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THE

General Baptist Repository;

COMPREHENDING

BIOGRAPHICAL AND
HISTORICAL MEMOIRS,
YOUTHS' MUSEUM,
ESSAYS,
THOUGHTS ON SELECT
PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE
ANECDOTES,

QUERIES AND SOLUTIONS,
CORRESPONDENCE,
EXTRACTS,
DEATHS,
MISSIONARY AND
RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE
ORIGINAL POETRY;

AND A REGISTER OF

GENERAL BAPTIST OCCURRENCES,

INCLUDING

ORDINATIONS, OPENING OF NEW MEETING HOUSES,
FORMATION OF NEW CHURCHES, CONFERENCES,
ASSOCIATIONS, LECTURES, AND MISCELLANEOUS
INFORMATION OF INTERESTING CIRCUMSTANCES,

Published at the request of the MINISTERS, and REPRESENTATIVES of the NEW CONNECTION of GENERAL BAPTISTS,

BY ADAM TAYLOR,

VOL. V.

London:

PRINTED FOR THE EDITOR. BY J. SRIRVEN, RATCLIFF-

TO THE FRIENDS OF THE G. B. R.

At the commencement of the G. B. R. the objects of the publication were stated to be—to facilitate a friendly *communication* among the churches, and thus enable them to act with more union and vigour, and more effectually to lend each other mutual assistance—to be a permanent *repository*, in which the proceedings, progress, and public concerns of the New Connection might be faithfully preserved—and to afford those of its readers who enjoy few other sources of information, a *cheap and correct acquaintance with the principal events of the religious world*.

With these views the work was at first undertaken, and with these views it has, for upwards of twelve years, been conducted. And, although the Editor freely acknowledges that, in many instances, want of leisure, ability, or information, has been too conspicuous, yet he has invariably kept his eye upon the primary design of the publication; and the approbation and countenance of the connection encourages him to hope, that, however imperfect his endeavours, they have not been wholly unsuccessful.

The Editor esteems it his duty to take this opportunity of returning his sincere thanks to those kind and worthy friends who have enriched the present volume with their valuable communications; This he does with peculiar gratitude; since at no former period of the work, has he had superior obligations to his correspondents. There appears an increasing disposition in many intelligent members of the Connection to assist the work. This has given the present volume more variety and interest, and, it is presumed, rendered it more acceptable and useful. It is earnestly hoped, that these friendly correspondents will not relax in their exertions: and that their example will incite others to similar attempts. Constant experience proves, that nothing has a happier tendency to form a good style, to improve the judgment and to enrich the mind, than frequent attempts to write on given subjects. Nor should any be discouraged if their first essay be laid aside: for it is only by repeated attempts that excellence is obtained. And while a writer lies hid behind a fictitious signature, he

may enjoy all the advantages of unsuccessful attempts without the mortification of being known to have made them.—To promote a literary taste, and to cultivate talents for literary usefulness, is an important, though secondary, object in publishing the G. B. R.

It is with reluctance that the Editor ventures to hint, that the *sale* has not increased in proportion to the acknowledged acceptance of the work. This he attributes to the very discouraging state of the times, and the enormous high price of the necessaries of life. But as a brighter prospect in public affairs appears to be opening before us, and as it has pleased a kind Providence to crown the year with his goodness, it is hoped, that these causes will, in future, operate less powerfully. And, the friends of the undertaking will, it is trusted, avail themselves, with alacrity, of the favourable opportunity which the commencement of a new volume offers, to solicit an increase of subscribers.—In the very narrow limits to which the nature of the work confines its circulation, it is only by the persevering and active exertions of all its well-wishers, that it can be respectably supported.

With the confidence that springs from experience, the Editor commits the G. B. R. to the patronage of those by whom it has thus far been so liberally countenanced: and indulges a cheerful hope, that their assistance, under the blessing of Him who alone giveth success, will enable him to render the succeeding volume more conducive to the instruction and edification of those for whose advantage it is more especially designed.

SHAKESPEAR'S WALK,

Jan. 27, 1814.

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ERRATUM.

Page 276 line 7, for pp. 24, read pp. 36.

THE
GENERAL BAPTIST REPOSITORY.

No. XXV.—Vol. V.

THE PRESENT STATE OF THE HOLY LAND.

EVERY intelligent christian will be pleased to receive authentic information respecting the present state of the countries and places mentioned in the holy scriptures. Such information may not only teach us the mutability and uncertainty of all human things; but, in many instances, may furnish strong evidence of the truth of Revelation. It may, therefore, be esteemed one of the good effects, produced by the disturbances which have for upwards of twenty years convulsed the kingdoms of the earth, that those parts of Asia, of which the Bible principally treats, have become more accessible to enlightened curiosity.

Men of various characters have penetrated into the Holy Land, and have examined it with very different views. The philosophic deist has scrutinized its scenery with the expectation, if not the wish, of discovering arguments against the accuracy of the inspired writers. The bigot of superstition has visited it, with the hope of receiving some supernatural benefit from the places in which the mysteries of redemption were accomplished. Others, however, have explored these countries, who, revering the truths of Revelation, have had discernment enough to distinguish between the records of antiquity and the legends of romance. *Volney*, the great apostle of infidelity; *M. Chatcaubriand*, a devout Roman Catholic; and *E. D. Clarke*, L. L. D. a scientific Englishman, may serve as instances of each of these descriptions of travellers. The first spent the years 1783, 1784, and 1785 in these countries, with the express design of gaining an accurate knowledge of their natural and political state. The second visited Greece, Egypt, Palestine and Barbary, in 1806 and 1807; and the last, at a period still more recent.

From these authors, we shall endeavour to extract a few particulars respecting the present state of the principal places mentioned in the scriptures; depending chiefly on Mr. Clarke, as he appears to be the most unexceptionable authority.—

“The pure Gospel of Christ,” says he, “is almost as little known in the Holy Land as in New Holland. A series of legendary traditions, mingled with remains of Judaism and the wretched phantasies of illiterate ascetics, may now and then exhibit a glimmering of heavenly light; but if we seek for the blessed effects of Christianity in the Land of Canaan, we must look for that period, when “the desert shall blossom as the rose, and the wilderness become a fruitful field.” For this reason, we had early resolved to make the sacred scriptures our only guide throughout this interesting territory; and the light afforded by the internal evidences of truth, in every instance where their fidelity of description was proved by a comparison with existing documents, surpassed even all we had anticipated.”

SOIL AND PRODUCE.] “The soil of the Holy Land is mountainous, rocky, and, in most places, barren. It exhibits, in its present state, little appearance of that fruitfulness and plenty for which it was formerly denominated, “a land flowing with milk and honey.” All intelligent travellers, however, join in acknowledging that its present sterility is the effect of the slavery and indolence of its wretched inhabitants; and that there exists sufficient indications of its ancient fertility. Dr. Clarke compares part of Galilee to the finest parts of Kent and Surrey. “The soil,” he observes, “although stony, is exceeding rich, but now entirely neglected. The delightful plain of Zabulon appeared every where covered with spontaneous vegetation, flourishing in the wildest exuberance.” And, speaking of a part of the country in the vicinity of Jerusalem, he adds, “Under a wise and beneficent government, the produce of the Holy Land would exceed all calculation. Its perennial harvests, the salubrity of its air, its limpid springs; its rivers, lakes, and matchless plains; its hills and vales; these, added to the serenity of its climate, prove this land to be indeed a field which the Lord hath blessed: “God hath given it of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine.”—“Without appealing to the positive testimony of history,” says Volney, “there are innu-

merable monuments which depose in favour of the vast population of these countries in ancient times. The prodigious quantities of ruins, dispersed over the plains, and even over the mountains, at this day deserted, prove they were anciently better cultivated, and consequently much more populous than in our days."

"When you travel in Judea," says M. Chateaubriand, "extraordinary appearances every where proclaim a land of miracles. The burning sun, the towering eagle, the barren fig-tree, all the poetry, all the pictures of scripture, are here. Every name commemorates a mystery; every grot proclaims the future; every hill re-echoes the accents of a prophet. God himself has spoken in these regions; dried up rivers: riven rocks, half-opened sepulchres, attest the prodigy: all the desert still appears mute with terror; and you would imagine that it had never presumed to interrupt the silence, since it heard the awful voice of the Eternal."

"These were indeed scenes to abstract and elevate the mind; and, under emotions so called forth, by every circumstance of powerful coincidence, a single moment seemed to concentrate whole ages of existence."

* SAMARIA.] "Sychem, the ancient capital of Samaria, now called Napolose, is still a pretty large and busy city. It is surrounded with a fertile and highly cultivated territory. "The traveller, directing his footsteps towards its ancient sepulchres, as everlasting as the rocks in which they are hewn, is permitted, upon the authority of sacred and indelible record, to contemplate the spot where the remains of Joseph, of Eleazar, and of Joshua, were deposited. The sacred story of events, transacted in the fields of Sychem, is remembered, from our earliest years, with delight; but, with the territory before our eyes, where those events took place, and in the view of objects existing as they were described three thousand years ago, the grateful impression kindles into ecstasy. Along the valley, we beheld "a company of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead," as in the days of Reuben and Judah, with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, who would gladly have purchased another Joseph of his brethren, and conveyed him as a slave to some Potiphar in Égypt. Upon the hills around, flocks were feeding as of old; nor in the simple garb

* The following extracts are from Dr. Clarke.

of the shepherds of Samaria was there any thing repugnant to the notions we may entertain of the appearance presented by the sons of Jacob."

JACOB'S WELL.] "The principal object of veneration among the Samaritans is Jacob's Well, over which a church was formerly erected. This is situated at a small distance from the town in the road to Jerusalem, and has been visited by pilgrims of all ages; but particularly since the christian æra, as the place where our Saviour revealed himself to the woman of Samaria. The spot is so distinctly marked by the Evangelists, and so little liable to uncertainty, from the circumstance of the Well itself, and the features of the country, that, if no tradition existed for its identity, the site of it could hardly be mistaken."

NAZARETH.] "This town was in the most wretched state of indigence and misery; the soil around might bid defiance to agriculture, and, to the prospect of starvation, were added the horrors of the plague. The second night after our arrival, as soon as it grew dark, we all stretched ourselves upon the floor of our apartment, not without serious alarm of catching the plague; but tempted by the hope of obtaining a little repose. This we had found impracticable the night before, on account of the vermin. The hope was, however, vain; not one of our party could close his eyes. Every instant it was necessary to rise and endeavour to shake off the noxious animals with which our bodies were covered. In addition to this penance, we were serenaded till four o'clock in the morning by the constant ringing of a chapel bell, as a charm against the plague; by the barking of dogs; braying of asses; howling of jackalls; and the squalling of children. Thus the town seemed destined to maintain its ancient reputation; for the Nathaniel of this day might enquire with strict propriety, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" In the valley, appeared one of those fountains which from time immemorial have been the halting place of caravans. The women of Nazareth were passing to and from the town with pitchers on their heads. We stopped to view the groupe of camels with their drivers who were there reposing; and, calling to mind the manners of the most remote ages, we renewed the solicitations of Abraham's servant to Rebecca, by the Well of Nahor. This well is called by early travellers *the Fountain of*

the Virgin Mary; and certainly, if there be a spot throughout the Holy Land that was honoured by her presence, we may consider this to have been the place; because the situation of a copious spring is not liable to change; and because the custom of repairing thither to draw water has been continued among the females of Nazareth from the earliest period of its history."

TWO WOMEN GRINDING AT THE MILL.] "Scarcely had we reached our apartment, in Nazareth, when, looking from the window into the court yard, we beheld two women grinding at the mill, in a manner forcibly illustrating the saying of our Saviour, *Math. xxvi. 41*; which contains a plain allusion to a custom actually existing in the place of his earliest residence. They were preparing flour to make our bread, as is always customary in this country when strangers arrive. The two women, seated upon the ground opposite to each other, held between them two round flat stones, such as in Scotland are called *querns*. In the centre of the upper stone was a cavity for pouring in the corn; and, by the side of this, an upright handle for moving the stone. As the operation began, one of the women, with her right hand pushed the handle to the woman opposite, who again sent it to her companion, thus communicating a rotatory and very rapid motion to the upper stone; their left hands being all the while employed in supplying fresh corn, as fast as the bran and flour escaped from the sides of the machine."

PRECIPICE.] "They shew a precipice without the town, where they say the Messiah leaped down, to escape the rage of the Jews, after the offence his speech in the synagogue had occasioned. They even pretend to shew the impression made by his hand as he sprang from the rock. Be that as it may, the words of the Evangelist are remarkably explicit, and prove that the situation of the ancient city was precisely that which is occupied by the present town. Induced, by the words of the gospel, to examine the place more attentively than we should otherwise have done, we went, as it is written "out of the city unto the brow of the hill whereon the city is built," and came to a precipice corresponding with the words of the Evangelist. It is above the Mazonite church, and probably the very spot alluded to by the text of *St. Luke.*"

THE SEAMLESS COAT.] “At Nazareth, a cloak is worn of very coarse and heavy camel’s hair cloth, almost universally decorated with broad black and white stripes passing vertically down the back; this is of one square piece, with holes for the arms and a seam down the back. Made without this seam, it is considered of greater value. Here, then, we perhaps beheld the form and materials of our Saviour’s garment, for which the soldiers cast lots, “it being without seam, woven from the top throughout.” It was the most ancient dress of the inhabitants of this country.”

THE WATER POTS.] “It is worthy of note, that walking among the ruins, at Cana in Galilee, we saw large massy stone water pots, answering the description given of the ancient vessels of the country; not preserved nor exhibited as reliques, but lying about, disregarded by the present inhabitants, as antiquities with whose original use they were unacquainted. From their appearance, and the number of them, it was quite evident that a practice of keeping water in large pots, each holding from eighteen to twenty-seven gallons, was once common in this country.”

THE WELL OF BETHLEHEM.] “The Well of Bethlehem still retains its pristine renown; and many an expatriated Bethlehemite has made it the theme of his longing and regret. As there is no other well corresponding in its situation with the description given us by the sacred historian, and the text of scripture so decidedly marks its locality, at the farthest extremity of Bethlehem, with reference to Jerusalem, this most probably was David’s Well.”

CAVE OF THE NATIVITY.] “The tradition respecting the Cave of the Nativity, or the precise spot in which the Virgin brought forth our Saviour, seems so well authenticated as hardly to admit of dispute. Having been held in veneration from a very early period, the oratory, established there by the first christians, attracted the notice and indignation of the heathens so early as the time of Adrian, A. D. 120; who ordered it to be demolished, and the place to be set apart for the rites of Adonis.”

VALLEY OF ELAH.] “After three miles travelling over hills and rocks from Bethlehem, we entered the famous Terebinthine Vale, renowned during nineteen centuries, as the field of the victory gained by the youngest of the sons of Jesse

over the uncircumcised champion of the Philistines, "who had defied the armies of the living God!" The idea of the place cannot be more forcibly excited than by the words of scripture: "And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together, and pitched by the valley of Elah, and set the battle in array against the Philistines. And the Philistines stood on a mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side; and there was a valley between them." Nothing has ever occurred to alter the appearance of the country: as it was then, so it is now. The very brook whence David "chose him five smooth stones," has been noticed by many a thirsty pilgrim, journeying from Joppa to Jerusalem; all of whom must pass it in their way."

THE SEA OF TIBERIAS.] "As we rode towards the Sea of Tiberias, or, as it is sometimes termed by the Evangelists, the Lake of Gennesareth, the guides pointed to a sloping spot on our right as the place where the miracle was accomplished by which our Saviour fed the multitude; it is therefore called the *Multiplication of Bread*; as is a hill in the neighbourhood, where the sermon was preached to the disciples, is called the *Mount of Beatitudes*. The lake continued in view on our left. The wind rendered its surface rough, and called to mind the situation of our Saviour's disciples, when, in one of the small vessels which traverse these waters, they were tost in a storm, and saw Jesus, in the fourth watch of the night, walking to them on the waves. Often as this subject has been painted, no artist has been aware of the uncommon grandeur of the scenery, memorable on account of this transaction. The Lake of Gennesareth is surrounded by objects well adapted to heighten the solemn impression made by such a picture; and, independent of the local feelings likely to be excited in its contemplation, affords one of the most striking prospects in the Holy Land. It is longer and finer than any of our Cumberland or Westmoreland lakes; it does not, indeed, possess the vastness of the Lake of Geneva, although it much resembles it in particular points of view."

THE MAN AMONG THE TOMBS.] "Along the borders of the Lake of Gennesareth, may still be seen the remains of those ancient Tombs, hewn by the earliest inhabitants of Galilee, in the rocks which face the water. They were deserted in the time of our Saviour, and had become the resort of wretched

men, afflicted by disease, and made outcasts of society. In the account of the cure performed by our Saviour upon a demoniac, in the country of the Gaderenes, on the south-east shores of this lake, these tombs are particularly alluded to: and their existence to this day, (although they have been neither noticed by priests nor pilgrims, and have escaped the ravages of the empress Helena, who would undoubtedly have shaped them into churches,) offers strong internal evidence of the accuracy of the Evangelist who has recorded the transaction; "There met him *out of the tombs*, a man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling *among the tombs*."

THE JORDAN.] "We broke up our camp on the borders of the Dead Sea," says M. Chateaubriand, "and advanced for an hour and a half, with excessive difficulty, over a fine white sand. We were approaching a grove of palm trees and tamarinds, which, to my great astonishment, I perceived in the midst of this sterile tract. The Arabs all at once stopped, and pointed to something that I had not yet remarked at the bottom of a ravine. Unable to make out what it was, I perceived what appeared to be sand in motion. On drawing nearer to this singular object, I beheld a yellow current, which I could scarcely distinguish from the sand on its shores. It was deeply sunk below its banks, and its sluggish stream rolled slowly on. This was the Jordan!"—"I cannot express what I felt at the sight of the Jordan. Not only did this river remind me of renowned antiquity, but its shores likewise presented to my view the theatre of the miracles of my religion. Judea is the only country in the world, that revives in the traveller the memory of human affairs, and of celestial things, and which, by this combination, produces in the soul a feeling and ideas which no other country is capable of exciting."

In a future number, we propose to insert some interesting particulars respecting the present state of *Jerusalem* and its vicinity.

ANSWER TO THE QUESTION, "WHY ARE YOU A DISSENTER?"

NOT because I was brought up a dissenter, or had early imbibed prejudices against the established church. My parents were members of that church; and my early prejudices were

strongly in its favour; so that I thought very meanly of those who differed from it. My *first* reason for leaving it, to attend on the ministry of dissenters was, because the Gospel was not preached where I had been accustomed to attend, and it was preached by the dissenters. My mind having been awakened to serious thought, and a deep concern for my everlasting welfare, I needed the encouraging invitations, promises, and consolations of the pure Gospel, to direct my way, set my mind at liberty, and animate my heart with hope and joy. These I sought in vain from my parish minister; nor could I learn that the Gospel was preached by any clergyman of the establishment in the neighbourhood. I was therefore induced to seek relief from the dissenters; and that, blessed be God, I soon found. These advantages which I received from attending on dissenting ministers, raised them in my estimation, extinguished my prejudice, and cemented my affections to them. I therefore continued to worship God among them. “ Will a man leave the snow of Lebanon which cometh from the rock of the field? or shall the cold flowing waters that come from another place be forsaken?” Jer. xviii. 14. The above reason is that which first induces many to become dissenters; and to me it appears a very important one, even such a reason as justifies any person in leaving a place of worship. It is a paramount duty to hear the *Gospel*, in preference to something substituted in its place. A man’s salvation depends on it; for it is the *Gospel* that is “ the power of God to salvation,” to him that believeth it.

My mind, however, was soon led to investigate the reasons by which dissenters vindicate their secession from the established church. I acknowledge, that no one ought to dissent on light ground. These reasons appear to me weighty and important, and such as fully justify their conduct. I shall proceed to detail those which, in addition to that above mentioned, operated on my mind so as to fix me among dissenters.

1. I object to the Church of England *as national and established*. The idea which the New Testament gives of a church of Christ is very different. It plainly appears that the various churches mentioned in that volume, were *voluntary* societies of professing christians, independent of each other, which usually met together to attend to religious worship, and divine ordinances, in the same place. They exercised the right of

transacting their own affairs, according to the judgment and conscience of the respective members, without being accountable to any but Jesus Christ; or directed or restrained by any laws but his. Thus a church is spoken of as coming together *in one place*, Acts, ii. 1, 46.—v. 12, 14.—1 Cor. xiv. 23.—Also a number of christians assembled for divine worship in a dwelling-house, is called *a church*: "Greet the church that is in their house." Rom. xvi. 5. See also, 1 Cor. xvi. 19.—Phil. 2. When affairs relating to the church were to be determined, all the members were called together to give their opinion. Acts, vi. 2, 5.—xv. 4, 22.—Such appear to have been the churches of *Jerusalem, Antioch, Corinth, Ephesus, Rome, &c.*: all of which appear to have been independent of each other. When there were more churches than one in a province or district, the term is used in the plural number; hence we read of the *churches* of Judca, and the *churches* of Galatia. Sometimes, indeed, the word *church* denotes the whole body of christians throughout the world, commonly called the universal or *catholic* church. See Acts, xx. 28.—Eph. v. 25, &c.

The church of England does not answer this description; it is not a *voluntary* society, as the whole nation are considered members of it, whether professedly so or not. These cannot assemble *in one place*; that they may consider and discuss, and give their vote in church affairs: but the several congregations of which it consists are deprived of this liberty, being all obliged to conform to an absolute uniformity in faith, worship, and discipline. How, then, can the body of the people, through the nation, who adopt the established mode of worship, be called a church, in the sense in which it is used in the New Testament, where it always means either a particular congregation, or the whole body of christians?

A church of Christ, according to the scripture account of it, is a society of persons united purely on *religious views*; John, xvii. 16.—xviii. 36.—whose laws are no other than *the word of God*; Psal. xix. 7.—Eph. ii. 20.;—which they have a right to interpret for themselves; John, i. 46.—Luke, xii. 57.—Acts, iv. 10. xvii. 11.—1 Thess. v. 21. &c.: the sanctions of which are purely *spiritual*; 2 Cor. x. 4.; and whose supreme and only *Head* is *Jesus Christ*. Eph. i. 22. Whereas, the church of England is a *civil establishment*, being founded

on acts of parliament, and enforced by civil sanctions; the chief magistrate, as such, being its supreme head. Thus the power which the king (or queen) of England has, as supreme head of the church, is, “to exercise all manner of ecclesiastical jurisdiction; and archbishops, bishops, archdeacons, and other ecclesiastical persons, have no manner of jurisdiction ecclesiastical, but by and under the king’s majesty; who hath full power and authority to hear and determine all manner of causes ecclesiastical, and to reform and correct all vice, sin, errors, and heresies whatsoever.” See the Act, 26 Hen. 8th. cap. 1.—This power Henry VIII. transferred from the pope to himself; and the kings and queens of England have possessed it ever since. Hence *the appointing of bishops* is the king or queen’s prerogative; and *the power of ordination* is from him, or her, and held during pleasure. This authority, in matters of faith, has been exercised both by kings and queens, in such a degree, as to reverse the votes of parliament, and stop the proceedings of a whole convocation of the clergy. Thus did queen Anne in the case of Mr. *Whiston*, who was condemned for heresy.

Such a power and authority, held by a fallible man, and even by a woman, over such a body of people, and in matters of such transcendent importance, where every one is personally responsible, is highly derogatory to the honour of Christ, whom God hath constituted head over all things to the church; as well as a gross infringement on the liberty of christians, who, in matters of faith and conscience, are forbid being the servants of men; 1 Cor. viii. 23.—Besides, the religion of Jesus needs not the support or aid of human power; its interference having been more injurious than beneficial to it.*

* The late learned and laborious Gilbert Wakefield thus expresses his opinion on national establishments—‘*National churches* are that hay and stubble (1 Cor. iii. 12.) which might be removed without difficulty or confusion, from the fabric of religion, by the gentle hand of reformation; but which the infatuation of ecclesiastics will leave to be destroyed by fire. *National churches* are that incrustation, which has enveloped, by gradual concretion, the diamond of christianity; nor can, I fear, the genuine lustre be restored, but by such violent efforts as the separation of substances so long and closely connected must inevitably require.’—Answer to Age of Reason, P. 7.

2. A second reason for my being a dissenter is, *the defective and corrupt state of the discipline* of the church of England. No persons whatever are refused admittance to the Lord's table, who have been confirmed, and are not excommunicated, though they be guilty of great immoralities. Many are allowed, yea obliged to receive it as a qualification for a civil office, when there is the utmost reason to believe they have no further view. This is a most awful perversion of a sacred ordinance. Should the minister refuse the sacrament to the most infamous sinner in his parish, he would be liable to suspension, and if obstinate, to excommunication. Is this an exact model of a church of Christ, according to the New Testament? It requires that cases of a public nature be brought before the church, for the consideration and determination of the whole body. See Matt. xviii. 17. But in the church of England, neither the minister of the parish, nor any of the congregation, can exercise any sort of discipline.—Offences must be brought before the spiritual court, instead of the church, to be determined by chancellors, who are often laymen, whose determinations will stand in law, though they be contrary to the bishops. The punishment which the New Testament mentions to be inflicted on obstinate offenders, is exclusion from christian fellowship, and the privileges attending it; but those inflicted for crimes brought before the spiritual court, are of a carnal nature, which the scripture no where warrants; such as fines, imprisonments, deprivation, and excommunication, the effects of which are dreadful. This discipline is also shamefully defective with respect to its ministers; as some are admitted into that sacred office, and others are suffered to remain in it, whose morals are extremely loose, and whose talents and application are greatly inadequate. None ought to be admitted into this office, but such as have given proof of a real conversion, and genuine piety; who understand and are determined to preach the great truths of the Gospel; and to enforce the same by a life of purity, love, and zeal.

3. Another important objection which I have to the church of England is, that the congregations are deprived of the right of *choosing their ministers*; though it is as reasonable, and far more important that they should possess this right, as that of choosing their own attorney or physician. Every patron of a living may present whatever minister he chooses, and the

people have no liberty to object. If he be ever so disagreeable to the people, or ill qualified for his office, they must submit. It is well for the people, in such cases, that there are other places of worship for them to attend; and this doubtless is one cause of the increase of dissenters. It seems an extremely hard case, for a people to have a minister imposed upon them, whatever his character or talents may be. How much more likely is a minister to be both more respected and useful, when he is the man of the people's choice.—The scriptures authorize the exercise of this right; see Acts, i. 6.—John, iv. 1.—Matt. xxiv. 24.—Luke, viii. 18, Ministers are mentioned as the *servants* of the church. 2 Cor. iv. 5.

4. I object also to *the terms* on which ministers are admitted into the church of England. They are required to subscribe and declare their hearty assent and consent to certain articles of religion, commonly called the *Thirty-nine Articles*, of human composition, as being in nothing contrary to the word of God. They are obliged to declare their belief, that there is nothing in the common-prayer book, and the book of ordination, contrary to the word of God. They are also obliged to swear obedience to the bishop, the ordinary, and their successors, in every thing required in the canons. Such requisitions as these are extremely hard on the clergy, and lay them under great temptations to prevaricate. It is also certain, that Christ never committed such authority to any man, or body of men; and who, but such as are infallible, can be considered qualified for the exercise of it? It is, beside a tacit reflection upon the holy Scriptures, as not being sufficiently explicit; an infringement on christian liberty, and a discouragement to free enquiry after truth. The New Testament no where enjoins such submission in Christ's ministers to one another, or to any human superior, as is here required. The grand pretext for subscription is, *uniformity of sentiment among her ministers*. But it may be asked, Is uniformity of sentiment absolutely necessary to christian edification?—Is it to be expected in the present imperfect state?—Is the demanding subscription to articles the way to secure it?—and, Is this object secured in the church of England?—From the preaching and writings of the established clergy, there appears as great a diversity of sentiments among them, as among any other body of ministers. The situation of the clergy is in this respect far from being enviable. How unlikely it is, that so

numerous a body of men should all believe, that two volumes so large as the book of common-prayer, and the book of ordination. contain nothing but what is agreeable to the word of God? Why should such a belief be thought necessary to make them acceptable ministers of Christ, or conducive to the good of the church? They are obliged to preach the same doctrines, whether they think them true or false, or else violate the most solemn obligations. Indeed subscription and the temporal emoluments connected with it, are a strong temptation to prevaricate; and tend to keep out of the church some of the most conscientious men, who are best qualified for such a trust, and to encourage such as are unfit to have the charge of souls.

N. B. In the year 1662, upwards of *two thousand* of the most pious and learned of the ministers of the church of England, gave up their livings, and committed themselves and families to providence; rather than violate their consciences in this matter of subscription. They were a noble company of men; and their conscientious conduct entitles them to the veneration and respect of posterity. Does this afford no presumptive proof that subscription to all that the ministers of the establishment are required to subscribe is wrong? A minister of that church should not be very confident and peremptory in speaking of its excellencies and perfection, when such a number of their studious, learned, and holy predecessors thought otherwise.

5. I object also to the number of officers which are appointed in the church of England, for which I can find no Scripture authority; and the appointment of which appears to me an infringement on the power and office of Christ as sole Head of the Church; as well as a reflection on the Sacred Scriptures as being an insufficient, or incomplete directory to Christians. Besides the three orders of *Bishops, Priests* and *Deacons*, there are *Archbishops, Archdeacons, Deans, Prebendaries, Canons, Chancellors, Surrogates, Proctors*, and others. But when did Christ appoint these? or where is their warrant from the New Testament? Are not these of *Popish* origin, and the effect of an unnatural alliance of the church with the state?

In the New Testament I read of but two kinds of officers, viz. *Elders* or *Presbyters*, which is synonymous with *Bishops*; the original word plainly signifying no more than overseers. They were the *pastors* of particular congregations, their busi-

ness was to minister in holy things; to preach the word; administer the ordinances, and watch over and feed the flock. The second order was that of *Deacons*, whose business it was to take care of the poor, and the temporal concerns of the Church.

As to the Bishops of the church of England, who can look into the New Testament, and not be forcibly struck with the striking contrast betwixt them and the Apostles of our Lord, whose successors they profess to be? The former are styled *Lord-Bishops*; and *right reverend fathers in God*; being peers of the realm. There is a great deal of pomp and parade used in their instalment and some ceremonies truly ludicrous; all of which is foreign to the simplicity of the New Testament. They have the sole power of ordaining the clergy; and they exercise great authority over them, not only to enquire into their conduct, but to exact an oath of obedience from them, as also the power of suspension. Such power and dominion over their brethren seems contrary to Matt. xx. 25, 27, xxiii. 8. They also perform the rite of *confirmation*, and the *consecration* of churches and church-yards; which have an obvious tendency to foster superstition in the minds of the people, and for which there is not one word in the christian scriptures. *They* live in splendour, and ride in state; while the Apostles were poor, “working with their hands,” and travelled on foot. *They* preach seldom; the Apostles were “instant in season, and out of season,” going every where preaching the word; disclaiming all dominion over the people’s faith, but labouring assiduously to be “examples to the flock,” and “helpers of their joy.” Is it not too much for one man to be pastor over, and to have the charge of all the souls in a whole diocese, which comprehends many hundred parishes; as well as the government of all the clergy, who are only his curates? What an awful responsibility do they take upon themselves! Is it consistent with their characters as the servants of the meek and lowly Jesus, to affect so much external pomp and worldly power? Must it not greatly interfere also with the spiritual duties of their office? As the above particulars are without any scripture authority, and contrary to the sovereign power and dominion of Christ, and the sufficiency of divine revelation as a rule of duty, I consider it my bounden duty to dissent from, and protest against such errors; and to worship and enjoy christian fellowship with those who pay a stricter attention to the Holy Scriptures.

6. Another reason for my dissent from the church of England is, *the mode of worship* it has adopted; the same stated forms of prayer being constantly used. Though it be better to pray by a form, than not to pray at all, yet there appears no necessity for forms. A private christian, who knows and considers his wants and obligations, may express them in a manner acceptable to God, without the use of a form. A minister who does not possess sufficient knowledge, and a fluency of expression, is unfit for his office. The Scriptures are silent both as to the necessity and expediency of them; and it is unreasonable that ministers should be confined to a stated form in their prayers, more than in their sermons. The practice is evidently attended with disadvantage, as it encourages indolence, cramps the mind in its operations, prevents a cultivation of the ability to pray, and deadens devotion by a constant repetition of the same things. Besides these liturgies cannot be adapted to all the varying circumstances of different societies, and those passing occurrences and events which ought to be noticed in public prayer; yet they must not be altered; nor is any minister allowed to deviate from them whatever the peculiarity of events may require.

The liturgy is also exceptionable in a variety of instances. It is irregular, full of tautology, and vain repetitions; some parts of it, (for instance, what is called the Lord's prayer, *Gloria Patri*, &c.) being used several times. In some respects it is defective; in others redundant; and in others not adapted to the occasion. Several things are objectionable in point of sentiment, in *the office of baptism*, in *the communion service*, in *the rite of confirmation*, in *the visitation of the sick*, in *the burial service*, the service for *holy days*, in *the Athanasian creed*, and in some parts of the *litany*. The limits to which I am confined in these remarks, forbid my being very particular; but I must be allowed to observe, that as to *baptism*, neither the *subjects (infants)*, nor what is by some called the *mode (sprinkling)* are scriptural. In *the communion service*, the notion of *Christ's real presence* in the bread and wine is strongly favoured by some expressions, and too much countenance given to a superstitious view of it. The rite of *Confirmation* has no foundation either in reason or Scripture, and may be attended with dangerous consequences, by inducing a persuasion in those confirmed, on the mere authority of the

bishop, of their being pardoned and regenerated, and consequently in a safe state, while they continue in their sins. In the *Visitation of the Sick*, the form of absolution savours strongly of popery.* Some parts of the *burial service* are peculiarly objectionable, and may be attended with dangerous consequences, as the most infamous characters, when dead, are pronounced happy. There is, besides, an evident impropriety in reading the same service at all funerals, without distinctions of age, circumstances or character. Many other parts might be pointed out as very exceptionable, in the services for *Jan. 30th.* and *May 29th.*—also, the reading of the *Apocryphical books*, the damnatory clauses in the *Athanasian Creed*, the practice of chanting in cathedrals, and reciting after the minister, &c. &c. The greater part of the liturgy of the Church of England, was taken from the old *popish liturgy*, several parts being little else than a translation of the *Roman Breviary, Missal, and Ritual.* The first Reformers, perhaps, did their part. They undertook a great and hazardous work; but their successors have greatly failed in theirs. Churchmen have such an invincible aversion to innovation, and such a dread of endangering the whole fabric by attempting to repair any part of it; that they have hitherto pertinaciously rejected all proposals for improvement, although made by many learned clergymen in the Church.—Not a pin of the building must be touched: One would suppose, by their extreme tenderness, that they considered the building so crazy, that if the smallest part be removed, the whole will fall into ruins. What is most surprising is, that those of the establish-

* *Mr. Hervey* used to complain, that the baptismal service, and the visitation of the sick, in the liturgy, were very defective, and much needed amendment. He in a private letter also adds: “ In an affair of the highest consequence, how negligent is the community, I mean in the long expected reformation of the liturgy, in which, excellent as it is upon the whole, there are some passages so justly exceptionable, that every bishop in the kingdom will tell you he wishes to have them expunged: and yet, I know not for what political or timid reasons, it continues just as it did. Had our first reformers been thus indolent, we still had been Papists.”

Gen. Col. Let, 156.—Life of Brown,

ed clergy, who should be most sensible of their church's defects, and most desirous of having them rectified, seem most tenacious of them, are loudest in crying up its excellent constitution; and have the phrase, "our excellent church," most frequently in their mouths. The simplicity, purity and independance of dissenting churches, and the dissenting mode of worship, appear to me so much more consistent with Scripture, and better calculated for general edification, that I am constrained to give them the preference. I sometimes feel some degree of surprize that conscientious men, who are in the habit of reading their bibles seriously, can be so well satisfied with their church and its service as they appear. But we cannot all see alike in this state; and men may be the subjects of prejudice while insensible of its influence.

The SUPERIOR SOURCES of CONSOLATION under the Loss of FRIENDS afforded by CHRISTIANITY.

ONE of the chief glories of Cristianity is, that it unveils the interesting concerns of a future state to mortals much more clearly than they were, or could be, discovered, by the strongest reason, unassisted by Revelation. This lays a foundation for motives to virtue and duty much more powerful than the most laboured system of Ethics could furnish. The supports, too, which this supplies to the christian, when struggling under the afflictions incident to this state of trial, are equally superior to those furnished by mere reason. We select, for an illustration, a calamity to which every human being is subject, and by which he is, at one time or another, certainly visited. All mankind are subject to death: and no man can pass through life without being deprived of those who are near to his heart and share largely in his affections. Now these are seasons in which the feeling mind needs support, and looks around for consolation. The moralist may harangue on the duty of submitting to providence, and the propriety of bearing with fortitude evils which cannot be avoided: and the stoic may expatiate on the vanity of murmuring at the decrees of fate, and the impossibility of resisting them. These topics may confound, but they do not console the sufferer. The delight of his eyes, the friend of his bosom, is torn from him, and nothing remains of that once beloved object but an inanimate, and disgusting piece of corruption, which he is soon obliged

to bury out of his sight. His reason can only lead to uncertain guesses at any other state of being after this life, and he conceives himself separated for ever. The frequency of the misfortune, and the impossibility of avoiding it, rather aggravate than lessen the weight of his grief. No source of comfort offers; and if he does not sink into stupid insensibility, he abandons himself to unavailing woe.

But, in circumstances like these, Christianity presents most powerful topics of consolation. Instead of picturing to his mourning imagination the spirit of a departed friend as extinct, or wandering "through Pluto's realms a solitary ghost," it assures him, that if the deceased was really interested in the privileges of the gospel, his soul is now secure in the enjoyment of bliss far superior to any that he could have enjoyed on earth. Revelation informs the mourner, that God has now wiped away all tears from the eyes of his friend; that he now drinks full draughts of bliss from the fountain of bliss; that, unhappy and imperfect as he was on earth, he is now completely happy and holy: and that he has sat down with his adorable Saviour on his throne. Such views as these naturally afford consolation to the affectionate survivor. Did he sincerely love those of whom death has deprived him?—Then, surely, he will rejoice in the contemplation of that glory and joy to which they are advanced. Will he not be willing, for their sakes, to forego the pleasure which he used to enjoy in their conversation and presence? Nay, will he not rejoice and find real satisfaction in the certainty, that *his* loss is *their* gain, and that they are now present with Christ, which is far better?

Again. It is painful to reflect, that even the *bodies* of those, whom we love and reverence, should be totally lost, and mix for ever with their parent clay. But reason, with all her powers, nor even imagination, in her wildest flights, could ever discover the least ray of hope of the recovery of these machines, after they had been consumed on the flaming pile, or dissolved in the silent grave. But here, Revelation again steps in to our relief. It assures us, that "what was sown in corruption, shall be raised in incorruption: that what was sown in dishonour, shall be raised in glory; that what was sown in weakness, shall be raised in power; and that what was sown a natural body, shall be raised a spiritual body." What a source of consolation for a fond relative, to look forwards to

to that glorious day, when that very body, which has, for so many years, been the delight of his eyes, shall be restored to additional splendour, and adapted for pleasures more refined than those it could support in this imperfect state of existence.

Further. The Gospel assures us, that if we be found walking in the steps of our deceased friends, the painful separation will be but for a time. The period will soon arrive, when we shall be re-united with them in happier circumstances, and in the participation of superior delights; without the jarring disorders and evils too common on earth. Nor will our felicity be damped with the fear of any future separation. We shall then have the consoling assurance, that our happiness will continue for ever, and will for ever increase. Well may this glorious prospect reconcile us to the temporary absence of our dearest connections—when we have the promise of divine truth, that we shall certainly join them again, and never more be parted. Surely, those who have good evidence, that their deceased friends and themselves are both partakers of the same kingdom of glory, ought not to sorrow as those who have no hope.

Lastly. The most enlightened of the heathens had very obscure and discouraging views of providence. Some supposed, that the Deity, too exalted to interest himself in human affairs, left them to the direction of blind and undistinguishing chance. Others talked something of a sovereign fate superior to gods and men, which irresistibly controuled all events. It is the Christian alone who is taught, that a God of infinite wisdom, almighty power, and boundless goodness, rules over all the creation; that not a sparrow falls without Him; and that this God has engaged his sacred word, that all things shall work together for good to them that love him. When death, therefore, snatches away his most beloved connections, he is authorised, he is required, to believe, that the great Disposer of all events has some benevolent purpose to accomplish by the dispensation. He may comfort himself with the persuasion, that, though in this state of darkness he cannot fathom the designs of his heavenly Father, yet, when he arrives in that happy state where he will see eye to eye, he will perceive abundant reason to conclude, that, even in these affecting events, He has done all things well. A firm and constant conviction, “that the Judge of all the earth must do

right," will and ought to calm our minds, and moderate our sorrows, under the most severe strokes of His providence.

From these considerations, we may draw two important hints of improvement.

1. Let us be careful to secure our own title to everlasting bliss, that we may have solid ground for hoping to meet our pious friends again in glory. Does the anticipation of this relieve our sorrows, and, even in the midst of grief, yield us sacred joy? Let us, then, beware of losing this consolation. Our departed friends walked with God on earth, and thus were prepared for the full enjoyment of His presence in heaven. Are we pursuing their steps? They evidenced their love to their Saviour by keeping his commandments. Do we endeavour to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things? Let us examine ourselves whether we be in the faith. Our Saviour tells the Jews, that they shall see their great ancestors, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, sit down in the kingdom of heaven, and they themselves shall be cast out. Awful sentence! May it properly affect us! Should we at the great day be on the left hand of the Judge, we shall be cast into outer darkness; when an impassable gulph will be fixed between the realms of bliss and us, that will for ever preclude any intercourse with those in whose happy company we had vainly hoped to have passed an eternity of joy. O what keenness will this add to the teeth of the worm that never dies! what fury to the flame that shall never be quenched! Let, then, our attachment to our dear and pious connections rouse us to consult our own safety, and excite us to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling.

2. Let a due consideration of this subject awaken us to deep concern for the salvation of those that are near and dear to our hearts. How dreadfully must it aggravate our grief on the loss of such, when we have any ground to apprehend that they are not only lost to us in this world, but lost for ever, and plunged in irremediable ruin. Such a suspicion calls into exercise all the most painful emotions of the mind. Our own loss is absorbed in their's; and we suffer the most poignant anguish. Nothing, perhaps, can aggravate our distress, unless we have reason to apprehend, that this awful misery might probably have been prevented, had we been more diligent and more earnest in warning, instructing, and praying for, the un-

happy immortal. Let us, then, while we are in the land of hope, earnestly wrestle with the God of all grace, that he would impart his saving grace to our beloved associates; and let us not content ourselves with prayer, however constant or fervent. Let us diligently use all the means which divine goodness has put into our hands. Let us warn those with whom we stand connected of the danger of perishing in their sins; let us exhort them to flee from the wrath to come; let us instruct them in the way of salvation; and sedulously guard them against all the snares which might draw their feet aside from the paths of righteousness. Thus may we hope, through the assistance of the Holy Spirit, to meet them in those happy realms, where sin and death shall be unknown.

S. O.

FIRE AT SERAMPORE.

WHEN we drew up the interesting account, published in our last number, of the astonishing progress that had been made, and was then making, by the Baptist Missionaries in India, in the translating and publishing of the Scriptures for the instruction of the perishing millions of Asia, we little thought, that, at the moment we were writing, the whole undertaking had been for four months entirely suspended, by a most mysterious dispensation of Providence. So limited is our knowledge! Yet it now appears, that such was actually the case. The particulars of this distressing event will be learnt from the following letter from Dr. Marshman; which, at the request of the last Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire Conference, we willingly insert. We likewise most cordially join with them in recommending this important subject to the liberal attention of our readers, especially to such as possess the means of rendering effectual assistance.

Copy of a Letter from Dr. Joshua Marshman, of Serampore, in Bengal, to Dr. Ryland, of Bristol, dated March 12th, received September 9th, 1813.

MY DEAR SIR,

I closed a letter to you on the 10th, but now write anew. Another leaf of the ways of Providence has been since unfolded which will fill you both with sorrow and gratitude;

and call for the exercise of faith in HIM, whose word, firm as the pillars of heaven, has declared, "All things work *together* for the good of them that love God."

Last night, about six, I was sitting in my study, musing over the dealings of God who had that day week taken my infant son; and what afflicted me far more, three weeks before, my dear brother Ward's second daughter, about six years old, in a putrid sore throat. While reflecting on these providences, and attempting to collect my thoughts on—"It is of the Lord's mercies we are not *consumed*," as a subject for our weekly evening lecture, some one exclaimed, "The printing office is on fire." I ran instantly thither, and beheld, at the lower end of the office, which is a room 200 feet long, a stage containing 700 reams of English paper, sent out to print the Tamul and Cingalese New Testament, enveloped in flames. Every door and window but one was fastened by a large flat bar of iron which went across it, and was secured by a bolt in the inside. In five minutes, the room was so filled with smoke that a candle would not live. Finding it impossible to open the windows, or for any one to go in without danger of instant death, we fastened that door again, in the hope smothering the flame, and ascending the roof pierced it over the fire; and by incessantly pouring down water, so kept it under for three hours, that nothing but that paper appeared to have kindled, and there the flame was greatly abated. The alarm which we gave brought all the Europeans around us to our assistance, besides our native servants, so that we had all the assistance we could desire. While, however, the flames were got under there, I looked in, and suddenly saw a flame spread about twenty feet higher up. The smoke and steam increased so as to render it death to get three feet within the wall. In a few minutes the flames spread in every direction, and took away all hope of saving any thing from thence, and filled us with terror for Mrs. Marshman's school, about thirty feet to the north-west, a bed-room for the boys about sixteen feet full north, which communicated with brother Carey's, and the hall, library, and museum, within twelve feet of it to the north-east. The wind, however, fell, and it burned as straight upward as a fire on a hearth, and communicated to nothing beside. It remained burning six hours, and consumed the beams five feet in circumference, the roof, the windows, and

every thing but the walls. Happily, no lives were lost, nor a bone broken. The loss we cannot at present estimate. It has consumed all but the six presses, which we rejoiced were saved being in a side room. *Two thousand* reams of English paper are consumed, worth at least £5000. Founts of types in fourteen languages, besides English: namely,—Nagree, (two founts large and small,) Bengalee, (two founts) Orissa, Mahratta, Seek, Burman, Telinga, Tamul, Cingalese, Chinese, Persian, Arabic, Hebrew, and Greek, were burnt; besides founts of English for carrying on ten works, which we have now in the press; and the cases, stones, brass rules, iron chases, &c. correspondent with all these. We have not types left for the circular letter, nor even to print a statement of the loss. The editions of the New Testament which are stopped are nine: viz. The Hindostance, Persian, and Tamul, printing under the patronage of the Auxiliary Bible Society, and the Hindce, (second edition), Telinga, Seek, Burman, Sungskrit, (second edition), and Chinese. The editions of the Old Testament are five: The Sungskrit, Bengalee, (second edition), Orissa, Mahratta, and Hindce. Among the English works suspended till we get types from you are: The Sungskrit Grammar, (second edition,) Brother Ward's Work on the Manners of the Hindoos, (second edition), Confucius, (second edition), The Dissertation on the Chinese, (second edition), enlarged to more than two hundred pages; Bengalee Dictionary, and a Telinga Grammar, both by Brother Carey. The loss cannot be less than *Twelve Thousand Pounds sterling*, and all our labours are at once stopped.

Yet amidst all, mercy evidently shines. I trembled for dear Brother Ward (as our Sisters did for us both) lest the roof should have fallen in with him, or lest he should have entered too far, and at once extinguished the spark of life. But we were all preserved, blessed be God. The flames touched nothing besides; they might have consumed every thing. The presses are preserved, and happily the matrices of all the founts of types were deposited in another place; had they been burnt, it must have been years before they could have been replaced. We can now, however, begin casting types to-morrow, if we can find money; country paper can be substituted for English, and thus two or three months will put the Versions of the Scriptures in motion again. But for English we shall be dis-

tressed till you can send us a supply; we know not even how to send you a circular letter. I am writing this at Calcutta, to go by the packet this evening, whither I am come to inform Brother Carey, and therefore cannot tell you what types, nor how many. They must, however, be all the sizes from the text of Confucius to the Minion in the circular letter; also Italian, and every printing utensil accompanying. Perhaps some friend in London in the printing line can tell what goes to complete a printing office with English types. You must also send a fount of Greek and Hebrew. I am distressed to think where you will find money, but send if you incur a debt; the silver and the gold are the Lord's. The christian sympathy of our friends almost overwhelms me. The Rev. Mr. Browne was confined by illness, but Mr. Bird, his son-in-law, exerted himself for us in the most strenuous manner. I fear it affects Mr. Browne's mind even more than mine own; he sent off an express at midnight to acquaint Mr. Harrington, who is deeply affected. Rev. Mr. Thomason wept like a child to-day on hearing of it. He begs us to make out a minute statement of our loss, and says he will use all his interest on our behalf; we shall write again to-morrow. I feel assured that the Lord will bring so much good out of it, that Satan will repent it ever was done. How it arose we know not. Brother Ward and others think it must have been done by design, and that some idolater among our servants, turning pale with envy at the sight of the Bible printing in so many languages, contrived this mode of stopping the work. This, however, is mere conjecture. Be strong in the Lord, my dear Brother, he will never forsake the work of his own hands.

I am, ever your's,

J. MARSHMAN.

P.S. One thing will make us go to work the sooner: the keys of a building, larger than the printing office, which we had let for years as a warehouse, were given up to us on Saturday last. Thus we have a place to resume our labours, the moment types are cast.

At the GENERAL BAPTIST CONFERENCE, Loughborough, September 29, 1812, among other cases, the following was presented from the G. B. church at Derby.

In consequence of the melancholy destruction of the Baptist Missionary Printing House at Serampore, and of its valuable

contents, it is needful that great exertions be made by the friends of Religion to repair so great a loss. We therefore respectfully suggest the propriety of Conference *earnestly recommending and beseeching* the G. B. churches to come forward as speedily as possible with collections for that purpose.

After this case had been considered, the following resolutions were adopted without one dissenting voice.—That the Conference recommended the G. B. churches to make collections to assist in repairing the melancholy loss at Serampore; and that the minister of the church, which sent the case, be desired to write a letter to the G. B. Repository, containing some reasons in support of such recommendation.

**TO THE MEMBERS OF THE G. B. CHURCHES OF THE
NEW CONNECTION.**

CHRISTIAN FRIENDS,

Conformably to the above resolution, I wish to submit to your candid attention, a few thoughts on the propriety and necessity of your raising collections towards defraying the loss occasioned by the fire at Serampore.

Among the considerations that naturally suggest themselves to the mind when reflecting on that mysterious event, perhaps the following may be deemed worthy of peculiar regard.—The awful state of Hindoostan and the different Asiatic nations, and the incalculable beneficial tendency of the Baptist Mission.—

The British Dominions in India, are computed to contain seventy millions of inhabitants; and all Asia five hundred millions: of which almost the whole are benighted pagans, or mahomedans nearly as deeply involved as they in spiritual darkness. This darkness is extreme. In Hindoostan its shocking effects are manifest in various ways.—Children are hung on trees in baskets and devoured by birds of prey.—Female infants in some provinces are destroyed by starving.—Men and women devote themselves to death by drowning in places reputed holy, or by falling under the wheels of the enormous machine which carries the idol Jaggernaut.—In some places, widows are burned, in others buried alive, with their deceased husbands.—Ten thousand annually are calculated to perish thus in the northern provinces of Hindoostan alone. Persons supposed to be dying, are immersed in the

river; water is copiously poured into their mouths; and they seldom survive many hours.—To such lengths of atrocity and infatuation do the unhappy inhabitants of Hindoostan proceed, that, if a father has devoted himself to death by drowning, and afterwards attempts to escape by swimming back to land, it is not uncommon to see his sons push him into the water again.—Some of the self-devoted victims under the wheels of Jaggernaut's car, take a soporiferous draught a few hours beforehand, and lie down in the track of the machine, hoping to meet death asleep.—Besides these horrid customs, other ceremonies that often end in death abound.—In addition to the multitudes thus destroyed, tens of thousands, not to say hundreds of thousands, annually perish in different ways, in consequence of their pilgrimages to the shrine of the dreadful Jaggernaut; of whose worship as of Moloch's of old, blood and lust are said to form the prominent features.—Besides those miserable victims that are crushed beneath his bloody car, such multitudes perish in other ways, that Dr. Buchanan affirms, that, when at fifty miles distance, he knew that he was approaching Jaggernaut, by the quantity of human bones, which, for some days, he had seen strewed by the way. And Dr. Carey mentions, that twelve hundred thousand persons are computed to visit annually that obscene and bloody temple; that, if of these but one in ten perish, the number thus destroyed every year amounts to one hundred and twenty thousand; but some suppose, not more than one in ten return to their home. Ah, unhappy victims of infernal power! if such is their state in this world, what must it be in that which is to come!—If ever the conquests of Satan were any where complete, Hindoostan is a scene of his perfect triumph. There he aspires to a dreadful pre-eminence—both soul and body are his prey.

When the attention turns from these heart-rending views to the unostentatious missionary settlement at Serampore, we see in it a star beginning to cast its rays through the horrid gloom:—A morning star.—The harbinger of a day that will disperse the awful shades of pagan night. But, ah! Christianity mourns that star bedimmed, though, we trust, not extinguished.

The Mission conducted at Serampore presents to the pious observer a most pleasing spectacle. It has proceeded along a

silent, but successful course; has been eminently attended by a divine blessing, and accomplished much more than others of far prouder names and greater powers. Its missionary stations now amount to five; its missionaries to thirty; of whom twelve are native preachers. Yes, NATIVE PREACHERS! benighted pagans as they were, they are now heralds of the everlasting gospel.—The Printing House attached to this interesting Mission, and lately destroyed by fire, was of the first importance to the great cause of evangelizing India.—It was a building of considerable extent, furnished with the requisites for conducting the printing of the Scriptures on a grand scale. It is stated that Dr. Carey has to superintend the printing and publishing of the Scriptures in twenty-four different languages. At the time of the fire, editions of the Old or New Testament, in *fourteen* languages, were in the press.—Some of these were *second* editions. Part were printing at the expence of the Society, and part under the patronage of the Calcutta Auxiliary Bible Society.—When these and other circumstances relating to the mission are considered, in connection with the awful state of India, surely it is not too much to assert, that the extinction of the sun from the firmament would not have a more baleful influence on the natural world, than the annihilation of the Missionary Printing House would have in Hindoostan on the religious. But, christian friends, that Printing Office has perished in the flames. Can you be backward in offering your aid towards the rebuilding of it;

As another motive for benevolent exertion, let it be considered, that immortal souls are at stake.—Such is the worth of one, that it were better that all the inhabitants of the earth should exhaust their property and weep their lives away in indigence and grief, than that one should be lost, which might by the divine blessing on human efforts be saved. But it is most certain, that, if the Serampore Printing Office be not re-established, many must be lost, through ignorance of the Scriptures, that might be illuminated by that heavenly book. Should there be only delay in accomplishing so important a purpose, that delay would probably be fatal to some, perhaps to many.—While destitute of the Bible, their day of grace is departing, and they are hastening to the tribunal of their eternal Judge. A Bible contains immortal treasures.—To beings hurrying to eternity, the giver of a Bible may be a

greater benefactor than the giver of a world ; but the opportunity for bestowing so invaluable a blessing is rapidly declining and once gone is gone for ever.

It is a consideration worthy of some regard, that, in presenting our offerings on this occasion, we shall assist BAPTISTS. In this case, the men to whom you, christian friends, are invited to entrust your property, to lay it out for God, are men who not merely, like you and many others, love the Lord Jesus Christ ; but who, like you, value HIS ordinances ; and who, like you, reject the vain inventions of man.

Permit me to urge another motive.—By contributions towards repairing the loss at Serampore, you may impart real comfort to some of the most deserving of mankind. How poignant must be the distress which our baptist brethren in India have lately experienced.—The Most High had honoured them as the instruments of raising the most powerful engine under heaven for disseminating divine truth and for shaking the foundations of Satan's kingdom.—Such was the Missionary Printing House at Serampore—but alas ! ruin has overwhelmed it. Yet it must be restored—or thousands perish eternally. It must be restored—or the scriptures remain unknown to millions.—It must be restored—or infidelity exult and Satan triumph.—It must—or our Brethren still mourn its loss, and every christian have reason to unite in their griefs.—Oh come forward, then, ye friends of Jesus, ye friends of wretched man.—Be not idle spectators of such a contest between the powers of darkness and the Prince of light.

This cause deserves a much abler advocate than I ; or, should I rather say, that the cause itself is such, that merely to mention it is to plead it.—It is eminently the cause of him who though he was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich.—Oh, may its importance impress the minds of all his followers, and his love stimulate their hearts to lend it their willing support. I remain, christian friends,

Yours, &c. J. PIKE.

It affords us great pleasure to learn, that, this affecting event has already called forth the energies of the friends of religion and humanity. On the very day when the melancholy news arrived, the Directors of the London Missionary society voted one hundred guineas for the Baptist mission ; and a few days

after, the Trustees of the Evangelical Magazine voted fifty pounds for the same purpose. It is also said, that the British and Foreign Bible Society have, with their usual noble liberality, ordered two thousand reams of paper to be immediately sent, at their expence, to replace that burnt at Serampore. Let these generous examples be duly imitated, and the designs of Satan will be frustrated. The arduous undertaking will be resumed with fresh spirit, and prosecuted with increased vigour. The word of God will be presented in their native tongues, to five hundred millions of our fellow creatures who are now perishing through lack of knowledge; and we confidently hope, that it will run and be glorified, till the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. May the G. B. churches pay a due attention to this important subject; and prompt'y claim their share in promoting so glorious a work!

QUERIES *respectfully submitted to the* **SERIOUS CONSIDERATION** *of the* **CONDUCTORS of SUNDAY SCHOOLS.**

Is not attending the public worship of God, and the public ordinances of religion the duty of every christian, which ought not to be neglected without sufficient cause?

Is not the habit of regular attendance on public worship one of the great advantages to be gained by children, on a Sunday? Ought not, therefore, the conducting of the schools to be so arranged as to allow both teachers and scholars as frequent opportunities as possible of attending it?

Are not those conductors of Sunday Schools in which more teachers than are necessary are detained from public worship, or in which they are detained oftener than necessary, guilty of slighting the ordinances, and of neglecting plain duty?

Is there not, in such cases, reason to fear that young teachers as well as their scholars will be in danger of contracting a habit of treating lightly the means of grace and of absenting themselves from them for trivial reasons?

Do not those who employ such children as go to school on week days, in learning to read, spell, &c. at a Sunday School, on a Lord's day, and thus prevent them from attending public worship, at least one part of the day, teach such children to make no distinction between that day and other days, deprive

them of the appointed means of spiritual edification, and accustom them to the mispending of the sacred day?

Would not every good purpose be answered, if those children who attended week day schools were instructed in religious subjects *only*, before or after the hours, of service, and carried to public worship both morning and afternoon?

Do not those parents who profess religion and frequent the means of grace themselves, deprive their children of great advantage and expose them to great danger of forming bad habits, by sending them to a Sunday School where they are detained from public worship, one half if not the whole of the Lord's day?

A FRIEND TO SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

To the GENERAL BAPTIST CHURCHES.

Mile End, October 23, 1812.

BELOVED BRETHREN,

In our last half-yearly meeting, it was unanimously resolved, "to set apart the first day of the next year, 1813, as a day of fasting and prayer for the revival of religion in our respective churches."

We pretend not to the least authority over any of you. But we thought it proper, in present circumstances, to acquaint you with our design, and to invite you though at a distance to co-operate with us in the solemn services of that day; either on the day abovementioned, or on some other, which may be more suitable to your respective circumstances. We need not inform you, Brethren, that devotional exercises of this kind, are very beneficial in themselves to the individuals engaged in them, much encouraged in the holy Scriptures, and frequently followed with the influences of the Holy Spirit upon the churches of Jesus Christ. That this unspeakable blessing may be more richly obtained and enjoyed by all the churches in our Connection, and by all the churches of our adorable Redeemer in all parts, is the earnest prayer of your affectionate brother and willing servant, in behalf of the half yearly meeting,

D. TAYLOR.

THE NEW ACT OF TOLERATION.

At the request of several respected friends, and with a view to the general information of the Connection, we insert the ACT IN FAVOUR OF DISSENTERS, brought forward by his Majesty's ministers; and passed without opposition, in the last Session of the late Parliament, July 29, 1812.

ANNO QUINQUAGESIMO SECUNDO, GREGORII III. REGIS.

CAP. CLV.

An Act to repeal certain Acts, and amend other Acts relating to Religious Worship and Assemblies, and Persons teaching or preaching therein. (29th July, 1812.)

