till every heart shall speak thy work divine,
 And yield the homage thro' the bounds of time.
 'Till all thy Father's vast designs of love,
 Shall reach their summit in the realms above;
 And thou high-seated on the throne, shalt share
 With Him creation's endless praises there.

Aug. 15th, 1772.

THE
GENERAL BAPTIST REPOSITORY.

No. XL.—Vol. VII.

*SELECT PASSAGES of SCRIPTURE, illustrated
from the SCENERY, CUSTOMS, and MANNERS
of the EAST.*

DOGS are considered in the east as unclean creatures, and to touch them is esteemed a defilement. They are not permitted to enter the houses, nor are they the property of individuals. Yet there are numbers of them that prowl about the streets and collect food as they can. In the night their howlings are very disagreeable. This accounts for the contemptuous manner in which they are mentioned. 1 Sam. xvii. 43. 2 Kings, viii. 13. and explains the allusion of the Psalmist when he says: "At evening let them return, and let them make a noise like a dog, and go round the city. Let them wander up and down for meat and grudge if they be not satisfied." Psal. lix. 6. 14, 15.

The Arabs who infest these countries sometimes ride on horseback into the houses, and insult, terrify and plunder the inhabitants. To prevent this, in places exposed to their inroads, they make their doors excessively low. May not this assist us in understanding the wise man's assertion? Prov. xvii. 19. "He that exalteth his gate, seeketh destruction." Does he not intend to teach us, that he who affects splendor and stateliness, exposes himself to calamity; as a person, who, by making a lofty entrance to his house, would expose himself to the insults of the plundering Arabs?

The eastern princes and nobles not only invite their friends to feast with them, but frequently send a portion of their banquets to such as cannot attend, to whom they wish to shew particular respect: especially to the poor, and to those who are mourning for their dead, who are supposed to have neglected to make due provision for themselves. Thus, the day on which

the deliverance of the Jews from the treachery of Haman was commemorated, was "a day of gladness and feasting, a good day, and of sending portions one to another." Esth. ix. 19, 22. And Nehemiah directs the Jews to celebrate a holy day, "by eating the fat and drinking the sweet, and sending portions to them for whom nothing is prepared." Neh. viii. 10. When David also affected great regard for the comfort of Uriah, he pressed him to go to his own house and enjoy himself: and, as a mark of peculiar attention, "there followed him a mess of meat from the king." 2 Sam. 11. 8.

The women in the east seldom eat with the men, but have their feasts, at the same time, in separate apartments: and, on great occasions, these are as sumptuous as those of the men. Vashti the queen, therefore, acted according to the usages of her country, when "she made a feast for the women in the royal house." Esth. i. 9.

It is the business of the young unmarried women, in some parts of the east, to fetch the water for the use of the family, from wells which are often at some considerable distance from their houses: and to avoid the heat of the day, this is usually done in the cool of the mornings and evenings. A well then was a very likely place for Abraham's servant to halt, in hopes of finding a wife for Isaac. Gen. xxiv. 11. &c.

Water is so necessary in those hot countries, that it forms an important part of the provision for a feast, or even for an ordinary repast: and during the time of harvest a number of persons are constantly employed in carrying water to the reapers. It was thus in ancient times; for Nabal exclaims, "Shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my flesh, which I killed for my shearers, and give it unto men whom I know not whence they be?" 1 Sam. xxv. 11.

The inhabitants of those countries supply themselves with water by two methods. They collect the rain water in cisterns and other reservoirs, and they dig wells in the earth to procure spring water. The water obtained by the latter mode is reckoned much better than by the former, and called, by way of eminence, living water. This gives force to the complaint of the Lord: "My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns broken cisterns, that can hold no water." Jer. ii. 13.

The wells in the Holy Land are few, and many of them deep. They are not usually supplied with permanent conveniences for drawing up the water, but persons who frequent them take with them a small leathern bucket and a line by which they may procure it: and even travellers are generally furnished with these necessary implements. Does not the woman of Samaria allude to this custom, when she says to our Saviour: "Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: whence then hast thou this living water?" John iv. 11.

The ancient tabret was a piece of parchment stretched over a hoop, which was beat upon by the fingers, something like our tambourines: and was chiefly used by the females. In allusion to this mode of playing, the prophet expresses the action of women beating their breasts through grief, by "taboring upon their breasts." Nahum ii. 7.

When a person was setting out on a journey, it was usual for his relations and friends to take leave of him with music and songs. This was esteemed a mark of regard and affection. Laban, therefore, blamed Jacob for stealing away from him in a private manner, and not giving him an opportunity of dismissing his daughters with due respect. "Wherefore," says he, "didst thou flee away secretly, and steal away from me, and didst not tell me; that I might have sent thee away with mirth and with songs, with tabret and with harp?" Gen. xxxi. 27.

The persons employed to carry letters in these countries travel with amazing speed: sometimes running on foot one hundred and fifty miles in twenty-four hours. This gives increased energy to Job's complaint: "My days are swifter than a post." Job. ix. 25.

The country in many parts of the east is uninclosed: and, in times of commotion, travellers, to avoid hostile parties, are wont to leave the public roads and pursue their way by unfrequented paths, across the open champaign. This was the case during the unsettled state of the republic of Israel: "In the days of Shamgar, the son of Anath, in the days of Jael, the highways were unoccupied, and the travellers walked through by-ways." Judges v. 6.

In some parts, there are pieces of ground, cultivated as gardens, in the open plain, without any inclosure. In these it is customary to build detached huts of sòds, straw, or leaves, in

which persons are stationed to guard the fruits of the plantation, which chiefly consist of cucumbers, melons, grapes, &c. These temporary habitations are lonely and inconvenient, and are forsaken as soon as the vintage is finished. To these huts the prophet compared Israel, when involved in distress. "The daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers." Isa. i. 8.

When the productions of the open plantations approached to maturity, they were peculiarly exposed to depredations; especially if situated in the vicinity of a public road. In such circumstances, several watchmen, proportioned to the degree of danger, were stationed round the garden, by whom an intruder might be assailed on all sides and secured. The prophet borrows an expressive figure from these circumstances to represent the situation of Judah when attacked by her enemies from every quarter: "As keepers of a field are they against her round about, because she hath been rebellious against me, saith the Lord." Jer. iv. 17.

When any of the princes or governors of the petty kingdoms in the east encamp, on their marches, in any part of their own dominions, the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages immediately bring them presents of victuals and other necessaries, sufficient to supply all their wants. To neglect this would be esteemed an affront, and even a proof of disaffection to the government. This may explain the reason why Gideon treated the men of Succoth and Penuel, who refused to give loaves to his followers, with so much severity. Judges viii. 6, 8, 16, 17. It likewise illustrates the conduct of the men of Belial, who, despising Saul's authority, brought him no presents. 1 Sam. x. 27. We may also conjecture, that the liberality of the inhabitants of Mahanaim to David, when he fled from Absalom, was not intended merely as an act of benevolence, but as a token of allegiance. 2 Sam. xvii. 27—29.

Lambs and sheep were often given as presents to great men, and it was reckoned a mark of respect to select such of the flock for this purpose as were fat, sound, and perfect. To have offered a lean or maimed animal would have been resented as an insult. The recollection of this gives a peculiar spirit to the expostulation of the Lord, by his prophet. "Ye brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the sick; thus ye

brought an offering. Should I accept this of your hand? saith the Lord."—"If ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and the sick, is it not evil? offer it now to thy governor, will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the Lord of hosts." Mal. i. 13, 8.

Travellers into the east speak very slightly of the wooden sandals or shoes usually worn by the natives, and represent them as the meanest part of their dress, and of very little value. How depraved then must the magistrates of Israel be, "who sold the righteous for bread, and the poor for a pair of shoes!" Amos. ii. 6. viii. 6.

The inhabitants of the Holy Land are very ceremonious in their modes of salutation. When they approach a person of rank or any superior whom they wish to please, they bow their bodies almost to the ground, and with great respect kiss his knees, his feet, or even the hem of his garment. This appears to have been customary in the days of our Lord. Luke viii. 41, 44. v. 8. &c. Some in very abject circumstances, or of very servile tempers, will stoop till their faces touch the ground, and thus "lick up the dust of the feet" of those to whom they pay this fulsome regard. Isa. xlix. 23.

Another mode of salutation used when an inferior dares not presume to approach a superior, is performed by the inferior's putting his fingers to his own lips, and then removing them to his forehead. This appears formerly to have been a religious ceremony, and is probably alluded to by Job, when he says, "If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness, and my heart hath been secretly enticed, and my mouth hath kissed my hand." Job. xxxi. 26. 27.

The dances in the east are not restricted like ours, to certain motions; but the steps are varied according to the taste and pleasure of her who leads the dance, yet always in an agreeable manner and in exact time. Thus when Israel celebrated the overthrow of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea, "Miriam, the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand, and the women went out after her, with timbrels and with dances." Exod. xv. 20. And it is probable, that it was as a leader that David danced before the Lord, when the ark was removed. 2 Sam. vi. 14. 15.

Several modes of writing were practised formerly in the

eastern countries. Their children were wont to write their lessons with their fingers on the ground; the pavement being for that purpose, strewed all over with fine sand. When one lesson was sufficiently studied it was easily obliterated; and the sand being strewed afresh, a new lesson was commenced. It is probably to this kind of writing, so easily effaced, that the prophet refers, when he says: "They that depart from the Lord shall be written in the earth." Jer. xvii. 13. That is, in the words of the Psalmist: "They shall be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous." Psa. lxxix. 28. In opposition to this transient mode of writing, Job wishes that his words might be printed, or as it ought certainly to be translated, written in a book, and thus obtain greater duration. But books, when there are only one copy in manuscript, being liable to destruction from various accidents, this patient man desires a still more permanent record. It was the custom of his countrymen to engrave memorials of any transaction which they wished to perpetuate, in large characters, cut deep into the marble rocks, with which their country abounds, and filled with lead: and various specimens of this writing are now to be found, which are probably as old as the days of Moses. Job, therefore, heightens his wish: "Oh, that my words were now written; that they were written in a book: that they were graven with an iron pen and lead, in the rock for ever." Job. xix. 23, 24. See also Deut. xxvii. 2, 3.

The rocks in these countries are often very large and high, and contain cavities capacious enough to hold a considerable number of men. Sometimes these cavities have been used as places of defence, and formidable armies have spent months in fruitless attempts to force them. The rock Etam, to which Sampson retired after the slaughter of the Philistines was probably a fastness of this nature; as were perhaps the "clefts of the rocks," mentioned by the prophets as inspiring the inhabitants with so much confidence. Judges xv. 8, Jer. xlix. 16. Obad. 3, 4.

When a city was taken by an enemy, or when it was proposed to grant special favour to an ally, the foreign nation was allowed to possess certain streets or districts in the city, with full jurisdiction over them, and a claim to all the revenues derived from them. This explains the intention of Benhadad,

who, after he had been defeated by Ahab, proposed to the conqueror: "Thou shalt make streets for thee in Damascus, as my father made in Samaria." 1 Kings xx. 34.

Eastern prisons are not public buildings erected for that purpose, but a part of the house in which the judge dwells. As the governor of a town, or the captain of the watch imprison such as are accused in their own houses, they select proper apartments for that purpose, when they are chosen to those offices, and appoint for jailor a fit person from among their domestics. Thus Joseph and his fellow prisoners were confined in the house of the captain of the guard. Gen. xl. 3. And Jeremiah was put in prison "in the house of Jonathan the scribe." Jer. xxxvii, 15.

The judges in eastern countries seldom concern themselves where a prisoner is confined or how he is treated: all that they require of the jailor is, that he be forthcoming when called for. Being thus left to the discretion of his keeper, he is often treated with great severity, in order to extort exorbitant fees from him. Sometimes a person in confinement is not permitted to drink above once a day, even in the hottest weather, nor is any of his friends suffered to see him. At other times, he is plunged into a noisome dungeon, where his life is endangered by the damp and filthiness of the place. The sighing of the prisoner and supplication of Jeremiah would, therefore, be well understood in those parts. Psa. lxxix. 11. Jer. xxxvii. 20.

(To be continued.)

ORIGINAL CORRESPONDENCE between PHILLIS WHEATLEY, the AFRICAN POETESS, and MISS JANE BULL, afterwards MRS. THOMPSON, of Boston, Lincolnshire.

(See G. B. R. vol vii. pp. 115, and 131.)

LETTER I.

To PHILLIS WHEATLEY, Negro Servant to Mr. JOHN WHEATLEY, at Boston in New England, on reading her Poetical Essays.

Dear Phillis, while I read thy tuneful lays,
I view with rapture, and with wonder gaze;
Say, shall I call thee by the name of friend?
For kindred hearts thy numbers will commend.

Whate'er thy theme—all to thy strains belong,
Of elegance and harmony in song.

Whether the plaintive dirge, or sprightly lay
Awake thy lyre—thy genius each display ;
Whether of friendship, or of arts, or arms,
Alike, thy muse with equal beauty charms,
But when, IMMANUEL dwells upon thy tongue,
And love immense, gives music to thy song ;
With ev'ry grace thy polish'd numbers flow,
And teach the heart with sacred fire to glow ;
'Tis thine, with fervent energy to move,
When the rapt subject is *Redeemiug Love* :
E'en *seraphs* high-enthron'd, will not disdain
To adopt *thy* language in their heav'nly strain.

Hail Grace Divine ! whose all-pervading light,
Pours forth its beams thro' nature's tenfold night !
All incense rise to that supernal Pow'r
Who taught thy mind the *Saviour* to adore ;
Illum'd thy native darkness into day,
And o'er thy soul diffus'd th' enliv'ning ray !
In Faith and Love, O ! may'st thou daily rise,
'Till thou at length shalt tread the lucid skies !
And may—O ! may, the gospel sound be spread
From pole to pole, and wake the *living dead* ;
The barb'rous climes be taught a God to fear,
And every nation of a *Saviour* hear ;*

Thy gentle voice, O ! Phillis, could I hear,
In pleasing converse to delight my ear,
Thy bright ideas with soft language join'd,
Would raise, refine, and elevate the mind :
But vain's the fruitless wish,—for lo ! between,
Wide-spreading billows to impede—are seen.

Then may we gain, 'ere long, the blissful shore,
(When earth, and sea, and time shall be no more ;)
Where rapturous meet, all the redeemed throng,
Of every climate, and of every tongue ;

* The fair authoress has taken occasion here to introduce a long panegyric on the Countess of Huntingdon, to whom P. WHEATLEY dedicated her poems, which we omit as foreign to our purpose.

Where nought terrestrial can their peace annoy,
Complete in pleasure, and sublime in joy.

Nov. 18, 1773.

Permit me to beg your acceptance of the preceding, as a small testimonial of my gratitude for the very sincere pleasure your ingenious productions have given me.

Permit me also to congratulate you on those amiable endowments both natural and spiritual, which the great source and fountain of *all* grace, has thought fit to confer upon you — 'Tis needless I am persuaded to remind you, where the glory of all ought to be ascribed.

And permit me likewise to excite you to triumph in your glorious privilege as a christian, since the sacred page informs us, "That barbarian, Scythian, bond or free, are all one in Christ Jesus." To be a christian is indeed truly honourable. 'Tis truly dignifying to the sons of earth, to be the true followers of the adorable Jesus, servants of the most high God, and of the retinue of heaven. When kings and mighty monarchs mingle with the dust, and all the glittering scenes of this perishing world disappear for ever: *this* character alone, shall shine immortal, and stand the test of eternity.

If my prayers are favoured with acceptance on your behalf, they shall be, that *you*, my much esteemed friend, may "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things"; that Christianity may *shine* in all your conduct, in a religious, relative, and moral view, and that infidels and unbelievers may be convinced there is something divinely animating, and sacredly efficacious, in that "holy name by which you are called."

May I take the liberty to hope, that you will, (though at this remote distance,) favour me with a few lines from your own hand? The valuable correspondence of a person of your elevated understanding, would give inexpressible pleasure, and confer the highest obligation on her, who is, with the utmost respect,

Dear Phillis,

Your affectionate humble Servant,

Boston, Nov. 18th, 1773.

J. BULL.

LETTER II.

From PHILLIS WHEATLEY to Miss J. BULL.

MADAM,

I thank you heartily for your obliging Letter and poem of Nov. 18. which I received by the packet. Your generous prepossessions in my favour are, perhaps, too great, and I wish I deserved them; but I am sadly sensible that I am not so much as I ought to be, the happy original of that beautiful picture, which you have so inimitably drawn in verbal painting. Yet I hope ever to ascribe to God the praise of every mental endowment, which it were ingratitude to disown: as it is the duty of *all* to acknowledge their constant dependance on the Father of Light, for every good thing; and above all for the great invaluable privileges of a christian. Methinks those who have an interest in them cannot want cause of exultation and triumph. This distinguishing character is truly dignifying to human nature. Can any thing be more honourable than to be the servants of him, whose service is freedom; and the enjoyment of whom, is vastly superior to the poor vain glittering trifles of this transitory world? Let any one compare them together (if the latter consideration does not injure the former,) and it requires not an instant to determine which ought to be avoided and which pursued. This shall perish, while that shall endure and shine superior, when kingdoms fall, nations expire, and the universal system be reduced to ashes. This glorious character, the christian, shall shine brighter than the sun, in that kingdom, whose duration is coeval with eternity.

I am greatly obliged to you for your charitable and christian wishes and prayers in my behalf, and beg the continuance of them. O! that unbelievers were convinced of the real intent of our Saviour's mission, that wonderful person who united our human with his divine nature, to perform a work which infidels "will in no wise believe though it be told them." Pray tell me, if you think there can be a real athiest, while the light of nature, reason and common sense, all conspire to convince him of the existence of a Deity? The soul within him is a witness of this which is a spark of divinity, but shrouded in thick darkness. It shrinks back appalled at the very thought of annihilation. Thence whence that strong desire of immortality, (which no man

in his senses will deny,) if the soul is not immortal? It seeks happiness eternal, while the unhappy creature denies its existence. This reverie has lengthened my letter more than I intended, I conclude with acquainting you with the death of my best mortal friend, my mistress; and I am left below, wondering like Elisha on his ascending master, while the chariot and horses of fire snatched him from terrestrial scenes. However, whether she went in a fiery chariot, or in the arms of angels, is not at present so material, as the accession of the happy soul to the right hand of the Divine Majesty. Though we may justly suppose that those ministering spirits have their proper appointments, in conducting the heirs of salvation to their glorious mansions. The Lord prepare us, by living the life, to die the death of the righteous. I must beg an interest in your breathings to heaven for the sanctification of this afflicting providence. I was exceedingly pleased with the unexpected favour of your kind epistle; and request the favour of your valuable correspondence, I am,

MADAM, with great sincerity,

Your unknown friend and humble servant,

Boston, New England, Mar. 22d, 1774. P. WHEATLEY.

A GLANCE at the STATE of RELIGION in the various parts of the WORLD, and the ATTEMPTS now making, to spread the GOSPEL in heathen countries.

In surveying the moral and religious state of mankind, it is distressing to observe what darkness still covers the earth, and what gross darkness, the hearts of the people. The knowledge of the true God appears to be of limited extent; and that of the Saviour, is confined within still narrower bounds. If, in the primitive age, the sound of the gospel went into all the earth, and its words unto the end of the world; it is far from being the case in these later ages. The sun of righteousness which first arose upon the eastern nations, with healing under its wings, has long since ceased to illuminate those distant regions; and the churches which then flourished under its sacred influence, have sunk into an awful gloom, and vanished from the page of history. Through the tender mercy of our God, the day-spring from on high hath visited us, who were once

sitting in darkness, and in the region of the shadow of death; and the light of truth which has so long been concentrated and embodied in our western hemisphere, is still waiting to return to its native east; to gild the whole earth with the beams of its brightest glory.

According to the latest computations, the following is a brief view of the present state of the habitable world.—The total population is estimated at Eight Hundred Millions.

Of these there are 482 millions of Pagans,
 140 millions of Mahometans,
 80 millions of Roman Catholics.
 66 millions of Protestants,
 30 millions of Eastern Christians,
 2 millions of Jews.

From this statement we see that more than half the inhabitants of the world are in a state of absolute *Heathenism*; without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise; having no hope, and without God in the world.

Another large division are *Mahometans*, the most inveterate enemies to the christian faith, and the subjects of the grossest delusion and imposture.

Whatever of individual piety may be found among the *Catholics*, and we doubt not but there are many pious individuals among them; yet the general superstition and antichristian ceremonies which abound in the church of Rome, afford but a gloomy prospect, as to the interests of true religion among them, though they are more numerous than any other section of the christian church.

The *Eastern Christians*, who are scattered over the various kingdoms and provinces of Asia, are christians rather in name than in deed and in truth; and in most respects they are nearly as corrupt in doctrine and in worship, as those of the catholic communion. From this general representation of the eastern christians, there is, however, a very gratifying exception, with respect to some parts of the Greek church in Russia; and more especially as to some denominations of dissenters lately risen up in that vast empire, who appear to exemplify much of the simplicity of primitive christianity. But their numbers are few, compared with the general body of the eastern church.

Amongst two millions of *Jews*, who are scattered abroad in

all nations, only a few solitary instances occur of individual conversion; the great body of that unhappy people still remaining, as they have remained for ages and generations past, in a state of impenitence and unbelief. They appeared in prophetic vision, like an army that had been slain in battle; and still the valley is full of these dry bones: they have not yet been brought out of their graves, nor has the spirit of life from God entered into them.

The *Protestants* of the present day, though comparatively numerous, bear but a small proportion to the general population of mankind; and amongst them there are multitudes who are christians in name only, and whose moral and religious state is little better than that of Jews and heathens. Yet, under God, it is from the united zeal and exertions of the truly pious amongst the various denominations of protestants, that all the hope of the church and of the world, is to be derived, as to the future extension of the Redeemer's kingdom; though indeed it is highly probable, from some recent appearances, that several of the members of the Greek church will also be engaged in the same undertaking.

It would be highly interesting to take a brief survey of the present state of the world; to see what nations are yet sitting in darkness, and to trace the beams of light that are beginning to arise upon them; but the sources of our information are too limited for that purpose, the intercourse among christians of different nations having been long interrupted by the continuance of war, has only of late been partially renewed.

It is but little we know of the present state of EUROPE; and though nearer to us than other parts of the world, we seem to be less acquainted with it, or find in its moral and religious condition less to interest our attention or enliven our hopes. In the northern parts indeed, far removed from the contentions which have torn the heart of Europe,—in Greenland, in Iceland, and amongst other inhabitants of the frozen regions, the pious, the humble, the faithful Moravians have been labouring with indefatigable zeal and patience, during the greater part of the last century; there they have numerous missionary stations, and multitudes of converts. Like the church in the wilderness, they have been hidden from the face of the dragon, and almost from the knowledge of their brethren in the kingdom and patience of Christ; but their work, though

silent, has been remarkably successful, and God has been with them of a truth. To them belongs the honour of having been the first who have entered upon missionary labours among the heathen in these later ages. While the christian church in general appeared content with a state of ease and inactivity, or at most with the routine of domestic duty, these self-denying missionaries were traversing the chilling regions of the north, to plant the standard of the cross amidst oceans of ice and mountains of snow. The Moravians have thirty-three missionary settlements in different parts of the world, upwards of one hundred and fifty missionaries, and more than twenty-seven thousand converts.

In Sweden and in Denmark the protestant religion has been cherished ever since the reformation; and both these countries have supported foreign missions, in India and in other places, under the immediate patronage of the respective governments.

In the large empire of Russia, as we have already intimated, there are some favourable appearances, which we hope may lead to important results. A spirit of zeal for the general circulation of the scriptures has begun to infuse itself into the national church, and the various dissenting denominations; bible societies are liberally supported, and religious liberty meets with considerable encouragement. In Prussia and in Germany there appears to be some revival of the spirit of christianity, amidst all the calamities which those unhappy countries have endured. In the southern parts of the continent, the interests of religion wear a more gloomy appearance: yet of late we have been gratified in learning, that protestant christianity is beginning to struggle for life, though exposed to the most unexpected opposition, in several parts of the papal dominions; in Spain, in Italy, and even in the city of Rome itself.

AFRICA, long desolate and dark, though in the early ages possessing some of the brightest luminaries of the church, is now revisited by the light of life, and Ethiopia is beginning once more to stretch out her hands unto God. The interior of this quarter of the globe has long been impervious to European visitors, shut up in heathen darkness and barbarity; but along the coasts and in other accessible parts of this vast continent, several missionary stations have of late years been formed by the London Missionary Society, and also by the exertions of

a presbyterian society in Scotland; both of which afford the hope of extensive usefulness.

In AMERICA, it is scarcely necessary to state, that the influence of the gospel has been more deeply and more extensively felt of late years, than perhaps in any other part of the earth. The truly pious of all denominations have been greatly multiplied; a great revival has generally prevailed: and as a natural consequence, this has been followed with proportionate exertions for the conversion of mankind, by means of Bible societies and missionary labours, at home and abroad. Bordering on the same quarter of the world, the unhappy slaves and other inhabitants of the West India islands have received the tidings of salvation from our zealous brethren, the Wesleyan Methodists, who have laboured with unabating ardour and great success in the sultry climes of the south and west.

But it is in ASIA that we are chiefly to look for the great work which God is performing in our day. Not indeed that the number of real christians bear any proportion to those in America or in Europe: but there it is that the principal attack has of late been made, on the brazen frontiers of the heathen world, and made with wonderful success. The dwellers in Asia, which contains more than half the population of the globe, have for ages, and ages past, been sunk in the grossest idolatry and superstition, and scarcely any attempts have been made to recover them from the abyss of ruin, except by the Danish missionaries during the early part of the last century. Of late the Lord has touched the hearts of his people with pity for these perishing heathen, and thrust out many labourers into the vineyard. In one part of this wide field, we see the Baptist missionaries, ploughing up the fallow ground, sowing the seed, and preparing for a future harvest. In another part, the Independents, from the London missionary society, are doing the same work, and following the example of their brethren. In another, we see the pious Episcopalians, from the church missionary society, digging up the roots of pagan superstition, planting the vine, that it may cover the face of the earth with fruit. And lastly come the zealous and indefatigable methodists, with their axes and hammers, to break down and destroy the temples of idolatry, and to rear up a habitation for God through the Spirit. Thus the ploughman overtakes the reaper, and the treader of grapes, him that

soweth seed; and, in a little time, the mountains shall drop down sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. PAULINUS.

*IMPOSITION of HANDS the SCRIPTURE MODE
of ORDINATION.*

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

As the subject of the Letter signed *Synonymous*, at page 122, of your last number, is important as a part of christian order, and closely connected with the peace and welfare of the Connection, I venture to send you a few remarks on it: though I should be sincerely pleased, if any of your more able correspondents, by sending something better suited to the purpose, should induce you to throw this letter among your waste paper.

It will be proper before I proceed, to state the point at issue; as *Synonymous* has varied his terms and thereby caused some confusion. Sometimes it is "ordination to the pastoral office;" sometimes "ordaining a person merely for the work of the ministry," to qualify him for preaching the gospel and administering the ordinances; and sometimes "sending persons to preach the gospel." But, though the work of the ministry, preaching the gospel, and administering the ordinances, may all be included in the pastoral office, yet neither jointly nor separately do they constitute that office. It is not, that I know of, asserted by any dissenters, that ordination of any kind is necessary to qualify a person for preaching the gospel: and therefore his reference to the seventy disciples sent forth by our Saviour for that purpose, is totally foreign to the question. The simple inquiry is: Have we scriptural authority for the imposition of hands in the ordination of persons to the pastoral office? This your correspondent denies, and I venture to affirm. Permit me, Sir, to state the grounds of my opinion, and then to make a few remarks on his objections.

The imposition of hands in setting apart persons to important offices had been practised, by the express command of Jehovah, long before the commencement of the christian æra. When the Levites were set apart in the wilderness "to execute the service of the Lord," the divine direction was, "the children of Israel shall put their hands upon the Levites." When

Joshua was to be solemnly consecrated to the high office in the Jewish church and state, which Moses had sustained for nearly forty years, "the Lord said to Moses: Take thee Joshua, the son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay thine hand upon him; and set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation, and give him a charge in their sight," &c. "And Moses did as the Lord commanded him: and he took Joshua and set him before Eleazar the priest and before all the congregation. And he laid his hands upon, and gave him a charge, as the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses." Numb. xxvii. 18—23. The imposition of hands in the ordination of persons to sacred offices was, therefore, in the former dispensation, of divine authority. Let us now examine what sanction the New Testament affords to this practice.

In the infancy of the christian church; the circumstances of the times made it necessary to appoint persons to superintend its temporal concerns: The apostles therefore, under the guidance of the infallible spirit, instituted the office of deacons: and directed the brethren to look out proper persons whom "they might ordain to the office." How did they proceed? The sacred narrative is explicit. "And when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them." Nothing surely can be more plain, than that these men were "set over this business," ordained to this office; by the imposition of hands. Acts vi. 1—7.

