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A table of contents for *The General Baptist Repository* can be found here:

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THE
General Baptist Repository.

COMPREHENDING

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

PUBLISHED

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

BY ADAM TAYLOR.

VOL. IX.

London:

PRINTED FOR THE EDITOR, BY W. C. DRAKE, 65, RATCLIFF HIGHWAY.

1820.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The **EDITOR** cannot send forth the *Ninth* volume of the *General Baptist Repository*, without expressing his grateful acknowledgments to his kind friends for the patronage with which they have favoured his endeavours. It affords him sincere gratification to reflect, that through their friendly assistance, and the blessing of God, he has been able, notwithstanding many discouragements, to continue the publication through nine volumes: and that, at present, it seems to have attained a degree of approbation, which promises it a permanent support. It is true, that during the course of eighteen years, it has repeatedly drooped; and that many numbers have been published, in which the Editor has not only sacrificed his time and labour, but has also sustained real loss. Even its present circulation is necessarily confined. Its very nature limits it to our own churches: nor can it, while restricted to four sixpenny numbers a year, be made of more general interest. To attempt to introduce a greater variety of subjects, or more extensive intelligence, would prevent a proper attention to the concerns of the *New Connection*, and defeat the original and laudable design of the undertaking: and our Connection is too small to demand a numerous impression of any work intended solely for its use. It can therefore excite no surprize, that of most contemporary religious periodicals, more than five times as many copies are sold, and of others twenty times as many, as have ever been sold of the G. B. R. And yet, the Editor of one Magazine, who boasts of selling full four times as many as are printed of this Miscellany, declares to the public, that the work has never yet afforded him a reasonable remuneration for the trouble of publishing it. The Editor of the G. B. R. cannot then be overpaid. Indeed he can boldly say, without fear of contradiction, that had personal emolument been his motive, this work would never have been undertaken, or would long since have been laid aside: as his own interest would have been much better consulted, by employing an equal attention on other objects. He does not, however, repent the sacrifice which he has made, nor complain of the present circulation of

the work. He is happy in the conviction, that his imperfect exertions as Editor have, in many ways, been useful to the Connection to which he is from principle attached, and grateful to his friends for the encouragement which he receives. He hopes they will pardon these observations. It is disagreeable to his feelings to say so much of himself; but it appeared to be his duty to state these facts, in order to remove certain groundless scruples, which, he is sorry to learn, have been propagated, and produced an unhappy effect on the minds of some whom he highly esteems. With this necessary explanation, he cheerfully commits himself to the candour of his brethren.

Yet the Editor is well persuaded that, if proper attention could be excited, in all parts of the Connection, in favour of the work, and effectual methods adopted to provide materials and encourage the sale, the G. B. R. might be rendered, not only much more efficacious in promoting the objects for which it was at first undertaken, but also might render valuable assistance to the Funds supported by the Connection. But in order to do this, to any good purpose, the publication must be more frequent, and the sale, at least, double. This, he believes might easily be effected, could *all the churches* be induced to co-operate heartily in the attempt: and he should rejoice to assist it, by affording every facility, as far as his personal interest is concerned, to complete the arrangement. He hopes that before the close of another volume, the subject will be seriously considered by the Association.

In the mean time, he respectfully solicits his friends to continue their patronage to the work, by forwarding useful communications in due time, and taking the occasion offered by the commencement of a new volume, to increase the number of subscribers. He hopes, should it please the Lord to favour him with life and health, to spare no efforts to make succeeding volumes more worthy of their acceptance. And he trusts that, deeply sensible of the inefficacy of all human endeavours without the divine blessing, he and his readers will unite frequently in imploring His aid, who alone can " establish the work of our hands upon us;" and make this humble Miscellany conducive to the promotion of his glory and the prosperity of his church.

SHAKESPEAR'S WALK,
Jan. 27, 1820.

CONTENTS OF VOL. IX.

	Page
Anecdote—the usefulness of a Bible.....	178
Annual Association at Derby.....	228
Antinomianism, Queries respecting.....	255
Baptism of Believers, a singular fact respecting it.....	11
Baptizing such as do not join Baptist churches, Remarks on	157
Baptists in America, an Account of.....	18
Baxter's Life; an Extract from.....	63
Berridge (Rev. J.) original Letters from.....	14, 73, 109, 112
Burgess (Rev. Wm.) original Letter from.....	60
Conscience, its Rights asserted.....	115, 151
Christian Fund, Anniversary of.....	142
Christian Negroes at Trinidad.....	235
Curtis (Wm.) Inscription on his Monument.....	46
CONFERENCES.	
<i>Lincolnshire, at</i>	
Fleet.....	137
Gosberton.....	184
Morcot	36
Tydd St. Giles.....	137
<i>North Lincolnshire, at</i>	
Butterwick.....	185
<i>London, at</i>	
Church Lane.....	229
Seven Oaks.....	139
Smarden.....	93
<i>Midland, at Derby.....</i>	92
<i>Midland, at</i>	
Hinckley.....	136
<i>Warwickshire, at</i>	
Austrey	139
King's Heath	139
Sutton Coldfield.....	139
<i>Yorkshire, at</i>	
Birchcliff.....	94
Halifax	93
Lineholm.....	138
Queenhead.....	93
Staley Bridge.....	138
DEATHS of	
John Anderson.....	273
Thomas Aubin.....	274
Lucy Deacon.....	84
William Evans	183
Sophia Farrent.....	33
William Fletcher....	270
Joseph Freeston.....	275
Hannah Garton.....	180
Mary Hobbs.....	88
Mary Hurst.....	00
Leonard Keppell....	135
Joseph Milner.....	280
DEATHS of	
Joseph Nichol.....	280
Sarah Pollard.....	32
Patrick Phelon.....	220
Sarah Rous.....	134
A. Sibson.....	183
Elizabeth Slee.....	244
Mary Stannard.....	223
James Scott.....	279
John Taylor.....	91
R. M. Waller.....	130
John Whitworth....	133

CONTENTS.

	Page
Dress, Moderation in, and Charity respecting.....	8
Dress, the ancient Modes of.....	97
Debts on Meeting Houses, a Plan for discharging.....	115
Eternity, Reflections on.....	159
Father, Reflections on the Death of a	178
Ford, Account of the Church at.	81
Friar Lane, Anniversary at.....	228
Genealogies of our Saviour, Query on the.....	256
General Baptists in America.....	233
Heathen Priest, Conversion of an.....	24
Infidelity, Temptations to, silenced..	63
Isaiah vii, 14—16. Illustration of.....	243
Itinerant Fund, an Appeal in Behalf of.....	193
Jephthah's Vow, Remarks on.....	6
————— Reply to Remarks on.....	112
————— Rejoinder to Remarks.....	202
Jews, present State of the.....	69
Jewish Jurisprudence, an Account of.....	214
Joseph, History and Character of.....	164
Ladies' Library for the Academy, Presents to.....	40
Lincolnshire Ministers' Widows' Fund.....	28
Locusts, an Account of the Eastern.....	25
London Conference, Rules of the.....	218
Meeting House, New, opened at Barrowden.....	226
————— Belper.....	225
————— Holbeach.....	141
————— Hose.....	36
————— Nottingham.....	140
————— Seven Oaks.....	94
Meeting House re-opened, at Friar Lane.....	38
Ministers, the Scarcity of, Query respecting.....	13
————— Reasons for, by a Lay Pastor.....	57
————— Thoughts on, by a Layman.....	77
————— Reasons of, and Remedy for, by Scrutator	125
————— Observations on, by a General Baptist,....	173
————— One Cause of, by W. T.....	212
Ministry Christian, the Design and Means of the, by	
D. Taylor.....	205, 248
Missionary Society, General Baptist.....	186
Missionary Intelligence.....	230

CONTENTS.

	Page
Miscellaneous Intelligence.....	142, 231
Mead (Wm.) Trial of.....	115, 151
Madagascar, a proper G. B. Missionary station.....	7
Ordination of Mr. J. Cooper, Nantwich.....	186
— of Mr. E. Payne, at Morcott.....	39
Penn (Wm.) Trial of.....	115, 151
Penn (Wm.) Letter to his Children.....	258
Pollard (Mr. B.) Memoir of.....	1, 49
POETRY.	
Hymn at laying the Foundation of a Chapel.....	46
Hymn sung at Mr. Pollard's Funeral,.....	144
Life, a Poem.....	143
Missionary Reflections	47
Sweetmeats	239
Watch Paper, Inscription on a.....	46
Queries.....	18, 129, 178, 204—213
Revenue, the Sin of defrauding the.....	264
REVIEW of	
An affectionate Address to Dissenters.....	95
Benedict's History of American Baptists.....	231
Freeston's "What must I do to be saved?".....	41
— Advice to a Candidate for Fellowship.....	43
Goadby's Memoirs of Hildersham.....	192
Pike's Persuasives to early Piety.....	190
Taylor's (Dan) Important Hints to Churches... .	96, 241
Scripture illustrated by Eastern Facts.....	25, 97, 214
Signs and Symbols, Eastern Communication by.....	241
Taylor (Dan) Proposals for a Life of.....	44
Taylor's (Jaines) Plan, Strictures on.....	78
Tale-bearing, Nature and Guilt of.....	103, 145
Ungodly Children of pious Parents, a Hint to.....	218
Universality of the Death of Christ should be enforced....	257
Welch Preaching, a Specimen of.....	262
Wendover Church, some Account of.....	84
Young Ministers, Advice to ; from the Harleian MSS....	200

INDEX TO SIGNATURES IN VOL. IX.

	Page		Page
A. Zouch.....	157, 259	I. Hobbs	90
A. Taylor.....	118	J. J. L.....	269
Circumspector,.....	14	John Berridge, 15, 18, 77, 112	
Collector.....	200	Layman.....	78
Constant Reader.....	257	Lay Pastor.....	59
D.....	180	Obscurus	81
D, G.....	129	Observer	11
Enquirer.....	204	P.....	8
General Baptist.....	177	Phi.....	81, 115, 144, 214
Gilboa	256	P. N.....	214, 265
Iota.....	73, 159	R. I	226
J. R.....	12, 46	S. E	48
J. N.....	164	Scrutator.....	129
Juvenis.....	178	S. O	249
J. B.....	184	T. R.....	273
J. Farrent.....	118	T. H. B.....	258
J. A. B. T.....	200	Viridus.....	7, 204
John.....	218	W. T.....	212
J. D.....	88, 228	W. Burgess.....	63
J. W.....	69, 235	W. Penn.....	263

ERRATUM.

Page 225, line 19, for *Loughborough*, read *Woodhouse-Eaves*.

THE
GENERAL BAPTIST REPOSITORY.

No. XLIX.—Vol. IX.—November 1st, 1818.