WHEREAS it is expedient that certain Acts of Parliament, made in the reign of his late majesty King *Charles* the Second, relating to Non-conformists and Conventicles, and refusing to take oaths, should be repealed, and that the laws relating to certain congregations and assemblies for religious worship, and persons teaching, preaching, or officiating therein, and resorting thereto, should be amended; be it therefore enacted by the King's most excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords spiritual and temporal, and Commons, in this present parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, That from and after the passing of this Act, an Act of parliament made in the session of parliament held in the thirteenth and fourteenth years of his late Majesty King *Charles* the Second, intituled *An Act for preventing the mischiefs and dangers that may arise by certain persons called Quakers, and others, refusing to take lawful oaths**; and another Act of parliament, made in the seventeenth year of the reign of his late Majesty King *Charles* the Second, intituled *An Act for restraining Non-conformists from inhabiting in incorporations*†; and another Act of parliament, made in the twenty-second year of the reign of the late King *Charles* the Second, intituled *An Act to prevent and suppress seditious Conventicles*‡; shall be and the same are hereby repealed.

II. And be it further enacted, That from and after the passing of this Act, no congregation or assembly for religious worship of protestants (at which there shall be present more than

* 13 & 14 Car. II. c. 1. † 17 Car. II. c. 2. ‡ 22 Car. II. c. 1.

twenty persons besides the immediate family and servants of the person in whose house or upon whose premises such meeting, congregation, or assembly, shall be had) shall be permitted or allowed, unless and until the place of such meeting, if the same shall not have been duly certified and registered under any former Act or Acts of parliament relating to registering places of religious worship, shall have been or shall be certified to the bishop of the diocese, or to the archdeacon of the archdeaconry, or to the justices of the peace at the general or quarter sessions of the peace for the county, riding, division, city, town, or place, in which such meeting shall be held; and all places of meeting which shall be so certified to the bishop's or archdeacon's court, shall be returned by such court once in each year to the quarter sessions of the county, riding, division, city, town, or place; and all places of meeting which shall be so certified to the quarter sessions of the peace, shall be also returned once in each year to the bishop or archdeacon; and all such places shall be registered in the said bishop's or archdeacon's court respectively, and recorded at the said general or quarter sessions; the registrar or clerk of the peace whereof respectively is hereby required to register and record the same; and the bishop or registrar or clerk of the peace to whom any such place of meeting shall be certified under this Act, shall give a certificate thereof to such person or persons as shall request or demand the same, for which there shall be no greater fee nor reward taken than two shillings and sixpence; and every person, who shall knowingly permit or suffer any such congregation or assembly as aforesaid to meet in any place occupied by him, until the same shall have been so certified as aforesaid, shall forfeit for every time any such congregation or assembly shall meet contrary to the provisions of this Act, a sum not exceeding twenty pounds, nor less than twenty shillings, at the discretion of the justices who shall convict for such offence.

III. Provided always, and be it further enacted, That every person who shall teach or preach in any congregation or assembly as aforesaid, in any place, without the consent of the occupier thereof, shall forfeit for every such offence any sum not exceeding thirty pounds, nor less than forty shillings, at the discretion of the justices who shall convict for such of-

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III. Provided always, and be it further enacted, That every person who shall teach or preach in any congregation or assembly as aforesaid, in any place, without the consent of the occupier thereof, shall forfeit for every such offence any sum not exceeding thirty pounds, nor less than forty shillings, at the discretion of the justices who shall convict for such offence.

IV. And be it farther enacted, That from and after the passing of this Act, every person who shall teach or preach at, or officiate in, or shall resort to any congregation or congregations, assembly or assemblies, for religious worship of protestants, whose place of meeting shall be duly certified according to the provisions of this Act, or any other Act or Acts of parliament relating to the certifying and registering of places of religious worship, shall be exempt from all such pains and penalties under any Act or Acts of parliament relating to religious worship, as any person who shall have taken the oaths, and made the declaration prescribed by or mentioned in an Act, made in the first year of the reign of King *William* and Queen *Mary*, intituled *An Act for exempting their Majesties' protestant subjects, dissenting from the church of England, from the penalties of certain laws*, or any Act amending the said Act, is by law exempt, as fully and effectually as if all such pains and penalties, and the several Acts enforcing the same, were recited in this Act, and such exemptions as aforesaid were severally and separately enacted in relation thereto.

V. Provided always, and be it further enacted, That every person not having taken the oaths, and subscribed the declaration herein-after specified, who shall preach or teach at any place of religious worship certified in pursuance of the directions of this Act, shall, when thereto required by any one justice of the peace, by any writing under his hand or signed by him, take and make and subscribe, in the presence of such justice of the peace, the oaths and declaration specified and contained in an Act, passed in the nineteenth year of the reign of his Majesty King *George* the Third, intituled *An Act for the further relief of protestant dissenting ministers and schoolmasters**: and no such person who, upon being so required to take such oaths and make such declaration as aforesaid, shall refuse to attend the justice requiring the same, or to take and make and subscribe such oaths and declaration as aforesaid, shall be thereafter permitted or allowed to teach or preach in any such congregation or assembly for religious worship, until he shall have taken such oaths, and made such declaration as aforesaid, on pain of forfeiting, for every time he shall so teach or

* 19 Geo. III. c. 44.

preach, any sum not exceeding ten pounds nor less than ten shillings, at the discretion of the justice convicting for such offence.

VI. Provided always, and be it further enacted, That no person shall be required by any justice of the peace to go to any greater distance than five miles from his own home, or from the place where he shall be residing at the time of such requisition, for the purpose of taking such oaths as aforesaid.

VII. And be it further enacted, That it shall be lawful for any of his Majesty's protestant subjects to appear before any one justice of the peace, and to produce to such justice of the peace a printed or written copy of the said oaths and declaration, and to require such justice to administer such oaths and to tender such declaration to be made, taken, and subscribed by such persons; and thereupon it shall be lawful for such justice, and he is hereby authorized and required to administer such oaths and to tender such declaration to the person requiring to take and make and subscribe the same: and such persons shall take and make and subscribe such oaths and declaration in the presence of such justice accordingly; and such justice shall attest the same to be sworn before him, and shall transmit or deliver the same to the clerk of the peace for the county, riding, division, city, town, or place for which he shall act as such justice of the peace, before or at the next general or quarter sessions of the peace for such county, riding, division, city, town, or place.

VIII. And be it further enacted, That every justice of the peace before whom any person shall make and take and subscribe such oaths and declaration as aforesaid, shall forthwith give to the person having taken, made, and subscribed such oaths and declaration, a certificate thereof under the hand of such justice in the form following: (that is to say),

I, *A. B.* one of his Majesty's justices of the peace for the county, [riding, division, city, or town, or place, as the case may be] of _____ do hereby certify, That *C. D.* of, &c. [describing the christian and surname, and place of abode of the party] did this day appear before me, and did make and take and subscribe the several oaths and declaration specified in an Act, made in the fifty-second year of the reign of King George the Third, intituled (*set forth the title of this Act.*) Witness my hand this _____ day of _____ one thousand eight hundred and _____. And for the

making and signing of which certificate, where the said oaths and declaration are taken and made on the requisition of the party taking and making the same, such justice shall be entitled to demand and have a fee of two shillings and sixpence, and no more: and such certificate shall be conclusive evidence that the party named therein has made and taken the oaths and subscribed the declaration in manner required by this Act.

IX. And be it further enacted, That every person who shall teach or preach, in any such congregation or assembly, or congregations or assemblies as aforesaid, who shall employ himself solely in the duties of a teacher or preacher, and not follow or engage in any trade or business, or other profession, occupation or employment, for his livelihood, except that of a schoolmaster, and who shall produce a certificate of some justice of the peace, of his having taken and made and subscribed the oaths and declaration aforesaid, shall be exempt from the civil services and offices specified in the said recited Act passed in the first year of king *William* and queen *Mary*, and from being ballotted to serve and from serving in the militia or local militia of any county, town, parish, or place in any part of the united kingdom.

X. And be it further enacted, That every person who shall produce any false or untrue certificate or paper, as and for a true certificate of his having made and taken the oaths and subscribed the declaration, by this Act required for the purpose of claiming any exemption from civil or military duties as aforesaid, under the provisions of this or any other Act or Acts of parliament, shall forfeit for every such offence the sum of fifty pounds; which penalty may be recovered by and to the use of any person who will sue for the same by any action of debt, bill, plaint, or information, in any of his Majesty's courts of record at *Westminster*, or the courts of great sessions in *Wales*, or the courts of the counties palatine of *Chester*, *Lancaster*, and *Durham* (as the case shall require); wherein no essoign, privilege, protection, or wager of law, or more than one imparlance shall be allowed.

XI. And be it further enacted, That no meeting, assembly, or congregation of persons for religious worship, shall be had in any place with the door locked, bolted, or barred, or otherwise fastened, so as to prevent any persons entering therein during the time of any such meeting, assembly, or congrega-

tion; and the person teaching or preaching at such meeting, assembly, or congregation, shall forfeit for every time any such meeting, assembly, or congregation, shall be held with the door locked, bolted, barred or otherwise fastened as aforesaid, any sum not exceeding twenty pounds, nor less than forty shillings, at the discretion of the justices convicting for such offence.

XII. And be it further enacted, That if any person or persons, at any time, after the passing of this act, do and shall wilfully and maliciously or contemptuously disturb or disturb any meeting, assembly, or congregation of persons assembled for religious worship, permitted or authorized by this act, or any former act or acts of parliament, or shall in any way disturb, molest, or misuse any preacher, teacher, or person officiating at such meeting, assembly, or congregation, or any person or persons there assembled, such person or persons so offending, upon proof thereof before any justice of the peace by two or more credible witnesses, shall find two sureties to be bound by recognizances in the penal sum of fifty pounds to answer for such offence, and in default of such sureties shall be committed to prison, there to remain till the next general or quarter sessions; and upon conviction of the said offence at the said general or quarter sessions, shall suffer the pain and penalty of forty pounds.

XIII. Provided always, and be it further enacted, That nothing in this act contained shall affect or be construed to affect the celebration of divine service according to the rites and ceremonies of the united church of *England and Ireland*, by ministers of the said church, in any place hitherto used for such purpose, or being now or hereafter duly consecrated or licensed by any archbishop or bishop or other person lawfully authorized to consecrate or licence the same, or to affect the jurisdiction of the archbishops or bishops or other persons exercising lawful authority in the church of the United Kingdom over the said church, according to the rules and discipline of the same, and to the Laws and Statutes of the Realm; but such jurisdiction shall remain and continue as if this act had not passed.

XIV. Provided also, and be it further enacted, That nothing in this act contained shall extend or be construed to extend to the people usually called *Quakers*, nor to any meetings

or assemblies for religious worship held or convened by such persons; or in any manner to alter or repeal or affect any act, other than and except the acts passed in the reign of king *Charles* the second, herein-before repealed, relating to the people called *Quakers*, or relating to any assemblies or meetings for religious worship held by them.

XV. And be it further enacted, That every person guilty of any offence, for which any pecuniary penalty or forfeiture is imposed by this act, in respect of which no special provision is made, shall and may be convicted thereof by information upon the oath of any one or more credible witness or witnesses before any two or more justices of the peace acting in and for the county, riding, city, or place, wherein such offence shall be committed; and that all and every the pecuniary penalties or forfeitures which shall be incurred or become payable for any offence or offences against this act, shall and may be levied by distress, under the hand and seal or hands and seals of two justices of the peace for the county, riding, city, or place, in which any such offence or offences was or were committed, or where the forfeiture or forfeitures was or were incurred, and shall when levied be paid one moiety to the informer, and the other moiety to the poor of the parish in which the offence was committed; and in case of no sufficient distress whereby to levy the penalties, or any or either of them imposed by this act, it shall and may be lawful for any such justices respectively before whom the offender or offenders shall be convicted, to commit such offender to prison for such time not exceeding three months, as the said justices in their discretion shall think fit.

XVI. And be it further enacted, That in case any person or persons who shall hereafter be convicted of any of the offences punishable by this act, shall conceive him, her or themselves to be aggrieved by such conviction, then and in every such case it shall and may be lawful for such person or persons respectively, and he, she, or they shall or may appeal to the general or quarter sessions of the peace holden next after such conviction in and for the county, riding, city, or place, giving unto the justices before whom such conviction shall be made, notice in writing within eight days after any such conviction, of his, her, or their intention to prefer such appeal; and the said justices in their said general, or quarter sessions

shall and may, and they are hereby authorized and empowered to proceed to the hearing and determination of the matter of such appeal, and to make such order therein, and to award such costs to be paid by and to either party, not exceeding forty shillings, as they in their discretion shall think fit.

XVII. And be it further enacted, That no penalty or forfeiture shall be recoverable under this act, unless the same shall be sued for, or the offence in respect of which the same is imposed is prosecuted before the justices of the peace or quarter sessions, within six months after the offence shall have been committed; and no person who shall suffer any imprisonment for non-payment of any penalty shall thereafter be liable to the payment of such penalty or forfeiture.

XVIII. And be it further enacted, That if any action or suit shall be brought or commenced against any person or persons for any thing done in pursuance of this act, that every such action or suit shall be commenced within three months next after the fact committed, and not afterwards, and shall be laid and brought in the county wherein the cause or alledged cause of action shall have accrued, and not elsewhere; and the defendant or defendants in such action or suit may plead the general issue, and give this act and the special matter in evidence on any trial to be had thereupon, and that the same was done in pursuance and by authority of this act; and if it shall appear so to be done, or if any such action or suit shall be brought after the time so limited for bringing the same, or shall be brought in any other county, city, or place, that then and in such case the jury shall find for such defendant or defendants; and upon such verdict, or if the plaintiff or plaintiffs shall become nonsuited, or discontinue his, her, or their action or actions, or if a verdict shall pass against the plaintiff or plaintiffs, or if upon demurrer judgment shall be given against the plaintiff or plaintiffs, the defendant or defendants shall have and may recover treble costs, and have the like remedy for the same, as any defendant or defendants hath or have for costs of suit in other cases by law.

XIX. And be it further enacted, That this act shall be deemed and taken to be a public act, and shall be judicially taken notice of as such by all judges, justices, and others, without specially pleading the same.

OATHS and DECLARATION required by the Act of 52d. Geo. III. cap. 5. (the Act inserted above) to be taken by Preachers or Teachers at or in any Place of Religious Worship allowed by the said Act.

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE.

“ I, A. B. do sincerely promise and swear, that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to his Majesty, King George: So help me, God.”

OATH OF SUPREMACY.

“ I, A. B. do swear, that I do, from my heart, abhor, detest, and abjure, as impious and heretical, that damnable doctrine and position, that princes excommunicated or deprived by the pope, or any authority of the see of Rome, may be deposed or murdered by their subjects, or any other whatsoever. And I do declare, that no foreign prince, person, prelate, state, or potentate, hath or ought to have any jurisdiction, power, superiority, pre-eminence, or authority, ecclesiastical or spiritual, within this realm: So help me, God.”

DECLARATION.

“ I, A. B. do solemnly declare, in the presence of Almighty God, that I am a christian and a protestant, and as such, that I believe that the scriptures of the Old and New Testament, as commonly received among protestant churches, do contain the revealed will of God, and that I do receive the same as the rule of my doctrine and practice.”

An ACCOUNT of the RISE and PROGRESS of the G. B. CHURCH at IPSWICH, in SUFFOLK.

(In a Letter to the EDITOR of the G. B. R.)

DEAR SIR,

As the G. B. church at Ipswich stands a candidate for admission into the New Connection, and as few of the churches are acquainted with its circumstances, perhaps the following particulars may be acceptable to your readers, if you think them worthy of insertion in your Repository.

Several years ago, I and my wife, who had both been for some time members of the G. B. church at Deal, in Kent, removed to Ipswich. On settling in this town, we enquired

for a G. B. church; but soon found there was none nearer than Norwich, a distance of forty-three miles. We became, however, acquainted with a few Methodists, who then had neither meeting-house nor preaching in Ipswich. With these I united; and we licensed the house in which I lived, for preaching. Soon after, I was requested to go into the neighbouring villages, to preach the gospel; and with much reluctance I complied. It pleased the Lord to bless my poor endeavours, and several were awakened. I continued to preach among the Methodists, for more than four years; when some of those among whom I laboured, being convinced of the scripturality of believers' baptism, were baptized by a minister of the particular baptist persuasion. This raised a prejudice against me amongst my associates; and, as I could not consent to conceal my sentiments on the subject, we parted in an amicable manner.

At this time, the Derby militia lay at Ipswich; among whom were several men that belonged to the G. B. churches in the midland counties. These, hearing of my sentiments, sought me out; and encouraged me to procure a place for public worship. We accordingly hired and licensed a room in a house occupied by the shoe-makers of the regiment; and I first preached in it, June 18, 1809. In the morning, we had only eight hearers; and not above twelve, in the evening. But our hearers increased rapidly, and the room was soon crowded. In a short time, we had seven candidates for baptism. I requested the minister of the G. B. church at Norwich to come over to baptize the candidates, and form us into a church state. This took place, Aug. 13, 1809. The church consisted of ten members, who immediately chose me for their minister. Here we went on our way rejoicing, and the Lord added many to the church. When the regiment left Ipswich, we were obliged to give up our room; but as another regiment soon arrived and took the same house, we hired a room of them, though not so convenient as the other. This, however, we did not occupy long, as these soldiers also soon left the place.

Thus we were plunged in great difficulties; but the Lord soon provided for us. A little time previous, a large house had been burnt down, and then lay in ruins. The owner was prevailed upon to rebuild this house for a temporary place of

worship; and we agreed to pay him a rent of £25 per annum. This place, which would hold nearly three hundred people, we furnished at our own expence with pulpit, pews, &c. to the amount of nearly £50. It was licenced, and opened, April 22, 1810. We are all poor people, and found the charges of fitting up a heavy burden; but I went among the G. B. churches in Kent, and though personally unknown to most of them, collected the greatest part of the money. In this place, many were added to the church. We chose two deacons, Messrs. Wright and Jennings, who will, we trust, prove blessings to the cause.

We found, however, the rent a very great hindrance to our exertions; and as we were obliged to give a year's notice, we determined, last Christmas, to inform the owner that we should leave at Christmas next; and to trust to divine providence for our future accomodation. This we did; and, in a few day's after, a builder sent for me, and proposed to erect us a meeting-house on such terms as we thought ourselves happy in accepting. Accordingly he erected the meeting-house which we now occupy. This was opened, as stated in the last Repository, to which I refer your readers, both for an account of the services on that occasion, and of the ordination which took place on the following day. (G. B. R. vol. IV. pages 269, 270.)

We are now, blessed be God, in a comfortable state; and the cause of the Redeemer seems to prosper. The expences we have incurred, though we used our old pews, &c. are indeed great; but we have paid one instalment, and place a cheerful confidence in that providence which has led us thus far, to help us through the present difficulty, and to incline the hearts of our fellow christians to lend us liberal aid.

Praying that you, Sir, and all who love God, may enjoy his presence and blessing, I remain,

Your affectionate friend and brother,

Ipswich, Oct. 1, 1812.

W. JACKSON.

GENERAL BAPTIST OCCURRENCES.

OBITUARY.

Aug. 2, 1812, died Mrs. HANNAH SMEDLEY, the wife of the Rev. W. Smedley, of Downton, Wilts, and the daughter of the Rev. D. Taylor, of London. She had long been the

subject of severe and repeated indisposition. Every means which affection and prudence could devise were used for the re-establishment of her health, but without any permanent effect. She had a strong desire to visit her friends in London, the air of which had been found to agree with her constitution. For a long time, her husband, knowing her weakness, and fearing the result, opposed her desire. At length, however, he consented, and she set out in company with a female friend from Salisbury. She performed the former part of her journey with tolerable ease; but was nearly spent before she reached town. She was affectionately received by her relatives and treated with the utmost attention. The best medical advice was procured, and for some time hopes were entertained of a favourable issue; but her complaint soon assumed a fatal ascendancy. She was confined to her bed at her father's, and notwithstanding the most affectionate care, sunk under the weight of her affliction. Her remains were interred on the Saturday following, in the burying-ground, Church Lane, Whitechapel; and on this affecting occasion, the Rev. J Kello addressed the mourning relatives and friends. On the following Lord's day, her father improved the event, in a discourse from 1 Cor. xv. 57. "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Mrs. S. was baptized in 1801; and continued a respectable member of the G. B. church, Church Lane, Whitechapel, till 1805, when she was honorably dismissed to the church at Downton, of which her husband was pastor. Her conduct there adorned her profession, and procured her the esteem of all who knew her. This was abundantly evinced by the sympathetic sorrow of all her acquaintance at her death. The news appeared to excite universal regret at Downton, and her widowed husband and orphan children experienced the most tender commiseration. The Rev. Mr. Sleigh, of Salisbury, improved the event, in her husband's pulpit, from Ezek. xxiv. 16. "Son of man, behold I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke." The meeting-house was excessively crowded, and numbers could not gain admission. The tears and sighs of this numerous congregation bore ample testimony to their respect for the deceased, and their sympathy with the disconsolate survivors.

As her medical attendants forbad her to converse during her

last confinement, little can be said of the state of her mind. She appeared happy, patient and resigned. Though separated, by a distance of eighty miles, from a husband whom she tenderly loved, and two dear children for whom she had the most maternal affection, she did not appear anxious respecting them. She would sometimes say, "I wonder how Mr. Smedley and the children are getting on;" but immediately dropped the subject.

May this very affecting stroke be sanctified to all concerned; and may her afflicted partner and her dear infants meet her again in that happy state, where sickness and death shall be unknown, and where friends shall part no more.

Aug. 16, 1812, died Mr. JOHN HOST, aged fifty-six years, a respectable member of the G. B. church, Portsea, Hants. He was well respected by all that knew him; and his neighbours, at his interment, bore their voluntary testimony, that he "was a worthy man."

The most prominent traits in the character of our deceased friend were benevolence, fidelity, and sincerity. Never was a distressed case of a suffering fellow creature related to him, but his humane feelings were moved, and he was ready to devise and execute plans for their relief. He cheerfully imparted to them part of what he possessed, and zealously endeavoured to provoke others to assist in the good work. His feet moved unasked to collect from his friends what they were disposed to lend to the Lord, by giving to the poor. Indeed, "the blessing of them that were ready to perish came upon him," and "he made the widow's heart sing for joy." When an institution was commenced to aid the cause of piety by instructing the rising generation—When a plan was proposed to assist the poor and increase their scanty comforts—When it was necessary to erect, enlarge, or repair the temples of the Lord,—our friend stood always prepared to lend his assistance and his influence. Nor did he confine his liberality to those who were of his own sentiments; but extended it to all who loved the Lord, and endeavoured to promote the salvation of sinners.

Our deceased friend was faithful in admonishing his brethren. He executed the various trusts which were reposed in him with fidelity and exactness. His sincere attachment

to the cause of the Redeemer was shown by his regular and punctual attendance on public worship and church meetings; and indeed on all occasions when the cause of religion or humanity required his presence. He was ready to forgive, and forward to seek reconciliation, when any misunderstanding had happened with any of his brethren. In short by the assistance of divine grace he was enabled to adorn his profession by a life and conversation eminently honourable and useful.

His death was sudden. He received a slight accidental wound, which issued in a rapid mortification. He was in his usual state of health, and laid in the silent grave in the compass of one short week. He was happy and composed in the prospect of death; and almost his last words were "Christ is precious."

June 27, 1812 died, highly esteemed by all her acquaintances, Mrs. DINAH BARRY, of Fratton near Portsea, aged forty eight years. This amiable lady was in early life influenced by divine truth, and from about twenty years of age was decidedly the Lord's. She joined a society of christians in the village where she resided, who were then in low circumstances and greatly persecuted. As her former associates moved in a higher sphere, they grieved that she should forsake the pleasures of the gay world, and unite herself with so despised a sect. But her choice was unalterable; and, after having faithfully warned them both by conversation and letters to flee from the wrath to come, she finally renounced their company.

For many years, she and her dear partner, did not regard infant sprinkling as an ordinance of Christ; and therefore several of their children were never christened. But though convinced of the divine authority of believers' baptism, yet for some time, they neglected it. She afterwards informed the writer of these hints, that the causes of their omission were; first, because they thought baptism not to be essential to salvation; and secondly, because they imagined, that, if they were bapsized with the Holy Ghost, the baptism of water was not of much importance. These excuses seem to satisfy many of the society with which they were then connected; though the *former* shews a great disregard to the authority of Christ; and the *latter* is directly opposed to the decision of

an inspired apostle, Acts x. 47. The natural timidity also of Mrs. B. caused her to neglect this sacred ordinance: for though she had been frequently advised to bathe for her health, yet she never could be prevailed upon to comply. At length, being convinced that the friends of Christ ought "to do whatever he hath commanded," she, with her partner and five others were baptized, April 22, 1810. They found it one of the happiest days of their lives. Her fears vanished before she went into the water; and she experienced the fulfilment of the promise. "As thy days so shall thy strength be."

Her last illness and death were attended with circumstances peculiarly affecting. She accompanied a near relative, who had been long indisposed, to the vicinity of London; with whom she resided for a few weeks. Within a day of the time when her family anxiously expected her to return to gladden their hearts, Mr. B. received a letter informing him, that she was taken ill. He immediately hastened to her, and in a few days was followed by his two eldest daughters. But, to their unspeakable grief, though they arrived within a week of her being first indisposed, they found their tender and much beloved mother a corpse. Her son who is a medical gentleman, and an eminent physician attended her; but all human skill was insufficient to preserve her valuable life. With sweet composure, she informed her son, that she thought she was going to die: and entreated him not to be alarmed. When asked by an attendant, how she found herself, she replied, "I am *very* happy; my son knows, what I mean." At another time, she exclaimed: "O the mystery of the cross! I now see the end of all *that* suffering. I am in the heaven of heavens! I can hardly tell whether I am in the body or out of the body! O the unutterable glory! the unutterable glory!" On another occasion, speaking of the water of life, she said with great emphasis, "O for that pure, that living water." Her disorder brought on a delirium, which, to the inexpressible grief of her affectionate partner and eight dutiful and loving children, terminated in death. Her remains were conveyed to Portsea, and were interred in the G. B. burying ground. Her funeral sermon was founded on Rev. xiv. 13. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, &c."

The anxiety and fatigue occasioned to her anxious partner by her affliction and death, brought on a fever by which he

was reduced so low that his dissolution was hourly expected. But God who is rich in mercy has again restored him; lest his already deeply afflicted children should have sorrow upon sorrow. May he and they, and all who knew the deceased, tread in her footsteps on earth, and meet her in heaven, where "the spirits of the just are made perfect."

 CONFERENCES.

Oct. 14, 1812, the LONDON CONFERENCE was held, at *Church Lane* Whitechapel. Messrs. D. Taylor and J. Binns opened the meeting with prayer. Mr. D. Taylor was chosen chairman; and Mr. E. Sexton, moderator. The accounts from the churches were received; and, upon the whole, were encouraging. In answer to the general question, viz. "What can be done more for the promoting of the cause of the Redeemer in our churches?" it was unanimously resolved:—

1. That it be recommended to each church, in this district, to set apart a day, or a part of a day, for solemn fasting and prayer, for the revival of vital religion in the churches, and the conversion of sinners.
2. That, as it would be desirable that the churches should as far as convenient engage in this sacred work, at the same time, it be requested that as many churches as see the propriety of the measure and can make it convenient, devote the first day of the next year to this purpose.
3. That these resolutions be published in the G. B. R; and, that Mr. D. Taylor be desired to write a short letter to the churches, in the other branches of the Connection, to invite them to join with us in this solemnity.—In the evening, Messrs. Sexton and Binns delivered the double lecture: the former from Phil. i. 12; "The furtherance of the Gospel;" and the latter from Rom. viii. 17. "If children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ."

The next conference to be at *Chatham*, on the Wednesday in Easter week. Mr. J. Ewen to preach on the Tuesday evening; and Messrs. D. Taylor and J. Hobbs on the Wednesday. In case of failure, Mr. J. Preston.

VERSES *on the Death of Mrs. SMEDLEY; sung after her Funeral Sermon, preached by the Rev. S. SLEIGH.*

DEAR partner, now farewell,
And rest in yonder tomb ;
There thy Redeemer once did dwell,
And sanctified the gloom.

Thy Saviour's watchful eyes,
Shall guard thy sleeping clay ;
Thy Saviour soon shall bid it rise,
To everlasting day.

Thy spirit's now at rest ;
And, freed from ev'ry care,
Reclines on Jesu's lovely breast,
Who did its burdens bear.

The period soon will come,
When we shall meet again ;
Meet in our heavenly Father's home,
And with the Saviour reign.

Dear Jesus, condescend,
'To hear thy servant's prayer ;
Let him to thy kind arms commend,
The objects of his care.

His dearest children bless,
And guard them with thine eye ;
Endue them with thy early grace,
And teach them how to die.

Ye people of my charge,
Still love the Saviour's name ;
The duty of the cross discharge,
And glory in its shame.

Dear Father of mankind,
Accept, thro' Christ thy Son ;
The homage of a feeble mind,
Which says—" Thy will be done."

THE
GENERAL BAPTIST REPOSITORY.

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AN ACCOUNT OF THE
SYRIAN CHURCHES IN INDIA,
Collected from Dr. Buchanan's Christian Researches in Asia.

When the Portuguese navigators, having doubled the Cape of Good Hope, and discovered a passage by sea to India, arrived, in 1503, on the coast of Malabar, they were surprized to find upwards of a hundred Christian Churches, flourishing in a country till then unknown to Europe. But, when they became acquainted with the purity and simplicity of their worship, they were offended, "These Churches," said the Portuguese, "belong to the Pope." "Who is the Pope," said the natives, "we never heard of him before." The European priests were still more alarmed, when they found, that these Hindoo Christians maintained the order and discipline of a regular Episcopal Church; and that for *thirteen hundred years* they had enjoyed a succession of Bishops, appointed by the Patriarch of Antioch. "We," said they, "are of the true faith, whatever you from the west may be; for we come from the place where the followers of Christ were first called Christians"

When the Portuguese Catholics had obtained sufficient power, they invaded these tranquil Churches, seized some of their ministers and devoted them to the death of heretics. They seized the Indian Bishop, Mar-Joseph, and sent him prisoner to Lisbon; and then convened a synod at Diamper, one of the Syrian Churches, at which the Romish Archbishop presided. At this compulsory synod, one hundred and fifty of the native Clergy appeared. They were called upon to abjure their heretical tenets and practices, or be suspended: and all their books on religious subjects were condemned to be burnt; "in order," said the Inquisitors, "that no pretended

apostolical monuments may remain." The churches on the coast were thus compelled to acknowledge the Pope: but the churches in the interior would not yield to Rome. After a shew of submission, for a little while, they proclaimed eternal war against Popery and the Inquisition. They hid their books, fled to the mountains, and sought the protection of the native princes, who had always been proud of their alliance.

Two centuries had elapsed without any particular information respecting these Syrian Christians in Malabar. It was doubted by many Europeans whether they existed at all. If they did exist, it was thought probable that they must possess some interesting documents of Christian antiquity. This induced the Revd. Claudius Buchanan, D. D. a pious and benevolent clergyman of the Church of England, in the service of the East India Company, to conceive the design of visiting them. He presented a short memoir on the subject in 1805, to Marquis Wellesley, then governor general of India, who was pleased to give orders that every facility might be afforded him in the prosecution of his inquiries. In the autumn of 1806, he began his journey. He procured an introductory letter from Lieut. Col. Macauley, the British Resident at Travancore to the Rajah or Prince of Travancore, in whose territories the Syrian Christians resided. The Rajah cheerfully agreed to forward his views. He put an emerald ring on Dr. B's finger, as a mark of his friendship and to secure him respect in passing through the country; and directed proper persons to accompany him as guides.

We shall endeavour to lay before our readers a connected view of the progress of his tour in select extracts from his journal, under their proper dates.

Nov. 10, 1806, at Chinganoor, a Church of the Syrian Christians.

"The face of the country exhibits a varied scene of hill and dale and winding streams. These streams fall from the mountains, and preserve the vallies in perpetual verdure. The adjacent mountains are covered with forests of teak wood, the Indian oak, producing, it is said, the largest timber in the world."

"The first view of the Christian churches in this sequestered region of Hindoostan, connected with the idea of their tranquil duration for so many ages, cannot fail to excite pleasing emotions in the mind of the beholder. The form of the oldest buildings is not unlike some of the old parish churches in

England. They have sloping roofs, pointed arch windows and buttresses supporting the walls. Most of the churches are built of a reddish stone; which, at the quarry is so soft that it may be cut with a knife; but when exposed for a time to the air, it becomes as hard as adamant.

The first Syrian church, that I visited, was at Marelycar; but the Syrians here, being in the vicinity of the Romish christians, are not so simple in their manners as those nearer the mountains. They had been so little accustomed to see a friend, that they could not believe that I was come with any friendly purpose. They had heard of the English but supposed they belonged to the church of the Pope, and suspected me of being a Romish emissary. Soon, however, the gloom and suspicion subsided. They gave me the right hand of fellowship, in the primitive manner; and one of their number was deputed to accompany me to the churches in the interior."

"When we approached the first Syrian church of Chingannour, we met one of the Syrian clergy. He was dressed in a white loose vestment, with a cap of red silk hanging down behind. Being informed who he was, I said to him in the Syriac language, "Peace be unto you." He was surprized at the salutation, but immediately answered, "The God of peace be with you." Having learnt from the Rajah's servant who we were, he returned to the village to announce our approach. When arrived, I was received at the door of the church by the Presbyters or Priests, habited in like manner, whose names were Jesu, Zecharias and Urias. There were also present two Deacons, and the three principal lay Elders. After some conversation with my attendants, they received me with confidence and affection. The people of the neighbouring villages came round us, women as well as men. The sight of the women assured me, that I was once more, after a long absence from England, in a Christian country. For the Hindoo women and the Mahomedan women, and in short all women who are not Christians, are accounted by the men an inferior race: and in general confined to the house for life, like irrational creatures. In every countenance, now before me, I thought I could discover the intelligence of Christianity; but at the same time, I perceived, all around, symptoms of poverty and political depression. In the church, and in the people there was an air of fallen greatness. I said to the senior Priest, "You appear to

me like a people that have seen better days." "It is even so," said he. "We are in a degenerate state compared with our forefathers. About three hundred years ago, an enemy came from the west, bearing the name of Christ, but armed with the Inquisition: and compelled us to seek the protection of the native princes. The native princes have kept us in a state of depression ever since. They indeed recognize our ancient personal privileges, for we rank next to the nobility of the country; but they have encroached by degrees on our property, till they have reduced us to the humble state in which you see us. The glory of our church has passed away; but we hope your nation will revive it again." I observed, that "the glory of a church could never die, if it preserved the Bible." "We have preserved the Bible," said he, "The Hindoo princes never touched our liberty of conscience; but the learning of the Bible is in a low state among us. Our copies are few in number, and that number is continually diminishing instead of increasing; the writing out of a whole copy of sacred scripture is a great labour, where there is no profit and little piety." I then produced a Syriac New Testament. There was not one of them who had ever seen a printed copy before. They admired it much: and every Priest, as it came into his hands, began to read a portion, which he did fluently; while the women came round to hear. I asked the old Priest whether I should send them some copies from Europe. "They would be worth their weight in silver," said he. He asked me whether the Old Testament was printed in Syriac as well as the New. I told him it was; but I had not a copy. They professed an earnest desire to obtain some copies of the whole Syriac Bible; and asked whether it would be practicable to obtain one copy for every church. "I must confess," said Zecharias, "that we have very few copies of the Prophetical Scriptures in the church. Our church languishes for want of the Scriptures." "But," added he, "the language that is most in use among the people is the Malabar, the native language of the country. The Syriac is now only the learned language, and the language of the church: but we expound the Scriptures to the people in their own tongue." I then entered on the subject of translating the Scriptures into the Malabar language. He said, "a version might be made with critical accuracy; for many of the Syrian Clergy were perfectly masters of both

languages." I told them that if a version could be prepared I should be able to get it printed, and to distribute copies among their forty five churches at a small price. "That indeed would give us joy," said one of the lay elders; and there was a murmur of satisfaction among the people. "If I understand you right," said I, "the greatest blessing the English church can bestow upon you is the Bible." "It is so," said they.

Ranniel, a Syrian Church, Nov. 12, 1806.

I have now visited eight churches, and scarcely believe that I am in the land of the Hindoos: only that I now and then see a Hindoo temple on the banks of the river. I observed that the bells of most of the churches are within the buildings and not in a tower. The reason they said, was this. When a Hindoo temple happens to be near a church, the Hindoos do not like the bell to sound loud, "besides it frightens their god."

I attended divine service on the Lord's day. Their Liturgy is that which was formerly used in the churches of Antioch. During prayers there were intervals of silence: the Priest praying in a low voice, and every man praying for himself. These intervals added much to the solemnity and appearance of devotion. At the conclusion of the service, a ceremony takes place which pleased me much. The Priest, or Bishop if he be present, comes forward and all the people pass by him as they go out, receiving his benediction individually. If any man has been guilty of immorality, he does not receive the blessing; and this, in their primitive patriarchal state is accounted a severe punishment.

The following are the chief doctrines of this ancient church.

1. They hold the doctrine of a vicarious *atonement* for the sins of men, by the blood and merits of Christ, and of the justification of the soul before God "by faith alone" in that atonement. 2. They maintain the *regeneration* or new birth of the soul by righteousness, by the influence of the spirit of God, which change is called in their books, "a change of the mind." 3. In regard to the *Trinity*, the creed of the Syrian Christians accords with that of Athanasius, without the damatory clauses.

Conde-nad, a Syrian Church, Nov. 23, 1806.

This is the residence of Mar-Dionysius, the metropolitan

of the Syrian church. He is a man of highly respectable character in his church, eminent for his piety, and for the attention he devotes to his sacred functions. I found him far superior in general learning to any of his clergy. I submitted to this bishop my wishes in regard to the translation and printing of the Holy Scriptures. "I have already fully considered the subject," said he, "and have determined to superintend the work myself, and to call the most learned of my clergy to my assistance. It is a work which will illuminate these dark regions, and God will give it his blessing!" I was much pleased when I heard this pious resolution of the venerable man; for I had now ascertained that there were upwards of *two hundred thousand christians* in the south of India, besides the Syrians, who speak the Malabar language.

Cranganore, Dec. 9, 1806.

THIS is that celebrated place of christian antiquity where the apostle Thomas is said to have landed, when he first arrived in India from Aden in Arabia. There was formerly a town and fort at Cranganore; but both are now in ruins. There is, however, one substantial relic of its greatness. There is an archbishop of Cranganore, and subject to him are forty-five churches,* many of which I entered. Not far from this place is the town of Parour, where there is an ancient Syrian church which bears the name of the apostle Thomas. The tradition among the Syrians, is, that the apostle continued at this place for a time, before he went to preach on the coast of Coromandel, where he was put to death. The fact is certainly of little consequence; but I am satisfied that there is as good authority for believing that the apostle Thomas died in India, as that the apostle Peter died at Rome.

Verapoli, Dec. 1806.

THIS is the residence of the Pope's apostolic vicar in Malabar. He is a man of liberal manners, and gave me free access to the archives of Verapoli, which are upwards of two centuries old. We had some conversation on the subject of giving

* These churches are connected with the church of Rome and distinct from the ancient Roman christians, whom D. B. had previously visited.

the scriptures to the native Roman catholics. I told him I should probably find the means of translating the scriptures into the Malabar language, and wished to know whether he had any objection to this mode of illuminating the ignorant minds of the native christians. He said he had none. At our last interview, he said, "I have been thinking of the good gift you are meditating for the native christians; but, believe me, the inquisition will endeavour to counteract your purposes by every means in their power."

I afterwards conversed with an intelligent native priest, who was well acquainted with the state and character of the christians and asked him whether he thought they would be happy to obtain the scriptures? "Yes," he answered, "*those who have heard of them.*" I asked him if he had got a bible, himself? "No," he said, "but he had *seen one at Goa.*"

These extracts from this very interesting work will, we trust, be acceptable to our readers. It must give pleasure to every lover of the truth to learn, that there are such numbers of professing christians in a country in which it was supposed the name of Christ had scarcely been heard. Though it is evident, that the Syrian churches in India have retained too much of the pompous hierarchy and too many of the corruptions which had disfigured christianity in the fourth century, yet the simplicity of their manners, the purity of their doctrines, and their ardent love for the sacred oracles, entitle them to a high degree of respect.

After Dr. B. left Travancore, the bishop prosecuted the translation of the scriptures into the Malabar language, without intermission, until he had completed the New Testament. The year following, Dr. B. visited Travancore a second time, and carried the manuscript to Bombay to be printed; learned natives from Travancore went to superintend the press, and it is probably, by this time, in circulation. The translation of the Old Testament is in a state of forwardness.

We are sorry to subjoin to this account, that the venerable bishop Mar-Dionysius is dead since Dr. B's return from India; but it is hoped that his successors will enter into his views and continue his undertakings.

AN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION, WHY ARE YOU
A DISSENTER?

(Concluded from the last number, page 18.)

ANOTHER reason why I dissent is, because the church of England claims the right and authority of enjoining unscriptural ceremonies. Such, are the following,—bowing towards the east;—bowing at the name of Jesus;—signing with the cross the infants they sprinkle, with sprinkling itself;—and the admitting of infants instead of adults to church membership and baptism.—Particular gestures in worship, as kneeling at the Lord's supper. To which may be added,—the wearing of particular habits;—observing certain days as holy; the distinction of places; and the use of sponsors. These are all mere human and arbitrary appointments. As these things are not commanded in scripture, the practice of them is mere *will worship*, which is forbidden, Col. II. 23; and to make the observance of them necessary terms of communion, is a gross infringement of the authority and office of Christ as head of the church, and both criminal and antichristian. It is making other terms of communion than what he has made, and making those things essential, which he has not made so, as if they were wiser and holier than He. In consequence of such impositions, many are excluded from the church who cannot conscientiously comply with them. The assuming a right or authority to demand subscription to human deeds and formularies, to institute ceremonies which Christ has nowhere commanded, and to make these *necessary terms of christian fellowship*, is a glaring invasion of Christ's prerogative, destructive of christian liberty, affords unnecessary causes of offence, and disunion, spoils the simplicity of divine worship, and encourages superstition. Allegiance to Christ demands resistance to such assumed authority. We are to "call no man *master* on earth," but to "*stand fast* in the liberty, wherewith Christ has made us free." Gal. V. 1.

Dissenters have great cause to be thankful to God for the liberty they enjoy, and to labour to make a proper use of it. It is a blessing to the christian world at large, that not only civil liberty is better understood than formerly, but also the *sacred rights of conscience*. What melancholy details does

ecclesiastical history present to us, since the reformation, and among protestants, of the disastrous and horrible effects of the want of just views on this subject. Hence those who had been denied liberty of conscience, and the right of private judgment, and had severely smarted under the rod of persecution ; when they obtained possession of the power, could exercise the same injustice and tyranny towards those of their fellow christians, who differed in opinion from them. Even such as sought refuge from ecclesiastical tyranny in the woods and wilds of America, among roving clans of savages, and in the face of almost insurmountable difficulties and hardships, so highly did they value religious liberty ; yet, to the disgrace of the christian character, and even to human nature, these very men soon resorted to the same execrable oppression and tyranny under which themselves had groaned. Such is the inconsistency and frailty of man. It was by a very slow progress that enlightened and just views of the rights of conscience gained ground in the world.* How unreasonable it is, to deny that liberty to others, which we claim for ourselves ! Let dissenters be careful to stand fast in the liberty providence has called them to enjoy ; and not desert *their own ministers and churches*, to attend the preaching of clergymen who are considered evangelical. Let them imitate their noble predecessors, who did

* *Mr. Roger Williams*, a Dissenter and Baptist, claims the honour of having been the first legislator in the world, in its latter ages, who effectually provided for, and established, in the colony of Rhode Island, in North America, *a free, full, and absolute liberty of conscience*. Persecution drove him from the state of Massachusetts, and he repaired with a few companions to that part of the country, denominated by him *Providence*. He obtained, in 1643, a charter of incorporation, and laid the foundation of that new colony. The foundation principle on which it was first settled, was, *that every man, who submits peaceably to the civil authority, may peaceably worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, without molestation*. This example was first followed by *Cæcilius Lord Baltimore*, in Maryland ; then by *William Penn*, in Pennsylvania. Such men were *truly great*, and deserve to have their names transmitted with honour and esteem to the latest posterity.

not leave the national church so much on account of *doctrines*, but on account of those *impositions of conscience*, which strike at the Headship of Jesus Christ, and which are so contrary to the spirit of christian liberty. In point of doctrine, the *Puritans* first, afterwards the *Non-conformists*, the early *Dissenters*, very much agreed with the national church, as it is expressed in their articles and homilies. Let it, however, be remembered, that the church still practices the same impositions on conscience, and no suggestions or persuasions have yet induced her to alter. As one very justly observes—"The state tolerates, but the church does not."—The truth is, "what the church was at first, that it still continues. It retains the same articles, the same ceremonies, the same courts, officers, principles, and canons, that it had all the time of its persecuting, and it refuses to repeal any of them. The state has restrained the operation of the ecclesiastical system on Dissenters: but the system itself is the same." These considerations are a sufficient warrant for our dissent, however, evangelical some of the clergy may be. Fidelity to Christ, to truth, and to conscience, demand it of us. But, at the same time that we regard it as an imperious duty to separate from our episcopal brethren, let us endeavour to maintain and exercise christian love towards those among them who appear sincerely devoted to God. Genuine piety is confined to no denomination of christians; nor is the divine blessing, withheld, as we plainly see, from those ministers who preach the pure and plain gospel. May we ever say,—"*Grace be with all such ministers.*" It behoves us, however, as dissenters, inasmuch as we think we enjoy superior advantages, to labour to exceed others in ardent devotion, and true godliness; otherwise it will be said, "what do ye more than others?"—The members of the established church, doubtless think their advantages superior to ours. Let there then be no other subject of contention betwixt us, equal to—which shall live nearest to God;—which shall be most laboriously devoted to truth, to christian liberty, and to the kingdom and glory of our blessed Redeemer. This will be an emulation, worthy of our higher regard, and commensurate to all our powers.

The above is a summary view of my reasons for being and continuing a dissenter. I have not been without offers of service, to introduce me to the ministry in the established church;

but these I have from conscience declined. Those who wish to study the subject more at large, should read *Palmer's Dissenter's Catechism*; *De Laune's Plan for Nonconformity*; *Pierce's Vindication of the Dissenters*; and *Towgood's Letters to White*: which is the most laboured and complete publication on the subject, we have in our language. The first and last of these works, no Dissenter should be without; the former, for the instruction of their children in the principles of dissent; and the latter, for their own fuller information. After all, I consider the cause of dissent so just, and so important to the interests of truth and vital religion, that it ought by no means to be slighted. There has been a period in which the Dissenters stood alone in this kingdom, in maintaining and defending the peculiar truths of the Gospel; and but for them, evangelical preaching would have become quite extinct.—An eminent minister and writer of the establishment acknowledges, that at the time above referred to, it was not publicly known that there was one minister in that church that faithfully preached the pure Gospel*. It is different at the present time; and some hundreds of Gospel preachers are reckoned among her ministers.—May the number increase!—I sincerely rejoice in the

* His words are, “ The times are dark; but perhaps they were darker in *England* sixty years ago, when though we had peace and plenty, the bulk of the kingdom lay under the judgment of an unregenerate ministry, and the people were perishing for lack of knowledge.”—“ I am not sure, that in the year 1740, there was a single parochial minister, who was publicly known, as a gospel preacher in the whole kingdom: now we have I know not how many, but I think not fewer than four hundred.” This was written, July 18th. 1795. See *Letters and conversational Remarks, by the late Rev. John Newton*, p. 75, and 76. He further says, “ I have been informed there are about ten thousand parishes in England; I believe more than nine thousand of these are destitute of the gospel,” p. 146. Is it not a blessing then, that there are Dissenters in many of these destitute parishes, who preach the gospel?—Surely it will be thought so by those who know its value. There are not many, it is hoped, who are such rigid Churchmen, as to hold the execrable opinion that many had better never hear the gospel, than not hear it in the established church.

good they appear to do. But are they in no degree indebted to Dissenters for that increase; and for the revival which has taken place among them in the last fifty years?—May “grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.”

* It is undeniable, that for many years the Dissenters stood up alone in defence of the best of causes. The attentive reader of the ecclesiastical history of this country, need not be informed what was the state of religion in the established church, from the *restoration to the rise of Methodism*. Who besides Dissenters clearly stated, and constantly inculcated the familiar doctrines of the Gospel; truths so essential to the conversion of the ungodly, and to the comfort and progress of Christians, while the episcopal clergy regarded them as “the dogmas of fanaticism?”—Who can say that those clergymen who were the fathers of the Methodists, would ever have been heard of beyond the boundaries of a single parish, had not Dissenters opened for them the way?—“The social religion which is cherished by Dissenters as the life of the Christian church, has not only produced the happiest effects among themselves, but has also been imparted in a considerable degree to the friends of evangelical truth in the establishment.” There is reason therefore to believe that the “apostacy of the nation from the sentiments and spirit of the Gospel had been total, but for the Dissenters; by their means a vital spark was preserved, and the nation is now warmed with the spreading flames.”

To have been, for almost a century, the witnesses for God in the land, though prophesying in sackcloth was a high honour. A thousand dissenting churches were, during all that time, receiving into their communion those who were convinced by the preaching of the Gospel among them, while no such effects were looked for by the established ministers. To form an adequate estimate of all the benefits, direct and indirect, which must have been produced in our cities, towns, and villages, from such a practical testimony borne to the most important of all truths, is beyond the power of a finite mind. But he who exults in the prosperity which now attends the Gospel of Christ in various communions, must look back with veneration to the people who once possessed alone, what now forms the glory of our land.” *B. and B's History of Dissenters*, vol. 4, page 497.

—If “ Christ be preached, I therein rejoice, and will rejoice.”
 —If *sinner*s be converted to God, and *saints* are trained up in holiness for heaven; though it be in a less perfect church, it ought to be matter of rejoicing to all good men.

Before I conclude, it may be proper to remark, that the *principles* on which we ground our dissent from the church of England, are *the same*, as those on which alone she can justify her separation from the church of Rome. We have carried those principles farther than she has, and it has been much lamented, that she did not listen to her sons the worthy *Puritans*, and complete that which the Reformers had so nobly begun. In fact, Churchmen cannot justly reproach the Dissenters for their dissent, without renouncing their protestant principles, and returning again to the bosom of the church of Rome.

A judicious writer on this subject has stated and defended the four following general principles, in which all Dissenters alike are interested.

1. The Christian religion is nothing but religion: for *Christ's kingdom is not of this world.*

2. Jesus Christ is the only Sovereign over conscience. *One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren.*

3. The Scriptures alone, without the addition of human articles or creeds, are sufficient to determine all matters of faith and practice. *Christ is the author and finisher of our faith.*

4. As *every one must give account of himself to God*, every individual ought to be left to follow the dictates of his own mind, without any human incentive or restraint. These, I may venture to affirm, are the common principles of Protestant dissent. We maintain then, the spirituality of the Christian religion;—the sole dominion of Christ;—the sufficiency of Scripture;—and the right of private judgment*.

* A learned Clergyman, *Dr. Edwards*, seemed not insensible of the importance of Dissenters, both with respect to religious liberty, and genuine Christianity. He expresses himself thus: “ If we would but open our eyes, we should see that we are beholden to the Dissenters for the continuance of a great part of our theological principles; for if the high Churchmen had no checks, they would have brought in Popery before this time, by their over valuing pomp and ceremony in

I would earnestly recommend to the members of all our churches, that they pay a proper attention to this subject; and labour both to inform themselves, and also to instruct their children in the principles and grounds of our dissent. It is much to be feared that not a few are dissenters from mere tradition, and remain, in a great measure at least, ignorant of the above principles, being able to assign scarcely any other reason than that their parents were Dissenters before them, and they have been from infancy accustomed to attend dissenting places of worship. It may be true, that this is as good a reason as many who adhere to the established religion can assign; but ought not Dissenters to be better informed?—Is it *reasonable* to dissent without knowing why?—or *creditable* to

divine worship. So that if there had been no Dissenters, *the church of England had been long since ruined.*” *Preacher*, vol. 2. p. 133.—“As the different parties of professing Christians which appeared in the very infancy of the Church, were perpetual guards upon each other, and rendered it impossible for one party to practise grossly on the sacred books, without the discovery and clamour of the rest; so now, wherever there is a body of Dissenters from the public establishment, who do yet agree with their brethren in the establishment, in the use of the same translation, there is as great evidence as could reasonably be desired, that such a translation is in the main right; for if it were in any considerable argument corrupted, most of our other debates would quickly lose themselves in this.”

Doddridge.

“Doubtless, (says a sensible and pious Churchman,) a principal design of Providence in permitting our differences, is the opportunity they afford for the trial and exercise of various Christian graces; such as candour, forbearance, and love; candour in the construction we place on the sentiments, and especially the motives, of those who differ from us; forbearance, notwithstanding their errors and follies, towards them; and cordial esteem of their persons. But the greatest benefit results from the *principle of emulation* which this diversity excites; and in the present imperfect state of human nature, we need every stimulus to holy exertion. A very powerful one we derive from this source, which would, in a great measure fail, were we all of one communion.” *Christian Observer.*

be unable to assign better reasons? These things ought not so to be. What stability or consistency can be expected when such ignorance prevails, especially when worldly interests incline another way?—If our dissent be founded on truth and reason; and if the interests of real vital religion be connected with it, which has appeared eminently so at a former period, then let it be supported with all the earnestness and diligence its importance demands. No one need be ashamed of his dissent, because all Christians were such till the time of Constantine, and men of the first attainments in talents, learning and piety have been, and still are, found among them. But, if there be such among us who deem it a matter of so little importance as not to take the trouble to enquire on which side truth lies; or who hang so loosely as to be swayed by worldly interest or connexions, no matter how soon such depart. They are an honour to no religious community.

May the love of truth, the principles of piety, and the exercise of Christian love, be abundantly more prevalent both among Churchmen and Dissenters; and while they find it impracticable to see and believe alike on every subject, let them exercise mutual forbearance, pray fervently for each other, distinguish themselves by an interchange of Christian and friendly offices, and rejoice in each others felicity.

J. F.

H—

April 25th. 1812.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

The following very encouraging fact ought to be known by all the worthy supporters of these valuable institutions—“ In a Sunday school, in the north of England, one class of fourteen boys so rewarded the labours of its teachers, that every one of them became decidedly pious, and was received into a Christian church; and every one is now either preaching the Gospel at home, or labouring as a Missionary abroad.”

Bogue and Bennet's History of Dissenters, vol. iv. p. 388.

COPY OF A LETTER

From the late REV. J. MANSEL, to a

FRIEND IN AFFLICTION.

Dear Sir,

Pursuant to my promise, I have made bold to write unto you; and hope that I shall be enabled to administer some small consolation under your present affliction. Afflictions, dear sir, are not sent but with a commission for our good. They are the merciful chastisements of our heavenly Father, by which he would wean us from a deluding world, and induce us by a kind of gracious necessity, to seek for happiness in the heavenly regions, where alone it can be found. Thousands who are now enthroned in glory, have reason to bless God that ever they were afflicted, since by means of their awakening calls, they were roused from their lethargy of sin, and made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. "Before they were afflicted they went astray, Psalm cxix. 6. 67. but God had compassion on them, and sent his rod to tutor them into obedience, and to be as a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ. Oh! may you, dear sir, hear the rod, and Him who hath appointed it; and, taught by the merciful dealings of the Lord, fix all your hopes on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was slain to take away the sins of the world. In Him may you be found living and dying. For his sake and upon his account may you be esteemed as righteous in the Father's sight; and then all your afflictions shall be blessed unto you, shall work out and be productive of your everlasting good. In the mean time, dear sir, let the precious promises of the Lord, be your songs of consolation in the house of your pilgrimage; particularly those promises which administer comfort under affliction; such as Sam. iii. 32. Heb. xii. 6. 2 Cor. iv. 7. A believing view to those will cheer the gloomiest night of woe, will gild the horrors of disease and death, and support the soul even in its passage through the darksome vale. Oh! Sir, nothing in the world will be of half the service to us when our flesh and heart fail us, as an interest in the promises of God, and a firm faith in Him, in whom all the promises are yea and amen: I

* See G. B. R. vol. iv. page 112.

mean the Lord Jesus Christ. In this Saviour are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, which administer comfort to the soul in every time of need.—Let all our endeavours, therefore, centre here: that we may be found in Him, and then all shall turn to our good. If Christ is ours, we have a covenant right to all the promises of God. If we are savingly united to Christ, nothing in the world shall separate us from Him, Rom. viii. 38, 39. Interested in Him, we shall be more than conquerors in the most trying affliction: though tossed for a while on the world's tempestuous sea, we shall arrive safe at the haven, the wished for, blissful haven of perfect happiness and undisturbed repose, that we may meet each other in those happy regions, is the earnest prayer of,

DEAR SIR,

Yours, &c.

J. MANSEL.

HINTS ON CANDOUR.

CANDOUR is that disposition of the mind, which leads us to put the best construction on the words and actions of our neighbours, and to think and speak of them in the most favourable manner. It is that branch of charity which "believeth all things and hopeth all things." This amiable temper ought to be cherished in all our dealings with mankind at large; but it ought especially to mark our conduct toward our fellow Christians, who differ from us in judgment or practice. It is deeply to be lamented, that in our religious disputes there often is less candour exercised than in other controversies. But much as this is to be regretted, yet it is possible, nay it is not uncommon, for this term to be abused. Too many, it is to be feared, under a pretence to extraordinary candour, conceal a laxness of sentiment and a want of fixt principles. These are often uncandid enough to accuse those of bigotry who are decided in their profession of what they esteem important doctrines, or bear a plain and explicit testimony against what they believe to be dangerous errors. It may, therefore, be useful to enquire what is contrary to true candour, and what consistent with it.

Candour will prevent us from assigning motives for actions which the party concerned disavows. There is a strange pro-

pensity in the human mind to invade the prerogative of Him who "alone knoweth the secrets of the heart." No sooner does a fellow rational dare to think differently from us, than we begin to suspect his motives, and invent some private reason for his opinion. So confident are we in our own infallibility, that we conclude that it is impossible for any person, unbiased by some secret motive, to differ from us. This is certainly uncandid. Except we have full evidence to the contrary, we ought to allow every man entire credit for acting conscientiously. If we could but on these occasions, as well as on all other occasions, learn to practice our Saviour's golden rule, "to do to others as we would they should do to us," it would preserve us from such evil surmisings. We should always reflect, that how far soever our neighbour differs from us in opinion, we differ as much from him: that he is accountable to God alone for his religious views, and that he has as much right to suspect our motives as we have to suspect his. These reflections would make us be very cautious in our censures; and cause us often to ponder the important declaration of our Saviour, "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."

Candour will teach us to do justice to the arguments of our opponents. It generally happens, when a cause is defended from various topics, that some proofs are much more conclusive than others. Nor is it unusual for the most expert disputant to weaken a good proof by some indiscreet concession, or injudicious management. Now a really candid person will not take any advantage of such defects. He will allow all the reasoning of an adversary its full importance, and if, on a review of the whole, there is weight in it, he will not expose partial weakness, or triumph over casual inadvertency. He will in this respect, also, do as he would be done by.

Candour will especially prevent its possessor from doing injury to any one, either in character, estate, or person, on account of difference in religious sentiments. It is diametrically opposed to every kind of persecution. That great maxim that every man has a right to think and act for himself in matters of this awful importance, in which every man must answer for himself, is not only allowed in theory, but influences the whole of the conduct of a really candid man. He abomi-

nates the remotest idea of restraining the personal liberty of an opponent. However highly he may disapprove of his system, or how derogatory soever he may esteem it to the honour of God, yet he detests the idea of taking upon him to plead for him by fines, imprisonments, or deaths. Like a sensible father of old, he says with regard to co-ercion of any kind, "If he is a God let him plead for himself." The expostulation of the Apostle "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant; to his own master he standeth or falleth," keeps him at an awful distance, from the wish to tyrannize over the conscience of any accountable creature.

Candour not only prevents me from misrepresenting my neighbour's sentiments or infringing his right; it also makes me equally explicit in avowing my own sentiments and equally decided in claiming and exercising my own privileges.

It is therefore perfectly consistent with the possessors being firmly convinced of the truth of his own opinions, and the fallacy of those of his opponent. It is every man's duty to "be fully persuaded in his own mind," in the great things that relate to the momentuous concerns of eternity. It is mentioned as a mark of a state of great imperfection to be "like children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine." Indeed the nature of the truths of the gospel are such that a man must form an opinion for his own direction and comfort. And while he, by no means, presumes to controul the judgment of others, he owes it to his own conscience to give his hearty assent to those opinions, which, upon a proper examination, appear to him to be accompanied with a sufficient degree of evidence. This is arrogating nothing to himself, that he does not allow to all his fellow creatures. We are exhorted, "to search the scriptures daily," to see whether any proposed doctrines are agreeable to the Oracles of Truth: "to prove all things," and when we have found it, to hold fast that which is good."