Soon after the great Head of the church called these two eminent ministers, Saul and Barnabas, to undertake some particular service in the propagation of the gospel; and commanded the prophets and teachers at Antioch to ordain them to this sacred work. "Separate me," he said, "Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." Had these primitive christians any suspence respecting the mode of ordination? Not the least. "When they had fasted and prayed they laid hands on them, and sent them away," to prosecute the work to which they were called. Acts xiii. 2. 3. What ever the work was; there can be no doubt as to the *manner* in which they were ordained to it.* It certainly was by imposition of hands:

* The great Lightfoot remarks on this passage: "This is the second imposition of hands since the gospel began, which did not confer the Holy Ghost: for these two were full of the

Saul and Barnabas, being thus "sent forth by the Holy Ghost," travelled through various countries, preaching the gospel and planting churches: and having proceeded to the extent of their circuit, returned, by nearly the same route, to Antioch, from whence they had set out. On their return, they confirmed the souls of the new disciples, and completed the organization of the infant societies. The sacred historian's account of these transactions is beautifully simple and very instructive; but one part of it deserves our particular attention: that is the manner in which the settlement of the elders is mentioned. "When they had," says Luke "ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they had believed." Acts xiv. 23. Now if, as Synonymus seems to insinuate, ordination was performed by prayer and fasting only, how are we to understand this text? Something distinct from prayer and fasting is here mentioned as having taken place, and that something is called ordination. What was this? Possibly by comparing this passage with the text just mentioned, we may be enabled to make a proper reply to this question.

We have two accounts, by the same historian, of similar transactions: the setting apart of Paul and Barnabas by the prophets at Antioch, to the work to which they were called; and the setting apart of elders in every church by Paul and Barnabas. Now it is highly probable, that these good men would adopt the same mode on these two occasions; yet there is a singular difference in the accounts. In the former, we are told, "when they had fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away." In the latter, it is said: "when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they recommended them to the Lord." It is evident then, that at both these seasons, prayer and fasting formed a part of the solemnity; but something was done at the latter, which Luke calls ordaining, and in the former account, he informs us that this was imposition of hands. Now does it not appear from this, that in the opinion of the sacred writer, the

Holy Ghost before.—No better reason, I suppose, can be given for this action, than that the Lord did by this set down a pattern of ordaining ministers in the churches of the gentiles to future times." *Har. of New Test.* page 94.

laying on of hands formed the act of ordination; and that prayer and fasting were only appendages? Or can Synonimous or any other person inform us what else was done, when Paul and Barnabas ordained these elders, besides fasting and prayer, if it was not imposition of hands?

If this reasoning be allowed, it applies to the parallel passage, Titus i. 5. "I left thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that were wanting, and ordain elders in every city." Both passages inform us, that persons were ordained to the office of elders, but say nothing as to the *mode* of ordination. But it is an obvious rule of interpretation, that when an action is said to be performed, without specifying the manner in which it was performed, we are to understand that it was performed in the mode usually practised in the same age and country. We have abundant evidence, that persons were set apart to the service of God by imposition of hands; and it would be dangerous as well as absurd to suppose, that it was otherwise in the cases where it is simply stated that they were thus set apart, and nothing said as to the mode.

There is another passage to which your correspondent alludes, though he seems by no means disposed to examine it very closely. Paul advises Timothy, "Lay hands suddenly on no man; neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure." 1 Tim. v. 22. This has been considered, by the wisest and best interpreters of scripture, as a caution against ordaining persons to the pastoral office without due deliberation and previous examination. I might easily prove this by quotations from many of the most noted commentators; but to Synonimous this would probably be very unsatisfactory. With the spirit of a noble Berean, "he esteems it his duty to read the scripture, and judge for himself." This is truly commendable. Let us then read the passage, and endeavour to judge of its meaning.

Timothy was an Evangelist, 2 Tim. iv. 5; and was left at Ephesus for much the same purpose, that Titus was left in Crete: to regulate the rising churches, and preside at the choice and ordination of proper persons to the various offices. 1 Tim. i. 3. iii. 14, 15. To assist him in this work, Paul employs a great part of this epistle in describing the qualifications requisite for these offices; and the marks of false teachers. In the immediate context of this passage, he is in-

structing Timothy in the due treatment of elders, the honour due to their station, and the tenderness, openness, and impartiality that ought to be exercised towards them, when they have unhappily fallen into sin. This last subject naturally led him to reflect on the awful effects of the misconduct of ministers; the necessity of using great caution in calling persons to that important office; and the guilt that those would incur through whose carelessness or precipitation the cause of religion was involved in the disgrace caused by disorderly elders. Impressed with these ideas, he exhorts his young friend, "Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins." Ordain no man to the sacred office before his qualifications and character have been fully examined and approved; lest thou become accessory to all the mischiefs that may arise from the disorderly conduct of improper persons.

This explanation is natural and perfectly consistent with the context, and no other interpretation appears equally easy. Your correspondent seems to suppose that it may have some reference to miraculous gifts. Does he suppose that Paul meant to caution Timothy against the too frequent exercise of his ministerial gifts? or against imparting them too precipitately to others? There is not a word in the whole epistle that favours either of these strange ideas. We have no evidence, that Timothy possessed either the power of working miracles himself, or of imparting miraculous gifts to others. If he had, we can scarcely conceive how he could make himself partaker of other men's sins by the abuse of them. In short, understand the apostle to refer to the ordination of elders, and all is clear and consistent; adopt any other interpretation, and the text becomes unintelligible, confused and irrelevant to the subject on which he is treating. Imposition of hands, therefore, is the scriptural mode of ordination to sacred offices.

There are two other passages that speak of the laying on of hands, and probably in ordination to some office in the church: these are, 1 Tim. iv. 14, and 2 Tim. i. 6. It is confessed that there is something obscure in these texts. Paul was addressing a person who well knew the particulars of the solemn event to which he refers; and therefore mentions them in such general terms, as make it difficult to conclude with certainty what that event was. But, in the context of the first of these passages, he is exhorting his beloved disciple to discharge the

duties of his ministerial office with diligence, watchfulness, and zeal; to attend sedulously to such things as would best qualify him for the effectual discharge of its important duties; and to take heed to himself and his doctrine, that he might save himself and his hearers. Now when, in the midst of these exhortations, all relating to duties of the ministry, the apostle says, "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery:" is it not reasonable to suppose, that he intends, "Recollect the sacred impressions, the holy resolutions, and the devout affections, which through the peculiar influence of the Holy Spirit, animated thy soul on the day of thy ordination; and endeavour constantly by every proper method to keep alive the same sentiments and dispositions in thy heart, that thou mayest continue to discharge, in a successful and effectual manner, the important duties of that station to which thou wast then consecrated by the imposition of hands." This exposition appears the most natural: and till Synonymous can propose one more eligible, we shall venture to consider it as the true meaning of the passage; which, thus understood, affords another proof that imposition of hands in the ordination of officers is scriptural.

Having thus stated, as briefly as I could, "the grounds of my opinion," it will be necessary to crave your further indulgence for a few remarks on the paper of your correspondent. "It appears," he says, "that whenever hands were laid on any person recorded in the New Testament, the transaction was either attended by a miracle, or power was given to those on whom hands were laid to work miracles." But supposing this assertion to be true, it would furnish no argument for discontinuing the practices, unless it could be proved, that the laying on of hands was designed to convey these miraculous powers, not to set apart the persons to their office: but, in all the cases which have been mentioned, it is evident, that the latter was the primary, if not the sole, object. Had it therefore pleased God, at that time, when his cause required such extraordinary support, to have always accompanied this service by a miracle, it would no more have followed that the practice should have been discontinued when the miracle ceased, than that the other ordinances of religion should have been laid aside, when they were no longer attended with the extraor-

inary effects that usually followed them in the apostolic age. But the assertion is wholly unfounded; as a slight attention to the several instances which have already passed under review, will easily prove. When the deacons were ordained, there is not the least intimation of any miracle being wrought, nor the slightest hint of any miraculous powers being conveyed. Stephen, indeed, did afterwards, "great wonders and miracles among the people;" but, before his ordination, he was distinguished from the rest by being "full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost:" and there is nothing in the scriptures that causes us to doubt of his previous working of miracles. Philip too, also, afterwards became an eminent minister, and was endued with the power of working miracles: but, that this power was conferred on him by the imposition of hands at his ordination to the deacon's office, is wholly a conjecture of your correspondent, without the least support from the sacred history. Of the other five deacons we know nothing: and therefore their ability to work miracles depends entirely on the authority of Synonimus. The same observations apply to the case of Saul, who, before his ordination was filled with the Holy Ghost, preached Christ in the synagogues, confounded the Jews, and disputed with the Grecians. No instance of his working of miracles is indeed recorded, but many might have occurred in the course of such long and active labours for the spread of the gospel. But that miraculous powers were either exercised or conveyed when he was ordained to the work to which the Holy Spirit had called him, there is not the most remote hint in the sacred historian. Imposition of hands, it is cheerfully acknowledged, was practised for purposes far different and totally distinct from ordination; and Synonimus has mentioned several instances of this. But because Ananias laid hands on Saul that he might receive his sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost, does it follow that imposition of hands in ordination is unscriptural? Would not the more rational conclusion be, that the purposes being so different, and the cases so dissimilar, there can no argument be drawn from one to another? Equally foreign to the subject in debate, are the instances of the Samaritans, and the Ephesians; and your correspondent must see, on a review, that they have not the most distant connection with ordination. The fact is, and, considering the circumstances of the times, it is remarkable,

that we have not the least evidence from the New Testament, that the imposition of hands, when performed for setting apart persons to the service of God, was ever attended by a miracle or ever conveyed the power of working miracles. So careful has the Divine Inspirer of the volume of truth been to prevent any occasion for disusing this practice, under the pretence that its ancient effect has ceased.

Thus, Sir, I have endeavoured to state my sentiments on this subject with as much plainness as I could. I have forbore to make any remarks on the bad tendency of the mode of treating sacred subjects, which is adopted by your correspondent, because I wish to avoid any thing like reflection. And I have said nothing in defence of ordination itself; both because Synonymous "is an advocate for ordination if performed according to the precepts and examples of the word of God," and because every passage that proves, that imposition of hands is the scriptural mode of ordination, proves also that ordination itself is scriptural. If these few hints remove any of the difficulties in the mind of your worthy correspondent, or have any other tendency to promote the peace of the churches and the glory of God, it will yield great satisfaction to,

Your's, respectfully,

EBORACENSIS.

SUBMISSION to REPROOF.

"Let the righteous smite me it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent oil which shall not break my head." PSA. cxli. 5.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

MY DEAR SIR,

The following Letter from a pious soldier, a member of a General Baptist church, addressed to his minister, and occasioned by an unfounded report of some declension in his religious character, which had reached the minister, and been mentioned by him to the writer in a previous epistle, exhibits, in my opinion, much of the spirit and temper of a genuine christian. If you think proper to publish it in the G. B. R. it may perhaps afford a useful lesson to such as are placed in si-

milar circumstances, which, I believe is no uncommon case. Having copied it from the original, I can vouch for its genuineness. I am, yours, in christian affection,

J. H.

London, Sept. 7, 1812.

MY DEAR AND ESTEEMED FRIEND.

I feel myself much indebted to divine mercy, in that I have an opportunity of writing a few lines to one whom I so affectionately esteem, as a leader to, and an admomitor in, the way of divine truth. I received your kind letter; and I do assure you, my dear sir, that you had not the least reason to apologize for the hasty reproof: I do not consider it hasty, neither can I conceive that you would have thus addressed me, had you not had reason to suspect a need of it. But before I proceed, let me pause for a moment, and ask of Him, who searches the hearts, and tries the reins of the children of men: Has thy worn, O my God, at length fallen a victim to that which thou well knowest he has ever dreaded since he professed to be thy follower? Has he laid in the way of the weakest of thy flock, a stumbling block or rock of offence? If so it be, my good and merciful Father, lay not this to my charge; as thou well knowest it has not been known to him: but O, if thou shalt see fit, discover to him wherein he has offended thee, and grieved the hearts of thy children, and may he be led to repent as in dust and ashes before thee. Has he become an open violater of thy law, and thereby given those who are living in open rebellion against thee, a just cause of speaking reproachfully of thy cause and followers? Has his esteem or affection, in the smallest degree, become diminished towards thy children? No, my God, thou that knowest all things, thou knowest I do still love thee; and it is my earnest desire to love thee more and more: and my greatest concern is, that I do not possess more of that heart and mind that was in my dear Redeemer. And, as to the weakest of thy followers, I do still consider them as the excellent of the earth: not from any personal esteem; but so far as I discern the image of a Saviour in them.

My dear christian friend, having made these few propositions to him that now discerns the thoughts and intents of my

heart as well as at every other time, I pause for a moment. And then I would say, "Let me not deceive myself, O my God; but search me and try me, and shew me if there is any way of wickedness in me: and lead me in the way everlasting."

My dear Sir, I must now draw to a conclusion, as I am not able at this time to dwell much longer on the subject; and it would give me much more pleasure to have seen you than to have written; but at this time being called away, it is probable I shall not have the opportunity for some time. But should it please the Lord, who has heretofore separated us, to call us to see each other again, I hope it will be to tell what great things he has done for us, and has had compassion on us. It is unknown to me who it may be that has hinted to you that it is not so well with me as in times past, neither have I a desire to know this. I have to add, I trust through grace, I have not so learned Christ as to render railing for railing; but should it be a friend, or should it not, that has thus smitten me on the right cheek, I would also turn unto him the left.

Please to give my kind sincere love and affection to the whole of your little flock, both collectively and individually. My earnest prayer is, and I trust ever will be, that you all may be kept in perfect peace, and that your righteousness may continue to flow as the waves of the sea. My kind love to Mrs. G. and your family.

I remain, your most affectionate brother, (if still deserving the appellation) in the most sweet and endearing tie of christian love,

JOHN HARTLEY,

Serjeant in the First Regiment of Guards.

THE ADVANTAGES OF A FURNACE.

"I HAVE CHOSEN THEE IN THE FURNACE OF AFFLICTION."

Jer. xlviii. 10.

An Original Letter from the Rev. J. BERRIDGE, to a brother in the Ministry.

Everton, Oct. 23d. 1779.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the 2d of July, came duly to hand; but has waited a wearisome while for an answer. Indeed, I have been

much, yet not too much, afflicted with my old disorder for some months, a nervous fever. We have been housekeepers every summer for forty years; and this fever friend has kept me this summer twelve weeks at home, and forbidden me all literary correspondence. As winter comes on, I begin to revive; and when the swallows march off, I begin to march out: as when the swallows return, I am often obliged to keep in. 'Tis well we are not in our own keeping, nor at our own carving, since we so little know what is good for us. I do not love this fever friend; yet he is certainly the best earthly companion I have. No lasting gain do I get but in a furnace. Comforts of every kind, in the issue, make me either light or lofty; and swell me though unperceivably, with self-sufficiency. Indeed, so much dross, native and acquired, is found in my heart, that I have constant need of a furnace; and Jesus has selected a furnace for me. Not a hot and hasty one, which seems likely to harden and consume me; but one with a gentle and lingering heat, which melts my heart gradually, and lets out some of its dross. Though I cannot love a furnace, nor bask in it like a salamander, yet the longer I live, the more I see of its need and use. A believer seldom walks steadily and ornamentally, unless he is well furnaced. Without this, his zeal is often scalding-hot; his boldness attended with fierceness, or rather rashness; and his confidence at times more the result of animal spirit than the fruit of the Spirit. But a furnace consumes these excrescences; and, when sweetly blown with grace, will make a christian humble, watchful, and meek; very censorious of himself, and full of compassion for others.

May your congregation be increasing in numbers, and the power of the Lord be present to wound and to heal, to quicken and comfort, and build! But let me add, the growth of the children will greatly depend on your conduct; for a congregation quickly drink in the spirit of the preacher. Much reading and thinking may make a popular minister; but much secret prayer must make a powerful and useful preacher. If you converse much with God on the mount, as Moses did, and the old puritans, your hearers will see a gospel lustre on your countenance, and stand in awe of you; and, what is best of all, like Moses, you will not be sensible of that lustre, whilst others see it and reverence it. Much secret prayer will solemnize your heart, and make your visits savoury, as well as your

sermons. The old puritans visited their flocks by house-row : the visits were short. They talked a little for God, and then concluded with prayer to God. An excellent rule which prevented tittle-tattle, and made visits profitable. May Jesus bless you and water your flock,

Your affectionate Brother,

JOHN BERRIDGE.

ADVICE TO UNORDAINED MINISTERS.

*Respectfully addressed to the PROPOSER of the QUERY, signed
a PREACHER, page 120 of the last Number of the G. B. R.*

DEAR SIR,

The question proposed by you is a very serious one, and requires a serious answer. I feel both sorrow and shame, that any circumstances have arisen in the New Connection of General Baptists to render such a query necessary ; yet so it is : and nothing remains but to roll away the reproach, for such I certainly esteem it, as speedily as possible.

I well remember that, when the subject was discussed at the Nottingham Association, I felt considerably for the young men who were placed in your situation ; and was very sorry that the remarks which were then made, by several of our venerable brethren, bore so hard on them, and reflected so lightly on the societies by which they were employed. Sensible that a proposal for ordination would originate with much more propriety from the church than from the minister ; I believed it was probable, that many of our younger brethren in the ministry had reluctantly submitted to the irregular custom, now so lamentably prevalent among us, of acting as pastors without ordination, more through an excusable, though perhaps culpable, modesty, than through inclination. Having possibly thought little on the subject, and seeing others acting in the same manner around them, they were unwilling to be esteemed ambitious of honour, or affecting a proud singularity ; and acquiesced rather than approved. Many of these no doubt like yourself, now see the subject in a much more important light ; and like you have become increasingly uneasy. With such I

most sincerely sympathise; and would, with affectionate respect, offer them the following advice.

1. Be very earnest in prayer to the God of wisdom, to enlighten your understanding to see the path of duty; and to influence your will to walk in it. In all cases this is your duty and your privilege; but when placed in circumstances of peculiar difficulty, when your own honour, happiness, and usefulness, and the prosperity of the cause of the Redeemer, depend greatly on your decision and conduct, it then becomes still more highly necessary. It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. What a peculiar favour it is then, that we are encouraged, in all our ways, to acknowledge God, and are graciously assured that if we do, He will direct our paths! He can, with perfect ease, remove all your difficulties; and make his way straight before your face. Seek, therefore, to Him, in the first place, for instruction, support and comfort.

2. Examine the subject carefully, and endeavour, with honesty and simplicity, to satisfy yourself how far conscience is concerned. Take care that no improper motives influence your conclusions. Be anxious to discover the will of God, not to collect proofs for an opinion already formed. Enquire how far you can, consistent with a regard to the authority of the scriptures, continue to serve the church in the work of the ministry without ordination, and where conscience obliges you to stop. It is presumed, that such an examination, conducted as in the sight of God, might have a happy tendency to remove some of your scruples. It would probably convince you of the necessity of ordination; but it would perhaps teach you likewise, that the irregularity of your present conduct consists, more in the habitual and unnecessary assumption of the various duties of the pastoral office, without being, according to scripture example, regularly set apart to that office, than in the performing any particular part of the ministerial services.

3. When you have thus satisfied your own mind, be determined to act in conformity to your convictions. Nothing can justify a man in acting contrary to the dictates of his own conscience, even should his conscience be misinformed and judgment wrong. For though, "nothing is unclean of itself; yet to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean." Resolve, therefore, by divine assistance, to do nothing that *you* esteem to be contrary to the will of God.

4. Take care, however, that you proceed with caution, and avoid every appearance of dogmatism precipitation or obstinacy. Advise with such as you think best qualified and most disposed to give you good advice; and be not hasty in forming your determinations. When you have resolved to discontinue any part of the ministerial duties which you have been accustomed to perform, call your friends together, and calmly but firmly, inform them of your determination. Endeavour so to conduct yourself, that all may be convinced that you are acting solely from a sense of duty. Beware lest any thing in your temper, your words or your behaviour should raise any suspicion that a wish for honour or power has any influence in your conclusions. Shew a readiness to serve them as far as you can; and meet every proposed arrangement with a sincere desire to promote conciliation and mutual accommodation.

5. If an arrangement should be made, beware of shewing any disposition to shyness, any want of christian affection to those who may differ from you, in respect to the subject of ordination. Act towards them with the same freedom, affability and respect as formerly. Do not attribute their disapprobation of ordination to "a fear lest they should confer too much honour or authority on their servant;" but give them credit for acting conscientiously. You would think it unjust in them to ascribe your approbation of ordination to a wish to sit in the chief seat, and be called Rabbi. Do ye to others as ye would they should do to you.

6. Be diligent, affectionate, and impartial in the discharge of all those ministerial labours to which you can conscientiously attend. Be instant in season and out of season; and always ready to every good work. Let your whole conduct prove, that you are willing to spend, and be spent to promote the present and everlasting welfare of all those among whom providence has placed you. And be careful not to introduce the points in debate into social worship, whether public or private.

By such a conduct as this, steadily pursued from right motives, it is probable that, through the divine blessing, your friends may be won to your sentiments, and their objections may vanish. They will, it may be hoped, be as desirous as you wish, that the connection between you and them should be public, solemn and lasting; and the great Head of the church

may make them your comfort here, and your crown of rejoicing for ever. Should not this be the happy effect, it may, after a due time has been allowed, become your duty to accept any opening in Providence where you have a prospect of being more usefully and in a manner more consistent with your own views of gospel order, employed in building up the church of God. May the Lord direct and bless you, is the sincere prayer of your affectionate friend,

A LAYMAN.

GENERAL BAPTIST OCCURRENCES.

OBITUARY.

The following pleasing account of the triumphant death of Serjeant John Hartley, a member of the G. B. church at Chatham, (see p. 168.) is extracted from a letter addressed to his minister by a pious comrade, Charles Wood, Serjeant in the same regiment; dated *Oporto*, April 17th, 1813,

My dear Friend and Brother in the Lord,

I can no longer delay to perform a promise, made to a brother much beloved, to lay before your church and the world the testimony of a dying christian, a brother soldier, serjeant Hartley, of the first battalion of the first regiment of Foot Guards. I became acquainted with him in Sicily, and he first led me to the means of grace in the little church over which the Lord hath made you an overseer. You know Sir, the first bosom friends of a believer in Jesus are dear to them. I need not attempt to describe his sincerity and humility. Yourself and the church of which he was a member can testify to his attendance on the means of grace, and the purity of his love to his brethren. As a soldier, he was an example of good to all that knew him. Remarkable for cleanliness, sobriety, diligence, punctuality, and civility; always preferring the company of those that feared God, but ever ready to do his enemies any kind office. As a christian, I never heard him speak of the children of God but with reverence and respect. To such his heart was always zealously united. He frequently expressed his ardent love for you, whom he declared God had

made the messenger of peace to his soul, and would often mention some of the sweet lessons of instruction he had received from you. After we left Chatham, he was greatly afflicted. I visited him in an hospital in London, where I beheld his patience under sufferings and sweet resignation to the will of God. Soon after his recovery, he went recruiting to Carlisle, from whence I received an excellent letter from him, which I answered: but heard no more until 11th Nov. 1812, when he came to see me at Aldeseca, a village near Salamanca in Spain. I was happy to find his soul alive in that religion the gospel reveals, and which is the privilege of every man to enjoy. I spent a few hours with him very pleasantly. I saw him no more till the month of January, just as he was returned from the provost duty at the Marquis of Wellington's quarters, when he was praising God for his many mercies. About the 12th of January, I was informed that serjeant Hartley, was ill in the hospital Vizeu, and wished to see me. I immediately went to Vizeu, where I found him very ill. Instantly upon my opening the door, he looked up and said, "O my brother, I am glad you are come; draw nigh and see a monument of mercy." He took me by the hand and exclaimed, with a flood of tears, "Now, Lord, thou hast given me all my desires; it is enough. Help me to speak to my friend whom thou, in thy goodness, hast sent unto me, and then, Lord, receive me to thyself." He then said, "All is well—All is well, for eternity and heaven. I have seen the way that leads to the glorious mansions clearly. About three nights since, I was nearly gone. I spoke to the next man to me, and desired him, if he lived, to tell serjeant Nobes and serjeant Wood, that I was a sinner saved by grace: that I enjoyed peace with God through Jesus Christ: and that his Spirit was about to bear me to his glorious presence. That as serjeant Wood knew my dear friends at Chatham, it was my dying request that he would convey this my last testimony to him, and to my dear wife also, requesting her to take care in time to prepare for a happy eternity. He then gave an exhortation to all the patients in the room to prepare for death and judgment, declaring what he had been himself, and what he then was by grace; and that except they experienced the same change they must perish eternally. "Sinners," said he, you have lived, take care that you do not remain such, and die in that state." Then, with

a loud voice, he cried, "Come my fellow comrades, who is for heaven? I am away," and repeated the following verse.

"Come, Lord, the drooping sinner cheer,
Nor let thy chariot wheels delay :
Appear, in my poor heart, appear,
My God, my Saviour, come away."

Our dear brother seemed then to revive, and said to me, "My brother, the Lord hath spared me to tell you of his mercy, that through the merits of Jesus, I have now no condemnation; but am passed from death unto life. I am an heir of heaven, for God has given me the evidence of his spirit, and as I know you love Mr. Garratt, inform him I am happy, and return him my humble and sincere thanks for his many labours of love in my behalf, his tender care for my soul. He is my greatest friend on earth. From his lips God spoke to me, and shewed me the Saviour I now enjoy. I bid him farewell awhile, I will be ready to welcome him on that happy shore where we shall know as we are known. Give my sincere love to that dear young man, Mr. G. P.; I love him also, and pray that God may prosper his labours: my love to Mr. and Mrs. C. and the church at large: I dearly love them all, and thank them for the good they have done me. I have in return, ever mentioned them in my feeble petitions at a throne of grace, and now my last prayer at that throne for them is, that they may hold on, and hold out to the end; loving each other as Christ has commanded, that they may join me in that triumphant song above, where parting is no more." In my last interview with him, he repeated his experience nearly word for word, as before, I prayed with him and parted from him in hopes to have seen him again; but on Feb. 4, 1813, he finished the days of his pilgrimage with the following words: "All is well! all is well for heaven! I am now happy!" and fell asleep in Jesus. This testimony was given me by some who were near him at the time, and who said, "We never saw a man like this man."

Now, my brother, I have given you a concise and true account of your son in the gospel, I have only to add, he was an amiable character, esteemed by the profane as well as the religious, and his name in the regiment is frequently mentioned with great respect.

Your affectionate brother in the Gospel,

CHARLES WOOD:

June 3, 1816, died Mr. W. SMITH, a member of the G. B. church at Sawley. He was born near that village; and in the early part of life, was brought to a concern for salvation, through the instrumentality of John Tibbutts, a pious friend who then lived at Sawley. After labouring for some time under deep conviction, his mind was set at liberty under a sermon by Mr. F. Smith: when the glorious text, 2 Cor. v. 19, was made of great use to him. Soon after this, he settled at Long-Eaton, and opened his house for the preaching the gospel. Thence he removed into Bedfordshire, where he sunk the greatest part of his property. But though deprived of earthly means of support, he retained his trust in God: which never forsook him in all the difficulties which he endured. He spent the latter part of his life as servant, in various places of Derbyshire. In this humble station, his conduct was so exemplary, and his conversation so heavenly, that it was evident to all observers that he had been with Jesus. He was always ready, on proper occasions, to testify what God had done for his soul; as well as to warn the sinner of the bitter consequences of continuing in his wicked course; and was made the instruments of fixing conviction on the minds of several which afterwards issued in a happy conversion.

He was remarkable for a constant and steady faith in his Saviour, not only for the blessings of a spiritual nature; but also for all needful supplies of temporal good. He was confident, he used frequently to say, that He who spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us, would with him freely give us all things necessary for this life. Nor was his hope put to shame. God raised him friends, often in a very surprising manner, who supplied his wants in his old age, without his exertion. One generous friend in particular engaged, should all others forsake him, to take care of him till death: an act of love which will certainly be remembered by the great judge, who has declared, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Our deceased friend was once offered considerable property if he would leave his religious connections, but he prudently answered: "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

Mr. Smith had been for more than fifty years a member of G. B. churches; was an Israelite indeed, in whom there was

no guile; and held fast the beginning of his confidence firm to the end. His last illness was only of three days duration. He expired in great composure, expressing his confidence in his saviour, who he said was precious to him in the hour of death. His remains were interred in the G. B. burying ground at Sawley, and the event improved from Isa. xii. 2: "God is my salvation, I will not be afraid," &c.

YOUTHS' MUSEUM.

The happy death of two Sunday Scholars.

A few years ago, one of the teachers of the General Baptist Sunday school, Nottingham, observed, amongst the higher classes of girls, a more than ordinary seriousness, and an unusual desire to be informed on religious subjects. He determined, therefore, to select out such and form them into a society, for the purpose of giving them more particular attention; and, if possible, of fixing more firmly the character of his charge. MARY SMITH was one of this juvenile company. Delicate in her constitution, seriousness pervaded her conduct, though she was troubled with a fretful and peevish temper: a failing which engaged the particular attention of her teacher, and the efforts used to amend it, were not altogether in vain.

In this society, she apparently began to imbibe the spirit and favour of Him, whom to know is life eternal. But the most promising flower must fade, however delightful and agreeable it may be: a wasting consumption, with slow but certain steps, withered her in the blossom of life. She expired in the seventeenth year of her age. Though so long approaching, death was not anticipated by her, until the complaint had taken firm hold: long she entertained the delusive idea that she should recover. The remarks of her father, after a conversation with a friend, more particularly discovered the state of her mind. "Mary," said he, "Mr. S. thinks you are in a decline." After a short pause, she said, "Well, father; I am not afraid to die." "No!" exclaimed he. "No; for I know that Jesus loves me, and I love him." As the period of her dissolution drew nearer, her relish for spiritual things and heavenly conversation increased. Though very shy and diffident with strangers, the presence of her teachers would light up her countenance, and shew that her mind was at once happy and

serene. She was much in prayer, and particularly fond of an hymn out of her school book, entitled, "Christ all in all."