*A MEMOIR of the REV. B. POLLARD, late PASTOR
of the GENERAL BAPTIST CHURCH, at
QUORNDON, LEICESTERSHIRE.*

BENJAMIN POLLARD was born April 30th, 1754, at Swithland, near Loughborough, in Leicestershire. His parents, though in low circumstances, were respectable for their honesty and industry; and trained their children early to habits of these excellent moral virtues. Benjamin, their eldest son, was taken by his father, when only eleven years of age, to work, in a slate quarry about a mile from his home: where, during twelve months, he laboured for only two-pence a day. When he had attained his fourteenth year, his employer, observing him to be a steady promising boy, took him apprentice for seven years, to the business of a stone mason. He still resided with his father; and, his mother being in a very weak state of health, he was often occupied, after the usual hours of labour, in various domestic employments. At this time, he exhibited the certain symptoms of a feeling, affectionate and obedient disposition. In the winter evenings, also, his father taught him to read; and, after he had tasted the sweets of knowledge, he became more anxious for information. In order to obtain this, he attended, for some time, an evening school in the village; and this constituted the whole of the education which he ever enjoyed.

About the year 1760, the general baptists began to flourish at Loughborough and Quorndon. The zeal of their manner and the novelty of their extemporaneous discourses, excited considerable attention; and induced many to attend their ministrations. Among others, the parents of Mr. Pollard went to inquire what this new doctrine was. Though his father was parish clerk at Swithland, and had therefore official ties to the

established church ; yet his mind was struck with the plain and affectionate manner in which these preachers stated and enforced the great truths of the gospel. His wife was equally impressed : and they searched the scriptures, and found that they plainly sanctioned the doctrines they heard. They were soon brought to a saving acquaintance with Jesus Christ ; and made a public profession of their faith in him, by being baptized and joining the church at Loughborough, of which they continued honourable members till their decease.*

When this worthy pair began to attend the preaching of the general baptists, their son Benjamin was usually left at home, wishing that they might not approve this new religion. To his great mortification, he found that their satisfaction with it daily increased, till at length they openly espoused it. Although the distance they had frequently to travel in order to attend divine worship, was from ten to fifteen miles, yet, they soon accustomed their son to walk with them. But, for

* In a communication made to the Editor, a year or two ago, our late valued friend gave the following account of his worthy parents. "I was born in 1754, at Swithland, a village four or five miles south of Loughborough, and can well remember, when very young, hearing much talk about meetingers. There was a very respectable family of the name of Johnson, who then espoused the distant baptist cause, were very diligent in the use of the means of grace, and very zealous in making proslytes. They seldom missed public worship, either on Lord's-days or winter evenings ; when even females would go to the distance above mentioned, in dark nights and deep snows, to the astonishment of the whole parish. Among these wanderers were my father and mother, who were often pressed by the Johnsons to go hear the gospel. Soon after this, a Mrs. Hutchinson, a married branch of the same family, died ; and was taken to the burying ground at Loughborough for interment. The neighbours were invited to attend, and my father went. He was so struck with the sermon, delivered by Mr. Donisthorpe, that he never could forget it : though, strange to tell ! he afterwards accepted the office of parish clerk, which he held for three years and a half. He then relinquished his situation, and professed himself a baptist ; for which Sir John Danvers turned him out of his habitation, to his very considerable disadvantage."

several years, he seems to have attended only in compliance with paternal directions, and no lasting impression was made on his heart. His master, to whom he was apprenticed, was a rigid churchman; and, though he did not prevent his attending the means of grace with his parents, yet, on this account, he withheld from him some advantages in his trade.

During his apprenticeship, he was diligent, at his leisure hours, to improve himself in reading, writing, drawing, &c. as necessary accomplishments for attaining eminence in his business. He was then principally employed in the stone and marble masonry; but, his genius inclining him to the more ornamental pursuits of carving and engraving, when his first term of apprenticeship was concluded, he engaged again with the same master, for another seven years, in order to perfect himself in these branches of his trade. The concern at Swithland was very extensive, and afforded great facilities for improvement; and the gravestones and monuments, in divers parts of the kingdom, which he executed, sufficiently shew how well he improved these opportunities. His conduct, during this long period of servitude, was marked by diligence, punctuality and fidelity; and his master and he were on very friendly terms: while by his shopmates he was always highly esteemed, and proved himself a most agreeable and worthy companion.

For several years he had filled his place in the congregations at Quorndon, Loughborough, Leake, and other places of worship, which then were occupied by one church, with such regularity and seriousness of deportment, as gained him great respect, which was heightened by the promptness of his wit and a prepossessing person. Though the heat of youthful passions, no doubt, often led him into deviations from duty, and caused him to seek pleasure in the creature more than the Creator, yet his conduct was free from gross immorality, and he was justly esteemed by those who best knew him a youth of more than ordinary promise. His mind was often deeply affected by the preaching of the word and the exhortations of his friends; but the full effect of these impressions were for a time prevented by the conversation of some young men, into whose acquaintance his cheerfulness of temper and aspiring turn of mind had introduced him, who were too much disposed to turn divine things into ridicule. Yet, though these un-

happy associates were the means of stifling his convictions, they were renewed with increased force. He viewed himself as a sinner under the divine law and exposed to misery. His sense of guilt led him at times to despair of obtaining mercy; and, alarmed that he felt no more sorrow for his past sins, he prayed for afflictions, that by them he might be brought to sincere repentance, and led to a saving faith in Lord Jesus Christ, and to the enjoyment of adoption into the family of God. In this state of mind, he reaped much assistance from the perusal of Baxter's Call to the Unconverted, and Alliene's Alarm: pieces which he often afterwards recommended to inquiring souls. Nor, were his religious connections inattentive to his situation; but, with christian sympathy, they encouraged him to seek diligently; and assured him that, if he did, he would find pardon and peace through the blood of Christ. Those worthy ministers of Christ, Messrs. Grimley and Donisthorpe, names dear to his memory to the latest period of his life, were particularly assiduous in directing him to the foot of the cross. But his uneasiness and guilt continued, and a sense of sin sunk him into the depths of wretchedness. For some weeks, his soul was in the most discousolate state. Though he appeared to understand the gospel plan of salvation, and was very anxious to enjoy an interest in the Saviour of sinners, yet his mind was dark and his ideas bewildered with respect to saving faith and the great work of regeneration. The encouraging advice of his friends and ministers were of no benefit: he still groaned under the condemnation of the law, and was unable to apply gospel promises. At length, as he was one day employed in his business, meditating on these subjects, it pleased God to grant him release. He was favoured with unusual confidence, the load was removed from his mind, and he was enabled to believe that he was a child of God through faith in Christ Jesus. He found the Saviour all sufficient—his gracious words imparted life—and his spirit gave light, life and peace to his soul.

This happy change had important effects. Deeply impressed with gratitude and love to his Redeemer, and affection for his perishing fellow creatures, his active soul was inflamed with ardour for his glory and their salvation. He offered himself for fellowship with the church at Loughborough, and was baptized, in 1777, in a field near the town, by Mr. N. Picker-

ing. This was a season of great comfort to himself; and his friends rejoiced in the addition, being highly pleased with the evidences of his sincerity. His forward and frank disposition, and good natural abilities, soon suggested the idea to his friends, that he might be useful in the ministry: and his own zeal made him ready to engage in every attempt to spread the gospel of his Saviour. Prayer-meetings were then held at Swithland, Woodhouse-Eaves, Quorndon, &c. at which it was usual for those who conducted them, in rotation, to read and explain the scriptures. In these engagements, he was always punctual in his own turn, and ready to fill up the place of any absent friend. From the manner in which he acquitted himself in these meetings, his friends were confirmed in their opinion that he possessed gifts for preaching. His diligence in the pursuit of knowledge, and steady application to the study of the scriptures, rendered him acceptable and useful: and in the places where he conducted the meetings, the cause of Christ increased rapidly. His prayers and expositions were heard with astonishment and pleasure; and numbers professed to have derived great benefit from them.

Mr. Grimley observed this promising plant in his vineyard with praise-worthy disinterestedness, paid it every attention, and nursed it with more than parental tenderness. That good man prayed frequently that the Lord of the vineyard would send forth more labourers; and in this lovely young man he beheld an answer to his prayers. He discovered in him the excellencies of the diamond, though hid in a slate quarry; and spared no pains to polish it and render it acceptable. This generous and christian conduct, on the part of his pastor, made a deep impression on the grateful mind of Mr. Pollard. Many years after the death of this esteemed minister, Mr. Pollard observed: "I think Mr. Grimley was perfectly free from envy. He could, without the least apparent disgust, see his abilities, age and faithfulness, all slighted, for the vain glitter of a young raw lad: and instead of considering this rival in the affection of his people, as the object of his envy, he treated him as the delight of his heart;—because his people loved him;—and it seemed an especial care of his soul to yield him every private assistance, that the people might have every wished-for advantage from him. Who but a Grimley could have acted

thus?" (G. B. R. Vol. I. p. 55) May we not add, "Who but a Pollard could have so handsomely discharged the debt of gratitude?"

Mr. Pollard's talents improving, and his popularity increasing, he was, in March, 1779, called regularly to the work of the ministry, and appointed assistant preacher. This our deceased friend was accustomed to consider as a precipitate act, and to express his surprise that such a church, with so wise a man as Mr. Grimley at their head, should call so unexperienced a youth to the regular work of the ministry.

Such however was the case: and, from this time, he was regularly employed in his turn in preaching, on the Lord's days, at Quorndon, Loughborough, Leake, Widmerpool, &c. &c. and on the week-day evening, at Quorndon, Loughborough, and Woodhouse-Eaves. Regardless of the fatigue of a day's labour, he walked in the most dreary weather, four or five miles to preach in the evening, and returned home after service. Animated by the love of Christ, he learned to endure hardships, as a good soldier; and laboured for the souls of the people, without coveting any man's silver or gold. This was literally true of him; for he laboured five years without any pecuniary reward.

(To be continued in our next Number.)

ON JEPHTHAH'S VOW.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

I have lately met with a solution of the difficulty in Jephthah's vow, which may perhaps be useful in your Repository.

The original, of Judges xl. 31, when properly translated, reads thus: "And it shall be, that whosoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be Jehovah's; and I will offer to him a burnt offering." Thus the vow appears to contain two parts. 1. That what person soever met him on his return, should be Jehovah's; that is, should be dedicated for ever to his service, as Hannah devoted Samuel before he was born, 1 Sam. i. 11. And 2. That Jephthah himself would offer a burnt offering to Jehovah, Unclean beasts and human

sacrifices were an abomination to the Lord ; and therefore Jephthal could not intend to vow either of these, had they presented themselves first to his notice : and if he had, surely the priests would not have offered them. Such a vow would have been impious, and could not have been performed. Had such been the intention, the hebreu would have required a different construction. The literal meaning is, I will offer to him, that is, to Jehovah just mentioned, a burnt offering.

Your's, with great respect,

B—n, June 10th. 1818.

VIRIDUS.