Further. Candour requires a decided, open, explicit avowal of our own sentiments, even when they may differ from those of others however great or respectable. That man who, through policy or fear, conceals or disguises his own opinions acts a mean, uncandid and disingenuous part. He deals dishonestly towards his associates, and unfaithfully towards his

Maker! Such a character ought to ponder well that awful declaration of our blessed Saviour, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." There were some who believed in Christ in the days of his flesh who yet did not dare to avow the sentiments of their hearts, "lest they should be put out of the synagogue." But these pusillanimous rulers are stigmatized by the sacred historian as acting on a weak and wicked principle. "They loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." How much more manly was the conduct of Paul, that pattern of decision, who could call those among whom he had laboured night and day, for three years, to record, "that he had declared unto them *all* the counsel of God," and "kept back nothing that was profitable to them." May every minister of Jesus Christ and every private christian be enabled to say with the same truly great man. "We have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation^l of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."

We remark again, that a man truly candid may yet have an anxious desire and may exert himself earnestly to defend his own sentiments. As an honest man, who conceives his own views of divine subjects to be conformable to the scriptures, he must esteem them very important. He must be persuaded that the happiness of his fellow creatures and the glory of God would be promoted in proportion as they were believed and acted upon. As a friend to society, therefore, and a servant of his Maker, he must feel desirous that sentiments so beneficial should become universal; and this desire will incite him, by all proper methods, to extend their influence. This, likewise, will animate him to oppose what he deems error; because, he is convinced, that it will injure man and dishonour God. And in proportion to his idea of the magnitude of the advantage of truth, and the disadvantage of error, and of his affection for his brethren and his God will be the zeal with which he will maintain his own sentiments and oppose contrary opinions. And the exertions of this honest

disciple of Jesus will be encouraged when he consults his New Testament, that best guide for the conduct of a sincere christian, and hears the first teachers of the Gospel exhorting their converts "to watch, stand fast in the faith, quit themselves like men, and be strong."—"to stand fast, and hold the traditions which they had been taught whether by word or epistle." "to strive together for the fruits of the gospel," and "to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, against such as denied the Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."

And if precepts so plain required any illustration, the conduct of Paul would fully exemplify their application. Some teachers had intruded themselves into the churches planted by that indefatigable missionary, who asserted, that the converts to christianity ought to submit to the Jewish ceremonies, This doctrine appears to have gained such ground, that Peter and Barnabas thought it prudent not to oppose it. They probably might plead the number and influence of those who espoused it, and the propriety of exercising liberality and candour towards opponents so numerous and so respectable. They might urge the advantage that would arise from pleasing the Jews: they might, with great plausibility, deprecate the injury that christianity would suffer by such a division among its ministers. All this and much more might have been pleaded for suspending the controversy. But how did Paul behave? Let him answer for himself. Speaking of these teachers, he says: "To whom gave we place by subjection, no, not for an hour." "When Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed." "When I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel, I said unto Peter before them all," &c. What was Paul's motive for all this earnestness? Why did he oppose such men so vehemently? The object was worthy his most zealous pursuit. I act thus, says he to the Galatians, "that the truth of the gospel might continue with you."

May every sincere lover of the gospel be actuated by the same noble motive to imitate his conduct.

REMARKS ON DR. ADAM CLARKE'S COMMENT
ON MATT. III. 6. RESPECTING BAPTISM,

To the Editor of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

IN reading over the Commentary of Dr. Adam Clarke, now publishing, I was much surprised with the observations concerning baptism which he has introduced when commenting on Matt. III. 6. I have transcribed them, and if agreeable with the plan of your work, should be pleased to see them, with the observations subjoined, inserted in the next number of your Repository.

“Verse 6. (Were baptized) In what form baptism was originally administered, has been deemed a subject worthy of serious dispute. Were the people dipped or sprinkled? for it is certain that *hapto* and *baptizo*, the words in the original, mean both. They were all *dipped* say some. Can any man suppose, that it was possible for John to dip *all the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judea, and all the country round the Jordan?* Were both men and women dipped, for certainly both came to his baptism? This would never have comported with safety, or with *decency*. Were they dipped in their *clothes*. This would have endangered their lives if they had not with them *change* of raiment.; and as such a baptism as John's (however administered) was in several respects, a *new* thing in Judea, it was not at all likely that the people would come thus provided. But suppose these were dipped, which I think it would be impossible to prove, does it follow, that in all regions of the world, men and women must be dipped, in order to be evangelically baptized? In the eastern countries, *bathings* were frequent, because of the heat of the climate, it was there so necessary to *cleanliness* and health; but would our climate, or a more northerly one, admit of this with safety, for at least three-fourths of the year? We may rest assured that it could not. And may we not presume, that if John had opened his commission in the north of Great Britain, for many months in the year, he would have *dipped* neither man nor woman, unless he could have procured a tepid bath! Those who are *dipped* or *immersed* in water in the name of the

Holy Trinity, I believe to be evangelically bapsized. Those who are washed or sprinkled with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, I believe to be equally so : and the repetition of such a baptism, I believe to be prophane. Others have a right to believe the contrary, if they see good. After all, it is the thing signified, and not the *mode*, which is the essential part of the sacrament."

Such a paragraph as the above, ought not to pass without animadversion. It contains some assertions and insinuations, which ought to be contradicted. Dr. C. does not appear to have been much profited, by the strictures which have appeared, in several publications, on his anecdote concerning Mr. Tripp's baptizing of himself. He continues to treat the ordinance of baptism in a manner very unbecoming so solemn and important an institution. It is very observable in how different a manner he treats this ordinance from what he does that of the Lord's Supper ; and therefore what an inconsistency appears in his conduct. In his discourse on the nature, design, and institution of the latter ordinance, he deems the observance of every circumstance the most minute, connected with it, to be of consequence. But in how trifling, may we not say irreverent a manner ! he speaks of baptism. It is, in his account, of little or no importance, whether it be administered by sprinkling or immersion. In one country it may be performed in one way, in another country, in another way. In some cases, he advises that persons administer it upon themselves. Whence is this, that he treats the one ordinance with so much attention, that every circumstance attending it is of importance, and the other with so much neglect, that it may be performed in any manner ? Are they not of equal authority ? Has not the same Lawgiver enacted both ? It is painful to have to state these things respecting a person of so much eminence as this writer.

But to attend to the paragraph which has occasioned these remarks : He asks ; " Were the people *dipped* or sprinkled ? for it is certain that *bapto* and *baptizo*, means both." If he intends that these words primarily and literally mean both, it is certain that his positive assertion is unfounded. It would be remarkable if the same word expressed two circumstances, so very dissimilar as dipping and sprinkling are. Parkhurst says, "*baptizo*, from *bapto*," is " to dip, immerse, or plunge in water :"

and of *bapto* he says, "to dip, plunge, immerse." If sometimes, in a figurative sense, these words intended something less than immersion, it need not appear strange; nor can such a circumstance justify any one in saying, that they mean to sprinkle. It is sometimes said of a person who has been for a long time exposed to a hearty rain, that he is completely dipped; yet who on this account would say that to dip, means to sprinkle? But this is what Dr. C. in effect tells us, when he says that *bapto* and *baptizo* mean to sprinkle.

"They were all dipped, say some. Can any man suppose, that it was possible for John to dip *all the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judca, and of all the country round about the Jordan?*" We have here an argument which to some of the Dr's readers, will probably appear decisive against the practice of baptizing by immersion. It is taken for granted, that John actually baptized *all the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judca, and all the country round about the Jordan.* And then it is asked, whether any man can suppose, that it was possible for John to *dip* so many persons. The answer to this inquiry is, No: and then the conclusion follows undeniably, John did not *dip* the persons whom he baptized. Yet nothing is more sophistical and nugatory than this argument. Dr. C. as a commentator on the Scriptures, knows better how to explain them, than to insinuate from the words, "Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judca, and all the region round about the Jordan, and were baptized of him," that John actually baptized *all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, &c.* How he could allow himself to argue from an assumption, which he could not but know was unfounded it is not a pleasant circumstance to inquire. There appears an evident design to impose upon the unwary.

Certainly John did *not* baptize all the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judca, and all the country round about the Jordan. For it appears from this same chapter, ver. 7—12. that he refused to admit to his baptism many of the Pharisees and Sadducees. From Luke viii. 30. we learn that the Pharisees and Lawyers, in general, refused to be baptized by him: and the Pharisees constituted the most numerous sect among the Jews. And John baptized those only who confessed their sins, and professed repentance. But who can suppose that *all the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judca, and all the country round*

about the Jordan, became truly penitent by the preaching of the baptist. His preaching was upon many persons successful; but there is reason to believe, that by far the greater number of the people continued unreformed, and consequently were not baptized by him.

The term *all*, in such connexions as the present, cannot possibly be understood in its most extensive sense. In John iii. 26. we read that some of John's disciples said to him concerning Christ, "Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou bearest witness, behold the same baptizeth, and *all* men come to him." Now, who can suppose, that the whole of the people attended our Lord's ministry? The meaning evidently is, that he had many followers; and that the number of them far exceeded the numbers of those who followed John. So here, we cannot without manifest absurdity, understand more than, that *many* persons, *great numbers*, from Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about the Jordan, went out to John, and were baptized.

The difficulty which Dr. C. fancies he sees, in John's baptizing so many persons, even on the supposition of his *dipping* them, is not so great as that which might be objected to his becoming acquainted with their character. As he only baptized those who confessed their sins, and professed repentance, it would be necessary that he should have some knowledge of their experience and conduct. This would be more difficult, and require more time than merely to dip them. This objection attached also to the Dr.'s own scheme of baptism. He sees an insuperable difficulty in the hillock, while the mountain is passed without being perceived.

But it is not necessary to suppose that John himself baptized all who were admitted to his baptism. He had disciples; and they also might administer the ordinance. It is said of Christ, that he baptized, and all men came to him; and yet it is elsewhere said, that he himself baptized not, but his disciples. And John and several assistants might, during the continuance of his ministry, administer the ordinance of baptizing even by immersion, to a very large number. History records that, among our Saxon ancestors, more than on one occasion, ten thousand were baptized in one day. And Dr. Clarke need not be informed that in those times, even in our northern climate, baptism was administered by immersion.

He adds, "Were both men and women dipped, for certainly both came to his baptism." It is extremely probable that women as well as men were admitted to John's baptism; we know they were to Christian baptism, Acts viii. 12. And doubtless all were baptized in the same way. There is no reason to suppose that John had two modes of administering the ordinance; one for women, and the other men. The modern opinion, that it makes no difference whether the person be sprinkled or immersed, was not known in the time of John.

"This would never have comported either with safety or with decency." What an insinuation! The practice of baptizing by immersion is charged with indecency! Somewhat more of caution and modesty would not ill become this writer. The best refutation of so unfounded a calumny, is boldly to contradict it. We boldly affirm, "it would comport both with safety and decency:" and appeal to daily observation for the truth of the assertion.

"Were they dipped in their clothes? This would have endangered their lives, if they had not with them change of raiment: and as such a baptism as John's (however administered) was in several respects, a new thing in Judea, it is not at all likely the people would come thus provided." How trifling is all this! And how such language betrays the cause it is designed to support! Could any scriptural and solid objection be brought against baptism by immersion, we should not surely, at least from a writer of Dr. Clarke's abilities meet with such pitiful cavilling. It would be so very easy for those who were baptized, to provide change of raiment, that to attempt a refutation of this objection, would be needless labour. When, indeed, it is considered, that John baptised such only as confessed their sins, and that probably very few were admitted to his baptism, on their once hearing him preach, the objection vanishes.

"But, suppose these were dipped, which I think it would be impossible to prove, does it follow that in all regions of the world, men and women must be dipped, in order to be evangelically baptised?" So far from its being impossible to prove that John baptised by immersion, every unprejudiced reader must admit that the scriptures prove it to a demonstration. Why did he baptise in the Jordan, why in Enon, because

there was much water there, unless he performed the ceremony by immersion? Why do we read that our Lord's being baptised, he came up straightway out of the water, if he was not immersed in the water? These considerations, with many of a similar kind, leave no doubt in the mind of the impartial, that John's baptism was that of immersion. Indeed the thing is so evident, that many of the most learned and candid among the friends of sprinkling frankly acknowledge it. Many instances of this may be seen in BOOTH'S *Pædo-Baptism Examined, on the principles, concessions, and reasonings of the most learned Pædo-Baptists.*

"But" it is asked whether because John dipped, "it is necessary that in all regions of the world, men and women must be dipped, in order to be evangelically baptised?" Is not this a very unnecessary inquiry? At least it admits of a very easy and apparently a very satisfactory answer. Is the mode in which John baptised the scriptural mode? If so, as no person has authority to make alterations in a divine ordinance, it is necessary, that in all regions of the world, men and women must be dipped, to be evangelically baptised.

"In the eastern countries bathings were frequent; because of the heat of the climate, it was there necessary to cleanliness and health: but could our climate, or a more northerly one admit of this with safety, for at least three fourths of the year? We may rest assured that it could not!" Here the Doctor is speaking of bathing; and he says, that our climate, or a more northerly one could not admit of it with safety, for at least three fourths of the year. What has this to do with the business? Is there no difference between the common practice of bathing, and the ordinance of baptism? That our climate will admit of baptism by immersion, at any season of the year, is plain from matter of fact. It is constantly administered to both men and women, in every season of the year; and always as far as the writer of this has ever heard with perfect safety. Does not Dr. Clarke know, that in the more northerly climate of Russia, the ordinance is administered by immersion, and that in the coldest season of the year. Nor do we hear of any dangerous consequences resulting from it.

"And may we not presume that if John had opened his com-

mission in the north of Great Britain, for many months of the year, he would have dipped neither man nor woman, unless he would have procured a tepid bath?" Considering the character of John, the most reasonable presumption is, that whether he had opened his commission in the north of Great Britain, or in a more northerly climate, he would have baptised in the way he was directed by him who sent him to baptise; and as this was by immersion, that in this way he would have baptised, at any season of the year, and this too without a *tepid bath*. Dr. Clarke seems frightened with the idea of immersion in our climate. It was happy for him, that he did not live under the former dispensation. Of the two initiatory ordinances, that which prevailed under the law, or that which is instituted in the Christian church, it may be presumed that, even in the north of Great Britain, he would choose to submit to the latter.

"Those who are *dipped* or *immersed* in water in the name of the Holy Trinity, I believe to be evangelically baptised." This is *universally* admitted. "Those who are washed, or sprinkled with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, I believe to be equally so. Others have a right to believe the contrary, if they see good." Dr. Clarke has undoubtedly a right to his own belief. But his opinion concerning the validity of the baptism of those who are only sprinkled, has no scripture support.

"And the repetition of such a baptism I believe to be profane." So far from its being profane, for those who have only been sprinkled, to be, on their conversion to Christ, buried with him by baptism into death, it is their indispensable duty, and essential to their becoming in a scriptural manner, his people.

"After all, it is the thing signified and not the *mode* which is the essential part of the sacrament." The church of which the learned Doctor is a member tells us, that the thing signified by baptism "is a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness." It likewise informs us that a sacrament is "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace." Then, according to Dr. Clarke's account, a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness, is the essential part of an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual

grace.* This sounds to common ears something oddly: perhaps the ingenious author can explain it. The Doctor having thus clearly proved that the thing signified is the essential part of the sacrament, infers that the mode is changeable. It may be dipping, or washing, or sprinkling at the pleasure or convenience of the recipients. Why does he not follow up his principles, and like the Quakers say, the thing signified is *all*: and that both dipping and sprinkling being non-essential may be omitted. But, according to his own church, "Baptism is an *outward and visible sign, ordained by Christ*, of a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness," or, in the words of the venerable Assembly, "Baptism is an holy ordinance *instituted by Christ*, which by *sensible signs*," doth signify and seal our ingrafting into Christ, and partaking of the benefits of the covenants of grace; and our engagement to be the Lord's." Allowing the accuracy of these definitions, and we suppose the Doctor will not call them in question, it is plain, that an *outward, visible, or sensible sign* is essential to the sacrament. Our Pædo-Baptist friends therefore, have only to prove, that washing or sprinkling is the sign which was ordained or instituted by Christ, and that infants are partakers, "of a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness:" that they are ingrafted into Christ, partakers of the benefits of the covenant of grace, and have engaged themselves to be the Lord's; and their practice and principles will be cleared from the charge of inconsistency. This, we may venture to say, has never yet been done: and it is evident that Dr. Clarke feels it above his acknowledgedly great abilities. The fact is, the greatest of men cannot reconcile contrarities, or explain absurdities: and it is much to be lamented, for their own sakes, that they should ever adopt a system that makes so hopeless an attempt necessary.

G. B.

* If we take the definition of a sacrament given by the Assembly of Divines, it will afford us no help. "A sacrament," they say, "is an holy ordinance, instituted by Christ, wherein, by sensible signs, Christ and the benefits of the New Covenant are represented, sealed and applied to believers." Shorter Catechism. Quest. 92.

COMFORT *and* ADVICE *to the* CHILDREN OF GOD,
when under SPIRITUAL DARKNESS.
(In a Letter to a Friend.)

DEAR BROTHER,

I have considered your remarks on the distribution of Religious Tracts; and I am convinced, that, with a divine blessing, it may have a very beneficial effect. The circulation of such Tracts, may be the means of reclaiming the vicious, of strengthening the weak, and of directing inquiring souls to the truths that make for their everlasting peace. Many Tracts have, I doubt not, afforded a reviving cordial to the people of God, on beds of languishing, or supported them in the hour of temptation, when they have been almost ready to despair. I confess that I have yet done little in distributing these cheap missionaries. I pray God to pardon my past negligence, and to enable me in future, to be more active and useful.

I am pleased to learn from your letter, that your bodily health and outward circumstances are such as call for gratitude; but I am peculiarly sorry to hear you complain that your soul does not prosper. The prosperity of the immortal soul is of all prosperity the most to be desired. I sympathise, therefore, most unfeignedly with your state, when you complain, that, from day to day, yea, from month to month, you labour under deadness of soul, and inward doubt and darkness, Happy should I be, if I should be enabled to say anything that might relieve you. But what shall I say? Allow me, my dear brother, to ask—Is there not a cause? This unhappy state of mind generally arises either from the persons' indulging in some secret iniquities, or from habitually living below his privileges. I hope better things of you, than to suppose the former is your case. I trust you dare not commit any known sin, nor omit any known duty. • You do not, I am persuaded, neglect the reading of your bible, or attending the public and private means of grace; such as secret prayer, meditation, self-examination, and daily watchfulness. Without a conscientious regard to these duties, communion and fellowship with God cannot be maintained; and most persons in a state of declension, can generally trace its progress, from sins of omission to sins of commission. Hence the evidences of an interest in Christ become clouded, and fears arise respecting the safety of the state. The enemy comes in like a flood, and drives

them from doubt to despondency; and, awful to relate, too often from despondency to desperation. How salutary then the advice of good John Bunyan:

“Beware of sin, then; crush it at the door:
 “If once ’tis in, it may go out no more.”

But, my brother, I should rather suppose, that your distress arises from living below your privileges as a believer, and humble follower of Jesus Christ. You do not, I fear, realize in your soul, all the comfort which that glorious declaration of divine truth, “Christ loved me, and gave himself for me,” warrants you to enjoy. Reflect on this glorious and soul-reviving truth, until you can say with Paul, “The love of Christ constraineth me.” Think seriously on that cheering passage, “The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.” Meditate often on the unsearchable riches of Christ. Think of the heights, the depths, the length, the breadth of the love of Christ. Contemplate the heights of his exaltation before he became incarnate; and the depths of his humiliation, when he who was in the form of God, made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant. Recollect his tears, groans, sweat, and blood. His love was stronger than death—Who can fathom its extent!—It reaches not only the vile, but to the vilest of the vile; it inspires him even on the cross, to pray for his murderers, “Father, forgive them.” Hear him in his word declare, “All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven.” Read the apostle’s assurance, “Christ is able to save to the uttermost;” that is, sinners of the deepest stain. His love is broad as the world; it reaches from sea to sea; it never past by one, or it would have past by me. “Go” said the Redeemer, “preach my gospel to every creature.” The length of his love extends from the first age of the world to the end of time: nay, it does not stop there, but runs parallel with the duration of eternity itself. “The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting, to them that fear him, to such as keep his covenant, and remember his commandments to do them.” Think much, my desponding friend, on this soul-reviving subject, and take to yourself all the comfort which it is adapted to afford.

By living below your privileges, you injure your soul, by indulging unreasonable doubts and unbelieving fears, like the

disciples in the ship and afraid of sinking, your faith fails you. How uncomfortable is such a state of bondage! it forbids the entrance of all consolation, of all joy and peace.—Is this christianity? Does God wish for trembling slaves to serve him? No; God will never accept such service; it stands opposed to the spirit of our holy religion. “God,” says the apostle, “has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.” Then fear thou not, sincere christian. Fear not God with a slavish fear; for he is thy reconciled Father. Fear not man; for thy God rules over all. Fear not the devil; for he is a conquered foe. Fear not death; for Christ has taken away its sting. Fear not hell; for Christ has delivered you from the wrath to come. It is dishonourable to God to fear any of these things. It is mistrusting his power or his faithfulness. It is saying that God is either unable or unwilling to save me. My dear friend, you stand in slippery places. A believer, may, at times, have his doubts and his fears. But to labour under them for months together is much below his character. Let me intreat you to renew your covenant engagements with God. Believe his word. Trust in his promises. Rely on his veracity. He has almighty power to save, He is faithful who has promised.

My dear Brother, I have selected a number of exceeding great and precious promises, which are the daily comfort of my own soul. Will you permit me to request you to read them over very frequently and to meditate on them very constantly and seriously. And by the blessing of God, may the perusal of them dissipate your doubts and restore peace to your drooping soul.

Are you tempted? then peruse, Rom. viii. 37.—xvi. 20. Mal. iv. 2. Phil. i. 6. Isa. xxxv, 3.—lii. 45.—xlvi. 5.—xlix. 14—16. Prov. xv. 9. 1 Pet. i. 7. Gal. iii. 13. Heb. iv. 14.—ix. 24. 1 Cor. x. 13. James iv. 7. Zech. x. 12. 2 Pet. i. 8. 1 Thes. v. 23. Psa. cxxxviii. 8.—lxxiii. 26. 2 Cor. xii. 9.

Do you want strength, courage and resolution? Consult, Isa. xii. 8.—xlv. 26.—xl. 29. 2 Tim. i. 7. Job, xvii. 9. James iv. 6. 2 Thess. iii. 3. Psa. xciv. 18.—ciii. 13. Lam. iii. 24. Heb. ix. 14, 15.—ii. 18. Luke xi. 13.

Do you desire to be fruitful and increase in grace? Read Psa. i. 2—lxxxiv. 7.

Are you afraid that you shall not hold out to the end? Read the following gracious promises and fear not. John x. 28.—xiv. 1—23. 2 Pet. ii. 9. iv. 10. Psa. xlviii. 14.—xc. 12.—xxxii. 24. Gen. xv. i. Isa. xxx. 10.—xlii. 3.—xli. 10. 1 Cor. i. 8.—i 30. Rev. v. 9. Heb. i. 14.—viii. 10.—xiii.—vii. 25. Jer. xxxi. 12.—Rom. viii. 38. 1 Pet. i. 5.—i. 18. Exod. xxxiii. 14. Deut. xxxiii. 27. Col. iii. 3, 4. 1 John iv. 4. Hos. xiv. 5. Prov. iv. 8. Jude* 24. Eph. i. 7.

If what I have written, together with the careful perusal of these blessed texts of scripture, do your soul good, you will have the benefit: I shall have my reward, and let God have all the glory.

Your's, most sincerely.

LINCOLNSHIRE,
Aug. 1812.

H. E.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

If you, or any of your correspondentss, would favour me with a few explanatory and practical remarks on Ecclesiastes xi. 1. "Cast thy bread upon the waters; for thou shalt find it after many days." it would much oblige a

CONSTANT READER.

GENERAL BAPTIST OCCURENCES.

OBITUARY.

On the 6th. of July, 1812, died the Rev. J. W. GODDARD; formerly minister of the G. B. Church at Ilkiston in Derbyshire; but the last nine years of his life were spent in the service of the G. B. church at Rothley, in Leicestershire. He was a man of considerable abilities, and his preaching very close and argumentative.

The former part of his life was a scene of considerable perplexity and trouble; but his latter years were much more se-

rene; and were spent in a way consistent with the great work in which he was engaged.

His health had been visibly declining some time. The last Lord's day that he preached, his subjects were the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. He delivered these discourses with an energy which surprized many of his hearers, though they little thought it would be his last labour among them. The next day, his dropsical symptoms became more alarming; and in spite of all medical assistance he sunk under them in about a month; during which time his faith was unshaken, and his hope firm and strong.

Decem. 8th. 1812, departed this life, MR. HENRY BOLLMANN, of Birmingham, a youth about twenty years old. He was not a member of the G. B. Church, being prevented from joining it by an abscess, of which, after lingering some months, he died. There were several traits in the character of this young man truly amiable, and worth the practical attention of young professors.

He had enjoyed a liberal education; to which was added the knowledge of the true God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, which was evinced by its influence upon his disposition and conduct. As he laboured to cultivate a tender conscience, it caused him to be much guarded in his social interviews. He durst not indulge in trifling discourse, and unprofitable conversation; yet was he becomingly cheerful, and shewed that wisdom's ways are indeed pleasantness. In his last moments of deep affliction, he was an example of christian patience and holy resignation. So far from repining at the dispensations of divine Providence, he had a full persuasion that God would do right. His confidence in Christ's bleeding sacrifice was strong, "I have a good hope through grace," was his dying language. His ardent desire was, that others, when brought into similar circumstances, should be able to adopt the same cheering language. This led him suitably to address those who attended him in his last hours, urging sinners to seek the Lord, and saints to persevere. It was gratifying though affecting, to hear him deliver his last charge to an only sister. He gave her his bible and feelingly exhorted her to read it, and attend upon the public means of grace; pressing it upon her by considerations drawn from death and eternity.

Mr. Cheatle addressed a serious and affected audience on the occasion of his death, from 1 Corinth. xv. 57. "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." May the conduct of this youth long live in the remembrance of his friends, and engage them, like him, to seek *first* the kingdom of God.

Died Dec. 18th. 1812, Mrs. MARY TAYLOR, wife of Mr. D. Taylor, of London; in the forty second year of her age. Mrs. T. had the great advantage of a pious and moral education. Her parents were respectable members of the G. B. Church, meeting in Church Lane, Whitechapel, London; at which place of worship she constantly attended during her childhood and youth. She was baptized and received into fellowship, A. D. 1793. The account which she then gave of the work of divine grace on her soul, written by herself, gave great pleasure; and her following life and conversation exhibited good proof that her experience was genuine. Mrs. T.'s former husband was one of our deacons, and appeared as likely to rise to eminence in that important office as most who are called to it. But he was taken away, eleven years ago, by death, when a young man. It is generally well known, that his death was attended with some very afflictive circumstances. Mrs. T.'s fortitude and patience, in that and some other severe trials, have frequently been mentioned, by her intimate friends, to the advantage of her christian character. She endured them with a christian firmness, and with an apparent confidence in that holy and wise God, who presides over all, and orders all things well.

Mrs. T.'s only ground of hope was the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ; and that preaching by which the Lord Jesus Christ was not exalted was to her insipid and unsatisfactory. But she knew that the doctrine of Christ is a "doctrine according to godliness;" and was therefore strenuous in her regards for practical religion.—She revered the Lord's day; and was careful not only to attend public worship on that day, but also to employ the other parts of it in the exercises of devotion. Of this I was the witness of many pleasing instances; and some that were remarkable and uncommon.

It is well known, that by the advice of a medical gentleman in Wiltshire, my daughter Smedley came to London the last Midsummer, and died with us, as mentioned in the last G. B.

Repository. Till that time, my dear wife was very cheerful, but was never well afterwards. Whether she caught Mrs. Smedley's disorder, as many apprehended, I pretend not to affirm. But her health, from that time, began gradually to decline.

In her health, she frequently observed, and repeated it to her physician, that "she was afraid of the pains of death; but not of its consequences." In this, however, the goodness of God to her was strikingly manifest. I had left her, for a few moments, to direct some family concerns; she assured me, when I left her, that she had no pain at all. I was almost immediately called up to her, on her appearing, unexpectedly, to change for death. The moment I saw her, the change to me was evident. We kneeled down by the bedside to commend her spirit to the Lord in prayer. We rose from our knees very soon. And I think she only gasped twice afterwards: Without a struggle, or sigh, or groan, she closed her eyes as though she had been literally going to sleep. Blessed be the Lord!

The great Disposer of events has in this visitation seen it wise and good to exercise me with a great trial. My duty is, to "be still, and to know that he is God;" to be "dumb, and not to open my mouth, because he hath done it." To him be everlasting praises. *Amen.*

D. TAYLOR.

CONFERENCES.

The LEICESTERSHIRE CONFERENCE was held at *Loughborough*, Sept. 29, 1812. The ministers present were Messrs. Smith, Stevenson, Ingham, Pyke, Pollard, Felkin, J. Smith, Barrow, Hoe, Hatton, Brand, and Green. At this Conference, was presented a case from Derby, stating the loss sustained in the East by the fire at Serampore: and it was also further agreed; that a letter, recommending the case, should be inserted in the G. B. R. and Mr. Pyke was requested to write it. (See G. B. R. Vol. v. p. 26.)

The Church at Barton enquired what is proper to be done by the connection in the case of Nantwich? Mr. Deacon gave the conference an account of a journey he had made to Nant-

wich, and undertaken at the request of the church at Barton, from which it appeared, that there is a chapel there belonging to the G. B's. and that only two Trustees survive, the church having become entirely extinct. It was agreed, that eleven persons be chosen as Trustees to whom the chapel may be conveyed. Mr. R. Smith was requested to take a journey to Nantwich, to make enquiries and forward the business: several of the brethren present engaging to be responsible for the expences.

The Church of Kegworth and Diseworth complained of a deficiency of ministerial aid, and were advised to write to the churches.

This conference met again, at *Kegworth*, Dec. 29, 1812. The ministers present were Messrs. Pollard, Felkin, Ingham, Pyke, Stevenson, Smith, Pickering. J. Smith, Westley, Wilders, Brand, Green, Hoe, Tarrat, and Green.

The result of Mr. Smith's journey to Nantwich was reported to the meeting, and it appeared that Mr. Madox, one of the two surviving Trustees, seemed unwilling to convey the chapel to Trustees, appointed by the Leicestershire Conference, as had been proposed; nor does it appear that the deed will admit of it, since it directs them to be chosen in Nantwich. The Conference requested Mr. Stevenson to go to Nantwich, and to stay two Lord's Days. It also desired Mr. Heard to advance £15 out of the Itinerant Fund, to defray the expences incurred by the supply of Nantwich; and engaged to refund it, if the Association object to the appropriation.

Mr. Smith having received a letter from Mr. James Taylor, relative to the G. B. cause in the Isle of Axholme, Mr. Deacon was desired to write to the friends at Epworth, &c. informing them of Mr. Pickering's intended visit.—It was enquired which of the Dissenters' Committees is most worthy of support? But the discussion of this case was referred till the next Conference.

The next Conference to be at *Archdeacon-Lane, Leicester*, on the *Tuesday* in *Whitsun Week*. Messrs. Pickering and Cheatle to preach. Inn, Black Lion, Belgrave Gate.

The **YORKSHIRE CONFERENCE** met at *Barnley*, March 30, 1812. Mr. James Taylor preached from Romans xiv. 19. In answer to the question left for consideration (see G. B. R.

vol. iv. page 272.) "What conduct ought a church to pursue towards an insane member? It was thought by the majority, best to suspend such a member from the Lord's table, and not exclude him.

This Conference met again, at *Shore*, June 15th 1812. Mr. James Hodgson preached from Acts iv. 12. A letter prepared for the association by Mr. James Taylor, concerning the academy, was approved this meeting.

The next meeting was, at *Slack*, Oct. 12, 1812. Mr. Joseph Ellis preached from Jer. vii. 2. Mr. Ellis suggested the propriety of affording some ministerial aid to the Isle of Axholme; and Mr. James Taylor was directed to write to Mr. R. Smith on the subject.

The last meeting of this conference was at *Birchescliff*, Dec. 25, 1812. Mr. George Andrews preached from John iii. 17, 18. This meeting recommended it to all the churches to make a collection, and divide it equally between the Academy and Itinerant Fund. All the ministers were desired to give their sentiments on the following question, at next meeting, viz. "Under what circumstances is a person at liberty to leave one church and join another? and how ought such person and both the churches concerned, to proceed in the case?"

ANNUAL ASSOCIATION.

THE *Annual Association*, this year, was held at *Wisbeach*, Cambridgeshire, June 23, 24, and 25, 1812. Mr. D. Taylor was chosen chairman; and Messrs. R. Smith and W. Felkin Moderators. On the Wednesday morning, Mr. W. Taylor opened the public service with prayer, Mr. D. Taylor preached, from Amos iii. 3, "Can two walk together except they be agreed." In the afternoon, Mr. T. Stevenson prayed, and Mr. R. Smith delivered a discourse, from 2 Cor. iv. 5. "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." On Thursday evening, Mr. Ellis prayed, and Mr. Felkin preached, from John xii. 26. "If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be."

The churches in the new connection now amount to fifty-eight. Within the last year, there have been baptized, three hundred and seventy-six; thirty-six have been restored, and one hundred and nine have died. The present number of

members are five thousand, seven hundred and forty six ; and the clear increase this year has been two hundred and seventy five.

It appears, from the account of the states of the several churches, read at this association, that religion is, in many places, on the advance. In some instances the number of those who have joined the churches has been very encouraging, and the hearers are numerous and attentive. We are sorry, that, this is not more generally the case. Divisions in churches, and quarrels among church members, have a most unhappy influence in preventing the conversion of sinners. May they be more conscientiously avoided. It gives us pleasure to find that valuable institution the *Itinerant Fund* appears, to obtain encreasing import. The collections and contributions in aid of this Fund, received at this association, amounted to £58. 17s. 8d.

ITINERANT FUND.

As several of our readers may be unacquainted with the existence and nature of this fund, it is presumed, that the following particulars may be acceptable.

At the London Association in 1810, the cases of several decayed churches in Lincolnshire were considered. It seemed desirable by most, that some minister should go and labour among them for a few weeks ; but the query that has damped so many good designs was suggested on this occasion : "*How shall the expences be defrayed ?*"—To this a friend observed, that it would be well if a fund could be established for the express purpose of meeting such demands. The hint was approved and a subscription opened, which soon amounted to £15, and the further arrangement of the plan was referred to the next year.

In 1811, the Melbourn Association resumed the subject, and after much deliberation, resolved—That a fund should be established for the general purpose of spreading the gospel :—that it should be raised by the voluntary contributions of churches and individuals.—That the management, application and distribution of it should be vested in the annual Association.—that Mr. John Heard be treasurer, —and that Mr. John Bakewell, of Castle Donington, Mr. John Bissill, of Sutterton,

and Mr. William Ingham, of Hepton Stall Slack, to be desired to recommend it in their respective districts and receive contributions, and remit them to the treasurer.

This was the formation of an institution, which, from the liberal support received at the last association, promises to be of great usefulness to the G. B. cause. We heartily recommend it to the attention of the churches: and hope they will exert themselves in its aid, before the next association.

MEETING OF SUNDAY SCHOOL DELEGATES.

On Tuesday, May 19th. 1812, the sixth *Assembly of Trustees from the G. B. Sunday Schools* in the Midland Counties, was held at Loughborough, and was well attended. The accounts from several of the schools were gratifying, and calculated to stimulate to increased activity and exertion. Several discussions took place, relating to the best method of teaching writing,—on conducting Teacher's meetings,—and on communicating religious instruction to the children, which it is hoped would be beneficial. The importance of opening and concluding the hours of school with prayer was strongly enforced; and the practice recommended by the Assembly, as being an essential part of christian duty, and as tending to impress their minds with seriousness, and to direct their thoughts to the great Fountain of every good. On the question being put, whether the advantages resulting from this annual meeting, were such as to make its continuance desirable, it appeared to be the unanimous opinion, that it had been, and still continued to be, highly useful to most of the schools; and it was resolved, that it be continued to be held as usual. It was also resolved, that, as a more general attendance of the Teachers would increase the utility of the meeting, all the Teachers of G. B. schools who attend shall be allowed to vote, and not the representatives only. In the afternoon, Mr. Stevenson delivered an animated address to the Teachers, encouraging them to proceed with zeal and ardour in their great and important undertaking.

The next assembly to be at Loughborough on Whit-Tuesday, 1813, at ten o'clock: and it is wished, that the statements of the schools may be forwarded to Mr. F. Deacon Leicester, a week before the Assembly meets.

STATEMENT OF THE G. D. SCHOOLS IN THE MIDLAND COUNTIES. MAY, 1812.

SCHOOLS.†	SCHOLARS.	TEACHERS.	ASSISTANTS.	Admitted.	Honorary dismissed	Withdrawn.	Expelled.	Dead.	REPRESENTATIVES
Burton - - - - -	105	8	4	19	6	8			S. Deacon.
*Beeston - - - - -	66	15	2						J. Fox.
Barleston - - - - -	90	13		15	2	4	13		Letter.
Bassford - - - - -	172	22							T. Soar, Wm. Kelham.
Castle Donington -	93	24							[J. Oliver.
*Cauldwell - - - - -	55	9	1						Wm. Barrowcliffe, Jun.
*Derby - - - - -	69	10	1						R. Shipman.
Diseworth - - - - -	70	8	4	9		7		1	J. Newberry.
Hinkley - - - - -	111	21	1	20	3	15		1	T. Potter.
Hugglescote - - - - -	120	18	7	30		21			J. Stubbs.
Ilkinston - - - - -	91	13							J. Hallam.
Kegworth - - - - -	70	15		14	3	13	1		
Leake - - - - -	159	14	4					5	
<i>Leicester</i> —									
—Archdeacon-lane	66	10	4	10		2		1	J. Thorpe.
—Friar-land - - - - -	145	14	14	54	11	57	6		F. Deacon, J. Boot.
*Longford - - - - -	120	26							W. Cook, H. Ball.
Longwhatton - - - - -	70	8							J. Miller, W. Newham,
Loughborough - - - - -	160	19	1	52		36	7	2	J. Earp, W. Adcock.
Melbourn - - - - -	175	8	7	29		32	1	3	J. Kingston, C. George.
Nottingham - - - - -	441	51	1	128	6	20		2	T. Granley.
New Bassford - - - - -	56	3	4						T. Smith.
*New Thorpe - - - - -	60								Letter.
Normanton - - - - -	40	5		7	2			3	[lard.
Packington - - - - -	120								W. Maunfield, T. Pol-
Quorndon - - - - -	215	17	2	65	3	19	13	3	J. North.
Rothley - - - - -	96	19	4	33	3	4	17		G. Marshall.
Sawley - - - - -	84	31		30		28	6		
*Smalley - - - - -	52	13							J. Smith.
*Sutton Ashfield -	150	18							W. Goodacre.
*Thurlston - - - - -	52	7							Letter.
Ticknall - - - - -	127	7	5	20		13	5		W. Kingston.
Wineswold - - - - -	45	8	1	11	2	6	2		
Wolvey - - - - -	128	26							
Woodhouse - - - - -	34	7		14		12			
	5689	487	67	550	56	275	90	16	

† Those marked thus. * having made no returns this year, the numbers are taken from the last report.

FIRE AT SERAMPORE.

The following particulars of the fire at Serampore, mentioned in our last number, have been collected from the latest accounts from the Missionaries, and will, we trust, be interesting to our readers.

The fire was probably caused by a coal falling unperceived beneath a set of shelves full of English paper. The articles consumed, were upwards of 1400 reams of English paper; a considerable quantity of Patna and other paper; 4460 pounds of English types; a double fount of Greek, a small one of Hebrew; 12 founts in the different Indian languages, including a fount of Persian, worth £375, a valuable fount of Arabic, and a double fount of Nagree, weighing 1600 pound; all the cases, frames and printing utensils which accompanied them; books in various languages to the amount of £625; manuscripts to the value of £75; the building itself, estimated at £1000; and the fixtures: The whole loss, exclusive of the fixtures and building, is reckoned at £8750 sterling.

On examining the rubbish, there were found the *steel punches* of all the Indian languages, uninjured by the flames. To have replaced these, besides the expence, would have occasioned a delay of six years. The *metal* also of which the types were composed, was found among the ruins, melted into large flakes, to the amount of nearly three tons and a half. Thus encouraged, the second day after the fire, the Missionaries laid their plans for future operations, began to recast their types, and so early as the 25th. of April had their presses at work, with the recast types, on the Hindoosthaneec and Orissa translations. The loss of the *manuscripts* will be replaced with the greatest difficulty. Mr. Carey will be obliged to retrace many arduous steps and spend many toilsome hours, before they are restored. But this venerable man is resuming his labours with his usual indefatigable industry and unruffled equanimity, "The ground," says he, "must be trod over again; but, as travelling a road the second time, however painful it may be, is usually done with greater ease and certainty, than we travel it for the first time; so I trust the work will lose nothing in real value, nor will it be much retarded by this distressing event; for we shall begin printing in all the languages the moment types are prepared. "To cause us to disist from our

work, even in the least degree," says Mr. Marshman, March 25th, "was evidently not the design of this providence. The saving of the presses and of the matrices, and the recovery of the punches and melted metal, with a building ready for use, seem to bid us go forward, and this we are doing with all diligence. We have nearly finished casting the Tamul already; and shall be able to cast a fount, or nearly so, every fortnight. The printing of the scriptures, therefore, will not suffer a month's interruption, the joy of which makes us almost overlook every thing else." "In a few more weeks, I hope our presses will be going again night and day."

While these zealous men are thus exerting themselves in India, we are happy to have the authority of the Committee of the Baptist Missionary Society for stating, that, by the very prompt and liberal exertions of the friends of the Scriptures in England, they consider the loss sustained by the fire at Serampore now *fully* repaired. The first news of this affecting providence was received, Sep. 9, 1812, and the above declaration committee is dated, Nov. 10, 1812: so that the whole amount was collected in the short space of two months. In this labour of love, we are pleased to learn, that many of the G. B. churches have participated. We hope, in our next, to record the particulars of their contributions.

REVIEW OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

SELF DISCLAIMED AND CHRIST EXALTED: *a Sermon preached at Philidelphia, before the Synod of New York, May 25, 1758, by DAVID BOSTWICK, M. A.* Printed for J. Mann, Commercial Road, London, pp. 48. Price one shilling.

This is a re-publication of an excellent Discourse, which, we are informed, has been for some time very scarce. The text is, 2 Cor. iv. 5. "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord!" and Mr. B. proposes, first, to shew what that selfishness is which the apostle here disclaims. Second, To consider some of the operations of that *selfish principle*; and, thirdly, To shew what it is to *preach Christ Jesus the Lord*. It is a plain, sensible, and faithful address, adapted, we think, to do good to all who read it, especially to *young Ministers*. We are per-

sueded, that if they read it with serious self application and prayer, it will, under the Divine blessing, be of peculiar advantage to them in the whole course of their ministry; and have a happy tendency to make them wise to win souls.—We insert the following extract, as a specimen of the matter and style. Speaking of the *operations* of the selfish principle, he says—

“It will go with them into their private studies, and there will chuse their subject, form and methodise their sermons, and often times make them more attentive to mere words and ornaments, than to the sacred truths of God. And hence, instead of plain and serious addresses, that might tend to MELT and CHANGE hard and unchanged HEARTS, they will abound with trifling speculations, set off with glittering toys, with figures of rhetoric, and arts of elocution. Or, instead of instructing their people, in the great things that concern their everlasting welfare, they go beyond their capacity, and teach them nothing, but that they are able to speak unprofitably and unintelligibly. SELF will often dispose them to take off the edge, and dull the life of their teachings, under a pretence of filing off the roughness, and smoothing the diction. And if a plain and cutting passage occurs, it will cast it away as too rustical and ungrateful. Thus in their preparations for public service, instead of consulting seriously, “What shall I say, and how shall I say it, so as best to please and glorify God, and do good to the souls of men:” SELF will make them consult, “What shall I say, and how shall I deliver it, so as to be thought an excellent preacher, and to be admired and applauded by all that hear me.”

And when SELF has done its work in their study, and made their sermons, it will attend them even to the pulpit, and there it will form their very countenance and gesture, and modulate their voice, and animate their delivery, and put the very accent and emphasis upon their words and syllables, that all may be calculated to PLEASE rather than to PROFIT, and to recommend THEMSELVES, and secure a vain applause, rather than to recommend JESUS CHRIST, and secure his interest in the hearts of men.

And when the sermon is ended, SELF goes home with the preacher, and makes him much more solicitious to know whether he is admired and applauded, than whether he has prevailed for the awakening and conversion of souls. And so

powerful is this principle in some, that they could even be glad in their hearts (were it not for shame) to ask their hearers, in direct terms, whether they like, admire, and applaud their labors, and conceive a good opinion of them. But as this will not do, SELF will put them on some topic of conversation with their hearers, that will tend, if possible, to draw out their own commendation; and if they can perceive they are highly thought of, they rejoice greatly, as having attained their end: But, if they find they are esteemed but weak, or at best, but common preachers, they are dejected and disappointed, as having missed what they think THE GRAND PRIZE OF THE DAY.

OUTLINES OF AN ECONOMICAL PLAN *for the conducting the EDUCATION OF THE POOR, on rational and solid principles.* by R. Goodacre. Cradock, and Joy, and Johnson, 8vo. pp. 28. price 1s.

THIS author having had the courage to attack the popular plans of Dr. Bell and Mr. Lancaster, for the education of the Poor, has, in anticipation a total defeat of his formidable enemies, very considerably furnished the benevolent public with a substitute. Without venturing to flatter him with an immediate or complete triumph, or even hazarding an opinion on a subject on which we know good and wise men differ, we think it may promote the cause of humanity, to notice the contents of this pamphlet. We are persuaded, that every plan of education contains some useful hints which may be adopted in practice with great advantage; and we fear that no scheme can be devised which will be found practicable or eligible in all circumstances.

“By education, the author means, a suitable preparation for active life;—the subjects to be attended to at School, he would define to be those which will be most useful in riper years;—and the objects to be kept in view, that the poor man should know how to act aright in every station,—that he should be able to distinguish between pretence and reality;—in short, that he should be qualified to fill, with propriety, the relations of father, husband, friend, Englishman, and Christian.”

Mr. G. supposes, that, of 600 poor children who can be spared to attend School, 300 will be boys above seven years of age. These 300 he puts under the care of one master, assisted by three boys properly qualified: and the other 300, consisting of girls and boys under seven, he places in two distinct Schools, each containing 150 children, and each superintended by one Governess, assisted by two properly qualified girls. The assistants, he supposes, to be under the vigilant inspection and controul of the Master or Governess. The teachers, on his plan, are to be employed every morning from nine till a quarter past twelve, and, four afternoons in the week, from half past one till a quarter before five, and from six till eight in the evening: the Master to be employ'd, in summer, from seven till eight. The children in each school to be divided into two equal parts; one half of each, that is 150 boys and 75 girls to attend during half the school hours, in the morning and afternoon, and then go home and leave the room for the other half; leaving a quarter of an hour between each change. Four days each week to be employed in reading and spelling, two mornings in arithmetic, the boys to be employed in the evenings in writing, and the girls in needle work; the summer mornings by the girls in writing and arithmetic. The institution he estimates will require to be furnished with a library of books, for instruction and amusement, to the amount of £75. The annual expence of the whole undertaking he reckons at £390. for 600 children, or 13 shillings per annum, each child. Due care is taken, by the proposer, to class the scholars and appoint each class its proper instructor, and its due turn for instruction;—to prepare a system of rewards and punishments,—and to employ the time of the Master, Mistress, and Assistants to the best advantage. But we refer those who wish to learn the particulars to the work itself, which enters more minutely into detail than our limits will allow.

We think that many parts of this scheme deserve the candid examination of those, who are engaged in superintending and conducting Schools for the poor. The dividing of the children into two companies, and suffering only one half of the number to be in the school at once, strikes us as an important feature. "The children of the poor are," says Mr. G. "frequently wanted to perform little domestic offices for their parents, and, by this division of time, a considerable portion will

be left for these purposes. The time of confinement is so short, that, the necessity for children's leaving the school-room during study is obviated. School-rooms are not wanted to be more than half the size which they are when all the children attend at the same time; and, lastly, by the hours of learning being short, school is neither so unhealthy nor so irksome to the playful child, as it too frequently proves."

LINES

Written after passing through a Church Yard, in which the Remains of several RELATIVES lie interred.

Return, beloved friends, to earth return,
 Cheer with your love once more life's dreary way;
 Come back to those who your departure mourn,
 To us, oh! come and chase our griefs away.
 "We cannot come," a heavenly voice replies,
 "Nor would we come to your abode of woe;
 'Tis you must seek us in the blissful skies,
 Not we join you in troubled scenes below."

P.

AT THE REQUEST OF THE LAST ASSOCIATION,

(See *Minutes*, Case x, page 12.)

It is proposed to publish, by Subscription,

THE HISTORY OF THE NEW CONNECTION OF GENERAL
 BAPTISTS;
 COMPRISING,

1. A *Sketch of the History of the BAPTISTS* from the commencement of the Christian æra to the Reformation: and a *concise account of the ENGLISH GENERAL BAPTISTS* from the Reformation to the close of the *seventeenth century*.

2. A more *particular account* of those G. B. churches, which formerly were united to other Associations, but now form part of the New Connection.

3. The History of the *rise and progress* of the G. B. cause in the *Midland and Northern Counties*, prior to the formation of the New Connection.

4. The History of the *design, formation, principles, and progress* of the NEW CONNECTION, from its origin to the present period: including, historical accounts of the several churches as they successively joined it; biographical notices of eminent persons; the origin, design and proceedings of the association, conferences, &c. of institutions and undertakings for the benefit of the G. B. interest or the good of Society, &c. &c.

The object of this work is to give the religious world, a proper knowledge of the *design, doctrines, and character* of the *New Connection*; and to call the attention of those who compose it, to the true nature and principles of the union; and enable them, with more certainty and effect, to prosecute the noble purposes of the association.—As such a work has been long anxiously desired by many in our churches, it is hoped, that they will now step forward, with spirit, in support of the undertaking; both by promoting subscriptions and furnishing interesting materials. It is only by the united liberal and zealous patronage of the *whole* Connection, that, such a publication can be rendered worthy of its object.

It is expected that this History may be comprised in one respectable octavo volume, and that the price to Subscribers will be seven or eight shillings. As it would be imprudent in the Author to venture on such an undertaking, without some probability of its success, he proposes, that *previous to the next annual Association*, subscriptions for the work, be obtained by each church in the Connection; that four shillings *per copy* be paid at the time of subscribing; that each church guarantee the complete payment for the number for which it subscribes; and that an account of the number of subscriptions be sent to the EDITOR of the G. B. R. at the ensuing Association. Should sufficient encouragement be received, at that meeting, the design will, with the Divine permission, be pursued with all the diligence and dispatch that health and other avocations will permit; otherwise the undertaking will be laid aside: the object of these proposals being to ascertain the wishes of the Connection respecting its publication.

N. B. It is earnestly requested, that those churches who wish well to the undertaking, would, appoint some proper person, to supply the author with as many *facts and dates* respecting their history, as can be collected. Any particulars respecting the G. B.'s. in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries would be highly acceptable.

THE
GENERAL BAPTIST REPOSITORY.

No. XXVII.—Vol. V.

THE HISTORY of the CITY of JERUSALEM,
from its first FOUNDATION by MELCHISEDECK, to the
PRESENT TIME.

(Extracted from Chatcaubriand's Travels.)

JERUSALEM was founded in the year of the world 2023, upwards of 1900 years before Christ, by the royal priest Melchisedeck, who called it *Salem*, which signifies peace. Fifty years after its foundation, it was taken by the Jebusites, the descendants of Jebus, a son of Canaan. They erected a fortress on Mount Sion, to which they gave the name of Jebus their father. The whole city then received the appellation of Jerusalem, which means the Vision of peace.

Joshua made himself master of the lower town of Jerusalem, in the first year after his arrival in the Land of Promise: he put to death Adonizedeck its king, and the four neighbouring kings of Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish and Eglon. The Jebusites still retained possession of the citadel of Jebus; and kept it till they were driven out by David, 824 years after their entry into the city of Melchisedeck. David made some additions to the fortress of Jebus, and gave it his name. He erected also on Mount Sion a palace and a tabernacle for the ark of the covenant.

Solomon enlarged and embellished the Holy City. He built the first temple, the grandeur of which is so magnificently described in scripture; and in which the visible symbol of the divine presence remained for four hundred and seventy years.

Five years after Solomon's death, Shishak, King of Egypt, attacked his son Rehoboam, and took and plundered Jerusalem. It was again pillaged one hundred and fifty years afterwards by Joash, King of Israel. It was once more

conquered by the Assyrians, and its monarch Manasseh carried away captive to Babylon.

At last, during the reign of Zedekiah, Nebuchadnezzar razed the city to its very foundations, burned the temple, transported the Jews to Babylon, and "Sion" in the words of the mourning prophet, "was ploughed like a field." This happened four hundred and seventy four years after the death of David, and about six hundred years before Christ.

When the seventy years captivity were completed, Jerubabel began to rebuild the temple and the city. This work, after the interruption of some years, was successively prosecuted and finished by Ezra and Nehemiah.

Alexander the Great visited Jerusalem, A. M. 3583, and offered sacrifices in the temple. Ptolomy the son of Lagus soon after made himself master of this city; but it was treated with great kindness by Ptolomy Philadelphus; who made some magnificent presents to the temple.

Antiochus the Great retook Jerusalem from the Egyptian monarch, and afterwards ceded it to Ptolomy Evergetes; but Antiochus Epiphanes again plundered the city, and erected in the temple, a statue of Jupiter Olympius.

The Maccabees restored liberty to their country, and defended it, for many years against the monarchs of Asia. At length, in an unhappy dispute for the crown between Aristobulus and Hircanus, two princes of that family, they had recourse to the Romans, who had become masters of the east. Pompey hastened to Jerusalem, and being admitted into the city, besieged and took the temple. Crassus abstained not from plundering this august edifice, which the victorious Pompey had respected.

Hircanus, under the protection of Cæsar, had obtained the supreme authority. Antigonus, the son of Aristobulus, who had been poisoned by Pompey's partisans, made war upon his uncle Hircanus; and applied to the Parthians for assistance. The latter invaded Judea, entered Jerusalem, and carried Hircanus into captivity.

Herod the Great, the son of Antipater, a distinguished officer in the court of Hircanus, seated himself, by the favour of the Romans, upon the throne of Judea. Antigonus, thrown by the fortune of war, into Herod's hands, was sent to Anthony, the Roman commander. This last descendant

of the Maccabees, the rightful sovereign of Jerusalem, was bound to a stake, scourged with cords, and put to death by the command of a Roman citizen. Herod, now left in undisputed possession of Jerusalem, filled it with splendid edifices. He wholly rebuilt the second temple. On this undertaking alone he employed eleven thousand labourers for nine years. The works were prodigious, and were not completed till long after Herod's death. The Jews having filled up precipices, and cut down the tops of the mountain, at length formed that magnificent esplanade, on which the temple was erected, to the east of Jerusalem above the vallies of Siloam and Jehosaphat. Forty days after his birth, our adorable Saviour was presented in this temple, and here his mother offered the pair of turtle doves, at the time of her purification. Here likewise the Son of man conversed with the doctors, at twelve years of age: and hence he expelled the dealers. On the pinnacle of this temple, he was in vain tempted by the devil. Here, indeed, were many of his mighty works performed, and here many of his wonderful discourses delivered.

Archelaus succeeded his father, and his brother Herod Antipas, who ordered John the Baptist to be beheaded, became tetrarch of Galilee and Perea. After them Agrippa, a grandson of Herod the Great, obtained the kingdom of Judea.

On the death of Agrippa, Judea was reduced into a Roman province. The Jews having revolted against their masters, Titus besieged and took Jerusalem. During this siege, two hundred thousand Jews perished by famine. From April 14th to July 1st, in the year of our Lord, 71, one hundred and fifteen thousand, one hundred and eighty dead bodies were carried out of Jerusalem by one single gate. They subsisted on the leather of their shoes and shields, on hay and filth picked up in the common sewers; and one mother devoured her own child. Eleven hundred thousand Jews perished in Jerusalem, and two hundred thirty-eight thousand, four hundred and sixty in the rest of Judea; including neither the women and children, nor the aged destroyed by famine, seditions, and the flames. Lastly, there were ninety-nine thousand two hundred prisoners of war; some of whom were doomed to labour at the public works, or reserved for the triumph of Titus; while others were exhibited in the amphitheatre.

theatres of Europe and Asia, and killed one another for the amusement of the populace of the Roman empire. Such as had not attained the age of seventeen years were put up to auction with the women; and thirty of them were sold for one denarius, about seven-pence half penny in English money. The blood of the holy and just Jesus had been sold for thirty pieces of silver at Jerusalem, and the people had cried, "His blood be on us and our children." God heard this wish of the Jews, and for the last time granted their prayer; then turned away his face from the Land of Promise, and chose for himself another people. Our blessed Saviour, had foretold this awful destruction in terms remarkably explicit; and, as the temple was burned only thirty-eight years after the death of Christ, many of those who had heard his prediction might also have witnessed its fulfilment.

The remnant of the Jewish nation having again rebelled, Adrian completed the destruction of what Titus had left standing in ancient Jerusalem. On the ruins of the city of David, he erected another town, to which he gave the name of *Elia Capitalina*. He forbade the Jews to enter it on pain of death; and caused the figure of a hog, in sculpture, to be placed upon the gate leading to Bethlehem. Gregory Nazianzen nevertheless relates, that, the Jews were permitted to enter Elia once a year, to give vent to their sorrows; and Jerome adds, that they were forced to purchase, at an exorbitant price, the right of shedding tears over their country. Five hundred and eighty thousand Jews are said to have perished in this war under Adrian. Prodigious numbers of the prisoners were sold for slaves; and fifty castles, and nine hundred and eighty villages were destroyed.

Adrian built the new city precisely on the spot which it occupies at the present day, and included Calvary within the walls. At the time of the tenth persecution, the very name of Jerusalem was so totally forgotten, that a martyr having said, in reply to the question of a Roman governor, that he was a native of Jerusalem, the latter imagined it to be some factious town, secretly built by the Christians.

Some commotions appear to have taken place in Judea under several of the Emperors. Jerusalem however continued a pagan city, till Constantine and his mother overthrew the idols erected upon the sepulchre of our Saviour, and conse-

erated the sacred scenes, by the edifices which are still seen upon them.

In vain did Julian, thirty-seven years afterwards, assemble the Jews at Jerusalem for the purpose of rebuilding the temple, and thereby falsifying the predictions of Jesus. Globes of fire, issuing from the half excavated foundations, dispersed the workmen, and prevented the accomplishment of his design.

We find a revolt of the Jews in A. D. 501, under Justinian: by whom the bishop of Jerusalem was elevated to a patriarch.

Still destined to struggle with idolatry, Jerusalem was taken by Cosroes, King of the Persians, A. D. 613. The Jews, scattered over Judea, purchased of that Prince ninety thousand christian prisoners, whom they put to death. In the year 627, Heraclitus defeated Cosroes, and restored Jerusalem to the christians. But nine years afterwards, Omar, the chief of the Mahometans, took Jerusalem after a siege of four months, and all Judea submitted to the power of the conqueror.

Omar was assassinated at Jerusalem, in 643. The establishment of several principalities in Arabia and Syria, the decline of the house of Omar, and the elevation of the descendants of Abbas, another Mahometan prince, involved Judea in troubles and calamities for more than two hundred years.

Ahmed à Turk. conquered Jerusalem, in 868; but his son having been defeated by the Prince of Bagdat, the holy city again returned under the dominion of the Saracens in the year 905. It was however, in 936, recovered by the Turks, who had seized the sovereignty of Egypt. They were in their turn expelled by the Saracens in 968, who were again, in 984, driven out by Turks: and these Turks were not long after conquered by the Saracen ruler of Egypt, from whom the Turks re-took Jerusalem in 1076, and maintained it against the Prince of Aleppo. They were soon afterwards dispossessed by the Saracens, who were masters of the place when the crusaders appeared on the frontiers of Palestine.

Hundreds of thousands of professed christians, in the different parts of Europe, now took up arms to rescue the holy city from the hands of the Infidels. Led by Peter the Hermit, who

marched at their head with his pilgrim's staff, they left their homes and all their connections, and marched, under the banner of the cross, into unknown and hostile regions. Arrived in Asia, they first captured Rama. They next entered Emmaus, and one of their leaders penetrated to Bethlehem. Jerusalem was soon besieged, and at three in the afternoon of the 15th of July, 1099, the standard of Christ waved on its walls. Godfrey of Boulogne, one of their principal generals, was elected, by his brothers in arms, king of the conquered city. Godfrey refused to put on his head the brilliant crown that was offered him, declaring that "he would not wear a crown of gold where Christ had worn a crown of thorns."