The Lord's day preceding her death, her teacher read and spoke to her upon the glories of heaven, and of those who should be the partakers of them. This produced a very pleasing effect upon her mind which was visible in her countenance. She frequently said, "I am not afraid of death, for I know that Jesus loves me;" and in this frame she continued to the last; expressing her reliance on the mercy of God, through Jesus Christ.

JOHN LITCHFIELD, died in October, 1815, aged fourteen. Truly applicable to this boy's situation were those well known lines,

"Afflictions are my daily lot,
"And sorrows press me down."

Death summoned a very tender father during the past year, to the tribunal of heaven. His mother, now the only guardian of the youth, would sometimes ask him if he could not recollect any thing which his teachers in the Sunday school had said. "Yes," he would reply, "but I have not thought so much as I should have done." He was soon after taken ill, when he appeared very thoughtful and was fond of reading and meditation. His mother took these opportunities therefore, of occasionally introducing the subject of death, and the necessity of being prepared for it. His mind thus became more impressed with divine things, and he was directed to Jesus as the friend and saviour of sinners.

About two months after, he called his parent to his bedside, and said: "O mother, don't be distressed any more about me, I have been praying to God to take away my sins: and I feel that he has, I know that Christ died for me." He then repeated those words of Dr. Watt's:

Lord, didst thou send thy son to die,
For such a guilty wretch as I;

and calling one of his sisters to read the whole hymn to him, he exclaimed, "This is just what I feel." Frequently after, he was heard repeating these lines. In July he lost his eyesight, and continued blind to his death. When thus insensible to surrounding objects, he was never heard to fret or murmur: and though greatly afflicted, he did not repine at the hand that

was upon him. "I have no desire to live," he would often say: "I had rather go to my Redeemer. There is nothing here before my eyes but sin and wickedness." A few days before he died, he said to his friends: "Death has no sting for me, I know that my Redeemer liveth." His teachers frequently visited him; to whom he gave the most satisfactory evidence of his interest in the blood of Christ. He rejoiced that he had such teachers, and that he ever came into the Sunday school. We have good reason to hope that he is now happy in that state where there is no more sin, and where the inhabitants never say, "We are sick."

CONFERENCES.

The LEICESTERSHIRE and NOTTINGHAMSHIRE CONFERENCE was held at *Hugglescote*, April 16, 1816, when a considerable number of ministers and representatives were present. Mr. Goadby opened with prayer in the morning the meeting, and Mr. Felkin preached from Heb. xiii. 8. The conference earnestly recommend it to the churches to afford the friends at Ilkiston and Smalley the best assistance they can, during their destitute state; and desire the brethren at Ilkiston to apply to the different churches by letter, as before. In answer to a request from our friends at Fleckney, the conference recommend it to such churches as have not collected for them to help them as soon as possible. Mr. Stevenson is requested to write to Mr. Cooper, at Nantwich, and make some necessary enquiries respecting the meeting-house and cause in that place against next conference. The church at Forncett St. Peter's desire to be assisted in purchasing a meeting-house, and Mr. Deacon is directed to desire Mr. Hall to write to the churches that have not collected for them, giving a simple statement of their case. Mr. Stevenson preached in the evening from Psa. iv. 3.

This Conference met again at *Wimsewold*, June 4, 1816, and was well attended; Mr. Pike preached in the morning from Gal. vi. 14: and, in the evening, Mr. Goadby from 1 Cor. xv. 58. Agreed, that the Association next year be held at Castle Donington. Received a case from Cauldwell respecting the interest at Burton-upon-Trent: and Mr. Pike was desired to go over and enquire into the real state of things there, and

report the same to the next conference. A letter of thanks was received from the church at Knipton for the ministerial aid afforded them; a letter was also received from the church at Nottingham requesting the conference to take into consideration the propriety of undertaking a foreign mission to some part of the world. After a full discussion, it was resolved, "That the subject appears to be of such infinite importance, that the conference recommend it to the most serious consideration of the general body, at the next association. And that previous to the association a copy of this resolution be sent to every church." A letter was received from Namptwich respecting the interest there. The consideration of the case referred to the association. The next conference to be at Duffield Messrs. Stevenson and Orton to preach.

The LINCOLNSHIRE CONFERENCE was held at *Gosberton*, April 16, 1816. The ministers present were Messrs. Jarrom, Rogers, Binns, Bissill, Bampton, Pocklington, Bullock, and Everard. In the morning Mr. Everard prayed, and Mr. Bissill preached from Isa. xlviii. 10. "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." At this conference Messrs. Jarrom and Ewen were requested to visit Chatteris, and proceed as they thought best with respect to hiring the meeting-house in that place. Mr. Binns was also desired to go over to Forcett St. Peter's, to assist the friends in that place, and to preach for them: and a supply was arranged for St. Ives. Mr. Rogers preached in the evening from Rom. iv. 5. "Now to him that worketh not," &c.

This conference met again at *Wisbeach*; June 6, 1816, and was attended by Messrs. Jarrom, Ewen, Rogers, Pocklington, William Smith, Everard, Binns, James Smith, Scott, Bampton, Paine, Green, and Bullock. In the morning, Mr. James Smith prayed, and Mr. Everard preached from Gal. vi. 14. In the evening, Mr. Bampton prayed, and Mr. Rogers preached from Matt. vi. 10. This meeting made an arrangement of supplies for St. Ives: agreed to present a case to the ensuing association requesting it to consider whether something could not be done in favour of foreign missions; appointed a meeting to be held early on the following morning to facilitate missionary exertions; and requested Mr. Ewen to hire the meeting-house, formerly occupied by the General Baptists at Chatteris. In

conformity to the stated regulations of this conference Mr. Jarrom acted as chairman, and Mr. W. Bampton as scribe.

The LONDON CONFERENCE was held at *Chatham, Kent*, April 17, 1816. Mr. D. Taylor was chosen chairman, Mr. Compton, moderator, and Mr. Hobbs, Scribe. The state of the churches upon the whole encouraging. At this meeting it was recommended:—That the ministers connected with this conference, do punctually fulfil their engagements, by attending the appointed meetings; and in case of their being unavoidably absent, that they send a written account of the state of their churches. That all the members of our churches carefully attend all the means of grace, such as daily, family, and private prayer; all public ordinances, church-meetings, and particularly the supper of our blessed Lord, which is so affecting a memorial of his atoning sacrifice for the pardon of our sins and our complete and eternal redemption. On Tuesday evening, the 16th, Mr. Compton prayed and Mr. Purcell preached from I Cor. iii. 4. "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received," &c. "On Wednesday evening Mr. Hobbs prayed, Mr. Compton preached from Prov. xii. 26. first clause. "The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour," after which Mr. D. Taylor preached from Acts xiii. 38, 39. "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, &c. The next conference to be held at Berkhamstead, Herts, Oct. 2, 1816, Mr. Bicknell and Mr. D. Taylor to preach; or, in case of failure, Mr. Parcell and Mr. G. Compton. Mr. Robert Compton, to preach on Tuesday evening; or in case of failure, Mr. E. Sexton.

GENERAL BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

Considerable attention to the subject of Missions to heathen nations has, for some time past, been excited in different parts of the New Connection. The Lincolnshire conference, after repeated discussion, concluded, that it would be more prudent, in present circumstances, to assist the Particular Baptist Mission, than to attempt a separate one. But the church at Nottingham, roused by some local circumstances, became more sanguine in the cause, and ventured to commence a subscription. They likewise recommended the subject to the consideration of

the Midland conference : and that meeting addressed a note to all the churches in the connection ; requesting them to attend to the subject, and send their representatives properly instructed, to discuss it at the ensuing association.

The subject was accordingly brought before the association at Boston, in the form of a case from the midland Conference ; and after considerable deliberation, it was resolved unanimously, "that this association heartily approves of a foreign General Baptist Mission ; and recommends it to the friends of the measure, to form themselves immediately into a society for the prosecution of this important object."

Encouraged by this resolution, several meetings were held, in the intervals of the business of the association, which were respectably attended. At these meetings a society was formed, under the designation of "The General Baptist Missionary Society ;" and a number of regulations respecting its object and the means of pursuing it, were cordially adopted. Mr. R. Seals of Nottingham was requested to act as Treasurer, and Mr. J. Pike, of Derby, as secretary for the ensuing year : and a number of friends, in various parts of the kingdom, were chosen as the first annual committee, "to diffuse information on the subject, to solicit subscriptions and donations, preparatory to the ulterior objects of the society ; and to watch those leadings of Providence which may direct to the scene of future operations, and point out men suited to the work." The zeal and liberality displayed at these meetings were highly encouraging, and afford good ground to hope well of the future success of this infant institution.

As the committee will doubtless take prompt and effectual methods to make known the formation, nature, and regulations of this society to every church, in the New Connection, we say no more at present. But as the noble efforts made by others for carrying the religion of Jesus to the benighted nations of the heathen have always claimed the peculiar attention of the Editor of this miscellany, it will certainly afford him greater pleasure to record the progress and success of the General Baptist Mission in the G. B. R. : and he trusts that the transactions of this newly formed society will give additional interest to his future numbers.

MEETING HOUSE RE-OPENED.

On the 25th of September, 1815, was re-opened for public worship, the G. B. meeting-house at Loughborough. The services of the day were performed by the following ministers: the Rev. Robert Smith of Nottingham, introduced the worship by reading the scriptures and prayer: the Rev. J. D. Pike of Derby, preached from Heb. x. 25: to him succeeded the Rev. T. Tolier, of Kettering, from 2 Cor. vi. 1, 2: and, in the evening, the Rev. R. Alliott, of Nottingham, preached from Luke ii. 14. The services were both well attended, especially in the evening; the place being very much crowded. The collection amounted to something more than eighty-six pounds. This appears a considerable sum; but it will appear *inconsiderable*, when compared with the whole expence of the enlargement, which it is believed is upwards of one thousand pounds. Including the collection at the re-opening, little short of six hundred pounds, has been subscribed, and that principally by the members of the church. A debt however, of more than four hundred pounds, remains as yet unprovided for. As the church at Loughborough has never been backward to assist her sister churches, when they stood in need of assistance, it is hoped, that her application for their friendly aid, in the removal of her present burden, will not be in vain.

REVIEW of NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE INCARNATION OF THE WORD: a Discourse, preached before the G. B. Conference at the Re-opening of the Baptist Meeting-house, Kegworth, Dec. 26, 1815, by THOMAS ORTON. 8vo. pp. iv. and 26. price 1s. Chamberlain. Leicester.

This sermon is founded on the well known text, John i. 14. "The Word was made flesh," &c. After a few striking introductory remarks on the simplicity of language and sublimity of thought, observable in the writings of the apostle John, which, when compared with his want of literary advantages, furnish strong evidence that what he taught and what he wrote was not of himself, but of God, the preacher proposes to notice: "1. The subject of incarnation; the *Word*. 2. The nature and design of his incarnation. And 3. The glory visible during his abode with men."

1. The Word in the text intends, in the opinion of the author, "Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah, the Son of God." This he proves, by shewing,—that this appellation was applied, by the Jews, to signify the Messiah—that they ascribed to him, as the Word, the creation of the world: in which they have been followed by the inspired apostle. 2 Pet. iii. 5.—and that some heathen writers mention the divine Word as the power of God; the Father and Maker of all things; the uncreated Creator, &c. Hence he argues, that Christ the Word, being the Creator of all things, must have existed before all things: which entirely coincides with the language of the New Testament. John viii. 5, 8. Heb. xiii. 8. Rev. i. 8. Col. i. 16, 17 —A word, the author further observes, "is the mind rendered audible or visible." If so, then, it will be reasonable to believe, that there is the same relation subsisting between God and Christ his Word, as there is between our minds and our words; that is, that he is of the same essence. "In him the eternal mind is rendered visible." The same conclusion follows still more forcibly, if the Greek term be rendered *reason*, as it sometimes signifies. From the whole, the preacher infers, not only the pre-existence of Christ but his proper divinity: an inference in unison with the current language of the sacred writers, who ascribe to him the essential attributes of Deity. 2. The *nature* of the incarnation, according to this author, consisted in the divine Word assuming a human body: and though the Word did not literally become flesh; yet it was so intimately united with it, that it might properly be said to be his own body: The *design* of this incarnation was to restore fallen man; by submitting to death as an atonement for the sins of men, so that God might be just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth. 3. His *glory* was visible during his dwelling among us—by the allegiance shewn to him by all things in heaven and earth,—by his working miracles by his own power, and teaching doctrines by his own authority,—by the number and nature of the miracles he wrought,—and, by the repeated attestations of his mission, with which the disciples were favoured from heaven. The preacher improves the whole by observing, that this subject should teach us the love of Christ, excite us to act for him, and encourage sinners to trust in him.

From this brief analysis of the discourse, our readers will form some idea of its contents; which we trust will induce

them to peruse it. The composition in general does credit to the author, and evinces the possession of a talent, which we lament has been so long buried in the earth. We hope the possessor will now diligently improve it for the promotion of the cause of truth, and the benefit of the connection to which he belongs; that when his Lord comes to reckon with him, he may be found a good and faithful servant. But though the reasoning is frequently strong, and the argument conclusive; yet we are afraid, that the worthy author has, in some degree, weakened the general effect by confining himself too closely to his text. This has prevented him from treating the subject in that decisive manner which, we believe, he would otherwise have done. Of this, however, he seems perfectly aware: as appears from the conclusion of the advertisement, prefixed to the sermon: with which, as it contains, in our opinion, an accurate character of the discourse, we shall conclude our remarks.—“The writer,” he says, “wishes it to be particularly remembered, that what he has said in the following discourse respecting the proper divinity of Christ, is not considered as the main arguments on which that fundamental doctrine of christianity rests, nor the most direct—but only such as necessarily follow from his being called *the Word*. With these he has endeavoured briefly to shew the coincidence of scripture.”

AGAINST SABBATH-BREAKING. Pp. 8.

TO THE YOUNG: *a Delusive Question Answered*. Pp. 12.

Wilkins, Derby. Kent, Londoff.

These are two small tracts, lately published, as we understand, by the G. B. Religious Tract Society, Derby. They are on a plan rather uncommon: each consisting of concise and impressive illustrations of various short answers to one leading question.—Thus, in the first, the question is: *'Tis true 'tis Sunday: but what harm can there be in taking a cheerful walk? Why will you not go with us?* To this the replies are: 1. Because it is profaning the sabbath. 2. Because sabbath-breaking is one of the worst and most baneful of sins. 3. Because God often punishes it in this world. 4. Because God will punish it in the next world. 5. Because I will not set a bad example to others. 6. Because I should lose the good I may gain. 7. Because, if my soul is safe, I would not endan-

ger it. 8. Because, if I am not safe, I have something more important than your delights to mind. 9. Because I would not change God's blessings into curses. 10. Because such pleasant walks, will, in the end, be sad ones. 11. Because I must give an account to God, of every sabbath. 12. Because this sabbath may perhaps be my last. Each of these answers is exemplified or enforced: and the tract closes with an earnest address to such as are guilty of breaking the sabbath.

The enquiry at the head of the second tract is: *You are but young; you have plenty of time: Why should you begin religion so soon?* The answers are: 1. Because religion is the one thing needful. 2. Because I am not too young to die. 3. Because our state is dreadful till we become interested in the Saviour. 4. Because I am under infinite obligations to live to my Redeemer. 5. Because I may never live to see old age. 6. Because, if I should reach old age, I may have no heart to repent. 7. Or, if I desire to repent, I may find the day of repentance past. 8. Because God calls for my youth. 9. Because early religion is peculiarly acceptable to my God and Saviour. 10. Because I would not give to God the Devil's leavings. 11. Because I cannot begin to be happy too soon. After pertinent and striking observations on each of these replies, a copy of verses on the importance of religion, especially early religion, concludes the address.

We think these small pieces are well adapted to rouse the attention, inform the understanding, and affect the hearts of those to whom they are addressed. We have given this particular account of them with a view to influence our readers to engage heartily in distributing them on every occasion when they are likely to produce a good effect.

JOHN HOBSON: *a Tale of the Times.* Pp. 12. price 2d.
Kent. London.

This is a pleasing little story, told in simple verse: intended to recommend Sunday Schools, Adult Schools, Bible Associations, &c. to the lower ranks of society. Though we certainly cannot rank the author high as a poet; yet we think his performance may be useful for the purposes intended, and trust that it will be widely circulated.

RELIGIOUS ANNIVERSARIES.

A short notice of the *Anniversaries* of the numerous societies connected with religious objects, which have been held in London, during the last few months, will, we presume, be interesting to many of our readers, who have not the opportunity of seeing other reports.

The *Methodist Missionary Society*, connected with the London district, commenced on Wednesday, April 24, and continued several days. Sermons were preached at the principal places of worship belonging to that denomination, in the metropolis, and collections made. On Thursday evening, the general meeting was held, at the New Chapel, City Road, when Dr. Adam Clarke being called to the chair, an interesting report of the last year's proceedings was read, and various animated speeches delivered. The affairs of this mission appear encouraging; and their labourers in foreign parts are diligent, and in a good measure successful.

The *Society for the support of Sunday Schools*, held a general meeting, at the City of London Tavern, April 29, 1816: S. Favell, Esq. in the chair. The report, read by the Secretary, Mr. T. Smith, stated, that the society had, during the last year, added two hundred and seventy-nine schools to their list, which raised the number, assisted by this society, to four thousand seven hundred and ninety-one. Since its formation, in 1785, this society has given to various schools upwards of four hundred and thirty thousand spelling books, eighty-seven thousand testaments, and eight thousand bibles. The expenditure of the last year has exceeded its income by nearly two hundred pounds; but the Committee act under the persuasion, that the same Providence who points to the extension of their operations, will furnish the means of carrying them into effect.

Thursday, April 30, the anniversary of the *Church Missionary Society*, was held at Freemason's Hall; Lord Gambier in the chair. The bishop of Gloucester and several members of parliament, upwards of one hundred clergymen, and one thousand lay members attended. Two missionaries and their wives were dismissed from this meeting to their labours in India, to whom the Bishop of Gloucester made a parting address. During the last year, the receipts of this society have amounted to seventeen thousand pounds, and its expences have been

nearly equal. This respectable society appears to be diligently and successfully pursuing its great object in various parts of the world, and new openings are constantly presenting. It has committees at Calcutta, Madrass, and New South Wales, who are establishing schools and exerting themselves in promoting the religious instruction of their pagan neighbours. Settlements are also forming at New Zealand, Malta, and Sierra Leone, where upwards of two thousand negro children, liberated from slavery, are waiting for christian instruction. The collection of the day amounted to nearly three hundred pounds.

The Anniversary of the *London Itinerant Society* was held, at the New London Tavern, May 7th, at six o'Clock in the morning: S. Robinson, Esq. in the chair, and was numerously attended. The object of this society is to support Sunday Schools, and the preaching of the gospel in villages within ten miles of London, and in various instances, the divine blessing has attended its efforts. In the different Schools connected with this Institution, six hundred and fifty scholars are instructed in the truths of christianity: and more than twelve hundred souls attend the preaching of the gospel every Lord's day, at opportunities afforded by it. A resolution was adopted at this meeting, which it is hoped will have the happiest effects: namely, "That the Committee shall take the earliest measures towards endeavouring to establish a school, in each village, for the instruction of adults unable to read."

(To be continued.)

POETRY.

ADDRESS TO A COW.

The late Mr. R. Robinson, of Cambridge, had a disagreeable altercation with a bookseller, respecting the publication of one of his works, which caused him much vexation, and might have ended greatly to his disadvantage, had not his friends interposed their good offices, and brought it to an amicable conclusion. The most active and zealous of these friends was Mr. Henry Keene of Walworth, on whom Mr. R. forced the present of a cow, as a token of his gratitude. As the bookseller fortunately bore the name of one of the tyrants of the forest, Mr. R's. playful

imagination took the hint, and accompanied the heifer with the following lines. Though they lay no claim to any superior poetic excellence; yet they contain many valuable ideas; and, as exhibiting the relaxation of a superior mind, are interesting and worth preserving.

TO HENRY KEENE, ESQ. *Walworth, Surry.*

These are to certify good men and true,
That I have convey'd the white heifer to you;
To have and to hold, for ever and aye,
On condition of finding her good grass and good hay.

CAMB. Dec. 20, 1774.

R. R.

Go, gentle Rockett, serve that faithful friend,
Who sav'd your master from the spotted fiend;
Go, milk white messenger, to Walworth go,
And be the gen'rous Harry's own milch cow.
When Godfrey doffs his hat with low'ring brow,
And hacks out—"Sir—I've lost—the Rockett cow,"
I'll ease his heart, by telling him a tale;
And make him snicker as with harvest ale.

The heifer, Godfrey, is to Walworth gone,
To serve my friend; my friend, I had but one,
For know, my boy, there was a dismal day,
When I, your master, travelling, lost my way.
Forth from a thicket, where I dreamt no ill,
A tyger spruug, I think I see him still:
Fast in his horrid fangs, he clasp'd me round;
And foaming laid me sprayling on the ground.
Ah! Godfrey, had you heard your master cry:
"We heard you, Sir, but none of us were nigh."
Well, one was nigh, and he a humane man.
Kind and intrepid, out the hero ran:
Touch'd to the quick to see my piteous case,
The tear of friendship trickled down his face
He stamp'd his foot, and fetch'd one deadly blow,
The tyger struggled, and his hold let go.
I sprang, and fell at my deiv'ers feet,
And vow'd an off'ring should his mansion greet.
Godfrey, observe. Some hundred years ago,
Before mankind did God, the true God know,

They daily offer'd to the unknown good,
 A cup of wine, or milk, or salt, or blood;
 And when in trouble, try'd to bribe his pow'r,
 By promising to make the off'ring more.
 But when the God who lives and reigns above,
 Unfolded to his creatures heav'nly love:
 Magnificent he shone; and thus he said:
 " I'll take no bull, no goat, no wine, no bread:
 Yet call on me, in all your darksome days,
 I'll set you free, and you shall give me praise."
 Ah! Godfrey, gratitude's a painful thing!
 High heaves my heart, some off'ring I must bring,
 What can I do? God will not have it. Then
 To ease myself, I'll force that best of men,
 That actor for my God, in that sad scene,
 The great, the good, the gen'rous Henry Keene.
 Go, fav'rite heifer, browse beneath his eye,
 Crop his rich herbage, near his garden lie,
 Lie full in sight, the live long summer's day,
 And round him, when he walks, my homage pay.
 See when he comes, his consort by his side,
 The best of wives, his virtue, and his pride.
 Twice, ev'ry day, your udder fill, nor fail,
 Gently to low, for Molly and the pail.
 She'll milk you softly: don't you kick her down,
 Nor whisk your tail about her sunday gown.
 Methinks I see the full-froth'd pail go in,
 I see that thirsty heathen, Griffiths, grin:
 " O, hang the cow, why don't she porter give:
 By beer, and not by milk, mankind must live."
 " Not so," the good old father Winch replies,
 His face a cherub's, and a dove's his eyes,
 " Mistress, I'll have some milk: O, I could live,
 Though heaven had nothing else but milk to give."
 I knew a widow, who with one red cow,
 Brought up six sons,—there's no such women now.
 Milk was the beverage of paradise;
 Milk, harmless milk, that never gend'red vice.
 Run, Judith, run: your mistress rings for cream.
 See there the circle sits,—the circle I esteem.

There sits the *governor*, like ancient Jove,
 The man made up of all that mortals love;
 There sits the queen of all domestic peace,
 And there the man of God, with looks of grace :
 There Isaac simpers, and there Stacey stares :
 And there, perchance, some stranger unawares.
 But all are wise, and every one loves cream?
 Ev'n tea's insipid without that, they deem,

But what thy milk ? and what thy luscious cream?
 Deceitful cow ! there's magic in the theme.

Thy silver fluid manufacturers know,
 Simple and mixt in many channels flow.
 With thee, the Baker shortens his hot roll ;
 With milk and rum, the vintner fills the bowl.
 With milk, the plaisterer silvers o'er the wall ;
 With milk, the poultry's whiten'd for the stall ;
 With milk, the farmer fats both pork and calf ;
 And of a pudding milk's the better half.
 With milk, the wench stirs up the ploughman's pies,
 And fries nice Shrove-tide pancakes for good boys.
 Cheesecakes and custards from the milk pail flow,
 And thence comes syllabubs and trifles too :
 Thence curds and whey, posset, and white pot come ;
 Thence many a nick-nack at the farmer's home.
 See how the flummary on the table shakes,
 And how the broad flat hasty pudding quakes ;
 The gay peas-pottage, and the gooseberry fool,
 The soft milk-broth ; light food for boys at school.

When Doctor Flundell has spent all his brains,
 And could not cure the patient's racking pains,
 A poultice and a glyster milk became,
 Perform'd the cure, and stole poor Flundell's fame.

Yet what are these ? and what ten thousand more ?
 Thy staple traffic, who can e'er explore ?
 Thy weekly butter and thy daily cheese,
 Employ, and keep some thousands at their ease.
 Thine annual calf, thy rich manure, thine all,
 Demand a tribute, both from great and small.

Go, universal blessing, Rockett, go :
 Long live and preach, and let your master know,
 God gave a noble present, when he gave a cow.

THE
GENERAL BAPTIST REPOSITORY.

No. XLI.—Vol. VII.

*SELECT PASSAGES of SCRIPTURE. illustrated
from the SCENERY, CUSTOMS and MANNERS
of the EAST.*

IN the countries of the east, they are very indulgent to their slaves and domestic servants. They frequently give their daughters in marriage to them, even when they have no son : and thus the slave becomes the heir to his master's property. This was the case formerly : when Sheshan gave his daughter to Jarba his servant to wife. 1 Chron. ii. 34, 35. It is not unusual for a rich man who has no children, though he may have other near relatives, to purchase some young slave, educate him in his own religion, adopt him as his son, and make him his heir. This was the case with Abraham, when he despaired of having children, and one born in his house was his heir. Gen. xv. 3. Sometimes these young slaves became great men in the state, and the favourites of princes. Thus one Bey of Egypt made six of his slaves princes. This was also sometimes the case in former days. Joseph, though he entered Egypt as a slave, was promoted to the second dignity in the kingdom. Gen. xli. 43. And Daniel, a Jewish captive, was advanced to be prime minister to the king of Babylon. Daniel. vi. 1, 3.

But the Tartars, and other eastern nations, frequently sell the prisoners whom they take in war for slaves, and at a very low rate : the children being frequently sold for a crown each, exchanged for an inconsiderable quantity of provisions, or played for, as a stake, at games of chance. To transactions like these the prophet alludes, when he complains : " They have cast lots for my people ; and have given a boy for a harlot, and a girl for wine, that they might drink." Joel iii. 3.

When the people in Egypt and other parts of the east attend a funeral, or wish to express affliction, they generally let their hair hang loose about their shoulders: This was the manner in which the weeping penitent approached our Saviour. Luke viii. 38, 44. When in captivity, or in any other circumstances of peculiar distress, the women shaved off the hair from their heads, and thus made themselves bald. Deut. xxi. 12, 13. Jer. xvi. 6. xlvii. 5. xlviii. 37. On the contrary, when the eastern ladies wish to adorn themselves for some joyful occasion, they collect their hair into one large lock, plaiting with great art, adorning it with jewels, and binding it with ribbons. This illustrates the meaning of the prophet, when he threatens the luxuriant daughters of Israel: "It shall come to pass, that instead of well-set hair, there shall be baldness." Isa. iii. 24.

The Arabian women wear several rings of metal round their ankles; and some of them have little bells attached to these rings. In walking, they slip one against another, and make a tinkling noise; of which the young women are very proud, and generally use a gait that increases the sound. This probably explains what the same prophet alludes to, when he speaks of the "tinkling ornaments about the feet of the daughters of Zion;" and says, "they walk, and mince as they go; making a tinkling noise with their feet." Isa. iii. 16—18.

It is the custom in almost all parts of the east, for the women to wear rings in the left nostril, which is bored for the purpose. The rings are generally of gold, and a ruby between two pearls is usually placed on them. This custom appears to have been in use at the time of the Old Testament. Such nose jewels, are mentioned Isa. iii. 21.; and to this custom the wise man alludes, when he says, "As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman without discretion. Prov. xi. 22. Our translators appear to have been unacquainted with this practice, and therefore have substituted forehead and face for nose: as in Ezek. xvi. 12. which they render, "I put a jewel on thy forehead;" when the original requires, "I put a jewel in thy nose: thus also they make Abraham's servant say of Rebecca; "I put the ear-ring on her face:" instead of, I put a ring in her nose." Gen. xxiv. 47.

The looking glasses in the east were made of polished metal: this explains Exod. xxxviii. 8. where Moses is said to have

made the brazen laver of the looking glasses, which the women who assembled to worship at the door of the tabernacle had presented for that purpose. In some cases, the mirrors were made of polished steel, and were convex on one side, and hollow on the other. It was probably to one of these that Elibu alluded, when he asks: "Hast thou with him spread out the sky, which is strong, and like a molten looking glass?"

In Arabia, it is the business of the women to buy and sell things woven of silk and cotton, as well as the raw materials before they are woven; while the men carry on the traffic in wheat, barley, and other fruits of the earth. Such appears to have been the custom in Judea in Solomon's time, who describes a good wife, as "making fine linen and selling it; and delivering girdles to the merchants. Prov. xxxi. 24.

In several places of the east, when the corn is winnowed, it is lodged in repositories under ground: two hundred of which are sometimes found together; the least containing four hundred bushels. They are very frequent in the fields round the villages, in the vicinity of Aleppo. Other fruits of the earth were also laid up in a similar manner. Are not these the "treasures in the field of wheat, barley, oil and honey," mentioned Jer. xli. 8?