ON A MISSIONARY STATION.

To the EDITOR of the GENERAL BAPTIST REPOSITORY.

DEAR SIR,

One of your correspondents, in the last number of the Repository, expressed a wish for some information respecting the island of *Madagascar*. That Island once appeared a promising station for any attempt, to evangelize the heathen, that may be made by our infant Missionary Society. In consequence, however, of recent circumstances, the propriety of *our* making that attempt becomes more doubtful. The circumstances to which I allude are these. The London Missionary Society has already sent off Missionaries for that Island. The Methodist Society has done the same; and the committee of the Church Missionary Society have lately had the subject of sending Missionaries there under discussion. This being the case, it appears probable that Madagascar will soon have its full proportion of christian instructors ; when we consider the extreme paucity of labourers for the wide missionary field. I understand it is designed to hold a Committee Meeting of our Missionary Society, at Morett, in October next, when the subject of a missionary station will be taken into consideration. Under these circumstances, your correspondent may allow that it is not necessary to occupy your pages with a full account of the Island of Madagascar. A few particulars may at this time be sufficient.

This noble Island is about eight hundred and forty miles long, by two hundred and twenty broad. It is fertile and beautiful; diversified with forests and mountains, and watered with nu-

merous rivers. Cattle and sheep abound; while lions, tigers, and various other beasts of prey, are said to be unknown. The population is computed at from three to four millions. Some of the natives are negroes, others are tawney or copper coloured. They are not subjected to any European power, but are governed by their respective chiefs. Reading and writing are known among them to a certain extent. They have some historical books and learned men, who mostly use the arabic characters. They are pagans. A favourable opportunity, for the introduction of christianity, appears of late to have been presented, in consequence of the friendly intercourse that has taken place between the native chiefs and the governor of the Isle of France.

With respect to Malabar, at this time, permit me merely to say, that it is under the dominion of the East India Company. Europeans are already fixed in various parts of the country. The intercourse with it is easy; and various stations suited for Missionaries may be found along the coast as well as further inland. Some of its superstitions were detailed in your last number.

Various causes have contributed to prevent my writing so fully as I intended. Perhaps under the circumstances I have mentioned, what I have written may be deemed sufficient for the present.

Believe me, dear Sir, Your's, &c. P.

MODERATION in DRESS, and CHRISTIAN CHARITY towards one another, respecting it.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

I read with pleasure, in your Repository for February last, the piece signed R. C. on "Moderation in Dress," which was chiefly an extract from one of Dr. Watts's valuable sermons. Though I had read the sermon at large, I was pleased to see so useful an extract in your valuable miscellany; especially as it is written (as indeed Dr. Watts's works in general are) with so much temper and moderation. This being a subject of considerable importance, I should have been glad if your correspondent had given us a little more concerning it, from

the treasury of his own mind. As he did not, you will excuse me, Mr. Editor, if I trouble you with a few additional remarks. And, least any should think that I favour *fashionable clothing* too much, I assure you, I do not intend to weaken the force of what you have inserted, from R. C. As far as it goes, it is congenial with my own views, and with my own practice and appearance in the world. You must know, Sir, I myself am a plain man; and have not, that I know of, deviated from the plain appearance, in the form of my clothing, to which I have been accustomed for these last twenty years; and perhaps never shall while I live. But I do not on this account require my christian friends to take me for their model; however, I may not be altogether unqualified to assume the character of a Spectator, and to bring forward my report on this subject, and my remarks to you.

That some professors are immoderately fond of fashionable clothing must be allowed. Young people chiefly, and perhaps young females in particular, from the very nature of their dress, are most in danger of falling into this excess. The writer would affectionately advise them, as christians, to guard against it. And he would also, with equal affection, advise his baptist friends at large, and particularly those who live in country villages, not to require an unreasonable disconformity in the dress of these young friends, in the polished circles, to the *decent modes* of the times.

A mistaken notion, into which many people have fallen, is, that *pride* consists only in superfluity or gaudiness of dress. It does indeed discover itself, oft-times in this manner; but, strictly speaking, it lies in the *temper and disposition of the heart*. The word *pride*, or *pryte*, is originally a Saxon term, which signifies a *swelling*, and perhaps is accurately explained by one of our writers on languages, who says, it consists in "too high an opinion of one's self;" whether that opinion respects our clothing, our abilities, or possessions. There are many persons in our churches who dress in a moderate way, according to the times, situations, and circumstances in which they live; and yet they are amiable, modest, and unassuming. There are others, who reject every thing of a fashionable sort, who have a great deal to say against pride, and are clamorous against every article of dress that is not, in colour and shape, suited to their own rustic taste; who yet, on almost every

possible occasion, betray a haughtiness of mind, and a restless and contentious spirit. It is scarcely needful to ask, Which of the characters just mentioned displays the more pride? That the silly fantastic creature, whose chief care consists in "putting on of apparel," is drawn aside from christian moderation, none can deny. And it is as certain that the opposite character, who abounds in contention and clamour, are equally criminal. Pride and haughtiness of spirit are the same thing, and are linked together in the sacred volume, Prov. xvi. 18. We are assured also, by the same authority, that it is only from pride that contention cometh, Prov. xiii. 10. This last species of pride is, if possible, worse than the former; because it destroys the peace of individuals, of families, and of churches.

As it respects the subject of dress, there must be some allowance made for persons, place, situations, connections, &c. Some persons have been accustomed from their infancy to genteel apparel, and it has become habitual to them. Others live in places or situations where it becomes them more, as men and women, and as christians too, to appear according to the stations they occupy, than it would to appear otherwise. Others again, have such connections, even among christian friends with whom they live, or with whom they must associate, that were they to exchange their usual mode of dress, for one adapted to the taste of a plebeian, they would degrade themselves by so doing. Dr. Watts himself, in the extract which R. C. has given us, says, "not that all christians must utterly abandon those rich and more costly methods of ornament, of which the Apostle speaks, 1 Pet. iii. 3: for every one of us should wear such raiment as suits our character and our age, our company and business in the world."—What the Apostle Paul says on another subject may be very suitably accommodated to this, "One (christian professor) believeth that he may eat all things; another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth, despise him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not, judge him that eateth, for God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth," &c. Rom. xiv. 3, 4. Concerning dress, let christians exercise the same candour. One christian, though he condemns gaudiness and indecency of apparel, (and some of the female fashions of late have hardly been decent), yet thinks he is not forbidden in a

moderate way, to dress according to the times in which he lives; especially as he honestly pays for his raiment before he wears it. "As far as I can learn from scripture," says he, "Christ and his Apostles appeared in their dress like the rest of their fellow countrymen, i. e. though they did not *ape* the fashion, they did not *affect singularity*; nor did they think it needful that their followers should be distinguished by the form or colour o' their coat or gown, bonnet or hat." On the other hand, another professor, like the people called Friends, may be of a different opinion. On these subjects we should agree to differ. As truly serious christians, let us be most solicitous to possess the hidden man of the heart, and the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is, in the sight of God, of great price. Then we shall avoid both extremes; we shall not be precise and formal, nor clamorous and contentious with our young friends who may differ from us. Neither shall we "conform ourselves to every foolish fashion, nor feel uneasy if every pin and point be not right, if every plait and fold be not modishly adjusted :

"And how a body so fantastic, trim,
And quaint in its deportment and attire,
Can lodge a heavenly mind, demands a doubt."

Wishing sincerely that these remarks may produce the good effect which the writer has in view, he subscribes himself,
Your's, affectionately,

Leicestershire, July 22nd. 1818.

AN OBSERVER.

REMARKABLE FACTS connected with the ADMINISTERING of BELIEVERS' BAPTISM.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

MR. EDITOR,

As it is our duty to observe the display of God's goodness, and to make them known for the good of others, I take the liberty of communicating to you some remarkable circumstances which have been related to me. Concerning their credibility, no doubt rests upon my mind, as I received the narrative from the mouth of the individual concerned, who is a truly pious christian, confirmed by her husband and two daughters, and I may add, others, who have been acquainted

with her for many years. The publication of it may be encouraging to such as are backward in following the Lord on account of apparent danger and difficulty. If you think it worthy a place in your Miscellany, its insertion will oblige,

Your's in the Lord,

Scpt. 22nd. 1818.

J. P.

Mrs. L—— is a member of the G. B. Church in N——. Her admission into the church by the ordinance of baptism was attended with circumstances peculiarly interesting and encouraging to such as are weak in faith. From her fifteenth or sixteenth year, to the time of her baptism, a period of about twenty years, she was very grievously troubled with fits. They were irregular in the season of their return; but so strong, and of such duration, that she has been repeatedly held for two hours at a time; yea, she even bit her own flesh once, and often used to attempt this, but was prevented by the care of her friends. Being visited in an affliction of some continuance, eight or nine years since, by a member of the church, when she was recovered, she attended the preaching of the word; and, under the divine blessing, received good to her soul. Having a satisfactory evidence of her interest in Christ, and convinced of the propriety of believers' baptism, she applied for admission into the church. Her experience and conduct being approved, she was accepted. But a difficulty of some magnitude presented itself. It was feared that her fits might return during the administration of the ordinance. The open hostility of her husband to religion considerably increased the delicacy. He even went so far as to speak in a threatening manner to the minister, if he presumed to baptize his wife. But after some conversation with him, he was more reconciled, and consented to the administration of the ordinance. Yet so apprehensive was the minister that something unpleasant might occur, that he proposed to baptize her early in the morning with but a few people present. This she refused, trusting that the Lord would carry her through his own ordinance. Her husband placed himself near the baptistry, to be ready to render assistance if necessary; but to the surprise of many, she went through it comfortably. And though she had her fits a short time before, yet, she has never been afflicted with them since. Her family and those

who are acquainted with the circumstance, are often led to admire what God hath done for her.

When these things are considered, surely we may adopt the language of the Psalmist, and say, "The righteous shall see it and rejoice, and all iniquity shall stop her mouth. Whoso is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord." Psal. cvii. 42, 43.

*ON the DECREASE of PASTORS and PREACHERS
in the NEW CONNECTION.*

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

Having occasion lately to look over the minutes of former years, I was much affected with the gradual decrease of ministers, in proportion to the number of churches and members, which has taken place, in the New Connection, since the commencement of the present century.

At the formation of the union in 1770, the nine churches which ultimately adhered to the Connection, had, besides many assistant preachers, fifteen pastors. The members then amounted to 1368; or about ninety members to one pastor.

In 1800, the Connection comprised thirty-eight churches and three thousand four hundred members; at the same time, there were twenty-six pastors and forty-five unordained preachers. At this period, therefore, not one-third of the churches were destitute of pastors; and the average number of members to one pastor, was 130; and of members to one preacher, including pastors and unordained ministers, not fifty.