It is probable that Godfrey died at Joppa, now Jaffa. He was succeeded by his brother Baldwin, who died in 1118, and left the throne to his nephew, Baldwin II. In his family the crown continued till 1188; when Saladin the Great re-took Jerusalem, and subjected it again to the dominion of the Mahometans. This conqueror imposed a contribution on each inhabitant of ten gold besants; and from inability to raise this sum, fourteen thousand were made slaves. Saladin would not enter the mosque of the temple till it had been washed with rose water. His soldiers pulled down a golden cross erected above the temple, and dragged it through the street to Mount Zion, where they broke it to pieces. One church only was spared: the church of the holy sepulchre was ransomed by the Syrians for a large sum of money.

In 1214, the Prince of Damascus, who was at war with the Sultan of Egypt, and had gained possession of Jerusalem, restored it to the Latin Princes. The Sultan sent his troops to besiege the capital of Judea. They re-took it and slaughtered the inhabitants. They plundered it once more, the following year before they delivered it up to the Sultan of Egypt.

During these transactions, the Emperor Frederic II. arriving in the holy land, and marrying the successor to the nominal kingdom of Jerusalem, made peace with the Sultan of Egypt, on condition that Jerusalem should belong jointly to the Christians and the Mahometans. Frederic, in consequence, assumed the crown of Godfrey, at the altar of the holy sepulchre, placed it on his head, and returned to Europe. The Saracens however, soon broke the engagements they had made with the Emperor, and Jerusalem was pil-

laged by the Sultan of Egypt. The famous Bibars Bondoc Dari became Sultan in 1263. He ravaged that part of Palestine that did not acknowledge his authority, and repaired Jerusalem. His grandson Khalil took from the Christians Tyre and Ptolemais, or St. John d'Acre, of which they still remained masters. At length, in 1291, they were entirely expelled from the holy land, after they had maintained themselves one hundred and ninety-two years in their conquests, and reigned eighty eight at Jerusalem.

The Sultans of Egypt remained in possession of their conquest till 1382; when the Circassian Mamelukes usurped the supreme authority in Egypt, and gave Palestine a new form of government. Selim, the Emperor of the Turks, put an end to all these revolutions in 1517, by the reduction of Egypt and Syria, and uniting them to the Ottoman empire.

There are persons who affect to believe, that the kingdom of Jerusalem was a miserable little valley, wholly unworthy of the pompous name with which it is dignified. The whole of the sacred scripture, numbers of pagan authors, the Jewish writers, the Arabian historians and geographers, and the travellers in Palestine, all unite in bearing testimony to the fertility and populousness of Judea. Can it appear surprising, however, if so fruitful a country have become barren after such repeated devastations? Seventeen times has Jerusalem been taken and pillaged; millions of men have been slaughtered within its walls, and this massacre may be said still to continue. No other city has experienced such a fate. This protracted and almost supernatural punishment announces unexampled guilt—guilt which no chastisement is capable of expiating. In this devoted country, consigned to the ravages of fire and sword, the uncultivated land has lost that fertility which it derived from human toil; the springs have been buried beneath heaps of rubbish; the soil of the mountains, being no longer kept up by the industry of the vine-dresser, has been hurried down into the vallies; and the eminences, once covered with woods of sycamores, now present to view nought but parched and barren hills. It is this Jerusalem of the Turks, this seventeenth shadow of the primitive city, that now exists.

OUR EARTHLY HOUSE OF THIS TABERNACLE.

A LETTER TO A YOUNG LADY.

MADAM,

As you are a tenant at will in a very handsome genteel house, and are now capable of furnishing it in the politest manner, ruling it by the strictest maxims of economy and decorum, permit a friend to give a few hints in an affair of so much importance.

Your building is composed of some of the finest materials I ever saw, and is so much the more liable to discover a flaw or spot that may accidentally touch it.—It is erected of a proper height, a just size, reared on a regular plan, and finished with the most accurate proportion. On the top stands an eminent turret, furnished with a room of the globular form, which I observe has two crystal windows in the front. These are so constructed as to be exceedingly useful, as they command an extensive prospect, and, if always kept clean and bright, will prove a very great ornament to the house. I advise you not to look through them at every object that passes by. Be sure to shut them soon at night, and you may open them as early as you please in the morning. On each side I discovered a small portal to receive company: Take care they do not always stand open, for then you will be crowded with visitors, and perhaps with many such as you will not like; let them never be shut against the instructive parent, the advising friend, or the supplicating orphan. I took notice of one gate in the front, at which all your company goes out; let that generally be barred close; be cautious what visitors you let out publicly, lest if any of ill character be seen coming from it, you draw a scandal upon your house. It will be necessary, therefore, to lay a strict injunction of vigilance on your two porters, who stand centinels in livery of the deepest scarlet, just without the ivory pallisadoes. I have seen some people paint the two pannels just below the windows, but I would advise you to the contrary, for the natural colour far excels all the decorations of art. This part of the

edifice is supported by a pillar of Corinthian marble, whose base is generally ornamented with a curtain of admirable needle work.

Beneath is the great hall, in which you have a small closet of exquisite workmanship; this, I suppose, is the place of your secret retirement, open to none but yourself, or some faithful intimate friend. I advise you to keep this always clean; furnish it well, make it a little library of the best practical authors, and visit it frequently, especially when you return home from church, or leave a circle of acquaintance, which you met at the table. Let the outside of the hall not appear like an hearse hung round with escutcheons, nor like a coach of state bedaubed with gilt and colourings, but let it be plain, neat, and clean, to convince the world that it is kept more for use than ornament.

You are sensible, Madam, time effaces the beauty, and demolishes the strength of the noblest structure, and therefore will not be surprized to find your little tenement subject to the same change:—Doubtless it has often wanted repairs, though you have lived in it no longer, which is a plain intimation the house will one day fall.—You may be soon turned out—the landlord may give you warning, or he may not; this is uncertain;—be always ready to go when called upon, and you will not be afraid to leave it at the shortest notice. One thing I would observe too, is, that when you quit the house, no other tenant will inhabit it, but it will lie waste and in ruins; yet the Proprietor will some time or other rebuild it for your reception in a more durable manner, with the same materials, but so refined and modified that it will be liable to no accident nor decays; and, as it is absolutely necessary that your habitation be new reared in some other place, I heartily wish it may be in a finer country, under a milder climate, and well sheltered from all storms; then will your situation be happy and honourable, and your lease never expire.

Your's, &c.

J. BUNYAN, JUN.

A DEFENCE OF
A DEFENCE OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

SIR,

You will greatly oblige the Teachers of the G. B. Sunday School, in Nottingham, by inserting the following in your next Repository.

TO THE AUTHOR OF QUERIES IN THE G. B. R.

SIR,

Vol. V. page 30.

Aware of the tendency your queries may have to influence the minds of those persons who are only acquainted with the nature of Sunday Schools by report, the Teachers of the G. B. Sunday School in Nottingham, after a serious discussion of your queries,—not from a desire that the present method of educating children in Sunday Schools may not be improved,—not because they are unthankful for any hints which may be thrown out for their consideration;—but, from a unanimous opinion, that your mistaken ideas, as they respect the conducting of these valuable institutions in general, may, if not counteracted, have unmerited influence, have resolved to notice them.

It must be allowed, on all hands, that, not only the attendance on divine worship, but likewise the practice of religion, is indispensably necessary; and that great and beneficial advantages are to be derived from it. It is therefore, cheerfully granted, that Sunday Schools should be so arranged, as to allow teachers and scholars as frequent opportunities of attending divine worship as circumstances will permit. But, so far from supposing that we have reason to fear that young teachers, as well as their scholars, will be in danger of contracting a habit of treating lightly the means of grace, by attending Sunday Schools, we are ready to believe them a stimulus to both, not only to attend the means, but to induce them to hear for themselves. Teachers, after endeavouring to instil virtuous and religious principles into the minds of their pupils, would be ashamed not to act in conformity to their own precepts; and children, from the examples of their teachers, and the regard they pay to their instructions, are induced, from the pleasure of obeying, to attend with satisfaction what they would otherwise consider as compulsion and treat with neglect.

Allow us to inform you, Sir, that **Sunday Schools**, except in particular instances, are not intended to admit children who go to a **Week-day School**; but those children only whose circumstances preclude them from that advantage; and that, these are taught, instead of making no distinction between the sabbath and other days, not only to read the word of God; but, above all things, that it is their indispensable duty to keep the sabbath day holy. And, from being accustomed to spend it in religious instruction, the idea is so far impressed upon their minds, that they are, not unfrequently, by those means, brought to consider their own eternal welfare.

Again, Sir, you enquire, "Would not every good purpose be answered if those children who attend **Week-day Schools** were instructed in religious subjects only, and carried to public worship both morning and afternoon?" This clearly proves how little you are acquainted with the general principles of **Sunday Schools**; as your enquiry can have no possible connection with them as a separate institution. We would recommend this as desirable, laudable, and commendable.

Lastly, you ask, "Do not those parents who profess religion, and frequent the means of grace themselves, deprive their children of great advantages, and expose them to great danger of forming bad habits, by sending them to a **Sunday School**, when they are detained from public worship one half, if not the whole, of the **Lord's Day**?" In answer to this query, we are of opinion, that children may gain more instruction from our address suited to their years and capacities, than from half a dozen regular sermons. And, that, were the danger of children forming bad habits by being sent to a **Sunday School**, as great as you suppose, it is not probable that the number of enlightened and religious characters who support them, would be so great, or their increase so rapid; whilst the number of serious characters which **Sunday Schools** have produced, speaks loudly in favour of the principles inculcated in them, on the minds of those who attend them.

In behalf of the Teachers of the *G. B. Sunday School, Nottingham.*

W. EGGLESTON, *Secretary.*

NOTTINGHAM, March 15, 1813.

We are requested to correct an error of the press in the second of the queries, alluded to in the foregoing remarks. It ought to stand, "Is not the habit of regular attendance on public worship one of the great advantages to be gained at a Sunday School?"

EDITOR.

AN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION,

"WHY ARE YOU A GENERAL BAPTIST."

TRUTH and CONSCIENCE constrain me to be one. Because I believe, *Jesus Christ*, my Saviour and Lord was one: because the *Apostles and primitive Christians* were General Baptists; and because the New Testament requires every Christian to be one. These positions may, to some readers, appear very extravagant; but to me they appear scriptural and just.

By a *Baptist* is generally understood, one who believes that *immersion in water*, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and *nothing short of immersion* is Christian Baptism: and that *believers only*, or the sincere disciples of Christ, on a *voluntary profession* of his religion, are the *proper subjects* of this ordinance. In this sense, I am free to declare myself a *Baptist*, in distinction from those who *pour* or *sprinkle*, instead of *immersing*, and who deem *infants* the proper subjects.

Christian Baptism, being a *positive institute*, neither its *nature, subjects, import, or design*, can be known *intuitively*, by reasoning *a priori*, or by *analogy*. As positive institutes originate purely in the will of the institutor; their *nature, &c.* can be known only from what he has caused to be written respecting them. And, as *Baptism* is a *Christian*, and not a *Jewish* rite, we are not to look for it in the Old Testament, but in the New *only*. Our great concern should be to know the mind of *Christ* on every particular respecting it, and the New Testament alone must be our rule.

That Christian baptism is not *sprinkling*, or *pouring*, but *an immersion of the subject in water*, is, I think, evident from the following considerations.

1. The sacred writers, when speaking of that rite, always make use of a term that denotes *immersion*. The terms that denote *sprinkling* or *pouring*, are as different, in the original

as they are in English.* Let any one who doubts this, and can, consult for his satisfaction Lexicographers, Critics, or Commentators. But many learned Pædo-baptists admit this.

2. This appears to be the case also, from the *places*, mentioned in scripture, as chosen for the administration baptism. *Jordan*, the largest river in the whole country is mentioned, and *Enon* near to Salim, because there was "much water" at that place. Why select *a river*, or speak of *much water*, if the sprinkling a few drops on the face, was all that was intended?

3. It is expressly noticed in the case of the baptism of the *Eunuch* by Philip, as if to guard against any mistake, that, after they were *come to a certain water*, &c. "they both went down *into* the water, and came up *out of it*." Surely then he must have been *immersed*.

4. If *sprinkling* be baptism, the application of water to the *face*, in preference to any other part of the body, is quite *arbitrary*. The scriptures say nothing about *what part* of the body shall be sprinkled. Suppose a person were to sprinkle the breast or the foot, or any other part, instead of the face, would he not have as good authority from the word of God for his practice, as they have who sprinkle the face? Is it usual for God to appoint positive institutions in this lax form?

5. We are plainly taught in the scriptures, that there is in baptism the representation of *a burial* and *a resurrection*: and also of the Christian's conformity to, and union with his Saviour, in his death, burial, and resurrection: see Rom. vi. 3, 4. Col. ii. 12. 1 Pet. iii. 21. Now what agreement is there betwixt these and *sprinkling*? But is not the agreement betwixt them and *immersion* obvious? It, therefore, seems quite natural and reasonable to believe that baptism can be nothing less than *immersion*.

6. The *sufferings* of our Lord; the *effusion of the spirit* on the day of Pentecost; and the *situation of the Israelites*

* The original terms for *sprinkling* are, *Rantos, Rantizo, Rantismos*, &c. but those for *immersion* are, *Bapto, Baptizo, Baptisma*, &c. Is it not surprising, if sprinkling be baptism, that the word which literally and properly signifies sprinkling is never *once* used?

at the bottom of the Red Sea, are called *baptisms*; but these are certainly better represented by *immersion*, than by *sprinkling*. Could there be, in any of these cases, an allusion to the sprinkling of a few drops of water on the face? Were not our Lord's sufferings *overwhelming*? Did not the Holy Spirit *fill the room* where the Apostles were waiting? And were not the Israelites *surrounded* with water? They might be considered as buried in the deep. The rite, therefore, alluded to in these places, could be no other than *immersion*.

7. Baptism is called in scripture *a washing*; Acts xxii. 16. and we read also of the "*washing* of regeneration." Titus iii. 5, in reference, no doubt, to the same practice. If baptism be *a washing*, then that ordinance can be nothing short of *immersion*. Whoever understood washing and sprinkling to be synonymous? What maid-servant ever washes by sprinkling? or what mistress would be satisfied with such washing? Besides, it no where appears in sacred writ, that sprinkling was ever reckoned among the washings. Admit baptism to be *immersion*, and the comparison is natural and significant.

8. The *Greek church* has invariably performed baptism by *immersion*. It must be allowed that they were the best judges of the import of their own language; and their practice shews that they understand the Greek term for baptism to signify *immersion*. Their practice is a comment on their belief in this article. It is said, that their ecclesiastical history does not record so much as a dispute on the subject.*

9. The original terms for *baptism*, *baptised*, &c. are not translated in our Testament: they are merely *Greek* terms anglicised. In this respect our Translators have used the English reader unfairly. I can find no other term in the

* The Greek church would not admit sprinkling to be valid baptism so late as the year 1745. In that year, Sophia Augusta, who had been christened by the protestants in her infancy, was espoused to Peter, afterwards the Czar Peter III. upon which she was baptized by immersion according to the rites of the Greek Church. This person was no other than the celebrated Catherine III. who reigned over the Russian Empire with so much glory.

English language besides *immersion*, and its derivatives, that can be substituted *in all places* in the New Testament, for the Greek word for baptism and its derivative. Is not this alone a presumptive proof that *immerse*, *immersed*, &c. is the proper rendering of the Greek terms.

10. History and other monuments shew that sprinkling is, comparatively, a modern practice. There are still existing *baptisteries* in some episcopal and Romish places of worship, originally constructed for the practice of immersion. *Fonts* also were unquestionably used, at first, for the same purpose. The history of our own country shews that immersion was, till within the last three centuries, the general practice; and the intelligent reader need not be informed how lustily *Dr. Lightfoot* exerted himself, to have sprinkling made the general practice, and succeeded.

Some say that the *mode* is of no consequence. But who taught them so? Why then did the Evangelists and Apostles constantly use a word that signifies to immerse; and not it and others indifferently, as they might have done? Others who are *Pædo-baptists*, acknowledge *immersion* was the primitive practice, but that it is not essential to the ordinance of baptism. But, as before, I may ask, who told them so? Is not this taking an unhallowed and presumptuous liberty with the appointments of the great Legislator, and awfully invading his province?

As to *the proper subjects of baptism*, my opinion is that *believers*, and *believers only*, are the proper subjects of this as well as of the other Christian institution, the Lord's supper. The principal reasons on which my opinion is grounded, are the following.

1. In all the New Testament, I do not find a single example of baptism being administered to *an infant*: and, as the practice of the Apostles was founded on our Lord's directions to them, and they must be allowed to understand their commission and duty, I conclude that nothing of that kind was included in the commission given to them, and that it was not their duty to baptize infants. I know, that Matt. xix. 13, 14, and 15, informs us that our Lord bade little children come to him, &c. but the passage says nothing about his *baptizing* them. It informs us, that he “laid his hands on them;” and also that the children were brought to him for that pur-

pose; but it does not appear that they who brought them had any thought about his baptising them, or even any desire of that kind. It is, however, certain our Lord *did not* baptize them, because "he baptised none," John iv. 2.

Because the scriptures speak of *housholds* being baptised, it is inferred, that there must have been infants in them, and therefore that *infant* baptism was an Apostolic practice. It is undeniable that there were no infants in some of them: and it will be very difficult to prove there were in any of them. All the house of Cornelius, *feared God, and received the Holy Ghost*. Lydia's household were *comforted as brethren*. The word of the Lord was *spoken to all* in the Jailor's house; and they *all rejoiced, believing* in God as well as himself. *All* the house of Crispus *believed* on the Lord; and the house of Stephanus *addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints*. Now if these things which are affirmed of *all* the baptised, will not apply to infants; then it plainly follows there were no infants baptised in these houses. What reason is there to doubt but that children would have been mentioned, if they were among the baptised, as *women* are mentioned in one place; Acts viii. 12; and, on other occasions, when children are concerned, the historian mentions children also? See Matt. xiv. 21.—Acts xxi. 5.

2. I consider religion a personal thing: and that whatever is not *believed with the heart, and practised voluntarily*, or from conviction and choice, as a matter of duty and conscience; has nothing of genuine christianity in it. But *infants* are not voluntary agents. What can an *infant* believe, profess, or practice? It is taking them at a great disadvantage, when they have *no choice* in the matter; *no will* to comply or refuse; but are *compelled* to that duty which is to be performed but once in a person's whole life. It is depriving them of the opportunity of coming forward voluntarily and joyfully, at a future period. When they have "believed with the heart to righteousness," and wish to "confess Christ with their mouths," in this sacred ordinance, they are told they have made this confession in their infancy; or it was done for them by proxy. Is not this depriving them of a solid satisfaction, and a reasoning joy? Besides: Is not such a practice *preposterous*? Is it not placing the end at the beginning? Should not conviction, and a sense of duty precede compliance and

practice ? Do we not expect it in all other cases ? If infants are the proper subjects of baptism ; why not of the Lord’s supper also ? Is more required as an essential pre-requisite to the latter, than to the former ?

3. *Baptism and believing*, or something analagous to it, or implying it, are so frequently connected together in the New Testament, that I cannot believe infants to be the proper subjects of the former. Thus we read, Acts ii. 41, 42. “ They that *gladly received the word were baptised*, &c. The Eunuch said to Philip, “ See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptised ? ” The latter replied, “ If thou *believest with all thine heart*, thou mayest.” Acts viii. 36, 37. Also, in the same chapter we read, that “ when the Samaritans *believed* Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were *baptised*, both *men and women*,” verse 12. Now had there been *infants* among the number baptised, would they not have been mentioned also ? We also read that, “ many of the Corinthians *hearing, believed*, and were *baptised*.” Acts xviii. 8. Many other instances might be produced ; but these may suffice. How consonant doth this practice of the Apostles appear to our Lord’s command ; and clearly shews in what manner they understood it. Can we have a safer or better comment on that command than their practice ? “ Go, *teach (Matheteusate, disciple)** “ all nations,” make them *disciples by teaching* ; “ baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. *Teaching (didaskontes)* them *to observe all things* which I have commanded, &c.” Matt. xxviii 19, 20. Now this passage supposes the persons baptised to be capable of being taught all the duties of the Christian revelation. Mark says, “ Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature : he

* *Matheteusate* from *Matheteuo* to *teach* or *make disciples*. It is to instruct such in the doctrines of faith and principles of the Christian religion, as are strangers to them or averse from them, that they may be made disciples. But *didaskontes* from *didasko*, is to *instruct those further who are already disciples*. See Simpson, Parkhurst, and Hedricus. The former word occurs only in four places : viz, Matt. xiii. 52—xxvii. 57—xxviii. 19—and Acts xiv. 21,

that *believeth* and is *baptised*, shall be saved, &c." Mark xvi. 15, 16. Surely, all must allow that such language is inapplicable to infants.

4. The *import and design* of baptism, or the *doctrine* it implies or represents, seem very ill to agree with infants as the subjects of baptism. Christians are said to be *buried with Christ*, and to *rise again* in baptism; to *put on Christ*; to be baptised *for the resurrection of the dead*; that is, in the belief and hope of a resurrection from the dead. In baptism they are emblematically *born*, John iii. 5, *saved*, 1 Peter iii. 21, and *their sins are washed away*. Acts xxii. 16; or that baptism is a symbol of these; because in that ordinance, they profess being *born of the spirit; saved by Christ; and purified by his blood*. The baptism of believers represents their *union and communion* with Christ, in his death, burial, and resurrection. But what can an infant know or enjoy of these? With what propriety can he be said to profess them? What authority is there for his doing these by proxy?

It is pleaded by some, that it was a common practice among the Jews, to receive proselytes to the Jewish church, *with their children*, by baptism. When our Lord then commanded the Apostles to go and baptize all nations, we are to recollect, that he spoke as a Jew, to his Apostles who were Jews; and consequently, who could not fail to know the way in which baptism was practised among their countrymen: that, as this was an ancient custom, it was not necessary for our Lord in his command to baptize, to specify *infants*, it having been customary to baptize them with their parents; that they would naturally suppose it was to be practised in the way it was known to be commonly observed. The celebrated names of *Broughton, Ainsworth, Selden, Hammond, and Lightfoot*, are mentioned as authorities for this opinion, and quote the Talmudical writers in support of it.

On the other hand, names, equally distinguished for their acquaintance with Jewish literature, and the writings of the early Christian fathers, as well as for learning in general, are produced in direct opposition to this opinion. These are *Drs. Gill, Owen, Lardner, and Jennings*. The former was a *Baptist*, and has written a dissertation on this subject, which it is presumed, will satisfy every impartial reader of the fallacy of the above opinion; and which I would recommend to

those who have any doubts on the subject.* The other three were learned *Pædo-baptists*, yet they all agree in considering the above notion “ a mere fiction of the Rabbins : ” † “ that it remains to be proved, not only that Christian baptism was instituted in the room of proselyte baptism, but that the Jews had any such baptism in our Saviour’s time. The earliest accounts we have of it are in the *Mishnah* and *Gemara* ; and that there wants more evidence of its being as ancient as our Saviour’s time, than I apprehend can be produced, to ground an argument upon it in relation to Christian baptism.” ‡ It appears, that all the proofs attempted are produced either from the Talmud, or the Talmudical writers. Now there are, it is well known, two Talmuds, the one called the *Jerusalem*, and written for the use of the Jews in Judea, is supposed to have been finished A. D. 230, and some say later. The other is called the *Babylonian* Talmud, and was written for the use of the Jews in Babylon, and the adjacent countries ; and is supposed to have been finished about A. D. 500. How can writings of so late a date be a proper authority for a Christian institution ? It is true, the authors attempt to produce scrip-

* He has attempted to prove, and with much success, that no such practice can be shewn to have existed before the third or fourth century of the Christian æra.

† Dr. Lardner.

‡ Dr. Gill says, “ No mention is made of this custom in the *Mishnah*, or book of *Jewish traditions*.” There are no traces of this custom in the Jewish writings before or about the time of John, Christ, and his Apostles. Yet mention is made of proselytes in the New Testament, but nothing is said concerning their admission, or the manner of it. Dr. Owen says “ Nor are there the least footsteps of any such usage among the Jews until after the days of John the Baptist, in imitation of whom it was first taken up by some Antimishnical Rabbins.” Also “ The institution of the rite of baptism is not mentioned in the *Old Testament* ; no example is extant, nor, during the Jewish church, was it ever used in the admission of proselytes ; no mention of it is to be met with in *Philo*, *Josephus*, nor in *Jesus the son of Sirach*, nor in the *Evangelic History*.”

§ Dr. Jennings.

ture authority, but what they say on the passages produced is of so whimsical and extravagant a nature, as to merit no regard. "While this custom then," as one properly observes, "has the Talmud for its only authority; and while it is so miserably supported by scripture; we cannot, I think, for a moment suppose Christian baptism founded on it." Neither *Philo*, the Targums of *Onkelos*, or *Jonathan Ben Uzziel*, nor *Josephus*, make any mention of such a practice; nor any of the Rabbinical books. No mention is made of this custom in the *Turgums* or Chaldee paraphrases.

Why do the Jews distinguish John by the title of the *Baptist*, if this custom was common? The scripture says he was sent to baptize; but what need of a commission for this, if such a practice was quite customary? Again, why did the Jews ask John "Why baptizest thou, if thou art not Christ?" if it was a common thing to baptize? This opinion also, if true, sets aside the argument for infant baptism from *circumcision*; as being introduced in lieu of it.

Some Christians speak lightly and irreverently of baptism, as being a mere ceremony, an outward thing, a shadow, &c. To such I would reply; what was the consequence of *Eve's* eating of a certain fruit? of *Saul's* sparing the best of the herds and flocks for sacrifice? of *Uzzah's* touching the ark, and the *Beethshemites* looking into it, or the man's refusing to smite the prophet? Or what would have been the consequence of *Naaman's* refusing to wash in Jordan? These appear small things; but they were violations of positive divine commands; and divine commands are sacred things. Let Christians learn to account nothing little that the All-wise Jehovah has seen proper to appoint; for, indeed, nothing of that kind can be trivial or unimportant. The above instances shew how awful it is to transgress a positive injunction, however little it may appear in the eyes of mortals. God's injunction makes them great, solemn, and important.

Some attempt to justify this depreciation of the baptism of water, by speaking of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which they say, is the main thing, the substance; and that if we have but the latter, the former is of small consequence. But whence did they derive this notion? Why then was the baptism of water enjoined by Christ, and practised by his disciples? Why also, is it not entirely given up? The Apostle

informs us, there is but *one baptism* to be continued in the church ; that must either be the baptism of water or of the spirit. If it be the latter, ought not the baptism of water to be discontinued ? Peter was of a different opinion to these objectors ; he assigns us a reason why some should be baptized with water, their having received the Holy Spirit. “ Who can forbid water, that these should not be baptised, seeing they have received the *Holy Ghost as well as we ?* ” Acts x. 47, 48. I fear those who talk in the above manner “ know not the scriptures,” or, at least, do not sufficiently consider their import. They do not distinguish betwixt the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and the effusion of it to enable the Apostles to perform miracles, nor even from the ordinary influences of the Holy Spirit. They speak as if all true Christians were baptised with the Spirit. But surely this is an egregious error. We have but *one*, or at most *two* instances of such baptism in all the New Testament. The *first* was on the day of Pentecost, and the other, if it be another, on the opening of the kingdom of heaven to the Gentiles by the ministry of Peter, to Cornelius and his household ; Act x. 44, 45. To baptize with the Holy Ghost, is spoken of as the sole prerogative of Jesus Christ, as Lord and Head of the church. *Whom* did he ever commission to perform it ? or *when* did any of the Apostles attempt it ? Let such re-examine the New Testament and inform us. The baptism of the Holy Ghost, on the day of Pentecost, was evidently an *immersion*, for the Holy Spirit descended and *filled the room* where the Apostles were sitting. And the Apostle Peter, relating the conversion of Cornelius and his family, observes, “ the Holy Ghost fell on them, *as it did on us at the beginning.* ” Acts xi. 14, 15. Now, if by this expression, he means that it descended and filled the room where they were assembled, then it was an *immersion*, and a second instance of this baptism. There are many instances in the New Testament of the Holy Spirit being communicated to qualify the recipients for their sacred and important employments ; and for confirming their ministry by miracles ; but these are not called a *baptism* ; much less are the ordinary influences of the Spirit to be so regarded.

Some also have attempted to excuse their neglect of scripture baptism, with saying,—it is not a *saving ordinance*, it is

not *essential to salvation*. But where are such ordinances to be found? If none are saving, then are none to be observed? We may then perform no works of righteousness, because salvation is "not of works, but of grace." Has Jesus in very deed then, lost all his authority, that his appointments should sink into insignificance? Has Christ done so little for his people, that they are under no manner of obligation out of gratitude to act for him? Has the love of Jesus lost its constraining influence? And ought Christians to be really indifferent about serving God, any farther than they can merit by it? Surely, to a real lover of Jesus, it should suffice that he hath enjoined it. A clear intimation of his will, in any case, should be a sufficient inducement to prompt obedience. As to its being *essential*; let such remember, that conscience may make it so; for "to him that knoweth the will of God, and doeth it not," the Apostle says, "*it is sin.*"

Let every reader remember, that the divine authority is not to be trifled with. "Two sons of Aaron were struck dead, for daring to deviate from the Lord's command. And Moses the man of God was in danger of losing his life, through his postponing a matter of duty, probably in compliance with the solicitations of his spouse."

Thus, I have given a *brief* view of the reasons why I am a *Baptist*. The limits to which I am confined forbid more enlargement; as also my noticing the *perpetuity* of this ordinance. Let the reader judge impartially of the force of the above reasons. I now proceed to shew why I am a *General Baptist*. J. F.

(To be concluded in our next.)

THE DUTY AND ADVANTAGES OF ATTENDING CHURCH MEETINGS.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

A question of considerable importance was proposed, G. B. R. Vol. IV. page 267; which I am sorry has remained so long unnoticed. "What means," enquires your correspon-

sent Incognitus, "can be most effectually adopted to induce church members to attend church meetings and meetings for discipline more generally than they do? And would not many important benefits result, in promoting the order, purity, and zeal of the members at large, if this object could be accomplished?"

Without attending to the exact order of the queries, it may perhaps be useful to endeavour to show, in a few observations, that, it is both the *duty* and *privilege* of church members to attend such meetings. This may lead us more directly to the object of the query.

It is the *duty* of every church member to attend church meetings, &c. as often as circumstances will permit, because all those who are engaged in a common cause, or share the benefits of a common undertaking, ought to bear their part of the fatigue and attention which the carrying on of that cause requires. Nothing can be more reasonable than this. A church is a voluntary association of professing Christians, united for the purposes of discharging the social duties, and enjoying the social privileges of their religion, and promoting the cause of their Saviour. It is obvious, that, to carry these objects into effect, it will be necessary, that regular consultations be held, that resolutions be taken and executed, and that the various circumstances affecting the common cause be observed and improved.

But attention to these things requires time and application. And are not all equally concerned in the prosperity of the church? How then can any one have a right to refuse bearing his part of the burthen? Surely not. Each ought to lend a helping hand, and to endeavour, by his presence and advice, to countenance every step taken to promote his own advantage. When Paul recommended the expulsion of a disorderly member from the church at Corinth, he advises them to do it, "when they were gathered together." 1 Cor. v. 3, 4, 5; and, on a subsequent occasion, alluding to this act of expulsion, he stiles it a "punishment inflicted by many." 2 Cor. ii. 6. From this passage of scripture, we may conclude,—that the affairs respecting the discipline, &c. of the Corinthian church were considered and managed at meetings, when all the members of the church were allowed and expected to assemble,—that such meetings were well

attended, and the decisions approved by many;—and that the inspired Apostle recommended this mode of proceeding, and gave it the sanction of his authority. How criminal then are those who willingly neglect these primitive assemblies!

When church meetings are well attended it gives dignity and weight to the resolutions and censures of the church. How natural it is, for disorderly members, when they are admonished or censured, to treat the matter with lightness “because” say they, “it was only a few who passed the resolution.” When a candidate offers for fellowship, it has a very unhappy tendency to lessen his ideas of the solemnity and importance of the transaction, when he observes only three or four who take the trouble to attend a meeting on so interesting an occasion. Indeed, the affect of approbation or disapprobation will always be augmented or diminished, in proportion to the numbers who join in the expression of one or the other.

Besides the thinness of attendance on these occasions naturally weakens the hands, and damps the spirits of those who do attend. When a member of a church, through a sense of duty, has perhaps put himself to great inconvenience to attend a meeting of discipline, and after losing some considerable time in waiting, finds that not one in twenty of his fellow members think proper to meet him, it must depress his mind and paralyze his efforts. Sensible that he will be considered responsible, in some good degree, for whatever steps are taken, he hesitates and feels a delicacy in speaking his mind: especially if he have observed, (and who has not?) that those who take the least trouble to do any thing themselves, are most ready to blame what is done. Hence, spring laxness in discipline and procrastination in almost every thing connected with religion. These too frequently tarnish the glory, lessen the prosperity, and sometimes destroy the existence of the church.

Again those members of churches, who neglect to attend and assist at the transactions of church affairs, desert the post allotted them by their great Master; and, as far as their influence reaches, betray the government of the church into those hands into which its divine Founder never intended it should fall. Could you allow room, it might easily be shown from the New Testament, that all the members of a church

have a right to deliberate and vote on questions respecting the admission and exclusion of members, the mis-conduct of one member to another, the choice of officers, the determination of points of faith and practice, &c. Now he, who by absenting himself from church meetings leaves these important concerns to be managed, either by the minister, or by a few leading persons, destroys the beautiful constitution of a church of Christ exhibited in the New Testament, and introduces powers inconsistent with the spirit of christianity. The New Testament represents christians as brethren, and forbids any of them to be called Master; but, the disgraceful inattention of too many professors has a direct tendency to debase the majority, and exalt a few above their equals. Such a subversion of the simplicity of christian discipline has too often paved the way for the introduction of tyranny of the most intolerable nature. a tyranny exercised over the consciences and liberties of rational creatures, under the mask of a religion, that breathes peace on earth and good will towards men.

But attending at these meetings is not only a duty incumbent on every member of a christian society, it is also a *privilege* fraught with many important advantages, of which he deprives himself by neglecting them. We can only glance at a few of the most obvious.

Every true servant of God wishes to be able to promote his glory, and every true friend to immortal souls feels a strong desire to be instrumental in rescuing them from eternal misery. Whatever therefore increases his ability or his opportunity to accomplish these noble purposes will be esteemed a privilege. This certainly is the effect of being regular in attending on meetings of discipline, &c. He thus becomes acquainted with the situation of affairs in the church, and is enabled to perceive what exertions are wanting, and how to direct his efforts the most effectually for the good of the cause, or the edification of individuals.

A church member likewise consults *his own edification* by attending meetings of this nature. Who can hear a candidate give an account of the operations of divine grace on his soul, in convincing him of sin, and bringing him to a humble confidence on the merits of his Saviour, without reviewing his own experience? feeling something of his first love? being humbled under a sense of his present coldness and decay? and animat-

ed to pray for divine Grace to enable him to strengthen the things that remain? Who can hear the exhortations and explanations, the statement of important doctrines and duties, the solemn cautions and fervent prayers that take place on those interesting occasions of the admission of new members, without being both instructed and edified? Who can attend to the painful accounts of such as have been drawn into sin, and thus exposed to admonition or censure; or witness the more distressing transaction of withdrawing from a brother that continues to walk disorderly, and not be excited to take more heed to his own ways, and to be more watchful in avoiding the first approaches of sin? more circumspect not to give occasion of offence? more jealous of his own heart? and more earnest in praying that he may be kept from temptation and delivered from evil?

These hints will, it is hoped, tend to evince the importance and duty of church members in general regularly attending church meetings, &c.

But your correspondent enquires "What methods can be taken to induce them with more punctuality to fulfil this duty?" This certainly is very desirable, and much might be said on the subject; but, as I fear to exceed due limits, the following brief observations must suffice.

1. Let ministers and the other leading persons of the church take proper opportunities of explaining to the younger, and less informed members their right to attend these meetings. It is presumed, that many absent themselves through some doubt, at least whether they have any right to attend, or through fear of being called forward or intruding if they did. If they could be convinced that their right was acknowledged by the bretheren who fill offices, or take the lead in church affairs, it would often make them more ready to give their assistance on these occasions.

2. Ministers should not only explain the right of church members to attend, they ought also to endeavour to convince them, that it is a duty they owe to the great Head of their religion, to the church, to their fellow members, and to themselves. They should point out to them the great advantages, that would result, to the blessed cause of the Redeemer, and to themselves, by a regular conduct in this respect; and

excite them to a compliance by every motive which the subject affords.

3. If ministers, &c. wish the members in general to attend church meetings, and be useful at them, they must *behave well to them* when they do attend. They must encourage them to give their advice and speak their sentiments: they must excuse their mis-apprehensions and imperfections, and treat their observations with proper respect; neither repressing them by symptoms of impatience or disapprobation, nor passing them over with contemptuous neglect. Their whole conduct ought to prove to every member present, that they acknowledge his full right to give his assistance; that they respect his sentiments; and that they esteem themselves obliged by his attendance. By methods like these, many a member would be induced to attend who is discouraged by a contrary treatment.

4 It would also have a happy tendency in inducing a full attendance on these occasions, if care was taken to make these meetings as edifying as circumstances would permit. It has been already observed, that many parts of the business transacted at these meetings are of such a nature, that if properly conducted and conscientiously improved, they must tend to edification. This would however lead to many important considerations: and as I fear, I have already trespassed too much on your room, and your readers' patience, I lay down my pen for the present. Should these desultory hints meet with your approbation, probably you may, at some future time, receive a few remarks on the *best mode of conducting church meetings, and meeting for discipline, so as to render them interesting and edifying, from,*

SIR, yours truly,

A LOVER OF ORDER.

THE PROGRESS OF RATIONAL CHRISTIANITY.

To the Editor of the G. B. R.

SIR,

Some time ago I read the Memoirs of Dr. Priestly, written by himself, and published by his son. I was particularly

struck with the changes that took place in the opinions of that, in many respects, great man. He appears to have given an ingenuous account of the progress of rational sentiments, and may furnish an actual exemplification of the last reason assigned by Mr. Freeston for not being a Socinian. Under this impression, I noted the successive modifications in his views of divine things: and if you think the publication of my notes likely to produce any good effect, they are at your service.

He was educated, while a child, in tenets highly calvinistical; and perhaps the injudicious explications of certain doctrines, zealously insisted on by bigots of that persuasion, may have had an unhappy effect on a mind, that entertained a high opinion of its own powers, and was naturally more prone to dispute than believe. He soon however softened his system: for he went through Baxterianism to Arminianism before he went to the Academy.

At the Academy, he became a confirmed Necessarian, and in all disputes with his fellow students generally defended the heretical side of the question.

Leaving the Academy, he settled at Needham. There he commenced Arian, and in consequence lost most of his hearers.

Not long after this, he was persuaded that the doctrine of atonement, even in its most qualified sense, has no countenance either in scripture or reason.

This was followed by a discovery, which those who have studied the subject will perhaps think ought to have preceded the former. He gained full satisfaction that the reasoning of the apostle Paul was, in many instances, far from conclusive, and very defective.

This naturally led forward to the next degree of illumination. In a short time, he became persuaded of the falsity of the inspiration of the authors of the books of scripture, as writers, and of all supernatural influence whatever, except for the purpose of miracles.

Having thus got rid of the argumentation of Paul, and the inspiration of the sacred writers, it is rather singular, that he should not have sunk from Arianism to Socinianism till several years afterwards. This however he states to have been

the case, and the change appears to have taken place very gradually.

The next step was to deny the miraculous conception of Jesus, and to assert his natural fallibility and peccability: that is, he discovered, that Jesus was nothing more than a man, produced like other men; and, like other men, by nature liable to error and to sin.

This is Dr. P's own account of the progress of his religious sentiments. I leave your readers to make their own reflections and improvement:

And remain, yours, &c.

CIRCUMSPECTOR.

TRUST IN THE LORD AT ALL TIMES.

AN ANECDOTE.

Mr. Hanserd Knollys was a pious, laborious and successful baptist minister, who suffered much persecution for his conscientious attachment to the truth. He was driven in the early part of his ministry to leave his country, and to emigrate to the wilds of America; the common asylum, at that time, for all who wished to enjoy liberty of conscience. There he sojourned four years; but returned, in 1641, at the earnest request of an aged father. On his arrival in England, he was reduced to great straits; but experienced the goodness of providence in a peculiar manner. The following particulars are extracted from his own account.

"I was still poor and sojourned in a lodging, till I had but sixpence left; and knew not how to provide for my wife and child. Having prayed to God and encouraged my wife to trust in God, and to remember former experiences, and especially that word of promise, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee;" I paid for my lodging and went out, not knowing whither God's good hand of providence would lead me to receive something towards my present subsistence. About seven or eight doors from my lodging, a woman met me in the street, and told me she came to seek me, and her husband had sent her to tell me that there was a lodging provided and prepared in his house, by some christian friends, for me and my wife. I told her my present condition, and went along with

her to her house. There she gave me twenty shillings, which Dr. Bastock, a late sufferer, had given her for me, and some linens for my wife; which I received and told her husband I would fetch my wife and child, and lodge there. I returned with great joy, and my wife was much affected with this seasonable and suitable supply. After we had returned praises to God, we went to our new lodging, where we found all things necessary provided for us, and all charges paid for fifteen weeks." When this time was expired, he undertook a school, and by the blessing of God was very successful; brought up a large family creditably; and though several times imprisoned for religion, continued the laborious and esteemed pastor of a poor church for fifty years till he went to his reward. He died September 19th, 1691, in the ninety-third year of his age.

AN ANECDOTE FOR CHILDREN.

The worthy Minister mentioned in the last article has left on record the following pleasing incident of his childhood, to which we invite the attention of our young readers.

"One day my brother and I, going to school together fell out and fought: upon which I was much convinced that we had sinned against God, and against our father, who had often told us we were brethren, and ought not fall out by the way" I said, "Brother, we have sinned: Come, let us be friends, and pray to God to pardon this and our other sins." we both immediately kneeled down on the ploughed land; and I prayed, wept, and made supplication to God as well as I could: which done we both kissed each other, and went to school.

G. B. OCCURRENCES.

OBITUARY.

Though the first article is certainly out of time; yet as the good man to whom it relates was well known and much esteemed in the G. B. connection, and as no notice of him is preserved, we have prefixed a few hints respecting him to the account of the death of his widow.

April 1st. 1781. Died Mr. JOSEPH ANDERSON, aged fifty-one years. He was ordained Elder over the G. B. church at Gosberton, Oct. 31. 1762; and continued in that relation 'till his death. He was highly esteemed by a numerous acquaintance, and had a good report of them who are without being much respected in the neighbourhood. Nine days before his death, he went to preach and administer the Lord's supper to the General Baptists at Burgh and Monkthorp. He was very poorly on the Saturday when he left home, and took some medicine for a cold; but, having once before been obliged through illness to disappoint these friends, he was unwilling to do it a second time, and ventured to go. While engaged in the worship of God, he was taken ill in the pulpit, and conveyed to the house of his friend Mr. Hurtshouse of Crofts, where his complaints continued to increase. On Wednesday, Mrs. Anderson was sent for, to attend her afflicted husband. He was perfectly sensible all the time of his illness. He sent particular charges to his children, and recommended them, in earnest prayer to the grace of God, in a manner suited to his views of their characters. On the Lord's day morning, he perceived his end approaching, and said to Mr. Hurtshouse and some other friends who were present, "I find it is death. This will be an everlasting Sabbath to my soul." About ten o'clock at night he departed. His remains were removed to Gosberton to be interred.—Mr. Thompson of Boston preached a funeral sermon, from Acts. xx. 38. "Sorrowing most all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more." He left a widow and six children to the care of a kind and merciful God.

His widow, Mrs. Eliz. ANDERSON, died, August 24. 1812. much esteemed by her relatives, and religious friends. She was born in the year 1733; baptized April 28, 1754; and married, 1761. She was first a member of the G. B. church, at Gamston, but removing from that part of the country she united with the G. B. church at Gosberton, and continued in fellowship till death dismissed her soul to the church above. Her mind was well informed in the doctrines of the gospel: and her heart and life were influenced by the word of Truth, which she found by experience to be the power of God to her salvation. Her continuing a respectable and useful member of the church for fifty-eight years, prove that she had not received the grace

of God in vain. While she saw some professors of religion go back to the world, and others tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine; she continued in the faith grounded and settled, and was not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which she had heard. In the active part of life, she was diligent in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord. After the death of her husband, she had the care of a large family, and the management of a farm for many years; in both of which she acquitted herself with credit: so that her children may rise up and call her blessed. To them she acted the part of a prudent mother; and for many years supplied the place of a father. She had many trials; and some of them were very painful and distressing to the mind. Her patience and fortitude were great.—She lost one son in the bloom of life, by death: but another was spared to her prayers; and, with pleasure, she often heard him preach before she died.

She was very regular in attending worship, and the Lord's supper. Her conversation was not flighty and vain: but chaste and coupled with fear. She adorned herself in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety.—And in all her deportment in life, modesty and gravity were conspicuous. She was an ornament to religion,—a mother in Israel,—an example for younger professors to walk in the steps and faith of this daughter of Abraham, and not be ashamed.—But, though her progress in the divine life was great, she was sensible of many imperfections.—Some years before her death, her hearing began to fail, and sometimes she would complain, that she could not profit under preaching, nor by conversation, as she had done in time past. Notwithstanding this she kept her soul alive to the best things. Her conversation was mostly spiritual,—and she was much in prayer to God.—For some months before her death, she appeared to be waiting for her dissolution; and would sometimes say to her children, “The grave is a dreary place; I shall soon be laid in it.” At other times she would observe, “I shall meet your dear father, and we shall part no more.”—She left Gosberton two days before her death, and said to her daughter Mrs. Clarke, who had long been tenderly concerned to make her aged mother as comfortable as she could, “I hope the God of Jacob will be your portion.”—Mrs. C. was not apprehensive that she should hear her mother's voice no more.

Many years before her death, a substance had grown upon her arm which at times was very troublesome. After she had suffered long the inconvenience of it, she had it removed by the knife; and did not consider the pain of the operation to be very great.—Afterwards, something of the same nature began to appear under her arm, which grew to be very large and continued increasing, till the pain caused by it was insupportable.—She thought it would be better to have it removed as the former had been, and mentioned this to her friends. They could not encourage her in the attempt, thinking that on account of her great age, she would not have strength to go through a second operation. They soon learned, however, that she would not be satisfied without trying to have relief if she could obtain it; and they well knew that she would not be easily turned from her intention. They, therefore, left the business with her to determine as she thought would be for the best. She made up her mind to go to Boston, and have the painful substance removed by the surgeon. On Saturday morning, Aug. 22, Mr. John Clarke, her son in law, took her in a carriage to Boston. She left home undismayed and as composed as if she had only been going to see a friend. In the afternoon, she underwent the operation, and bore it with her usual fortitude. Every thing appeared favourable, and a hope was indulged that she would do well. But alas! unfavourable symptoms in a short time began to appear. The afflicting news soon arrived at Gosberton; and when her daughter Mrs. Clarke, arrived at Boston, she found her dear mother unable to speak, so as to be understood. No account therefore can be given of the state of her mind, in the last hours of life: but she appeared to be composed and sensible to the last. In one thing she acted as though she recollected that she had formerly said, when she observed persons die with their eyes open. If I be sensible when I am going to die, I will close my eyes. As she was departing, she closed her eyes with her own hand; and soon after expired. Her remains were conveyed to Gosberton, and on Thursday evening were laid by the side of her dear husband in the chapel yard.

By her own desire, Mr. Binns, of Bourne, delivered a discourse to a respectable congregation, from Luke xxiii. 28. "Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your

children." Her two sons and three daughters, and many of their children were present.

May they never forget that they are the offspring of such good and respectable parents.

Sweet is the savour of their names,
And soft their sleeping bed.

How wonderful are the works of God, and his ways are past finding out! How necessary it is for us to watch, lest coming suddenly he find us sleeping!

Dec. 11th, 1812, died Mrs. SMITH, aged forty-six years. She was the daughter of Robert Booth, of Kirby Woodhouse; and had been brought up to attend the G. B. Ministry in that town. The church, which at that time was very small, was supplied by neighbouring Ministers, chiefly by Mr. Goddard of Ilkiston, and Mr. Trueman of Nottingham. In the year 1787, she with several others who were baptized by Mr. R. Smith, joined that little church. At the latter end of the same year, she removed to Nottingham, and joined the church there, being honorably dismissed from Kirby Woodhouse. Oct. 12th, 1788, she married James, son of the late Rev. Francis Smith of Melbourn, and brother to Mr. R. Smith, pastor of the G. B. church at Nottingham. This union was productive of great mutual satisfaction, which continued uninterrupted till death dissolved the connection. Whether as a christian, a wife, or parent, she maintained an honorable character. Being herself a regular attendant on the means of grace, she made it a matter of conscience to take all her children with her, that the seeds of the gospel might be sown in youth. Though prudence taught her not to be loquacious; yet she never withheld necessary advice. Every Lord's day evening, her children gathered round her, to read the word of God, and talk over the sermons of the day. It was on these occasions, that her conversation had a peculiar flow. Her countenance brightened, while she described to them the faith of the martyrs, the love of God in sending his Son to die for a guilty world, and the final reward of the christian. Yet she was naturally fearful and timorous: so humble, that she sometimes doubted whether she deserved the name of christian; and often feared that she should not be saved at last. For several months before she died, she used to say, "I have

done with the world long since." Indeed she had many reasons to use this language: for within the last nineteen years she had followed to the grave her father, mother, two sisters, two brothers, and three children. This added to a weak state of body which she has borne for several years, taught her the vanity of sublunary objects. She seemed, in a great degree to have retired from society; and would pleasingly apply the following lines to herself.

" I was a stricken deer, that left the herd
 " Long since. With many an arrow deep infix'd
 " My panting side was charg'd, when I withdrew
 " To seek a tranquil death in distant shades.
 " 'There was I found by one, who had himself
 " Been hurt by th' archers. In his side he bore
 " And in his hands and feet, the cruel scars.
 " With gentle force soliciting the darts,
 " He drew them forth, and heal'd, and bade me live.
 " Since then, with few associates, in remote
 " And silent woods, I wander, far from those
 " My former partners of the peopled scene:
 " With few associates, and not wishing more."

COWPER.

On the 8th of Dec. Mr. Smith on whose ministry she had attended more than twenty-five years, conversed with her on the preciousness of the promises to poor sinners, through Jesus Christ. To this, she said, " I could never yet look on death as a friend, but rather as an enemy." I could never say, " Come Lord Jesus, come quickly; yet I hope, when I am called to die, that he will give me dying strength. I have no doubt of Christ's ability or willingness to save me, nor of his atonement for me as a sinner; but I have not so cheerful a prospect of death as I could wish." In the evening, her husband read several passages of scripture to her, with Young's *Triumph over the Fears of Death*, and the last chapter of the *Rise and Progress of Religion of the Soul*. The next morning, she had a paralytic stroke, which nearly deprived her of speech and the use of one side. In this poor enfeebled state, she drew such draughts of comfort as she had scarcely ever experienced before. With her hand uplifted, she exclaimed, " Glory, Glory." Being asked, whether she had any fear of

death now, she replied with emphasis, "No! no! Her friends then enquired if she could say, "Come Lord Jesus!" she said, "Aye, Aye." Her husband comforted to see her so happy, said, "I hope all our children will follow their mother," and she anxiously answered, "Aye, all, all!" With great difficulty, she made her friends understand, that she wanted to see Mr. R. Smith to tell him as plainly as she was able, that the fear of death was taken away; and that she rejoiced in its near approach. She remained in an almost helpless state, gradually weakening, till about six o'clock on the morning of the 11th, when her happy spirit took its flight into that world where pain and sorrow never enter. Her death was a severe wound to her affectionate and disconsolate husband. He often looks upon his seven motherless children with parental solicitude. May they, by their obedient affection and virtue, prove themselves:

"Young shooting plants

"To screen his widow'd side."

On the 13th she was interred in the family vault, in the G. B. burying ground Nottingham. A funeral sermon was preached by Mr. R. Smith from Rev. xxi. 4 "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, &c." Her death is a solemn call to her children, and while they try to follow her example, watering her footsteps with the tear of affection, may they, assisted by grace divine, realize her last wish, and All, all, follow her to glory!

March 9th, 1813, died Mr. DAVID DANIELS, a member of the G. B. church at Ipswich, aged twenty-nine years. For some years, his conduct had been moral and regular; and he had attended at different places of worship. It was not, however, till he began to attend the G. B. ministry, that he was enabled to see his lost estate, and his need of a Saviour. There the Lord met with him in a powerful way. He was induced to seek the Lord in earnest; and soon found, that, being justified by faith, he had peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. He offered himself for church fellowship, and was cordially accepted. Having given himself up to the Lord by baptism, he did honour to his profession by his conduct, in his family, in the church, and in the world. As the G. B. cause at Ipswich is but in its infancy, he exerted his

self, to the utmost of his ability, to strengthen and support it: and his conversation among a number of graceless men, with whom he was daily obliged to labour, was so consistent, that they said after his death. "If Daniels be not gone to heaven, not a man in the town will."

His death was rather sudden. He was seized with indisposition on the Friday, and died on the Tuesday following. As he was apparently fast approaching the hour of dissolution, on the Tuesday evening, his minister was sent for. He kindly asked the dying man, how he did, who replied, "Very ill in body; but well in my soul, and perfectly resigned to the will of the Lord, either to live or die." Adding, "Christ is precious to me: and I could willingly leave all the world, and go to Christ, which is far better." His weeping wife, and three small children surrounding his bed, his minister asked him, "Can you leave your partner and family resignedly?" "Yes," replied he, "Christ says, except ye forsake all and follow me, ye are not worthy of me." Being questioned on what he depended for salvation: he said, "on Jesus Christ: on whom I can stedfastly rely for salvation." About two hours after this conversation, he died, without a struggle or a groan. Mr. Jackson, his minister, delivered a funeral discourse, to a large and affected congregation, from Rev. xiv. 13, "I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, write. Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, &c."

CONFERENCES.

The LINCOLNSHIRE CONFERENCE was held, at *Boston*, Sep. 23 and 24, 1812. On the Wednesday evening, Mr. Burgess preached from Psalm xx. 5. "We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will lift up our banners." Mr. Pocklington preached on the Thursday evening.

Dec. 9th and 10th, 1812, this conference was held again at *Sutterton*. On Wednesday evening, Mr. Binns preached from 2 Peter iii. 9. "Not willing that any should perish," &c. Some candid and free remarks were made: and several subjects of importance to the churches were considered.

The last meeting of this conference was at *Fleet*, March

10th, 1813. Mr. W. Taylor preached from 1 Thess. v. 9, 10. "For God hath not appointed us to wrath," &c. Among the business attended to at this meeting, an inquiry was made respecting the present state of the G. B. Academy, and the following resolution was agreed to, viz. "That it be recommended to the committee of the Academy, that the business of it be referred to the association; and that the churches be previously informed of this, that they may send their representatives prepared to attend it."

The LONDON CONFERENCE was held at *Chatham*, April 21st, 1818. The ministers present were, Messrs. D. Taylor, of London, J. Liddon, of Hemel Hempstead, Joseph Hobbs, of Berkhamstead, G. Purcell, of Bessell's Green, and S. Garratt, of Chatham. Mr. D. Taylor was chosen chairman; Mr. Liddon, moderator; and Mr. Hobbs, scribe. The state of the churches was inquired into. At *Berkhamstead, Chessham, and Tring*, they are thankful for peace as a church, and hope the work of the Lord is going forward. They are tolerably well attended with hearers; four persons have been baptized since the last meeting, and two are waiting for admission. At *Church Lane, London*, since last conference, five have been baptized, one received from another church; and there are now two candidates for fellowship. They hope they are getting over some of their difficulties, and the work of God is, in some measure, advancing. At *Chatham*, they trust that they are advancing, though slowly. They are united and peaceable; well attended in general with hearers; have baptized three since the last conference at Chatham; have two candidates, and entertain good hope of others.

At this conference, in order to revive the cause at Chatham, Mr. Garrett was advised to preach two short sermons on the Lord's day, and to continue the prayer meetings on the Lord's day morning. In answer to the question. What can we do to promote the interest of Jesus Christ in the world? it was advised—That a zealous attention should be paid to village preaching, and that ministers should be particularly careful to address their hearers in the plainest language, and on the most important truths of the gospel; such as repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus, cautiously avoiding all ambiguity of expression and all subjects of controversy.

On Tuesday evening, Mr. Hobbs preached from 1 Cor. xv. 58. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast," &c. On the Wednesday evening, Mr. Liddon delivered a discourse from 1 Tim. i. 11. "According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God," &c. And Mr. D. Taylor, from Phil. iii. 20, 21. "Our conversation is in heaven; from whence we look for the Saviour," &c.

The next conference to be held at Suffolk Street, Southwark, on the second Wednesday in October. Messrs. Sexton and J. Ewen to preach on Wednesday, and Mr. Purcell on the Tuesday evening.

Wednesday, Jan. 13th, 1813, the Anniversary Meeting of the CHRISTIAN FUND was held at Fleet, in Lincolnshire; at which a numerous company of its members and friends, from all parts attended. In the morning, Mr. Burgess delivered a discourse from Prov. xxvii. 12. "A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself." In the evening, Mr. Bissill preached from Prov. iv. 7, 8, 9. "Wisdom is the principal thing," &c. On the whole, it was a season of a very friendly, animating, and edifying nature.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION.

We are desired by, our friends at *Birmingham*, to request that the Representatives and others, who attend the ensuing Association, would put up at the *Rose Inn, Edgbaston Street*: and not at the White Hart as mentioned in the last year's minutes.

The ordination of *Mr. Cheatle* to the pastoral office over the G. B. church at Birmingham, will take place on the Tuesday, on which the Association commences.

We are happy to learn, that the governors of the G. B. Academy have resolved to adopt the plan recommended by the Lincolnshire conference; and to refer the whole business of that Institution to the next association. As the subject is of great importance to the prosperity of the whole connection, we trust the churches will give it that prompt attention which the case requires, and send their representatives properly instructed.

The attention of the connection is, likewise, respectfully called to the proposals for publishing the *History of the New Connection*, inserted in the last number of the G. B. R. It

is earnestly requested that each church would take the subject into serious consideration : and, if they judge the undertaking deserves encouragement, that they would exert themselves to procure Subscriptions. Some progress has been made in collecting and arranging materials; and several unexpected sources of information have been discovered. The prosecution of the Work will depend on the encouragement received at the ensuing Association. If a sufficient number of subscriptions be not then brought forward the design will be relinquished. There may, however, be a propriety in stating, that, as it is proposed to charge the subscribers only the trade price, an advance of at least twenty-five per cent. must be made to non-subscribers: so that, if the volume be sold to the former for *eight* shillings, the latter must pay *ten*.

It is with pleasure we announce the publication of the *ninth* edition of *D. Taylor's Catechism*; and seventh of his *Compendious View of the Nature and Importance of Christian Baptism*. These editions are corrected; the former contains thirty-six pages for four-pence; and the latter twenty-four pages for three-pence.

BAPTIST MISSION IN INDIA.

In a former number of the G. B. R. (see vol. iv. page 137.) We brought down the transactions of this interesting Mission to the autumn of 1810. We now resume our account of the progress of their labours in the different places, in which they have attempted to diffuse the light of the gospel of peace.

The mission at RANBOON, in the Burman empire, has met with many obstacles. In August, 1810, Mr. Felix Carey, who has for several years laboured there, met with a serious accident. Returning one evening, from visiting his patients, his horse run against the trunk of a tree, and threw him off. In the fall, he dislocated his right wrist; so that he apprehended there was danger of a mortification. By the divine blessing on proper means, a cure was effected; but his hand will always remain weak. This however did not discourage him. In the beginning of the next year, he declares that he had wholly resolved to spend his days in the service of God, among the Burmans. He applied sedulously to perfecting his knowledge of the language; and proceeded with the transla-

tions of the scriptures into it with all the diligence that his professional avocations would permit. For he was highly esteemed as a medical practitioner, and much countenanced by government. March 22d, 1811, he married a native of Burmah, who had been a Roman catholic, but had lately rejected her priest, and broken all connection with that sect.

In the spring of this year, the country was torn in pieces by intestine commotions. Several insurrections took place. The governor of Pegu and his family were carried into captivity; and the viceroy of Rangoon was attacked, in his journey to Ava, and lost fifty of his men. These tumults increased in the following months. In July, the Burman government was totally cut off, by the revolters, and Rangoon was threatened with an attack. Mr. F. C.'s situation became daily more dangerous and alarming; but he was enabled to encourage himself in the Lord his God. "If," says he, in a letter to his father, dated July, 1811, "God has a work for me to do, he will find means for my preservation, amidst all the tumults and perils which can possibly surround me. Into his hands, therefore, I resign my all: assured, that what is committed into the hands of my blessed Redeemer can never be lost."