In Egypt, the granary of Joseph, a large warehouse where the corn that is paid as a tax to the Grand Seignior is deposited, is carefully sealed by the inspectors or officers to whom it is intrusted: this is done, by covering the locks of the doors with a handful of clay, and impressing the mark of their seals on the clay. This custom, which is not uncommon in other parts of the east, may illustrate the assertion, Job. xxxviii. 14. "It is turned as clay to the seal."

When the memory of any transaction, either good or bad, is to be perpetuated, it is usual in the countries round Palestine, to set up a large stone for a pillar, or to collect a heap of stones in the form of a pillar, by way of a monument: and the persons who are present at the erection of such a monument, generally each bring a stone, and place it on the pillar or heap, as a token that they are witnesses to the fact intended to be commemorated. It is also common for travellers when they pass such a monument, to lay a stone on the heap, as a token of veneration or detestation. There are various instances of

similar monuments in the Old Testament: such was the pillar set up by Jacob, in commemoration of the treaty between him and Laban. Gen. xxxi. 44—55. Such the twelve stones set up by Joshua, in memory of the passage of the Israelites over Jordan. Josh. iv. 9. Of a similar nature were the heaps of stones raised over the graves of Achar and Absalom. Josh. vii. 26. 2 Sam. xviii. 17, 18.

Medicines are generally, in the country and villages of the east, applied externally as fomentations or ointments to the stomach and belly: and these outward applications and friction are almost the only remedies used, where the ignorance of the inhabitants prevents them from venturing to administer internal medicines. Might not the wise man allude to a practice like this, when he says of the fear of the Lord, "It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones." Prov. iii. 8.

In Persia and Turkey, the beds are not raised from the ground on bed posts, but are composed of light and soft cotton mattresses, laid on the floors of the apartments. The rich and great possess a large quantity of such beds, which are laid up in a room appropriated to the purpose, called on that account, a *chamber of beds*. It is probable, that it was in such a chamber of beds, that Jehosheba concealed young Joash for six years, during the reign of Athaliah. 2 Kings. xi. 2.—2 Chron. xxii. 2.

It is a singular, though very common practice among the orientals, when they wish to express their displeasure against a person, to rail at his parents. This practice prevails very extensively at present, and appears to have been adopted in early times. When Saul was greatly irritated against his own son Jonathan, he styles him, "Thou son of a perverse and rebellious woman." 1 Sam. xx. 30. And Elisha, when exasperated against a wicked prince who had sent to take away his life, calls him "a son of a murderer," 2 Kings vi. 32.

The Dervises, a kind of Mahometan monks common in the eastern countries, when they wish to indulge in meditation, tie their thighs against their bellies with their girdles, and lay their faces upon their knees; considering this the best posture for recollection. Does not this resemble the posture of Elijah, when "he cast himself upon the earth, and put his face between his knees?" 1 Kings xviii. 42.

The eastern warriors carried their bows in cases of leather or cloth, hung to their girdles; and never unsheathed them, unless when preparing for action. To uncover or make naked the bow became therefore a proverbial expression for preparing for an attack. To this the prophet alludes, when representing the anger of the Lord he says, "Thy bow was made quite naked." Hab. iii. 9.

The outward dress of the orientals consists in a loose flowing robe, which is thrown across the shoulders and wraps over the breast; so that the arms are confined and covered. When the wearer, therefore, has occasion for any exercise of his arms, he stretches forth his naked arm from under his robe. To make bare the arm, has thus become an usual expression for exerting power or engaging in action. This gives a sublime meaning to the prophet's language, when he represents the Almighty as engaged for the salvation of his people: "The Lord," he says, "has made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." Isa. lii. 10.

To alight from the beasts on which they ride when they meet any person, is esteemed in the east, a token of great respect. They descend from their asses when they approach the tombs of their holy men; and oblige Christians to dismount when they meet any of the officers of the Mahometan armies. On the same principles, no doubt, Rebecca alighted from her ass when she saw Isaac. Gen. xxiv. 64. Achsah when she met her father. Judges i. 14. Abigail when she approached David. 1 Sam. xxv. 23. It was therefore a high condensation in the haughty Syrian Naaman, to alight from his chariot to meet the servant of the prophet Elisha. 2 Kings v. 21.

The eastern shepherds amuse themselves, while watching their flocks, with playing on a pipe made of a reed. These rude instruments are liable to frequent accidents from cracks and bruises; but as they are of small value and easily constructed, the owner breaks them in two when injured, and throws them aside with little concern. Some commentators have thought that the prophet alludes to these pipes, when, to illustrate the tenderness and care of the blessed Saviour to the

meanest of his children, he says, "a bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench." Isa. xli. 3.

The Arabs not only wound themselves, when they wish to express immoderate grief, but also when they are earnestly pleading with their superiors for obtaining an important favour. This ceremony is performed by cutting deep gashes in the arms with a knife; and is alluded to frequently by Jeremiah. xvi. 6.—xli. 5.—xlvii. 5.—xlviii. 37. And the priests of Baal when they could not obtain an answer from their idol, "cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out." 1 Kings xviii. 28. This savage practice was forbidden to the Israelites. Deut. xiv. 1.

The banks of Jordan are so beset with bushes and trees, that the water cannot be seen till you approach to the river's brink. In this thicket several sorts of wild beasts used to shelter; which being driven from their coverts by the overflowing of the waters, roamed through the adjacent country to the great terror of the inhabitants. This gives us the meaning of the prophet's allusion, "He shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan." Jer. xlix. 19.

ORIGINAL CORRESPONDENCE *between* PHILLIS WHEATLEY, the AFRICAN POETESS, and MISS JANE BULL.

(See *G. B. R.* vol. vii. pp. 116, and 131.)

LETTER III.

From Miss JANE BULL to P. WHEATLEY.

DEAR PHILLIS,

After I had relinquished the hope of hearing from you, on the 28th of May, I had the happiness of receiving your valuable and obliging Letter. You may be assured, I enjoy the most sensible pleasure from your friendship and correspondence, and must earnestly entreat the continuance of so great a favour: somewhat of a similiarity of taste and sentiment, which I presume there is betwixt us, endears you much to my regard, and gives me the warmest wishes for your welfare.

I sincerely sympathize with you under the loss you have

sustained, in the death of your mistress. That lady, I am persuaded, has been an instrument in the hand of Divine grace, in forming your mind for immortal happiness; and I doubt not, but you experience the most generous feelings of respect to her memory. May I be permitted to request a copy of those elegiac lines, which I suppose love, gratitude and sorrow must dictate on this occasion? I will not indeed forget to pray for you, that this afflictive dispensation, however painful, may be productive of your highest interest and chief good; and that you yet may be peculiarly the care of an indulgent Providence. I hope you will be so kind as to return the same act of friendship. And what a privilege it is! What an invaluable privilege! That however distant and remote kindred minds may reside from each other, they are allowed access to one beneficent Parent of the universe, through one Mediator; and that the humble worshipper, of whatever nation, climate, or tongue, is the object of his paternal regard. The ineffable Divinity is omnipresent, and ever ready to attend the supplicating prayer. Does not your heart glow with the thought? The idea it imparts is indeed noble and interesting.

You ask me "if I think there can be a real atheist:" I don't profess myself a casuist, but in answer to your interrogatory, I reply, That there are numbers of practical atheists every where to be found, who live "as without God in the world," is not to be denied: but that any one disowned the being of a God, from the calm, rational, deliberate conviction of his own mind, no such person certainly ever existed.

As you are so particularly a friend to the muses, I have again taken the liberty to insert a few lines * in the poetical way; the inaccuracies attending the poetry, your penetration will easily discover, and I doubt not but your candour and good nature will excuse them: and to you who have by experimental knowledge imbibed the spirit of such kind of writing, the subject I am persuaded will require no apology. Indeed I cannot help enjoying the most pleasing satisfaction from this consideration; that, while eminent abilities and exalted understandings are frequently employed in depreciating the gospel, and all vital internal religion, your fine genius and superior

* The verses on *Redemption*, which are inserted G. B. R. vol. vii. pp. 141, 144.

talents are engaged in the interest of the Redeemer, and in the cause of heaven. In so truly laudable an employ therefore, may the valuable efforts of your pen be greatly successful.

Your friends in this part of the world are waiting for a publication of more of your productions, who will always with the highest pleasure become purchasers. I beg you will write to me with the utmost freedom, and must earnestly request to be favoured with a letter from you as soon as convenient. I hope you will not make my negligence in writing a precedent. Accept my very respectful wishes, and believe me to be, with the greatest sincerity,

Most affectionately yours,

Boston, 25th Aug. 1774.

JANE BULL.

P. S. Mr. T. desires his christian respects may be inserted, is much obliged to you for your letter, and sincerely wishes the speedy restoration of peace and tranquillity to the American Colonies.

LETTER IV.

From P. WHEATLEY to Miss JANE BULL.

MADAM.

I have the honour of receiving your sensible and obliging letter, August 25th, the perusal of which gave me the greatest satisfaction. I am highly delighted with the prospect of the continuance of your friendly correspondence. I thank you for the warm expressions of your wishes for my welfare: a similarity of sentiments has engraved you upon my heart. Your observation upon that best of women, my mistress, are exceeding just: and I wish that this great loss may conduce to increase my ardour in pursuit after enjoyments for ever permanent and lasting.

The consideration of the inestimable privileges of our free access to the beneficent Parent of the universe, is truly great, and worthy of a Christian! Nor can be sufficiently admired; the great, the marvellous dispensation of grace, which the angels desire to look into!

You ask "if my heart does not glow with the thought."

Who for one short space can reflect on their relation to the Deity, and not kindle with a sacred fervour; yet feel a deep reverential awe before so great a Sovereign, and so great a God? But what various sensations must, at the same, time exercise us on the view of the reconciliation of the seemingly jarring attributes, justice and mercy, holiness and goodness, all pleading in favour of the state criminal, man?

You give me full satisfaction with respect to the existence of a real atheist: I believe with you there never was one from the calm and rational dictates of nature, or even the most depraved mind. That were indeed a hideous birth, a dreadful blot in the fair creation; yet there are, I am sorry to say it, by far too many practical atheists; a sad cause for shame and sorrow inexpressible.

I would have gladly obliged you with an Elegy, had I written one, on the death of my mistress. It was not want of love, gratitude, and intense affection, which prevented the sallies of my grief in Elegy of the sincerest kind; but her earnest entreaties to the contrary prevailed upon me to resist my own inclination.

I am particularly pleased with your poem on Redemption, which in my humble opinion is well executed. I cannot but pronounce you happy in the choice of your subject, and in the manner of treating it. When I become a Longinus I may perhaps find out the inaccuracies you mention. I hear, read of, and see, with the deepest astonishment, many excellent talents misapplied in depreciating the gospel of our salvation. True religion is unfashionable; it is deemed a rudeness to introduce the celestial stranger into their company. But how my heart exults in the view of a youthful pen defending the cause of religion against its potent adversaries. Go on, happy genius, and may heavenly laurels bloom around you: my sincerest wishes for your success attend you in so laudable an employment. Nor will I conceal my small talent in the earth, but by the divine assistance, improve it to the glory of the great Giver.

I thank my honoured friends in England for their generous intentions of becoming purchasers of my future productions, I wish my writings may deserve the honour! I cannot say, that I shall publish anything more very soon; though I have a volume of familiar letters in manuscript which my friends

are desirous should see the light ; and some poems on various subjects than are already published in *London*.

My master having generously given me my freedom, I am desirous of paying another visit to Great Britain, which I once saw (at least the metropolis) for six weeks ; the recovery of my health, the motive. I beg you would not write to me by the packet, for I am sorry to put you to so much expence in writing to me, and the letters are much longer in coming ; but for the future, please to send your letters to some friend in London, who will put them into any of the bags which are put up for Boston, at the New England Coffee House, Thread-needle Street. Thus we may have more frequent intercourse across the ocean. Please to present my dutiful respects to Mr. T. I thank him for his good wishes for America, which is at present in the utmost consternation. Hoping to hear from you soon, and wishing you the highest happiness, I am, invariably,

Your faithful friend and humble servant.

Boston, New England, Dec. 14, 1774.

P. WHEATLEY,

REMARKS on the **RULES** for **ADMISSION** into the **CONNECTION**, and **EXCLUSION** from it, adopted at the last **ANNUAL ASSOCIATION**.

DEAR SIR,

As the happiness and prosperity of the G. B. Connection is intimately connected with the proceedings of the annual association, permit me, through the medium of the G. B. R. to offer a few remarks on the *Resolution and Rules* "for the admission and exclusion of churches and individuals," adopted this year at Boston.

As most of your readers are doubtless in possession of the Minutes of the last association, it may be sufficient to say, that the resolution recognizes the six articles of 1770, as the permanent principles of the new connection ; and asserts the necessity of those who are admitted into it maintaining the same principles, and of excluding such as depart from them : and that Rule 1. prescribes the mode of receiving churches into the connection, and Rule 2. details the measures to be used with churches or individuals who depart from the faith or act

improperly ; concluding thus, " But if every merciful method which the association may adopt, fail of producing the desired effect, let the association proceed to take such other steps as they may think proper, and if necessary to expulsion. See Minutes. Case I. p. 15.

These rules are certainly important, and ought to be well weighed. They may affect a considerable number of Christians both of the present and future generations ; and ought to be consistent and precise. But it has been thought, that they are deficient in both these essentials of laws. In the resolution, the churches applying for admission are to satisfy the association, that they maintain the principles on which the connection was formed ; but Rule 1. only requires a statement of the applicant's religious sentiments and practices. Now a church stating its own religious sentiments, and subscribing the creeds and confessions of others, are two very different things. The first, a lovely object ; a christian society that has sentiments of its own, and is neither afraid nor ashamed to avow them : the second exhibits a servility of disposition unworthy a disciple of Christ ; a disposition to say just as others, their brethren, dictate. For, does not the resolution just repeated say, " Here is a standard for your religious sentiments which *we* have erected ; and unless you come up to it, you cannot be admitted among us ?" To churches believing the perfection of the holy scriptures and the right of private judgment, this language must be offensive. Surely such an assumption of power ought to be supported by some stronger argument, than the simple narration, that six articles were proposed, agreed upon, and signed in London, June 7th, 1770, by A. B.—C. D.—E. F. and G. H. Again the terms of the canon passed at the last association are very indefinite. Who can determine the exact application of the phrases " depart from these principles," " unbecoming the character of a christian church," " preacher of different sentiments ;" " employ," &c. Should these creed-makers be disposed to press uniformity with rigour, and punish the slightest deviation from the six articles with the same severity as the most scandalous lives, here is a law expressed in such a loose manner as may fully bear them out. Surely these things ought not so to be. The only apology for them is, that the representatives of the G. B. churches are inexperienced in the science of legislation.

Till now, their employment has been to explain and enforce the laws of Christ; and in this it is acknowledged they have excelled: but in framing decrees they are unpractised, and totally unqualified for the task.

But these are inferior considerations. To require churches desirous of joining the connection to declare their belief of the six articles, and thus make this creed the standard of orthodoxy, and to frame a law for government of the religious sentiments and practices of the churches, is, in my opinion, improper on several grounds.

It is *contrary to the plainest maxims of our Lord Jesus Christ*. "Ye know that the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them; but it shall not be so among you." "Be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren." Call no man your father on earth, for one is your father which is in heaven: neither be ye called master, for one is your master, even Christ." These passages plainly—teach the sole sovereignty of Jesus Christ among his disciples—the equality of all his disciples—the sinfulness of assuming any dominion over the religion of others—and the obligation that lies on all the subjects of Christ to resist every such assumption. But are not the rules laid down by the last association authoritative? Is it not the tone of authority to say, Let every church that shall depart from these principles be called, &c? Is it not an instance of that particular kind of authority, the exercise of which is forbidden among the disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ? It certainly is an attempt to fix, by a human standard, and by human authority, the religious sentiments of the churches of Christ: it is therefore in direct contrariety to the exclusive sovereignty of Christ, and the independence of conscience, maintained in the above scriptures. If no infringement of the rights of conscience be intended, why all this preparation? Why is a creed exhibited as a test? Why a canon formed to punish such as depart from it? Why is the association constituted a seat of inquisitorial examination and judgment? Why is expulsion threatened? It is not pretended that the scriptures direct any such mode of proceeding. No plea can justify, nor any circumstance render necessary such an act of human authority. The Lord and Judge of all condemns it. *It shall not be so among you.* It may be said that no cor₁o-

real punishments are mentioned: and it would indeed be strange if there were. But it is an act of tyranny over conscience; and however we may shudder at the thought, this is the fruitful source from which has flowed the fines, imprisonments, banishments and deaths, which, in various ages and countries, have worn out the saints of the Most High. By whomsoever the independence of conscience is invaded, and under whatever specious pretences, it will be the honour, as it is the duty of the G. B. churches, to maintain the distinguishing tenet of Protestant dissenters, "the disavowal of *all human authority* in religion?"

This resolution and these rules are *subversive of the independence of the G. B. churches*. They present us with a system entirely *new*. Hitherto each church was esteemed competent to direct its own affairs, without being subject to any foreign controul. But now there is a tribunal established, with authority to dictate the principles and practice to be maintained by each church—to determine whether they act in a manner becoming a christian church—to approve or censure their choice of a minister, according as he agrees or differs with them in doctrine. Is not then, independence, till now the glory of the G. B. churches, entirely lost? In the primitive ages of christianity, associations claimed no authority over the churches they represented. May the earliest assemblies of this nature, in which the corruptions of spiritual tyranny were unknown, be the model of ours! In Acts xv. we have an example well deserving our imitation.

These rules and the practice intended to be supported by them, are *incompatible with the principle of equality* on which the G. Baptists associate; and *repugnant to the professed design* of their annual meetings. Equality was the just and liberal ground on which the association was originally formed. Among its members were found no lawgivers, no subjects: no master, no servant: they were an assembly of equals. The design of their meeting was not to compose creeds, nor frame decrees, nor judge the brethren; but to help one another in the work of the Lord. Let the following observations be duly regarded: "they are more to be desired than gold." "Associations are of ancient date; and have been and may be either useful or hurtful, according to the design of them, and the manner in which they are conducted. If the

design be to compose creeds as standards of orthodoxy, to form decrees and enact laws for the churches of Christ, and thereby to exercise a despotic power over the consciences of men, they ought to be detested rather than encouraged. In this view, they are big with mischief; they are an affront offered to the blessed Jesus, the Lord and King of his church: and to encourage and support them is little less, than taking the crown from his head to place it on the heads of ignorant mortals. At least, to speak in the softest terms, it is diverting the minds of his subjects and servants from that book, which is the only depositum of sacred intelligence, and the sole directory in all matters of faith and practice. But, if the design of associations be to comfort and assist one another in the work of the Lord, to extend and enlarge his kingdom and interest, and to use every scriptural method to promote the unity, harmony and spiritual prosperity of the churches, by keeping their minds attentive to the word of God, and by animating their zealous regards to his truth and commands, this design is every way consistent with pure and undefiled christianity, and the accomplishment of it is a matter of vast worth and consequence." These accurate and important views of associations cannot be too highly esteemed. They are extracted from the Circular Letter for 1779, signed, in the name of the rest of the association, by Dan Taylor, chairman; W. Thompeon and F. Smith, moderators. How unequivocally the above remarks condemn the practice of the last association! The majority of that meeting may resolve, that the connection continue to adhere to the principles on which it was founded; but who shall satisfy the friends of religious truth and of the rights of independent churches, if acquainted with the minutes of 1816, that the connection continue to observe the views of associations which it published in 1779?

It is an acknowledged fact, that the dominion of the church of Rome derived its origin from a movement on the part of the deputies of the churches similar to what is here regretted. "The deputies assumed dominion, and the privileges of the people were infringed. They soon commenced lawgivers; and the people had nothing to do but to obey. The presidents exalted themselves into archbishops; and exercised their authority not only over the laity, but likewise over the ministers themselves. This laid the foundation for the hierarchy of the

church of Rome; and it is well known how assiduous successive builders have been to heighten and aggrandize this stately edifice." See the Circular Letter for 1793.

The design, Sir, of these observations, is to guard against the infringement of the people's rights by the assumption of dominion on the part of the representatives: lest, in this instance, they should be so unwise as to imitate the anti-christian tyrants of papal Rome. Our friends should not, like them, *usurp* authority over Christ's disciples; and then *affect*, as they did, to give "*merciful measures*" to such as will not obey their oracles; and last of all, to fill up the iniquity of the transaction, proceed, like them, to the excommunication, or, if they please, the expulsion of their brethren. They may make laws; but it is to be hoped, the churches will soon convince them that they will not submit to be governed by any other than the *written law* given us by the Lord himself. The extirpation of heresy is the avowed object of these regulations; but can such means either retard the progress of error or accelerate the spread of divine truth? The truth of God is insulted by supposing that it needs such support. Nor is there any heresy in our churches, that we have heard of, which is so abominable to God and ought to be so offensive to good men, as "an attempt to take the crown from the head of the blessed Jesus the Lord and King of the church, and place it on the heads of ignorant mortals."

With all due deference, Sir, to the abilities of my brethren who promoted the rules of which I complain, and giving them full credit for the purity of their intentions, I am, with sincere prayers for the prosperity of the New Connection of General Baptists,

Your's very respectfully,

NONCON.

REFLECTIONS at the CLOSE of the YEAR.

"I trusted in Thee, O Lord: I said, Thou art my God; my times are in Thy hands." Psa. xxxi. 14, 15.

The retrospect which the close of another year calls us to make, furnishes affecting evidence of the disappointing nature

of all earthly dependencies. Many who at the commencement of this year were alive, are now dead. Many who were vigorous, healthful and active, are now confined to beds of sickness, and reduced to a state of helpless debility. Many who were then opulent and wealthy are now reduced to poverty and want. Many who a year ago were zealous to promote our interests, have long ago become cold and indifferent. Many who were then friendly are now hostile. Every day has furnished some additional instance of the propriety of advice of the wise man: "Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth." Every hour has sealed the truth of the sentence of the Preacher: "Vanity of vanities: all is vanity and vexation of spirit." Political changes—domestic changes—personal changes are constantly occurring, and render all dependence on temporal objects precarious and dangerous.

"Lean not on earth: 'twill pierce thee to the heart.

A broken reed at best; but oft a spear:

On its sharp point, peace bleeds and hope expires."

How desirable, then, to have a more certain support, a more steady and unchangeable object of trust. David found this necessary, a mighty king, a valiant warrior, and a skilful statesman; he had tried the worth of all that earth can boast, and found it unstable and disappointing. He, therefore turns from this world and leans on the unchangeable Jehovah. "I trusted in Thee, O Lord."

The wisdom, the power and the goodness of God, which are manifest in the works of creation and providence, sufficiently prove that the Lord is good to all; and his tender mercies are over all his works. These therefore might have authorized David, as one of the works of the Almighty, to have placed his trust in his Creator. But this ancient saint views him also as the God of grace, with whom he could claim a personal relation: "I said, Thou art my God." Astonishing language! And may a creature of the dust claim a property in the great Jehovah? Yes: he has condescended to sanction this encouraging claim. He has graciously made a covenant with all true believers, through the blood of his Son, which secures to them this inestimable privilege. "I will, saith the Lord, make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn

away from them to do them good." "And this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel: I will put my law in their inward parts and I will write it on their hearts: and I will be *their* God and they shall be my people." This was the happy experience of the Psalmist: he could say, with holy confidence: "He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure." David, therefore could address the Searcher of hearts and say: "Thou art my God." And every real christian may lay the same claim to his covenant God: and without presumption appropriate to his own circumstances, all the merciful promises to which that exalted relation may entitle him. He may rest secure in the perfection of his Almighty Friend: rejoice that all the circumstances that can affect him are at his divine disposal: and with holy pleasure say, "My times are in thy hand."

The christian, at the commencement of another year, looks forward through the course of it; and sees himself surrounded with circumstances that have a tendency to render him anxious for the future. He is engaged in various undertakings, connected with various contingencies, on the event of which much of his happiness and credit depends; and yet he finds himself unable to foresee their termination or influence their issue. In these cases, how soothing to reflect, that, notwithstanding his shortsightedness and weakness, yet all these circumstances are in the hands of a Being who sees the end from the beginning; who can controul and govern all events; and that this Being is *his* God.

Does the opening year find the christian worn down by indisposition, and overwhelmed with fear that his strength is failing, and his usefulness is past? Has he applied to the aid of medicine; and yet continues to droop? Does he look forward to months of weakness, and expect to drag on a debilitated existence, useless in a great measure to himself, to his friends, and to the church? The prospect is indeed discouraging; and the heart may well sink in the contemplation of it: but recollect, feeble christian, that thy times are in the hands of thy God. He who first formed thy body can renew its powers and restore its vigour. If he sees that it will tend to thy real good, he will, before the close of this year, cause thee to renew thy youth like the eagle, and restore thee to thy use-

fulness in civil and religious society. But if not : acquiesce in his divine will. He has promised, that his grace shall be sufficient for thee, and that thy strength shall be equal to thy day. Endeavour then to glorify him by thy resignation and patience under his afflicting dispensations : and thy patience will not lose its reward.

But, perhaps the desponding christian does not merely anticipate a state of debility, but also has the sentence of death in himself. He feels the vital powers decay ; and sees the grim tyrant daily approach. He feels alarmed at the pangs of dissolution, and nature shrinks back appalled from the prospect of breaking all the ties that connect him with life. He fears to leave his widowed partner and helpless offspring exposed to the insults and oppression of the thoughtless or the wicked. But, let this sinking christian recollect, that the solemn time of his dissolution and every thing connected with it are in the hands of *his* God. He can smooth the pillow under the languishing head : can soften the pains of death, or animate the courage of the sufferer, till he exclaim, like holy David, " Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil : for thou art with me ; thy rod and thy staff comfort me." And his God has left on record, many cheering promises ; which his blessed Spirit may bring to the recollection of the dying saint, and enable him to apply them to his special comfort. His God has declared himself to be " a father of the fatherless and a judge of the widow." " Leave," says he, " thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive ; and let thy widows trust in me." " For in me the fatherless find mercy."

Perhaps when the conscientious believer takes a survey of his worldly circumstances, at the close of the year, he is discouraged and alarmed. Though he has been diligent in business, yet success has not crowned his efforts : his affairs grow worse, and he knows not how he shall be able honourably to surmount the difficulties with which he is surrounded. He trembles lest his failure should bring a reproach on the dear cause in which he is engaged. But remember, thou despairer, that thy times are in the hands of thy God ; and that it is his blessing that maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow with it. He can succeed thy present pursuits, or open new resources. Leave, therefore, to him the issue ; and, in the conscientious

discharge of present duty, "commit thy works to the Lord; and thy thoughts shall be established."

Another child of God is looking forward to a new year, with considerable anxiety on account of his unsettled circumstances. Many things render him uncomfortable in his present station; he is neither so useful nor so happy as he thinks he might be, could he change his situation. He has taken all the steps to accomplish it which appeared prudent; but his way continues to be hedged up; and he knows not what to do. He wishes to walk in the path of duty; but he can hardly determine which the path of duty is. He desires to follow the leadings of Providence; but cannot distinguish them. After forming the plans of his future procedure with great attention, some unexpected obstacle totally disconcerts all his schemes. In this state of perplexity, let him not despond or give way to discontent. Let him rejoice, that his ways are in the hands of his God, who knows the right way, and is engaged to lead his people in it. He can, with perfect ease, dispel the cloud that hangs over his path. He can over-rule even disappointments to promote those purposes which they seem to overturn. Be tranquil then, O christian: "Trust in the Lord at all times, and lean not to thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge *thy* God, and he shall direct thy paths."

Again. The real christian is perhaps the object of the persecution of wicked tongues. His motives are slandered; his actions are misrepresented; and his good name destroyed. He has already made several ineffectual attempts to vindicate his character, and wipe off the disgrace which the cause of truth suffers from the calumnies levelled at him. Let him not be discouraged. This appears to have been in a peculiar manner the case with David when he wrote this Psalm. "He heard the slander of many. 'They spoke proudly and contemptuously against the righteous.' Yet, in the midst of all, David trusted in the Lord and said, 'Thou art my God: my times are in thy hands.'" Go, thou who art ready to sink under the malice of thy enemies; and do likewise. Thy God can with perfect ease confound the devices of the crafty, and bring forth thy righteousness as the day.

In all the vicissitudes of life, and under all its trials, the consideration that our times are in the hands of our God, ought

to yield support and consolation. In sickness or health, in riches or poverty, in honour or disgrace, in life or death, the christian may with calm serenity of soul leave all his burdens and trials to the disposal of his God. If he is indeed *our* God, and we have a covenant relation to him, then we have his gracious assurance, that *all things shall work together for our good*. Instead, therefore, of looking forward with trembling anxiety to future trials which may never reach us, let it be our chief care to have the evidence clear of our interest in that covenant which is ordered in all things and sure. Then, "whether we live, we live to the Lord: or whether we die, we die to the Lord; whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's."

S. O.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST APPARITIONS.

AN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION.

Can any well-founded arguments be brought against the appearance of apparitions?