But, in 1817, the union comprehended seventy churches, containing six thousand eight hundred and thirty-three members; to serve which there were only thirty-four pastors and sixty-one unordained ministers. Last year, therefore, more than one-half of the churches were without pastors; and the average proportion of members to one pastor was upwards of two hundred; and of members to one preacher, ninety-one.

Now, Sir, while I sincerely rejoice at the extension of the New Connection of General Baptists, and earnestly pray that it may continue and increase, I feel considerably alarmed at this rapid decrease in the proportion of the labourers. It

certainly bodes no good to the union ; and, unless it can be checked, it will assuredly undermine its prosperity, and ultimately hasten its dissolution. Permit me, therefore, through the medium of your Miscellany, to call the attention of the Connection to this important subject ; and to request early answers to the subsequent queries.

1. To what cause or causes can this decrease of ministers, since the commencement of the present century, be justly ascribed ?

2. What methods can be adopted to stop, or, at least, to lessen this alarming evil ?

Plain, pertinent and practical answers to these inquiries would doubtless be highly advantageous to the cause of religion and interesting to most of your readers,

Your's, &c.

CIRCUMSPECTOR.

ORIGINAL LETTERS from the late REV. JOHN BERRIDGE, A. M.

We have been favoured with the loan of a number of very interesting ORIGINAL LETTERS, from the late pious and useful, but very eccentric clergyman, the REV. JOHN BERRIDGE, of Everton, addressed to a gentleman well known and highly esteemed for genuine religion and christian benevolence. We shall, we are persuaded, gratify all our readers, by inserting a selection from them occasionally in the G. B. R.

Everton, October 22, 1775.

DEAR AND HONOURED SIR,

Your favour of the 17th requires an answer, attended with a challenge. And I do hereby challenge you, and defy all your acquaintance to prove, that I have a single correspondent half so honest as yourself. Epistolary intercourses are become a polite traffic ; and he that can say pretty things and wink at bad things, is an admired correspondent. Indeed, for want of due authority and meekness on the one side, and of patience and humility on the other, it is no easy matter to give or to take reproof. A fear of raising indignation instead of conviction, often puts a bar on the door of my lips : for I find where reproof does not humble it hardens ; and the seasonable

time of striking, if we can catch it, is when the iron is hot, when the heart is melted down in a furnace. Then it submits to the stroke, and takes and retains the impression. I wish you would exercise the trade of a gospel limner, and draw the features of all my brethren in black, and send them their portraits. I believe you would do them justice every way, by giving a rosy cheek its proper blush, without hiding a dimple upon it. Yet, I fear, if your subsistence depended on this business, you would often want a morsel of bread, unless I sent you a quartern loaf from Everton.

As to myself, you know the man: odd things break from me as abruptly as croaking from a raven. I was born with a fool's cap 'True,' you say: 'Yet why is not the cap put off? It suits the first Adam, but not the second.' A very proper question; and my answer is this: a fool's cap is not put off so readily as a night cap. One cleaves to the head and one to the heart. Not many prayers only, but many furnaces, are needful for this purpose; and after all, the same thing happens to a tainted heart, as to a tainted cask, which may be sweetened by many washings and firings, yet a scent remains still. Late furnaces have singed the borders of my cap, but the crown still abides on my head; and I must confess, that the crown so abides, in whole or in part, for want of a closer walk with God, and a nearer communion with Him. When I creep near the throne, this humour disappears, or is tempered so well as not to be distasteful. Hear, Sir, how my Master deals with me. When I am running wild and saying things somewhat rash or very quaint, He gives an immediate blow on my breast, which stuus me and stings me. Such a check I received, whilst I was uttering that expression in prayer which you complained of; but the bolt was too far shot to be recovered. Thus I had intelligence from above, before I received it from your hand. However, I am bound to thank you; and do hereby acknowledge myself reimbursed for returning your note.

JOHN BERRIDGE.

Everton, January, 14th 1774.

DEAR AND HONOURED SIR,

Your kind favour of the 10th came duly to hand, but the fifty Treasuries and three hundred Admonitions are not yet arrived.

The former Treasuries are dispersed, and the little Testaments are marching off apace—both of them are sweet pocket companions for the labouring poor. If beggars might be chasers, I could wish for two hundred only, of the Admonitions, and a few more of the small Testaments instead of the other one hundred Admonitions. My hearers are of a sound gospel drift, very poor and simple hearted, and cry out for the bible. They think, and rightly think, that one little Testament is worth one million of the Christian world unmasks. However, human writings are of use to carnal men, who care not for the Scriptures. For though the children love the honey of God's word, and tasting, feel it is divine; yet, strangers must be caught with human treacle; and many a wasp has been taken by it, and conveyed to Jesus's beehive.

Your letter will afford materials for a sermon. I say no more of it, because of the tinder, mentioned in your last, enveloping the heart; but shall add, by way of supplement, a few remarks on a noted text, 1 Cor. i. 30. "Christ is made to (or for) us, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." Christ, by the appointment of God, was constituted for us wisdom, righteousness, &c. St. Paul is not here speaking of what Christ worketh *in* us by his grace, but of which he hath wrought *for* us, as our legal surety. The four capital blessings, mentioned in the text, were procured for us, without any contrivance or concurrence of our own; and therefore the conclusion in the next verse is weighty, "Let him that glorieth, glory in the Lord."

Laws, human and divine, not only demand obedience, but require from the subject, a right knowledge of the laws. God's law demands an atonement for sins of ignorance, (Leviticus iv. and v.) and he who breaks an human law will not escape punishment, by pleading ignorance. Now, man at his first creation had a perfect knowledge given of God's laws; but through sin, he lost that knowledge; his faculties were darkened, and he became a stranger to the spiritual nature and extent of his Maker's law. However, God as our great creditor, has a right to demand the full payment of that knowledge he had lent us, though we through misconduct are unable to pay, having squander'd it all away. And thus we become debtors to God for the loss of knowledge, as well as for the loss of innocence; on which account, we need a surety for wisdom;

and one is provided "in whom are hid all treasures of wisdom and knowledge." And without a surety for wisdom, the wisest christian would have perished on account of his "knowing but in part."

Again. Adam was created both in righteousness and true holiness. Now righteousness, in its strict meaning, is an outward conformity to the laws; and sanctification or holiness is an inward conformity to it, or devotedness of heart to God. Both the outward and inward conformity are required by the law, and in a perfect degree; and in both we are utterly defective. On these accounts, a surety is wanted both for righteousness and sanctification; and one is provided who fulfilled all righteousness, and who could say, "Thy law is within my heart," and "it is my meat and drink to do thy will."

Lastly. We are insolvent debtors for wisdom, righteousness and sanctification; and as such we are fallen under the curse of the law, and need a surety to redeem us from it. Jesus is that surety, "in whom we have redemption, even the forgiveness of sins." Thus we are shewn in this noble text all the debts Jesus Christ undertook as our surety and discharged for us.

The commentators I have seen make sad confused work with this passage. They are puzzled to keep the parts distinct; and some parts are supposed to be wrought for us, and some wrought in us. But Paul makes no such distinction, nor will his words allow it. He only declares, in this passage, what Christ was made for us: a surety for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, a surety to discharge every claim the law had on us. Now when Jesus opens a sinner's eye to behold the multiplied guilt of his ignorance, unrighteous conduct, and unholy heart, and of his laying under a law curse thereby, he quickly flies to the surety for relief: and when by faith he is enabled to view a finished salvation, and stedfastly to rely upon the Surety, redemption is found, he feels the sprinkled blood. The love of God is poured into his heart which hallows it; making self-denial an easy yoke, and obedience a cheerful service. And while believers keep simply looking to a crucified Jesus, and the eye of faith is kept open, love and peace flow on sweetly, like a river, and the heart becomes more lowly, more child-like, and more devoted unto God. By feeding only and daily on the flesh and blood of Christ, eternal life springs up in them as a well of water.

I suppose your christmas pies are all eaten, though mine are not yet made. However may the true Christmas-cheer attend you all the year; a sweet Christ in your heart, the hope of glory. Grace and peace be with you, dear Sir, and with your fireside, and with all that love our common Lord, and with a poor limping traveller, called

JOHN BERRIDGE.

AMERICAN BAPTISTS.

We have, on various occasions, been led to notice the zeal of the Baptist churches in *America*, and their generous exertions in aid of missionary establishments. They have lately formed themselves into a general union with a view to act more effectually in promoting their own prosperity, and in sending the gospel to the heathen. This union is denominated "*The Baptist Board of Foreign Missions for the United States.*" Under its sanction, many plans have been adopted for increasing the mutual acquaintance and concentrating the efforts of the Baptists in the various parts of the republic: associations have been fostered; missionary societies formed; institutions for educating young ministers founded; and persons sent forth, at the common expense, to preach the gospel in dark places within their own borders, and among the neighbouring heathens. A periodical pamphlet is published by the authority of the Board, intitled the "*Latten Day Luminary,*" which is designed and well adapted to assist the objects of the union, by facilitating the intercourse of its distant parts, and giving a similar and co-operating impulse to the whole body. A recent number of this work has been kindly handed to us by a gentleman from Baltimore, which afforded us much pleasure. We should be happy, if our limits would permit us, to transcribe many interesting particulars from this pamphlet; but at present we must content ourselves with presenting our readers with the following sketch of the "**GENERAL STATE OF RELIGION**" among the American Baptists; hoping in subsequent numbers to insert some other extracts.

"It is lamented that our limits do not permit us to present that comprehensive and detailed view of this subject which the importance of it, and the interest it has in every christian

bosom, would render at once so proper and so gratifying—not in relation to one denomination only, but to all. A very brief, though general survey, only, can be here attempted. In this it will be necessary to mark regions of barrenness as well as those favoured by the refreshing visits of divine mercy. The Rev. Thomas Smiley justly observes, that “it would be a useful part of information to publish where there are declensions in religion as well as revivals; and where churches after great revivals have become extinct, let it be known, and what seemed to be the leading cause of it; as this may have been mostly owing to our imprudence, a faithful account of such things might serve as a warning both to ourselves and others. Also where ministers have apostatized, I have often noticed that in their best days there appeared to be a lack in them; and it would be but justice that, when they show themselves as they are, it should be known how they came into the ministry, their conduct while in it, together with their fall, which would serve as a future caution.”

This subject is so intimately connected with that of Missions, or with exertions to spread the everlasting gospel, that, in the review here submitted, no care will be taken to keep up between them a distinct line of demarkation.

Maine.—In this quarter much mercy has been experienced the past year. Among the churches of the *Bowdoinham association* about three hundred have been baptized on profession of faith and repentance; among those of the *Cumberland* nearly five hundred. At the last session of the former, ninety-five dollars and twenty-nine cents were furnished from various sources for missionary objects; on the minutes of the latter, the funds of the *Mission Society* exhibit an amount of three hundred and eighty-seven dollars and seventy-seven cents. Had the minutes of the *Lincoln* come to hand, with accounts from other *Mite* and *Mission Societies*, additional information of this nature might have been offered.