September 23d, 1811, Mr. Chater returned to Rangoon. During his continuance, at Serampore, he had printed two pamphlets of Scripture Extracts, in the Burman language, which he expected would be eagerly read by the natives. Mr. Chater, however, did not continue long with his colleague. The unsettled state of affairs, his wife's constitution being unable to bear the climate, and other considerations induced him to relinquish that mission. In a few weeks he took his final leave of Rangoon; and brought with him the Gospel of Matthew, translated into Burman by Mr. F. C. That young man, though left alone, proceeded assiduously with the translation of the scripture; but was much hindered by being employed in translating the correspondence between the Burman and English governments.

Since Mr. Chater left Rangoon, the friends at Serampore have been desirous of sending assistance to Mr. F. Carey. They turned their eyes on Mr. Kerr, a young man of twenty-two years of age; a member of the church at Calcutta, of an excellent character. Though in a good situation, and highly esteemed by his employer, he had voluntarily offered

to give himself up wholly to the work of the Lord without remuneration. When Rangoon was proposed to him; after deliberation and prayer, he expressed his readiness to go. If the internal troubles of the country have not caused a temporary suspension of operations, we trust he has joined his predecessors, and commenced his labours.

In ORISSA, the labours of Mr. John Peter and his associate Krishna-das, were blest with considerable fruit. In October 1810, the church consisted of Europeans, Portuguese, and Mussulmans; and the conduct of the members, with one exception, was becoming the gospel. The soldiers who had been baptized, continued steady and consistent, and several of their comrades joined them. They were removed from Balasore to Cuttack, in December; but their removal, though it weakened the hands of Mr. Peter, appears to have been instrumental in spreading the truth. On their march, and after their arrival at Cuttack, they not only maintained the worship of God among themselves, but were very assiduous in talking of Christ and the way of salvation to the natives, and in distributing Tracts and New Testaments among them.

Jan. 4, 1811, Mr. P. baptized a Byraggee, of the name of Niranjun, and many of the natives attended to see the ordinance administered. In a few days, this convert left Balasore for his native country. At parting he wept much, and said he would go and make known the name of Jesus to his countrymen; and rather die than deny him.

Mar. 31, a fifer of the 14th regiment was baptized. About this time, several of the natives of Orissa shewed great attention to the gospel. An Orissa woman of rank and influence died in May, who had professed her faith in Jesus, and was a candidate for baptism, but could not be baptized on account of her illness. Her last words were, "Yes, I am going to Jesus." The preaching of the word was better attended; and Mr. P. appears to be growing in the estimation of the inhabitants. His congregations in June sometimes consisted of three hundred natives, besides Europeans. Towards the close of this year, a gentleman presented him with a horse, which greatly lessened his fatigue, and enabled him to extend his labours to a greater distance. He visited the pious soldiers at Cuttack; and, on the road, preached to many of the heathens at one of their idolatrous festivals. Two were added to the church from the army; and, upon the whole, the prospect is encouraging

Our readers will recollect, that Messrs. Robinson and Cornish having been attacked by robbers, had left their station in **ROOTAN**. (See G. B. R. iv. 142.) After this affecting event, Mr. R. made one ineffectual effort more; and then, with the approbation of his associates, relinquished the attempt. For the present, therefore, that station must be considered as relinquished.

Jan. 21, 1814, Messrs. Chamberlain and Peacock set out with their families from Scrampore for **AGRA**,—a journey of nearly a thousand miles, up the Ganges. They seized every opportunity, as they proceeded, of preaching to the natives, and distributing the Scriptures and religious Tracts. They were detained, by a mutiny of their boatmen, for some time at Benares; the great seat of idolatry, where Mr. C. says, "Satan sits enthroned." Here they bore a faithful testimony against superstition; and assiduously preached the word of life. A considerable spirit of inquiry was excited; numbers heard with attention, and received their books with apparent pleasure; some following them eight or nine miles for Tracts, after they had left the city. On May 17th, they arrived at Agra, and were kindly received by a gentleman to whom they had been recommended. They engaged at home, and the next morning commenced their labours.

Many encouraging circumstances attended their first attempts; but they were soon called upon to exercise their faith and patience. One of Mr. C.'s children died Aug. 3d, and another promising daughter, of five years old, was taken away on Oct. 10th. She died rejoicing in Jesus. "O Lord," she exclaimed, a few days before her death, "let me be an angel of thine, and fly away. Take away from me this stony heart, and give me a heart of flesh. I know that I am a sinner, but Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners who have broken the law of God." Soon after their arrival, Mr. Todd, serjeant-major of the fort, had opened his house for the use of the missionaries, and they preached regularly in it on the Sabbath and Thursday evenings; but, in the latter end of October, their friend fell down and expired in an instant. These afflictions were heavy, but they were borne with Christian fortitude and resignation. The attention to their message manifested by several respectable Europeans settled in that city, and some appearances among the natives, supported their hopes. They applied assiduously to the acquisition of a more

correct knowledge of the language; and, according to their usual mode, immediately commenced the work of translation. They opened a school; and in December 1811, had nine day scholars and two boarders, with the prospect of several more after Christmas. Though no apparent success had been observed at this station, yet the brethren rejoice in hope that they shall in due time reap, if they faint not.

In our last account, we left Mrs. Moore much indisposed, soon after their arrival at PATNA. Subsequent information is more encouraging. In Mar. 1811, the brethren, on their road to Agra, stopped a day or two at Patna. They describe Mr. and Mrs. Moore's situation as a pleasant and important one. Mrs. M. was much recovered, and Mrs. Biss had joined her from Serampore. Mr. M. had opened a school; had already twenty scholars; and expected several others. Commodious premises had been purchased at *Digath*, near Patna, for a missionary house and school; and Mr. Rowe arrived from Serampore, in the beginning of December, to assist Mr. Moore. In a letter dated December 26th, 1811, he observes: "I am highly pleased with this country; it is healthy, and our neighbours are friendly. Calcutta excepted, I do not think there is a finer station in the country for missionary exertions, either among natives or Europeans. Patna is an immense city. We have procured a teacher, and intend to learn the Hindoo language as fast as we can."

Having given this sketch of the state of the Mission in the other parts of India, we now return to take a view of the churches in Bengal.

After the re-union of the interests at DINAGEPORE and SADAMAH'L, into one church, the labours of Mr. Fernandez, the worthy pastor, have been, in a good measure, successful. In November, 1810, he mentions several enquirers, of whom he entertained great hopes. In December, he made an excursion into the country, and was enabled to preach the gospel to a large number of people, who heard it with great attention, and appeared much affected. In the following spring, his hopes were realized. May 5th, five natives, two men and three women, were baptized at Dinagepore: and in August, six other natives voluntarily renounced their cast, and professed a conviction of the truth of the Gospel. Several others, and some of rank and influence, appeared deeply impressed with a concern for their souls; took every oppor-

tunity of inquiring the way of salvation; and encouraged their dependants to attend the means of Grace.

Büt in the midst of these pleasing scenes, M. Fernandez was called to suffer domestic affliction. October 6th, Mrs. F. died, after an indisposition of only a few days. She appears to have been an amiable and valuable woman; a great assistance and comfort to her husband, in his endeavours to enlighten his dark neighbours; and highly esteemed by all the brethren. Her husband felt his loss severely; and, for some time, was inconsolable. He soon, however, resumed his labours. On November 25th, three more were added to the church by baptism. Six or seven others were expected soon to follow their example: and the whole number of natives who had voluntarily renounced their cast, at this station, amounted to twenty-five.

At GOAMALTY, the labours of Mr. Mardon, and his two native associates, Deep-chund and Bhagvat, have been greatly interrupted by frequent indisposition. Towards the close of the year 1810, they and their families were much afflicted; but in November he was so far recovered as to be able to take a journey, and preach the gospel. They continued labouring as they were able, though not with much apparent success. In March, Mr. M. describes them as "faint, but pursuing." Deep-chund's mother, a member of their little church, died in a comfortable state, February 17th. At this time the native brethren were brought so low by bodily affliction, as seldom to be able to get out. Mr. M. himself continued weak, and often unable to bear any fatigue. On Lord's-day, July 14th, he baptized the wives of Deep-chund and Bhagvat, and received them into the church. Soon after this, an unpleasant affair, respecting Deep-chund, induced both Mr. M. and he to quit the station, and go to Serampore. This discouraged Mr. M. much; but, in October, he returned to Goamalty, and took with him De Cruz, a member of the church at Calcutta, as an assistant. On his arrival, he wrote to the brethren at Serampore, and concluded thus: "The communion of saints, how sweet and cheering to the mind! Last Lord's-day eight of us partook of the Lord's supper in this bungalow. On Monday evening we had the monthly prayer meeting; and on Tuesday evening we had another prayer meeting here. I have little reason to expect such pleasing interviews in future. The

wilderness of Gowr produces no such delicious fruit. In your prayers remember Goamalty."

Mrs. M. had, in consequence of indisposition, and in prospect of being confirmed, left Goamalty, and arrived at Serampore December 6th. On the 15th she was delivered of a son; and died on the 24th. The infant and three other young children survived, to feel the loss of an indulgent mother. Two of these children, however, soon followed her to the grave: and, on May 23d, 1812, Mr. Mardon himself died, almost suddenly. He was nearly as well as ever he had been six hours before his death. These are dark providences; but the Lord has the residue of the spirit with him; and will, we trust, raise up some well qualified instruments to carry on his own work.

Towards the latter end of November, 1810, Mr. W. Carey jun. and his family arrived at CUTWA, to replace Mr. Chamberlain, who had consented to endeavour to settle a mission at Hindostan, and has at length settled at Agra. Mr. Chamberlain and his family set out for Serampore immediately on the arrival of the former. The interest here is but small; but, in 1811, one native was baptized, and six or seven others expressed their desire to be admitted to that ordinance. One of these is a native merchant of considerable property, who had formerly a house of gods. After hearing and reading the Gospel, he expelled his idols, tied them up in straw, and sent them to Mr. Chamberlain, who sent them to Serampore. He also clave up a fine car of the God Krishna; and used it for fire wood. His former temple is filled with merchandize. There are others who adhere to him, and who have reserved the word of God. As they live about sixty miles from Cutwa, they sanctify the Lord's-day among themselves, by reading the Scriptures, and carrying on the worship of the true God, as well as they are able. They reside at a large town called *Lakra-koonda*, on the confines of the Mahratta country. They have suffered much persecution from their neighbours; but appear to maintain good characters. January 23d, Mr. W. Carey visited them, and baptized two persons. The opposition to the Gospel increased by this public measure, and the heathen magistrates encouraged the populace to maltreat all who shewed a disposition to hear it. Kreeshna Rosa, the merchant mentioned before, has been falsely accused, and lost considerable property; and several of the other enquirers have

been imprisoned and used with great cruelty. They bore it with patience; and an effectual door appears to be opened for preaching the Gospel among the heathens in those benighted parts of Bengal.

The church in the district of **JESSORE** consists of four branches, each about thirty miles distant from each other, and comprehends an extent of country little less than a hundred miles in diameter. Through these branches of the church, **C. C. Aratoon**, called in the former accounts only *Carapeit Chator*, itinerates; and labours with great diligence and success. At the close of 1810, the church consisted of nearly sixty members; thirty-two of whom, fourteen Mussulmen and eighteen Hindoos, had been baptized that year. Six more were baptized June 6th, 1811; and eight waited for baptism in March. At Aratoon's urgent request, four native preachers have been stationed at the different branches of the church, to preach and converse with enquirers when he is absent. Their names are *Sectoram*, *Manik*, *Pron-Krishna*, and *Manik-sha*. These people are very poor. Their pastor is a poor man; nor have they a rich man amongst them. The hardships they endure in embracing the Gospel are truly serious. Prankrishna was threatened by the zemmdar to be turned out of the village. Manik-sha, for attempting to build a hut for worship, was flogged, and imprisoned for three days, without any thing to eat. Fearing the consequences of their cruelty, his persecutors then dismissed him, after stripping him of his little property, and said, "Go home and build your house, but do not preach in these parts; if you do, we will kill you some day." To this Manik-sha calmly replied, "You are able to kill my body, but you are not able to destroy my soul." In some places, however, they meet with more countenance. September 10th, C. C. Aratoon was invited by the head man of a village called *Doto-para*, to preach at his house. He complied; and the invitation was repeated, with a promise to prepare a suitable place for public worship.

The labours of these diligent missionaries continue to be blest. Two natives were baptized in 1811, two more in July; and, in September, Aratoon informed Mr. Ward, that seven or eight persons desired baptism, whom he proposed baptizing in the villaged to which they belonged.

November 19th, 1811, C. C. Aratoon was married to Miss *Miriam Muckerton*. About this time, Mr. Cornish, who had

so narrowly escaped being murdered on the borders of Bootain, undertook the oversight of an indigo factory in *Jessore*; this was done with the approbation of the missionaries, and the hope of promoting the cause of Christ in that neighbourhood.
(To be concluded in our next.)

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

Should you think the following, worthy of a place in your Repository, I should feel myself obliged.

A young gentleman, tenderly attached to a young lady, was obliged to take a journey. During his absence, she became a follower of Jesus. He heard of the change; and wrote her a letter full of invectives against religion and its gloomy professors. Having a good voice, and playing well on the piano-forte, she had been accustomed to entertain him with her music; especially in performing one song to which he was very partial, the burden of which was "Ah never, Ah no!" At the first interview after his return, he tauntingly said, "I suppose, you cannot sing us a song now!" "O yes," she replied, "but I will;" and immediately sung and played the following verses, which she had composed to his favourite tune. The effect was, that his prejudices were shaken; and, in time, he embraced the principles that he had opposed.

Nottingham.

I am yours &c. J. S.

AH NEVER! AH NO!

As I glad bid adieu to the world's fancied pleasure,
 You pity my weakness; alas did you know
 The joys of religion, that best hidden treasure:
 Would you bid me resign them? Ah never! Ah no!
 You'll surely rejoice when I say I've received
 The only *true* comfort attained below.
 I know by experience, in whom I've believed:
 Shall I give up this treasure? Ah never! Ah no!
 In the gay scenes of life I was happiness wooing;
 But ah! in her stead, I encountered a woe:
 And found I was only a phantom pursuing:
 Never once did I find her. Ah never! Ah no!
 But in these bright paths, which you call melancholy,
 I've found those delights which the world does not know.
 Oh did you partake them, you'd then see your folly;
 Nor again bid me fly them: Ah never! Ah no!

THE
GENERAL BAPTIST REPOSITORY.

No. XXVIII.—Vol. V.

EXTRACTS *from* RECENT TRAVELS *in* JUDEA, &c.
ILLUSTRATIVE *of* SCRIPTURE.

ELISHA'S SPRING AT JERICHO. The environs of Jericho are adorned with a spring, the waters of which were rendered sweet by a miracle of Elisha's. This spring is situated two miles above the town, at the foot of the mountain where Christ prayed and fasted forty days. It separates into two branches. On its banks are seen some fields of doura, groups of acacias, the tree which yields the balm of Judea, and shrubs resembling lilacs in their leaves which were not in flower. At present there are neither roses nor palm trees at Jericho. An aged acacia overhangs the spring; and, a little lower, another tree bends in such a manner over the stream, that issues from the spring as to form a natural bridge across it. We halted at Elisha's spring. A lamb was slaughtered and put down whole to roast before the fire, which was kindled on the brink of the water. When the banquet was ready, we seated ourselves round a wooden dish, and each tore in pieces with his fingers a portion of the victim. One is fond of discovering in these customs some traces of the manners of ancient times, and of finding memorials of Abraham and Jacob among the descendants of Ishmael.

ROUTE FROM JERICHO TO JERUSALEM. We quitted Elisha's spring, and set out for Jerusalem. We left, on the right, the mount where Christ fasted forty days, and on the left mount Abarim whence Moses, before his death, surveyed the Land of Promise. As we entered the mountains of Judea, we saw the remains of a Roman aqueduct. The road we pursued among the mountains was broad and sometimes paved; it is perhaps an old Roman way. We passed the foot of a mountain formerly crowned with a gothic castle that defended

the road. We then descended into a deep gloomy valley called in Hebrew the place of blood. In this lonely spot, the Samaritan succoured the wounded traveller. We passed through Bahurim, where David fleeing before Absalom was stoned by Shimei. A little farther we alighted at the fountain, where as tradition relates, Christ was accustomed to rest with his Apostles as he returned from Jericho. We began to ascend the back of the Mount of Olives, and came to the village of Bethany, where the ruins of Martha's house, and the sepulchre of Lazarus are still pretended to be shewn. We then descended the Mount of Olives towards Jerusalem, crossed the brook Cedron in the valley of Jehoshaphat, and pursuing a winding path over Mount Zion, we entered Jerusalem by the pilgrim's gate.

THE VALLEY AND VILLAGE OF ST. JEREMIAH. Before us to the north and east opened the valley of St. Jeremiah. It is conjectured that the author of the Lamentations came into the world in the village that bears his name. So much is certain, that the melancholy of these parts seems to pervade the compositions of the prophet of sorrows. On approaching St. Jeremiah, however, I was somewhat cheered by an unexpected sight. Herds of goats with pendant ears, sheep with large tails, and asses which remind you of the beauty of the ass of scripture, issued from the village at the dawn of day. Arab women were hanging grapes to dry in the vineyards; others with their faces veiled carried pitchers of water on their heads like the daughters of Midian. With the first beams of the light, the smoke of the hamlet ascended, confused voices, songs, shouts of joy met the ear. This scene formed a pleasing contrast with the desolation of the place.

THE PLAIN OF SHARON. The flowers, which in spring adorn this celebrated plain, are the white and red rose, the narcissus, the white and orange lily, the carnation, and a highly fragrant species of everlasting flower. This plain stretches along the coast from Gaza in the south to mount Carmel in the north. The whole of it is not on the same level: it consists of four platforms separated from each other by a wall of naked stones. The soil is a very fine sand white and red; and though intermixed with gravel appears extremely fertile. Thanks however to Mahometan despotism, this fertile soil exhibits on every side nothing but thistles, dry

and withered grass, interspersed with scanty plantations of cotton, and patches of barley and wheat.

THE POOL OF BETHESDA. We have now nothing left of the primitive architecture of the Jews at Jerusalem except the Pool of Bethesda. This is still to be seen near St. Stephen's gate, and it bounded the Temple on the north. It is a reservoir one hundred and fifty feet long and forty wide. The sides are walled, and these walls are composed of a bed of large stones joined together by iron cramps; a wall of mixed materials run up on these large stones; a layer of flints stuck upon the surface of this wall; and a coating laid over these flints. The four beds are perpendicular to the bottom, and not horizontal; the coating was on the side next the water, and the large stones rested, as they still do, against the ground. This Pool is now dry and half filled up. Here grow some pomegranate trees, and a species of tamarind of a bluish colour: the western angle is quite full of nopals. On the west side may be seen two arches, which probably led to an aqueduct that carried the water into the interior of the Temple. Here the lambs destined for sacrifice were washed; and, on the brink of this Pool, Christ said to the paralytic, "Rise, take up thy bed and walk." This is all that remains of the Jerusalem of David and Solomon.

THE SEPULCHRES OF THE KINGS. Leaving Jerusalem by the gate of Ephraim, and proceeding for about a mile along the level surface of a reddish rock, with a few olive trees growing on it, you arrive in the middle of a field at an excavation which bears a great resemblance to the neglected works of an old quarry. A broad road conducts you, by an easy descent, to the further end of this excavation, which you enter by an arcade. You then find yourself in an uncovered hall cut out of the rock. This hall is thirty feet long by twenty broad, and the side of the rock may be about twelve or fifteen feet in height. In the centre of the south wall you perceive a large square door sunk to the depth of several feet surrounded with a whimsical but exquisitely delicate *frieze*. In the recess opens a passage in which people formerly walked erect, but where you are now obliged to crawl on your hands and knees. This leads by a very steep descent to a square chamber, hewn out of the rock. Holes six feet long, and three broad are cut in the walls or rather sides of the cham-

ber, for the reception of coffins. Three arched doors conduct from this first chamber into seven other sepulchral apartments of different dimensions, all excavated out of the solid rock. One of these grotts which is lower than the others having a descent of six steps, seems to have contained the principal coffins. These were generally arranged in the following manner: the most distinguished personage was deposited at the further end of the grot facing the entrance; and on either side of the door a small vault was reserved for the less illustrious dead, who thus seemed to guard those kings that had no occasion for their services. The coffins of which fragments only are now to be seen were of stone and ornamented with elegant sculptures. Nothing is so much admired as the doors of the sepulchral chambers. These as well as the hinges and pivots on which they turned were of the same stone as the grot. From various considerations it is extremely probable that these subterranean edifices were erected by Herod the Tetrarch as tombs for his family. These sepulchres were extremely numerous, but the posterity of Herod soon became extinct: so that many of those receptacles waited in vain for their tenants. Nothing more was wanted to convince me of the vanity of our nature, than to behold the tombs of persons who were never born. The most tragic ideas are connected with the memory of the Herods. We know little of them, except from the massacre of the infants, the death of John the Baptist, the condemnation of Jesus Christ, and the persecutions of his apostles. Little then would you expect to find their tombs embellished with light garlands, not far from the temple where Jehovah gave his tremendous oracles.

MOUNT ZION. The name of Zion doubtless awakens grand ideas in the mind of the reader. This hill is of a yellowish colour and barren appearance, open in form of a crescent towards Jerusalem, and round at the top. This sacred summit is distinguished by three ruins, to which tradition has given the titles of the house of Caiaphas, the place where Christ celebrated his last supper, and the tomb or palace of David. On this mount, we know, that David did build himself a palace and a tomb; here he kept for three months the ark of the covenant.

POOL OF SILOAM. At the foot of Mount Zion on the east is the *Pool of Siloam*, where Christ restored sight to the blind

man. The spring issues from a rock, and runs in a silent stream. It has a kind of ebb and flood: sometimes discharging its current like a fountain, at others retaining it and not suffering it to flow at all. The Levites sprinkled the water of Siloam on the altar, at the feast of tabernacles, singing, "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." Some relate that this spring suddenly issued from the ground to allay the thirst of Isaiah when he was sawed in two, with a wooden saw, by order of Manasseh; while others assert that it appeared first during the reign of Hezekiah. According to Josephus, this miraculous fountain flowed for the army of Titus, but refused its waters to the guilty Jews. The pool, or rather the two pools of the same name are close to the spring. They are still used for washing linen as formerly; and we there saw some women, who ran away abusing us. The water is brackish and has a very disagreeable taste. People still bathe their eyes with it, in memory of the miracle performed on the man born blind.

VALLEY OF JEHOSEPHAT. The valley of Jehoshaphat runs from north to south, between the Mount of Olives and Mount Moriah; and the brook Cedron flows through the middle of it. This stream is dry the greatest part of the year, but after storms, or in rainy springs, a current of a red colour rolls along its channels. The valley of Jehoshaphat seems to have always served as a burying place for Jerusalem: there you meet with monuments of the most remote ages as well as of the most modern times. Thither the Jews resort from the four quarters of the globe to die; and a foreigner sells them, for its weight in gold, a scanty spot of earth to cover their remains in the land of their forefathers. The cedars that Solomon planted in the valley, the shadow of the temple by which it was covered, the stream flowing through the midst of it, the mournful songs composed there by David, and the lamentations uttered there by Jeremiah, rendered it an appropriate situation for the melancholy and the silence of the tombs.

The valley of Jehoshaphat exhibits a desolate appearance. The west side is a high chalk cliff, supporting the walls of the city, above which you perceive Jerusalem itself; while the east is formed by the Mount of Olives and the Mount of Offence, thus denominated from Solomon's idolatry. These

two contiguous hills are nearly naked, and of a dull red colour. On their desolate sides are seen, here and there a few black and parched vines, some groves of wild olive trees, wastes covered with hyssop, chapels, oratorios, and mosques in ruins. At the bottom of the valley you discover a bridge of a single arch, thrown across the brook Cedron. The stones in the Jews' burying ground look like a heap of rubbish below the Arabian village of Siam, the paltry houses of which can scarcely be distinguished from the surrounding sepulchres. Three antique monuments, styled the tombs of Jehoshaphat, Zechariah, and Absalom, appear conspicuous amid this scene of desolation. From the dulness of Jerusalem, whence no smoke rises, no noise proceeds; from the solitude of the hills where no living creature is seen; from the ruinous state of all these tombs, overthrown, broken and half open, you would imagine that the last trump had already sounded, and that the valley of Jehoshaphat was about to render up its dead.

MOUNT CALVARY. In ancient times, Mount Calvary was without the city. It was the place where criminals sentenced to death were executed; and that all the people might attend on these occasions, there was a large vacant space between that place and the city. The rest of the hill was surrounded with gardens, one of which belonged to Joseph of Arimathea who was in secret a disciple of Christ. Here he had constructed a sepulchre for himself, and in this the body of our Lord was deposited. The Jews were not accustomed to bury their dead in the manner we do. Each according to his ability had a kind of little closet hollowed out of the rock, where the body was laid at length upon a table also cut out of the same rock. This receptacle was closed by a stone placed before the entrance, which was generally no more than four feet in height.

JEWS AT JERUSALEM. Cast your eyes between the Temple and Mount Zion: behold a petty tribe cut off from the rest of the inhabitants of this city. The particular objects of every species of degradation, these people bow their heads without murmuring; they endure every kind of insult without demanding justice; they sink beneath repeated blows without sighing; if their head be required they present it to the scymetar. On the death of any member of this proscribed

community, his companion goes out at night and inters him in the valley of Jehoshaphat, in the shadow of Solomon's Temple. Enter the abodes of these people, you will find them, amidst the most abject wretchedness, teaching their children to read a mysterious book, which they in their turn will teach their children. What they did five thousand years ago, these people still continue to do. Seventeen times have they witnessed the destruction of Jerusalem, yet nothing can discourage them, nothing can prevent their turning their faces towards Sion. To see the Jews scattered over the whole world must doubtless excite surprise; but to be struck with supernatural astonishment, you must view them at Jerusalem. You must behold these rightful masters of Judea living as slaves and strangers in their own country: you must behold them expecting under all oppressions, a king who is to deliver them. Crushed by the cross that condemns them and is planted on their heads, skulking near a temple of which not one stone is left upon another, they continue in their deplorable infatuation. The Persians, the Greeks, and the Romans are swept from the earth; and a petty tribe whose origin preceded that of these great nations, still exists unmixed among the ruins of its native land. If any thing among men wears the character of a miracle, that character is here legibly impressed. What can appear more wonderful even to the philosopher, than this spectacle of ancient and modern Jerusalem at the foot of Calvary? The former overwhelmed with affliction at the sight of the risen Jesus; the latter exulting before the only tomb that will have no deposit to render up at the consummation of ages.

JOB'S HORSE. The Arabian horses are treated according to the purity of their blood with more or less honour, but always with extreme severity. They are never put under shelter, but left exposed to the most intense heat of the sun, tied by all the four legs to stakes driven into the ground, so that they cannot stir. The saddle is never taken from their backs; they frequently drink but once and have only one feed of barley in twenty-four hours. This rigid treatment, so far from wearing them out, gives them sobriety, patience and speed. I have often admired an Arabian steed, thus tied down to the burning sand, his hair loosely flowing, his head bowed between his legs to find a little shade, and stealing,

with his wild eye, an oblique glance at his master. Release his legs from the shackles, spring upon his back, and he will paw in the valley, he will rejoice in his strength, he will swallow the ground in the fierceness of his rage, and you recognize the original of the picture delineated by Job.

CORINTH. When the Cæsars rebuilt the walls of Corinth, and the temples of the Gods rose from their ruins more magnificent than ever, there was an obscure architect who was rearing in silence an edifice which remains standing amid the ruins of Greece. This man, who was a foreigner, unknown to the great, despised by the multitude, and rejected as the "offscouring of the world," at first associated with himself only Crispus, Gaius, and the family of Stephanas. These were the humble architects of an indestructible temple, and the first believers at Corinth. The traveller surveys the place where this celebrated city once stood: he discovers not a vestige of the altars of paganism; but he perceives some christian chapels rising among the cottages of the Greeks. The Apostle might still, from his celestial abode, give the salutation of peace to his children, and address them in the words: "Paul to the church of God at Corinth."

ATHENIAN CURIOSITY. We passed through the market at Athens, abundantly supplied with butcher's meat, game, vegetables, and fruit. Every body saluted M. Fauvel, my guide, and eagerly enquired who I was? and whence I came? We find the same inquisitive disposition in ancient Athens. "All the Athenians," says Luke, "spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or hear some new thing." As for the Turks, when we passed them, they coolly observed "A French gentleman:" and continued to smoke their pipes with perfect indifference.

AN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION, "WHY ARE YOU A GENERAL BAPTIST?"

(Concluded from page 118 of the last Number.)

It is, I presume, generally understood, that the principal ground of distinction betwixt the *General* and *Particular* Baptists, is, their different views respecting *the extent of our Lord's death*: the former believing that *he died for all*, without exception; and the latter believing that *he died for only a*

part; that is, for the *elect*. Other important doctrines they believe and maintain in common.

In determining this important enquiry, whether Christ died for a *part of mankind only*, or for *the whole human race*, we must advert to plain, direct, scripture testimony; and those parts especially, which professedly speak of the extent of our Saviour's death. My reasons then, for believing that *Christ died for the whole of mankind*, are briefly as follow.

1. In those places in the New Testament where the *characters* of those are mentioned, for whose sakes he came into the world, and suffered and died, we have a proof of this truth. They are styled indefinitely, *sinners, unjust, ungodly, and the lost*. Thus the Apostle *Paul*, "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to *save sinners*, of whom I am chief." 1 Tim. i. 15. "In due time, Christ died for *the ungodly*." Rom. v. 6. Thus also the Apostle *Peter*, "Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for *the unjust*, that he might bring us to God." 1 Pet. iii. 18. Thus also *our Lord himself*; "I came not to call the righteous, but *sinners* to repentance." Matt. ix. 13. "The son of man is come to seek and to save *the lost*." Luke xix. 10. Now there is nothing in these passages to restrict them to a *part* of mankind; the phrases *the unjust, the ungodly, the lost, &c.* denote such in general. This appears to be their obvious import; and, if there were nothing in scripture more explicit on this subject than these passages, they would be decisive; as they appear to me to hold out as much encouragement to one sinner as to another.

2. But as if it were God's most express design to prevent dispute, and to remove all doubts on the subject, and to prevent any restriction or limitation when recommending it to poor sinners; he has informed us, that *Christ died for ALL, every man, and the whole world*. Thus we read; "the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for *all*, then were *all dead*; and that *he died for all*," &c. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. The *all* for whom he died, must be as extensive as the *all* that were dead; and these, it is granted, were the whole human race. Again. The Apostle exhorts that supplications, &c. be made for *all men, &c.* "For this," says he, "is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have *all men* to be saved, and to come

unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; *who gave himself a ransom FOR ALL*, to be testified in due time." 1 Tim. ii 1, 6. I see no reason why the *all men* whom God would have to be saved; and for whom Christ gave himself a ransom; should be restricted, any more, than the *all men* for whom Christians are to pray. Again, "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour, that he by the grace of God should *taste death for EVERY MAN.*" Heb. ii. 9. Can language be more explicit or full than this? Once more. The Apostle John writes to his fellow Christians that they "sin not, and, if any man sin," he says, "we have an advocate with the father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins;" that is, for the sins of *believers*, or *Christians*, "and not for *ours only*, but also for the sins of THE WHOLE WORLD." 1. John ii. 1, 2. Is there not here an evident distinction made, betwixt *believers and sinners*, or *believers and the world*? And yet he is said not to die for the former *only*, but also for the latter, even for the WHOLE WORLD. Sure no expression can be more unlimited than this. If such a phrase be not intended to express the *whole human race*, I know not what does; or how the whole can be expressed. If, for argument's sake, we allow that it was the sacred writer's intention to convey that idea, we shall be at a loss to conceive any language more proper for the purpose. Thus, we have not only *the world* mentioned, for whom God, in pure love, gave his only begotten son: John iii. 16, but also *the whole world*.

3. This view of the subject appears to me best to correspond with the revealed character of God, and his great benevolence. He is said to be *rich in mercy; full of compassion; abundant in goodness; delighting in mercy; ready to forgive*; and not only the *God of love*, and of *all grace*, but that *he is love*. He solemnly declares that "He has *no pleasure* in the death of the wicked, but that they should return to him and live" Ezek. xxxiii. 11. He is "long-suffering, *not willing that any should perish*, but that ALL should come to repentance." 2 Pet. iii. 9. He is also said to be "good to *all*,"—and "would have *all* to be saved;"—and his tender mercies are over *all his works*." I cannot reconcile such language with

the opinion that a part of mankind are left by the blessed God, without a Saviour and salvation. or any provision for their reconciliation to God and eternal felicity. As there is no salvation but through the death of the Son of God; if he did not die for them, then there can be no salvation for them; but they are left without hope.

4. The commission which our Lord gave to his Apostles, after his resurrection, militates against the notion of the limited extent of his death. His language is, “Go ye into *all the world*, and preach the gospel to *every creature*.” Mark xvi. 15. The gospel is *good news*; good news of *forgiveness and eternal life*, through a Saviour that was crucified. But what good news could be preached to those for whom Christ did not die? Why preach the gospel to *every creature*, if Christ did not die for every creature? There is no pardon, no salvation for any but those for whom he died. Now in this passage, and in many others, particularly John iii. 3, 16. there is an evident distinction preserved betwixt those to whom the gospel is to be preached, and those that will be saved. The Gospel is to be preached *to all*; salvation is restricted to such as *believe*. In the latter also, a distinction is made betwixt *the world*, whom God loved and *for whom he gave his only begotten Son*; and those that *through believing*, will enjoy everlasting life. The former expression is indefinite; the latter is evidently restricted. Those only of the world that *believe*, are to enjoy the blessings of salvation.

The language of our Lord in the parables is in the same strain. Ministers are to go into the streets and lanes, &c. and invite *as many as they find* to the gospel feast. The Apostles appear to have acted upon this view of the commission they had received. They went “every where preaching the word;” and their language was, “Be it known unto you men and brethren, &c.—“to you is the word of this salvation sent.—“We pray *men or sinners*, be ye reconciled to God.”

5. Christ is said to die even *for those that may be lost*; and if so, he must have died for more than the elect: for none will dispute his having died for such as will be saved. When the Apostle gives instructions to christians respecting the use of meats, &c.—and exhorts every one to be careful not to put a stumbling block, or an occasion of falling, in his brother’s way;—he adds, “Destroy not him with thy meat *for whom*

Christ died." Rom. xiv. 15. And again, 1 Cor. viii. 11; where he is speaking of their sitting at meat in the temple of an idol, he says, "through thy knowledge shall thy weak brother *perish, for whom Christ died.*" Now, surely this language implies the *possibility* of some perishing, for whom Christ laid down his life; or what else can be his meaning? The Apostle would not fight with shadows; he would not caution and warn them by introducing an impossible case. The same observations may be made on what he says of himself; namely, that he laboured to bring his body into subjection, "lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, *I myself should become a cast-away.*" 1 Cor. ix. 27. I see no reason to believe that the Apostle had any doubt in his own mind, whether Christ died for him; or whether he had been truly converted; and yet he supposes it possible that he might after all become *a cast-away*. See also, 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21, 22.

6. Upon no other supposition than that of Christ's dying for *all*, and thereby making provision for *the whole human race*, can I see how God can judge the world in righteousness, or consign those to everlasting destruction for whose salvation no provision was made. I am fully sensible that fallible men are very incompetent judges of what is right and proper for the infinite incomprehensible God to do. No guide is so sure, or safe as his word; and by that we must abide. But, nevertheless, he appeals to his rational creatures concerning the equity of his proceedings;—"Are not my ways equal?" and he undoubtedly will be clear when he is judged. The Judge of all the earth will do right; and I have not the least doubt, that all his dealings with his creatures will at length appear both just and merciful. Upon the supposition, however, that Christ has died for all, the finally impenitent are left without excuse.

I might proceed to multiply reasons why I believe in general redemption; but the above shall suffice. Notwithstanding, I feel myself constrained to differ from many on this important subject, for whom I entertain the highest regard. Men of the greatest talents of profound learning, and the most ardent piety, have maintained, and do still maintain, views different from the above; but still, as "the Bible is the religion of protestants," so long as it appears to me to teach a doctrine con-

trary to what such eminent, though fallible men, maintain ; I cannot but adhere to it. Truth and conscience demand it of me ; and I must call no man master but Christ. I wish to hold my opinion with modesty, and to be candid towards such as differ from me. I know I am fallible, and may be mistaken. It is, I trust, my desire to know *the truth*, as it is in Jesus ; and to maintain nothing but the truth. Happy will that state of Christians be, when all will see alike, and when there will be the most perfect harmony, and the most pure and refined friendship. May the spirit of truth guide me, and them, and all Christians into all truth ; inspire us with mutual forbearance, candour, and generous christian love ; and lead our fellow men at length into a saving knowledge of the truth.

II—
April 20th. 1812.

J. F.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR FRIEND,

Being myself a decided friend to *Missions*, I have often felt a wish to see one established among the General Baptists ; or if some desponding spirits should imagine this expression too strong, of seeing one attempted. Permit me, therefore, to lay before you a few desultory thoughts on the subject.

My object is *not* to point to any particular spot as a place suited for missionary exertions. Were a missionary society formed, that would then become a subject of consideration ; but I rather wish on this occasion to urge upon the friends of religion the importance of endeavouring to diffuse the light of life among the benighted votaries of Paganism.

Many societies, it is acknowledged, are now exerting themselves to promote this important end ; but so wide is the field of exertion, that thousands of labourers yet are needed.—For the souls of millions no man cares—there are nations whom no christians help.—Such is the awful darkness of the world, that if all who are influenced by the gospel were to unite their utmost exertions in furthering the cause of Jesus, yet even then ages would probably elapse before the whole world were evangelized, unless the divine blessing in an uncommon measure attended their exertions.

P

According to a *low* computation, four hundred and eighty millions of the inhabitants of the earth still continue wretched pagans, bowing down to idols as base as detestable as Moloch of old. Another computation gives a very considerably larger number.

What is their situation? If we believe scripture, we are there taught to believe them the hopeless slaves of Satan. Whatever harsh epithets may be applied to such a view of the Gentile nations, and however painful it is, yet it is that which the Divine Redeemer gives, Acts xxvi. 18. "Here," observes Dr. Buchanan, "is established that fundamental truth which ought ever to be present with us, in all our counsels concerning the propagation of the gospel, that the Gentiles are under the power of Satan." "I send thee," said Jesus, "to the Gentiles to turn them from the power of Satan unto God." "This," adds that able writer, "is a truth which the wisdom of the world will not receive; and it is assaulted by a false philosophy continually. But, like a rock assailed by the restless waves, it will remain for ever **IMMOVEABLE**. For what we call a revelation from heaven, is properly a revelation of this, that all men are by nature "in darkness" and "under the power of Satan." And that Christ hath come "to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God."

While such, in the most awful and dreadful degree, is the condition of the hundreds of millions that are still benighted with paganism, while this, and **ONLY THIS**, is the view which the Son of God himself hath given of their situation, what an imperious christian duty is it to unite for sending them the tidings of deliverance from such infernal bondage, and for rescuing them from such utter darkness! Compassion for perishing millions, and concern for the Redeemer's honour, not merely faintly call for such an attempt, but *demand it*: and all the obligations we are under to the Most High for delivering us from such direful slavery, and such a night of ruin should lead us gladly to comply.

The worth of the immortal spirits of those who are thus perishing in darkness, should also deeply impress on us that it is our incumbent duty to stretch forth a helping hand, and point them to a Saviour. Oh what is the value of a never dying soul!

Survey that midnight glory ! worlds on worlds !
 Amazing pomp ! redouble that amaze :
 Ten thousand add ; add twice ten thousand more ;
 Then weigh the whole ; *one soul* outweighs them all ;
 And calls the astonishing magnificence
 Of unintelligent creation poor !

Yes ! For all this must perish, but the immortal inhabitant of every human frame will still survive—survive when suns and worlds shall pass away, like lightning seen, admired, and forgotten. Such is the value of a single soul, that a glorious end were answered though the earth and skies were maintained in existence through a thousand centuries merely to ripen one soul for immortality and heaven. Are we deceived by these ideas ? far, far from it. In the estimation of Infinite Wisdom such is the value of the soul, that heaven itself cannot furnish a treasure too costly for its redemption. The brightness of the eternal Father's glory, and the express image of his person, who thought it not robbery to claim equality with him, has condescended to become its ransom. Yet this precious jewel which exceeds the universe in worth, is perishing, is lost. Thousands possess it who know not that they have it, thousands who know not what was paid for its redemption. We know, and should we not tell them ? If there were but *one* in this lost state, the labours of ten thousand thousand men or angels, through ten thousand thousand years, would be well employed in directing that one to the redeemer ; but instead of one only in this condition, there are millions : instead of millions only, lands inhabited by millions, who are but the successors of millions now departed from this world, and who must soon give place to millions more. Some of these might shine for ever as stars in the firmament, when all the stars of heaven are gone out in eternal night. They might, but these are without God in the world. These might sing the praises of redeeming love in robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb—but they know not the Saviour. These might live supported and die animated by the hope of religion, but, they have it not.

I do not wish, my dear friend, to trespass too much on the attention of your readers. I will conclude, only observing, that if you think what I have written worthy of insertion in

the Repository, I propose, with the divine permission, hereafter to pursue the subject further :

And remain, yours, &c.

P.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

I am much obliged to the worthy teachers of the G. B. Sunday School, at Nottingham, for the notice which they have taken of a few queries respecting Sunday Schools, inserted in the 25th number of the G. B. R. The subject is important; and deserves the serious attention of every real friend to mankind. Sunday Schools are certainly a cheap and efficacious means of promoting morality and religion among the poorer classes of the community; and they have, in numerous instances, been made, under the blessing of God, the means of doing much good. I should therefore be sorry if any thing suggested in the queries should be considered as designed to discourage these institutions, or to lessen the countenance which they receive from the wise and the good of all denominations. The sincere intention of the querist was to render them still more useful, by preventing those abuses which might tend to lessen their utility. For he who preserves any good design from misapplication or abuse contributes largely to its proper effect, and renders a benefit to all concerned. With this view I wrote the queries; and with this view I feel desirous to explain my sentiments frankly on the subject.

The great design of these schools ought to be to impart religious instruction, and promote religious dispositions in those children, who might otherwise have no opportunity of gaining the one or cultivating the other. This great object should be kept invariably in view. It is this alone, that can justify the employing of so much sacred time in conducting them. Much temporal benefit may doubtless be derived by poor children from learning to write, &c. but this is not to be obtained by the sacrifice of the spiritual edification of either scholars or their teachers. Reading, valuable as it is, can only be considered as a mean of obtaining religious knowledge; and only as such ought it to occupy the sacred hours devoted to public worship. Moral and religious improve-

ment evidently was the primary object with the original projector of Sunday Schools. The wish to lead a number of children, whom he saw spending the Lord's day in disorder and vice, to a proper observance of that sacred day, first suggested the idea of their establishment to the benevolent Mr. Raikes.

This primary design of these institutions being kept in view will direct both to the proper objects to be admitted, and the measures to be pursued. Every child who needs moral and religious instruction is a proper object for a Sunday School. These may be of two descriptions: children whose parents are too poor to afford them any means of improvement, and who consequently attend no schools; and those who are regularly instructed on week days in reading, writing, &c. but are neglected with respect to divine things, and suffered to spend the Lord's day profanely and unprofitably. Both these classes of children are equally to be pitied; and both may receive lasting and important advantages from a well conducted Sunday School.

But, in order to accomplish the design of these institutions, these children must be treated differently. The former, having no other opportunity of learning, must be taught to read at the Sunday School, that they may be able to read the scriptures. But, as the latter are taught every day, there can be no necessity of employing the sabbath in instructing them in reading. It would indeed be worse than needless: it would have a very mischievous tendency. By employing the Lord's day in the same exercises as they employ the other days, children would be too ready to make no difference between it and them, and find no difficulty in spending it according to their own pleasure. Thus the great design of these institutions would be frustrated. But, if these children were collected at the School on a Lord's day morning, and seriously and affectionately taught the great things of religion: if the nature, propriety, and importance of public worship were explained to them: if they were led under the conduct of pious and discreet superintendants to the house of God at all proper services; and if due care was taken to enquire what they recollected, and to teach them to practice self application—the benefits might be very great; and this class of children have occasion to bless God to all eternity for

Sunday Schools. Far be it, therefore, for me to attempt to exclude such from these schools; all I wish is that their attendance may be made as beneficial as possible. And, when it is considered that two thirds of the children that attend many Sunday Schools, are such as attend week-day Schools, (a fact which might easily be proved,) it becomes a question of importance how they ought to be treated. If the former queries, or these remarks cause those who are actively engaged in this good work to think seriously on the subject, it will answer every purpose intended.

Unwilling to intrude on your limits, I shall only venture two more remarks, which, as they are explanatory of the queries, I hope you will excuse.

It has sometimes struck me, when I have observed the mode of conducting these valuable institutions, that there has not been a sufficient regard paid to economy of time. Too many teachers have sometimes been employed in proportion to the number of scholars; and, in consequence, when the School has attended public worship only once on the Lord's day, the teachers have been more frequently than necessary detained from the means of grace. As the teachers in these Schools are generally young persons, this is the more to be regretted. Every thing that has the least tendency to disturb the regularity of their attendance on public worship is to be dreaded. The young mind, even when seriously inclined, is too prone to relax in religious duties, and too ready to form excuses for slighting them. Small as my Nottingham friends may suppose my acquaintance with Sunday Schools has been, it has afforded me too many opportunities of observing this bad effect. But it may easily be remedied by paying a strict regard to economy of time in laying the plan of attendance, &c. and, it is presumed, that it requires only to be mentioned to be rectified.

My last observation is, that those serious parents, who can procure instruction for their children on the week days, and who are in the habit of attending regularly in the assemblies of the saints, act imprudently, in sending their children to any Sunday School. They would consult the edification of their child much better by keeping him under their own eye on the Lord's day; leading him to the house of God in company with themselves, training him to a serious and

attentive conduct when engaged in public worship; and endeavouring to fix on his memory and conscience what he hears. Every one who has had the care of children knows, that, however assiduous a teacher may be to preserve seriousness and attention in school, and in public worship; yet too often it is found extremely difficult; and that, in the intervals of school hours, when there are a number of children together, they will be ready to indulge in play and sport, inconsistent with the sacred regard that they are taught to pay to that holy day; and directly calculated to counteract the instructions, and damp the impressions which their teachers or ministers may have been labouring to fix on their minds. It would be well if we could stop here; but the painful experience of twenty years obliges us to proceed. Not unfrequently does it happen, that a child is drawn by some of his wicked and artful school-fellows to be guilty of actions really and grossly immoral, even when returning home on a Lord's day. These painful circumstances will sometimes happen; but they furnish no argument against Sunday Schools. The design of such institutions is to endeavour, under the divine influence, to make bad children good; to bring to order and virtue those youths who through the ignorance, poverty, or wickedness of their parents are sunk in disorder and sin. In attempting this, they may expect often to fail; and even when they do ultimately succeed to meet with crimes, which rendered familiar by habit, are not easily reformed. But the many encouraging instances in which these Schools have been the happy instruments of rescuing valuable characters from ignorance and vice, and of rendering those useful and honourable members of society who would otherwise have been its burden and terror: and especially, as there is good reason to believe, that they have, under the influence of divine grace, been the happy means of imparting religious instruction, and of making religious impressions which have led to the conversion and final salvation of thousands who might have remained strangers to the gospel, render them deserving of the liberal support and countenance of all who sincerely wish for the present and future happiness of their fellow creatures. Believing them, in a high degree, adapted to promote both, I rejoice that so many are so zealously supported among the G. B.'s. May their numbers and their usefulness increase, is the

earnest prayer of one, who in reality as well as in profession, is

A FRIEND TO SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

We are to let our light so shine before men, that they may see our good works; Matt. v. 16. We are also to enter into our closets, and shut the door, and there to pray to our father who is, and who seeth in secret. Matt. vi. 6. However bright the flame that burns in this sequestered place, it is not to be expected that much light should beam from the closet into the world, except so far as secret converse with our God makes "the face of our conversation shine." Yet if we are much in private prayer, perhaps it will hardly be either proper or practicable to conceal it from the families in which we stately reside, or in which we occasionally spend a little time. It was certainly very discreditable to Protestants, that a Roman Catholic, when his church was taxed with the appearance of pharisaism, could say, that he believed the Protestants said their prayers no where, for he had travelled with them in the coach, and slept in the same room at inns, yet never heard any pray but one, who was a Presbyterian. Ever since I commenced a religious course, I have been pretty frequent and regular in private prayer; and though I have lived in some families where God is regularly worshipped, I never thought that the duties of the family exempted me from those of the closet. My lot is sometimes cast for a night amongst my christian friends from home. After family worship we retire; and if I be alone I feel myself at liberty. If with an inferior or equal in knowledge, age, &c. I lead him in the chamber to a throne of grace. But perhaps my companion is superior to me, in knowledge, age, and piety; yet he seems to let the family devotion stand for all: nor have I courage enough then to take the lead. It is suggested to my mind that having just risen from your knees below stairs, it will look too ostentatious if you pray again; or perhaps, your praying or requesting him would imply a reproof; as he ought to propose it. If, in such circum-

stances, I were to engage, as I am naturally timid, it is probable that the flutter of my spirits would spoil the duty. I therefore silently commend myself to God. But still I am dissatisfied. Were I not conscious of more timidity than most people seem to feel, I should be ready to conclude my friends were like myself, and perhaps some of them may. If we could however manifest a little more courage in such circumstances, I believe that it would add to our honour, happiness, and usefulness. If you think these lines likely to be useful, you will publish them in the G. B. R. and if any of your older and wiser correspondents will give me and others a word of advice on the above subject, I shall be much obliged.

I am, Sir, your's respectfully,

O.

To the EDITOR *of the* G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

In page 81 of the present volume, a constant reader requests a few explanatory and practical remarks on Eccles. xi. 1: "*Cast thy bread upon the waters; for thou shalt find it after many days.*" If nothing more to the purpose have come to hand, the following hints are offered to your consideration.

The design of the sacred writer, appears to be to encourage us to persevere in our efforts to benefit our fellow creatures, although no apparent success may at present attend our endeavours. The sense of the passage may perhaps be given paraphrastically thus. "Continue to exert thyself for the good of society; and be not too much discouraged if no returns of gratitude be made, by the objects of thy benevolence, nor any fruit of thy labour be apparent in the improvement of their circumstances, their morals, or their virtue: for the time may come, though after a long season, when thou shalt see, even in the most hopeless instances, that thy efforts have produced their proper effects, and when thou shalt receive abundant returns of grateful affection into thine own bosom. Do thou thy duty, and leave the success to Him who governs all things."

This sense of the text, is perfectly consistent with the following context, in which the wise man argues, from various considerations, the impropriety of making present and apparent success the guide of our attempts to do good.

From our ignorance of what distress may happen in future, and how soon we may be deprived of our ability to benefit our fellow creatures. ver. 2. From the certainty, that death will soon put an end to all our endeavours to do good. ver. 3. From the uncertainty of any more convenient time for exertion; and the impropriety of slackening our zeal, or ceasing our efforts for every circumstance of a discouraging nature. ver. 4. From our ignorance of the operations of nature, and the workings of providence, and our consequent inability to determine whether our exertions are not, even when we least suspect it, producing some good effect. ver. 5. And from our utter inability to foresee the events of futurity, or to ascertain which of our plans to promote the glory God, and the welfare of men, will be finally successful. ver. 6. All these considerations enforce the advice of Solomon. "Cast thy bread on the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days."

Having thus ascertained the design of the passage, let us, in a few instances endeavour to illustrate and apply it.

A pious parent may derive both direction and encouragement from this text. He sees perhaps, that his best instructions, his most earnest prayers, and his consistent example, are lost on his thoughtless children. They still remain careless; they probably appear to plunge deeper and deeper into folly. His spirit droops, and he is ready to yield to despair. But let him attend to the wise man's advice; let his admonitions, his instructions, and his prayers be continued; and he may rest assured that they will not be in vain. Possibly, on some occasion, when he least expects it, or in some of his family, of whom he had the least hopes, he may find that his pious endeavours have been operating silently, but deeply; and he may have the high satisfaction of seeing the fruit of his labours, in the change of the disposition and conduct of those over whom he had long mourned. The bread cast on the waters, will be found after many days.

Again, behold that faithful minister of Jesus Christ. He has laboured assiduously, and prayed fervently, for months, perhaps for years; and yet the dear cause of his blessed Redeemer, seems to decline in his hands. In the bitterness of sorrow, he is ready to exclaim, "I have laboured in vain, and spent my strength for nought." But do not despond, thou afflicted servant of God; the time may be at hand, that

will prove thy apprehensions are groundless. Then shalt thou see, that the seed of the word, sown by thee in tears, has fallen in good ground. Though its progress has hitherto been unobserved; yet it has struck deep its roots, and pushed its branches wide underground. It is now just bursting the surface of the earth, and will soon flourish in open day. Then shalt thou rejoice in the fruit of thy labours; and bless God, that neither disappointment nor despair caused thee to relax in thy exertions.

Once more. Those friends of society, who are engaged in the education of the poor, whether employed in the actual superintendance of charity or sunday schools, or generously contributing to their support, by their influence or property, have frequent occasion to mourn over the little effect produced by their most faithful and diligent endeavours. Their hearts sink, and their hands hang down, when they observe that the objects of their generous attention, appear to trifle with the most serious things, and to neglect the most solemn and affectionate admonitions:—when they feel the pangs of disappointed hope, in witnessing proofs of obstinacy and depravity, in those of their charge, of whom they had formed the most flattering expectations. But let not the affectionate mind yield to despondency; his diligent and disinterested endeavours may yet produce their full effect. That froward child, over whose perverseness he now mourns, may, by some dispensation of providence, be brought to reflection. Then those instructions which he has received, and those prayers which have been offered up for him, and with him, will be recollected; and by the influence of divine grace, be instrumental to his everlasting salvation. Others, perhaps, whose inattention or obstinacy during the course of their instruction has prevented all hopes of their real edification, may grow respectable members of society, and humble followers of Christ; and may gratefully ascribe these happy effects to those instructions which they apparently slighted, and to those admonitions, to which they appeared insensible. Thus may the bread cast on the waters, be found after many days. Thine eyes, generous patron, or faithful instructor, may see it, and thy heart, even thine rejoice in the blessed view.

But should it please the Supreme Disposer of all events, to suffer these active and benevolent friends of the human race,

to leave this world unacquainted with the happy result of their sincere endeavours to do good, there is a time approaching, when they shall reap, if they faint not. At that great day when the secrets of all hearts shall be laid open, the pious parent, the laborious minister, the affectionate teacher, and the liberal patron, may meet those on the right hand of the Judge, who may ascribe their felicity to the very endeavours which those who made them, deemed utterly lost. Then may they with unutterable delight, enter the kingdom prepared for the righteous, accompanied by those objects of their assiduous cares, over whom they have here below, mourned, and wept, and despaired. Surely the prospect of such a moment, ought to animate our hearts, and stimulate us to efforts still more vigorous, and to perseverance still more unwearied.

S. O.

REMARKS on PSALM CX. 3. "THY PEOPLE SHALL BE WILLING IN THE DAY OF THY POWER."

This is one of the passages which many suppose to favour the doctrines of Calvinism. The sense in which they understand it is, that the people spoken of, are they who have been before chosen to salvation; that the day of his power is the time when Christ will make his word and ordinances effectual to their conversion; and that, at this time, how rebellious soever they may have been before, they will be brought to true repentance.

This view of the passage seems, at first sight, very plausible; nor is it surprising that persons who are biassed by system, or who do not reflect on consequences, should consider such an explanation as the true one. But does not this interpretation take for granted a notion which is obviously unscriptural? And does it not throw a shade on the divine character? It supposes, that persons before they are converted, even while they are in love with sin, and disobedient to Christ, may nevertheless be his people. But is not this a most unscriptural notion? Those who are unconverted, are, according to scripture, so far from being the people of Christ, that they are the children of wrath, and in a state of condemnation. It also represents Christ as deficient in love to the non-elect, in not doing that for them which is essential to their conversion.

Without a divine and invincible operation there can be no hope of their becoming truly pious. And yet this necessary operation is withheld from them. Does not such a representation cast a shade on the character of Him who is "unwilling that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance?"

The following explanation, it is hoped, is natural and easy in itself; agrees with the context; harmonises with scripture in general; and is not encumbered with implications of partiality, or want of love, in Him "who is good to all, and whose tender mercies are over all his works."

1. *The day of his power* is the period of our Lord's sitting down on the right hand of his Father, as mentioned in the preceding verses: "The Lord said to my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool!" Christ's sitting on the right-hand of God, is in scripture constantly represented as the period of his power. See Matt. xxviii. 18. Eph. i. 20. 1 Pet. iii. 2. &c. &c. The day of his power, therefore, does not relate to some particular time, when he is pleased in an effectual manner, to influence the minds of sinners; but relates to his exaltation at the right hand of the Majesty on high; invested with all power in heaven and on earth. This day includes the whole period of his mediatorial reign, until he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, 1 Cor. xv. 24.

2. *His people*, intend those who uniformly are represented in scripture as his, viz. those who receive him as the Messiah, and are obedient to him as their Lord and king. The scripture will not authorize us to consider any as his people, who are not converted to him. "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." "They who are Christ's have mortified the flesh, with the affections and lusts."

3. Their *being willing* in the day of his power, indicates that the people of God, under the gospel dispensation, should serve him cheerfully, spiritually, and with a willing mind; should, as the original imports, be volunteers in his service; and as the Apostle exhorts christians, should "present themselves a living sacrifice, holy, and acceptable to God," and willingly yield themselves unto God, and their members as instruments of righteousness into God," Rom. vi. 13. The declaration began to have its accomplishments on our Lord's sitting down on the right hand of God; it has had its accom-

plishment in every age of the church since; but it will more fully and gloriously be accomplished, when in the language of scripture, our Lord shall take to him his great power and reign; when he shall have the heathen for his inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession; when all shall know him from the greatest to the least. Then indeed his people will be a willing people. May all who profess to be Christ's in the present age, increasingly bear the mark here given of christians; may they be increasingly spiritual, and willingly offer themselves in the service of Christ their Lord and Master.

J. W.

ILLUSTRIOUS FEMALES.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

SIR

Having received much pleasure from the following letter, dated Nov. 3, 1804, from a respectable clergyman, in Alsace, Germany, to the Secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, I should be pleased to see it in the G. B. R. It does so much honour to the sex, that it ought to be generally known.

PHILANDER.

"I have made a list of such persons as I consider most deserving of such a present. Among the large number of individuals and families to whom a Bible is a most welcome present, I first put down such characters as are most active in promoting the Redeemer's kingdom, and in doing good to the bodies and souls of their fellow-men.

"1. The *first* Bible shall be given as a present to Sophia Bernard, who is one of the most excellent women I know, and, indeed, an ornament to my parish. While unmarried, she undertook, with the consent of her parents, the support and education of three helpless boys, whom the wicked father had often trampled under his feet, and treated in a manner too shocking to relate, when, nearly starving with hunger, they dared to cry out for food. Soon afterwards, she proved the happy means of saving the lives of four Roman Catholic children, who, without her assistance, would have fallen a prey to want and famine. Thus she had the management of seven children, to whom several more were added, belonging to

members of three several denominations; she now hired a house and a servant girl, and supported the whole of the family entirely with her own work, and the little money she got from the industry of the children, whom she taught to spin cotton. At the same time, she proved the greatest blessing to the whole village where she lived. For it is impossible to be more industrious, frugal, clean, cheerful, edifying by her whole walk and conversation; more ready for every good word and work; more mild and affectionate, more firm and resolute in dangers, than she was. Satan so enraged some of her enemies, that they threatened to destroy her old tottering cottage, but God was graciously pleased to preserve her. A fine youth, of a noble mind, made her an offer of his hand. She first refused; but he declared he would wait for her, even ten years. When she replied, that she could never consent to part from her poor orphans, he nobly answered, "Whoever takes the mother, takes the children too." So he did—and all these children were brought up by them in the most careful and excellent manner. Lately, they have taken in some other orphans, whom they are training up in the fear and love of God. Though these excellent people pass rather for rich, yet their income is so limited, and their benevolence so extensive, that sometimes they hardly know how to furnish a new suit of necessary clothes. To them I intend to give a Bible, considering that their own is very often lent out in different Roman Catholic villages.