A considerable part of mankind have, at one period or another, maintained, with the utmost confidence, that they have seen the immaterial soul of man when it has been separated from the body. But confidence and general reception are not always the criterion of truth; and it has long appeared to me that it is precisely so in the present case. When we draw near this subject to examine it, our suspicions are strongly excited, as we perceive, very clearly, that it wants some of the principal characteristics of truth. Truth is only discovered by the light; but this is dependent upon darkness alone. We are told that these visitors from the other world make their appearance here in the night; but as soon as the light of the sun approaches in the morning, when we should have an opportunity to examine them, behold, they are gone? The man who believes in apparitions feels but little concern about them in the open day; for he will then go without fear into out-houses, lanes, fields, and even into the church-yards, and ransack the mansions of the dead with composure: because he is persuaded that while the light is present with him, the spirits are sure to be absent. But he would perhaps find it impossible to prevail upon himself to visit any of these places in the dead of the

night, or to go alone into any dreary apartment at home, In the dark ages of popery and superstition, when the light from heaven was nearly put out, then did the ghosts stalk forth in crowds, and terrify and enslave the greatest part of mankind. But most attentive observers have perceived, that, as far as the light of the reformation reaches, and as far as the pure revelation of God, and the light of science spread their beams, apparitions have disappeared, and the belief of them has experienced a proportionate decline. Most aged people will inform us, that the belief of ghosts was far more prevalent in the days of their youth, than at present.

I shall take the terms of the question in the same sense as they appear to be understood by those who believe the doctrine. They believe that the apparition is the spirit or the soul of man; that it can make its appearance to them when and where it pleases; that it can assume to itself any form; that when it appears, it has frequently various properties of matter, as height, depth, length, breadth, colours, the human voice, &c.; that it has power to move matter, and to destroy property; that it can talk and communicate with any one; and that it can of its own will and power make any noise, excite any alarm, and spread wild destruction around it. They also affirm, that it frequently leaves the body, and makes its appearance even before the person is dead. I do not say that every one who favours the doctrine, would express himself exactly in these terms; but I am fully persuaded, that the ideas contained in the various accounts that have come to my knowledge, and those that have been given to the world, agree with the above statement.

The question being thus understood, it is asked, Are there any well founded arguments against it; I answer, I think that arguments may be drawn from the nature of the soul, from animal vision, from the act of appearing, and from the ill effects that would follow if the doctrine were true.

I. First then, we will attend to the NATURE OF THE SOUL. And here I shall only notice its consciousness and its agency.

1. Its *Consciousness*. The soul, or the spirit, is a thinking being, or a being which has the power of thought. Its connexion with this material world extends no farther than the union which it has with its own body; and it is conscious of the existence of corporeal objects only through the medium of

its own senses. When external objects make impressions on the organs of its sense, sensations are excited, and ideas of those objects are conveyed to the mind; the mind then, and not till then, is conscious of the existence of those objects. If any of the senses become extinct, the sight or feeling, for instance, the mind will instantly cease to receive notice of those properties of matter which are the peculiar objects of those senses; nor can those senses that remain supply their deficiency. The colours and figures of all objects will for ever be lost to the mind: the taste cannot discover the light of the sun, nor can the ear perceive the features of a man. When, therefore, all the senses cease to exist, as at the time of death, all the soul's consciousness of this world will cease to exist also.

2. We will in the next place just notice the *agency* of the soul, or its *power of moving matter*. In the case of volition, or the will exerted, I can move my arms and legs; and, when they are in motion, by the same will, I can stop them again. My volition extends no farther than my own corporeal organs, because my nerves, which connect my volition with those organs, have no connexion with external objects; of course, my will has no more power to move the organs of another man, than it has to move a tree or a rock. When the nerves which connect my volition and my arm together, are cut asunder, or the arm is cut off, the power of the will over that arm immediately ceases. Death, then, which completely separates the soul from the whole of the body, will annihilate all the power which the soul had to move a material being. Hence it is certain, that when all consciousness and all power of corporeal objects are cut off, the soul's connection with this world is entirely at an end.

B. In the next place I will consider ANIMAL VISION. The question here is, whether the corporeal or animal eye can see a spirit? To me it appears impossible.

1. The soul is immaterial; void of all matter, and opposite to it. The eye is material; and it is as essentially opposite to spirit as heaven is to earth. The soul is a thinking being; or a power of thought: its very essence consists in thought. Now, it is a fact known to every man, that the corporeal eye cannot see a thought; and therefore, as thought is the essence of the soul, we cannot with bodily eyes, see the soul.

2. Another and a very striking proof has frequently occur-

red to the thoughts of most reflecting persons : when they stand by an expiring friend, they always find that the departing spirit is totally invisible.

3. God is a spirit, and the Father of spirits, and the Scriptures declare he is invisible. When Moses requested to see him, the Lord said he could not see him and live : that is, he must be separated from the body before he could see him. Here, then, the fact is, I think, clearly and unequivocally proved, that it is an impossibility for a man while he is in this world to see a spirit.

III. Let us, in the third place, proceed to inquire into the ACT OF APPEARING. The spirit of man came from God, and to God it must return, to receive its final destination in another world. When death has performed his office, then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it. Then, when the Sovereign of the universe has fixed its state, can it return again to this world when, and where, and to whom it pleases ? Surely not.

1. If they had a power to return, it is highly probable, on many accounts, that some of them would. Some would come and try to check their profane and sceptical friends. Others would undoubtedly return, and mark out their horrid murderers and foul assassins, who lay for ever concealed from the human eye. It is likely too, that many cruel frauds and deceptions would be laid open, and their perpetrators brought to light ; especially where the wills of the deceased have been violated, and their innocent and helpless survivors have been thrown into irretrievable ruin. Nor would the kind and loving husband forget the partner of his bosom, but would try to ease her heart in the hour of despair ; and the tender parent would direct the infant steps, that he might preserve his unwary offspring from the jaws of destruction. Now, if they could return, there is no doubt but all these things and many more would frequently occur ; but as none of them do, the conclusion therefore is easy.

2. We have seen that while the soul was in the body, it received its knowledge of material objects through the medium of senses ; and also, when it was separated from these senses, its knowledge of this world was necessarily at an end : consequently it knows not how to return either to persons, places, or things. On the other hand, it has been proved that as it is

a pure spirit, it cannot be seen by the corporeal or animal eye. As then it cannot see the persons in this world, and as the persons in this world cannot see it, it is an impossibility, in the nature of things, that it should come here and make its appearance.

But has it not a power to resume its own body, and then come again? No! When the body has lost a limb, as already noticed, the soul cannot resume it again, much less the whole body. Besides, God has decreed that when the body has returned to the earth again, it shall there remain till the restitution of all things. But, if it cannot take its own body again, can it not make a new one? Impossible: for to create belongs to God alone. Well, then, if it must be invested with corporeal organs in order that it may either see or be seen, and if it cannot clothe itself with its own body again, nor create a new one, will not God do it for it? Certainly not. That God should continually work miracles merely to terrify and distress the weaker part of mankind, and to effect one rational object by it, is inconsistent with his infinite wisdom and benevolence; and no one who well understood the moral government of God in this world, especially under the christian dispensation, ever seriously believed it.

In our Lord's account of the laws and ceremony of the other world, in the case of the rich man and Lazarus, this question is fairly and fully brought to issue. We see there was an anxious desire in the departed spirit to return, but it could not; neither could any other, nor would the Almighty permit it. And we find, from the reply made to the rich man's request, not only that his state was unalterably fixed, but also that God had irrevocably determined, that while we are in this world, we shall walk by faith, not by sight.

IV. In the last place we were to consider THE ILL EFFECTS that would follow if the doctrine were true. It would in a great measure frustrate, if not annihilate, the moral government of God in this world. If the spirits in the other world had power to come here and do as they pleased, then the Devil and his Angels, and all those wicked spirits that left the world in malice and rage, would speedily be amongst us; and they would excite the most inexpressible horror, they would create the greatest confusion, and they would spread the most tremendous havoc among mankind. In this state of

things there would be no arts and sciences, no men acting from rational principles and motives, and as the passions would usurp the power of reason, moral agency would be at an end. There could be no preaching of the gospel, fear would be wrought up to its highest pitch; and there could be no heart governed exclusively by the love of God. But here permit me to stop—I did intend to enlarge upon this part of the subject, but here the doctrine appears so palpably false, that I think it would be an insult on common sense to pursue it any farther.

From the whole then it appears, that the belief of the appearance of apparitions, has no foundation in the nature of things, nor in the moral order which God, in his infinite wisdom, has established for the government of his rational creatures in this world.

W. C.

*The PRESENT STATE of the SEVEN CHURCHES
in ASIA; to which the EPISTLES in the
REVELATIONS are addressed.*

Among the various benefits resulting from the astonishing success of the British and Foreign Bible Society, is the knowledge which it diffuses of the state of religion in various parts of the world. This must have a happy tendency to excite attention and direct the exertions of those friends to the human race, who are engaged in attempts to spread the light of the gospel in countries which lie in darkness. This reflection struck us on reading, in the Appendix to the last Report of that noble institution, a Letter, dated Constantinople, Jan. 10, 1816, from Rev H. Lindsay, chaplain to the embassy at that court. This gentleman had occasion, in the course of the last year, to visit Asia Minor, the seat of the seven churches to which John addresses the Epistles in the Revelations. He took with him some modern Greek and Armenian Testaments, and Arabic Bibles, with which that society had furnished him for distribution; and made it an object to collect what information he could of the present state of christianity in those places in which it had been established in the apostolic age. The following abstract of the result of his inquiries will, we presume, be interesting to all our readers. The country is

now subject to the Turks; and the established religion has long been Mahometanism.

Mr. Lindsay first visited *Smyrna*, which is at present a populous, trading city, containing one hundred and forty thousand inhabitants. Of these, fifteen or twenty thousand, are christians of the Greek church; six thousand, Armenian christians; five thousand, Roman Catholics; one hundred and forty, Protestants; and eleven thousand, Jews.

From *Smyrna* Mr. L. proceeded to *Ephesus*. But it seems that noble city has disappeared, and nearly on the spot where it once stood, is a small village, now called *Asialick*, consisting of fifteen poor cottages. Here he found only three christians; two brothers who keep a small shop and a garden-er. They belong to the Greek church; but are lamentably ignorant. In that place where the apostle Paul laboured so long and so successfully, there are christians, that have never heard of him as an apostle, and only know his name as one of the saints in the almanac. One of these christians could read a little, and Mr. L. gave him a modern Greek Testament; which he expressed a strong desire to read, and promised to lend it to his friends in the neighbouring villages.

In proceeding from this village towards *Laodicea*, our traveller arrived at *Guzel-hisar*, a large town with one church and about seven hundred nominal christians: who were so unacquainted with the Bible, that they had no distinct knowledge of the books it contains, except the four gospels. He sent thither three modern Greek Testaments from Constantinople; Approaching within three miles of *Laodicea*, he passed through *Denizli*, which is thought, by some, to be the ancient *Colosse*. This is a large town, and contains about four hundred christians, who know little of the scriptures, but are much addicted to fables and legends. *Eski-hisar*, close to which are the ruins of *Laodicea*, contains about fifty poor inhabitants: among whom are only two christians, neither of whom could read. The Mahometan prayers are the only devotions which are now heard near the scite of the ancient *Laodicea*: on which the awful tarent recorded in Rev. iii. 16. has been fully executed. Mr. L. left the copy of the New Testament, intended for this church, at *Denizli*.

He next visited *Philadelphia*, now called *Alah-shehr*: and was highly gratified to find a comparatively flourishing chris-

tion church: twenty-five places of worship, five of which were large; a resident bishop; twenty inferior clergy; and about one thousand professed christians. So well has this church been kept from the hour of temptation, which came upon all the world. Rev. iii. 10. Mr. L. presented a modern Greek Testament to the bishop, which was received with great thankfulness.

Mr. L. was informed at Alah-shehr, that not a vestige remained of the ancient church at *Sardis*, now called *Sart*. It was therefore a pleasing disappointment to meet with a christian society on the plains of *Sardis*. The few christians who dwell round *Sart* were accustomed to meet at each others houses; but, about five years ago, they wished to build a place of worship and settle in the town. This was prohibited by the Turkish governor; and they built the church upon the plain, within view of *Sardis*. A little village has since risen round it, now denominated *Tatar-keny*. Here the christians of *Sart* who amount only to seven, and those in the neighbourhood resort for public worship, and form a congregation of about forty persons. Thus there appears still a remnant, "a few names even in *Sardis*," which have been preserved. Rev. iii. 4. They received the present of a copy of the New Testament in a language with which they were familiar, with tears of grateful joy: several crowded round the priest to hear it on the spot; and they were left thus engaged.

Ak-hisar, the ancient *Thyatira*, is said to contain thirty thousand inhabitants, of whom three thousand are christians. There is one Greek church and one Armenian; though there are but two hundred of the latter denomination. The superior of the Greek church, to whom Mr. L. presented a modern Greek New Testament, esteemed it so great a treasure, that he earnestly requested another: that one might be secured from accidents in the church, while the other circulated among the people for their private reading. Mr. L. sent them four copies on his return to Constantinople.

The Church of *Pergamos*, now *Bergamo*, is as numerous as that at *Ak-hisar*, has two churches, and nearly the same proportion of Greeks and Armenians. The resident clergy were wholly incapable of estimating the value of the copy of the New Testament which Mr. L. intended for them. He left it

therefore, with the lay-vicar of the bishop : by whom he was assured that his superior who was then absent, would highly prize so valuable an acquisition.

This is the present state of these ancient churches. It is satisfactory that one copy, at least, of the pure Word of God has been left with each of them. May they be abundantly blessed by the great Head of the church to the revival of his cause :

ICELANDIC ANECDOTES.

Mr. Ebenezer Henderson, a very active agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society, has lately made the tour of Iceland, to investigate the want of Bibles, and to arrange means for supplying it. His reports are truly affecting. In many large districts, only one or two copies of the scriptures could be found; and in others none. The inhabitants expressed great pleasure, in the prospect of having a sufficient provision; and received the copies which Mr. H. distributed with great thankfulness. Twelve families resided in an island thirty miles from the main land, and had only one copy of the Bible, and that had been borrowed. There is one parish consisting of two hundred souls, among whom are only four Bibles; and another of fifty families, who possess only three. One pious and worthy clergyman, a dignitary of the church, had been *seventeen* years endeavouring to procure an Icelandic bible for his own use; and had, at last, given up all hopes of ever obtaining it. At one part of the island, only one bible could be found in three parishes. Yet the people, so destitute of the word of life, appear simple, honest and religious; and all earnestly desirous of obtaining the scriptures. It is gratifying to learn, that more than four thousand Bibles, and nearly seven thousand Testaments have already been sent to this country; and that others are preparing.

“ At the last house on the south side of the island,” says Mr. H. “ I found an old copy of the second part of the Old Testament. As the family was poor, I gave a new Testament to the children; on which two of them immediately began to read a portion aloud. It was pleasing to observe from the manner of the eldest, a girl of about eighteen, and the emphasis she laid on the proper words, that she not

only understood, but seemed to feel the importance of what she read. It was part of the evangelic history of the sufferings of the Redeemer. On my return the same way this summer, I was still more gratified. The girl had made an astonishing use of the New Testament during the winter: for there was not a passage to which I made the most indirect reference, which she did not quote with the same facility and accuracy as if she were reading from the book."

At one place, the wife of a peasant applied to Mr. H. to purchase a Bible and a Testament, and was desired to wait till the general distribution took place; but the desire of obtaining copies which existed in the family was so great, that on his return home, her husband went to Mr. H. to try if his application would not be more successful. Mr. H. informed him that he had only a few copies, and again desired him to wait; but he would take no refusal; and insisted that, if he could not have a Bible, he should be permitted to make payment for it, that he might be sure of it the next year. Mr. H. seeing his anxiety, at length sold him a Bible and Testament: besides which, he bespoke six Testaments when they arrived, that each of his children might have one.

"Early on Monday morning," observes Mr. H. "I prosecuted my journey, accompanied by the clergyman, his son, and one of his servants. We had not rode many steps, when we all took off our hats, for about the space of five minutes, to implore the Divine mercy and protection. This laudable impressive custom is universally practised in such parts of Iceland as remain uncontaminated by the influence of those foreigners who live without God in the world. Before crossing a river, and after having crossed it, the genuine Icelander also moves his hat in token of the sense he entertains of his dependence on the Supreme Being; and the fishermen, when they put to sea, all take off their hats, and send up a prayer, committing themselves to God, and soliciting his blessing on their labours." Iceland abounds with burning mountains, which frequently throw out streams of melted matter, which bury the adjacent country. "The road," says our traveller, "in the desert of Modrubal, lies across a mountain of brimstone, which sends up, without intermission, immense volumes of smoke. At the place where I pitched my tent for a night, I was greatly

struck by the appearance of the church, which, in an almost miraculous manner, escaped the general conflagration in 1728. Reaching the north-west corner of the low earthen wall by which the church-yard is inclosed, the fiery torrent that was poured down from the adjacent mountain, had been suddenly arrested in its progress; and, at the distance of only two feet from the wall, had divided into two separate streams, which pursued their distinct course for about twenty yards; when, having past the edifice, they again united; leaving the church and the burying ground uninjured in the midst of the surrounding flames."

In the parish of Hof in Iceland, there are upwards of four hundred inhabitants; and only one above six years of age who cannot read: and that individual hindered by a natural infirmity.

IRISH ANECDOTES.

Some time ago, we gave our readers an account of the Baptist Society for Promoting the Gospel in Ireland. (See G. B. R. vol. vii. pp. 89—93.) They have just published their second Annual Report: a very interesting pamphlet. We select the following anecdotes, as illustrative of the opposition they meet with from many of the Catholic priests: the proceedings of the society will be detailed in their proper place.

A certain priest proclaimed from the altar, that if his people would continue to send their children to the free schools, he would neither hear confession, nor marry them, nor anoint them when dying. This staggered the poor people greatly: but, being very desirous of having their children taught, they came to a resolution to continue to send them, whatever might be the consequence. The priest finding his threats had produced no effect, and missing many of his flock at confession, was alarmed; and issued another proclamation, that he would hear confession without money. But it was now too late: at his last confession not one half of his parish went near him. A thing before unheard of in Ireland.

In July, 1816, a priest mounted the altar, and with great authority commanded his flock to return every Testament they had in their possession: telling them, that he had the same

authority on that altar as God in heaven on his throne. His hearers were disgusted; a man and his wife left the chapel, and declared that they would never enter it again: but not one Testament was returned. The next Sabbath, at another part of his parish, he stood up and wept bitterly: declaring that his flock was likely to be destroyed. His tears, however, were as little regarded as his threats: the demand for Irish Testaments continued to increase.

In one place, where the reading of the scriptures has been blest to the awakening of many of the careless and ignorant, they have a turbulent priest of whom they are in great dread: being in fear of their lives if they incur his displeasure. One young woman, though convinced of the vanity of the action, yet impelled by fear, went to him to confess. The second question he asked her was, 'What sins have you committed since the last time of confession?' She answered, "I have broken the law of God: and offending in one point. I am guilty of all." 'Oh, oh,' said the confessor, 'you have been with a preacher.' "I never was," said she. 'Then how came you by such an answer?' inquired he. "I read the scriptures," she replied, "and am persuaded it is the case." 'If you read the scriptures,' returned he, 'you will be damned to all eternity. You must promise me never to read them again.' "I cannot make that promise," said she, "for I see in them the words of life." 'O you have the very words of the preachers,' he replied, 'and I will have nothing to do with you.' The young woman took him at his word; left him, and determined never again to attend confession, whatever it might cost her.

It gives us pleasure to add some instances of a contrary spirit in the same class of men. One of the society's itinerants writes thus to the secretary. "I find every where around me, not only an ardent desire in the poor to receive instruction, but also the support of the Roman catholic priests, who give me all the aid I demand. Some of them visit the poor with me, and exercise the children in the Irish Testament. I therefore find them particularly useful."

One of the readers employed by the society, was visited by his sister, and took that opportunity of reading the Irish Testament to her; and of shewing her that sinners must obtain salvation by faith in Christ, and not by their own endeavours.

She replied, that she would never believe any one would be saved without the ointment. Her brother replied, that the ointment would avail nothing, nor any thing else, but the blood of Christ. Looking at the priest, who happened to be present, she addressed him. "If so, what good are ye to us?" "Whether I am good or harm," said the priest, "what your brother says is the truth."

The almost incredible ignorance of the common people in some parts of Ireland is truly deplorable. One of the itinerants speaking of a country in which he had been preaching the gospel, expresses himself thus: "Of all the parts that I ever travelled, this is the most grossly ignorant; not only of the scriptures, but also of their own religion. A great many of them have never heard the name of the scriptures; and those who had heard the word, knew nothing what it meant." He had therefore to explain the design, the nature, and the authority of the Bible to them; which he did at large under the idea of a Will or Testament: reading to them various parts of the Irish New Testament. They had never before seen a Testament in any language: and were highly gratified indeed with hearing it read in Irish. When the minister told them that the priests would probably forbid them to hear it; they were struck with great consternation, that "any man would forbid such fine reading." They however seemed highly interested, and were urgent to have another opportunity of hearing it read.

The following instance of the power of the truth, is copied from a letter of another of the society's itinerants. "John — was fond of swearing, blaspheming, sabbath breaking, and of distilling whiskey without paying the duty, and that on the Lord's-days as well as week-days. His wife came to hear me, and invited me to her house. I called; and her husband asked me to dine with him. I told him I would neither eat bread nor drink water with him, unless he would invite his neighbours to his house and let me preach to them. To this he instantly agreed: and I preached that evening to his parlour full of people, from Matt. vii. 21. The sermon was by the mercy of God made the power of God to his conviction; and the still-house is taken down to the foundation.

ON ORDINATION.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

I thank your able correspondents for the pieces on Ordination, lately published in the G. B. R. I think they are calculated to do much good. But there is one point which I wish to see cleared up; viz. Whether should ordination be performed *publicly* before the open congregation, or *privately* before the church only and a few friends invited to assist? As some say there is no scripture for its being public, a solution of this difficulty will much oblige one of your sincere friends,

A LOVER OF TRUTH AND ORDER.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

Might it not be admitted that a minister, being an elder, may administer the Lord's Supper, till he can have an opportunity of being ordained, without being thought too forward, if the church request him to do it? If there be any scripture to forbid this, I should be thankful if some of your enlightened correspondents would point it out: as, at present, I with many others cannot find it. It may be objected "By the same rule Pædo-baptists may plead for infant baptism; viz. there is no scripture forbids it." But scripture shews the qualifications for baptism, viz. faith and repentance, which infants cannot perform. But is ordination a requisite qualification for administering the Lord's Supper? If so, what scripture shews it to be such? An answer will oblige many, besides,

Yours, &c.

IGNORAMUS.

GENERAL BAPTIST OCCURRENCES.

OBITUARY.

Dec. 25, 1811, died FRANCIS TUTTY, of East Halton, Lincolnshire. He was born April 7, 1732. O. S. His parents

were General Baptists, and he was early instructed in their principles. In his youth, he was convinced of his lost condition; and was enabled to believe on Christ for salvation. He was baptized, when about nineteen years of age, by Mr. Joseph Sowden, then minister of the G. Baptist church at Killingholm. From that time to his death, a period of sixty years, he continued an active, humble and useful member of that christian society. Much reproach was heaped upon him for his steady adherence to the truth; but "he had respect to the recompence of the reward," and was unintimidated. Closely attached to the great truths maintained by the G. Baptists; he was constant in his attendance on their ministry; unless when necessity compelled him to be absent. His memory was very tenacious; and he was in the habit of repeating to his family the most affecting passages in the discourses which he had heard. This was an exercise in which he took great delight: and in which his mind was often deeply impress; sometimes even to tears. He opened his house for the preaching of the gospel to his neighbours; and for several years, service was held in it once a fortnight. He remained till his death firm in the principles of truth which he first embraced.

In the early part of his profession, he was much harrassed with the fears of death: but the grim tyrant assumed a milder aspect as he approached. In his last illness, which was not long, he shewed a desire to depart. When near the time of his dissolution, he exclaimed: "O that I may be singing in the presence of my blessed Saviour, the next Lord's-day."

"But" added, after a short pause, "the will of the Lord be done." He was sensible to the last; and within a short time of his departure, he solemnly exhorted his son to follow his steps as far as he had followed Christ. His last audible words were, "Seek the Lord." Soon after he had uttered these words, he fell asleep in the Lord, in the seventy-ninth year of his age. His funeral sermon was preached by Mr. Atterby, from Job xix. 25—27. "I know that my Redeemer liveth." &c: a text chosen for this occasion, by the deceased, as suiting his own happy experience.

April 19, 1816, died ANN BARKER of Kirkby-Woodhouse, Nottinghamshire. Her parents being members of the G. B. church in that place, she had the great advantage of a religious education: and her mind appears to have been early im-

pressed with a sense of divine things. She was baptized and received into the church Nov. 11, 1799, and to her death adorned her profession by a suitable conversation. She had been long afflicted with an inward complaint, which at last settled in her right breast; and baffled all the efforts of medical and surgical skill. Her indisposition was of more than six months duration; and her affliction was great. During the former part of this season of pain, her mind was much dejected, and her thoughts bewildered. But it pleased God to hear the prayers, offered by herself and her christian friends; her fears gradually vanished, and her evidence of acceptance with God became clear: so that she could anticipate with pleasure the rest that remaineth for the people of God. Apprehending that her departure was nigh, she expressed a desire to see some of her relatives; and, when they had assembled round her dying bed, she advised them, with all the energy which her weak state admitted, to prepare for death, and to make the service of Christ the principal business of their lives. May the parting exhortations of their expiring relative, produce their proper effect on all to whom they were addressed! A few hours before her death, she expressed, in a very encouraging manner, the state of her mind, and repeated those lines of Dr. Watts: "Death may dissolve my body now." &c. She was interred on the following Lord's-day; when her pastor delivered a discourse, at her desire, from 2 Tim. 7, 8. "I have fought a good fight," &c. The congregation was very numerous and attentive.

May 4, 1816, departed this life, PETER HELMSLEY of Kegworth, Leicestershire: a man of great worth. For several years previous to his death, he had been a deacon of the G. Baptist church in that town: and was such a man as the apostle points out for that office. His character stood very high through the neighbourhood. He was a true friend; and of great service in the church; though, like the pins of the Tabernacle, his influence was little perceived. After bearing very long and heavy affliction, he, viewing himself as a poor sinner, "had hope in his death," arising from the words of the beloved apostle, 1 John i. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

ROBERT TOWNSEND, a valuable member of the G. B. church at Birchcliff, was called to his reward July 26, 1816, in the twenty ninth year of his age. He was highly respected by his neighbours in general, and much esteemed by his brethren in the church, by whom he was frequently called to assist both in public and private meetings. A man of peace, of sweet temper, and regular in his attendance on the means of grace, he promised to be very useful for many future years. In his attendance to domestic duties, he was exemplary: diligent in business; punctual and earnest in family prayer; and careful in teaching his children to read; and devoting a part of his time every day to private devotion. Yet he was humble; and, sensible of his own weakness and guilt, used to say to his friends, "I shall need the publican's prayer to the last day of my life."

Some months before his death, he was reading Jer. xlix. 11. "Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me:" and observed to his wife, that he feared he should be taken from her; though he was then in perfect health. July 17, he was seized with an inflammation on the lungs, while working in the hay-field; and went home: when he reminded his partner of the text just mentioned. He desired to see his minister, who was then on a journey; and did not return till the Friday evening; when he hastened to him. He appeared sunk, and his countenance ghastly: but his confidence in the merits of Christ appeared to be unshaken. At subsequent visits, he maintained a steady reliance on the rock of ages, and an entire resignation to the will of God: though for the sake of his family he wished, if consistent with the divine purpose, to be restored to health. On the Lord's-day, he was rather better, and hopes were entertained that he might yet recover; but that evening the symptoms increased, and hope vanished. His mind however was preserved tranquil; no darkness or unbelieving fears disturbed him: for "his heart was fixed trusting in the Lord." His bed was now surrounded by two of his brothers, and several of his christian friends: to whom he stretched out his arm, and enquired, "Has my pulse ceased?" evidently desiring to depart. While approaching the solemn hour, he was frequently heard to pour out such ejaculations as these: "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." "Lord, grant me a

convoy of angels to conduct me over the swellings of Jordan." "Can this be death? O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." His last advice to his brethren was in the words of the apostle, "Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord," &c. On Tuesday morning, leaning his head on the arm of his brother, he said, "God be merciful unto me a sinner;" and gently breathed his last. He has left a disconsolate wife and three small children to lament their loss. May the Lord preserve the fatherless alive, and may the widow trust in him! May they all, by the influence of divine Grace, be enabled to follow their husband and father to that happy state where there shall be no death. He was interred, July 26; when his minister delivered a discourse to a very large, serious and affected congregation, from Luke viii. 13. "God be merciful to me a sinner."

Sept. 11, 1816, the G. B. church at Birchcliffe was deprived of another very useful member, in JONATHAN SPEAK, of Highgate, who departed this life in the seventieth year of his age. He has been long known and highly esteemed by our elder ministers, whose host, like Gaius, he generally was, when the concerns of the churches called them into those parts. In his youth, he was attached to the established church: but his wife joining the G. Baptists, his attention was attracted to the distinguishing tenets of that denomination; and he was led to examine the scriptures, to see whether these things were so. The happy consequence was, that, being convinced that their doctrines and practice were conformable to the word of God, he attended their ministry, and after some time was baptized by Mr. Dan Taylor and received into the church.