In *New Hampshire* and *Vermont*, much that is grateful to christian feeling is observable. To all the associations accessions have been gained of such as profess an experience of grace in the heart; to some of them the accessions have been very numerous; in one instance, five hundred and ten, in another, eight hundred and sixty-six. Female *Mite societies* and other indications of the prosperity of Zion are multiplying.

Extracts from letters and minutes, exhibiting notices of *societies, contributions, &c.* with many animating passages relative to revivals, and some complaints of coldness and negligence in religion, are unavoidably here omitted.

The associations in *Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut*, have received additions; but some of them small, while others have been very considerable. Although, in reference to particular places, there is great reason for lamentation and distress on account of the low state of religion, and disregard of the ordinances of the house of God, others have experienced precious re formations. The mission spirit also is in active operation, as the contributions from mite societies, churches, congregations, and individuals mentioned in their minutes, amply testify.

New York State.—Upon this region we advance with unfeigned delight. Here the Spirit of the Lord has been largely shed abroad. Numbers have been brought out of the darkness of sin into marvellous light. Many have been baptized into the name of **HIM** who was crucified, and who rose from the dead. Of course, zeal for missions abundantly prevails. It is regretted that the minutes of several of the associations in the past year have not been obtained. Those that have come to hand, as well as letters from that quarter, exhibit the most animating indications of the progress of the cause of Zion. In the churches of one Association have been baptized, four hundred and nine—another, four hundred and thirty-seven—another, seven hundred and thirty-three—and another, eight hundred and seventy. Extracts from letters will be introduced into a future number of the *Luininary*, as soon as practicable.

Some of the churches in the *New Jersey* Association have been favoured with refreshing influences from on high. Others mourn a state of coldness in divine things, praying with the prophet, *O Lord, revive thy work!* The Ladies of the *Burlington Mite Society*, as well as others, continue to display a laudable zeal for missions—while one, lately of their number, now shares in the toils of the missionary field westward of the Mississippi river.

Large additions the past year were not made to any of the churches connected with the *associations* in *Pennsylvania*. A number of them, however, both in the city of Philadelphia and the country round about, as well as those at a greater distance,

have worn a pleasant aspect, and realized a gradual increase. Several missionary societies have been formed. Within the limits of the *Abington Association*, a revival, it is understood, has commenced. But in various sections of the commonwealth missionary aid is pressingly needed.

Relative to the associations in *Delaware* and *Maryland*, but little can be here introduced. Notwithstanding a degree of coldness in religious matters, much to be deplored, and that many are to be met with who seldom hear preaching, some things are observable to sustain and animate our hopes. In one of the churches in Baltimore, forty-six have been baptized, and in that in *Alexandria* fifty-eight; besides the zeal for missions, *foreign and domestic*, in these places, in *Washington*, city, and in other portions of country now under review.

A survey of *Virginia*, awakens emotions at once joyous and painful. Several of the churches in different parts of the state have been richly visited with the showers of divine goodness. Happy and extensive revivals have been witnessed. Much zeal for missions continues to be displayed; and societies for missionary purposes have multiplied. Some sections, however, are but partially supplied with the preaching of the gospel.

Similar observations will apply to the *Carolinas* and *Georgia*. Although various places exhibit a degree of barrenness which it is mournful to view, considerable ingatherings have gladdened some of the churches; favourable prospects have for a time warmed the hearts of the brethren in others; and a zealous activity and liberality in favour of the missionary cause has been manifested.

In the *Alabama Territory* and *State of Tennessee*, the gospel appears to be gaining ground. To the associations in this quarter large additions have not been made. In a few instances the Lord has shed forth a spirit of revival; at Mobile a Sunday school has been originated by the ladies; missionary efforts are increasing; still here is a wide field for faithful labours in the Saviour's service.

Kentucky has been greatly favoured the past year. Powerful and extensive awakenings have been experienced; the number of mission societies has been augmented; and much concern for imparting the blessings of civilization and christianity to the native tribes of the forest, is here discovered. An abun-

dant reward for these evangelical solicitudes, and their attendant liberalities, it is hoped, will be enjoyed in the continued and increasing displays of the divine favour.

Ohio and *Indiana* appear not to have been signalized by any remarkable outpourings of the Holy Spirit, the past year. Some of the servants of the Lord have seen happy times; others have had their hopes raised and expectations excited for a season; but have reason to lament the want of preachers, and the *ways of Zion mourn* that so few attend the solemnities of divine worship.

Illinois and *Missouri* Territories present extensive fields for missionary labours. Churches, however, have been formed; and there are some, besides the missionaries under the patronage of the Board, proclaiming the *unsearchable riches of Christ*.

Mississippi and *Louisiana*.—The state of things in this quarter is best exhibited in the communications from the Rev. Mr. Ranaldson, published in this and former numbers of the *Luminary*. Missionaries are there greatly needed.

By the returns on the minutes, as exhibited in the *Table of Associations*, the number baptized the preceding year must have exceeded twelve thousand two hundred and seventy; that number is actually returned from eighty associations, while from fifty associations no returns of those baptized have been furnished. The churches are two thousand six hundred and eighty-two; preachers, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-nine; the whole number of members about one hundred and ninety thousand.

From this estimate it is obvious that there is far from being a sufficient supply of ministers even for the churches; besides loud and pressing calls from destitute sections of the country. While, therefore, we have much cause for devout thankfulness to the Father of goodness for his manifold mercies, we have also great reason for deep humility, and fervent application that the *Lord of the harvest would send forth labourers*.

The preceding remarks have reference to the state of religion in our own denomination. Others, blessed be God! have, in multiplied instances, been highly favoured with the reviving influences of divine grace. We regret that our lists do not allow us to introduce a more particular and extended survey. We wish to know, and wish our readers to know as

accurately as possible, the state of every religious denomination in our own country, and throughout the world.

The education of pious young men, who, in the judgment of the churches, as well as in their own judgment, are called of God to the work of the ministry, deserves to be taken into the account in a general view of the *state of religion*.

The necessity that the preacher of the everlasting gospel should 'give attendance to reading,' as well as 'to exhortation' and to 'doctrine,' should 'meditate upon these things;' should 'give himself wholly to them;—that he should 'study,' in order 'to shew himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth,' agreeably to the solemn and repeated injunctions of Paul to Timothy, is becoming more and more apparent. Enlightened by the scriptures on this subject, the churches feel its importance. In all directions a kindling zeal is producing vigorous exertion.

Our brethren in the eastern states have already made considerable advancement. As appears by the minutes of the *Boston Association* at their last session, they received seven hundred and sixty-five dollars to assist the funds of the Baptist Education Society. Among the contributors we are happy to notice two *Female Education Societies*. A dozen or fourteen young men are studying with the Rev. Mr. Chaplin, of Danvers, Mas. In the course of the past season, another institution has been originated in that quarter, and located in Maine, the design of which is understood to be both classical and theological, and the prospect of its utility flattering.

Besides the Education Society in the city of New York, one has been formed in the interior of that state, where very considerable zeal appears to exist, with competent means, for the prosecution of this interesting object.

In Virginia and North Carolina, something, on an enlarged scale, it should seem, is about to be attempted. Education societies, particularly among the ladies, have already been established.

Our brethren in South Carolina connected with the Charleston association, have for a long time employed a zealous activity, and given to this business successful operation. The minutes of their last session exhibit receipts from societies, churches, and individuals, to the amount of 635 dollars 93½ cents

for the *Education Fund*, besides 928 dollars 99½ cents for missions. We notice, too, with particular satisfaction, the donation of 100 dollars by Mrs. Elizabeth M'Nair, towards the Theological Seminary proposed by the Convention, and about to be carried into effect by the Board.

Another education concern, it is understood, has been originated in this state among the churches belonging to the Savannah River Association. Our friends in Georgia, we are persuaded, will not, with their ample means, refuse themselves the happiness of assisting a cause so obviously important to the interests of religion.

In Mississippi an education society has already been formed, and one in Ohio; nor will we for a moment admit the idea that our worthy brethren in the wealthy and flourishing country between, will suffer others to carry forward these benevolent and useful plans without their assistance. Meantime let us all unite in supplicating the blessing of God on every pursuit undertaken for his glory."

A CONVERTED HEATHEN PRIEST.

Among the many auspicious signs of the times, we may notice, as peculiarly encouraging, the triumphs which Christianity frequently obtains in heathen countries; not only over the ignorant and rude inhabitants, but also over those natives whose education and stations oppose the strongest prejudices to the simplicity of the gospel. An interesting event of this nature occurred, in 1816, in Ceylon.

The pagan natives of this fertile island, are divided into two castes; the Vellalas and the Chalias. The former are esteemed the primitive inhabitants, and look down, with an air of superiority on the latter; who, though a very ancient colony, are reckoned foreigners. The Chalias, piqued at this affectation of contempt, determined to have a priest of their own cast, who should surpass the Vellalas in knowledge and attainments. For this purpose, they selected a young man, of very promising talents, whose name was Raje Gooroo; and resolved to furnish him with every means of improvement. This destined support and ornament of paganism was sent to the island of Ava, the principal seat of that species of idolatry which they professed,

and the fountain head of its mysteries. On his way thither the young man resided, for some time, on the continent of India, where he studied the Sanscrit language. He abode almost three years in Ava; and applied intensely to the study of the books of his religion. His proficiency was great, and his character was held in high estimation. At his departure, he was loaded with distinguished honours by the king and idolatrous priests.

He returned to Ceylon with his mind enlightened with study and travel; and capable of estimating the reality of things. Here it pleased God, to open to his perusal the Oracles of divine Truth. His cultivated understanding, illuminated by the influences of the Holy Spirit, soon perceived the difference between his former superstitions and the majestic simplicity of the sacred volume. After many conversations with the chaplains of the colony and the missionaries, he renounced the errors of paganism; and was admitted into the christian church on Trinity Sunday, in company with one of his pupils. The liberality of government conferred on him an official title and a salary for his support, till he should be qualified to undertake the work of the christian ministry, to which he aspired. Nothing, however, that he has received, or is ever likely to obtain, can, in a wordly sense, compensate for the rank which he held, and the influence that he enjoyed among his countrymen. His sacrifice of wealth, authority, and influence, is the best proof of the sincerity of his conversion.

SCRIPTURE illustrated from EASTERN FACTS.

LOCUSTS.

The locust is often mentioned in scripture, and was frequently an instrument in the hand of the Almighty in chastizing the nations for their sins. This insect being little known amongst us, though still common in the east; the following hints respecting its nature and habits will, it is presumed, be acceptable; as tending to prove how accurately the sacred penmen adhered to actual facts. They are chiefly drawn from the accounts of the travels of a gentleman, who spent the years from 1810 to 1816 in those parts, and wrote from observation.