"2. A *second* Bible I intend to give to an excellent woman, Maria Schepler, who lives at the opposite end of my extensive parish, where the cold is more severe, and the ground unfruitful, so that nearly all the householders are poor people, who must lend their clothes to each other when they intend to go to the Lord's Supper. This poor woman is also a very distinguished character, in whose praise I could say much were I to enter into particulars. Though distressed and afflicted in her own person and circumstances, yet she is a mother, benefactress, and teacher to the whole village where she lives, and to some neighbouring districts too. She takes the most lively interest in all that relates to the Redeemer's kingdom upon earth, and often groans under a sense of all the inroads made by the power of darkness. She also has brought up several orphans without receiving the smallest reward, keeps a free-

school for females, and makes it a practice to lend her Bible to such as are entirely deprived of it.

“ 3. A *third* Bible-present I intend to make to an excellent widow-woman, Catharine Scheiddegger, who is like the former, a mother to orphans, and keeps a free-school; as also does another young woman, who instructs little children in a neighbouring village, in such knowledge as may render them useful members of human and Christian Society.

“ I might easily enumerate many more characters of a similar description, whose eyes will overflow with grateful tears if they are favoured with the present of a Bible.”

To these instances of the laudable exertions of females, we add the following, recorded in the Periodical Accounts of the Baptist Mission in India.

A serjeant of artillery, named W—— was employed during the war in India under Lord Lake, and had an active part in most of the bloody conflicts of the times. He had taken an Hindoo woman, as a slave of the vilest description. This degraded female proved in the sequel, an everlasting blessing to him, and an important instrument in spreading the gospel in Calcutta. Her attachment to her master was so strong, that she accompanied him in the heat of every battle, and often lent him a hand when exhausted, and supplied his place at the guns. In one of these scenes, Mr. W. received a musket ball about the temples, which penetrated nearly through the skull, carrying a part of the brass hoop of his hat along with it. He instantly dropped down, to all appearance dead. She, however, neither lost her fortitude nor her affections: even in this trying moment, when the shots were falling like hailstones about her own head, she took her master on her back, with the intent of performing the last friendly office of burying him, and carried him clear out of the scene of action. It pleased God to restore him: and to make the most grateful return of which he thought himself capable, after his recovery he made her his wife.

On the conclusion of hostilities, he obtained a permanent situation in the fort, at Calcutta. She had soon an opportunity of hearing the Baptist Missionaries preach; was brought to a sense of her lost condition; and enabled to trust in Jesus. She was now anxious in her endeavours and prayers to bring her husband to be a partaker in the same spiritual blessings.

It pleased the Lord to bless her pious efforts with success ; and, in the summer of 1811, they were both baptized, and added to the church at Serampore. Before this event, she had prevailed on her husband to open his apartments in the Fort, for the preaching of the gospel. The missionaries occasionally laboured here ; but it was chiefly supplied by the native preachers. March 17th, 1810, Mr. Marshman went to preach in his turn, but was told by Mr. W. that Col. — had forbidden these meetings to be held at his house, and he must decline continuing them. Mr. M. therefore, having prayed with the people and given them suitable advice, dismissed them : and an inexplicable providence appeared to forbid all further attempts. But this good woman was not to be so easily discouraged. Affected with the tears and lamentations of the hearers, both Europeans and natives, and trusting for success to her Saviour, in whose cause she was engaged, she determined to wait personally on the general himself who commanded in the Fort, to make known her distress. We shall present our readers with her own relation of the interview, as given to the missionaries. “ I found,” says she, “ the general engaged in conversation ; but my business was too urgent to admit of much ceremony. I therefore begged a hearing, which he very kindly granted ; and invited me to take a chair, and come out of the heat of the sun. I told him, I was the wife of a poor man and could not accept such an honour : and, that neither the heat of the sun, nor being burned to death, appeared to me a matter of any consequence when compared with the business I came about. I then told him the story of the meeting at my house from the beginning to the present time. He asked, “ Who preached there ? ” I said, “ The missionaries.” “ But,” said he, “ you do not all understand English sufficiently to benefit by their preaching.” I told him that most of us understood a little ; that the discourses were very plain ; and the Bible was translated into Bengalee, and was expounded once a week, in addition to the English preaching twice. It pleased God to grant me favour in the sight of the general. He not only smiled all the time ; but expressed his hearty approbation of what I had narrated, granting full permission to continue the meeting ; and promising that not one should interrupt us. I felt at a loss for words to express my sense of the favour.

The business however was not yet finished. The colonel knowing nothing of my application, nor of the general's answer, I suggested the necessity of his being informed of it. This the general readily commissioned me verbally to make known to him. I submitted to him whether a few lines from himself would not better establish what he had so kindly granted. He then wrote a line requesting the colonel's company at head quarters. This completed my wishes; as I had now an opportunity of hearing the colonel's objections. I found these to be grounded on a surmise, that the soldiers met to get liquor, and that my husband procured it for them. This I soon cleared up to the satisfaction of both the general and the colonel. The latter then started another objection, much more unexpected than the first: viz. that he supposed the missionaries and myself received money. To this I answered, that a house as large as that which I then stood in, (head quarters,) with a thousand rupees a month, would be considered of no value when compared with the news of salvation, through a crucified Redeemer, which I heard preached at my house; that my husband and myself now resided in a house under his (the colonel's) controul, and were receiving a salary of thirty rupees per month in his gift, for all which we felt thankful to him: but, that if he were determined to shut out the words of eternal life, we would as freely resign his favour as we at first received it. After the latter of these remarks, the two gentlemen retired, and conversed a few minutes out of my hearing. After this, they came and told me to continue the meeting without the least apprehension of being interrupted in future. I then expressed my fear, that, at some distant period, if they should be out of the way, some other superior officers might interrupt us; but both the general and the colonel passed their word, that I might be easy on that head; and that the late interruption was purely the effect of misunderstanding.

The courage, prudence, and zeal, displayed on this occasion, by this converted Indian, certainly do honour to her sex, and place the Hindoo character in a very favourable light.

REFLECTIONS ON CHRISTIAN LIBERTY!

This is an important subject, and deserves to be well understood. It sometimes causes wrangling among serious and well-

meaning christians; and is too often made the pretext for disorder and irregularity.

It is called *Christian Liberty* because it is the peculiar privilege of christians, bequeathed to them by their adorable Saviour. Let us accept it thankfully, use it to his honour, and freely allow it to all our fellow christians. By doing this we shall render christianity honourable in the world, and acceptable to men. We shall then present it in its primitive simplicity; and it will be found worthy of our merciful Father whose wisdom is infinite; and worthy of that exalted being who came into the world, not to destroy men's lives but to save them. It may, perhaps, be useful to mention a few of the mistakes which have been made, by some who called themselves christians, on this subject. This may guard our readers from falling into the same errors.

Some have thought that christian liberty consists in a freedom from all obligations to moral duty. This is an awful delusion. Moral duties arise from our relation to God as our Creator, preserver and governor; and to our fellow creatures as the works of the same Creator, and as standing connected with us in various natural relations. These duties would have been obligatory on Adam had he never fallen; and on all his posterity, had christianity never been promulgated. Christianity, indeed, enforces them with additional motives, and urges them with more endearing and more awful sanctions. "The whole Moral Law," says Dr. Watts, "in the precepts of it, was taken into every dispensation of the gospel, as a part of it; to be the constant and everlasting rule of man's duty." And the blessed Jesus has condescended to furnish us with an epitome of it convenient, for constant reference. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul and with all thy mind; and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," are precepts obligatory on all men, in all places, and at all times. All christians must, therefore, be included; and these precepts, in all their varied and extensive application, are obligatory on them. Their great Founder declared that, "he came not to destroy the law but to fulfil it." And that, "it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than for the least part of his law to fail."

Nor must we suppose, that christian liberty authorises us to change any thing taught in the new Testament; to alter

any of the ordinances which the Author of christianity has instituted ; or to make any additions to them in those particulars in which he has declared his will. In baptism, for instance, we are not at liberty to change either the mode, the subject, or the design of the institutor. To change the ordinance is still one of the things that defile the earth under the inhabitants thereof. Isaiah xxiv. 5. But the great Apostle of the gentiles praises the Corinthians, because they kept the ordinances *as he had delivered them.*" 1 Cor. xi. 2. And the awful conclusion of the sacred volume stands directly levelled against every attempt to add to, or diminish from, the words of revelation. May every one who names the name of Christ fear to incur the dreadful penalties.

Christian liberty stands opposed to the bondage of sin and Satan, under which all men are held in subjection, till they are set free by Christ. He was sent to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and to set at liberty them that are bruised. Sincere christians " have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of adoption whereby they cry, *Abba Father.*" This is that liberty to which every one ought to aspire ; and which demands the supreme estimation of immortal creatures. May the Son make us free, and we shall be free indeed.

Christian liberty delivers us from the *ceremonial law.* Judaism was " a yoke," as the apostle Peter declares, " which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear." Acts xv. 10. This is emphatically called by Paul, the yoke of bondage. In the early ages of the church, there were some that exerted themselves to subject christians to the law of Moses. They were vigorously opposed by all the apostles ; but especially by the apostle Paul, who has spent a considerable part of his epistle to the Galatians, in arguing against them. He exhorts his converts to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free ; and fully shews, that if they expected salvation from the works of the law, then they had fallen from grace ; and Christ had become of none effect." For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision ; but faith which worketh by love." He thought it of so much importance, that he opposed the imposition on every occasion, with the most decided firmness ; and even reproved his brother apostle, Peter, when he acted in a manner that

seemed to give it countenance. May every christian be thankful that this heavy yoke is not imposed on him; and endeavour to learn of him, whose yoke is easy and whose burden is light.

Lastly. Christian liberty set us entirely free from the controul of our fellow creatures, in matters of religion and conscience. It forbids us to call any man master, on earth; and places us all on an equal level. "One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren," is the fundamental principle of christianity; and whatever violates it, is so far destructive of the beautiful system appointed by our Saviour. It leaves all our transactions with our fellow men, and all our duties as members of civil society, to be regulated by the immutable laws of morality; but, in every thing that relates to God and ourselves, in every part of religion, as such, we have no superior. Whoever attempts to impose on us any thing, either in the faith or practice of christianity, invades the province of the great head of the church, acts the tyrant over independent minds: and as far as his attempts are successful, deprives us of our right as christians. Had this been always understood, and acted upon, what torrents of blood might have been spared! what scenes of wretchedness and woe, prevented! What dreadful occasions of reproach to the sacred religion of Jesus, avoided! Let us bless God for that degree in which this great truth is understood, in the present age; and carefully endeavour to extend its influence. While statesmen and legislators are recognising the great principles of christian liberty, while moralists and philosophers are advocating the rights of private judgment, let not christians betray their own cause, by a criminal indifference; or oppose it by narrow minded bigotry.

This hasty glance at the important subject, may teach us several lessons of instruction.

1. We ought to value our privileges, and be thankful for them. We are not called to bear the burdens of meats and drinks, of times and seasons, and of washings, sacrifices, and tithes imposed upon the Jews. The few positive injunctions of the gospel are easy, pleasant, and significant, and well adapted for our spiritual edification, and growth in grace. How ungrateful, then, shall we be, if we disfigure their beautiful simplicity, by any alterations or additions! In these

sacred things, let us maintain a holy jealousy, that all be done after the pattern shewed in the mount.

2. Let us not abuse our liberty into a pretext for disorder and irregularity. There appears to have been some in the apostles' times, who "used their liberty for a cloak of maliciousness," or "an occasion to the flesh;" and others, who so far mistook the nature of this privilege, that "while they promised themselves liberty, they became the slaves of corruption." Indeed, the sacred writers are so frequent in cautioning against the abuse of this privilege, that one would suppose they apprehended peculiar danger. Let us beware then, lest by pushing our claim to christian liberty to extremes, we fail in some of our moral duties. Numerous instances of this might be adduced; but one will explain our meaning. Every one certainly ought to judge for himself, in matters of religion, and no one has any right to impose his opinions on another; but, when under this pretence, the young and ignorant treat the persons or sentiments of their aged and experienced brethren with disrespect or rudeness, they sadly abuse the name. It is the precept of morality, as well as of scripture, that "grey hairs are worthy of honour;" and that "the younger should submit to the elder." And we should always remember, that nothing can supersede a moral duty.

3. While we are endeavouring to use our own liberty to our own edification, let us be careful not to encroach on the liberty of our fellow christians. Let us always remember, that the same sacred principles that forbid our yielding to the controul of any human being, in matters purely religious, forbid our neighbours from submitting their consciences to our authority. Let us therefore never assume the dictator's chair, and suppose that our decrees should command implicit regard. Let us never presume to determine any thing that the great head of the church has seen proper to leave undetermined. And even in points concerning which we believe the oracles of truth are express, let us forbear to judge our neighbour, who professes conscientiously to differ from us. His sincerity or insincerity are known to his great Master; and who are we, that presume to judge another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth.

THE YOUTH'S MUSEUM, No. XI.

HAPPY DEATHS OF PIOUS CHILDREN.

Hannah Smith Chamberlain, the daughter of Mr. Chamberlain, one of the baptist missionaries in India, was a fine child. Though only a few years old, she could read, and converse in three different languages, the English, the Bengalee, and Hindoosthane. She was seized with an indisposition, in 1811, which was long and painful, and brought her very low. A few days previous to her death, while her father was praying by her, she said, "O Lord, let me be an angel of thine, and fly away. Take away this stony heart, and give me a heart of flesh." Her father asked her, "Where do you think you shall go, if you die?" She replied, "Where God pleases to take me." He said, "Do you think you are a sinner?" She answered, "I know it, my dear papa, but Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, who have broken the law of God." On the night before her death, she said to her father, "I want to pray to Jesus." About one o'clock in the morning, she changed for the worse; and died very easily at one in the afternoon, Oct. 10, 1811.

Among the Hindoos converted to Christianity by these laborious missionaries, Krishnoo was one of the first, and has long been a successful preacher of the gospel to his heathen countrymen. Many of his family have embraced the truth, and adorned it by a consistent conversation. Lately, it pleased Divine Providence to take away his grand-daughter, at the age of five years. Her name was Pran. For some time before her death, she seemed to love the Saviour. During her affliction, which was tedious and severe, she was never heard to murmur; but was often heard to cry out, "Lord have mercy on me, Lord forgive my sins." To one who asked her whether she wished to live and serve God on earth, she replied, "I wish to go to heaven, and praise Christ there." Two days previous to her death, she called her relative Anunda, and begged her to sing and pray with her; in which she joined, kneeling down on her bed. Just before her departure, she got some friends together to read the scriptures, and sing and pray with her; and while they were in this act, she breathed her last without a sigh or a groan.

BOYS EXPOSED FOR SALE.

SUMATRA is a large island in the Indian Ocean, about a thousand miles long, and one hundred and fifty broad. The English have for more than a century had settlements on the western coast of this island, and most of the maritime parts are possessed by the Mahometans; but the inhabitants of the interior remain sunk in the grossest barbarism. One of the inland districts, denominated the Cassia country, is inhabited by a people called the *Battas*. These differ from all the other inhabitants in language, manners, and customs. They are a nation of cannibals, and actually purchase human beings for food. The following account affords an affecting proof of this horrid fact.

Mr. Williams, the captain of a country trading vessel, had occasion, in 1811, to touch on the coast of Sumatra, in a part peopled by the *Battas*. During his stay there, he one day observed three boys, confined in a kind of wooden cage. Struck with surprize, he inquired into the circumstance; and learnt with horror, that they were *fattening for the knife*, and were exposed for sale. That is, as our young readers will observe, these three boys were kept up in this coop, and fed plentifully, that they might grow fat and be fit to be slaughtered, and sold for food; just as they treat young pigs in England. Captain W's humanity was roused at this shocking spectacle; and he instantly bargained for them. For the sum of about thirty pounds, he had the high satisfaction of carrying them safely to his ship. What became of two of them is not said; probably they died during the voyage. The third, whom he gave the name of Thomas Chance, he brought to Calcutta; and placed him at the charity school founded and conducted by the Baptist Missionaries.

When first placed in this seminary, it was found very difficult to make him understand the most simple thing; and more so to persuade him to touch food in the presence of any of the family. He continued thus for more than a month, although they used every means to cultivate familiarity with him. He had picked up a few words of English during the voyage; but appeared to have no idea of any other language. He seemed to remember nothing of either father or mother; and it is highly probable that he did not know that he ever had any parents. Though apparently about twelve years of

age, it could not be discovered, that he recollected any thing prior to Capt. W's carrying him to the ship.

The rude state of his ideas and articulation rendered it exceedingly difficult to teach him either to understand or pronounce. These obstacles however he surmounted by his voluntary and indefatigable diligence; but, even in this the strangeness of his disposition appeared. He seldom parted with his book as long as daylight continued; but he was seldom seen, as he preferred the most dark and retired corner of the house. He has lately taken a great liking to writing; and at first, permitted a schoolfellow to rule his book and set him copies: but he now rules his book himself, and goes on writing his own way. He begins likewise to read and pronounce pretty clearly. In short, if his life be spared, there is reason to hope that he may become an useful member of society: for this poor savage boy has already learnt to read his New Testament, and to write legibly.

When our young readers have finished this affecting story, it is hoped, that they will reflect on the goodness of Providence in placing them in a christian country; and feel compassion for those wretched children that are born in the lands of pagan darkness, and treated like the beasts that perish.

GENERAL BAPTIST OCCURRENCES.

ORDINATIONS.

June 3, 1813, Mr. James Smith, late of Kirton in Lindsay and Sutterton, was ordained to the pastoral office over the G. B. church, at Tydd St. Giles's, Lincolnshire. Mr. H. Everard opened the morning service with reading suitable portions of scripture, and offering the general prayer; Mr. Burgess then put the usual questions to the church and the minister, and having received satisfactory and affecting answers, he offered the ordination prayer, and with Messrs. Jarrom and Everard, laid hands on the minister. Mr. Burgess then delivered the charge to the minister, from Col. i. 7. "A faithful minister of Christ:" and concluded the morning service with prayer. In the afternoon, Mr. Pocklington engaged in prayer, and Mr. Jarrom addressed the church from Col. ii. 5. "Joying and beholding your order; and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ." Suitable hymns, at proper intervals, were given out by Mr. Bampton, of Sutterton. May

this young minister who has laboured for some time among this people with much acceptance and success, for many years to come, shew himself a faithful minister of Christ, and have great reason to joy in beholding the order and steadfastness of the faith in Christ of a numerous, prosperous, holy, and happy people.

June 22, 1813, Mr. G. Cheatle was ordained to the pastoral office over the G. B. church, at *Birmingham*. Mr. Jarrom, of Wisbeach, began the service with prayer, and the reading of suitable portions of scripture. Mr. James Taylor, of Heptonstall Slack, delivered the introductory discourse. The questions to the church and minister were proposed by Mr. Felkin, of Kegworth; and answered on the part of the church by Mr. Cottrell. Mr. Cheatle, in reply to the questions put to him, introduced a short account of his sentiments on the principal subjects of religion. The ordination prayer was then offered by Mr. R. Smith, of Nottingham; who, in conjunction with Messrs. D. Taylor, T. Rogers, W. Burgess, and J. Jarrom, laid hands on Mr. Cheatle. Mr. D. Taylor, of London, afterwards gave the charge to the minister, from Heb. xiii. 17. "They watch for your souls as those that must give account:" and concluded the morning service with prayer. In the afternoon, Mr. B. Pollard, of Quorndon, preached to the people from 1 Thess. v. 12, 13. "We beseech you, brethren; to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake; and be at peace among yourselves." Mr. Brand, of Castle Donington, gave out the hymns at both services. This was a pleasing and affecting opportunity. The congregations were respectable and serious. May this young man, thus settled in an important station, prove himself an able minister of the New Testament: and may the church flourish long under his care, and abundantly increase in numbers and in graces!

CONFERENCES.

June 8th, 1813, the LEICESTERSHIRE CONFERENCE was held at *Archdeacon Lane, Leicester*. The ministers present were Messrs. Felkin, Pollard, Wesley, Pickering, Green, Gamble, Cheatle, Pike, Stevenson, Orton, Briggs, Brand, Jones, J. Deacon, and Yates. The case at Nantwich was

referred to the Association.—And, in answer to a case from Derby, it was unanimously agreed, (except a few neutrals,) that, considering how baneful the poison of Socinianism is, there is a manifest and great impropriety in Socinian Ministers being invited, upon any account whatever, to preach to G. B. Churches, as by giving an indirect sanction to their principles who deny the Lord that bought them, and lessening the distance between those who hold them and ourselves, it has a tendency to make inexperienced christians an easier prey to that destructive system which saps the very foundation of vital piety. The next conference to be at Derby, on the last Tuesday in September: Inn, Robinhood, Irongate.

June 3d, 1813, the LINCOLNSHIRE CONFERENCE was held: at *Tydd St. Giles's*. But few ministers were present, and the time was chiefly employed in the ordination of Mr. Smith. Mr. Morris, late of Dunstable, who was occasionally present, kindly supplied the place of the absent brother who was appointed to preach, and delivered a discourse, on Wednesday evening, from Psa. lxxii. 19. "Blessed be his glorious name for ever; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory." Mr. Bampton gave out the hymns. The next conference to be at Wisbeach, Oct. 7, 1813, and the sermon on the preceding evening.

ANNUAL ASSOCIATION.

The ANNUAL ASSOCIATION of the New Connection of G. B.'s, was held this year, 1813, at *Birmingham*: it commenced June 22d, and continued to the 25th. Mr. D. Taylor was chosen Chairman; Mr. R. Smith, Deputy Chairman; and Messrs. J. Freeston, and W. Burgess, Moderators. On Wednesday morning, Mr. T. Rogers opened the public service with prayer; and Mr. R. Smith preached from Col. i. 28. "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus!" In the evening, Mr. Sexton prayed; and Mr. D. Taylor preached, from Phil. ii. 16. "Holding forth the word of life, that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain." Mr. Jarrom opened the public service on Thursday evening; and Mr. Felkin preached, from Isa. xxviii. 16. "Therefore, thus saith the

Lord God, behold, I lay in Zion, for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste."

In the course of the last year, four hundred and thirty-nine have been baptized; and ninety-seven removed by death. The present number in the Connection are five thousand nine hundred and eighty-eight; and the clear increase of members, two hundred and forty-two. On the whole, the cause appears on the advance, and the churches, in general, in peace. We trust, that the great Head of the Church still continues to bless those hills of his Zion. At this Association, much important business was attended to, in an affectionate and harmonious manner. May it issue in the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom among men; and the prosperity of that interest with which it was more intimately connected. The next Association to be at Birclescliff, in Yorkshire; to commence on the last Tuesday in June, 1814.

G. B. ACADEMY.

At the last Association, the management of the Academy was resigned into the hands of the Connection; and it was agreed, that the business relating to it should be transacted by the Annual Association. Several important resolutions were adopted, respecting the objects of the Institution, the application of the funds, and the management of the whole undertaking; which, by rendering it more extensively and effectually useful, will, we trust, engage the cheerful support of the whole Connection. When the plan for the future conducting of this Institution is matured, and the arrangements completed, we shall be happy to lay the whole before our readers. In the mean time, we are highly pleased to record an instance of liberality, that ought to be generally known; Mr. F. Boot, of Nottingham, has paid into the hands of the Treasurer twenty Guineas, as a donation, for the support of the Academy. We insert this encouraging fact, to stimulate others, who have the ability, to go and do likewise. The objects of the Institution being enlarged, the expence will be greater; and it is hoped that the liberality of its supporters will increase in proportion. Nothing but the united and zealous patronage of all the churches, can render it effectual for the important purposes designed.

THE HISTORY OF THE NEW CONNECTION OF GENERAL
BAPTISTS.

The Subscriptions received at the Association for this Work were encouraging; and have induced the Author to determine, if it please divine Providence to favor him with life and health, to proceed with the undertaking as expeditiously as circumstances will permit: As several churches, however, have not sent in an account of their subscribers, it was agreed, at the recommendation of the Association, to extend the period of subscribing to the 1st of October next:—to publish the Work in shilling numbers:—and to leave it to the convenience of the Subscribers, either to pay four shillings at the time of subscribing; and the remainder on the delivery of the last number; or to pay for each number when it is received; the Church, or the person who sends the order, being considered as security that each Subscriber will complete the purchase. It is now, therefore, proposed, to publish the first number of the History on the 1st of February next; and, if possible, to follow it with a number every succeeding three months, till the whole be completed. All who wish to encourage the undertaking, are earnestly requested to send in their names before the 1st of October; as the price of each number must then be advanced to fifteen-pence, to all who have not previously subscribed. A List of Subscribers will be printed in the last number.

As the merit of the Work, as well as the early and regular publication, will, in a great measure, depend on the prompt communication of proper materials, it is hoped that each Church will immediately appoint a person to furnish the Author with as particular answers to the following queries, as can be obtained:—1. When and how was your Church formed?—2. Who was your first pastor?—3. What was the number of members at the commencement; and at the close of every ten years, to the present period? what pastors have you had? and when did they succeed each other?—4. Have any of your members, whether pastors or others, been distinguished for usefulness, zeal, piety, &c. &c.—5. Have you any institutions amongst you, for promoting the interest of religion, or the good of society? if so, what are they; and what has been their success?—6. Into what other places have you introduced the G. B. cause?—7. When was your meeting-house

erected?—8. What other interesting circumstances have you to communicate, either respecting your own Church, or the G. B. interest in your neighbourhood?—The early communication of detailed replies to these queries will be esteemed a particular favor; especially, if attention be paid to *facts* and *dates*.

There is another part of the proposed History, to which the Author begs leave to call the attention of those Churches which have formerly belonged to other Associations. There is reason to believe, that, during a considerable part of the seventeenth century, the *General* Baptists were highly respectable for their numbers, characters, and sentiments. As their history has never been distinctly written, they remain almost unknown. The Author would be happy to rescue their memories from oblivion, and to place them, in their due rank, among the ancient puritans and non-conformists, the worthy ancestors of the modern dissenters. In this design, he trusts, that he shall enjoy the cheerful assistance of those G. B. churches, in the various parts of the kingdom, who are their successors. He, therefore, flatters himself, that those Churches who may have church books, of an early date, and those individuals who may be in possession of any of the works of the G. B.'s, in those ages, will not neglect to oblige him, as soon as possible, with the loan of them, and they will be carefully returned. It is probable, too, that several of the descendants of those G. B. confessors, who suffered so nobly under the Stuarts, may possess some traditional accounts which might greatly enrich this History: and it is hoped that they will seize with pleasure this opportunity of contributing to do justice to their pious ancestors.

Any communications respecting either Subscriptions or Materials will be thankfully received by the *Editor of the G. B. R.*

REVIEW OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE ADVANTAGES OF EARLY PIETY, displayed in a MEMOIR of Mr. JOHN CLEMENT, *Surgeon, late of Weymouth; who died in the twentieth year of his age.* By JOHN HOOPER, M. A.. 8vo. pp. 190. pr. 4s. 6d. in boards.

This is a very pleasing account of an excellent young man, whose piety, diligence, and abilities, gave encouraging prospects of his future eminence and usefulness. We think this

small volume cannot be attentively read by any description of character without considerable profit. It will, however, be peculiarly advantageous to youth; but more especially to young men engaged in the pursuit of knowledge. To these, the humility and docility, the diligence and punctuality of young Clement, will operate powerfully, both as a stimulus and example. To such we heartily recommend this instructive memoir; and are persuaded, that a practical regard to its contents will have a happy tendency, either to fit them to live usefully and honourably among men, or prepare them to meet death with safety and tranquillity. The author has rendered this account much more interesting, by inserting copious and well-selected extracts from Mr. C's Letters and Diary; by which the young reader is admitted, as it were, into the confidence of the worthy deceased, and made the partaker of his most private meditations. Many of these extracts are very valuable.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE BAPTIST MISSION IN INDIA.

(Continued from page 144.)

Having, in our last number, traced the progress of the Baptist Mission in the distant parts of India, we shall complete the sketch; by a brief account of its success at Serampore and Calcutta, the original seat of the mission.

The labours of Krishnoo at Calcutta are continued and rendered increasingly useful. This native preacher grows in grace and in knowledge. He has lately been joined in the sacred work by Sebuk-ram, another native convert from idolatry, a man of kindred zeal and diligence. "I could not help," says the Deacon of the church at Calcutta, "noticing with admiration the zeal and activity of our truly valuable brother Krishnoo, who appears to gather strength of body by his unremitting labours. He preaches at fourteen different places during the week, he has fifteen families in his circuit; spares no labour, and shuns no fatigue; but flies wherever duty calls. He regularly visits twenty-eight private families in the city. Indeed, instead of being wearied in all these visits and labours, you would take him to be a young warm convert, having at the same time the experience of a father.

In Oct. 1811, there were no fewer than nineteen candidates for baptism. From their accounts of the work of grace

on their hearts, it appeared that eighteen of these were indubitably under divine grace, to the translations of the scriptures for their first serious impressions. A striking instance of the importance of supplying even the unconverted with the word of God, in a language which they understand, and a strong incitement to exertion and perseverance in every attempt to disseminate the oracles of truth.

The Lord continued to bless the labours of the missionaries. Numbers of Europeans, Portuguese, Hindoos, and all the motley group that inhabit Calcutta and its populous environs, were roused to a concern for the salvation of their immortal souls. Doors were opened by providence for preaching the gospel and distributing the scriptures, which the brethren diligently improved. Several persons of respectability attended their worship; and they were in a good measure countenanced by the government. Within the eight months preceding Sep. 1811, fifty persons had been baptized at Calcutta, and twenty-four more previous to March, 1812.

A great and important part of the success of the missionaries has been among the British soldiers, stationed in various parts of India. In the autumn of 1809, Mr. Chamberlain baptized twenty-five of the twenty-second regiment at Berhampore, in the vicinity of Cutwa. This number consisted of two serjeants, seven corporals, and fourteen privates. In Oct. the same year, three privates, and in Dec. one serjeant, and eight privates of the same regiment were likewise baptized. Their conduct during their stay at Berhampore, did honour to their profession. They formed themselves into a church and chose elders from their own number. They instituted a school at Berhampore, in which not only all the children of the regiment, that could be induced to attend were instructed gratis; but a great number of their adult countrymen were taught to read the word of God. All the expence of this school these brethren defrayed themselves; besides nearly one hundred pounds which they laid out in the space of two years, in bibles, hymn books, and other books calculated to promote spiritual edification, of which they formed a common library. They likewise collected a considerable sum, which they sent to Serampore as a present to the mission.

They did not however continue long at Berhampore; but soon were ordered to Calcutta, where they appear to have

been stationed during the greatest part of 1810. About the time of their arrival in this city, several soldiers who were already in that garrison, by attending on the labours of the missionaries, were brought to a sense of divine things and joined the church at Calcutta. In July 1810, several privates of the 14th regiment were baptized by Mr. Ward. Others soon after joined them and they united together, and formed what is denominated in the Periodical Reports, *the church in the army*. Being ordered to embark in the expedition against the Isle of France, they chose a pastor, and two assistant elders. They viewed their probable destination as likely to afford an opportunity of spreading the gospel; and expressed their determination to improve every occasion that offered. The church in the army consists of between thirty and forty members, in full communion: many of whom are steady and judicious men, well acquainted with the scriptures. Previously to the departure of the expedition, they addressed a very affectionate and pious letter, dated Sep. 1810, to the brethren at Serampore, expressive of their gratitude for the spiritual advantages which they had enjoyed by their instrumentality; and earnestly entreating an interest in their prayers. They were all engaged in the attack on the Isle of France and Bourbon; but were providentially preserved from harm. After the capture, they remained some time in the Isle of France, where they had the happiness of being joined by some pious soldiers of the 59th regiment, and added three to their church by baptism. In the beginning of 1811, the 22d regiment took possession of the French Port Tamitase, in the Isle of Madagascar, where they expected to continue for some time in garrison. The 14th regiment returned to Madras, and the pious soldiers experienced considerable persecution. They were frequently interrupted in their worship, and some of them were committed to the guard house, for having met on an evening for the worship of God. We are happy to find, that the brethren submitted to these harsh measures with patience and cheerfulness; and that they are only distinguished from their comrades, by the regularity and sobriety of their conduct and the punctuality with which they discharge their military duties.

But the missionaries do not confine their labours to the adult. They have established a Seminary, under the title of "*The Benevolent Institution, for instructing the Children of*

indigent Christians." Of this description there are, it is said, above seven thousand Portuguese families in Calcutta; besides Greeks, Armenians, &c. These are, in many instances, four descents from European Portuguese, incapable of reading a Portuguese book, or understanding a Portuguese sermon: hence, as the service of their churches is all performed either in Latin or Portuguese, they are heathens in every thing but name. They are, too, extremely poor, beyond either Hindoos or Mahomedans. Exposed to the most corrupting examples, and driven, by necessity, to the most degrading means of obtaining support, their children grow up the burthen and terror of society. "I do not believe," says the worthy master of the school, in a letter to Mr. Marshman, "that children of their age, even in Constantinople, exceed them in lying, swearing, obscenity, resentment, accompanied by deep-rooted pride, and the obstinacy arising from the united idolatry and superstition of heathens and catholics. All these vices are to be seen glaringly in children scarcely arrived at the age of six years."

Pitying the deplorable condition of these wretched children, Mr. Marshman recommended them to public notice, in a sermon, preached Dec. 25, 1809; and opened a school for their gratuitous instruction. Mr. Leonard, one of the deacons of the church at Calcutta, was appointed master; and before April, 1810, they had fifty boys under their care. The school-room was used in the evenings as a place for religious conversation with enquirers. In the beginning of 1811, they adopted a plan of teaching, built on Mr. Lancaster's, but considerably improved, by which they were enabled to instruct a greater number of children. In May, 1811, they had increased their scholars to upwards of 100; and before March, 1812, they amounted to 350. About this time, they opened a free school for girls, on the same plan, which was equally successful. They are building a large school-room in the heart of the city, near their own chapel; which will measure 90 feet by 70, and accommodate, they suppose, nearly 800 scholars.

The missionaries were proceeding with this labour of love, in their usual quiet unostentatious manner, when they were forced into notice by a violent attack, in the public paper, from a Dr. W. one of the Company's chaplains, and master of the established free-school. This obliged the missionaries to defend themselves through the same vehicle; and the result was, that though Dr. W. set up a similar institution, yet the subscriptions

to the missionary school were more than trebled, and they were relieved from all their difficulties. "Nothing," says Mr. Marshman, "could have been more opportune than this attack. It has published and accredited the Benevolent Institution, both with the public and with the government. It may now be carried to any extent."

Besides this great undertaking at Calcutta, the brethren have opened two schools, of a similar nature, on their own premises at Serampore. They are supported and managed wholly by the male and female scholars in Mr. and Mrs. Marshman's boarding schools. The object of all these institutions is to teach the children reading, writing, and arithmetic, both in English and Bengalee; and to make them familiar with the scriptures in both languages, as the grand means of making them wise unto salvation. When we contemplate these exertions, in connection with the success of the translations of the scriptures, we cannot refrain from indulging a sanguine hope, that the Sun of righteousness is rising on the benighted nations of the east.

While these strenuous exertions are making in Bengal, the brethren are contemplating new missions. Mr. Robinson, has set out for the island of Java; and Mr. and Mrs. Chater, who were for some time with Felix Carey, at Rangoon, had safely arrived at Columbo, in the island of Ceylon, where they are endeavoring to establish a mission. In both these attempts, the permission of government has been obtained. A number of native members of the church at Calcutta are gone, with Mr. Thompson, to the city of *Patna*, where another church will be formed, distinct from that under Mr. Moore at Digah, and 15 miles distant from it. Another church is expected to be formed near Dacca, where Mr. Cornish has settled in an indigo factory, and has taken with him Bhagvat, a native preacher. There are now twelve missionary stations; ten churches; thirty brethren, who preach, according to their ability, in six different languages; and ten others, who stand ready to devote themselves to the work. In the close of 1812, Messrs. Johns and Lawson, who were sent out from England in Nov. 1810, arrived at Serampore, and were received by the missionaries with gratitude. They had suffered some heavy bereavements, having buried four children, two scholars, and a faithful servant, out of the mission family, in less than a year; besides Mrs. Mardon, who died a few months previous, and Mr. Mardon, who expired almost suddenly, May 23, 1812.

POETRY.

ON THE AUTHOR'S BIRTH DAY.

Blest be that God, who, by his power,
 At first did give me breath;
 And still preserves me ev'ry hour
 From accidents and death.
 'Tis to his boundless love I owe
 Whatever I enjoy;
 O may the gifts his hands bestow,
 My grateful thanks employ.
 It was his tender care to me,
 Upheld my youthful way;
 And lengthen'd out my span, to see
 Once more my natal day.
 The day when I, a stranger, came
 To sojourn on this earth;
 But he, my God, I'll bless his name,
 Preserv'd me from my birth.
 Think, O my soul, what thanks are due,
 Beyond thy power to pay,
 To him, for mercies ever new,
 By thee receiv'd each day.
 If to create, preserve, redeem,
 Proclaim the Deity;
 Then ever make His love thy theme,
 For these are done for thee.
 Through all my life, while years shall bring
 This day in annual round,
 In serving him, my Heav'nly King,
 May I be ever found.
 Then though my path on earth should be
 With crosses overlaid;
 On Him I'll e'er rely; for He
 Will keep me undismay'd.
 Thus while I live He'll be my friend;
 And, thro' my Saviour's love,
 I'll hope, whene'er this life shall end,
 To be receiv'd above.

THE
GENERAL BAPTIST REPOSITORY.

No. XXIX.—Vol. V.

**THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF PROPHECY IN THE CAPTURE
AND TOTAL DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON.**

THE Fulfilment of Prophecy affords so conclusive a proof of the divine origin of the Scriptures, that all, who wish to be able to give a reason of the hope that is in them, ought to endeavour to gain some acquaintance with this interesting subject. Our limits forbid us to take a regular survey of so extensive a field; but we may cast an occasional glance over some detached parts, and receive both gratification and instruction. We select, as the subject of our present contemplation, the accomplishment of the prophecies respecting Babylon.

Babylon is supposed to have been founded about fourscore years after the flood, by the great grandson of Noah, "Nimrod, that mighty hunter before the Lord." Gen. x. 9. It was situated in the delightful plain of Shinar, which was so fertile and pleasant, as to have been thought by many the seat of the terrestrial paradise. The river Euphrates watered this country; and contributed much to its fertility and beauty. The vain attempts of puny mortals to make themselves a name, raised here a mighty edifice, which has been rendered famous by the confusion of the builders, and entailed the name of Babel or Confusion on their structure. Round this tower, arose, in process of time, a city which was called Babylon. For many ages it continued on a level with other neighbouring states, and was subject to a despotic chief. But about seven hundred years before Christ, it began to extend its influence and increase in magnificence. Its monarchs enlarged their dominions, by the successive subjugation of the neighbouring states; till, in about one hundred and fifty years, it attained its full splendour and importance. A

short description of this celebrated metropolis will render the following remarks more intelligible.

Babylon was built on an extensive plain, in the form of an exact square, each side being fifteen miles in length. The circuit, therefore, of the town was sixty miles. The walls were three hundred and fifty feet in height, and eighty seven feet thick; inclosing a space of two hundred and twenty-five square miles. In each side of the walls, were twenty-five gates, all of solid brass: and between every two of these gates, at equal distances, three towers. From each gate, a straight street extended to its corresponding gate in the opposite wall: thus there were fifty streets, each fifteen miles long, and one hundred and fifty feet wide; twenty-five of which ran east and west; and twenty-five, north and south. These streets divided, by their intersections, the whole city into six hundred and seventy-six great squares: each nearly one thousand yards in length, and as much in breadth; and containing about two hundred acres of ground. These squares were surrounded with magnificent houses, three or four stories high, and beautified with all manner of ornaments. The interior of each square was laid out in gardens, pleasure grounds, &c. and could, in case of a siege, be applied to produce subsistence for man and beast. A branch of the Euphrates ran through the midst of this city from north to south. On each side of the river, were walls similar to the external walls of the city, and brazen gates, of the same construction. A bridge of a furlong in length was thrown over the river in the centre of the city. On the east shore of the Euphrates, stood the old palace of the kings of Babylon, four miles in circumference: and on the opposite shore, Nebuchadnezzar erected a new palace, four times as large as the former. To gratify his queen, who retained a taste for the mountains and forests of Media, her native country, Nebuchadnezzar constructed the famous hanging gardens. They were four hundred feet square, and consisted of terraces one above another, carried up to the height of the wall of the city: the ascent from terrace to terrace being by steps ten feet wide. The whole pile consisted of substantial arches upon arches and was strengthened by a wall, surrounding it on every side, twenty two feet thick. The floors were made so as to retain the moisture of the mould, which was suf-

ficiently deep to afford space for the roots of the large trees that were planted on the terrace; together with an immense number of shrubs of every kind. Upon the uppermost of these terraces, was a reservoir, filled by an engine with water from the river; from whence the gardens on the other terraces were supplied:

Nor was less attention paid to the safety and convenience of this great metropolis; than to its ornaments. The Euphrates annually overflowed its banks; which, though very conducive to the fertility of the soil, was inconvenient to the inhabitants of so populous a city. To remedy this, an immense artificial lake was dug, of about forty miles square, and forty feet deep. This lake was connected with the river by proper canals and sluices, by which the excess of the waters could be drawn into it. Thus the inundation was prevented: and a large quantity of water was always ready to be let out, as occasion required, for the improvement of the land.

Such was the city. Its inhabitants were numerous, wealthy, and luxurious. Its monarchs were the acknowledged sovereigns of most of the neighbouring nations: and maintained a state and grandeur corresponding with the extent of their dominions, and the magnificence of their residence. Babylon might be justly called the lady of the kingdoms. To use the expressive language of inspiration, "she was given to pleasure; she dwelt carelessly: and said in her heart, I am, and there is none else." Isaiah xlvii. 5, 8.

Among other nations subdued by the monarchs of Babylon, were the Jews. The oppression, cruelty, and injustice, exercised by those haughty conquerors towards their unhappy captives, provoked the Lord of Hosts to declare that he would "plead the cause of his people, and take vengeance for them." Jer. li. 36. This had been foreseen by Him who declareth the end from the beginning: and, long before the events took place, the captivity of the Jews, the cruelty of the Babylonians, and their exemplary punishments, had been distinctly foretold. Isaiah who flourished upwards of a century before the captivity, and nearly two centuries before the capture of Babylon: and Jeremiah who lived at the time of the captivity united in foretelling the awful fate of this city. We shall select the leading circumstances from these prophets: and then shew how exactly their predictions were fulfilled.

1. The *period* at which Babylon should be taken was distinctly predicted. Isaiah had foretold that it should be at the close of the captivity of the Jews: and Jeremiah limits the duration of that captivity to seventy years. Read Isaiah xlv. 28. xlv. 1. Jer. xxi. 2.

2. The *name* of the *commander*, and the *country* of the troops to be employed, are particularly specified by Isaiah, two hundred years before the event. "Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden to subdue nations before him," Isaiah xlv. 1. "Go up, O, Elam, (the ancient name of Persia:) besiege, O, Media." Isaiah xxi. 2. Read also Isaiah xiii. 17. Jer. li. 2. Media lies to the north of Babylon: and, therefore it is foretold that her enemies should come from the north, Jer. l. 2, 9.

3. The *circumstances* attending the assault and capture are distinctly predicted.—It shall happen *suddenly*; and, to the besieged *unexpectedly*. "Therefore shall evil come upon thee; thou shalt not know from whence it riseth; and mischief shall fall upon thee; thou shalt not be able to put it off; and desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou shalt not know." Isaiah xlvii. 11. "I have laid," says the Lord by Jeremiah, "a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon, and thou wast not aware." Jer. l. 24.—It shall happen in the *night*, and at the time of a *great feast*. Isaiah, personating the king of Babylon, exclaims, "The night of my pleasure hath he turned into fear unto me." Isaiah xxi. 4. "In their heat, I will make their feasts: and I will make them drunken that they may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual sleep, and not awake, saith the Lord." "And I will make drunk her princes and her wise men, her captains and her rulers, and her mighty men: and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not awake, saith the King whose name is the Lord of Hosts." Jer. li. 39 and 57.—The entrance of the assailants shall be *facilitated* by the *river* being dried up. The Lord is represented by Isaiah, as saying to the deep, "Be dry; and as drying up the rivers." Isaiah xlv. 27. "A drought," says Jeremiah, "is on her waters, and they shall be dried up: for it is a land of graven images, and they are mad upon their idols." Jer. l. 38. li. 36. The *gates* of brass which defended the city shall be *neglected*. "Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus whose right

hand I have holden to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings: to open before him the two leaved gates, and the gates shall not be shut. I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight; I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron." Isaiah xlv. 1, 2.—The king of Babylon shall be seized with *terror* and *affright*. That monarch is represented by the prophet in a vision as exclaiming, "My heart panteth, fearfulness affrighteth me: the night of my pleasure hath he turned into fear unto me." Isaiah xxi. 3, 3. "And all hands," says the same prophet, "shall be faint, and every man's heart shall melt, and they shall be afraid: pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth; they shall be amazed at one another; their faces shall be as flames." Isaiah xiii. 7, 8.—In this perplexity and dismay, resource shall be had to the *astrologers* and *diviners*. The Lord, therefore, thus challenges them by his prophet, "Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators stand up and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee." Isaiah xlvii. 13.—The city shall be *taken*, the king *slain*, the empire *overturned*, and his troops *dispersed*. "Behold the day of the Lord, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger: to lay the land desolate, and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it." "And it shall be as the chased roe, and as a sheep that no man taketh up: they shall every man turn to his own people, and flee every one into his own land. Every one that is found shall be thrust through, and every one that is joined unto them shall fall by the sword. Their children also shall be dashed to pieces before their eyes, their houses shall be spoiled, and their wives ravished." Isaiah xiii. 9, 14, 15, 16. "One post," says Jeremiah, "shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to shew the king of Babylon his city is taken at each end." Jer. li. 31.

Lastly, this desolation shall be complete and perpetual. "And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in, from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch his tent there: neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there,

and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there, and the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant places: and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged." Isaiah xiii. 19, 22. "For I will rise up against them, saith the Lord of Hosts, and cut off from Babylon the name and remnant, and son and nephew, saith the Lord. I will also make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water: and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the Lord of Hosts." Isaiah xiv. 22, 23.

Having thus heard the predictions, let us attend to their accomplishment. And here we ought to be grateful to divine Providence, who has preserved to us the testimony of unexceptionable witnesses. Xenophon, an experienced general, and elegant historian, among the Greeks, about one hundred and fifty years after the taking of Babylon, served for a long time in the army of the Persians; and had every opportunity of learning the particulars of that memorable event, both from authentic records and tradition. He has left us a most interesting relation of the siege and its issue. This is corroborated by Herodotus, a cotemporary writer, of the same nation. As Xenophon and Herodotus were both pagans, and had no connection with the Jews, their evidence is peculiarly valuable.

In the beginning of the reign of the son and successor of the great Nebuchadnezzar, a dispute arose between the Babylonians and the Medes; which laid the foundation for that animosity, that at length brought on the dissolution of the Babylonian empire. The war continued for many years, till, at the approach of the time appointed by the prophecy, Cyrus who commanded the troops of his grandfather Darius, at the head of a large army of Medes and Persians, having subdued most of the dependent states, laid siege to Babylon itself. This city was then strongly garrisoned: had magazines of provision sufficient for twenty years, and was defended by walls, gates, and towers, wholly impregnable by any mode of attack known at that time. The inhabitants, secure in their ramparts and stores, laughed at the attempt to take the city as visionary: and insulted Cyrus and his troops from the top of the walls. That commander, however, determined to per-

severe. He spent two years in cutting a large and deep ditch all round the city, as if for the purpose of reducing it by famine. He concealed his real views from every one: and used various stratagems to keep up the security of the besieged, while he was equally careful to preserve the health and confidence of his own troops, and waited for a proper opportunity to put his scheme into execution.

In order to understand the subsequent operations, we must observe what took place in the city. Here the greek historians fail us; but we have the facts recorded by an eye witness, whose authority will not be disputed. The prophet Daniel was a principal officer in the court of Belshazzar, the last king of Babylon, and has left a circumstantial account of the transactions of that memorable night, in which Babylon was taken. Daniel v.

The king, unconcerned about the movements of an enemy, who he thought was attempting impossibilities, celebrated an annual feast with a thousand of his lords. In the heat of the wine, he ordered the gold and silver vessels, which had been taken from the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem, to be brought out: and his courtiers, his wives, and his concubines drank out of these sacred vessels in honour of their idols. God thought fit to vindicate his insulted majesty, by causing the apparition of a hand to write certain unintelligible characters on the wall. On the sight of this, the king was terribly affrighted, "His countenance," says Daniel, "was changed and his thoughts troubled: so that the joints of his loins were loosed; and his knees smote one against another." He ordered, with great emotion, the astrologer, Chaldeans, and soothsayers to be called in; that they might explain the writing. But they were utterly unable to afford him any satisfaction, as not one of them could read the inscription. This increased the terror of the king and his companions, till the queen recollected Daniel's wonderful revelations in the days of Nebuchadnezzar. The king immediately directed him to be brought into his presence. That intrepid man of God, in an address full of spirit and propriety, laid before the intemperate monarch a striking picture of the pride and cruelty of his predecessors, and of his own folly and ingratitude towards that "God, in whose hands his breath was, and whose were all his ways." He then read the mysterious

inscription, and informed the king that its meaning was: "Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians." This interpretation, it might have been expected, would have increased the king's trouble, and put an end to the feast. It is probable, however, that unwilling to disturb the general joy of this grand festival, and not supposing the threatening would be so quickly executed, they put off the discussion of serious matters to a more convenient time; and continued their mirth.

While these things were transacting within the walls, Cyrus, who, as we are informed by Xenophon, had been informed of the confusion and disorder generally occasioned by this annual festival, resolved to seize that opportunity of executing his grand design. He posted one body of troops on that side where the river entered the city, and another at the opposite side, at its exit. As soon as the evening closed in, he ordered the banks of the Euphrates to be cut, both above and below the town, and the waters let into the vast ditches which his army had been so long employed in making. By this means, the river was soon emptied, and its channels became dry. Then Cyrus directed the two bodies of troops already mentioned, to advance up the channel of the river into the midst of the city: and, to encourage them to proceed with confidence, he told them, that he marched under the conduct of the gods. These troops proceeded without any obstacle: and, to their great surprise, found all the brazen gates which led from the river into the streets left open. Had these gates been shut, as was usual every night, the troops of Cyrus would have been caught, says the Greek historian, as in a net. They could not have entered the city, and the Babylonians might easily have destroyed them from the walls. But the Lord had declared that "these gates should not be shut:" and, in the intemperance and disorder of that riotous night, they were neglected and left open. Thus an easy passage was afforded the Persian detachments; and, without any opposition, they met, according to the plan of Cyrus, at the royal palace. They immediately attacked the guards, and slew them all. The company within the palace, who were probably still engaged in their festivity, hearing the noise, opened the gates to enquire the reason of the disturbance, when the enemy rushed in, and made themselves masters of it.

The king advancing at the head of his guests, with his sword drawn, was killed on the spot, and his attendants put to the sword. The Persians, having secured the palace, marched into the city, and slew all that were found in the streets. They then commanded the citizens to bring all their arms to Cyrus, and afterwards to shut themselves up in their houses. The next morning, the garrison which kept the citidel being informed, that the city was taken and their king slain, surrendered themselves to Cyrus. Thus did this prince, almost without any resistance, find himself in peaceable possession of the strongest place in the world. The first thing the conquerors did, says Xenophon, was to thank the gods for having at last punished the impious king of Babylon: a character perfectly consistent with what the scripture records of Belshazzar.

Thus every particular which the prophets had predicted respecting the capture of this famous city was literally accomplished. But the most remarkable part of the divine threatenings was yet to be executed. Babylon was not only to be taken, but it was to be destroyed from the face of the earth. This very improbable prophecy was, by degrees, also exactly fulfilled.

Babylon ceased from this time to be a royal city. The kings of Persia preferred Shushan and other places, and themselves destroyed great part of Babylon. The Macedonians who succeeded the Persians, not only neglected to repair it; but, in order to draw away its inhabitants, built Seleucia in its neighbourhood. The Persians, who afterwards obtained possession of this devoted city, pursuing the same extraordinary policy, built Ctesiphon which carried away the remainder of its population. Thus from the time the curse was pronounced against Babylon, those very persons who ought to have protected her, became her enemies. The prophet had foretold: "It shall not be inhabited," and its masters, contrary to their own interest, endeavoured to depopulate it. About six hundred years after its capture by Cyrus, A. D. 96. nothing was left except its walls. This was the situation of Babylon, when Pausanias wrote his remarks on Greece. The kings of Persia, finding the place deserted, made a park of it, in which they kept wild beasts for the chase. Such was the purpose to which it was appropriated in the

days of St. Jerom, A. D. 400. He had the account from a Persian monk, who had himself seen what he related.

But the divine decree forbad even the walls to continue. They fell down in several places, and various accidents destroyed the remainder. The animals, which were confined for the amusement of the kings escaped. Serpents and scorpions remained, and rendered it a dangerous task for any one to attempt to explore its antiquities. The breaches made in the banks of the Euphrates by Cyrus, had never been well repaired. Alexander, indeed, had designs of making it his residence, and gave orders for reducing the river to its former course, and rebuilding its banks. But in a few months that monarch died, and all his designs respecting Babylon were relinquished. The waters sought new channels; and, as the obstructions caused by the ruins encreased and prevented their passage, they formed stagnant lakes and pools. These constantly enlarging from the same causes, the whole country at length degenerated into a marsh: and the precise spot on which Babylon stood has long been sought for in vain by the ablest geographers. The Lord had said: "I will make it a possession for bitterns, and pools of water: and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction." The awful denunciation has long been terribly fulfilled: and every vestige of that once proud and magnificent city has long been swept from the face of the earth.

CIRCUMSPECTOR.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

SIR

Many of our Ministers are drawing towards a period of life, when the infirmities of age will, perhaps, press heavily upon them, and oblige some of them to retire. When this occurs, as no suitable provision is made for them, their situation will be sufficient to grieve the heart. They have laboured long and faithfully in the service of their great Master, and have had their day of popularity and success; but now the shadows of the evening are drawing on, and their strength faileth. In the prime and vigour of their days, they had, perhaps, warm and generous friends; but in the course of a few years, deaths, removals, and failures in trade, have swept them away, and the young that take their place, do not feel the ties and tender sympathies of their aged friends. They have sacrificed many

of their earthly comforts, in acquiring improvement to feed the flocks over which they were placed; and have spent all their best strength and days in the service of religion. Many of them have, perhaps, had large families, and with straitened incomes, have been able to provide little or nothing for them; and are at length sinking under a weight of years and infirmities, with all their temporal prospects at an end. Except the hope that lies beyond the grave, and a sense of conscious integrity, they have nothing to cheer them amidst the many neglects, and pains, and wants that surround them. Though it is as plain a truth as any in the scriptures, that he that preaches the gospel, ought to live upon the gospel; yet it is well known, that the greatest part of our ministers have not had so much allowed them as a common tradesman allows his clerk. Hence at the close of life, when their labours are at an end, and their annual small pittances transferred to the ministers that succeed them, they will be left destitute and in distress. Surely a recollection of the deplorable state of such ministers, demands the serious attention of every compassionate heart, and every friend to our cause. It is, therefore, the duty of our churches, for it is within their power, to adopt a plan which will relieve them in this their time of extremity.

Do not mistake me, sir; I am not a minister, and asking relief for myself, nor have I any relation to any that are in the ministry, any farther than as a brother in Christ. But the case is of high importance, and I wish that my brethren throughout the Connection would enter into it. Several plans offer themselves to notice, as—contributions, according to the abilities of each individual—public collections—a small uniform subscription. Many undoubtedly would have a number of objections to the two first; and perhaps the last is more likely to be attended with permanency and success. We have five thousand nine hundred and eighty-eight members in our Connection: if each were to subscribe a halfpenny per week, it would amount to nearly six hundred and fifty pounds per annum. This, I think, would meet our present demands; and would perhaps in time raise a fund. Let a committee be appointed to manage the business; and let this committee receive regularly once a month from each church, the complement of its members, leaving the churches to adopt what method they may think proper in collecting it. I ear-

nestly entreat that my friends will take up the cause immediately ; and do what they can towards comforting those who have spent their lives in promoting the happiness of others.

I am, Sir, your's, &c.

Warwickshire.

EPSILON.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

SIR,

Various are the expedients adopted by worldly men, for providing against casualties and accidents. Among the number, none are more common than the establishing of Benefit Societies for the affording out of the stock, a weekly sum for the support of such of their members as may need relief. It appears to me, that they are very laudable undertakings ; and a striking example of the truth of that sentence, uttered by our blessed Lord.—“ The children of this world are, in their generation, wiser than the children of light.

I have for some time back been ruminating on this subject, under the impression that much good might be done, if a Benefit Society could be established, consisting wholly of sincere christians, as far as man can judge, having the same pecuniary object in view as other societies ; added to one of infinite superiority, namely, the building up the members in their most holy faith, by gospel consolations ; and giving suitable admonitions in the spirit of meekness and love. The value of these, no one can duly appreciate to a fellow creature, on a bed of languishing or of death. In addition to this, much spiritual advantage might arise to the carnal friends or acquaintance of the afflicted members, from the arguments that may be made use of on these occasions. These objects will likewise have the advantage of the prayers of the whole society, both individually and collectively ; as every meeting of such a society would, of course, be opened and concluded by prayer.

If the number of dissenters of one denomination, in any place, were sufficiently large, it might be as well to confine such a society to one particular sect ; but I see no great reason why dissenters of every name should not be admitted. In order to guard against the intrusion of any but sincere followers of the Lamb, every candidate should be recommended by a member, who should be able, in some good degree, to answer for his

character: and a proof of his being in communion with some church, might be considered as an essential qualification. It might be a proper regulation also, that those points of doctrine on which the members are known to differ, should never be introduced at any of their meetings; but that they should be conducted on the broad basis of christian charity.

I am, Sir, your's sincerely,

T. H. B.

As we believe that societies of the nature proposed by our correspondent, do already exist, we should esteem it a favour if any member of them would oblige us with an account of their rise, principles, and success. Such an account might be useful to many of our churches.

EDITOR.

ON RIGHT DISPOSITIONS AND CONDUCT IN PUBLIC WORSHIP.

The public worship of God being so very important in itself, the occasions of it so frequently recurring, and the consequences depending upon it of so serious a nature, it is hoped a few thoughts on this subject will not be altogether useless. They shall be founded on Eccles. v. 1, 2, "Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of fools; for they consider not that they do evil. Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God; for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few."

It is taken for granted, that every one who has a proper sense of his duty, a regard for the honour of God, and a desire to prosper in his own soul, will be regular and conscientious in attending on the public means of grace. Solomon supposes this in the passage just now repeated, and every christian must allow the truth of it. Duty, gratitude, and interest conspire to recommend so reasonable a practice; and the account we have of the character and experience of the children of God in past ages proves, that they felt the force of these powerful considerations. Hence we frequently hear them speaking on this wise. "Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honor dwelleth." "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts." "A

day in thy courts is better than a thousand." "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God?" "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord, all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple." If we have therefore but little relish for the exercises of the sanctuary; if we can habitually neglect them; or only join in them when it suits our inclination, convenience, or worldly interest; it is a sure mark that something is materially amiss in us: our hearts cannot be right in the sight of God. How far this is our case it behoves us seriously to enquire. Is there no cause for humiliation and reformation? Are we so regular in attending week-day evening lectures as we might be, and ought to be? Have we always a lawful excuse when we are absent? Ought we not to be more frequently at the house of God on a Lord's day morning? And should we not endeavour to arrange matters so as to be present at all the public opportunities on that sacred day? Would it not also be to our own credit and advantage, as well as the advantage of our fellow-worshippers, were we more punctual in observing the time?

These are questions in which we are nearly concerned, and which it would be well for us seriously and impartially to consider. We leave them with the reader, and proceed to the advices or directions which the wise man gives us respecting our own conduct in the house of God. The first is a general direction, applicable to all the parts of public worship. The second refers particularly to the hearing of the word. The rest to prayer. In this order let us briefly consider them.

The first which presents itself is, "Keep thy foot." The term *foot* in the sacred scriptures frequently means thoughts, inclinations, affections, or actions. See Psal. xxxvi. 11. cxvi. 59. Ephes. vi. 15. So we may understand it here. Some think that the phrase refers to the command given to Moses, Exod. iii. 5. "Put thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground;" and suppose Solomon to recommend by it *seriousness and reverence* in our approach to God. Perhaps the following paraphrase will convey the meaning and design of the author. "When thou goest to the house of God, consider well the business which is before thee, endeavour to have thy mind possessed with a proper sense of

its importance, enter upon it with becoming seriousness and reverence, labour to be wholly intent upon it, and guard against all wandering thoughts and roving affections, whilst thou art engaged in it." The propriety of such an admonition is evinced by multitudes in every worshipping assembly. How many rush into the presence of God, like the horse into the battle! How many go to his house merely from custom or habit, and with no other view than to see and be seen, to pass away a dull hour, to criticise, to be furnished with head knowledge, to oblige their friends, to quiet their consciences, or to promote their worldly interests! And even in those whose motives are good, there is not always that abstraction of mind, seriousness of spirit, and steadiness of attention, which the nature, the end, and the object of public worship demand. It should be remembered however, that the God with whom we have to do, is "God of Gods, and Lord of Lords, a mighty God and a terrible, that regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward." Deut. x. 17. He requireth truth in the inward parts, and hath expressly said, "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me." We must, therefore, serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling; and, whenever we come before him, be concerned to worship him in the beauty of holiness.