Being of an active and friendly disposition, he was soon very useful in the temporal concerns of the society; and, for a great number of years, he used the office of a deacon well. Nor was his usefulness confined to the temporal wants of the church: he was often called to give an exhortation both at Shore and Birchcliff, when the congregations have been disappointed of ministers. And his conversation and conduct were so consistent with his profession, that whatever he said was listened to with attention. He was very frequently called to visit the

sick of all classes, rich and poor, young and old, professors and profane. All wished for his instruction and support, at the time when eternity seemed to be approaching. His house was, for years, the resort of his christian friends, who were in the daily habit of meeting there to sing, pray, and discourse on religious subjects; and he was always ready to teach them the way of the Lord more perfectly. His bible was his constant companion and counsellor: he preferred it to all other books, and used invariably to read some part of it every morning. Being a person of some property, he could indulge more freely his relish for divine exercises, and devote more time to religion, than would, perhaps, be right in some: but, in one excellence, he was an example worthy of the imitation of every one who sincerely wishes the prosperity of Zion. While employed at his work during the week, he was accustomed to reflect on the state of the congregation, on the preceding Lord's-day; and recollect who listened with peculiar interest, or appeared under serious impressions. On the ensuing Lord's-day he would contrive to fall in with such, and by asking them how they liked the sermon, lead them into a conversation which gave him an opportunity of dropping such hints of admonition or encouragement as their case required. This method was frequently made useful to inquirers; and his disposition was so friendly and his instructions so pertinent, that it was usual for those who began to seek the way to Zion, to throw themselves purposely in his way.

His health and strength had, for some years, visibly declined: and in February last, he was seized with a violent pain in his breast, which much affected his breathing. He took it for the messenger of death; but was tranquil and resigned. He was however very unexpectedly recovered; and seemed disappointed at being called back to this world: but the attack terminated in a dropsy; under which he struggled for several months. His sufferings were great, not being able sometimes to lie down in his bed for weeks together. But he bore all with fortitude; and his daily prayer was to be preserved from murmuring. He often, in the midst of his pains, spoke much of the faithfulness and goodness of God; and frequently repeated,

“I'll not attempt a murmuring word,
Against thy chast'ning hand.”

Though deeply sensible of his own guilt and sinfulness, he was enabled to rely on the merits of his Saviour, and would often say, "Christ, and Christ alone is the only foundation of my hope." His evidence of being built on this foundation was clear, and took away the fear of death. A short time before his departure, a christian brother observed to him, 'I think you have nearly done.' "I am glad," he replied, "that I have. What a change shall I experience, when I have done with this afflicted body, and go to heaven." This happy change at length took place. His funeral sermon was preached Lord's-day, Sep. 16, to a crowded auditory, from 2 Cor. xiii. 11. "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect," &c. A text which he had mentioned to his minister at the beginning of his indisposition.

ANNUAL ASSOCIATION.

The forty-sixth Annual Association of the Representatives of the Churches composing the New Connection of General Baptists, was held at Boston in Lincolnshire, June 25, 26, 27 and 28, 1816: and was attended by forty-five representatives. Mr. Dan Taylor was chosen chairman, and Messrs. W. Taylor and J. Bissill, moderators. On Tuesday evening, the 25, Mr. J. Binns prayed, and Mr. D. Taylor preached, from John i. 12: Wednesday evening, Mr. Pike prayed, and Mr. Felkin preached, from John xv. 5, last clause: and, on Thursday evening, Mr. Orton prayed, and Mr. R. Smith preached, from Ephes. vi. 24. Mr. Everard gave out the hymns at all these services.

The progress of the G. B. cause, as it appears from the returns made to this association, has been encouraging. In most of the churches there has been some advances; and in many, the prosperity has been remarkable. During the last year, the number of candidates that have been baptized, in all the churches, amounts to five hundred and eighty, and the clear increase to three hundred and twenty-nine. The whole number of members in the churches composing the New Connection is six thousand, six hundred and twenty-four. Some important cases were discussed at this meeting; but they will appear in other parts of the G. B. R.

CONFERENCES.

The YORKSHIRE CONFERENCE was held at *Halifax*, Feb. 25, 1816, when Mr. W. Pickering preached from Psa. lxxxix. At this meeting it was agreed;—1. To collect for Kirton after the next midsummer:—2. To supply Lidgate till next Conference:—3. To desire Mr. Pickering to write to Mr. Cooper, to encourage him to continue his labours at Nantwich:—4. To declare their opinion, that the laying on of hands on persons newly baptized is not an apostolical or primitive practice.

This conference assembled again at *Burnley*, June 4, when Mr. Pickering preached from Matt. v. 13. Supplies were arranged for Lidgate. Mr. W. Pickering was requested to lay the state of the church at Nantwich, and Mr. Hodgson the result of his inquiries respecting Manchester, before the association. And, the friends at Shore were encouraged to enlarge their burying ground, and obtain new deeds and trustees for their meeting house.

The same conference was held at *Shore*, Aug. 27. When Mr. James Taylor preached from Acts i. 14. At this conference, a supply was arranged for Lidgate: and Messrs. Ellis, Hollinrake, Hodgson and Dean, were appointed to baptize the candidates at Lidgate, and form them into an independent church. The friends at Queenshead also informed this meeting, that they had commenced preaching at Apperley Bridge, a village about four miles from Bradford.

Sep. 27, 1816, the WARWICKSHIRE CONFERENCE was held at *Sutton Coldfield*. Mr. Gamble of Cauldwell preached, from Col. ii. 6: and Mr. Cheatle of Birmingham, from Philem. x. 11. The next meeting is to be held at Austrey, the first Tuesday in Jan. 1817, when Messrs. Cheatle and Cottrell are expected to preach. This meeting is intended as a social and friendly interview of those churches, in that part of the country, to which the Midland Conference does not extend. We sincerely pray that it may tend to increase the zeal and activity of those engaged in supporting it, and to promote the increase of the Redeemer's kingdom. We hope to be favoured with a more particular account of this conference for some future number.

ORDINATION.

Oct. 8, 1816, Mr. Thomas Stevenson was ordained to the pastoral office over the G. B. church at Loughborough, Leicestershire: Mr. Pike of Derby, commenced the services of the day, by reading appropriate portions of scripture and prayer. Mr. Felkin of Kegworth, delivered an introductory discourse, on the subject of ordination: Mr. Pollard of Querndon, proposed the usual questions to the church and minister, and received the profession of faith: he also offered the ordination prayer, and united with several others in the imposition of hands. Mr. K. Smith, of Nottingham, gave the charge to the minister, from 1 Tim. iii. 15. "That thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth:" and concluded the morning service with prayer. In the afternoon, Mr. W. Pickering of Staley Bridge, addressed the church, from Luke iii. 14. "And what shall we do?" And in the evening, Mr. Orton, of Hugglescote, delivered a discourse on the duties and qualifications of ruling elders and deacons; as a motto to which he read, Phil. ii. 20. "Who will naturally care for your state." The sacred transactions of the day were conducted with great solemnity, in the presence of exceedingly large congregations: and the effect far transcended any thing ever before witnessed within those walls. During some parts of the morning service, particularly the ordination prayer, some hundreds of the auditors were dissolved in tears. May the great Head of the church succeed, with his especial blessing, an union formed in so solemn and affecting a manner!

OPENING A NEW MEETING-HOUSE.

The insecurity of Kegworth meeting-house, has long been a matter of painful anxiety. There was a defect in the original deed, and that deed was never enrolled in chancery: a circumstance of itself sufficient to render it invalid. Besides, in the disorder that occurred when Mr. Wootton was excluded, some of the trustees had the culpable weakness to deliver this deed to one of the heirs at law, and it could never since be recovered. In these ticklish circumstances, a piece of ground in a very eligible situation being on sale, the church thought

it prudent, in 1814, to purchase it. Soon after, an offer was made to permit them to remove, in a peaceable manner, the materials of their late meeting-house. After mature deliberation, this was done: and a new place was erected, in the autumn of 1815, at an expence of four hundred and fifty pounds. It was opened Dec. 26, 1815; when Mr. Orton of Hugglescote preached, in the morning, from John i. 14: and Mr. Smith, in the afternoon, from Hag. ii. 19. The collection at the opening was more than twenty-six pounds. The prospects since this event continue favourable, and several have been added to the church. May their number increase! and this hill of Zion be watered from above!

GENERAL BAPTIST MISSION.

In our last number, we recorded the formation of the G. B. Missionary Society. The committee have since published an "Address," in which, after detailing the object of the society, and the reasons for its formation drawn from horrid cruelty and immorality of paganism, &c. they proceed thus:—"Perhaps some that approve of Missions when they have read thus far will say, 'Missions indeed are important, but why act as a distinct society, when so many excellent ones already exist?'

Not to set ourselves in array against those sacred institutions—Not because we could not cordially join with them—Not because we view their success with an envious eye, for we rejoice in it, and bid them, God speed; but because we think the cause of Christ will be promoted in a greater degree, by acting as a distinct Missionary Society. For

I. We may then cultivate some new field; turn the waters of life into some new channel; form another army to attack the strong holds of Satan; and convey the glad tidings of salvation to those for whom as yet no man cares.

II. We may be stirred up to greater exertions. These will be called for, and feeling their need, may impel us to activity. Thus heathens abroad and our churches at home may be benefited by a spirit of increasing zeal, and while watering others, we may ourselves be watered.

III. More interest will be excited in our minds, and thus also, under God, a greater measure of holy zeal may be

brought into action, An able Friend of Missions, speaking of the distinct operation of different Christian denominations has said, ' By different classes of workmen the work is expedited; as it were by a division of labour. Besides, more interest is created when there appears a kind of *property* in the work; and more energy is excited when the attention is confined to a single body of men. At this very time, some societies are so intent on their own work, that they do not well know what the rest are doing.'

IV. And to give one more reason in the words of the Church Missionary Society, ' Christians may be allowed to support, and in truth ought to support most strenuously, the efforts of that body to which they have of deliberate choice and settled conviction attached themselves. There is no need here for unholy rivalry. The wide world is before us.' "

They then make an earnest appeal to the different classes of society for their support; and conclude, by recommending some measures which it may be advisable for those who wish to encourage the design to adopt. These we copy for the information and direction of those of our readers into whose hands the Address may not come.

" I. To obtain as extensively as possible, donations to meet the first exigencies of the Society, and annual subscriptions for its more permanent support.

II. Whenever it can be done, to obtain an annual congregational collection from every church that favours the design.

III. Where circumstances favour such an attempt, to promote the formation of Auxiliary Societies.

IV. As extensively as possible to encourage the formation of penny-a-week associations. Such associations, besides the advantage which they possess of diffusing widely a Missionary spirit, may also become one of the most efficient means of supporting the Society. Whenever a few friends to the Heathen are found, they may form such an association. They should appoint some one friend to act as a treasurer and secretary, and nominate as numerous a committee as they can, who should act also as collectors, and each of them endeavour to collect at least six-pence weekly. They should have their regular times of meeting, when their accounts should be adjusted, and when prayer for a blessing on Missionary exertions, united with conversation, or the reading of information

on Missionary subjects. may render the meeting both profitable and interesting. A penny-a-week association may allow a member that desires to do so, to subscribe a larger sum. Where such an association cannot be formed, a single person may undertake to collect a weekly six-pence or a shilling for the Society. As weekly collectors of the charity of friends to the heathen world, young men and women especially may become the active, zealous, and useful friends of the Society. The heads of families may form little associations of this kind among their children; and thus endeavour betimes to encourage in their hearts a spirit of benevolence. Sabbath-school teachers may act the same part among their scholars. The Bible Society has received many pounds thus raised, where the teachers have given a penny a week, and the scholars a half-penny.

V. To encourage the formation of monthly Missionary prayer meetings.

VI. Not to allow any person who may appear to possess abilities for a Missionary, and a heart devoted to the work of evangelizing the heathen, to continue inactive for want of encouragement.

Communications to the Committee respecting the affairs of the Society, or applications to them from any who may desire to engage as Missionaries, should be addressed to Mr. Pike, the Secretary, Derby. Contributions should be remitted to Mr. R. Seals, the Treasurer, Nottingham; but where more agreeable to themselves, the friends of the Society may remit their subscriptions or donations to the Treasurer, through the medium of any member of the Committee.

The names of subscribers will be thankfully received, and may be given to any member of the Committee, to the Treasurer, or Secretary, or to the Editor of the G. B. R.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

Wednesday, May 1, the twelfth Anniversary of the *British and Foreign Bible Society* was held, at Free Mason's Hall; Lord Teignmouth in the chair, supported by the Duke of Kent, the Bishops of Salisbury, Norwich, Gloucester, Clogher, and Cloyne, Lords Gambier, Calthorpe, the Chancellor of the Ex-

chequer, &c. &c. The operations of this noble society have now extended themselves to almost every corner of the earth, and the annual report has become too considerable and voluminous to be recited in detail, at one meeting: a selection therefore, containing the most interesting facts which had occurred during the last year, was read by the president and assistants. From this it appears, that one hundred and thirty-eight thousand Bibles, and one hundred and ten thousand Testaments, had been distributed by the Committee in that period. This makes the number of copies of the scriptures, reckoning Bibles and Testaments, already circulated by this society, amount to *one million, five hundred and fifty-seven thousand, nine hundred and seventy-three*. The receipts of last year were nearly ninety-three thousand pounds; and the expenditure upwards of one hundred and three thousand pounds, besides outstanding obligations to the amount of thirty-six thousand pounds. Hence it appears, that, great as the encouragement is which this institution receives, yet the activity of its managers, and the calls for assistance, much exceed it.

Our room will not permit us to give even the outlines of the transactions of this very respectable meeting. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, alluding to the singular State Papers, (published in the xxxixth Number of the G. B. R. page 134.) observed, "The kings of the earth have indeed stood up, and its rulers have taken counsel together; but it has not been against the Lord, and against his Anointed:—it has not been to extinguish the light of the gospel in the blood of its professors—but to acknowledge its authority and extend its influence! To those who had the opportunity of being acquainted with the real and genuine history of this treaty, and of knowing the sincerity and integrity of the principles from which it originated, it affords the gratifying, and hitherto unprecedented spectacle of an union of christian sovereigns, differing in their respective modes of persuasion, but agreeing in a public recognition of the divine authority of the gospel, and binding themselves, by a solemn compact, to adopt its precepts, as the rules of their policy and conduct." The speaker then adverted to the zeal and vigour with which the Emperor of Russia had entered into the views of the Bible Society, as the best evidence of his sincerity in subscribing the Pacific Convention; "In giving the Bible to every nation in his vast

dominions, in its own language, that monarch fixed the real and most appropriate "ratification of the Christian Treaty."

We cannot close this short account, without transcribing the concluding words of the report. "Looking," says the Committee, "to what has been accomplished, and to the progressive march of the institution, the christian sees, with joy unspeakable, that it has been the means of conveying the treasures of divine truth and knowledge to thousands professing christianity, who might never have known the Bible but by name, if the British and Foreign Bible Society had not existed. He contemplates the heavenly light which was graciously revealed to guide our feet into the way of peace, dawning over nations which have long sat in darkness, and in the shadow of death; and while he surveys, with rapture and astonishment, the numerous Bible Societies spread over the face of the earth, identified in object and united in affection, exhilarating and adorning the western as well as the eastern hemisphere, he is encouraged to hope, that, by the continuance of the favour of God, on the means, now in operation for disseminating his Holy Word, the predicted period may be accelerated, when "all the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before him."

POETRY.

ON HAPPINESS.

Hail distant Good! Thro' what an endless maze,
 In search of Thee, imagination strays!
 Each path we steer, each purpose we pursue,
 At Thee we aim, 'tis Thee, we keep in view:
 For thy enjoyment all our sighs ascend,
 The only centre, where our wishes tend.
 Yet, oft while we her transient footsteps trace,
 With winged flight, she mocks the eager chace;
 Eludes our care, our fondest hope deceives,
 And for her substance, but the shadow leaves.

When we expect her in the golden prize,
 And dream her form in hoarded treasure lies;

Or that she dwells upou the Indian shore
 In glitt'ring gems, and in Peruvian ore :
 Gold, gems, and grandeur, cloy the loathing sight,
 And fancy sickens at the glaring light :
 Riches, with all their full and ample store,
 'Ere long disgust us, and delight no more.

Upon Parnassus' top, the bard pursues
 Thy close retreat, for Thee, invokes the Muse ;
 Full draughts he asks from the Pierian spring,
 Bids nymphs and graces their assistance bring ;
 He sues with ardour for the poet's flame,
 To be enroll'd in registers of fame,
 And hopes to find Thee in a lofty name.
 But while he quaffs the nectar from the bowls,
 While the rich juice in sparkling torrents rolls ;
 And airy nymphs and sprightly graces join,
 Each glowing thought to brighten and refine ;
 With hydra form, Detraction rears her heads,
 And Calumny her baneful venom spreads,
 Envy and Spleen their deadly influence pour,
 And blighting dews, and noxious vapours show'r.
 Too late he finds, the stings of scorpion-hate,
 (Instead of Thee,) on wreaths of laurel wait.

E'en Philip's son sought Thee, but sought in vain,
 When o'er the world, he spread his vast domain ;
 At Thee, he grasp'd in uncontrouled pow'r,
 In an unbounded sway from shore to shore.
 But tho' he left no climate unexplor'd,
 No realm unaw'd, by his victorious sword ;
 Tho' all mankind did him sole monarch own,
 And paid allegiance unto him alone :
 Yet still unblest, amidst his greatness sighs,
 The world's strait limits mourns with streaming eyes ;
 No other left, to fill the insatiate mind,
 But all his conquests to one globe confin'd.

Since then, from wealth, nor fame, nor honours, flow
 The heav'nly guest, say, dwells she here below ?
 Where must we tread the unfrequented road
 That leads to her magnificent abode ?

Where shall we eye th' illuminating ray
That safe conducts us to her perfect day ?

Behold: RELIGION speaks : the nymph draws near
With gentle accents, and celestial air :

“ Mortals, no longer search with fruitless toil
“ For happiness, in this delusive soil.
“ Vain are the hopes, and the attempts to find
“ So fair a prize, in shadows, air, and wind,
“ Observe *my* dictates, to *my* rules adhere,
“ And with her presence she'll reward your care ;
“ The lovely portrait of her form, you'll see
“ With ev'ry grace display'd alone in *me*.
“ When wealth, and fame, and fleeting honours fail,
“ My radiant beams to cheer the gloom prevail :
“ Tho' far remote th' alluring prospects fly,
“ With brighter scenes their absence I supply.
“ My balmy sweets, each sorrow can controul,
“ And still the wildest tumults of the soul :
“ Mine is the heart-felt peace, the lasting joy,
“ The source of pleasure which will never cloy.
“ Constant on me, does Happiness attend,
“ While you an ear to all my precepts lend.
“ When each created object, takes its flight,
“ And sinks for ever in primeval night,
“ Her heav'n born charms, above yon lucid skies
“ Shall with new force, and dignity arise :
“ You'll view her there, seraphic, and refin'd,
“ A boundless good to fill th' immortal mind :
“ 'Tis there, you'll find the substance not the shade,
“ Her solid essence real, unallay'd,
“ There, thro' eternal ages, she'll remain
“ Exhaustless, and immortally the same.

JANE BULL.

Jan. 10th, 1761.

THE

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A BRIEF VIEW of the exact FULFILMENT of OUR SAVIOUR'S PROPHECIES respecting the EVENTS that preceded the LAST SIEGE of JERUSALEM.

HAVING, in some former numbers, shewn how accurately some of the Old Testament prophecies have been verified in the event, we shall now submit to our readers a few of the remarkable predictions of our blessed Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, respecting the various circumstances which preceded the final overthrow of the Jewish state.

We shall only promise, that our Saviour was crucified in the thirty-third year of the christian æra, and the destruction of Jerusalem happened in the seventieth; and that these predictions were made not long before his death, when his followers were only a few illiterate fishermen, and the whole land of Judea was in a tranquil and flourishing state. All the events, therefore, to which we shall have occasion to refer, took place within less than forty years after our Saviour's death. Of this period we have two valuable historians: Josephus the Jew, who lived at the time, and was engaged in many of the transactions; and Tacitus the Roman, who flourished about twenty years after the destruction of Jerusalem. From the writings of these authors most of the subsequent facts are extracted.

1. Our Saviour foretold, that, before the final destruction of Jerusalem, the doctrines of christianity should be promulgated in all parts of the Roman empire and places adjacent. "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations: and then shall the end come." Matt. xxiv. 14. "The gospel must be first published among all nations," Mark xiii. 10. That this was really the case,

is evident from the history of the New Testament, and the epistles written to churches in various parts of the world; as well as from the declaration of the sacred penman. Romans i. 18—xv. 19. Col. i. 23. Tacitus too, the Roman historian, bears unsuspected testimony to the facts. He informs us, that the christian religion, which had its rise in Judæa, had spread into many places, and reached Rome itself; where the professors of it were numerous, so early as the year of our Lord sixty-four, six years before the destruction of Jerusalem.

2. Our Saviour had thus forewarned his disciples. "Before all these things, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you: delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake." "And some of you they shall cause to be put to death." Luke xxi. 12, 16. See also Matt. xxiv. 9. Mark xiii. 9. The Acts of the Apostles furnishes us with particular evidence of the exact fulfilment of these predictions, and various passages in other parts of the New Testament shew that, in those early days, persecution was the usual portion of the disciples of Christ. Heb. ix. 32, 34. 2 Mess. i. 3. 6. James ii. 5, 7. 2 Peter ix. 12, 19. The historian to whom we have just alluded, also confirms this report of the sacred penman. "Nero," he says, "inflicted exquisite punishments on those people who were commonly known by the name of christians;" and goes on to describe the dreadful sufferings to which they were consigned; observing, that they were condemned, not so much for the burning of the city of which Nero accused them, as for their enmity to mankind: that is, on account of the singular religious tenets which they professed.

3. Our blessed Lord also predicted, that, before the destruction of the temple, there would be declensions and apostacies amongst his followers. "And then shall many be offended and shall betray one another: and because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." Matt. xxiv. 10, 12. Mark xiii. 12. Luke xxi. 16. That this was the melancholy fact, the New Testament itself affords abundant proof; not only in the exhortations to constancy, and the cautions against falling away which are scattered through the epistles, but in many direct assertions. Heb. x. 23, 25. 2 Tim. i. 15.—iv. 16. 1 Tim. i. 19, 20. And of this fact too, there is evidence from the same passage of the pagan histo-

rian. Tacitus assures us, that, at the beginning of Nero's persecution; such only were apprehended as confessed themselves to be christians; and that afterwards, these informed against a great many others, who were seized on their accusation. An awful instance of both apostacy and treachery!

4. Our Lord foretold that, before the utter extinction of the Jewish state, many remarkable natural calamities would be experienced. "There shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famine and pestilence: these are the beginning of sorrows." Mark xiii. 8. Luke xxi. 11. That this awful denunciation was exactly executed, in all its particulars, is evident both from sacred and profane history. The sacred writer records a famine, that, for several years, sorely afflicted Judea, and several of the adjacent counties: Acts xi 25, 30; and Josephus records, that it was very severe and extensive. Other pagan authors mention a famine, at this time, which oppressed Rome and all Italy. Josephus also notices a pestilence, about ten years after our Saviour's death, which destroyed many of the Jews who dwelt at Babylon and also says, that, about five years before the siege of Jerusalem, there was a dreadful mortality which ravaged Rome and various parts of the empire. Tacitus writes, that, in this period, there was an earthquake at Rome and Apamea, and a tremendous one in Asia, which destroyed Lædica, Hierapolis and Colosse. There was also another earthquake in Campania, about the same time.

5. Our Lord said to his disciples, "Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled, for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom." Matt. xxi. 6, 7. Mark xiii. 7, 8. And the history of the period between the death of our Saviour, and the destruction of Jerusalem is filled with accounts of wars, seditions, insurrections, and tumults, in which the Jews were the principal actors and sufferers. In the year of our Lord forty, a disturbance arose in Mesopotamia, in which upwards of fifty thousand Jews perished. Nine years afterwards, a tumult happened at Jerusalem, which caused the slaughter of twenty thousand of the same people. These disturbances continued to increase. At Cesarea, there arose a quarrel between the inhabitants and the Jews, when more than twenty thousand of

the latter were cut off in one hour. This enraged the Jews in the neighbouring cities, and gave rise to many insurrections in various places, in which great numbers were put to death. All Syria was in confusion, and every city divided against itself. The days were spent in slaughter, and the nights in terror. The streets were filled with naked dead bodies, lying in heaps, without any regard to sex or age. At Alexandria, at one time fifty thousand lay dead in the streets: and at Damascus in one hour's space ten thousand Jews were slain. These were what our Lord calls, "the beginning of sorrows."

6. Our blessed Saviour foretold, that many false prophets should rise and deceive many. "There shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Matt. xxiv. 11, 24. Mark xiii. 21, 23. The Jewish historian, Josephus, has preserved abundance of instances of the exact fulfilment of this prophecy. About ten years after our Saviour's death, an impostor persuaded a very great multitude to take their effects with them, and follow him to the river Jordan; assuring them that he was a prophet, and that, causing the river to divide at his command, he would give them an easy passage. His confident pretensions deceived many; and a multitude followed him. But the Roman governor sent a troop of horse after them, and slew many of the deluded people, together with their leader, whose head they cut off and carried it to Jerusalem. The historian observes in another place, that "impostors and deceivers persuaded the people to follow them into the wilderness; where they affirmed that they should see manifest wonders and signs, performed by the providence of God. Many hearkening unto these false prophets, at length suffered the punishment of their folly." For Felix sent after them, and cut them off. How wise the advice, and how exact the foresight of our adorable Saviour, when he warned his followers against these impostors! "Behold I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold he is in the desert: go not forth." About the same time, adds Josephus, there came a man out of Egypt to Jerusalem, who said he was a prophet; and having persuaded a good number of the meaner sort to follow him to the Mount of Olives, he told them that thence they should see the walls of Jerusalem fall down at his command; and promised thus to

give them an entrance into the city. Felix, the governor, being apprised of this movement, marched out of Jerusalem with a body of troops, and falling on the Egyptian, killed four hundred of his followers, and took two hundred prisoners. Many instances of a similar nature might be added; but these are sufficient to verify our Lord's assertion, when he told the Jews: "I am come in my father's name, and ye receive me not; another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive." John v. 43.

7. The last particular that we shall notice is, the signs and wonders which, as our Saviour predicted, preceded the final overthrow of the city and temple. "There shall be," he said, "fearful sights, and great signs shall be from heaven." Luke xxi. 11. Now the Jewish historian, who will not be suspected of designedly fabricating evidence in favor of Christianity, and who lived at the time, has recorded many strange occurrences of this nature. He tells us,—that there was a star resembling a sword, which stood over the city; and a comet which continued a year;—that, at the ninth hour of the night, so great a light shone about the altar and temple, that it seemed to be bright day; and continued half an hour;—that the brazen gate of the temple, which was with difficulty moved by twenty men, and fastened with bolts that went deep into the floor, was seen to open at midnight of its accord:—that before sunset, chariots and troops in armour appeared to be carried on the clouds and surrounding cities:—and, that one Jesus, the son of Ananus, an illiterate countryman, for four years together, previous to the siege, went continually about the streets and lanes of the city, crying "Woe to Jerusalem," and could not be made, either by stripes or entreaties, to desist from his mournful cry, till the city was encompassed by the Romans; when, going round on the wall, repeating his usual denunciation, he cried out, with his whole might, "Woe, woe, once more to the city, to the people, and to the temple!" and then added, "Woe, woe, to myself also;" at which instant, a stone from one the Roman slings struck him, and immediately killed him. Some of these relations, it must be confessed, border on the marvellous, and may perhaps have been a little embellished by the narrator. But that extraordinary prodigies happened, at this time, is a fact attested by heathen, as well as Jewish writers.

We here pause for the present, and trust that this glance at the exact fulfilment of some of the predictions of our blessed Lord and Saviour will heighten our veneration for his character, and strengthen our faith in the doctrines which he taught. On some future occasion we may perhaps notice a few of the interesting predictions of the same divine prophet, respecting the siege and destruction of the holy city and temple, and shew that they also were most exactly accomplished. S. O.

MEDITATIONS on the LORD'S PRAYER.

No. VII.

Mat. vi. 12. *And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.*

There is a manifest fitness and propriety in all the instructions given by our Lord, both as to the doctrines themselves, and the manner in which they are communicated. He had just taught us to pray for "daily bread," as an article of the first necessity; but having forfeited all our mercies by sin, we deserve nothing at the hands of God; and whatever of earthly good we may possess, while unforgiven, can yield us no real satisfaction. Hence the importance of that petition, so fitted to the lips of sinners, and of such daily necessity—"Forgive us our debts." Without divine forgiveness, wrath is mingled in our cup, and a curse with the very bread we eat. In the fulness of his sufficiency, the sinner shall be in straits; every hand of the wicked shall be upon him. When he is about to fill his belly, "God shall cast the fury of his wrath upon him, and shall rain it upon him while he is eating." Nothing but pardoning mercy can sanctify our ordinary comforts, or prevent even our table from becoming a snare to us; much less can any thing short of it render us capable of enjoying future blessedness.

We are here represented as "debtors," debtors to the great Father of mankind; to whom we owe a debt of obedience, of gratitude, and love, which we can never pay. We are under obligations to him for our lives, and all that we possess, and shall be so in every future stage of our existence, both in this world, and that which is to come. But God is not only our Father; he is also our Lawgiver and our Judge; and in this

view we owe to him a debt of punishment, in consequence of sin, and for innumerable defects in every part of our obedience. Like the transgressor, who owes his life to public justice, for having violated the laws of his country, even so have we forfeited our all at the hands of God.

It is impossible, seriously, to reflect on what may be termed the best parts of our conduct, without feeling that we are sinners in all we do, and are continually coming short of the glory of God. He requires that we should love him with all the heart, and soul, and strength; and yet how partially is this duty fulfilled. If we love God in reality, it is nevertheless blended with awful indifference and inconstancy; and never aspires to that purity and ardour which the transcendent excellency of the object demands, even in our happiest seasons of spiritual enjoyment; and when we closely inspect the motives by which we are influenced, how little do we discover of that sacred principle in the generality of our religious duties. We are also required, in whatever we do, to do all to the glory of God: yet how little of this enters into our worldly engagements, our common enjoyments, or even our acts of devotion. Were all our services, all our pleasures, and pursuits, measured by this rule, how little religion should we appear to possess! and how defective would every part of our conduct seem! None of the graces we exercise, none of the duties we perform, can pretend to an equality with the divine requirements; all are marked with lamentable defects, and are in deep arrears to the holy and righteous law of God.