The female locust lays her eggs in the earth, under the hedges and ridges of the field; where they are hatched by the heat of the sun. About the middle of April, the hedges and fields begin to swarm with young locusts, which are then black, without wings, and harmless. In May, they are much increased in bulk, and their wings begin to appear. Towards the close of June, they attain their full size, three inches and a half in length: the legs, head, and extremities are red, and the body of a pale red colour. They then fly away in immense swarms, in search of food. To this depositing of their eggs in the hedges during the winter, and the flying away of the insects in summer, the prophet seems to allude, when he says, " Thy crowned ones are as locusts, and thy captains as the grasshoppers ; which camp in the hedges in the cold day ; but when the sun ariseth they flee away, and their place is not known where they are." Nahum iii. 17.

They fly in compact swarms through the air, darkening the atmosphere, and sometimes occupying a space of many miles in extent. " On the 11th of June," says our author, " while sitting in our tents, about noon, we heard a very unusual noise, like the rushing of a great wind at a distance. On looking up, we perceived an immense cloud, here and there partly transparent, and in other parts quite black, that spread itself all over the sky, and at intervals overshadowed the sun. These we soon found to be locusts ; whole swarms of them falling round us." Thus when the Lord designed to punish the land of Egypt. " The Lord brought an east wind upon the land all that day and all that night, and when it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts. And the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt and rested on all the coasts of Egypt," Exod. x. 13, 14. And the prophet Joel, when describing the approach of a swarm of locusts, under the idea of an army of soldiers marching to lay waste some devoted country, informs us, that it was " a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains, a great people and a strong." Joel ii. 2.

In their flight, these animals seem to be impelled by one instinct, and move in one body, which has the appearance of being organized and guided by some leader : and when on the ground, they march right forwards, in regular battalions;

rawling over every thing that lies in their way. This circumstance did not escape the observation of Solomon. "The locusts," he observes, "have no king, yet they go forth all of them by bands." Prov. xxx. 27. And the prophet already quoted predicts, "They shall run like mighty men, they shall climb the wall like men of war : they shall march every one on his way, and they shall not break their ranks." Joel ii. 7.

The locusts are remarkably strong for their size, and are furnished with saw-like teeth, admirably adapted, in the expressive words of the Psalmist, "to eat up all the herbs in the land, and devour the fruit of the ground." Psa. cv. 35. In nipping off the corn and herbage, they make a noise that may be heard at a great distance; some authors say six miles. This, and the sound they make in their flight, is thus elegantly noticed by the prophet. "The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses, and as horsemen shall they run. Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array." Joel ii. 4, 5.

When these insects settle in any place they are a general nuisance. "They entered," says this traveller, "the inmost recesses of the houses, were found in every corner, stuck to our clothes, and infested our food." And the prophet declares, "They shall run to and fro in the city ; they shall run upon the wall ; they shall climb up upon the houses ; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief." Joel ii. 9.

The ravages committed by these destructive animals is almost incredible. The astonished and appalled spectators seem to labour when they attempt to convey an idea of it. "While these invaders pass along," observes one, "as if by enchantment, the green disappears, and the parched naked ground presents itself." "They appear to be created for a scourge," says another, "and during their stay proved themselves to be the real plague described in Exodus." It is indeed to the touching simplicity of Moses, and the sublime poetry of Joel, that we must turn for an adequate description of the desolation that ensues, when "the Lord commands the locusts to devour the land." 2 Chron. vii. 13. "For they covered the face of the whole earth," says the historian, "so that the land was darkened ; and they did eat every herb

of the land, and all the fruit of the trees; and there remained not any green thing in the trees, or in the herbs of the field, through all the land of Egypt." Exod. x. 15. "A fire devoureth before them," observes the prophet, "and behind them a flame burneth; the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them." "The earth shall quake before them, the heavens shall tremble, the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. And the Lord shall utter his voice before his army; for his camp is very great; for he is strong that executeth his word, for the day of the Lord is great and terrible, and who can abide it?" Joel ii. 3, 10, 11.

These dreadful scourges are sometimes entirely withdrawn very suddenly. Thus our traveller observes of the immense swarm already mentioned which passed over them, June 11th. "Their passage was but temporary. A fresh wind from the south-west which had brought them to us, so completely drove them forwards, that not a vestige was to be seen in two hours afterwards." Something similar to this took place in Egypt, when Moses entreated the Lord: "And the Lord turned a mighty strong west-wind, which took away the locusts and cast them into the Red Sea: there remained not one locust in all the land of Egypt." Exod. x. 19.

The locusts are used for food, at present, in the east. Great quantities, says a very recent traveller, are salted down at Cairo and Alexandria, and carried to different parts of Africa. Many were brought to Tripoli, during his residence in 1816, and eaten by the inhabitants. Thus also, in ancient times, they were allowed to be eaten by the Jewish legislator. Lev. xi. 22; and formed a principal part of the subsistence of John the Baptist. Matt. iii. 4.

GENERAL BAPTIST OCCURRENCES.

LINCOLNSHIRE MINISTERS' WIDOWS' FUND.

The establishment of this Institution has been in contemplation for some time, and various steps taken for its formation; but the following Rules for conducting it, and Address to the Churches in its behalf were sanctioned by the Conference, held at Boston, June 11, 1818, and ordered to be printed:

I. That this Institution be denominated *The Widows' Fund*, for the benefit of the Widows of General Baptist Ministers, connected with the Lincolnshire Conference.

II. That it be supported by Donations, Private Subscriptions, and Annual or Occasional Collections, in the churches composing this District.

III. That the management of the concerns of this Society be under the direction of the District Conference, which shall determine what applications shall be admitted, and to what extent relief shall be afforded.

IV. Every application for relief shall be recommended by the church of which the applicant is a member.

V. All Subscriptions, collections, and donations, to be forwarded to the Treasurer, previously to the Annual Conference, at Fleet; at which time the accounts for the last year shall be audited, cases attended to, and the Treasurer and Secretary chosen for the ensuing year.

ADDRESS.—Christians, the calls of charity are numerous; but the funds of christian benevolence are inexhaustible. “Ye have the poor always with you;” and while there remains a heart in the world, under the influence of christian principle, there will at least be one heart capable of feeling compassion for the poor and the needy.

We are not without hope, that the increase of the christian profession, in this our day, is attended with a proportionate increase of “pure and undefiled religion,” a prominent feature of which is, “to visit the fatherless and widows, in their affliction.”

After making every allowance and abatement, on account of mere nominal christians; who, under the influence of feelings, common to humanity, or excited by the example of the truly pious, pour their superfluities in the channels of christian benevolence, there can be but little doubt, that the number of real christians is greatly increasing; and by them, as instruments in the hands of providence, many institutions have been raised and fostered; which, while they exhibit to the public mind scenes of human wretchedness, furnish more regular and systematic means of affording their relief.

In support of the Institution, which this address is designed to recommend, we have not appealed to the general body; because, even in a connexion so limited as ours, such projects

are attended with delay ; and it requires some length of time, before the energy of a public body can be brought into action. Local circumstances suggested the idea ; and their probable recurrence has determined the General Baptist Churches, forming the Lincolnshire Conference, to establish themselves into a Society, for the benefit of the Widows of the Ministers connected with it. At the same time, our plan is open to a more general co-operation with the other branches of the connection, whenever it shall be thought expedient.

We have agreed upon a few general rules, and now submit them to the consideration of the Churches ; and to those pious individuals, who may feel disposed to give the Society their encouragement and support. And, while the poor widow did not withhold her two mites from the treasury, and was noticed and commended by our Lord, we cannot but hope, that the friends of humanity and religion will avail themselves of the opportunity now afforded, of contributing to a fund which is designed for the special benefit of a particular class of widows, who have peculiar claims upon christian sympathy and benevolence.

It may be truly said of Gospel Ministers, that they live not so much for themselves, as for the glory of the Lord, and the spiritual benefit of others. They spend themselves, and are spent in labouring to promote the edification of the churches, and the salvation of their fellow men,—“They are poor, but make many rich,”—and have a righteous claim for temporal support : for “if they have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if they should reap your carnal things?”

It is generally acknowledged, that the scanty means of a Minister’s subsistence, who gives himself wholly to the work, necessarily prevent him from making any considerable provision for a surviving family, whenever it pleases God to call him away from them to his reward ; consequently, the companion of his care and sorrow in life is often left in indigent circumstances at his death. It is not unreasonable to suppose, that if those talents, by which a Minister is qualified with reputation to discharge the office of the christian ministry, had been directed in commercial, or in other pursuits, by which persons are enabled to provide for their own, that the competition would have been equally successful ; but, having dedicated themselves to God, in the service of the Redeemer, they cast themselves

and families on the care of a superintending providence; and leave the world in the faith of that promise, which says, "Leave thy fatherless children, and let thy widows trust in me." They do not expect a miraculous interposition on their behalf; but they know that the hearts of all men are in the hand of the Lord, and the minds of his people, under the influence of his grace, and the directions of his word; that they are stewards of his bounty, through whose hands he relieves the necessities of his poor.

It is worthy of notice, that the Widows of Ministers are peculiarly circumstanced. In many temporal callings, the widow and family are capable of carrying on the business of the deceased husband, for their temporal support: but in this case, the resources are instantly dried up, or turned into the channel of his successor in the ministry, who enters into his labours, and, ere he scatters a handful of seed, reaps the harvest for which his predecessor incessantly toiled. And is it right, however worthy the present labourer is of his hire, that he should engross the care and attention of his people to that degree, that the widow and family of their spiritual father, and invariable friend, should be left unbesieged, to pine away in sorrow, in solitude, and in want? No good Minister of Jesus Christ, whatever his claims may be to the affection of his people, while actively employed, would wish the widow of their former Minister to be neglected.

While, therefore, there remains a spark of gratitude in our congregations, and but a faint recollection of their once faithful and esteemed pastors, and their widows remain unprovided for, they cannot, under the least semblance of a christian profession, withhold pecuniary aid, to render the last stages of life comfortable; and, by the exercise of sympathy and benevolence, smooth their passage to the tomb, and through the gates of death, to their husbands and to their God.

It is freely admitted, that in congregations circumstanced as ours generally are, the means are inadequate for the living, and therefore, though no disposition may be wanting, the ability is wanting, to take the charge also of the widow of the dead.

The institution of this Society meets the case, and is adapted to its circumstances; it offers to your consideration and co-

peration an easy way of bearing one another's burdens, and so fulfilling the law of Christ.

Sister churches, which derived pleasure and profit from the occasional labours of pious Ministers, now no more, will, while memory retains its office, feel a peculiar pleasure and satisfaction in strewing the flowers of benevolence on the living remains of departed worth.

It is due to several individuals and churches in this district, and highly creditable to their pious feelings, to acknowledge the promptness with which they have united in the measure, and come forward in aid of its funds; and as we are now enabled to present the rules of the Society, with an account of its progress, we have no doubt that it will meet with that support and encouragement to which it is entitled; and may the zeal of your exertions provoke many other churches to co-operate, and go and do likewise. Remembering for our encouragement, that in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

In behalf of the Conference and of the Society,

THOMAS ROGERS.