The second advice of the wise man refers particularly to the hearing of the word. "Be more ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of fools." This is necessary, whether the word be *read* or *preached*. It is a peculiar privilege which we, who live under the gospel dispensation, enjoy, that we are not only favoured with the written word of God to which we can have recourse whenever we please, but we have a standing order of men whose proper business it is to preach it to the world. Their duty is "to be instant in season and out of season." The object of their office is "to turn sinners from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Christ." Their commission they derive immediately from Jesus Christ. Whenever they stand up, it is in his name and by his authority, Luke xxiv. 47. Mark. xvi. 15, 16: and whatever they speak according to the oracles of God, it is as much our duty to regard as if he himself had spoken it in

person. 2 Cor. v. 20. Matt. x. 40. On these accounts we should be ready to hear them. It is true they are fallible men: but it is hoped they will always make it their sincere aim to preach the truth: and none of them surely will be unwilling that we should, like the Bereans, search the scriptures; that we may know how far they *do* preach the truth. This, no doubt, they will frequently recommend.

This readiness to hear requires that we guard against every thing which has a tendency to prevent or lessen our attention, either before or during the time of public worship: as, a propensity to sleep, excess of food, strong drink, drowsy postures of the body, sitting up late the previous night, or want of due preparation for the exercises of the sanctuary: that we lay aside all worldly thoughts, and every thing which is not immediately connected with the work before us, and that we keep up our attention to the end of the service.

This readiness to hear must further be extended to all the parts of the word of God, both doctrinal and practical, not excepting those which are most contrary or disagreeable to flesh and blood: for instance, such as tell us that we are guilty and depraved creatures, under the condemnation of God's righteous law, on account of sin, and obnoxious to everlasting misery; that we cannot escape this misery of ourselves; that Christ alone can deliver us from it; and that he will deliver none, but such as actually come unto him for that purpose. So likewise when we are commanded to confess Jesus Christ openly, to be baptized in his name, to deny ourselves, to love our enemies, to do good to them that hate us, to cut off a right hand, and pluck out a right eye, that we may enter into the kingdom of heaven, &c. &c.

We must also hear with a design to practise. This is the meaning of the word hear in many parts of the sacred writings, Prov. viii. 34. John viii. 47, x. 27; and so it must be understood here. Indeed, without this practical regard to the word of God, it is in vain to preach, and in vain to hear. We shall neither please God, nor profit ourselves, but the reverse. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that *doth* the will of my Father which is in heaven." "Blessed are they that hear the word of God and *keep* it." "If ye know these things, happy are ye, if ye *do* them." "He that knoweth his Lord's will,

and *doeth it not*, shall be beaten with many stripes." In order, therefore, that we may be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving our ourselves, we should *remember* what we hear, take the earliest opportunity to examine ourselves by it, and charge our consciences with the observance of it, whatever may be the consequences of such observance.

Now without this readiness to hear, which we have been endeavouring to explain and recommend, we shall be in danger of giving the sacrifice of fools, and consequently do evil in the sight of God. This was the case with some in Ezekiel's day, as may be seen, Ezek. xxxiii. 31, 32. Would to God it was not so common in our day! Let us not, however, deceive ourselves. Specious appearances and empty forms will never pass with the Almighty for sterling devotion. In vain do we worship him, if our hearts be going after our covetousness, or if we be not sincerely disposed both to know and to do his will. Such persons, whether they consider it or not, are guilty of mocking and insulting the Majesty of heaven, and, instead of expecting a blessing, have greater cause to expect a curse from Him, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. The sacrifice of fools is an abomination to the Lord.

- It now only remains, that we consider the advices or cautions which Solomon gives respecting prayer. They are the following: "Be not rash with thy mouth, let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God, and let thy words be few." They convey an important lesson to the worshippers of God in general, and ministers as well as private christians may learn something from them, for the regulation of their public and private devotions.

"Be not rash with thy mouth." As if he had said, "Be cautious and considerate in all thy approaches to the Divine Being. Let not thy tongue outrun thy thoughts. Weigh well thy errand to the throne of grace, and utter nothing that thou wilt have cause to repent of afterwards." This caution is particularly necessary in all our vows, promises, professions, and appeals, and is not to be forgotten in our confessions, petitions, and thanksgivings. Without some such care as this, we shall be in danger of uttering before God, things which are not true or proper; of asking for things which we have no authority to expect; or of making promises and vows

which are either improper, imprudent, or impossible to be fulfilled: and thus we shall be snared by the words of our mouth. We have a remarkable instance of this in the case of Jephthah. When he was going to the slaughter of the Ammonites, he vowed a vow, that if God would make him successful against his enemies, and bring him back to his home in peace, he would sacrifice whatever should come first out of the doors of his house to meet him. This proved to be his daughter, and only child; and it is expressly said, "He did unto her according to his vow." See Judges xi. 30—40. Moreover, this rashness is inconsistent with that reverence which ought to run through all our immediate addresses to the divine Majesty; and, to say the best of it, will lead us into the guilt of drawing near to him with our lips, while our hearts will be far from him. Whereas they that would worship the Father acceptably, must worship him in spirit and in truth. Prayer must be dictated by the heart, and arise out of our present circumstances, if we would have it to be availing. It would be well, therefore, if, previous to our going to the throne of grace, we were to spend a little time in considering our wants, and proposing to ourselves such questions as these; What are my sins? What are my duties? What are my difficulties? What are my temptations, weaknesses, propensities, dangers, &c.? We should thus come to the altar of God with our hearts full; and prayer would be both an easy, delightful, and profitable work. The same advice might be given to such as lead the devotions of others. Let them study the cases of those with whom or for whom they pray, in order that their prayers may be interesting and useful.

But it is not enough that what we utter come from the heart. It must come from a composed and deliberate heart. Let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God. In the warmth of our devotions we may be sometimes drawn into an error in this respect, and led to say things which cool reflection will not justify, and thereby bring guilt upon our souls. In the heat of passion too, or under the pressure of affliction, there is some danger lest our hearts should be hasty, and transgress the bounds of decency, truth, and propriety, as some good men have done. Isaiah xxxi. 21, cxvi. 11, Job xviii. 21. xx. 14, 18. That we may not err in either of these respects, we must remember that "God is in heaven." He

takes notice of every thing we say and do, and will admit no evasions or excuses in the performance of our duty, or the fulfillment of our engagements. He is great, and not to be trifled with: he is true, and requireth sincerity: he is a God of Providence, and will take care of his children; so that they may safely leave themselves in his hands.

We ought also to recollect that "we are on earth," totally incapable of understanding the plans or fathoming the counsels of the All-wise Governor of the Universe. We should, therefore, approach Him with a deep sense of our ignorance; and offer up our requests with a humble deference to his divine will. We ought to cherish the persuasion that he knows infinitely better than we what ought to be done, and that the Judge of all the earth will do right. This would keep us, at an awful distance from presuming to dictate to the Almighty; and enable us to say, with perfect acquiescence of soul, "Not my will, but thine be done."

Lastly, our prayers must not be too long. "Let thy words be few." "When ye pray," says our Lord, "use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them. For your heavenly Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him." Our wants and desires may soon be expressed, and there is no need of repeating them over and over again, as if we were talking to men like ourselves. It betrays a trifling and careless spirit, low and unworthy thoughts of God, and is altogether inconsistent with his greatness, and our comparative meanness. For God is in heaven, but we on the earth. There is an infinite disparity between him and us. He is eternal, unchangeable, holy, glorious, and almighty; the Creator, Preserver, and Upholder of all things; worshipped by myriads of happy spirits in heaven, who veil their faces with their wings when they approach before him. But "we are on the earth." We dwell in tabernacles of clay, and our foundation is in the dust. We are not only mean, but guilty; and instead of meriting any favour, deserve to be everlastingly excluded from his presence. It behoves us therefore to approach him with the greatest humility and self-abasement, under a sense of our helplessness and misery, without an interest in his love, conscious of the awful difference between him and us, and sin-

cerely desirous to honour him, and take shame unto ourselves. "Be not rash then with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God. For God is in heaven, and thou upon earth : therefore let thy words be few.

GNAHIM.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

Your worthy correspondent, who subscribes himself a "Friend to Sunday Schools," has, in your last number, presented your readers with some remarks on the manner of conducting those invaluable institutions. I entirely agree with him, in thinking, that the communication of religious knowledge, and the formation of virtuous and pious habits, are the prime objects to be kept in view, by the worthy, and disinterested managers of these Schools. But I am not fully convinced, that the teaching poor children to *read merely*, supposing they could be taught by no other means, would not justify the application, to this purpose, of a considerable portion of time, even on the *Lord's day*; especially as it applies to some, who are employed as teachers. Your correspondent would, I think, have laid us under additional obligations, had he favoured us with what might appear to him the best means of imparting religious instruction to Sunday scholars. But, perhaps he has done this, in advising the teachers, "to explain to their pupils, the nature, propriety, and importance of public worship; then to lead them to the House of God, at all proper services." I suppose he means all public services, "Afterwards to enquire what they recollect and teach them to practise self-application." Now, Sir, though I should be sorry to drop a word that might even *seem* to militate against, or depreciate public worship; yet I cannot consider *that*, as the most efficacious method of imparting a knowledge of the doctrines and duties of *religion to children*. It is, in the first place, extremely difficult to keep up their attention to what is said; for they regard the being consigned to motionless inactivity and dead silence for an hour and half, or two hours, as a species of imprisonment, rather than a means of receiving information. And it is but a small part only of what is delivered from the pulpit, that is

adapted to their comprehension. Much of the preacher's language, and still more of his ideas, are, it may safely be affirmed, quite unintelligible to children. They are not, I conceive, very likely to recollect what they do not understand; and still less likely to *apply* it. If you, Mr. Editor, instead of your present mode of instruction, were to collect your pupils together, at stated times, and lecture them on the several subjects of Arithmetic, Grammar, Geography, &c. I believe you would soon be convinced of the incompetency of the plan; and I confess, so far as it respects teaching the theory, I can see no essential difference, between religion and any other sciences. It is however certainly desirable, that the children in Sunday schools, should occasionally attend public worship; and that the reasons for that attendance should be explained to them: but if nothing more be done, I am persuaded their progress will be exceedingly slow.

I cannot say that I am more friendly to the catechetical mode. It is one thing to commit to memory a number of answers, adapted to as many questions, and to recite them when called upon; and another, to understand the subjects of which they treat. I believe, Sir, the former, in a great majority of instances, is all that is actually effected. To see a boy of twelve years of age, stand up before a large congregation, and hear him deliver a complete body of divinity, and gravely assert his belief of the whole, one is ready to enquire, Does he understand it? If he do, he must have reflected on the subjects, weighed the evidence for and against each proposition. Now one can scarcely believe that the mind of the boy has been exercised in this way upon the different parts of his catechism: and if it have not, in some degree at least, does he not give an incorrect specimen of his progress in that branch of knowledge? As a test by which to try a pupil's proficiency, let him be required to give his own ideas of the subject, in his own words. If he understand it, he will be able to give, at least, some account of it: but if he have collected no ideas from what he has been taught to recite, he will of course be able to express none: which I fear in many instances, will be found to be the case.

I trust, Sir, you will give me credit for the assertion; that I have not been induced to make the above remarks, for the purpose of gratifying a captious temper; but from a convic-

tion, that the plans of religious instruction, at present adopted in many of our sunday schools, are inadequate to the object in view: and that your worthy correspondent above alluded to, or some other individual competent to the task, may step forward, and favour us with some remarks on the subject; which may lay the foundation of a *real improvement* in this important branch of sunday school education. In doing this, he would, I doubt not, oblige many, and most certainly, no one more, than your's, respectfully,

PHILO.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

It is, by serious persons, universally admitted, that the office of pastor is a very important one; and that to all who sustain it, there attaches a most awful responsibility. It is also a very general opinion, that public preaching, comprehends only a *part* of a minister's duty. If some senior brother, who sustains the pastoral office, would, through the medium of the G. B. R. lay before his younger fellow-labourers, some account of those duties which devolve upon a pastor, *over and above his pulpit labours*, he would, I think, confer a favour upon many of our younger preachers, and especially upon your's, sincerely,

JUVENIS.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

SIR,

At page 266 of the 4th vol. of G. B. R. is a question, which though not of equal importance with many that fill your pages, yet may deserve some attention. It runs thus. "Is there not a propriety, at least, in my burying my dead in the church yards belonging to the establishment where my parents are buried, notwithstanding I am a Dissenter?"

It cannot be disputed; but that a burying place is generally an advantage to the neighbourhood and to the church with which it is connected. Men in general respect the place of their fathers' sepulchres. The most profligate and careless, will appear in a congregation once or twice after a near relation has been buried there. Now and then it happens, that

one of this character continues to go there, begins to approve of the place, the minister, and the doctrines taught there; and the effects are, in some instances, honorable and happy for the individual, for his family, for the church, and for the neighbourhood. Now your correspondent is a Dissenter, and we take it for granted, that he is an honest one: as such, he believes the party to which he attaches himself, to be the nearest of all other denominations, to the standard of the New Testament; and is convinced, that the cause of truth, and the good of his fellow creatures, are closely connected with its prevalence. He will therefore feel it *proper* to take every lawful method to encourage and strengthen it: and, as burying his dead in the ground connected with his own party, is obviously one of these methods, he will feel there is propriety in adopting it. The careless and inattentive among his own relations will naturally lie near his heart; and he will find a particular satisfaction in bringing them by this means, to hear the truth. The possibility that this opportunity may be blessed to the spiritual advantage of those that are dear to him by the ties of nature, will, in his apprehension, heighten propriety into duty. He will esteem himself bound to adopt a conduct that may, under the divine blessing, be attended with such happy effects.

The practice of all denominations of professors, evinces that the above principles are acknowledged, in common cases, by mankind at large. Circumstances indeed may occur, in which there may be a propriety, and perhaps a duty, in the contrary practice. The people to whom a man belongs, may perhaps have no burying ground; or it may be at a very great distance from his habitation; or the deceased might have desired to be interred at some other place. In these, and such like cases, a Dissenter is not only excusable, but laudable in deviating; but, in general, propriety requires that every person bury his dead in the ground belonging to his own place.

The above principles, if just, apply equally to the burying grounds belonging to other denominations of Dissenters, as to the church-yards belonging to the establishment. The question might, indeed, with greater propriety, have been expressed in more general terms.

If these remarks merit insertion, I may, perhaps, at some future time, send you a few observations on the second

question, respecting joining in the funeral service appointed in the Common Prayer Book. In the mean time, I remain,

Your's, cordially,

EBORACENSIS.

THOUGHTS ON THE PROPER MODE OF CONDUCTING CHURCH MEETINGS, AND MEETINGS OF DISCIPLINE.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

SIR,

As you inserted my remarks on the importance of the members of churches regularly attending church meetings, I now send you a few hints, on the best methods of conducting those meetings; so as to secure a good attendance, and promote edification. After some consideration on the subject, I do not know that I can better convey my meaning, than in a few explanatory and applicatory observations on those four exhortations, addressed by the apostle Paul to the church at Corinth, which have sometimes been called the *four great canons* of christian discipline. Let all things be done—to the glory of God—to edifying—decently and in order—and with charity, or love.

The first canon is, “*Do all things to the glory of God.*” 1 Cor. x. 31. This is our duty at all times; but especially so when we are transacting the sacred things relating to the church of God, and the interest of the Redeemer on earth. To do any thing to the glory of God, implies that our design in what we do is to advance his glory, and promote his honor; and that we are careful to adopt no measure, perform no action, or countenance any proceeding, which does not appear to us adapted to accomplish this purpose. It is a mournful fact; but those who have the best acquaintance with meetings of this nature will allow it is a fact, that sometimes members of churches have other ends in view, in their proceedings at church meetings, than simply to promote the glory of God: some profit or honour to secure to themselves or friends; some scheme of their own to carry; some wish of their own to gratify; or some secret purpose to answer. It is not meant that these persons are always conscious of their own designs. Self may represent the vindication of my own character, the

accomplishment of my own wishes, or the carrying on of my own plans, to be so important and so essential, as to make me suppose the glory of God is materially concerned in my success. Sometimes too my attachment to a person or a party may lead me to identify them with the cause of religion; and to imagine, that I am zealous for the glory of God, when the great Searcher of hearts sees, that a proud or an affectionate desire for the success of myself or friends, inspires my exertions. We should therefore be jealous of our own hearts, lest, while we are professing to honour the Lord, we are giving that honour to another, which is due to him alone.

The second apostolic rule is, *Let all things be done to edifying.* 1 Cor. xiv. 26. To edify is to build up. It signifies the disposing the materials of a building in such order, and the connecting of them in such a manner, as will best promote the strength, convenience and beauty of the edifice. When applied to the transactions of a church, it suggests the idea of so conducting the various concerns that relate to it as, in the most effectual manner, to promote its peace, holiness and prosperity. The church of God is frequently represented as a building; the members of it as the stones of which it is composed; and those who manage its affairs as builders. Eph. ii. 19, 22. 1 Pet. ii. 5. 1 Cor. iii. 9. Nor is this confined to ministers alone. Paul says that women laboured with him in the gospel, Phil. iv. 3: and exhorts the members of the church at Thessalonica to edify one another. 1 Thes. v. 2. Now in order that a building may be properly constructed, it is requisite, that the stones be of a proper kind; that they be fitted for their respective situations and uses; that they be fixed in their proper stations; and that they be preserved from changing their place, and falling out of the edifice. It would be easy to apply these particulars to the conducting of church meetings; and the application would be interesting and instructive. But we only observe in brief. The great design of those who attend these meetings ought to be, to keep the sacred edifice in due repair; to enlarge it with additional materials; to rectify those stones that may be irregularly placed; and to remove such as are become unfit to support the structure. In doing this, the strengthening, enlarging, and beautifying of the building, should always be the principal object of every measure. That is, to drop the

metaphor, in all the transactions of a church, a single eye should constantly be kept to the preserving the harmony, promoting the holiness, increasing the graces, and enlarging the numbers of the society. Great care ought, therefore, to be taken, and the probable effects of every step be well weighed. The first enquiry certainly ought to be, Is the measure right? Is it required by the word of God? If this is clear, it becomes our duty to adopt it, and to leave the consequences to Him who has commanded it. But, if the evident effect of any proposed measure will be to prevent the prosperity of the cause, or to interrupt the peace of the church, we ought to pause before we adopt it. God is a God of order, not of confusion; and there is cause to fear, that we have misunderstood his precepts, if they tend to produce confusion.

The third apostolical canon for the guide of our proceedings is, *Let all things be done decently, and in order.* 1 Cor. xiv. 40. This is an excellent rule in all the concerns of life; and never fails to promote the honour and advantage of all that attend to it. But it is more especially necessary to be observed in every thing connected with religion. Decency is of extensive application, and includes many important considerations. We shall just state the leading ideas.

This rule requires, that the important affairs which are transacted at church meetings, should be attended to *deliberately* without precipitation. "Lay hands *suddenly* on no man," is a sacred direction, the spirit of which ought to operate on all church business. The prudent advice of the Ephesian magistrate, "Do nothing rashly," is of the first importance. We seldom are able to see all sides of a subject at once. The most conscientious and most intelligent may be led to form wrong conclusions, if he determine without taking pains to investigate. When those important concerns, on which the prosperity of the church, and the success of the cause of the blessed Redeemer depend, are to be decided, it becomes those who wish well to the interests of religion, to be cautious, and deliberate well before they venture to conclude. Nor should they forget earnestly to seek illumination from the Father of light, that they may be able to give prudent counsel.

Decency is opposed to *heat and passion*: and requires that all the concerns of the church should be attended to with

calmness. Some persons are of such a proud fiery disposition, that if their suggestions be slighted, their proposals objected to, or their views opposed, they immediately feel affronted; suppose some disrespect is shewn to them; and give way to resentment and anger. Now this is at once unreasonable, imprudent, and indecent. Unreasonable, because every other member present has as much right to suggest, propose, and recommend any measure as he has; and therefore might as justly be angry with him for daring to deliver his sentiments, as he is with the other. And it ought always to be kept in mind, that the great object of their deliberation is to promote the glory of God, and not to please themselves. Every proposal, therefore, from whomsoever it may proceed, ought calmly to be considered, and that, which on due examination, appears best adapted to promote his glory, ought to be cordially accepted. Passion is imprudent, because it prevents a man from doing justice to his own views. A person under its influence, can neither explain his meaning, nor enforce his proposals with that clearness and effect, which he might if his mind were in an untroubled state. And it is very indecent, in divine and sacred matters, to let our passions interfere and disturb that solemn regard to the will of God, which ought to distinguish these proceedings. "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me;" says the blessed Jesus, "for I am meek and lowly in heart." Matt. xi. 29. "A meek and quiet spirit in the sight of God is of great price." 1 Pet. iii. 4. Saints are exhorted to put away from them all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, and all malice." Now if these precepts ought to regulate the general conduct of the followers of Jesus, surely they deserve especial regard, when they meet to transact the important concerns of his church. Then they ought in peculiar manner, "to study to be quiet;" "to follow after the things that make for peace;" and "to be ready to submit themselves one to another in the fear of God." How pleasant to behold a number of Christians met together, under the influence of these friendly precepts; but how painful! how indecent, to observe a contrary conduct, instigated by an opposite spirit! Decency requires that the business of these meetings be transacted *impartially*. No one ought to be treated differently from another. Every member should be allowed an equal

opportunity of delivering his thoughts; every opinion should be listened to with candour and attention. That solemn charge of the apostle to Timothy, ought to regulate the conduct of all who have any influence in conducting church meetings. "I charge thee, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things, without preferring one before another; doing nothing by partiality." 1 Tim. v. 21. It is indecent to see the opinion of one member respected, that of another slighted; the complaints of one attended to, of another disregarded; the wanderings of one excused, of another magnified. These things ought not so to be.

Decency requires that the business of church meetings be conducted *seriously*, without *levity*. When we reflect on the vast importance, the awful nature, and everlasting effects of the concerns of a church of Christ, one would suppose, that it would be needless to mention seriousness as requisite in the transacting them. Whoever properly considers, that the glory of God, the salvation of men, and the happiness of society, so greatly depend on these transactions, will, when engaged in them, feel no inclination to be light or trifling. And yet, through want of thought, through bad habits, it too often happens that scenes of levity occur on these occasions, which, however they may divert the thoughtless, and raise a laugh in the ignorant, cause pain and sorrow in the pious and reflecting friend of religion. A minister should shew himself a pattern of gravity: the children of ministers ought to be in subjection with all gravity; deacons ought to be grave, and their wives grave. Titus ii. 7. 1 Tim. iii. 4. 8. 11. If then gravity ought to be the characteristic of those leaders, in their general conduct, surely it becomes them, when actually engaged in deliberating on the affairs of the church of God. If foolish talking and jesting be inconvenient, on common occasions, surely they are highly indecent when the servants of Christ are engaged in the most serious concerns of their Lord's kingdom on earth. Eph. v. 4.

Lastly. Decency requires that great *delicacy* should be exercised in meetings of this nature, especially when the church has to consider the character and conduct of candidates or members. It is as indecent as it is cruel, to expose the circumstances of the failings or the crimes of any person without necessity, or any farther than necessity requires:

This is an important remark. Inattention to it has done incalculable mischief, both to churches, families, and individuals. Sympathy, to an erring brother, would prevent us from giving him unnecessary pain, by a needless repetition of his failings. Justice demands, that while we are endeavouring to preserve the purity of the church, we should be careful not to injure the character of any one in the world, or destroy his temporal comforts. In short, the never-failing rule of our blessed Saviour, of doing to others as we would they should do unto us, would induce us, on these occasions, to adopt the advice of the great apostle: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one, in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself lest thou also be tempted." Gal. vi. 1.

The fourth apostolical canon is, "*Let all things be done in charity.*" 1 Cor. xvi. 14. This requires the conscientious attention of the disciples of Him, whose great commandment is "Love one another." John xv. 17. It implies, that in all the transactions of the church, we exercise that spirit of benevolence and love towards our brethren, which Paul so elegantly describes, in 1 Cor. xiii.

This spirit of love will prevent us from *exaggerating the failings* of our brethren. It will dispose us to weigh all circumstances, and to endeavour to ascertain the precise state of the case. We shall, if under its influence, neither be forward to credit a bad report, nor hasty to repeat it. It will also put us on our guard, when we see it our duty to repeat it, against colouring too highly the facts we mention; or giving improper impressions to the hearers. "Charity rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth."

Charity will make us ready to *admit proper apologies*, and allow full weight to all alleviating circumstances. In order to do this, we shall not immediately conclude, that the fact is as faulty as it is represented. We shall always, if practicable, suspend our judgment till the party accused have an opportunity of stating his own case. We shall often find, that, when this has been done, circumstances appear very different, and we shall be much better qualified to judge of their real character. The inhabitant of Zion "taketh not up a report against his neighbour." Ps. xv. 3.

Charity will preserve us from *imputing motives* for actions,

which the actors disavow. We shall not presume to search the hearts of our fellow creatures; but, unless stubborn facts prevent us, give every one credit for stating his own motives. When an action can be supposed to proceed from a good motive, it is equally cruel and uncharitable to impute it to a bad one. Real charity will make us always believe and hope the best; and if any doubt remains, will induce us to decide in the most favourable manner. "Charity thinketh no evil; beareth all things; hopeth all things; believeth all things; and endureth all things."

If the business usually attended to at these meetings, were conducted in the spirit of these apostolic canons, they would be edifying opportunities; and we should soon find them better attended. But if, instead of this, pride, self consequence, and clamour, mark the conduct of the leading members; and a disposition to expose the weaknesses, magnify the failings, and defame the character of a wandering brother, appear to direct their proceedings, it will be in vain to expect either a good attendance or edification. Serious persons, who wish well to religion, will probably retire, and mourn in silence over such conduct as must injure all they hold dear; and the careless professor, unconcerned for the prosperity of Zion, will find more amusement in other engagements.

It was my intention to have made some observations on the devotional exercises, which ought always to form a part of these meetings; but I fear, that I have already exceeded proper limits. If these observations be thought worthy of insertion in your Repository, I may, perhaps, at some future time, resume the subject. I am your's, &c.

A LOVER OF ORDER.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

Happening, the other day, to take up a number of the Monthly Repository, I cast my eye upon an original letter of Dr. Priestley's, in answer to a friend on the Subjects and Mode of Baptism. I was induced to read it, as I expected something, in private correspondence, more expressive of the writer's true sentiments, than is always advanced in a more public way. Though I was in some measure surprised at his conclusions

respecting the subjects of that ordinance, still it led me to see the necessity there ever has been to use all possible means in order to establish unscriptural opinions; and the plain confession he makes concerning the ancient *mode* proves in some degree, the insufficiency of them all. He first tells his friend how necessary it is that we should be more acquainted with eastern practices; the influence a person has over the whole of his family, whether children, or slaves; the use he makes of them to manifest his real character, by causing them to submit to forms and ceremonies expressive of his true sentiments.—That the cattle of Nineveh were made to fast as a proof of their master's contrition, and not by their own choice. Hence, when the head of a family received the christian religion, he was, with all his children and slaves baptized. Himself, as a proof of his owning Christ as his Lord and Master; and they, as a declaration to the world that their father or master was a christian. This he supposes to have been the common way of proceeding until baptism began to be considered as producing remission of sin, when it was deferred until just before the person's decease, and "was confined to adults." Is not this saying there was a time, since the Apostles' days, when none but adults were admitted to baptism? He seems rather to "adhere to the primitive ideas: and considers the baptism of his children as nothing more than a declaration that he is a christian, and consequently of his obligation to educate them in the christian religion." This he infers from the rite of circumcision.

It must appear to every unprejudiced mind, that there is much ambiguity in this apparent friendly solution. It seems to intend, that none but adults ever were, or ever can be interested, in that ordinance: nor were any others laid under the least obligation arising therefrom: but that children or slaves, "might change their religion with their masters." Will this agree with Paul's declarations, Rom. vi. 3, Gal. iii. 17. If in baptism all put on Christ, whether masters or not, where is the least authority in the word of God to put him off again? Yet certainly this must be the case, with dependants, if the head of the family changed his profession. And the doctrines which Dr. P. says, John taught, and the very reasons which he gives for his wonderful success, prove that the persons who were baptized were such as designed it to express

“their own repentance and desire to lead a new life.” And will any venture to say that only a few individuals were interested in it? or that any of them were infants?

With respect to the mode he says, “I have *no doubt* but the *only* ancient mode of baptism was *immersion*; and should rather approve of it at present: but since it is the application of water that expresses the purity of heart and life peculiar to christians, and not any certain quantity of it: and since the meaning of the rite is as well understood in whatever manner it be administered; and also since dipping is sometimes imagined at least to be dangerous for the health of children, I think a scrupulosity in this punctilio unnecessary; and therefore I do not think it worth while to make any alteration in the common practice. If I thought immersion the only proper baptism, I should certainly submit to it without delay.” Had he been satisfied with sending this and no more, I should not have been surprised. His judging a few drops of water sufficient to express all the cleansing from guilt a soul requires, might proceed from his high notions of human nature. But it should seem his friend was not satisfied with his first statement, and put his question a second time. To this the Dr. declines answering himself; but gets another to perform the task. He says, “The mode is not precisely directed, and therefore he thought it left to discretion, and may be performed in the manner in which baptism, that is washing, is usually practised in each country;” and adds, “That in his opinion, our Lord baptized his disciples by washing their feet,” John xiii. And thinks it sets that part of our Lords conduct in the most striking light.

The Dr's. readiness to be immersed upon being convinced, &c. can be nothing less than saying that Christ has given commands which his people are unable to perform aright, for want of plainer instructions. But how can he approve the other's mode of a washing the feet only, contrary to what appears to be his firm belief? Which yet he does in a note accompanying it. Surely, Sir, this should impress our Lord's solemn injunction upon all our minds. John v. 39. “Search the scriptures.” And where is the man who has read the pure word of God upon this important part of duty, without preconceived notions, but will say with the learned Dr. “I have no doubt but immersion was the only ancient mode?” Yet I

Must confess, though I have often read that wonderful display of Christ's readiness to serve, I never had the least idea of his performing the ordinance of baptism upon his disciples. I have read of some who baptized the dead, of others who repeated it, by sprinkling, many times in a person's life: and believe it to be the practise in the Greek church to this day to dip their children thrice in baptism; but never read, or heard of any who maintained that our Lord performed it by washing the feet. Perhaps something of this kind might induce them to "wash the feet of those who were baptized at their coming out of the font," in the time of Ambrose. However Jesus baptized not. John iv. 2. If it be common in the east for some person to wash the *hands* of those who have been taking food, did not our Saviour's condescending to wash the *feet*, prove that he came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.

May we learn from the above considerations not to believe any creed, because great men are the promoters of it, since the best may and do err; but may God preserve us from error and give us grace to walk in all his ordinances blameless: cherishing brotherly affection towards those who differ from us.

N. J.

THE DUTY OF CHRISTIANS TO OBSERVE THE LORD'S DAY.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. B.

SIR,

The following answer to an important question is copied from the Minutes of an Association of Particular Baptists, held in London, in 1689. As it appears to contain a compact and judicious solution, by inserting it in the G. B. B. you might benefit some of your readers, and would oblige, your's respectfully,

G. B.

QUESTION. Whether it be not the duty of all christians and churches of Christ, religiously to observe the Lord's day, or first day of the week, in the worship and service of God, both in public and private?

ANSWER. It is concluded in the affirmative; because we find that day was set apart for the solemn worship of God,

by our Lord Jesus and his holy apostles, through the infallible inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

1. Because it appears that the Son of God, who was manifested in the flesh, had authority to make a change of the solemn day of worship, being Lord of the Sabbath. *Matt. xii. 8.*

2. It is manifest that our blessed Lord and Saviour arose on that day, as having completed and confirmed the work of our redemption. *Matt. xxviii. 1. Luke xxiv. 1. John xx. 1.* whereby he laid the foundation of the observation of that day.

3. Our Lord Jesus did then, on that day most plainly and solemnly appear to his disciples, teaching and instructing them; blessing them and giving them their commission; breathing on them the Holy Ghost. *Luke xxiv. 13, 27, 36. John xx. 19, 23.* Moreover on the next first day of the week, he appeared to them again, giving them a further infallible proof of his glorious resurrection: and then convinced the apostle Thomas, who was absent the day before; but was now with them. *John xx. 26.* Whereby it appears he sanctified and confirmed the religious observation of that day by his own example.

4. Our Lord and Saviour remained with his disciples forty days after his resurrection, speaking to them of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, *Acts. i. 3.* And we question not but he then gave command about the observation of this day.

5. For a further confirmation hereof it appears, that after his ascension, his disciples or apostles were assembled together solemnly with one accord, on the day of Pentecost; which by all computation, was the first day of the week: recorded, *Acts ii. 1, 2.* He then poured out his Holy Spirit, in a marvellous and an abundant measure, upon them.

6. Accordingly, afterwards, we find this day was solemnly observed by the churches; as appears, *Acts xx. 7,* where we have the churches assembling on that day plainly asserted, with the solemn duties then performed, which were preaching and breaking of bread; and all this recorded as their usual custom: which could be from no other cause but divine and apostolic institution. And it is most remarkable, and worthy the most serious observation of all the Lord's people, that although the holy apostles, and others, that preached the

gospel, took their opportunities to preach the word on the Jewish sabbath-day, and on other days of the week, as they had convenient seasons afforded; yet we have no example of the churches then assembling together to celebrate all the ordinances of our Lord Jesus peculiar to them, but on the first day of the week; which manifest practice of theirs is evidently as plain a demonstration of its being a day set apart for religious worship, by the will and command of our Lord Jesus, as if it had been expressed in the plainest words. Forasmuch as they did nothing, in those purest primitive times, in the sacred worship of God, either as to time or form, but by divine warrant from the holy apostles, who were instructed by our Lord Jesus, and were guided in all those affairs by his faithful and infallible Holy Spirit.

7. In like manner the solemn ordinance of collection for the necessities of the poor saints, was commanded to be performed on that day, 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2, by apostolic ordination; which without question, by reason of their observing that day for their holy assembling and worship, was then required.

Lastly. It is asserted by all the considerate and able expositors of the holy scriptures, that the denomination or title of Lord's day, mentioned Rev. i. 10, was attributed to the first day of the week, as the usual distinguishing name given to that solemn day, by the christians, or churches in the primitive times; and as being a day to be spent wholly in the service and worship of the Lord, and not in our own worldly and secular affairs, which are lawful to be attended unto on other days of the week.

From all which laid together and considered, we are convinced that it is our duty religiously to observe that holy day in the celebration of the worship of God.

Ivimey's Hist. of Eng. Bap. p. 497.

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE CHILDREN OF JOHN THOUGHTLESS AND ABRAHAM MODEST.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

In a former letter, (see G. B. R. vol. iv. p. 121.) I gave you an account of two very different characters in my neighbour-

hood; John Thoughtless and Abraham Modest. Agreeable to my promise, I now send you some particulars respecting their children.

Thomas Thoughtless, at the death of his father, was about twenty years of age; a forward sprightly youth, and had learned a good trade. Being driven, by the ill usage of his mother-in-law, from his father's house, he had procured lodging at a steady and pious neighbour's. The cheerful piety and regular comfort which he witnessed in this happy family, so far different from that he had been forced to quit, affected him deeply. He saw and felt that the ways of religion were ways of pleasantness; and seemed desirous of walking in them. His conduct became regular, he attended constantly on the means of grace, and endeavoured to gain religious knowledge. His pious host, who had known his unhappy father, began to consider him as a "brand plucked out of the fire;" and encouraged him to offer himself to the church. He took the advice, and was accepted. For some years, his conduct was regular and consistent with his profession; and he began to enjoy the natural consequences. He was decent in his appearance; had a few pounds in his purse; and was respected by his friends.

Unhappily for Thomas, a gentleman erected a large factory and a genteel family mansion, in the neighbourhood. He had always a disposition to pry into the concerns of others, and spent some time in enquiring into the particulars of this new undertaking. He learnt that it was proposed to give high wages to good workmen, to act as overseers. Thinking himself qualified for the office, Thomas immediately began to wish for it. He found now, that his present situation had many disagreeables which he never noticed till this new place offered: and had not the least doubt but that, in the desired one, every thing would be agreeable. In this temper, he met Richard, the son of Abraham Modest, who was nearly of his own age, and a member of the same church; when the following conversation took place. *Thomas*. "Well, Richard, will not you try to get a place at the new factory? Do you not hear what high wages they propose?" *Richard*. "I have no such intentions, at present, Thomas: I should like to know a little more about them first. Besides, I am very content where I am?" *Thomas*. "But I am very discon-

tent; and I know enough to determine that I should be much better in such a place." *Richard*. "Perhaps it may be so; but perhaps it may not. There may be disagreeable things in the situation you wish for, with which you are unacquainted. Had you not better try to make things comfortable where you are, at least till you know more about this new situation? All is not gold that glitters. Think well before you act." *Thomas*. "No: I will not think about it. I will get in if possible before all the places are filled." *Richard*. "Well: God prosper you."

Soon after this conversation, Thomas procured a place at the factory. His business was to oversee a certain number of workmen, to be responsible for their work and conduct, and to work with them. For some time, things went on smoothly. It is true the workmen would too often use profane words, which, at first, was very disagreeable to Thomas; and he checked them. But being laughed at for his preciseness, as they termed it, he desisted. Habit soon made him familiar with their disgraceful language: and we are sorry to add, it was not long, before he would, when in a passion imitate it. Sometimes it happened also, that too much ale would be drunk, and of course riots and quarrels would ensue. On these occasions, Thomas, for a while felt uneasy; especially as he generally had to pay part of the expence: but could soon join these scenes of riotous mirth as heartily as the rest. It was not unfrequently the case, that, in order to execute pressing orders, they were obliged to work on the Lord's day. To this Thomas at first submitted with reluctance; but was compelled to conform to the rules of the place; and at length grew quite indifferent to the matter. Thus his morals were undermined; and by degrees he lost not only the power but the form of godliness. The church, from time to time, took up his case, and admonished him of the evil of his ways. He always expressed his sorrow for the past; and his intentions of reforming. But, alas! these intentions were never realized; and after long forbearance, the church was obliged to withdraw from him.

Thomas soon found disagreeables in this situation. The men were ignorant, careless, idle, and abusive; and often spoiled their work: and his superiors would frequently express their dissatisfaction in strong terms. He perceived too,

that, with all his high wages, he got no richer. He therefore became unhappy in his place, and fancied that a change must be for the better. He had observed, when he had occasion to go to the hall, how gaily the servants spent their time. The footmen appeared as spruce as gentlemen, and always unemployed. On enquiry, he learnt that some of them had higher wages for doing nothing, than he could earn by toiling hard all day. Without taking any further thought, or making any enquiries, he, at once, determined to get into the family. By bribing the butler, he obtained a footman's place, and made his entry into the servants' hall. Here all was jollity; and, for a few months, Thomas thought himself happy.

As the servants had much spare time, they employed it in various unlawful games, and other sinful pastimes: and Thomas, who had now ceased to pray for grace to resist temptation, quickly became as hearty a gamester as the rest. He got entangled also with a gaudy young woman, a fellow servant, with whose character and connections he was totally unacquainted; and with his usual thoughtlessness, married her. As she had from a girl been in gentlemen's houses, and had seen things only on a large scale, she was ignorant of those arts of economy and management, so necessary for the wife of a poor man. But her great defect was, that she was destitute of all religion, and had no relish for any of its exercises. She, therefore, exerted her influence to draw this unhappy young man from all his serious acquaintance and connections; and to extinguish in his soul, all the remains of desire after the ways of God.

This marriage made it requisite for his wife to leave her situation: and Thomas had been long enough a footman to discover, that even footmen have not every thing just as they would please. He therefore determined to leave his place, and as he had often envied the jovial life of the master of a public house, he resolved to turn publican. With the little money he and his wife had saved, and the credit they had procured, he obtained a public house in a neighbouring village; and while their credit and money lasted, went on comfortably. When those were gone, Thomas found, that the malsters would be paid, that his customers were troublesome, and his house never his own. He therefore, without

Further consideration, sold all his stock, and left the house, with very little property.— But it would be tedious to follow him through all his wanderings. With the same unthinking fickleness, he became successively, a huckster, a travelling pedlar, a bailiffs' follower, the proprietor of swings and shews at fairs, and is now travelling the country with a monkey and a bear.

His wife, imitating his example, became as careless as he was inconsiderate. They dragged on many uncomfortable years together, in a state of constant altercation. At last, they parted, and she took up the trade of singing ballads and telling fortunes. They had two sons, who after spending their childhood in idleness and vice, were thrown on the parish. One was sent to sea; where, meeting with a pious and humane captain, he was well treated, and appears likely to become a respectable man. The other was bound an apprentice to a mechanic, too much like his father. After quarrelling and absconding several times, he was turned away; and wandered about as a vagabond; often driven to acts of dishonesty to satisfy the cravings of hunger. Not long ago, he was detected in an attempt at robbing a shop; and was sent to Botany Bay.

Let us now turn to Richard, the son of John Modest. After having been instructed in the principles of religion and morality by his excellent parents, and accustomed in his infancy to habits of regularity, industry, and obedience, his father chose him a pious, sober, and industrious master. Richard served this master diligently and faithfully during the term of his apprenticeship, and continued to work with him as a journeyman for several years till his death. At this event, Richard sincerely lamented; as he always had cherished a sort of filial regard to his master. About this time, he married a modest serious young woman, who had indeed no fortune, but had been instructed by her pious parents in the fear of the Lord; and brought up in habits of cleanliness, industry, and frugality. As his master had left no sons, Richard took the house, and carried on the business. Though in a country village, there was not employment for many hands; yet he, being a good workman, and well respected by all the neighbourhood, had always work sufficient for himself and an apprentice.

Some months previous to his marriages, Richard had offered himself to the church, which received with peculiar satisfaction his humble but pertinent account of the gracious dealings of God with his soul; and admitted him to fellowship with cordial unanimity. His regularity in attending the means of grace, his unassuming but zealous and assiduous endeavours to promote the cause of his Saviour, and his general good conduct, were remarked with approbation by his minister and his fellow members; and, about four years ago, he was chosen to the office of deacon without one dissenting voice. In this situation, he continues the same modest, prudent, and useful man; and though by no means rich, he is looked up to with sincere respect by all the church and is highly esteemed by all who know him.

As soon as Richard and his wife took possession of their house, they erected a family altar in it; and that God whose blessing they implored smiled upon them as a family. They neither possessed nor wished for wealth. Providence crowned their industry and frugality with a competence; and the divine grace taught them to be content with such things as they had. They had several children, who were early instructed to love and serve the God of their parents. They grew up like olive branches round their table; and now are filling their several places in society to their own credit and comfort, and the satisfaction of those with whom they stand connected.

“Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it.”

In some future communication, the females of this family may be introduced to your readers, by your's,

OBSERVATOR,

GENERAL BAPTIST OCCURRENCES.

CONFERENCES.

THE LEICESTERSHIRE CONFERENCES was held at Derby, Sept. 28 and 29, 1813. The ministers present were Messrs. R. Smith, Pickering, Brand, Hoe, Rogers, Ingham, Barrow, J. Smith, J. Deacon, Pike, Dallison, &c. At this meeting a further supply was arranged for Namptwich. Mr. John Shegs, a native of Ireland, who has acted as an itinerant preacher in various parts of Derbyshire and Staffordshire,

unconnected with any body of christians, expressed a desire to become connected with the G. B's. Agreed that Messrs. Barrow, Ingham, and Pike, visit the places at which he preached, before the next conference. The following question was proposed from Friar-lane, Leicester, "Ought not the G. B's. to exert themselves as much as they can in establishing, though on ever so small a scale, a mission of their own?" Answer. "Yes." A question from the same church respecting the establishing of a General Tract Society was postponed for consideration, at the next conference; as was also some other business. It was determined that four conferences be held yearly: and that the next conference be held at Castle Donnington, on the Tuesday after Christmas-day.

The following plan respecting future conferences was arranged and adopted. That the churches with which the conference is connected, should be divided into *four* districts, which may be termed the *Nottingham, Loughborough, Leicester, and Derby* Districts. These districts, beside smaller or remote churches where it is not judged convenient for conferences to be held to include the following churches respectively. *Leicester district*, the spring conference; Leicester, (the two churches being reckoned as one, and having the conference alternately) Hinckley, Barton, and Hugglescote. *Nottingham district*, the summer conference; Nottingham, Beeston, Ilkiston, and Leake. *Derby district*, the autumnal conference; Derby, Duffield, Castle Donnington, and Melbourne. *Loughborough district*, the winter conference; Loughborough, Quorndon, Kegworth, and Ashby. It was further determined, that this plan should commence from the next spring conference: and, that the churches in the respective districts should have the conference in alphabetical order. The following will therefore be the regular rotation for the succeeding four years.

	1814.	1815.	1816.	1817.
SPRING;	Barton,	Hinkley,	Hugglescote,	Leicester:
SUMMER;	Beeston,	Ilkiston,	Leake, or Wimeswold,	Nottingham.
AUTUMN;	Derby,	Donington,	Duffield,	Melbourn:
WINTER;	Ashby,	Kegworth,	Loughborough,	Quorndon.

The times for holding the respective conferences are, for the Spring conference, Easter Tuesday; Summer conference, Whitsun Tuesday, subject to a removal to the last Tuesday in

June, in case the Association should be altered to Whitsuntide; Autumnal conference, last Tuesday in September; Winter conference, last Tuesday in December.

N. B. The friends who may attend the next conference at Donnington, are particularly desired to take notice, that the plan recommended by the Association, in the minutes, case 18, will be adopted there.

THE LINCOLNSHIRE CONFERENCE was held, Oct. 7th 1813, at *Wisbeach*; but few ministers attended. There is reason, however, to hope that the meeting was profitable; and possibly may prove so in its future consequences, should a measure then suggested, be hereafter seriously attended to. Mr. Binns, as the substitute of Mr. Taylor, of Boston, preached on the preceding evening from 2 Peter iii. 9. "Not willing that any should perish."

THE YORKSHIRE CONFERENCE met at *Halifax*, March 2nd 1813. Mr. James Taylor preached from Gal. v. 13. A letter from Mr. Smith concerning the Isle of Axholme, was read; and some supplies for it were arranged. In answer to the important question proposed last meeting, (see G. B. R. Vol. v. page 86,) Messrs. Spencer, John Taylor, Hollingrake, Dean, Hodgson, and Andrews gave their thoughts in writing; the following abstract was approved, as the sense of the meeting: and the substance of the answers.—1. "Although we do not encourage persons causelessly to separate from the fellowship of any church; yet we cannot deny that every member is at liberty to remove to any church, when he believes it will be most for his own advantage, and most for the glory of God.—2. We advise such persons as design to remove, to settle all their concerns with the friends whom they leave, and peaceably to endeavour to obtain a dismission or character from them, before they propose themselves to any other society.—3. We recommend the church from which a member departs to dismiss him peaceably, at his request; and give him such a character as they believe he deserves. If they neglect to do this, we cannot see that they can reasonably find fault with any subsequent steps to which their neglect may necessarily lead.—4. If a person offer himself for fellowship to any of our churches properly recommended, we think it the duty of that church to receive him; but if he present himself without a suitable recommendation or character, probably, his case will fall under the next direction.—5. As

to excluded persons, or persons withdrawn, let the church to which such offer themselves apply to their former connections, to learn how and for what reasons they were separated from them. If it appears, that they were excluded for immorality or have withdrawn under church censure, let their offer be rejected, till they be reconciled to their former connections. If a church be generally persuaded, that he who offers himself is a christian, and has been improperly treated by his former friends; let them still endeavour to reconcile him to their friendship, and fellowship again; or, with their approbation, receive him. But if they cannot obtain a candid investigation of the affair, let them receive him on such evidence as they can obtain, if it satisfy them."

This conference met again at *Queenshead*, June 8th, 1813. Mr. Ellis preached from 1 Sam. xii. 23, 24. Appointed the Association in 1814, to be at *Birkscliffe*, &c.

This conference assembled again at *Burnley*, Aug. 9. Mr. Hollingrake preached from 2 Tim. iv. 2. Amongst other things agreed for Mr. Burgess to collect in this district for the chapel at *Gedney Hill*, next Midsummer; Messrs. Phelon, Andrews, Ellis, and Dean, engaged to supply *Kirton*, and the *Isle of Axholme*, each three or four Lord's days, before Christmas.

Oct. 13, 1813, the LONDON CONFERENCE was held at *Suffolk Street, Southwark*. Mr. D. Taylor was chosen chairman; Messrs. Hobbs and Purcell, moderators; and Mr. Preston, scribe. The states of the churches were then read. At *Birkhamstead, Chesham, and Tring*, they are in an united and prosperous condition; have baptized several since last conference, and have five candidates. They request an interest in the prayers of their brethren, that they may improve their blessings aright, and rejoice with holy fear. At *Chatham* they are advancing, though slowly; are pretty well attended with hearers; continue to have preaching twice every Lord's day; are at peace among themselves; have two candidates for baptism; and hope serious impressions are made on others. They solicit the prayers of the churches, that the cause of Jesus may revive and prosper among them. At *Church Lane*, they have baptized four since the last conference; have three candidates for fellowship; and hope that they are making some advancement in religion. At *Suffolk Street*, they have baptized three since the last meeting. They think their con-

gregations are better than usual, and that their prospects are encouraging. In answer to the general question, "What more can be done among us, to promote the Interest of our Lord Jesus Christ?" this meeting were of opinion, that if professors were more attentive to punctuality in all their proceedings, it would conduce much to their own advantage, and the honour of religion. They therefore requested Mr. D. Taylor to write a small piece on this subject for the G. B. R. It was also considered very desirable, that parents and heads of families instruct their children by catechising; and that ministers co-operate with them, in promoting this means of instruction, in a more public manner. This meeting likewise cordially approved the advices given at the Chatham conference, Sept. 12, 1810, and earnestly recommend them to the serious attention of all their christian friends (G. B. R. vol. iii. p. 575.) Tuesday evening, Mr. Purcell preached from Col. ii. 6, 7. "As ye have received Christ Jesus, the Lord, so walk in him, &c." On Wednesday evening, Mr. J. Kingford opened the public worship with prayer; and Messrs. Hobbs and D. Taylor preached; the former from Acts viii. 8. "There was great joy in that city." and the latter from Col. ii. 6. The next conference to be at Tring, on the Wednesday in Easter week. Mr. J. Preston to preach on the Tuesday evening, and Messrs. Kingford and D. Taylor, on the Wednesday.

INTERESTING INFORMATION.

The British and Foreign Bible Society have lately published their Ninth Annual Report. From this highly interesting document it appears—that during the year 1812, seventy-five New Auxiliary Bible Societies were formed in different parts of Great Britain, exclusive of numerous Branch Societies, and Bible Associations,—that from Feb. 21, to Dec. 31, 1812, this Society had distributed 81,319 Bibles, 121,261 Testaments,—that since its commencement, it has distributed 221,734 Bibles and 412,785 Testaments exclusive of those circulated at the charge of the Society in foreign parts:—that the total *receipts*, exclusive of Sales in the year ending March 31, 1813, was £66,897. 16s. 1d. and the *Sales* amounted to £9,575. 4s. 11d.; while the total *payments* were £69,496. 13s. 8d. We hope, in a future number, to give a more detailed account of this Society.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

SIR,

If no other account of Mrs. Boot come to hand ; perhaps the following, taken from a neat gravestone, standing in the baptist burying ground, at Loughborough, in Leicestershire, may afford a moment's entertainment to some of your readers.

B. P.

A Monument of filial Affection.

Sacred to the Memory of
 CATHERINE, Wife of
Francis Boot of this Place ;
 who, like a Mother in Israel,
 delighted in assisting the
young Enquirer in the way to Zion,
 and piously discharging the
 Duties of her domestic and
 CHRISTIAN RELATIONS,
glorified her great Redeemer :
 She exchanged this Mortal Life
 for Immortal Glory,
 On the 7th of March, 1813 :
 Aged 72 Years.
She was 52 Years a Member
of this Church.

**LINES OCCASIONED BY HEARING A PANEGYRIC ON HOMER,
 FROM THE PULPIT OF AN ORTHODOX PREACHER.**

While some preachers old heathen writers recite,
 And boast of the beauties they see ;
 In Virgil, and Tully, and Homer delight,
 The beauties of Jesus for me.

For ever they Tully and Homer may name ;
 Can it be expected this should
 The poor careless wandering sinner reclaim,
 Or do the sad penitent good ?

Tho' nothing but Jesus determin'd to know,
 In my humble opinion, St. Paul
 Did more solid worth and true dignity show,
 Than the wisest and best of them all.

With a sense of the glorious gospel impress'd,
 And zealous the truth to impart ;
 The apostles with plainness their hearers address'd,
 And feelingly spake to the heart.

And Jesus himself, the blest fountain of love,
 Whom we, tho' unseeing, adore ;
 Whose heavenly wisdom came down from above ;
 Who spake as ne'er man spake before ;

With discourses most faithful, and parables plain,
 Sin's evils attempted to cure ;
 And this proof of his mission he did not disdain,
 "The gospel is preached to the poor."

Among the poor feeble attempters to teach,
 Some now are so rational grown,
 They seem, tho' appointed the gospel to preach,
 Unwilling the Saviour to own.

At enthusiasts too they make heavy complaints ;
 And think, if they ventured to say,
 The apostles, as well as the primitive saints,
 Were far less enlighten'd than they.

Some skip like a squirrel, from this thing to that,
 Until the most learned would fail,
 To tell what the've been an hour aiming at ;
 Or distinguish the head from the tail.

And some, I presume, who are equally good,
 So well have adjusted their plan ;
 Leave you, as it were, in the midst of a wood,
 And you may get out as you can.

The gospel is plain, and they plainly should preach ;
 But this I may venture to say,
 The language they use and the doctrine they teach,
 Drive half their few people away.

R. G.

REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

'Tis true to dust I must return ;
 And leave my friends on earth to mourn ;
 Weeping for me will be in vain,
 I never must return again.

But lie and moulder in the ground,
 Till the last trump of God shall sound :
 Then mount and fly with wings above,
 To see my Jesus, whom I love.

No trouble dares approach that seat :
 There's no unkindness, no deceit ;
 No longer fight with flesh and blood ;
 But dwell for ever with my God.

Yet stop—one thought disturbs my mind,
 My friends ! my friends ! ah, they are blind !
 Shall I with triumph meet them there ;
 Or hear them plung'd to black despair.

Oh dreadful thought, it pierces deep :
 And can they ? are they yet asleep ?
 O, wake them, Lord, while they have breath :
 And snatch them from eternal death.

FILIA.

 LINES OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF AN ESTEEMED
 FRIEND.

AN EPITOME OF HIS CHARACTER.

By providence with riches crown'd,
 With comely form and graceful mein ;
 Yet seldom fill'd with pride, or frown'd
 On those in lower circles seen.

His heart, to tenderness inclin'd,
 Oft swell'd at another's woe ;
 At such, as in distress confu'd,
 The depths of pain and mis'ry know.

The sorrows of the poor he shar'd ;
 O'er them he shed a falling tear :
 And for their wants supplies prepar'd
 When they to his abode drew near.

His mind was seriously dispos'd,
 Tho' sometime 'lur'd with earthly care ;
 Yet still on Christ his soul repos'd,
 And in his comforts had a share.
 We trust he's now in realms of light,
 Far from the reach of ev'ry snare ;
 Rob'd in his Saviour's glories bright,
 Enthron'd with saints and angels there.

THE SURVIVORS' SOLILOQUY.

Most gracious Sovereign, at whose righteous word
 Our kindred die, our dearest comforts flee,
 Yet ever be thy name by us ador'd ;
 And teach us always to confide in Thee.
 In this dark world of thine, this distant land,
 Where by thy kindest providence we live,
 Thy mercy gave an husband, parent, friend,
 Our griefs to mourn, and all our wants relieve.
 We, his dear offspring, who lay near his breast,
 Oft shared the tokens of parental love ;
 In all our woes his tenderness express'd
 As evening dews descending from above.
 Religion bore a share in his desire,
 His wishes for its growth were often seen.
 A holy life he did always admire,
 Display'd in conduct peaceful and serene.
 Whatever virtues in our parents shone,
 Let us all copy now without delay ;
 For all his failings let our love atone,
 Regardless what a giddy world may say.
 When his dear life drew near a final close,
 He saw the folly of neglecting God ;
 His fault'ring tongue advis'd us all to choose
 The path of piety the saints have trod.
 His dying counsel on our hearts abide,
 Till life's whole scene from us shall be withdrawn ;
 Its gains, its joys, nor honours turn aside,
 Our hearts from virtue till our work be done.

J. H.

THE
GENERAL BAPTIST REPOSITORY.

No. XXX.—Vol. V.

An ESSAY ON the PASTORAL OFFICE, respectfully submitted to the Churches composing the "NEW CONNECTION" OF GENERAL BAPTISTS; with a few hints to the *serious persons* in their several *Congregations*.*

THE christian ministry is the highest office sustained by man; being the service of souls, in exclusive reference to their salvation and the divine glory. It is the institution of the compassionate Redeemer of man, for the regular diffusion of spiritual light, and the dispensation of the bread and water of life, that "*God's ways might be known upon earth, his saving health among all nations.*" That *the seed which serve Him* may, by proper culture, *bring forth fruit unto life eternal*. This ministry consists of two great parts. The first regards the wicked; and its tendency is, to *bring them into the way of peace*: the last respects the righteous; that they may have a prosperous journey *to the house not made with hands*. These parts have an intimate connection; and they are admirably subservient to each other. The last of them is significantly styled the PASTORAL OFFICE.

The *first* attempt will be, to give those addressed, a just idea of it; and the *second*, to impress them suitably with a few of those interesting facts, which that idea will naturally suggest.

Some christians may think the former a superfluous labour, under an apprehension, that it is enough if the *pastor* knows his employment: if the servant understands his work com-

* This Essay originated in the earnest request of many ministers and representatives at the last Association, who unanimously solicited the writer to prepare a piece on this important subject, for the G. B. R. EDITOR.

pletely, and he for whom he labours has but a slight knowledge of it, is it not likely that the man will sometimes be blamed when he ought to be commended; and commended when he deserves to be censured? So it has been probably in reference to the duties of this sacred function, and for the same reason.

The scriptures give us different views of this office; these must be collected and combined, or a just-conception of it cannot be found. They affix several characters to the christian pastor, which are attended with their appropriate duties; but they are all comprehended in those of a WATCHMAN, and a STEWARD.

A *watchman* is one placed in a particular station to espay danger, and to give notice of it in a proper manner to those for whom he is engaged, that they may be secure. The Lord said to Ezekiel xxxiii. 7. *Son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel.* And the writer to the Hebrews, xiii. 17, describing these officers in his christian church, says, *they watch for your souls.*

The watchman's office grows out of the apprehension of danger. The christian's state is vastly improved by his conversion; but to say that he, while in this world, is out of danger, is certainly to speak in opposition to the author of the Bible. Christian, art thou a man? Thou hast reason to be apprehensive of danger to thy soul from thy *passions* and *appetites*: the swellings of pride, the pinings of envy, the cravings of covetousness, the desires of lasciviousness, the ragings of anger, the black suggestions of malice, are evils, the seeds of which are not eradicated from thy nature. There is (consider the alarming fact!) a *law in thy members*, more terrible than the veteran in arms, warring against the law of thy mind; seeking to bring thy soul again into *captivity to the law of sin*. Art thou in the world? *Every condition* in which thou canst be placed has its snares. Art thou prosperous? *When Jeshurun waxed fat he kicked: then he forgot God, and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation.* Deut. xxxii. 15. Agar dreaded poverty lest he should be dishonest and deny God. And much business tends to *overcharge the heart with the cares of this life*. Dost thou abide on the earth? Thou art in a country which abounds with snares, pits, prisons, and mortal enemies. Every saint has

his dwelling near the haunt of one, compared with whom, the *roaring lion* is an impotent foe. The oracles of God, therefore, always direct the saint to prayer, faith, sobriety, vigilance; and unless he attend to these he cannot be secure. But the *shepherd and bishop of souls*, thinking these alone insufficient, was pleased to appoint some to watch for the rest. That they might do this more effectually, he has divided the great *household of faith* into separate parts, which are called churches. His plan is for each of these to have one of his servants placed as a watchman unto it; that he may be acquainted with each person in it; and observe him, so as to be able to apprise him of approaching danger; and of the consequence of stedfastness, vigorous resistance, or immediate flight, as the case may require.