But, when to these are added, the sum of positive evil committed, who can understand his errors, or fully estimate his desert of punishment? How many sins have been committed from our youth up! sins of ignorance and presumption; how many secret departures from God, since we have known his holy name; how much ingratitude, impenitence, and unbelief; how much carnality and worldly-mindedness have entered into the composition of our character, and marred and ruined all that we have said and done!

For all this we are deeply in arrears to the divine lawgiver, have rendered ourselves unworthy of the love of "our Father who is in heaven," and justice would demand the forfeiture of all that we possess: yet we are daily adding to the dreadful score, and our sins are continually enhancing our desert of pu-

nishment. Were all the positive and negative evils of only one day written down, what shame and confusion would cover us! What then must be the total of our whole lives; in youth, in manhood, in maturer years; in health, in sickness, in fulness, in poverty, in society, in secret; against men against God, in word, in thought, and in deed? How awful the aggravated sum! "Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up: they are more than the hairs of my head, therefore my heart faileth me."

In the view of such accumulated guilt, it is not difficult to perceive that if ever we be forgiven, it must be freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Hence all our hopes arise. Sin is a debt we can never discharge, nor can we by any means release ourselves from an obligation to punishment. It is like a debt of long standing, that has been continually increasing, every day and hour of our lives, and which can never be liquidated, either by rivers of tears or seas of blood. Here the least and the greatest sinner stands on a level; we can make no atonement: the redemption of the soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever; all our hopes and all our efforts are vain and ineffectual. Forgiveness is indeed connected with repentance, and so connected that it cannot exist without it; but they are not connected as cause and effect, so that the one must necessarily follow upon the other; for then forgiveness could not be free, even though repentance were the gift of God.

But in the forgiveness of sin, God is represented as acting with sovereign freedom, while at the same time his promises of grace ensure to the penitent the full remission of his guilt: "We have redemption through the blood of Christ, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." "All that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses." "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." The creditor, who had two debtors, the one owing him five hundred pence, and the other fifty, on finding that they had nothing to pay, frankly forgave them both. Such also is the conduct of God towards us: "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for my own sake, and will not remember thy sins."

In praying for divine forgiveness, it is of the utmost importance to be convinced of this necessary truth; to feel that we

are deeply in debt and have nothing to pay, and that our forgiveness must be all of grace. No other prayer will be effectual, no other plea avail. We must come as unworthy, as amongst the chief of sinners, emptied of all self-righteousness, and divested of every hope but what is founded on the promises of God in Christ Jesus.

There is however a most important consideration connected with the hope of mercy, suggested in the petition before us, which is essential to every successful application to the throne of grace. Forgiveness at the hands of God must be sought in the exercise of a forgiving spirit towards others; and it is in vain to seek it in any other way. "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." In the whole of this interesting prayer our Lord had taught his disciples to feel towards each other as brethren; and now, in the same inimitable manner, he will teach them to seek forgiveness. All the members of his family must be like himself, full of compassion, and gracious, loving one another and forgiving one another, even as God for Christ sake hath forgiven them. This only is the religion of the gospel; this only is the doctrine that is according to godliness, or that corresponds with the hope of eternal life.

Such language indeed implies that we are in danger, not only of sinning against God, but also against one another, and that therefore we shall need mutual forgiveness and forbearance; and as we forgive others, so our Father also will forgive us: after the same manner, but in an infinitely higher degree. "With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful, with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright; with the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure, and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward." "The Lord shall reward every man according to his works."

It must needs be that offences will come; and while in this world we must expect to meet with injuries and evil treatment, not only from the wicked, but also in many cases from the righteous themselves. If men sin against God, it is no wonder they should sin against one another. The depravity of the human heart will lead to things of this sort, and no situation in life, no degree of moral excellence can secure us from them. Christ himself did not pass through the world free from invective or reproach; he had not only to endure the contradiction of sinners against himself, but the unmerited

reproof of some of his brethren; and for this even the intrepid Peter was an offence to him. So certain is it, that we shall have occasion for the exercise of brotherly forgiveness, and so essential is such a disposition to the existence of the christian characters, that they are directly implied in the petition we are instructed to present before the throne of "our Father who is in heaven." It would be as impossible to reconcile an unforgiving spirit with the nature of true religion, as to associate with it the practice of any other evil, and the more so as it violates not only the letter of christianity, but vacates the very principles on which it is founded; giving, instead of the most perfect system of benevolence, nothing but what is hateful in malignity, and destructive of all that is fair and beautiful in the moral world.

So imperative is the duty of forgiveness on those who hope to be forgiven, that every prayer we offer up without a disposition to perform it, is at once converted into an awful imprecation. All such prayers are an abomination to the Lord, and dangerous to the individual who shall presume to offer them: he is making his own destruction sure, while he puts on the semblance of piety and devotion. To pray and hope to be forgiven, "even as we forgive others," while we ourselves are cruel and implacable, is a doctrine only fit for devils to believe, and can find no place among real christians. It is no inconsiderable commendation of the religion of Jesus, that it requires all his followers to be as brethren, to be kind and tender hearted, ready to forgive; and that whatever is incompatible with this should disqualify them for the kingdom of heaven. Matt. xviii. 23, 35. Luke xvii. 3, 4. Ephes. iv. 31, 32.

PAULINUS.

*The RIGHT of the NEW CONNECTION to ADMIT
and EXCLUDE its MEMBERS.*

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

As the subject on which Noncon addressed you in the last number of the G. B. R. is of the first moment to our Connection, I hope you will permit me to offer a few observations, lest his glowing descriptions should mislead the unwary.

And, as he seems to have encountered some frightful spectres, by omitting coolly to state the point at issue, it may prevent us from needless terrors, if we endeavour to define our object, and explain our terms.

The object then of these lines is to show, if we can, that the New Connection, as well as every other voluntary society, whether civil or religious, has a right to choose its own members. This right includes the power of accepting or refusing candidates, and of excluding such members as may be judged improper for the station. To this object alone I would direct my attention, not to the defence of the resolution and rules adopted at the last association, much less of the phraseology used in expressing them. If the principle be secured, the mode of its application may safely be left to the wisdom of future associations.

When persons voluntarily form themselves into a society, there is always some object which they propose to accomplish by such union. Now, it is obvious, that effectually to pursue this object, the parties uniting must have corresponding views, both of the object proposed, and the means of obtaining it. They must all think the object desirable and worthy of their pursuit, and agree to endeavour to obtain it by means consistent with each other. For to suppose, that the members of such an union have not the right of judging whether a candidate for admission is likely to promote their object, and accordingly to accept or refuse him: or to say that, when a member changes his views of the object or the mode of proceeding, that the society has no right to exclude him, would be, at once, to change the nature of such society. It would be no longer a voluntary association of equals, pursuing unitedly one common object, by measures which all approved and which mutually conspired to accomplish their purpose: but a gang of slaves, chained together by some foreign influence, seeking different objects, by methods which constantly obstructed each others progress. The idea is revolting—perhaps the most subtle tyranny could devise no more exquisitely miserable mode of persecution, than that of compelling an ingenious man to act in society, without allowing him to choose his own associates.

But churches and connections of churches, or associations, are, as far as relates to their fellow men, voluntary societies.

No man, nor any body of men, has a power to compel any individual to join in a church or to remain in it. It is his own personal act, for which he is responsible to his Creator alone, and not to any inferior authority. The same may be said, with still greater propriety, respecting an union of churches. Each church has certainly an undoubted right either to stand alone, or to unite itself with such other societies as it may deem expedient. It is granted, that, as christians, both individuals and churches are under the most sacred obligations to make the word of God their rule, and to unite with such only as in their opinion approach nearest to that sacred standard. But then they are bound by the same obligations to read the divine volume for themselves, and to understand it according to their own judgment, without any regard to human authority.

Perhaps, it may be said, that, as all agree in making the scriptures their rule, that might form a basis of union among christians of different sentiments. But, alas! this is delusive. They, might indeed, unite with the professed design of promoting the glory of God and the good of man. They might even agree in saying, that the scriptures are the only rule to direct us how to attain this object. But, when they attempted to apply this rule to any particular mode of acting, they would immediately clash with one another. What the Trinitarian, for instance, would think himself required by scripture to perform for the promotion of the glory of God and the good of his fellow creatures, the Unitarian would esteem derogatory from the divine Majesty, and destructive to the interests of humanity. At every step, such jarrings would occur, and the object of their union would be completely defeated. Might not each then pursue his own objects much more effectually, either alone or in connection with persons of his own sentiments?

The prophet recognizes the necessity of union of sentiment, in order to union of exertion, when he enquires, "Can two walk together: except they be agreed?" And every exhortation to united endeavours always pre-supposes the actors to agree in judgment as to the object in view. "Strive together for the faith of the gospel," takes it for granted that they are of "one mind," what that faith is. In all societies this is important; but in none so much as in those of a religious nature. Religious differences are often of such tremendous consequence,

that two honest men, who disagree in their views respecting them, neither can nor ought to act together. It is the duty of each to endeavour, by all proper means, to oppose, and, if possible, destroy the opinion of the other.* This is a duty to which he is called by the voice of reason; and on this, as well as on every subject, scripture and reason coincide. So far from encouraging persons to act with those whose sentiments they believe to be contrary to the oracles of truth, we are continually directed to shun them. Timothy was commanded to *withdraw* from "men destitute of the truth." 1 Tim. vi. 5. Titus was directed to admonish heretics; and, if that 'merciful measure' had not the desired effect, to *reject* them. 1 Tit. iii. When Hymeneus and Alexander had made a shipwreck of the faith, Paul delivered them unto Satan that they might learn not to blaspheme. 1 Tim. i. 19, 20. John, the beloved disciple of Christ, whose heart was filled with divine love, thus addressed the elect lady and her children. "He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the father and the son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed. For he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds." 2 John 9, 10, 11. The church at Pergamos is blamed for *having amongst* them, those who held the doctrines of the Nicolaitans and of Balaam; and the Thyatirans are threatened for *suffering* Jezebel who called herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce the people. Rev. ii. 14, 15, 20. These churches ought therefore to have excluded and silenced those heretics. Indeed, it is hardly possible for the most careless to read the scriptures, without seeing that it is the duty of every one who wishes to make them the rule of his conduct, to use his utmost diligence to preserve the church free from the leaven of false doctrine, and to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." It therefore is the duty as well as the privilege of the New Connection, as a body, to exclude such individuals and churches as depart

* The writer is well aware, that this language will grate on the ears of some of his *candid* and *liberal* cotemporaries; but, after mature consideration, he dares neither retract nor soften it.

from what they esteem essential truths of the gospel. The prosperity, nay the very existence of the body, depends on this principle, not only being recognized, but also acted upon with decision. Unless it be, I am persuaded from a serious examination of the General Baptist history, that the churches which now crowd our Annual Reports, like those of the Old Connection, which for a century were the glory of our British Israel, will soon be numbered among the things that have been.

CIRCUMSPECTOR.

Nottingham, Oct. 23^d, 1816.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

An address to the Ladies in our several congregations being circulated in this year's Minutes, requesting their aid in providing a select permanent Library for the use of the students in the General Baptist Academy, the Treasurer trusts it will be agreeable to you to insert, in the Repository, the subjoined account. He feels persuaded the information will be pleasing to many, and may likewise excite others to imitation.

He has received from the females of the G. B. church and congregation, at Loughborough—In cash £17. And from Mrs. Sarah Ayres, Finch's Essays.

These, Sir, are the first fruits which the address has produced from our fair contributors; and it is hoped the harvest will be equally productive.

We are certainly very much obliged by the *prompt* and *liberal* subscription of our female friends at Loughborough for this additional act of benevolence: nor must we omit to mention our obligation to the young ladies, by whose active exertions so handsome a subscription has been obtained. May He, whom they have endeavoured to serve, repay them, by imparting largely to them of the rich blessings of his grace!

In the next place, I have to add, the gifts of our female friends at Derby. These consist principally of books; and are as follows.

FROM Mrs. Wilkins, Parkhurst's Hebrew Lexicon, 1 vol. 4to.
Mrs. Etches, Jenning's Jewish Antiquities, 2 vols.
Mrs. Sarah Pike, DeLauey's, Rev. Examined, 2 vols.
Jenkins on the Christian Religion, 2v.

Mrs. Mary Ann Saunders, *Alix's Reflections on Scripture.*
Fletcher's Portrait of St. Paul.

Mrs. Mary Perry, *Lowman on the Revelations.*
Watson's Apology.

Mrs. Poxon, *Law's Serious Call, &c.*

A Friend, One Shilling.

Mrs. Eliz. Argyle, *Towgood on Dissent.*

These, Sir, are the fruits of benevolence of our sisters in Christ, at Derby. May their fruit still abound to the glory of our common Lord!

Give me leave here to suggest a hint to our friends, who may be desirous of promoting the object of the address. It is this, that though probably some of them will enrich the Library with valuable books which they have in possession, for the donation of which we shall be thankful, yet, where money is given, it appears most desirable, that it be sent to the Treasurer, and not expended by individuals in different places; and that a few persons be appointed by the Association to consult together, and determine upon the most useful works, and upon the best mode of purchasing them.

By this method, it is supposed that books better adapted to the design of the Institution will be obtained, at considerably less expence. Thus both the quality of the Library will be improved, and the number of volumes much increased.

I am, your's,

JAMES SMITH,

Treasurer.

OBSERVATIONS on the **PAPER** signed **NONCON.**

(See the last Number of the *G. B. R.* page 202.)

To the **EDITOR** of the *G. B. R.*

SIR,

In your last number, you inserted a flaming letter signed *Noncon*, bearing very hard upon measures adopted at the last Association. As I was a member of that body, and certainly had no intention "of imitating the anti-christian tyrants of papal Rome," or to sanction "an act of tyranny over conscience," you will, I trust, spare me a page in your next publication, to attempt a defence of myself and Brethren from these heavy charges.

1. Your correspondent appears to have formed very inaccurate ideas of the nature of persecution. All that the rules on which he so severely animadverts could effect, if executed with the utmost rigour, is to exclude such as the Association may judge heretics from the New Connection. The language of the friends of those laws is: "These are our sentiments on subjects we esteem important: and unless you agree with us, you cannot act in union with us, and therefore cannot be members of our Connection. We pretend to no authority to forbid your differing from us, or to prevent your associating to promote your own views of these subjects with those who entertain the same opinions. We only claim the privilege of declining to act with you." But the style of persecution is very different. She says, "Unless you believe as I direct, and practise what I prescribe, I will inflict on you all the tortures in my power." Paganism exclaimed: "Unless you burn incense to Cæsar, and worship the immortal gods, I will throw you to the wild beasts, or consume you for torches to illuminate the public gardens." Popery threatened, and not in vain: "Unless you believe in the real presence of Christ in the consecrated wafer, and conform to the dictates of the Holy Catholic Church, I will burn you at the stake for heretics." And, when the pious founders of the General Baptist Interest were struggling for the right of conscience, Episcopacy stepped forwards and declared: "Unless you attend your parish church, and receive the sacrament according to the form prescribed in the book of Common Prayer, I will deprive you of your rights as men, will fine, imprison, ruin you." This was indeed persecution. How happy would these worthy confessors have been, if their oppressors had excluded them from the pagan temples, the popish chapels, and the parish churches, and left them at liberty, unmolested and uninjured, to follow the dictates of their own consciences. They would have esteemed themselves in the possession of perfect religious liberty. It would never have entered their thoughts, that they had a right to continue members of any body after they had renounced its distinguishing principles. This discovery was reserved for our enlightened age.

Now these rules which have so innocently incurred the high displeasure of your correspondent, neither condemn those who differ from them, nor compel any to unite with those who adopt

them, nor yet punish any for disbelieving them. Surely then, there can be no assumption of undue authority over conscience; and therefore, the admirable maxims of our blessed Saviour to which he so confidently refers, can never apply to them. The Association wish neither to exercise authority, nor to be called either Rabbis or Masters. They acknowledge God as the only Lord of conscience, and Christ as the supreme head of the church, and wish to reverence the one, and promote the kingdom of the other. They only claim the privilege of doing this according to their own judgment; unobstructed by an union with those who act on different principles: principles often which they esteem contrary to the will of God, and destructive of the interests of the Redeemer.

The independence of churches, that glory of the G. B. system, is in no wise compromised by the rules under consideration. No church is compelled to become a member of the Connection; or to continue so any longer than it approves of the doctrine and practices which it sanctions. All that is wished, is that, when a church forsakes those sentiments which obtained it a place in the New Connection, it would honestly avow the change, and take an honourable leave of its former associates. Surely there is no incroachment on the independence of churches in this procedure. And if, for any reasons, and one can hardly imagine that they can be very creditable ones, a church should wish to continue in a connection from which it differs in sentiment, and that connection should take proper means to ascertain the fact, and when that is done, withdraw from such a society, or if you please exclude it from the connection, how is the independence of the church infringed? There is no attempt to compel the church to change either its faith or practice: the connection interferes only in its own affairs.

But are we not, Mr. Editor deceiving ourselves here? Is there not an evident inconsistency between the strict independency of churches, and a connection of churches? Can churches any more than individuals enter into society, without, in some respects, surrendering their independence? Must not a church which aims at complete independence stand alone in the earth? If any union with others be attempted, the parties uniting become, as far as the union extends, dependent on each other. It would be as reasonable for an individual

member of a church to claim the privilege of acting for himself in things, relating to the society, as for one church of a connection to be independent of the rest. And, as the business of a church can be properly transacted only at a church-meeting, at which all the members have a right to be present; so the affairs of a connection can be transacted only at an association, at which all the churches have a right to attend by their representatives.

Your correspondent is equally unhappy in stating, that the rules in question, "are incompatible with the principle of equality on which the association was formed, and repugnant to the professed design of their annual meetings." Any one, by reading the History of the General Baptists now publishing, (Vol. II. Book II. Chap. i.) will see, that the avowed object of this association, was to guard the connection from opinions which the parties who formed it thought heretical: that for this purpose, the articles to which he so frequently alludes, were drawn up, and signed by all the ministers who united; and that these articles were prefaced with this resolution; "We agree that no minister be permitted to join this assembly who does not subscribe the articles we have now agreed upon: and that those who do subscribe and afterwards depart from them, shall be no longer considered as belonging to this assembly." The fact is, that the good men who laid the foundation of the New Connection had long seen, with deep regret, the mischiefs which had sprung from a laxity of principle. They beheld the once flourishing General Baptist interest languishing and ready to expire, and they attributed this affecting decline to the neglect of what they esteemed important truths, and the introduction of theories and speculations inconsistent with them. They, therefore, were solicitous to guard the churches with which they stood connected, from the quicksands which had nearly swallowed up their predecessors. And the resolutions and rules of 1816, are neither more nor less than a new edition of the regulations they adopted to accomplish this purpose. And when, in 1775, it was resolved, "that subscription to a creed was not needful" yet, it was then agreed, that every applicant for admission should hear, "a declaration of what the Connection believed respecting the fundamental doctrines," for the express purpose of "trying whether there be an agreement in religious sentiments." (G. B.

Hist. vol. ii. page 212). It is evident then that your ingenious correspondent has, inadvertently no doubt, totally misrepresented the matter of fact; and that all his rhetoric, for want of proper foundation, vanishes into empty air.

The observations which he extracts from the circular letter for 1779, are certainly excellent; but as the last association has not yet been convicted of making any attempt to "exercise a despotic power over conscience," they may be dismissed as foreign to the present subject. It may, however, be observed that the parties who wrote and signed that circular, were the same who, nine years before, had assisted in forming the New Connection, and most probably drew up the regulations which it adopted to guard the churches from heresy. Unless, therefore, they had changed their sentiments; they did not intend to contradict their former decisions. And, if such a change had taken place, it lies with Mr. Noncon to prove that their later opinions were more correct than their former ones.

These remarks, Sir, I beg leave, with your permission, to submit to the consideration of the New Connection. The subject is important and demands very serious attention. May this and every other discussion be conducted in the fear of God, and conduce to his glory and the edification of the churches, is the sincere and earnest prayer of

Dear Sir,

Your's respectfully,

OCSOBORCAS.

P. S. The imagination of your correspondent has been so harrassed with images of terror, that he mistakes windmills for giants. He supposes that he contemplates a creed,—a canon to punish such as depart from it,—an inquisitorial examination,—tyranny over conscience,—anti-christian tyrants of papal Rome,—fines,—imprisonments,—banishment and deaths, &c. &c. What can have raised these tremendous ideas in his mind? Why truly, a regulation adopted by the members of a private association of churches, which, even when expressed canon-wise, reads thus, "Whosoever does not believe the six articles of 1770, let him be—excluded from the New Connection."

Risum teneatis amici?

On *ORDINATION*.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

SIR.

In page 225 of your last number, you inserted two queries: the former whether there be any scripture for the public rather than private performance of ordination; the latter, whether any scripture forbids an unordained elder to administer the Lord's supper.

The Bible certainly is the only rule of faith and practice for a christian; and whatever cannot be fairly defended from that blessed book, ought doubtless to be abandoned. But, excellent as this principle is, it may be abused. There are a thousand questions arise in almost every part of religions duty, which can never be determined by the express words of scripture. Had the Holy Spirit descended to detail, the sacred volume must have become inconveniently large: equally beyond the purchase and the perusal of the bulk of mankind. But the wisdom of the great Head of the church, is conspicuous in the manner in which he legislates for his people. Instead of a tedious enumeration of the various duties which we owe one to another, he gives us a golden rule, which applies in all cases, and neither burdens the memory nor perplexes the understanding. "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them."

Thus also, in questions respecting the order and worship of a christian church, there are many circumstances, which can never be determined by the express words of inspiration. But here again, we are furnished with a few plain and comprehensive maxims, which, if honestly applied, will solve almost every difficulty. Three of these universal canons, as they have sometimes been called, are given by the apostle of the gentiles; which, if properly considered, will help much in answering the queries of your two correspondents; even allowing that there is no express passage of scripture that applies directly to them. The rules are "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."—"Let all things be done unto edifying," and, "Let all things be done decently, and in order." I Cor. x. 31. xiv. 26, 40. Let us apply these rules to the subjects stated by the querists.

1. To perform the service of ordination in private, before a few select friends, is neither so much to the glory of God.

and the edification of man, nor so decent and orderly as to perform it in public before the open congregation. To see a minister and his people enter into a solemn covenant, which has for its object to advance the honour of God and the good of man, certainly has a tendency to exalt the Almighty in the eyes of spectators: and this glory which will thus be done to the religion and authority of the Lord Jesus, will be extended in proportion to the number of spectators. And, if the various parts of the sacred solemnities of an ordination-day be adapted to stir up devout affections and holy resolutions in christians, and to impress sinners with the reality and importance of religion, surely it is not doing all things to edifying to shut out all except a select few from the service. Nor is the benefit of publicity confined wholly to the spectators. Does not a "great cloud of witnesses" render the covenant then entered into more solemn, and impress the minds of the parties concerned more deeply, than it would have done if the service had been private. And lastly. Is it not more decent and orderly, that a transaction which is to have public effects should be publicly solemnized? Are Churches and Ministers ashamed of the union which they are forming; and wish to have it as little known as possible? Is there any thing in the services of such a day unfit for public observation? Surely ordination is not one of those deeds of darkness which shun the light!

Your second querist seems, if I understand him rightly, to allow that the pastoral office is of divine authority, that ordination is the scriptural mode of setting persons apart to that office, and that the administration of the Lord's supper is a part of the duty of the pastor. Now, allowing this, it is evident, that, except in cases of extreme necessity, it is neither decent nor orderly for a person to assume an office with which he has never been properly invested. It is allowed even in civil matters, to be both indecent and disorderly; and certainly is much more blameable in the important affairs of religion. It must be offensive to the Almighty, who is a God of order not of confusion; and has on various occasions manifested his displeasure against those who have thoughtlessly confounded his ordinances. Instead of advancing his glory, it leads men to think lightly of his laws and treat his institutions with disrespect. And a conduct that has that unhappy tendency, so far from promoting the edification of christians or the conversion

of simfers, must operate to prevent both : and is equally injurious to man and dishonourable to God.

These hints might be easily amplified ; but I am sensible that your narrow limits forbid enlargement. I therefore take leave of the subject: praying that the churches of the New Connection may "keep the ordinances as they were delivered to them."

Yours', &c.

EBORACENIS.

ADVICE to a CHURCH involved in PECUNIARY DIFFICULTIES, with MOTIVES to enforce it.

(From an Occasional Address by the late Mr. D. TAYLOR.)

1. Turn to your bibles and read carefully, twice over, the following passages, viz. Prov. iii. 19, 20. compared with Exod. xxiii. 19.—xxxiv. 26. Deut. xxvi. 2, &c. Mal. iii. 10—12. Hag. i. 5—11. 2 Cor. ix. 6—11. Gal. vi. 6—9. Luke xxi. 1—4. with other similar texts.—Then let every one consider the interest of Christ, which he has peculiarly espoused as his *own* interest ; and his own special and peculiar obligations to assist in the support of it : and let every one act accordingly. For if one do not, why should not another ? and thus, why should any ?

2. Let every one make conscience of enquiring what is necessary on the whole ; and what is his own reasonable part of that whole, in proportion to what the Lord hath given him ; or what he is able to do. Thus none will be guilty of the great sin of being eased, while another is burdened, and none will be at liberty to withhold his own part, and to excuse himself in that sin, because others do the same.

3. Be conscientious both rich and poor, for this purpose, in considering your income, your *necessary* expenditure, and your circumstances, compared with others of your brethren. Not only thinking what others do ; but what they *might* do, and what you are able to do, and act accordingly.

4. If at a loss in any thing, consult a faithful friend or friends. "Take sweet counsel together," on this important part of your Lord's will, and ask their advice ; as well as seek direction from God, who is the fountain of wisdom and spiritual understanding. This direction, and instruction on this as well

ns. on every other sacred subject, you will do well to seek, by seriously reading and considering *those* scriptures which relate to it; and by earnest prayer and supplication for divine instruction.

5. Whatever you subscribe, be punctual in paying it at the *time appointed*. If you cannot pay *one* subscription at the end of the quarter, you are not very likely to pay *two* the *next* quarter, &c. and remember, if *one* subscription be left unpaid, it must fall upon *some*, to bear the inconvenience. *Some must feel it*. The consequences of this are often very injurious; prejudices, shyness, hard-thinking, &c. Therefore in justice to others, and in prudence to yourselves, beware of want of punctuality. And from a long acquaintance with these matters, from the difficulties on one hand, and the exertions on the other, of *poor* people, I well know that this punctuality may be observed, in general cases, much beyond what it is in some instances.

6. In order to this punctuality, I beg leave to propose a method to which I have often advised, and which I have known to have been, among the poor, wonderfully succeeded. Consider the support of Christ's interest as a matter of the *first* importance; and what is necessary for it, not as a *gift*, but as a *debt*, both to God and man. Therefore, be *daily* or *weekly* making your little provision for it. Will the poorest be injured by laying aside one half-penny per week for the purpose. May not the generality of our poor put by one half-penny twice a week? and others in better circumstances two-pence a week, without ever feeling it; or suffering any inconvenience from it? We only want care and resolution; and God will abundantly supply and reward it, so that none will be poorer by it. See, besides other scriptures, 2 Cor. ix. 8, 10. I take the liberty of adding, that, in a course of more than forty years, I have known many, who, being conscientious in this small way, have been much prospered; while others, who neglected it, have never looked up like other people.

Think of the passages read at the beginning; and remember that they are God's words: that he is unchangeable and faithful, whatever we be. 2 Tim. 12, 13. Mark v. 18. Luke xvi. 17.

7. Let the poor of the church always remember, that though their poverty is a reason why they should not give *much*, nor

is *much required* of them ; yet nothing can excuse them from giving a little, and it will always be their *advantage*, as well as their duty to give something. Recollect the poor widow. Luke xxi. 1, 4.

8. Let the *rich* in the church always remember the sinfulness of *oppression*, and always be ready to take a part with the poor, *according to their ability*, which is the one general rule, both for the rich and the poor. Let them always see to it, that the poor give *something*, because it is their duty and their privilege ; yet it is the duty of the rich to take care that they be kept easy, not *burdened*, nor under the necessity of giving *too much*.

9. Let all, both rich and poor, continually remember, Mat. vii. 12, and make it the great rule of their conduct ; and not in *this only*, but in every other concern. Put yourselves in each other's place, rich, poor, old, young, servants of the church and those who are served. See that we all keep this rule in view, and near our hearts, and operating in our *tempers* and *lives*.

10. Let none of us forget, that what we do in this business, we do *for God*, are acting in his sight ; and must, accordingly give an account of ourselves to him, and receive from him our reward. Consider Heb. iv. 13. 2 Cor. v. 10. Rom. xiv. 12. Gal. vi. 7, 8. Col. iii. 23, 25. Rev. xxii. 12. Think seriously of this, and " according to your faith be it to you."

11. I give it as my opinion, and therefore as a word of advice, that, if any poor person sustain any particular loss, or be attended with any great affliction between subscribing and paying his subscriptions, he does not on that account, omit to pay what he has subscribed ; because what he has subscribed, is not afterwards his own, but the church's property ; and because his omission of the payment introduces, so far, confusion and disorder into the finances of the church. But let him apply, and open his case to the deacons, or to some other friend or friends, who will speak to them in his behalf, and let his damages be repaired by a collection, or in some other way, which the deacons or the church may think most proper.