Boston, June 11th, 1818.

RECEIPTS.—From Boston Church.....	£	9	10s. 0d.	
— Wisbeach ditto.....	3	8	6	
— Peterborough ditto	0	15	0	
— Bourn ditto	2	5	6	
— Tydd St. Giles ditto ...	2	10	0	
— Spalding ditto	1	7	6	
— Sutlerton ditto	4	8	6	
— H. Mr. Everard	1	1	0	
— Fleet Church.....	8	0	0	
	£	33	6	0

OBITUARY.

April 3, 1818, died SARAH, the daughter of Mr. JOHN POLLARD, of Swithland, Leicestershire. From her infancy she had been afflicted, and though she reached her twenty-sixth year, her life was one continued scene of pain and infirmity. Her disorder bade defiance to human skill, and

baffled the powers of medicine. Yet in the midst of the severest trials a gracious God often affords peculiar consolations: and though she languished through restless days and sleepless nights, the strength of her mental faculties and the cheerfulness of her temper were wonderful, and the patience with which endured her pains, exemplary.

She was dutiful and affectionate to her parents and relatives; of a serious conversation and pious turn of mind. Deprived in general of the public means of grace, her time, in the intervals of ease, was chiefly employed in reading. She became familiarly acquainted with the scriptures, and often perused such books as were adapted to improve the mind and cultivate submission to the dispensations of providence. Baxter's Saint's Rest, and Drelincourt's Consolations against the fears of Death, as particularly suitable to her circumstances, were her frequent and favourite studies. Notwithstanding her retired, and apparently inoffensive life, she became very early impressed with a sense of the depravity of her nature, and the need she had of peace and pardon through a crucified Saviour. This peace there is every reason to hope she enjoyed, and that it was her comfort in life, and support in the prospect of death.

About three months previous to her death, she was violently afflicted with spasms, which continued, with little intermission, till within a short time of her dissolution. She was well persuaded that the hour of her departure was at hand, and told her parents that she should soon die. On being asked if she felt any terror at the prospect, she replied, No. She was perfectly composed, and met the king of terrors with the utmost calmness and serenity. She expressed much concern for the sufferings and approaching dissolution of her respected and afflicted uncle, Mr. B. Pollard; but it pleased the Lord to release her three days previous to his death. Her remains were interred in the General Baptist burying ground at Woodhouse Eaves, and a suitable discourse delivered on the occasion by the Rev. T. Stevenson, of Loughborough, from 1 Peter, i. 24. "All flesh is grass," &c.

Aug. 9, 1818, died Mrs. SOPHIA FARRENT, the wife of the REV. J. FARRENT, pastor of the General Baptist church, in Great Suffolk Street, Southwark, aged twenty-nine years: leaving a disconsolate husband and four lovely children,

the youngest only a few months old, to feel their irreparable loss.

Mrs. Farrent was born at Cockfield, a village in Suffolk; and, till her fifteenth year, was brought up with too little attention to real religion. Though involved in the fashionable follies of youth, yet she escaped the vices too often connected with them; and was then remarked as a modest, prudent, and moral young woman. When about fifteen, she became seriously alarmed with the apprehensions of the divine displeasure by a sermon, from Mr. R. Smetham, a methodist preacher. The anxiety of her mind increased so as, in a short time, to render her wretched, and almost to deprive her of the power of taking necessary sustenance. For nearly two years, her health greatly suffered: she was reduced to a very weak state; and her friends entertained serious fears, lest she should sink under her affliction. At length, the keenness of her distress abated, and she began to hesitate, doubt, and inquire. Her principal anxiety was to ascertain, whether she had experienced that repentance which is unto life. Owing to confused ideas on this important subject, she was long kept in a state of darkness and suspense; and dragged through religious duties with little pleasure or profit. From this state of doubt she was at last delivered, by a sermon expressly on the subject of repentance, from which she obtained a more accurate knowledge of that doctrine. Applying that knowledge to her own experience, she was enabled to believe on Jesus Christ as her Saviour; and from that day forwards she went on her way rejoicing.

Having thus obtained a good hope through grace, her zeal and diligence to promote the glory and interest of her Redeemer became conspicuous. She introduced the preaching of the gospel into her native village; and, at a great expense, supported it, till a congregation was gathered, and a church formed; by whom a meeting-house was built, in which public worship is still maintained. Pitying the situation of the poor, and especially those who were perishing round her for lack of knowledge, she was in the habit of visiting from house to house. Even the workhouse and the prison witnessed her exertions of charity and piety; several of which appear to have been crowned with the happiest success. While thus occupied in pious benevolence, she was the object of furious

persecution, which she bore with exemplary fortitude. Indeed the active and passive virtues of christianity were equally exemplified in her conduct: she boldly avowed her hope in Jesus; while, without murmuring, she patiently suffered for this profession of her faith; and held fast a good conscience, though sometimes nearly at the hazard of her life.

In 1809, her attention was called to the subject of believers' baptism; and, after long and impartial examination, she was convinced, that it was a divine appointment. As soon as she had attained this conviction, she conferred, not with flesh and blood, but was baptised, at Isleham, in Cambridgeshire, June 14, 1812. From that time to her death, she continued an honourable member of the church of Christ; and her conduct throughout, adorned the doctrine of God her Saviour.

When health permitted, she was diligent in her attendance on the means of grace; and, when prevented from enjoying the public ordinances, was constant and fervent in private devotion. Her bible was her delight: she was well acquainted with its precious contents; and could, it is believed, repeat from memory the Epistle to the Romans. Her humility, modesty, devotedness to God, and strict adherence to religious principles, reflected glory on that Jesus who saves his people from their sins. Her patience and resignation were eminently displayed, in her long affliction; when not a murmuring word escaped from her lips, and her greatest regret appeared to be, that she was deprived of the opportunities of ministering to the bodily and spiritual necessities of her fellow creatures.

A peaceful death closed a pious life. Calmly resigned, and perfectly collected, she quitted this world without reluctance, anxiously looking for a better inheritance. On the morning of her departure, when informed that she must die, no alteration could be discerned in her tranquil countenance. But shortly afterwards, when reminded of the manner in which she had formerly anticipated the happiness, the enjoyments and the employments of the heavenly state, her whole countenance assumed a celestial glow, tears of joy glistened in her sparkling eyes, and with an enraptured smile she exclaimed, "O, Lord Jesus, permit me to come! Do let me now quit!" She then lay some time in a state of profound meditation; at the close of which she cried, "I am ready: why do I yet stay?" When life was ebbing out apace, and the last scene had drawn near,

she was heard distinctly to say: "I am happy, O, how happy!" Soon after this, she breathed her last, and resigned her tranquil soul into the hands of a faithful Creator.—"Let me die the death of the righteous!"

CONFERENCES.

The LINCOLNSHIRE CONFERENCE was held at *Morcot*, Sept. 24, 1816. The public services of this Conference were omitted, on account of the ordination which took place on that day. At this meeting it was agreed, that Mr. Pike, of Derby, should be invited to visit the churches in the Lincolnshire district, during the Christmas vacation, in order to endeavour to excite a missionary spirit amongst them. A case from the friends at Morcot, respecting building a meeting house at Barondon, a village about a mile distant from Morcot, was considered, and advice and encouragement given. The next conference to be at Fleet, on the day succeeding the anniversary of the Christian Fund.

The next MIDLAND CONFERENCE will be held at *Ashby-de-Zouch*, on Tuesday, Dec. 29, 1818. Messrs. Felkin and Stevenson to preach; or, in case of failure, Messrs. Ingham and Pike. The ministers and representatives are desired to put up at the *Waggon and Horses* Inn.

NEW MEETING HOUSES OPENED.

Almost thirty years ago, the General Baptists introduced the gospel into *Hose*, a village in the vale of Belvoir, about five miles north east of Broughton. The principal instrument of its first introduction was Mr. Thurman, the venerable pastor of Leake and Wimeswould church; and, after a lapse of several years, the seed which had been sown by him was watered by the zealous and successful exertions of Messrs. J. Bissili and T. Hoe. A spirit of opposition early discovered itself; and in endeavouring to carry the light of the gospel into this dark corner, these good men were exposed to great persecution and ridicule.* The cause seemed to gain ground for some time; but it afterwards declined; and was preserved from utter ruin by the labours of the late Mr. Dale of Saxelby.

* See the History of the General Baptists, vol. ii. page 2.

The prospect has lately been more pleasing, and the friends to religion were encouraged to erect a meeting house in this village. This was opened on Lord's day, Sept. 6, 1818, by their old friends : Mr. Bissill, of Sutterton, preaching, in the morning, from Acts xi. 23, and Mr. Hoe, of Wimeswould, in the afternoon, from Psal. cxxii. 9. The discourses were appropriate ; and the congregations, which on the whole were very attentive and orderly, were very numerous. It was supposed that, in the afternoon, more than three hundred hearers were within the walls, and half as many in the open air, at the doors and windows. A pleasing cordiality was exhibited by the hearers, who consisted of persons of various denominations ; and, though the inhabitants had been personally applied to for assistance in the expense, yet the collections, on this occasion, amounted to nearly twenty pounds ; raising the contributions from public benevolence to upwards of forty pounds, exclusive of the subscriptions of the members of the church.

This was a season of sacred pleasure to the friends of Christ, and of the souls of men, who witnessed the solemnity, and recollect, with grateful joy, the various steps by which divine Providence had planted, preserved, and revived his own cause in this place. They heartily joined in the ardent petitions which were then offered, that this interest might still continue to flourish, that when its present supporters are mouldering in the dust, the children may rise up in the place of their fathers, and that a succession of pious ministers may here proclaim the Redeemer's name to generations yet unborn. But it must have been a subject of peculiar satisfaction to the two ministers, who were engaged, to observe such a glorious harvest arising from their juvenile labours. They had cast their bread on the waters, and after many days it was found. What an encouragement to others to " go and do likewise ! "

Sept. 16, 1818, a neat and commodious meeting-house, forty-two feet long and twenty-four broad, was opened by the General Baptists at *Long-Sutton*, a village three miles south of Fleet. Mr. Jarrom introduced the morning service by reading and prayer, and Mr. Kinghorn, of Norwich, preached, from Psa. lxxxvii. 2. In the afternoon, Mr. Evans, the independent minister of the place, read and prayed; and Mr. Bissill preached, from Psa. lxxxvii. 3—6. And in the evening, Mr. Everard prayed, and Mr. Pike preached, from Rev. xiv. 6, 7.

The collections amounted to near sixty pounds; and the place was crowded to excess.