The Pastor, according to this view of his office, has to do with the saints not only as individuals; but in their united state as a church. He who is placed as a *watchman unto the house of Israel*, is to be concerned for its security as a *whole*: witness Paul's conduct toward the church at Ephesus, and his charge to them who were to be its future pastors, as described, Acts xx. 28,—31. Doctrinal errors, neglect of discipline, inattention to the quality of candidates for fellowship; a disposition to speculate, to wrangle, to domineer; lukewarmness, and the spirit of this world, are evils, at the sight of which, the man who fills this office well, will sound an alarm to the whole church. It is his, above every other member of it, to *look diligently lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble it, and thereby many be defiled.*

That this part of the office may be discharged faithfully, the Lord has attached an awful responsibility to it. Jacob had the charge of Laban's flock; and when referring to it, says, *that which was torn, I bare the loss of it; of mine hand didst thou require it.* The Lord of Hosts enforced his charge upon Israel's watchman by this declaration: *if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hand.* And your pastors are set to watch for your souls as they that **MUST GIVE AN ACCOUNT.**

The New Testament not only represents the man who fills the pastoral office as a watchman, but also as a STEWARD. A steward is an upper servant to whom his Lord commits his

goods, and the management of his family, with an intention that every thing be done according to his own directions, and for his sole interest. Paul wished some to account of him and his colleagues, as *ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God*, 1 Cor. iv. 1. That this was not peculiar to them as Apostles, appears from Tit. i. 7, where he says, a *bishop* (that is every pastor) *must be blameless, as the steward of God*. The Lord Jesus not only gives this idea of the office, Luke xii. 42; but speaks impressively of the duties attached to it: *Who then is that faithful and wise steward whom his Lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?* They are, in a subordinate sense, intrusted with his laws, his gospel, his church. Their great business, according to this representation is, *to take care of the church of God*, 1 Tim. iii. 5. And so it includes the office of shepherd, who takes care of the flock, by which image this part of it is frequently set forth.

A good steward must have his eye upon every thing of which he has the charge; accordingly we find that christian pastors are represented by Peter, (1 Epis. v. 2), as taking the *oversight* of the church; and in Acts xx. 28, as being made *overseers*. This part of the pastoral care is the inspection of the whole church, to see that each is in his proper place, and that he acts by the rule; not any rule of the pastor's making, or of the people's making; the rule laid down by the Lord himself. He must be satisfied with the character of those admitted into the family; and he ought not to be unconcerned in the exclusion of members from it: nor in the most material steps leading to that separation. It is plain from other passages of the sacred word, that he is not to be the sole doer of the one, or of the other; and that the church is not to act in mere conformity with his judgment: but to suppose that he has no right to take any active part in such matters; or that he has no more concern in them than any other member, is to entertain an opinion which cannot be made to agree with the idea of his office as a *stewardship*.* Here we

* Many reasons have been assigned to show, that in various cases of discipline and difficulty which occur in the church, it is better for the pastor to interfere but little. This supposition does not harmonize with the notion here given of his

perceive in what capacity he is to rule over the house of God. Not as a *proprietor*, to do what he pleases with it: not

office. The steward is responsible to his Lord, for the security and prosperity of the family; and can it comport with his duty to leave almost entirely to the management of others, those things which so materially influence its welfare; some of which strike at its very existence? The reasons, produced on these occasions, are drawn from maxims of worldly prudence, to which the New Testament is a stranger. The apostle of the gentiles did not direct his son Timothy to leave to other persons the giving of reproof and rebuke, lest they, or their relations or friends should be offended, and not hear him preach, or not hear him to advantage: he said, *reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and doctrine.* He inculcated the same upon Titus.

Partly from the supposed delicacy of the pastor's interference in some of these matters; and partly from the weight of concerns which he would otherwise have on hand, many churches have chosen what are termed *ruling elders*; and in a few instances, others, under the denomination of *helps*, to attend to such affairs: or, as it is sometimes said, to assist the pastor in so doing. The writer apprehends, that the New Testament knows nothing of any ruling elders *distinct* from pastors. It is certain that it describes the character, and points out the work of only two officers in the church: the pastor and the deacon. The one, Christ has charged with the care of the spiritual concerns of his household, and the other with the temporal ones. In these cases the society has rules by which to select its officers; and when appointed, the Lord in his word presents each with a clear account of his business; but as to the others, every one is left to his own fancy, or reason, in making the selection: and each is left to his discretion in judging what is their proper province. Hence perplexity arises: the church looks to the elders to do this and that; they think the matter is a pastoral duty which does not concern them. At other times they look to the pastor; he supposes it is one of the cases for which the elders were appointed; and so between them both much is neglected. And at some times, to avoid obtruding himself into the province of another, he forbears attending to that which lies with

as a Lord or a Legislator, who has power to enact laws of his own; but as Christ's servant, to see that all things be according to his revealed pleasure, and for his interest; to enforce the due observance of his laws, by considerations drawn from his approbation, wisdom, love, and glory. Should he overstep these bounds, and presume to legislate, allegiance to Christ would require the people first to remonstrate, and then to rebel; but, while he moves in this subservient sphere, they ought to obey him; for he rules them as an *accountable* servant. Heb. xiii. 17.

The good steward in looking over his Master's house, will be anxious about the health and soundness of those committed to his care. It is among the important duties of the office in question, to mark the first symptoms of spiritual disease; to enquire carefully what is amiss in the soul, and into the cause of what is wrong; to consider what application the case requires; and, at the proper season, with wisdom and fidelity,

great weight upon his heart. May it not be proper, therefore, for the churches to let these things remain on that simple footing, on which the Head of the church left them. He who fills the office before us must, in many instances have assistance, and every one in the church should stand ready to aid him; but where there is no official appointment, he will have the opportunity of selecting such as are most suitable for the case. In very large churches where the whole time of any man would be insufficient for the discharge of the various and weighty duties of this station, should not another pastor be sought, rather than have recourse to officers of which the scriptures appear ignorant? The argument to which some have resorted to justify this practice, that it is the privilege of the church to judge what offices are needful, and appoint them accordingly, will, if it prove any thing, establish too much. Every son of an episcopal or papal church would say that their deacons, priests, vicars, archdeacons, deans, bishops, abbots, cardinals, popes, &c. &c. were all necessary, and therefore their good and wise forefathers formed these offices; and that they for the same reason continue to appoint them: and, if the principle before named be allowed, it will not be easy for any protestant dissenter to show that they have not a right so to do.

to administer the suitable instruction, reproof, or consolation; that the soul may speedily be recovered, and fitted for the active service of its Lord. It also requires him who fills it, to consider the regular necessities of those given in charge to him; and a very essential part of his duty is, *to give them their portion of meat in due season.* The pastors which God of old promised to his people which were to be according to his heart, Jer. iii. 15, were to feed them with *knowledge and understanding.* The Lord has provided the food, and left it with his servants to be distributed to his household, according to the wants of each. They are to give *milk* to the *babes*, and *meat* to strong men. It is *pure* milk which they are to impart, and which you are to *desire.* The meat must be without any human taint; consisting of those substantial and sublime truths of revelation in general, and of the glorious gospel in particular, which will make you strong either for labour, or war; and fit you to stand before your Lord *at his coming.* In fine, all the solicitude and management of this office, are for the prosperity of holy souls; for the security, increase, and perfection of the church of Christ; *that he may present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.* Eph. v. 27. That it may not be *neglected*, the watchman is engaged to watch in view of the great *account:* that it may not be *abused*, the steward is forewarned that *if he say in his heart, my Lord delayeth his coming;* and shall begin to beat the men servants, and maidens, and to eat and drink and be drunken; *the Lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware; and will cut him in sunder,* and will appoint him his portion with the *unbelievers.* Luke xii. 45, 46.

This idea of the pastoral office is calculated to impress every serious person with the following facts: that it is an office of great importance; that it is natural and proper for every church to be anxious for a pastor; that those churches who are favoured with one are accountable to Christ for the blessing, that it is of consequence to all saints to be visible members of the church, that they may share in all the advantages of it; and that those who compose the churches should cherish an anxiety for a succession of eminent pastors.

FIRST, *it is an office of great importance.* It is that which Christ himself would have filled, had He continued personally in this world. The steward referred to by the Divine Speaker in Luke xii. 42, is evidently chosen to officiate in the Lord's stead during his absence. Jesus has taken a great journey on very momentous business. One of the most striking features of that *night in which he was betrayed*, was care for his people when he should be no longer with them. He promised to send the Holy Ghost to supply his place among them. It was not his intention that the Spirit should perform his whole work for the church, by immediate inspiration; but that there should be visible agents or officers in his house, which he should endue with gifts and graces suited to their station; that by them he might carry on a material part of his work. This was one of the many ends of that effusion of the Spirit which succeeded his ascension: and *he gave some pastors, for the perfecting of the saints, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ,* see Eph. iv. 11,—15. While the Son abode on Earth, He presided over his own house; but as *the heavens have now received him until the time of the restitution of all things*, the Holy Ghost maketh men overseers.

The direct tendency of its duties is to counteract the workings of your corruptions, to repel the baneful influence of your conditions, to defeat the designs of your adversary, the Devil, to save your souls from death; to conform you to the image of Christ; to facilitate your progress toward the *kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world.*

Zion's interest in it is great. *When there was no king in Israel, every man did that which was right in his own eyes;* and in the church, when there is no pastor, or other minister who in a good degree supplies the place of one, it is generally much the same: negligence, presumption, disorder, if not confusion, prevail: privileges are slighted, work is neglected, folly is wrought, no discipline exercised; the people wander, become faint, are scattered; one is wounded, another is diseased, a third is hungry; because there is no pastor to care

for their souls. Thus it was with the Jewish church, when Jesus saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them; because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Matt. ix. 36, and Mark vi. 34.

The manner in which the faithful discharge of its duties is impressed upon them who sustain it, strongly marks its consequence. Attention is not enforced by the forfeiture of thousands of gold and silver; but by the requisition of the people's blood. Temporal advantage is passed over: the promise is; *When the chief shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.* And they are reminded, that it is *the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.*

The SECOND fact which the foregoing view of this office presents to the serious mind is, *that it is natural and proper, for every christian society to be anxious for a pastor.* As the blessings of salvation surpass all others, the means by which they are conveyed, and directed to the attainment of their objects, are proportionably precious. To hear these regularly dispensed and judiciously directed, is a prime favour. Hence the advantage of a *stated* ministry; but above all, of a fixed pastor. When such an one, supposing him to have been a man of God, is removed from his station by death or otherwise, the church has great cause for grief. In such a case, there is mostly a necessity to have recourse for a season, to casual supplies, and in that exigence they should be thankfully received. But for a people to be entirely satisfied with them; to think it enough that they have a sermon or two in a week on the common themes of christianity, by persons in a great degree strangers to their immediate necessities; to suppose that if the place is open at the stated times, and the people generally give their attendance, they have all that they need to desire for the prosperity of their souls, and of the cause, is to betray ignorance, bordering upon stupidity. Yet when the springs of action shall be laid open, it will probably appear, that some prefer this plan as being cheaper, or more favourable to their views; of independency, and personal equality; or less troublesome to conscience, and more favourable to the soul's quiet: in reality, as being more congenial with their covetousness, their pride, and their carnality.

But ye, brethren, under a bereavement of this nature, while you cultivate a spirit of submission to the dispensations of the Most High, are to cherish an anxiety, to have the pastoral office speedily and respectably filled.

In the conjuncture supposed, your solicitude must not be to obtain a partizan, a tool, or a pleasant companion; but to secure the man most adapted to the circumstances of the place, who has gifts, graces, and views for the office; the man whose attainments in divine things disqualify him for a tyrant, whose sense of allegiance to his Lord, will not permit him to become a slave; whose conscience will not suffer him to slumber over his charge, nor do his Master's work deceitfully; whose ambition prompts him to take up with nothing short of souls for his hire: the man that will *take care of the church of God*; who will care for your souls; who will teach you *publickly, and from house to house*; be *instant in season and out of season*: who will *seek, not yours, but you*. The man whom the pen of inspiration has described—A PASTOR.

Your solicitude must be operative. You cannot by exertions form this man: he is a *man of God*. The pastors after his heart, are his gift. You must look up to the Head of the church. When he ascended up on high, he gave some pastors: and the residue of the spirit is with him. Those who compose a destitute society, should individually make it a matter of special supplication, that they may have such an one to go in and out before them; and the church as a body would do well to set apart some seasons for united fasting and prayer, to seek this blessing; or to ask counsel of God in reference to any person to whom the eye may be directed. Were God sought previous to these settlements, it is probable he would be more glorified in them. Hastily to call a *stranger* is evidently dangerous; and fact calls loudly upon the churches to be aware of it.

When the people have reason to conclude that the proper man is found, they ought to use all just and honourable means to obtain him. Having secured him, he should, after a lapse of time sufficient for the confirmation of their mutual satisfaction, be set apart to his work. Ordination to this office, by the imposition of hands, let disguised infidelity, or *rational* christianity, say what it will, was the practice of those days, when the Spirit, in the fullest sense, led the faith-

ful into all truth. These designations scripturally conducted, are indeed solemnities, *times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord*. The views then imparted, and the impressions received or revived, are productive of incalculable good. May the Connection witness these transactions, and realize their benign influence, *till time shall be no longer*.

The THIRD fact naturally arising from what we see of the pastoral office is, *that those churches which have a pastor, are accountable to Christ for the benefit*. Men are to be judged according to their works; according to their works estimated by the circumstances in which they will appear to have been wrought. It was on this principle that the Lord said; *It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom*, than for some of his time; not merely because their crimes were blacker; but on account of the circumstances attending their commission. In Isa. v. former part, Jehovah describes the ancient church as a vineyard; represents what he had done to make it fruitful; shows his disappointment in it; and how terrible is the judgment denounced in the fifth and sixth verses! The Son of God reproached the Jewish church with abusing the means intended for its salvation. He upbraided it with refusing the messengers of the Lord of Hosts; with killing his prophets, with stoning them that were sent unto it. Matth. xxiii. 37. To that the Chief Shepherd himself came; and the people's abuse of his operations, and of those performed by his immediate successors, brought wrath upon them to the uttermost. Your pastor is responsible to Christ for you; and you are responsible to Him for your pastor: he will to you, above all other men, be the *savour of life unto life, or of death unto death*. Therefore, under his management, don't be content with *abstaining from all appearance of evil*; but *grow up into Christ in all things; bring forth much fruit: hold forth the word of life*, that, in the day of Christ it may appear, that he has not *run in vain, neither laboured in vain*.

In order to this improvement, cherish a deep sense of the importance of his office; and of your own responsibility for it. And besides these, *give him a fair opportunity to serve your souls*. Show him that you prize his visits to enquire into the state of your minds. Open your hearts to him freely respecting your spiritual affairs; not as to a popish confessor to receive absolution; but as to a judicious friend or spiritual

father, whose life is bound up in your life, that he may judge accurately of your case, and administer accordingly. Give practical attention not only to the cheering promise, but also to the prudent hint, the wholesome advice, the serious warning, and the faithful reproof. Often approach the throne of grace to implore a sanctifying blessing upon all his steps. Be punctual in your attendance upon all his stated labours. It is in the house of God especially that he is to minister to your wants. The set seasons of worship are the regular times for feeding the household of faith. The *scribe well instructed unto the kingdom of God* repairs thither that *he may bring out of his treasures things new and old*. Then the *faithful and wise steward* endeavours to *give unto each his portion of meat*. Your pastors in their efforts to bring sinners to God, (for the pastor is always employed as the minister of reconciliation to the ungodly,) have also an eye to you; and in their morning sermons and weekly lectures, you are often almost the exclusive objects. But, it is at the Lord's table, that monthly feast to the pious, above all other places on earth, that they hope to meet you, and be the instruments of abundantly *satisfying you with the fatness of his house*; and of making you *drink of the river of his pleasure*.

Would you improve under your pastor's care, you must not think lightly of his ministry, much less neglect it. Were others to preach more elegantly, and in some respects more excellently, you might expect his sermons, generally speaking, to be blest to you above those of any other minister. He knows you, and loves you: they are the result of his intense thinking; the fruit of his fervent prayer; the offspring of that inexpressible solicitude which the good man feels, to stand clear of your blood at the bar of God; and to have you for his joy and crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus: they are the breathings of his affectionate anxiety for your everlasting salvation: they are adapted to you: they are the labours of the man whom God has given you; which you may therefore expect he will bless in a pre-eminent degree. Let him have it to say, in reference to you: *these are my epistles, known and read of all men*. Cause him to live in the quickening hope of presenting each of you *perfect in Christ Jesus*.

It is self-evident that your pastors cannot visit you so as to have that intimate knowledge of your affairs, and pay that attention to their pulpit preparations above supposed, without much time; and if you would afford them an opportunity to fulfil their ministry among you, you must let them have that time. The care of a church of moderate size, with the requisite ministerial duties, is certainly enough to occupy *all* the time of most men. It is matter of the deepest regret, that so many of the pastors among us, have their attention divided between the duties of the sacred office, and the cares of a secular employment. Hence their exclamations: *my leanness! my leanness!* that absence from your families, those inward conflicts attended with exquisite pain, upon a serious review of their function, to which all but God are strangers. What a blessing would it be to them, to the churches, to mankind, could they devote their mornings (say from six to one) to study and devotion; their afternoons to miscellaneous reading, and pastoral visits, their evenings to church meetings, prayer meetings, lectures, village preaching, and domestic duties. They might then rise much higher in sacred attainments; their pulpit exercises, if not more exact as compositions, would be more appropriate, plain, solid, rich, spiritual; accompanied with a seriousness and fervour which nothing but the immediate aids of the spirit, a thorough knowledge of the subject, a deep sense of its importance, and a sweet relish of its excellence, can possibly impart; and therefore calculated in a much higher degree to build up the church a *spiritual house*, and to enlarge it by additions of *lively stones*.

It is grievous that those whom the Lord has sent to labour in his vineyard should be obliged to devote two thirds of most of their days to other work. The proper alteration of this matter, with suitable attention to *purity of doctrine*, would insure the lasting prosperity of the Connection, as a spiritual body; and in the writer's opinion, they are both essential to it. Some of the churches are not able to liberate their ministers wholly; but this cannot be said of all. Does the pastor neglect many of his duties by being necessarily engaged in worldly business? And is this in societies able to free him from it? It becomes not only that man, but that **PEOPLE** to consider how these omissions are to be accounted for to the Lord at his

appearing. Will he that sows, and they who reap, *then rejoice together?*

The FOURTH fact issuing from the previous survey, is, *that it is of no small consequence to all saints, to be visible members of the church, that they may share in all the advantages of the pastoral office.* Some of these are not within the pale of the church. There are a few of this respectable class in most of the congregations. They share the affections of the pious to whom they are known. They derive considerable benefit from the public labours of the pastor. They do not escape his notice. They shew him unequivocal marks of esteem. He longs after them in the bowels of Jesus Christ: not that he may make a gain of them; but that he may be a more effectual helper of their joy. Many things may justly be said to shew the impropriety of these continuing without; but this article has an exclusive reference to their own souls, arising from the additional good they might derive from this office, were they incorporated with the church.

In that case they would be a part of the pastor's special charge; the objects of his immediate care, and prayer, and habitual solicitude. In his visits he would feel more at liberty with them on soul affairs; should they stray, be wounded or diseased (and we have seen in the first part that all the sheep of Christ are prone to the one and liable to the other) he would seek them, and take pains to restore their souls. Were they to err or sin, he must instruct or rebuke them; necessity would lie upon him to make efforts for their recovery from the snare of the devil; and that they might again experience the joys of God's salvation. But while they continue without, they exclude themselves from many of those labours of love. They must remain in a great measure strangers to pastoral sympathies in distress, advices in perplexity, cautions and succours in temptations, and reproofs under sin; to that peculiar blessing which usually attends the communications of a faithful pastor to the upright people of his charge. Unite with the church that you may prove their value. Should you take this step, and after the lapse of years look back upon those days of separation, it is presumed you will not have reason to say: *then it was better with me than now.*

The FIFTH truth which the previous view of this sacred function impresses upon the mind, is, *that those who compose*

the churches ought to be careful for a succession of eminent pastors. Your present pastors, valuable as many of them are, cannot continue by reason of death; the eye that now watches, will be closed; the tongue that teaches, will be sealed; the heart that now cares for you will, ere long, be occupied with other thoughts. Many of these servants have almost accomplished their day. Their shadows grow long: every thing indicates the going down of their sun. (Thou that holdest the stars in Thy right hand, let it set in brightness and rise in glory!) Here this momentous question arises: "Who shall watch for our souls, take care of our churches, and fill our pulpits when they are in the dust?" Brethren for you to evade this question, or pass it over lightly, would be to wrong your own souls; would be cruelty to your children; an injury to your posterity; a neglect of Zion; and a blot upon your memory. Volumes could not tell all the interest which it involves.

The serious person, who is acquainted with the conviction cannot revolve it long, ere he perceive this lamentable fact: that there are but few young men in the churches, who promise to fill this office to advantage. There are gifts in the churches, possessed by them who are ascending in life; but however painful or humbling the truth, it ought not to be concealed, that, generally speaking, they appear unequal to this station. This is no censure upon their possessors; they have what they have received; and no man has more. *The Spirit distributeth to every man severally as he will.*

The cause of this dearth of talents is another question of great magnitude. One thing shall be suggested; nothing affirmed. God is the fountain of all gifts and graces: his Spirit is the sovereign Dispenser of them; yet he acts by rule: he seldom deviates from this maxim: *unto every one that hath shall be given; and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath*, Matt. xxv. 29, and connection. The rule then is this: The proper improvement of gifts secures additional communications; but the neglect of gifts prevents fresh impartations, and is followed with privation. The Connection has in times past been favoured with a plentiful supply of them: of talents, which, like the sun darting his rays through the thick cloud,

have appeared to advantage, notwithstanding a thousand obstructions. Have these been wisely improved, or partially neglected? Has the candle been put under a bushel, or placed in the right situation to give light to all them that were in the house? How has this been, especially of late years, since the members and riches of the Connection have been so much increased? Has the Lord taken offence at your immuring in looms, and shops, and schools, the men whom he sent to give themselves *wholly* to the ministry? *Consider of it.*

Unfeigned solicitude for a succession of good pastors will constrain you to adopt measures to secure it. Should you be conscious of any material defect which may be the cause of so few able men being raised up among you, it must produce sorrow. Let that sorrow lead to repentance: and the fruit of repentance is a change of conduct. The first step to obtain gifts is to remove the cause of them being withheld. The second is to bear the interest of Zion upon your heart; to make speedy and urgent application to the Father of mercies for an abundant effusion of his Spirit upon his young servants. *Covet earnestly the best gifts, with corresponding graces.* Pray fervently that a double portion of the Spirit of Elijah may rest upon Elisha. *If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him? Ye have not, because ye ask not.*

Look carefully through the church for the prime qualifications of this office. Mark the evangelical, the prudent, the devoted, the studious, the industrious, the improving, the spiritual. Pay peculiar attention to him in whom these qualities *unite*; for they all meet in him whom the Lord intends to place in the pastoral office. Draw such gently into exercise; and when you are satisfied of the respectability of their talents, give them time, and every other facility in your power for the cultivation of their hearts and minds. You cannot be too vigorous in your support of a proper institution for their regular education. Capacities for this work are the gifts of Heaven; but, like man's food, they are not given in a *prepared* state. Prayers, cares, labours, expense, all are trifles, so that you may have skilful pilots to guide you into the haven of rest; to bring your children safely after you:

that there may be a race of men, when we are no more in this world, who shall help much in the churches' enlargement, and in the conversion of the world.

To grow under the culture of those whom the Lord now employs among you, to *esteem them highly in love for their work's sake*, are no inconsiderable things toward securing a succession of such. Here the preceding maxim applies: if, through indolence and carnality, you cause these, as to your improvement, to *labour in vain, and spend their strength for nought and in vain*, though they should be continued to you during the short space which their glass has to run, you must not expect that He will send you others to succeed them, except such as will speak *smooth things* in your ears, and *prophecy lies in God's name*, as a judgment for your crimes; but if you profit by those you have, and take the other steps which reason and revelation prescribe, according to the rule, you shall have more. You may live in the assured hope, that God will still give the Churches *pastors according to his heart, who shall feed his people with knowledge and understanding.**

W. F.

THE BENEFIT OF DAILY COMMITTING THE SCRIPTURES TO MEMORY.

A knowledge of the Scriptures is necessary to our present and future welfare. How thankful ought we to be for "the words of eternal life." Behold David's affection to the scriptures, and his comfort in the word of God. "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth." Psa. cxix. 103. As the scriptures are the

* To some it may appear singular, that in a paper written professedly on the pastoral office, nothing is said to those who sustain it; nor to those who may shortly be called to do so. The writer has three reasons to assign for this seeming omission: His own incapacity for such a task: that he did not understand it to be comprehended in the request of those who desired him to draw it up: and an apprehension, that the preceding account of their office will, in a measure, supersede the necessity of a direct address.

fountain of knowledge, they ought to be the man of our counsel; and our companion by day and night: The believer knows something of their value from experience; yea, even the seeker of the way to Zion, beholds a glimmering beam of their glory. To such permit me to suggest a useful idea. I have proved it by experiment, and can say it is good. It is this, *Commit a verse of scripture to memory every day.* By this easy, regular method, the word will be "hid in our hearts," that we may not sin against God. This might be done the first time we open our Bible in a morning, and would furnish a profitable subject of meditation through the day.

But it will be of little use to learn small detached passages of scripture; for these, through neglect or frequent review, will soon be lost. Rather commit to memory large connected parts of holy writ; such as Christ's last conversation and prayer with his disciples: John xiv. xv. xvi. and xvii.; the Sermon on the mount, Matt. v. vi. vii. &c. Begin this practice, and in a few months you will perceive the excellency of it. Have you never read, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom," Col. iii. 16. Take it then, and hide it with the greatest care in your heart. "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." John v. 39.

A dear minister of Christ said, when I mentioned this practice to him: "It is very useful if you recapitulate." Therefore repeat mentally what you have committed to memory, when you are engaged about your business, on journeys, &c. This will promote spiritual mindedness, the end of which is life and peace. By this practice you will be well instructed in the kingdom of heaven. Is it not desirable to be mighty in the scriptures? Then like the Bereans search "the scriptures daily." "Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth, and *lay up his words in thine heart.*" Job xxii. 22. Begin this practice to day. Let a desire to be acquainted with the word of truth, influence your mind, to the most regular and active exertions. Commend the practice to others; that a knowledge of God may become more general. The word will be in you like "a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Thus acquainted with the scriptures, thou mayest "Talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down,

and when thou risest up?" Deut. vi. 7. Enriched with the word of God, "When thou goest, it shall lead thee: when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee: and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee." Prov. vi. 22.

A SEARCHER OF THE SCRIPTURES.

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF MISSIONARY EFFORTS.

To the EDITOR, of the G. B. R.

DEAR FRIEND,

As you inserted the last letter that I sent you on Foreign Missions, I now take the liberty of troubling you with a few more remarks on the same subject.

It is a consideration worthy of notice, that the benefits of a mission would not be confined to this generation; but would extend, in a more enlarged degree, to those of distant ages. At first, the rays of divine light might reach but few, and perhaps a few only of the present generation might be snatched from ruin; but more, it may be believed, of the next would be brought into the way of life; of the next still more; and gradually larger numbers, till in one age thousands or millions might become travellers to heaven together. But wherever the glorious work is not begun, it cannot proceed: and the longer it is deferred, the greater must be the number excluded from its benefits. Let us remember, that under God we owe a great measure of the religious light we now enjoy to those who were the first missionaries to Great Britain: and, as one of the Missionary Societies observes: "Let it never be forgotten, that the first Missionaries to Great Britain came with their lives in their hands, supported by the *alms* of very poor churches.

To me it also has appeared an affecting thought that so many should live on the same earth with us, whom we know to be totally unprepared for an eternal state; and who yet should be suffered to pass into that unalterable condition without our making one effort to enlighten their darkened minds. The stream of time is rolling forwards, and hurrying multitudes that know not God to that state whence there is no return. Though now sojourning in the same world with us, they will soon be removed beyond our reach. The opportunity for assisting them must be seized now; or be for ever lost

to us and them. Then before the throne of the eternal Judge may they accuse us of our *criminal* indifference. They may say, "We lived in the same world with those thy professed disciples—they knew what we knew not—they knew whither we were hurrying; but never made one effort to pluck us from destruction." Is it, Sir, in our power to send the light of life to those benighted wanderers? Is it in our power, before they meet their God, to tell them whom they are going to meet? to publish peace to the believing penitent, and to warn the impenitent of endless woe? Is this in our power? Cold prudence and close-hearted avarice will answer, "No". Christian zeal and heaven-born love will say, "TRY; you may succeed; you can but fail; and a celestial prize shall recompense the mere intent." But if you succeed—Oh! if you succeed, unborn thousands in distant ages may bless the Most High for their unknown and forgotten friends—friends, whose names will be forgotten here, but not forgotten in the abodes of eternity, nor erased from the records of Heaven."

The need of pagan nations for evangelical truth, is doubtless greater than that of the most ignorant parts of England; and the labours of those employed in diffusing it among them are more beneficial. They are sowing seed that will continue yielding its increase through many a future age. The converts given them may be viewed as the first fruits of a harvest, that will require distant years and unborn labourers to gather in. All who are faithfully labouring in the cause of Jesus are usefully and honourably employed: but the meanest of his labourers in Africa or Asia may be pronounced more honourably and usefully employed, than the most distinguished in England. One of the latter labours in his little field, a village, or a town. One of the former has a nation for his scene of exertion: and if but few be gathered to God while he lives, still he labours for future ages. One is like a remote wheel in some piece of extensive and complicated machinery: and the other like a water wheel which sets ten thousand more in motion.

Perhaps the two following passages may tend further to enforce the importance of the object recommended in this letter. "Would to God," said the late Mr. Des Granges, in one of his letters, "that the ministers in our native country, the students at the different seminaries, and the religious pub-

lie could see what we see, and hear what we hear. Every man they beheld bowing to a stock of wood or a stone would be an argument to come over to India and help us. The horrid noise of thousands of idolators at the celebration of their festivals would sound like thunder in their ears: "haste, haste to the help of the Lord against the mighty." And those who could not come would have the number and ardour of their addresses to the throne of grace increased a hundred fold."

One of the converted Hottentots, some years back brought over to this country, thus expressed herself in broken English, "What pity 'tis, what sin 'tis, that you have so many years got that heavenly bread and hold it for yourselves; not to give one little bit, one crumb to poor heathen. There are so many millions of heathen, and you have so much bread; and, you could depend upon, you should not have less because you gave: but that Lord Jesus would give his blessing, and you should have the more. You may not think when you do something for poor heathen, you shall have less for yourselves; that contrary, Lord Jesus, fountain always full; thousand after thousand could be helped. The more we do for others, the more we shall be blessed—the more we shall have for our own soul."

As I propose pursuing the subject, at some future opportunity, I will conclude. Adieu, then, yours, &c.

Derby, Oct. 8, 1813.

P.

HINTS TO PARENTS.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

Yours is an important charge, and the relation in which you stand to posterity renders your situation peculiarly interesting. The result of your conduct will either be happiness to yourselves, and children, and the spread of the glorious gospel; or an increase of the miseries of future ages; and an hindrance of the diffusion of divine truth! Surely this thought is sufficient to awaken you to diligence, in order to avoid the latter, and secure the former.

I take it for granted, that, from the knowledge you have of religion, and the comforts you are daily receiving from it; you wish your children to be partakers of the like blessings, and are anxious to be made the humble instruments of imparting them. Yet you feel backward perhaps to con-

verse with your offspring on religious subjects, lest your instructions should be disregarded; and your kind admonitions and reproofs meet an unfavourable reception; because youth are too much attached to worldly pleasures and pursuits. However strange this may appear to some, I am convinced it is the case with many pious parents. But let such remember, if "thou cast thy bread upon the waters, it shall be seen after many days." Your labours shall not be lost; for you are commanded to "train up a child in the way he should go," with this blessed promise, that, "when he is old he will not depart from it." But this assertion contains an opposite truth. If you neglect to do so, he will be liable to miss that way, "and bring his parents to shame." And which of us, who has been favoured with religious parents, can say, he owes none of his present enjoyments to their solicitude for his everlasting happiness while under their care? I am persuaded not one.

Let it also be remembered, that the young mind is easily impressed with the truth. It is able to comprehend, and like the impressions made in wax, they remain to the latest period in life: and in some degree influence all his future conduct. This the writer could confirm from many instances in his own knowledge; from which the importance of embracing these early opportunities might be fully shewn.

There are also many obligations under which you are laid which demand this from you. God has blessed you with a knowledge of himself—has given his son to die for you—has intrusted you with a revelation of his will; and sent many of his servants to proclaim and establish the solemn truths it contains. Many of you have been blessed with pious parents, who thought it their pleasure to instruct *you* concerning the path of life; God has now given you children to train up for himself; and will require an account of them at your hands. Gratitude, duty, and obedience to the divine command, all unite to induce you to train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

It is not my intention to recommend particular methods of instruction. Every parent should consult scripture and reason, on the subject; and act accordingly. Yet, permit me to observe, that one general mean of instruction will be through the channel of plain and unaffected conversation upon religion,

carefully avoiding every thing that would tend to prejudice their minds against it, and always making your discourses short, lest you weary them. Endeavour to lead them to enquire, as in giving them answers, your opportunities for improving them will be much increased. And as their minds expand, unfold to them, in a more particular way, the plan of salvation by Christ.

Beloved friends, need I say any thing by way of incitement to this delightful work. Surely the regard you have for the happiness of your children, the honour of God, and the spreading of divine truth through succeeding ages, are sufficient to animate your souls with pure zeal, for this paternal office.

Remember you and I must die, and we may die soon. This thought calls for *present* exertion, lest the time be past with us for ever. We, who now stand forth and defend religion by our adherence to it, whether as public or private characters, must shortly be laid in the silent grave. To whom ought we to look for others to fill our places but to our children? As much of their usefulness depends upon the instructions which they receive in youth, how important it is for their minds to be stored with useful knowledge.

Consider if by your endeavours, with the blessing of God, you should be successful in bringing them to the knowledge of the truth, what joy, and peace, will it afford you in the close of life, and at the last great day, to present them with this divine exultation; "Here am I, Lord, and the children thou hast given me." If, on the other hand, they become slaves to sin, through your neglect, how bitter will be your reflections! and how will it rend your hearts, to be separated from them for ever.

If you prove faithful, who knows the number of ministers that may issue forth from your well-instructed families, to proclaim the word of life to poor sinners, in this and other parts of the world. Thus the good flowing from your exertions, to future ages will be incalculable. God will be glorified, and the kingdom of his Son enlarged.

Many of your children partake of the benefits resulting from Sunday Schools. You ought to embrace the assistance they offer, and, instead of frustrating those noble designs through indifference, confirm both by precept and example what they endeavour to inculcate. Thus shall you train up a

seed to serve the Lord, which shall rise up to call you blessed; prove your joy here, and your crown of rejoicing in the last day. By this means you will not merely pray the Lord of the harvest, to raise up labourers, but will actually fit many for his gracious purpose; and at last sitting down in the kingdom of heaven with your beloved children, and, musing upon the love of God, and the worth of one immortal soul, you will eternally glorify the fountain of all mercy, that your feeble endeavours have been made instrumental in bringing many sons to glory.

A FRIEND TO THE RISING RACE.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE AGED MINISTERS' FUND.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

It gives me pleasure to observe, that any of your correspondents are alive to a subject, which appears to me, at least, worthy of the serious consideration of every member of the G. B. Connection. Your worthy Warwickshire correspondent, styling himself "Epsilon," has endeavoured to call the attention of your readers, to the making of a provision for those venerable and praise-worthy characters, who have worn themselves out in the service of their Lord and Saviour.

As a scarcity of ministers is so generally acknowledged, and in many instances severely felt, it surely is a matter of prudence, to remove as much as may be, those difficulties and discouragements, which deter those young persons, who have ministerial abilities, from engaging in the work. Would it not operate as an encouragement, when they saw that their brethren were solicitous, that, at that period to which they are so generally disposed to look forward with painful anxiety, that time of decrepitude, or mental decay, which may render them incapable of providing for their earthly comforts, there should be an honourable provision made for them. This would certainly prove very grateful to the feelings of all such who might be disposed to undertake the sacred work.

The children of this world appear wiser in their generation. Hence we find the statesman erecting hospitals, and endowing them so that their appearance strikes the beholder with

wonder and admiration. And can the disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, he who is destined to live for ever, and whose greatest care (next to making his own salvation sure) is to propagate and extend the benefits of this salvation as wide as possible; can such an one feel *indifferent* to a plan which has for its object, the encouragement of those who are so materially engaged in its propagation? To multiply words in so plain a case seems unnecessary. Its *importance* will be universally acknowledged. With respect to the methods to be pursued, various may be the opinions. Its *practicability* does not admit of a serious doubt. From a very cursory view of the subject, according to your correspondent's calculation, after making due allowance for hundreds, who ought not to be considered capable of doing any thing, it is easy.

I have little doubt that "Epsilon" will feel pleasure in hearing that a design, in some respects similar to that which he has in view, is now in being amongst us, and has been acted upon for some considerable time. The committee who have the management of it, feel concerned that so little attention has been paid to it; especially by several of those whose interest it is designed to embrace. But as they suppose a part of the cause is owing to its not being sufficiently known, they are desirous, by the means of the G. B. R. to give it that publicity which they deem its importance deserves.

The Institution above alluded to is styled the "AGED MINISTERS' FUND," and was established in the year 1803. It embraces the following objects, viz.

1. To furnish some assistance to AGED MINISTERS, whose powers of body and mind, as well as their time has been employed in the service of Christ, and whom the infirmities of Age, have rendered incapable of *manual labour*, or the discharge of the *ministerial functions*.

2. To assist indigent churches who have stated ministers, but who are incapable of making them comfortable.

3. To afford some aid toward defraying the expence incurred by furnishing supplies for such *destitute* churches, as are themselves unable to bear the whole of the burden.

The committee meet half yearly, viz. on the last Wednesdays in April and October, at the G. Baptist Chapel, Loughborough, at ten o'clock, at which time all cases are considered and monies paid.

AFFECTING CALAMITIES IN COAL MINES.

To contemplate the deep distress in which our fellow creatures are sometimes involved, and the dreadful calamities that befall them, may, if properly improved, produce a good effect. It should teach us, to reflect on the many fatal accidents to which human nature is exposed, and to live so as to be always prepared to die—to commiserate those who are called to suffer such heavy misfortunes—to be grateful to a good Providence who preserves us from them—and to bear with patience those light afflictions which may be laid upon us. To excite sentiments like these, we lay before our readers the following melancholy narrative, the perusal of which has deeply affected us.

The colliery at Felling, near Sunderland, began working in October, 1810: and was considered by the workmen as the model of perfection in the purity of its air, and orderly arrangements. In it one hundred and twenty-eight persons were constantly employed under ground.

About half past eleven o'clock, on the morning of May, 25th, 1812, the neighbourhood was alarmed by three loud explosions from this colliery. The earth trembled for half a mile round the pit; the noise was heard to a distance of three or four miles; and immense quantities of dust, being blown to an amazing height into air, covered the ground to the extent of upwards of a mile.

A crowd of persons soon collected at the mouths of the pit, enquiring for their husbands, parents, sons, or brothers. On examination, it appeared that, at the time of the explosion, one hundred and twenty-one persons were in the pit; and it was probable that they had all perished. The machine, by which the workmen descended, was rendered useless by the explosion; but a temporary one was immediately substituted; and as no horses could be had at the moment, the men put their shoulders to the shafts of the gin, and worked it with astonishing rapidity. Before twelve o'clock, thirty-two persons were drawn up alive, and the dead bodies of two boys. These men happened to be near the shaft, at the time of the explosion, and therefore escaped with their lives, though three of them died in a few hours. The friends of those who

were saved seemed for a time to suffer as much from excess of joy, as they had just done from apprehension. The relatives of the eighty-seven, who still remained in the mine, felt increasing fears for their safety. These unfortunate men, at the time of the accident, were all employed in the workings, at a distance from the general entrance; and, as they had not been seen when the others were drawn up, it was feared they had all perished.

Soon after noon, nine men descended, and endeavoured to find a part of the mine, where many of the persons missing had been employed; but their progress was interrupted by a strong choak damp. Another passage was then attempted, with no better success; as the damp had filled the works so as to extinguish their lights, and prevent their breathing. They hastened to escape; and before they were all out of the shaft, another explosion took place. This filled the spectators with alarm for them, but they providentially sustained little injury. On their landing on the surface, they were eagerly questioned by the anxious relatives of those who remained in the mine; and their account augmented their despair. All reasonable hopes that these sufferers were alive now vanished, as the damp must long ago have smothered them; and the smoke, which issued from the pits, shewed too evidently that the works had caught fire. It was therefore proposed to fill up the mouths of the mine, and thus, by excluding the air, extinguish the fire. This, as it would deprive them of every hope, the relatives of the unfortunate victims resolutely opposed; and in the height of their anguish cried out "Murder!" The design was therefore deferred, and numbers of the distressed survivors remained all the night near the entrance of the mine, in the vain hopes of hearing the voice of a husband, son, or brother calling for assistance.

On May, 27th, two attempts were again made to penetrate into the mine, in search of the sufferers; but both were rendered fruitless through the prevalence of the choak damp. As the most affectionate and sanguine had now given up all expectation of their preservation, and as the smoke from the shafts increased, on the evening of this day, all air was excluded by closing up the pits. The mine continued closed till July 5; and during that gloomy and painful interval, the distress of the relatives of the men who were thus immured in

the bowels of the earth was greatly heightened, by many idle tales which the thoughtless or unfeeling circulated through the country. Some said that the sufferers heard the people that went into the pits in search of them; but could not speak loud enough to be heard. Others reported that they had been found eating their shoes, and drinking drops of water from the roof; with various other rumours equally absurd.

Eight men descended the pit, July 5th, and found a body near the entrance in so putrid a state that it could scarce be lifted into a shell. It being now found practicable to proceed in exploring the works; eighty-seven coffins were provided and brought to the mouth of the pit: and, on July 8th, the affecting search commenced. From that time to September 19th, continued the heart rending scene of widows and mothers examining the bodies as they were brought to the surface, to discover their husbands and sons: whose corpses, in most instances, were too much mangled and scorched, and in too putrid a state to retain any of their features, and could only be recognised by their clothes, and their tobacco boxes. The effects of the fire appeared on all: some were nearly torn in pieces; others appeared to have sunk down as overpowered with sleep. The eighty-sixth body was dug out, September 19th; but the other body was never found. Four of these corpses were buried in single graves: all the others were interred in Heworth Chapel Yard, in a trench, side by side, two coffins deep, with a partition of brick and lime between every four coffins. The solemn event was improved, in an appropriate sermon, by the Rev. John Hodgson, which was published for the benefit of the surviving relatives. From the account subjoined to this sermon, the foregoing particulars have been extracted.

After these affecting scenes, the colliery re-commenced working; and went on regularly till December 24th, 1813. At two o'clock in the morning of that day, the neighbourhood was again alarmed by a tremendous explosion of the same mine. Owing probably to the early hour when the accident happened, its victims were less numerous: yet it is painful to relate, that, on this occasion, nine men and thirteen boys lost their lives, and that eight widows and eighteen orphans were left to lament their untimely fate.

It is pleasing to turn from these awful incidents to others, in which the goodness of an over-ruling Providence has been conspicuously manifested, in the almost miraculous preservation and deliverance of persons in similar circumstances. The works of a coal-pit, at Beadley, in Staffordshire, fell in, on Tuesday, August 19th, 1812, and buried deep in the earth, eight men and two boys. Seven of the men had wives, four of them pregnant; and in the whole twenty-four children. Though all hopes of saving their lives were abandoned, their comrades resolved to find their bodies. They immediately determined to cut a way to them from a neighbouring pit, through an extent of seventy yards of solid coal. The work was instantly begun; and by incessant and strenuous exertions, by day and night, carried on with unexpected rapidity, till one o'clock on the Monday noon. At that hour the communication was opened, and the exertions of the workmen were amply rewarded, by finding seven of the men and the two boys alive. These were immediately conveyed to their homes in a coach, and by proper care, in a short time recovered their strength. They had been inclosed in the bowels of the earth, nearly seven days, and subsisted solely on a little water, which dropped from the roof of the works, and was caught by them in a small iron pan. The body of the eighth man was dug out of the rubbish, on the Wednesday following. From the report of those who escaped, it appeared, that, a short time prior to this accident, a part of the roof had fallen in and formed a kind of bank, upon which the men providentially saved themselves. The sound of the workmen had been heard all the time by those in the pit, who had endeavoured to direct them by knocking against the coal; but this was not heard till four o'clock on Monday morning, when a voice was heard to say, "Go to the left." This animated the workmen to still greater exertions, which were at length crowned with such pleasing success.

GENERAL BAPTIST OCCURRENCES.

OBITUARY.

October 31st, 1811, died, Mr. WILLIAM STANGER, of Spalding, Lincolnshire, aged fifty-five years. He was deacon of the G. B. church at Spalding, and used the office of a deacon well. His life and conversation adorned his christian

profession, and gained him the respect of his brethren, and a good report from them who were without. In his last illness, which was short, his soul was comfortably supported; he had a good hope through grace, and gave a pleasing evidence that he died in the Lord. His remains were interred in the G. B. burying ground, and his death was improved by Mr. Everard, from *Psa. xxiii. 4.* "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, &c."

Mrs. EVERARD, the wife of *Mr. Richard Everard*, of Spalding, died September 6, 1812, aged thirty-seven years. She was formerly a member of the G. B. Church, Church-lane, Whitechapel, London; but for some time previous to her decease, had been a member of the G. B. Church, at Spalding. Her conversation was highly exemplary; in her the christian and the lady were happily united; She was an honourable and useful member of the Church, a good wife, a kind benefactress to the poor, especially to such as were of the household of faith; and was highly esteemed for her works' sake.

It pleased God, doubtless in wisdom and love, to lay on her his afflicting hand, and to confine her for many months to a bed of languishing. Her disorder was a consumption, which was very gradual in its progress. Long did she groan, being burdened, and many wearisome days and nights were appointed unto her; but she bore all her afflictions with christian patience. In the former part of her illness, the enemy was permitted to buffet her, and she sometimes complained that her soul was under a cloud, her hope was not lively, nor her future prospects bright. This however did not continue long; her afflictions were greatly sanctified—the Sun of righteousness arose and shone upon her soul, and his grace was sufficient for her. As her outward man gradually decayed; her inward man was evidently renewed day by day: her faith grew strong, her hopes lively, and her prospects bright; her soul was satisfied with joy and peace. Death was disarmed of all its terror, and she could welcome him as a kind messenger to conduct her home to her father's house: frequently contemplating his approach, and saying, with perfect resignation and peace, "Death, thou mayst come!" In this happy frame of spirit, she fell asleep in the Lord. Her mortal part was interred in the G. B. burying ground, and

Mr. H. Everard preached her funeral discourse, from Cor. v. 1. "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Mr. REES MORGAN was born near Landils, Carmarthen-shire. His father dying when he was young, he was left to the care of a pious mother, whose earnest endeavours to bring him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and to warn him of the snares of sin, were instrumental in fixing early serious impressions on his mind. In 1771, he removed to Birmingham, and for some time associated with the methodists; but, being convinced of the divine appointment of believer's baptism, he joined the G. B. Church in that town. His attachment to the cause of his Saviour was strong, and he appeared to love the Lord with all his soul. As long as his health permitted, he was diligent and punctual in attending the public means of grace, and was, through his whole profession, eminent for private devotion. Like David of old, his delight was in the law of the Lord, and in that did he meditate day and night. His conversation in the world was remarkably circumspect. He studied to be quiet and meddled not with the concerns of others. His sober carriage and conscientious conduct bespoke a mind deeply impressed with the importance of eternity.

As he advanced in years, his health declined. This led him to examine closely the state of his soul; and to reflect frequently on the shortness and uncertainty of life. In October, 1812, his death was almost hourly expected; but, at this trying time, he expressed his strong confidence in the blood of his Saviour, and said he was determined and enabled to venture his all on Jesus Christ. When his pains were most violent, he would say "Father not as I will, but as thou wilt." On receiving a little respite from his anguish, he said, "I shall soon be where the weary are at rest;" and would often repeat

"Jerusalem! my happy home,

Oh! how I long for thee!

When shall my labours have an end?

Thy joys, when shall I see?"

To his minister, who was visiting him, he addressed this solemn exhortation, "Preach the truth, while you have strength—be faithful: you must die, and at last give an

account." To his children, he was peculiarly affectionate; and earnestly exhorted them to live near to God. It gave great pleasure to his pious soul to see them enquiring the way to heaven: may they all at last meet him in that happy state. At one time, his disorder abated, and a hope was indulged of his recovery. He appeared perfectly resigned to the divine will; and said, if he was restored his business should be to publish the sinners' Friend. But it was otherwise determined: for, on January 1st, 1813, he entered into rest. In the near prospect of his departure, he exclaimed, "All is well?" Mr. Cheatle improved the event, in a discourse, from Acts xxi. 16. "An old disciple;" a title to which his early attention to divine things and steady perseverance, even to old age, in obedience to the Lord Jesus, gave the deceased a peculiar claim.

Nov. 17, 1813, died Miss ELEANOR RATCLIFF, aged nineteen years. She was baptized Mar. 29, 1812, and joined the G. B. Church at Spalding. She was highly esteemed by her Christian friends; and could their earnest prayers have prevailed, her place would not so soon have been left empty. She had much of the mind that was in Christ—loved her God and her Saviour, and all who loved the Lord Jesus in sincerity—and was an example to young Christians in faith, love, obedience, and zeal for the cause of truth. Many lamented that so fair a flower should be cut down before its prime; but those who loved her best, bowed in silent submission to Him who does all things well. The complaint that brought her to the grave was a consumption, under which she suffered much for ten months. During her affliction she found Christ precious, and his grace sufficient. The promises of God were her support. Though all her earthly prospects were thus unexpectedly cut short, yet she expressed no anxious wish for life, but rather desired to depart and be with Christ. Her remains were interred at Fleet, and Mr. Burgess, at her request, delivered an excellent and appropriate discourse, on the occasion, from Psa. ciii. 15, 16, and 17. "As for man his days are as grass: as the flower of the field so he flourisheth: for the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more. But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting." May the solemn

event be blessed to all concerned, but specially to her young friends.

It is with sincere regret, that we record the death of our highly esteemed friend, the REV. MR. BURGESS, of Fleet, Lincolnshire, who departed this life Dec. 11, 1813, in the fifty ninth year of his age. As we have reason to hope, that we shall be enabled to give a biographical sketch of his life and labours in the next number, of the G. B. R. we omit at present any further particulars.

ORDINATION OF DEACONS.

Lord's Day, Oct. 3, 1813, seven persons were ordained to the office of deacons in the G. B. Church, at Queenshead, Yorkshire. In the morning, Mr. James Taylor, of Hoptonstall Slack, who had been invited to assist in the sacred work of the day, delivered a discourse from 1 Tim. iv. 16. "Take heed unto thyself:" which he addressed generally to the congregation at large; but more particularly to professors of religion; with a few words to officers in churches.

The afternoon service was peculiarly interesting. Though no notice of the intended ordination could be given before that morning, it is supposed that above one thousand hearers were crowded into the meeting-house, beside many at the doors and windows. As it is more than forty years since the minister of the place was ordained, it is probable that many in this large congregation were entire strangers to such sacred work. The service was begun by singing, and reading, 2 Tim. iii. Mr. James Taylor then delivered an introductory discourse of considerable length. After this, the seven candidates for the deacon's office stood up in the table pew, in the order of their ages, and a few words being addressed to them to affect and encourage their minds, Mr. John Taylor, their own pastor, offered up the ordination prayer, and then, together with Mr. James Taylor, laid hands on them, according to the original precedent. Acts vi, 6. This being performed, the seven brethren rose from their knees, and were affectionately recommended to the divine blessing through their future lives and labours in the deacon's office. The prayer and recommendation were attested by the hearty *Amen* of many in the congregation. After the singing of a hymn, Mr. James Taylor delivered a charge, partly to the deacons, and

partly to the church, from 1 Tim. v. 17. "Let the elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine." The whole service was concluded with singing and prayer. May the solemn transactions of this day be blessed by the supreme Head of the church to great and lasting benefit of that christian society. The names of the deacons are, T. Wilkinson, George Andrew, R. Riley, Joshua Robertshaw, Joseph Andrew, John Midgley, and Michael Stocks.

CONFERENCES.

The **LEICESTERSHIRE CONFERENCE** was held at *Castle Donnington*, Dec. 28, 1813. Ministers present were, Messrs. Smith, Pollard, Rogers, Brand, Westley, Orton, Green, Pike, Ingham, Felkin, Wilders, Barrow, Stevenson, Pickering, &c. In the forenoon Mr. Orton preached, from Heb. ix. 14.; and in the evening, Mr. Pike, from 1 Cor. v. 14, 15. At this meeting—supplies were arranged for Nottingham—Mr. Moss, minister of the Particular Baptists at *Burton-upon-Trent*, having changed his sentiments, and being desirous of joining our Connection, was advised to unite with the G. B. Church of *Cauldwell*, and in conjunction with them, to look out for a suitable place at *Burton* to preach in; but still to keep in view the building of a meeting-house: and to bring the case to the next Conference:—It was agreed, upon proper inquiry, to take no further notice of Mr. Shego, or his followers; (See G. B. R. vol. v. p. 232.) Mr. Smith reported, that a very favourable opening for the establishing a G. B. interest presented itself at *Sheffield*; and Mr. Felkin was requested to go and preach to the friends in that place.

The **YORKSHIRE CONFERENCE** met at *Hepstonstall Slack*. Mr. Hollinrake preached from 1 Pet. v. 7. At this Conference, it was recommended to the churches to admit the Ipswich case the next summer:—Supplies were arranged for the north of *Lincolnshire*:—The meeting being informed that there was a prospect of preaching being easily introduced into *Stockport*, Mr. Hodgson was desired to make the necessary inquiries previous to the next conference:—This meeting also concluded that it was improper for unordained ministers to administer the Lord's supper.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST AND THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND COMPARED; *with Observations on* DISSENT, SCHISM, &c. *in a LETTER to the Rev. GEORGE HUTTON, D. D. Vicar of Sutterton, &c. &c.: occasioned by reading his Third Dialogue with his Parishioner John.* By JOHN BISSILL, 8vo. pp. 24. Price 1s.

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The worthy Vicar of Sutterton, like a good son of the Church of England, in whose favours he liberally shares, is very active, it seems, to promote the interest of his bountiful patroness. In these grateful exertions, he found the Dissenters stood much in his way, and used various methods to allure or compel them to conform. At last he condescended to address them from the press. In his publications, he charged them with being guilty of schism; and repeatedly called upon them either to defend their separation from the establishment, or to return into her bosom. Mr. B. fearing their silence might be construed into disrespect, or esteemed the effect of a bad cause, has accepted the challenge; and, in the pamphlet before us, has attempted to justify the dissenters, especially the General Baptists, in this separation. This he does, by comparing the name, the head, the members, the officers, the ordinances, and many other important particulars of the Church of Christ, and the Church of England; and shewing that they are totally different the one from the other. From this comparison, he concludes that, however sinful it may be to separate from the Church of Christ, it is the duty of every true follower of Jesus to separate from the Church of England. The remainder of the tract is occupied with remarks on some of the Dr.'s positions; and in vindicating the tenets and practices of the Dissenters from the misrepresentations of the Dr. The subject of this work nearly concerns every G. B. and it is treated in a manner that will render it interesting and useful. Orders for it may be sent to the Editor of the G. B. R.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION.

In the last number of the G. B. R. we introduced the subject of *Religious Benefit Societies*, and solicited information respecting similar institutions established in our churches. We have received, in consequence, several valuable communications; but, as the subject is important and deserves serious consideration, we have deferred it to the next volume. We trust we shall then be enabled to give it proper attention by stating, not untried theories, but the results of actual experience. We therefore continue to invite our correspondents, who are connected with institutions of this nature, especially with such as are of some standing, to transmit to us the regulations, numbers, advantages and success of their respective societies, that the subject may be brought forward in the most satisfactory manner.

We beg leave also to announce that the *First Number* of the *History of the New Connection* is published; and that the names of the Subscribers continue to be received by the Editor of the G. B. R. We likewise venture to remind the several churches of the necessity of sending Replies to the Queries, inserted in the G. B. R. No. XXVIII, page 185. Several churches have sent Answers: and it is earnestly requested that those which have not, would *immediately* attend to it. Much interesting information has likewise been obtained respecting the General Baptists of the Seventeenth Century; but it is presumed, that much more might be collected from old church books, and the early publications of the G. B's. It is hoped, that every well-wisher to the design will exert himself in supplying materials for this important part of the History; and, it ought to be kept in mind, that intelligence for this department must be early to be useful. The Author is anxious to render the work as useful and instructive as possible; but his ability to do this depends, in a great degree, on the materials transmitted to him, as he cannot visit the different parts of the kingdom to collect information.

INDIAN SEEKERS.

Extract of a Letter from Krceshnoo, the Indian Missionary. The class of religious mendicants called Utithis and Mahuntas have long been in search of true religion; but knew not where to find it. Now they hear the gospel of Christ, and begin to think, "What can we do? How shall we abide in the commands of this Saviour?" They frequently come to see us, and enquire more and more respecting the gospel: a few of them have been baptized.—Among these leaders of sects, is Ram-doolala, who is said to have one hundred thousand disciples: they have no reverence for the gods. A second leader is Neela-dasa who may have five hundred disciples. These eat with us. A third leader is Shiva-ramadasa who has about five thousand disciples. For a considerable time back, we have been preaching to them, and a few of them have been baptized. A fourth leader is Rusa-rajah, whose disciples amount to above one thousand. Some of his followers have been baptized. A fifth leader is Hure-dasa, who has about five hundred disciples: several of whom have been baptized; and there are hopes of the leader himself. Prem-dasa, another leader of a considerable sect has, after a long consideration, and travelling to Serampore for instruction, abjured Paganism and embraced Christianity. He and several of his followers have been baptised. The people were struck with astonishment at the conversion of this man, and say, "Our cast must now go: he whom we regarded as a wise man, has embraced this new way; what shall we now do?"

 LINES,

ON the DEATH of the AUTHOR'S INFANT, a fine Boy, aged seven months, after a few days illness, Dec. 14th, 1813.

How short our comforts are below!
 How dash'd the cup of life with woe!
 Our pleasures mixt with smart!
 While we caress the fancied joy,
 Grim death stands ready to destroy
 The idol of our heart.

A little *idol* I possess,
 And deem'd myself supremely blest,
 With *William* in my arms;
 Cheer'd with his infant smiles, elate,
 Angels, I envied not your state,
 Enraptur'd with his charms.

My God! forgive me, when I say,
 Death robb'd me in that dismal day,
 Of what my soul held dear:
 Behind those bright bliss-beaming eyes,
 I little thought that in disguise
 The *monster's dart* was there.

Yet so it was—four days and nights,
 Had wing'd away their hasty flights,
 Since the disease began;
 And on the fifth, the fatal day,
 In ruins lay the beauteous clay,
 The earthly pride of man.

And shall I wish him back to me?
 And thus arraign the just decree,
 That tore him from my breast:
 Perhaps, if he had longer stay'd,
 He from the paths of truth had stray'd,
 And miss'd his heav'nly rest.

Escap'd from all the sins and snares,
 A world of woe, and anxious cares,
 He sees God's smiling face;
 With pow'rs enlarg'd to comprehend,
 The ecstacies which never end,
 In Jesus' lov'd embrace.

O, cheering sight! O, blessed place!
 No more let impious tears disgrace
 My unbelieving eyes:
 But faith resign'd and love divine,
 Support my steps, till I shall join
 My darling in the skies.

THE IMPORTANCE OF A MINUTE.
FOR NEW YEAR'S DAY.

A MINUTE! how soon it is flown,
And yet how important it is!
God calls ev'ry moment his own;
For all our existence is his
And though we may waste them in folly and play,
He notices each that we squander away.

Why should we a minute despise,
Because it so quickly is o'er?
We know that it rapidly flies,
And, therefore, should prize it the more:
Another, indeed, may appear in its stead,
But that precious minute for ever is fled.

'Tis easy to squander our years
In idleness, folly, and strife;
But oh! no repentance or tears
Can bring back one moment of life.
But time, if well spent, and improv'd as it goes,
Will render life pleasant, and peaceful its close.

And when all the minutes are past,
Which God for our portion has giv'n,
We shall cheerfully welcome the last,
If it safely conduct us to Heav'n:
The value of time may we all of us see,
Not knowing how near our last minute may be.

END OF VOL. V.

—D—G—

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