13. I would give a word of general advice to the church, i. e. that they conclude upon having one general church meeting every six or twelve months, as they may think convenient to spend some time in prayer and other devotional exercises ;

to do any general business belonging to the church, and to give the deacons an opportunity of reporting the state of the finances. This, if attended to properly, will habituate *all* the members to consider how much they are interested in church affairs, and in the churches' prosperity; and will prevent the frequent introduction of financial concerns into our monthly meetings, which has, for years past, been of such pernicious consequence. My advice is, that every member be required to attend this meeting, whether annual or half yearly; and if it be thought proper, I should think a discourse, at that time, on church duties, might be of considerable advantage.

13. It may perhaps be expected, that I say something at present, respecting the best method to be taken, in order to remove our *present* grievances. I pretend to dictate nothing. But I submit to the church some such plan as the following.

Let the members of the church be disposed in three classes: and let each of the first class subscribe ten shillings towards the sum required; each of the second class five shillings; and each of the third class two shillings.

Let every member choose his own class, and his own sum. If any choose to give more than the highest sum, it will so far relieve others, or lie as a stock in the Treasurer's hands, together with the pence or shillings that may be paid by the poorest, not included in this plan. I think it will be done with great ease. But you will adopt, reject, or modify it, as you may think most proper. Let the time of payment be two or three months as most convenient.

II. REASONS OR MOTIVES.

These may arise in numbers, from what it has been said, had we time to collect them. I add the few following.

I. Consider how much the harmony, comfort, and prosperity of the church depend upon paying a conscientious attention to what has been now recommended. How can these subsist when some seem so careless, while others are burdened. How dreadfully have the churches been hampered, distressed, and almost destroyed, as to true christian fellowship, for want of some such regulations in it. That the body of Christ may not be, in future, thus broken in pieces, nor the spirits of his children distressed by continual discords and animosities, I earnestly beseech you to resolve upon these, or some other similar regu-

lations, and let every one pay a serious and uniform regard to his own duty.

2. Consider your own prosperity as individuals. Can your souls prosper if you are covetous? if you are self-willed? if you are indulging the flesh? if you are preferring your own interest to that of Jesus Christ? if you are careless of each other's comfort, and the spiritual welfare of each other? It cannot be. If the spirit by which you are "sealed to the day of redemption," be a *holy spirit*, if the Bible be a revelation of divine truth, it is in vain to expect inward tranquillity, so long as you are negligent of the duties to Christ, and to your brethren, which this sacred book, and all the laws of society require of you.

3. Consider the promises and threatenings which have been already laid before you, and many more of a similar kind in the scriptures relating to the present life. Remember they are the word of an unchanging, faithful God. They cannot possibly be forgotten by him. He will abide by them, whether we regard them or not. If therefore, you wish the blessing of your heavenly father to be upon "your basket and your store," upon your labours and possessions, take care of his interest among men, and be attentive to the duties you owe to one another as brethren. Otherwise you are your own enemies, both with respect to soul and body.

4. Consider that all our earthly enjoyments and comforts, and the comforts of our families, all our health, all our success in trade, and all our other enjoyments, and means of enjoyment, are entirely at the divine disposal. Is it reasonable then, not to view him in all, and not so to regard his interests in all that he gives us, and in all we do, as that we may scripturally expect his blessing on ourselves, and our families? It is plain from a multitude of passages, that we cannot reasonably expect this blessing, in neglecting the concerns of his house and interest. I therefore, beseech you to consider all your happiness, as coming from him, and act like those who are dependent upon him for all they enjoy.

5. Consider the value of immortal souls; and how many have been hardened in their sins, against religion, and their own souls everlasting welfare, by knowing the wrangling, and the many other unhappy consequences of not attending to these plain and very important duties; and if you do not wish

to increase the number of such hardened sinners, attend to these things.

6. Consider how the world act, to support the things which *they* approve. How eager they are in supporting clubs, and institutions for amusement, for science, and for almost all objects; some better, and some worse, but all of them incomparably below the interest of Jesus Christ, and the prosperity of his Church. Can we observe *their* assiduity, and we ourselves be supine and indolent? Shall the interest of Christ, which is infinitely superior to every other, have the *least* of our support? God forbid! "Tell it not in Gath; publish it not in the streets of Askelon," lest the servants of Satan rejoice, and the enemies of true religion triumph in the dreadful consequences.

7. Consider the unparalleled and inexpressible compassion and condescension of our blessed Redeemer, in leaving all the glories of Heaven, and in going through all the labours, sorrows, and sufferings, which he endured on earth, to deliver us, poor unworthy worms, from the pains and punishment of hell, and to raise us to possess the unutterable joys and glories of an everlasting heaven. Read 2 Cor. viii. 9. Phil. ii. 3—8. Can we *believe* it, and be unmoved? Can we *believe* it, and not say, "What shall we render unto the Lord for all his benefits?" When we know that his church and interest lie so near *his* heart; and find the duty of supporting them so clearly and so forcibly urged upon us, can any christian withhold his hand, or his assistance? Shall not those who find it necessary, retrench superfluities, or undergo little difficulties, and exercise self-denial, for him who has parted with his all, even his own heart's blood, to make us completely and eternally happy?

8. Consider how desirable it is to lay up treasure in heaven. Immortal we all are, whether we have treasure in heaven, or not. However our Lord approve of bounty in other instances, (as he will certainly approve every instance of it,) every dictate of common sense, and the whole tenor of scripture demonstrate that he will *peculiarly* approve and reward that which is done for his interest, and especially for that which we declare, in his sight, and in the sight of angels and men, that we believe to be peculiarly and eminently his interest; and have in consequence of that conviction, set to it our hearts and our hands.

9. Finally. Let us all realize and keep in view the judgment-seat of Christ, when he will verify all his promises and all his threatenings. I conclude these motives by reading two passages, already referred to, 2 Cor. ix. 6, 11, and Gal. vi. 4, 10. And God bless you.

GENERAL BAPTIST OCCURRENCES. OBITUARY.

Nov. 26, 1816, died, at Mile End, the Rev. DAN TAYLOR, in the seventy eighth year of his age. For more than fifty-five years, he had been actively and successfully employed in the work of the ministry. His first sermon was preached, Sept. 1761, near Halifax, Yorkshire. He was then in connection with the Wesleyan methodists; but, not being satisfied either with their doctrinal sentiments, or mode of discipline, he continued with them only a few months. He then united himself with four poor, but pious individuals, who like himself had forsaken the methodists, and commenced preaching, in the open air, at Wadsworth, a wild and uncultivated place in the same neighbourhood. The blessing of heaven succeeded this weak attempt: and a regular church was soon gathered, over which he was ordained pastor, in the autumn of 1763. This was the first General Baptist church in that part of the kingdom: at present there are eight churches, containing more than seven hundred members; all which have sprung from this common stock, and acknowledge him as their founder.

When Mr. T. commenced General Baptist, he was not aware that there existed a church of that persuasion in the nation. It was not long, however, before he became acquainted with the churches which were connected with the general assembly in London. He was cheerfully admitted as a member of the Lincolnshire association, in 1763. His new associates highly esteemed him, and employed him on various public occasions. But, on a nearer survey, he discovered that they either denied, or explained away, some truths which he deemed essential: and, with his usual integrity, determined to leave them. Intimating his views to some of his brethren in the ministry, they formed what has since been called, "the New Connection of General Baptists." This union commenced in 1770; and, by the blessing of the great Head of the church, has increased

from seven churches to upwards of sixty. In almost all the public transactions of these churches, Mr. T. was actively, usefully, and very acceptably employed, for upwards of thirty years. He was present at forty-six successive annual associations; and on every occasion, except one, was called to the chair.

In 1785, after a long discussion, it was thought, for the advantage of the cause at large, that he should remove from Yorkshire to London. As he had devoted himself and all his powers to the connection, he made no hesitation in complying; but removed with a numerous young family. He was chosen co-pastor with Mr. J. Brittain, over the ancient society of General Baptists, in Church Lane, Whitechapel. His venerable colleague dying in 1794, he became the sole pastor; and continued to fill that office till his decease.

His death was very affecting to survivors, though peculiarly desirable to himself. He had been indisposed during the preceding week; but preached twice on the Lord's day. The last discourse which he delivered, in his own pulpit, was a funeral sermon for an aged member of his church, from Heb. iv. 9. "There remaineth a rest for the people of God." It was remarked, by several that heard it, to be peculiarly solemn, affectionate and faithful. On the Monday, he went out to visit a friend; but on Tuesday morning, he had another attack of his disorder. He was able to sit up at dinner; and, after a few hours of apparently sound sleep, he rose again to tea. While that was preparing, he, as usual, took his pipe, and sat down to read. He was observed to be uneasy; complained of a pain in his breast; and falling back in his chair, instantly expired without a struggle or a sigh. Thus easily, and in a moment, did this veteran in his heavenly Master's service, lay aside his armour, and enter, there is no doubt, into that rest which remaineth for the people of God.

According to his own request, his remains were interred, Dec. 5, in the burying ground, Bunhill Fields; and the Rev. Mr. Kello, an independent minister, between whom and the deceased there had existed an intimate friendship for more than twenty years, delivered an impressive oration at the grave. Mr. T. having been disgusted with the parade which he had sometimes observed at the interment of dissenting ministers, left a solemn injunction, that his funeral should be conducted.

in the most plain and economical manner, particularly that no coach or horse should be employed. This obliged his family to decline the respectful offer of the church, to provide carriages; and also prevented them from inviting his brethren in the ministry of different persuasions, who had distinguished him with their friendship while living, and whose presence at his funeral would have been esteemed an honour to his memory.

His funeral sermon was preached, at his own meeting house, Dec. 15th, by the Rev. Robert Smith, of Nottingham, who had been, for more than thirty years, his fellow labourer in the same cause. Mr. S. read, as the foundation of his discourse, Paul's description of himself, 2 Tim. iv. 6, 8. "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness; which the Lord, the righteous Judge shall give me in that day." From this text, he drew an animated parallel between the past experience, and future prospects of the great apostle and those of his departed friend. The congregation was serious and extremely numerous; that large meeting house being crowded to excess. And such was the general veneration for the deceased, that we understand most of the ministers of the New Connection have paid a tribute of respect to his memory, by preaching funeral sermons on the occasion of his death.

Our departed friend was blest with a constitution remarkably robust, and an intrepidity of spirit that despised difficulty. His exertions in the cause of religion, especially during the first thirty years of his ministry, were almost incredible. He has been heard to say, that, previous to his removal to London, he had travelled, merely for the purpose of spreading the gospel, more than the circuit of the globe, twenty-five thousand miles. His labours were not in vain; he was made eminently useful. It would, however, be impossible to enter into a detail of his labours, or a delineation of his character in the limits of an Obituary. But it was thought proper that the death of this active General Baptist should be recorded in the G. B. R.

April 24th, 1815, died, Mr. GEORGE BRENTNALL, of Remptstone, Nottinghamshire, in the eighty-fourth year of his age.

In the early part of his life, he entertained low views of the person and work of Christ; but, as he advanced towards old age, his sentiments on these infinitely important subjects gradually improved. As his views grew clearer, he evidently advanced in humility, in meekness, in piety, and in heavenly mindedness; so that, in the latter part of his life, the excellencies of the christian temper were eminently conspicuous. Pious and holy conversation was his delight, and religion the grand theme of his discourse in every company. This he generally introduced in so pleasant and agreeable a manner, as not to give the least disgust. The friendly cautions and wise admonitions which he frequently dropped, will be long recollected with gratitude. What a blessing is such a character to his family and friends.

A few years before his death, he had a severe indisposition; but, when he daily expected to be called from this world, he observed, that never till then did he know what it was to feel joy unspeakable and full of glory. He earnestly desired to depart and be with Christ: frequently saying, "I hope in a few days, perhaps a few hours, to be more happy than I can either express or conceive." When he was, contrary to all expectation, restored, he appeared disappointed, but resigned. "I hoped," he would say, "to have been with Christ before now; but as he sees good to spare me a little longer, I will endeavour to be as useful as I can." From this time to his death, he was patiently waiting for his happy change, and frequently spake of it with delight. He often declared, that he was a poor helpless sinner, and needed an all-sufficient Saviour,—that all his trust was upon Jesus Christ, and him crucified—and that this alone was his support under the growing infirmities of age, and in prospect of the solemn hour of death. Under the influence of these views he at last died in peace. He was interred in the G. B. burying ground at East Leake; and his funeral sermon, was preached by Mr. Hoe, at his own desire, from I Cor. xv. 57. "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Mr. B. descended from a family of Worthies: four of his ancestors being ejected, by the act of uniformity, in 1662. He often said, that he esteemed it a greater honour to have descended from such men, than if he had reckoned monarchs among his progenitors: and anticipated, with great delight;

meeting them in glory. This pleasure was increased by reflecting, that almost all his near relatives now living appeared to be in the way to Zion. May not a soul be missing at last!

Sep. 5th, 1816, died Mr. WILLIAM MILLER, of Costock, Nottinghamshire, in the eighty-ninth year of his age, who had been a very respectable member of the G. B. Church, at Leake and Wineswold, for upwards of fifty years. He was, constant and diligent in attending the means of grace, till prevented by the infirmities of old age: and he was generally there in due time. During the whole of his profession, he was highly exemplary for his steady faith in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. This supported him through the vicissitudes of a long pilgrimage, and this enabled him to meet the king of terrors with composure. His funeral sermon was preached, by Mr. Hoe, at the time of his interment, from Job xiv. 14. "All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come." May all his numerous surviving relatives speedily prepare for the same awful change, that they may join their departed friend in the mansions of eternal bliss!

Sep. 30th, 1816, died Mrs. ARMSTRONG, of Spalding. She was blest with religious instruction and example from her youth; attending regularly the ministry of the late Mr. Burgess, and was brought to enjoy peace in believing, by a sermon which he preached, from Heb. vi. 18. She was baptized at Flect, April 24th, 1812, and continued a respectable member of that church, till about a year ago, when she married, and settling at Spalding, removed her fellowship to that society.

Very soon after her removal to Spalding, symptoms of a decline alarmed her friends, which continued to increase till they issued in her dissolution. Her afflictions were neither few nor small. Her beauty faded, her body wasted, and her strength decayed: yet throughout the trying season, she exhibited a lovely example of that meek and quiet spirit which in the sight of God is of great price. Her christian fortitude and patient resignation were conspicuous; and not one murmuring word escaped her during her whole confinement. Her faith was strong, and enabled her to look beyond the grave with rapture; and thus to pass fearless through the valley of the shadow of death. The loss to her disconsolate husband is great; but God is able to make it work for his everlasting

good. Her remains were interred, in the G. B. burying ground, at Spalding, Oct. 4th, 1816; on which occasion, a funeral sermon was preached, by Mr. Everard, from Job xiv. 1, 2. "Man that is born of woman is of few days, and full of trouble," &c.

CONFERENCES.

THE LEICESTERSHIRE and NOTTINGHAMSHIRE CONFERENCE was held, at *Loughborough*, Dec. 31st, 1816, and was well attended by the ministers of the district. Mr. Preston preached in the morning, from Rom. viii. 31, 32, and Mr. Ingham, in the evening. The reports from the churches respecting the progress made in favour of the G. B. mission were received. The friends at Cauldwell were advised to maintain preaching at Burton, and to send an account of the expence, exclusive of the rent of the place, to the next Association, in order that it may be recommended to the Itinerant Fund. In answer to the question from Duffield, the friends there were desired to search the scriptures, and, if they found an example of ordination without imposition of hands, to send information of the discovery to the next conference. This meeting also agreed that a good life of the late Mr. Dan Taylor is highly desirable.

The LINCOLNSHIRE CONFERENCE was held, Oct. 10, 1816, at *Bourn*. In the forenoon, Mr. Everard opened public worship with prayer, and Mr. Rogers preached, from Isa. xxx. 20, 21. In the evening, Mr. Rogers prayed, and Mr. Jarrom preached, from 1 Pet. ii. 7. At this meeting, the church at Forncett St. Peter's, requested assistance in the ordination of Mr. Hall to the pastoral office among them; and Messrs. Jarrom and Binns, at the desire of the conference, agreed to undertake this business. Supplies were also arranged for St. Ive's and Chatteris.

This conference assembled again at *Fleet*, Dec. 31, 1816, and was numerously attended. At this meeting, the church at Louth was acknowledged as a part of this conference: and a letter was received from it, respecting the rules for admitting and excluding heretics, adopted at the last association. The friends at Louth declare their attachment to the doctrines generally believed in our churches, but disapprove of the rules in

question. Mr. Rogers was desired to write an affectionate reply to the brethren at Louth; stating the views of the conference on the case, and exhorting them to re-consider the subject, in the hopes that they would then view it in a different light. Mr. Bampton received the thanks of the conference for his services as secretary; and was requested to continue them for the next two years. Supplies were arranged for Gidney-hill, St. Ivo's, and Chatteris; and Messrs. Jarrom and Bissill were requested to prepare a plan for facilitating missionary exertions, and to lay it before the next conference. This will be at Sutterton, on the Thursday in Easter week. In the evening Mr. Everard preached, from 2 Cor. iv. 17.

The LONDON CONFERENCE was held, Oct. 2nd, 1816, at *Berkhamstead*, when Mr. D. Taylor was chosen chairman; Mr. G. Compton, moderator; and Mr. J. Ewen, scribe. Mr. G. Purcell having lately removed from Bessell's Green, to Wrotham, in Kent, and founded a church in the latter place, was with his church unanimously admitted into this conference. Mr. Purcell was advised to apply to the Itinerant and G. B. Funds for assistance in his infant undertaking. Mr. D. Taylor was requested to write a letter on "the importance of reading the Holy Scriptures," to be read at the next meeting. It was also resolved to recommend a monthly prayer meeting to the churches, with a special reference to the establishment of a foreign G. B. mission. On the preceding evening, Mr. R. Compton preached, from Rom. xv. 29. The following evening, Mr. W. Bicknell preached, from 1 Cor. ii. 1, 5; and Mr. D. Taylor, from Psa. lxxxiv. 11. The next conference to be at Wrotham, on the Wednesday in Easter Week; when Messrs. G. Compton, D. Taylor, and Hobbs, are appointed to preach; or, in case of failure, Messrs. W. Bicknell, J. Ewen, and R. Compton.

CHRISTIAN FUND.

Jan. 1st, 1817, the Anniversary of the CHRISTIAN FUND, was held at Fleet. Mr. Bampton preached in the morning from Prov. xxx. 8. "Feed me with food convenient for me." In the evening Mr. Finch, of Lynn, delivered a discourse from 2 Cor. v. 10, 11: after which a liberal collection was made, for the relief of cases of distress, which did come within

the scope of the society. The company was numerous. We hope in our next, to be able to lay before our readers some regular account of this flourishing institution.

OPENING A NEW MEETING HOUSE.

A New General Baptist Meeting House was opened, October, 22d, 1815, at King's Heath, a populous and increasing village, three miles south-east of Birmingham. Mr. Morgan and Mr. Hutchings, two particular Baptist Ministers, preached, on this occasion; the former, in the morning, from Psal. cx. 3: and the latter, in the afternoon, from Phil. I. 27. In the evening, Mr. Cheate, of Birmingham, delivered a discourse, from 1 Kings. ix. 3.

The G. Baptists have preached in this village, in which there was previously no place of worship, for upwards of four years. During the first discourse, a person in a state of intoxication, caused a slight interruption, but since then there has been no opposition. Several members from this place have been added to the church at Birmingham; and many children have been collected into a Sunday School. The new building will comfortably seat three hundred auditors; and the expence of its erection, including the ground and writings, will exceed three hundred pounds. Towards this sum, several friends have subscribed liberally: and, at the time of opening, the collections at the door, and the contributions of a few of the neighbours, amounted to nearly forty pounds. On this interesting occasion, the congregations were numerous; and the feelings of many resembled those of the Jews, when the temple was dedicated: "They went unto their tents joyful and glad of heart, for all the Lord had done for his servants." It is expected, that to liquidate the remaining debt, an appeal will be made to the benevolence of the churches.

ORDINATION.

Dec. 25th, 1816, Mr. HALL, was ordained to the pastoral office over the recently gathered G. B. Church, at Forncett St. Peter's, Norfolk. Mr. Binus began the service, by reading suitable portions of scripture and prayer. Mr. Jarrom offered the ordination prayer, and delivered the charge to the

minister, from 1 Tim. iv. 16. "Take heed to thyself," &c. In the afternoon, Mr. Jarrom read and prayed, and Mr. Binns addressed the church, from 1 Thess. v. 13. "Esteem them very highly," &c. On the following evening, two deacons were ordained. Mr. Jarrom opened the service by singing and prayer; and Mr. Binns delivered a charge to the deacons from 1 Tim. iii. 10. "And let these first be proved," &c. The services were well attended; and many apparently found them interesting and refreshing. Appearances at Forncett are encouraging: there is in the neighbouring villages, a considerable disposition for hearing the word. In several of these villages, regular preaching is established. It is hoped that God is carrying on a great work in this infant society. May he perfect it in his own season!

GENERAL BAPTIST CHURCH AT WROTHAM.

Wrotham is a market town in Kent, twenty-four miles south-east of London. In the beginning of May, 1815, Mr. G. Purcell who then served the ancient G. B. church at Bessell's Green, commenced preaching, on the Lord's day evenings, at Wrotham. The congregations were large and very attentive. In the following spring, it appeared necessary, that Mr. Purcell should leave Bessell's Green on account of the difference of sentiments on some important subjects, between him and many of the members of that society. He therefore laid a plain statement of circumstances before the London Conference at Chatham, April 17, 1816; and was advised by that meeting to remove to Wrotham, if there appeared a probability of obtaining a subsistence for himself and family. By the liberal encouragement of a pious individual, he was enabled to remove thither at Midsummer last; and opened a school for Mrs. P. and himself. The shortness of the trial and the pressure of the times, have hitherto prevented this attempt from great success. But, ever since their removal, they have maintained regular preaching three times on the Lord's days, and on the Tuesday evening. The congregations, on the morning and afternoon of the Lord's days, have yet been but small; but are on the increase. On the evening of the Lord's day, they are frequently crowded, and on the Tuesday evenings the attendance is encouraging. There have already been three baptized at Wrotham; which, together with Mr. and Mrs. P. have united

as a church of Christ; and they have good hopes that others are coming forward. The place of worship is, at present, a warehouse, which is hired at the annual rent of eight pounds. This is a heavy burden on the friends who are few and poor. Preaching has been introduced into two villages: at one of which it is continued with encouraging prospects, every Wednesday evening; but at the other, they have not yet been able to procure a proper place for regular worship, though many of the inhabitants seem desirous that the gospel should be preached amongst them. We understand that this infant society proposes to apply for admission into the New Connection.

REVIEW OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

CHRISTIAN BAPTISM; or, an *Attempt to ascertain the DESIGN, NATURE, and SUBJECTS of that Ordinance; a SERMON preached, May 12th, 1816, at the Baptism of nine persons on a profession of Faith, at Wisbeach.* By JOSEPH JARROM, 8vo. pp. 80. Price 1s. 6d. Mann, London, &c.

The following critique on this sermon, which appears in the *Baptist Magazine* for this month, expresses so accurately our sentiments respecting its character and merit, that we shall take the liberty of transcribing it from that respectable publication:

"In a short preface, the author modestly disclaims, any recommendation of his sermon to the religious public; the subject having been so frequently discussed, and, in many instances, by persons of erudition and eloquence, that any addition or improvement are not ordinarily to be expected. "His aim," to use his own words, "has been to furnish his friends, especially those of his own congregation, in whose instruction and edification he feels a peculiar interest, with some of the principal reasons on which their own practice, as Baptists, is founded, and with answers to some of the most plausible objections urged against it."

We feel no inclination to agitate this controversy, much less to assume the tone of boasting, "that we expect not that any thing that deserves the name of an answer to this discourse, will soon appear." We scruple not, however, to say, that

whoever will be at the pains of perusing it, will perceive that the author has shown himself to be a man of reading and reflection, and that he has comprised within a short compass the substance of the arguments in favour of believers' baptism, together with an answer to objections; and while he writes with the manly firmness of one conscious of having truth on his side, he has indulged in no expression, that we have perceived, indicative of bigotry and uncharitableness.

The following paragraph, while it affords a specimen of the author's talent, and is applicable to *present times*, will probably recommend the discourse to the perusal of our readers :

Reasons for rejecting Pædobaptism, p. 47 :

“ 1st. *There is no precept in the scripture for it, nor any plain account that it was ever practised by our Lord, or the apostles.* An express command from Christ, or an evident instance of its being performed by the apostles, would be sufficient authority for the practice, and remove all doubts concerning it; but there is neither one nor the other in all the Bible. We read of *men and women* being baptized, but nothing about the baptism of infants. Those scriptures which are adduced by Pædobaptists, as implying it, we shall afterwards consider; at present we only say, what all must admit, that in the scripture there is no express mention of it. Now, on the supposition that it is to be practised, this is a most extraordinary circumstance. Our blessed Lord must have been remiss in the revelation which he has made. There is a practice of a positive nature to be observed by his followers, and yet it cannot be proved, by any thing which he hath said or done, or by any thing said or done by his apostles, that he has instituted it. Surely he would not leave his appointments in an uncertain state. The sacred historians had the best opportunity for mentioning the baptism of children, had it existed; and considering they have related other particulars concerning them, of much less importance, it cannot rationally be doubted, that, had it been practised, they would, on some occasion or other, have mentioned it. Their silence respecting it cannot be accounted for, but on the supposition, that in their time it did not exist. *Pædobaptist missionaries, in relating their proceedings among the heathen in modern times, mention the baptism of children, as well as of adults.* What other reason can be imagined for this difference between the accounts re-

specting them; and those which regard the apostles, than *this* that the latter were not Pædobaptists?"

Other extracts, equally in point, might be adduced. "The facts will remain facts—and the evidences will remain evidences—not easily controverted, and certainly not easily confuted."

We have nothing to add to these judicious remarks, except to intimate, that the sermon is enriched with many apposite and valuable notes, chiefly extracts from the most respectable writers; which will, we are persuaded, answer the author's purpose, and "render the discourse more instructive and useful." We heartily recommend the pamphlet to the perusal of our readers.

DIRECTIONS AND ENCOURAGEMENTS FOR TRAVELLERS TO ZION: *being an earnest and affectionate Address to professing Christians in general, on several important Subjects,* by JOSEPH FREESTON. Button, Mann, &c. London.

The author of this work is well known to most of the readers of the G. B. R. and perhaps no subject could have better suited his disposition than that which he has chosen. We have read a few of the leading numbers with great pleasure, and, we trust not without some profit; but we shall defer any remarks till we have perused the whole. At present, we think it our duty to announce, that the work is now publishing, two numbers monthly; each containing thirty-two octavo pages, on good paper, for sixpence; and, that it is proposed to comprise the whole in ten or twelve numbers. It may also be acceptable to subjoin the titles of the chapters, or the different subjects intended to be treated. They are: "1. On the important change effected in the situation of real christians. 2. On the invaluable privileges which christians enjoy in the present life. 3. On the necessity of a close attention to inward spiritual religion. 4. On the importance of domestic and relative duties. 5. On a proper attention to public duties. 6. On the necessity of maintaining a character for uprightness in the world. 7. How to improve afflictions and other adversities. 8. How to recover lost peace of mind. 9. Short directions for walking with God. 10. On heavenly mindedness and guarding against an undue love of the world. On seeking the salvation of others. 12. On death and the heavenly state. 13. A concluding address to unbelievers and backsliders."

A BRIEF SUPPLEMENT TO THE PSALMS AND HYMNS OF ISAAC WATTS, D. D. *second edition corrected*. Halifax. Printed by T. Walker, and sold by A. Taylor. London. Price 6d. 1s. 6d. or in superior binding, 1s. 9d.

This is a corrected edition of the work, noticed in the G. B. R. vol. iv. p. 90. It is doubtless much improved in appearance: the type being larger, the paper of a superior quality, and considerable pains having been taken to render the execution correct. To this edition is prefixed the recommendation of the venerable Dr. FAWCETT, of Hebden Bridge, which concludes thus: "While Dr. Watt's is so deservedly preferred we must allow, that others have composed many useful hymns on all the subjects of christianity, and especially on some circumstances or subjects, in a measure unknown, or not sufficiently attended to, in the days of that author. The following Selection is designed to introduce a few of these hymns into those congregations of *Baptists* who use *Dr. Watt's* psalms and hymns, and I can cordially recommend it to them as a cheap and useful miscellany, suited to their denomination." It certainly merits the epithet *cheap*; as it contains two hundred and seventy hymns, which occupy one hundred and seventy-two pages.

A POEM on the ORDINATION of the REV. T. STEVENSON, General Baptist Minister, at Loughborough, Leicestershire, October 8, 1816. By JOHN KINGSFORD. Pp. 15. pr. 3d. Mann. London, &c.

This effusion, it appears, was caused by reading, in our last number, the account of the transaction mentioned in the title. The author assumes the maxim, that, "true friendship dispenses with cold formalities," and unceremoniously introduces the parties concerned in the solemn service, by their proper names, and describes the part they performed. It is true, that as he deals exclusively in panegyric, there was the less need of employing masks. Though the author certainly cannot take the highest rank as a poet, and occasionally descends to a pun; yet we read these verses with pleasure, and believe they will afford entertainment to most of those who peruse them. Nor will the practical and devotional hints, dispersed through the poem, and put into the mouths of the speakers, fail of edifying; if conscientiously applied.