A branch of the church at Fleet have, during many years, met for worship in a dwelling house, not far from this town; and their satisfaction at enjoying this comfortable accommodation must resemble that of the Israelites, when the ark was removed from the Tabernacle to the Temple. Their joy is increased by the prospect of usefulness which opens before them. The inhabitants, who have long been favoured with a succession of evangelical ministers in the establishment, were lately deprived of this advantage, by the sudden dismissal of a curate, whose labours had been very acceptable. Thus destitute of food for their souls, they cheerfully encourage the attempts of the dissenters; and it is presumed that the place, the opening of which we have recorded, and an independent meeting-house, which is at present building, will supply the inhabitants of the town with those means of edification, which have been so strangely denied them by their ecclesiastical superiors.

Last January, the friends at Spalding opened a Sunday school at *Pinchbeck*, a village about two miles distant. This led to the erection of a meeting-house, which was opened Aug. 6, 1818. Mr. Rogers commenced the service, in the morning, by reading and prayer; and Mr. Bissill preached, from Neh. ii. 18. In the afternoon, Mr. Rogers delivered a discourse, from 1 Cor. i. 21; and, in the evening, Mr. Bissill preached again, from Prov. iv. 7—9. The congregations were large and respectable; and the services of the day were interesting.

On Wednesday, Oct. 14, 1818, the meeting-house in *Friar Lane, Leicester*, was re-opened for public worship, after having been considerably enlarged. Its original interior dimensions were forty-two feet by thirty-six, and contained a gallery in front of five seats deep, and three on the sides. It is now seventy-feet and half by thirty-six, and contains a gallery of nine seats deep in front, three on each side, and five behind the pulpit, and will conveniently seat *one thousand and twenty-two persons*.

In the morning, the Rev. Mr. Burdett, of Sutton in the Elms, prayed, &c. The Rev. J. A. James, of Birmingham, preached an excellent sermon, from John xvii. 17. "Sanctify

them through thy truth; thy word is truth." The Rev. Benjamin Wood, Minister of Archdeacon Lane, Leicester, concluded with prayer.

In the evening, after singing, the Rev. R. Hartley prayed, and the Rev. I. Burt, of Birmingham, preached, from Eph. ii. 22. "In whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit." The venerable preacher was exceedingly animated, while he delivered the most appropriate and important sentiments, on a very interesting subject.

Collections were made at the close of each service, the amount of which was fifty pounds twelve shillings. A large fair, which commenced on Monday, and was expected to close on Wednesday, continued much longer than was expected, and hindered many from attending. Of course the morning congregation was comparatively small, and the evening, though much more numerous, not so large as in other circumstances it would have been.

On the following Lord's-day (the 8th), twelve persons were baptized in the new baptistery. All the services on the Sabbath were crowded, especially in the evening, there being many more hearers than could be accommodated with seats. Collections were made on this day, amounting to twenty-three pounds.

It is but just to observe, that the members of the church and the regular hearers have exerted themselves on this occasion beyond what is common, or what could be expected, considering their general circumstances. Above *five hundred pounds* had been previously subscribed by themselves: and continued exertions are resolved upon for the liquidation of the debt, which it is supposed cannot be less than *five or six hundred pounds*, when all the subscriptions and present collections have been absorbed. It is supposed that the whole amount of the enlargement will exceed *one thousand two hundred pounds*. May the great Head of the Church crown the whole with His blessing in the conversion of thousands of souls in the present and future generations!

ORDINATION.

Sept. 24, 1818, Mr. E. Payne was ordained to the pastoral office over the ancient G. B. church at Morcott, Rutlandshire.

Mr. Lilly, a student under Mr. Jarrom, commenced the services of the day, by reading suitable passages of scripture and prayer. Mr. Everard, of Spalding, offered the general prayer, and Mr. Bissill, of Sutterton, delivered an introductory discourse, on the subject of ordination. Mr. Rogers, of Fleet, proposed the usual questions to the church, and the minister, Mr. Sexton, of Chesham, offered the ordination prayer, joined with several others in the imposition of hands; and afterwards gave an affectionate charge to the minister, from 2 Tim. ii. 15. "Study to shew thyself approved unto God." Mr. Ewen, of March, concluded the morning service with prayer. In the afternoon, Mr. Millar, a particular baptist minister, of Oakham, engaged in prayer; Mr. Bissill, in consequence of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Jarrom, addressed the church, from 1 Thess. v. 11—13. "Know them which labour among you," &c. On the preceding evening, two brethren were set apart to the deacon's office, to whom Mr. Rogers delivered an impressive charge, from 1 Tim. iii. 10. The congregations were very numerous; and many could not obtain accommodation. Such a solemn and interesting scene was never before witnessed in that village. May the great Shepherd of Israel grant, that the pastor may approve himself unto God by piety, purity of doctrine, fidelity in preaching, and holiness of conduct; and, that the people may know, enjoy, and encourage him in his arduous office; so that the pleasure of the Lord may long prosper in their hands!

LADIES' LIBRARY FOR THE G. B. ACADEMY.

In addition to the Books, mentioned in former numbers of the G. B. R. the Tutor thankfully acknowledges the following donations received since. Reynolds' Three Treatises, Reynolds' Explanation of Psa. cx. Marshall's Gospel Mystery of Sanctification, Venn's Occasional Sermons and Tracts, Wesley's Sunday Service of the Methodists, &c, Sutcliffe's Introduction to Geology, and Sutcliffe's English Grammar, all presented by *Miss Williams*, of Portsea: also Taylor's History of the English General Baptists, by *Mrs. A. Taylor*, of London.

REVIEW of NEW PUBLICATIONS.

A PLAIN ANSWER to the important question, "WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED," with an earnest and affectionate ADDRESS to the Reader, by JOSEPH FREESTON. Button and Son. London, &c. 8vo. pp. 87. price 1s.

It is with great pleasure that we announce to our readers this small piece, from the pen of their well known friend, on the most important subject that can occupy the human mind. All that is necessary for us to attempt, is to inform them what the work proposes; their acquaintance with the character of the writer will enable them to judge of the manner in which it is executed. The author thus sums up the contents of the pamphlet: "I have shewn that whoever is *saved*, is saved by GRACE; that this unspeakable blessing can only be obtained through CHRIST; and that it must be *sought* and *received* by FAITH; also, that by whomsoever it is enjoyed, that enjoyment will be manifested by a life of grateful, cheerful, continued *obedience*; or, in other words, by a life of *holiness*; that the tree being made good, the *fruit* will also be good; that it is only by *faith*, a genuine, living faith, that you can "live," or "stand," or be "fruitful," and "overcome;" and that the gospel addresses, invites and encourages every sinner to *accept* of this salvation." These momentous topics are treated with a plainness, simplicity, and earnestness, which cannot fail of being useful to every attentive reader; not only to those who are beginning to inquire the way to Zion, but also to the confirmed christian. We insert an extract from the Address, as a specimen of the style of this excellent tract.

"READER,—I cannot satisfactorily take my leave of you, without indulging a little in expostulation, and in an attempt to impress upon your mind the necessity of an *immediate*, earnest attention to this important subject. *Delay* in this great concern, is an evil to which men are strongly inclined; and they will suffer objects of a far inferior nature to engross their attention, and continue this neglect. Of this you must be well convinced, if you have attended to what has passed in your own mind, and observed the conduct and manners of the world.—Strange and presumptuous! that that which is *first* in importance, and *greatest* in magnitude, should be the *last* and *least*, that deeply interests and powerfully engages all the powers of the

soul. I would fain have you fully apprized of your proneness to this neglect, and the danger which attends it. You remember the manner in which our blessed Lord attempts to expose the folly and danger of such conduct. He represents the provisions of the gospel by a marriage feast; Matt. xxii. 2.—or supper, Luke xiv. 16;—notices the kind invitations presented;—and the refusal given to those invitations. He then adverts to the *excuses*, Luke xiv. 18, by which they attempted to justify their neglect.—One had “ purchased a piece of ground and must needs go and see it;” another had “ bought five yoke of oxen, and must needs go to prove them;”—and another had “ married a wife, and therefore could not come.” Now these excuses were deemed frivolous, and their conduct was considered as an insult by the generous master of the entertainment. His displeasure was excited, and he determined that as they had persisted in their refusal, they should not be invited again, nor ever partake of his bounty. Their excuses formed no just plea; the one might have been done, and the other ought not to have been undone. Such is the awful neglect that is paid to the message of the gospel, by numbers of our fellow creatures. It is not necessary, to the loss of your souls and of heaven, to be employed in that which is in itself sinful; lawful employments may occasion this loss, by being made excuses for neglect or delay in religious and everlasting concerns. There was nothing sinful in purchasing an estate, buying oxen, or marrying a wife; but it is sinful and highly offensive to God to suffer these things, or any other, to prevent your receiving with thankfulness God’s message of love, and securing the salvation of your souls. “ They *would not come*”—“ they *made light*” of the invitation and of the entertainment also, and consequently of the inviter;—they were invited, and had an opportunity of attending at the supper;—but they had no relish for it—no desire—and therefore they set themselves, by way of justifying their conduct, to frame excuses; and because they could frame no better, they urged frivolous ones. How many, alas! treat the gospel, its blessings, and its author, in this contemptuous manner! O what numbers have lamented, and still lament, and will ever lament, the folly and guilt of such conduct, when there is no remedy!—Take care, Reader, that this is not thy case.”

A LETTER OF ADVICE to a YOUNG MAN, *on his offering himself for CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP*; by JOSEPH FREESTON. Button, London, &c. 13mo. pp. 37. price

To join a christian church, Mr. F. informs his young correspondent, "is seriously and deliberately resolving to obey the Redeemer's positive commands—to connect yourself with his people in visible fellowship, and thus publicly to espouse his cause—to profess your allegiance—gratefully to acknowledge your obligations for all the blessings of redemption—and to avow it as your most fixed determination to be the Lord's, and to live to Him during the whole of your future existence." On such a highly interesting transaction, the youthful candidate needs counsel and encouragement; and the pious and experienced writer is well qualified to give him useful and appropriate advice. After descanting on the nature, importance, and dignity of christian fellowship, and describing the design of baptism, and what is implied in that public profession, he explains the "*new relation and connection* thus formed—the *new character* to be maintained—and the determined *course* to be pursued." He then proposes to give advice to his young friend on propriety of conduct as a member of a christian society, in respect to his relation to the church, and the individuals who compose it—to civil society—to his domestic connections—and to his own advancement in personal piety."

As this was a real letter, addressed to a particular individual, and, as we are assured, "written without any view to publication," the author naturally confined his observations to the actual circumstances of his correspondent. This will account for the omission of some important topics that might otherwise, with propriety, have been included in his address: which, in a measure, lessens its general usefulness. It contains, however, much useful, pious, and affectionate advice, which, if practically followed, would greatly advance the honour of christianity, the peace of churches, and the personal edification of members; and we most cordially recommend it to the serious attention of every one who wishes to "know how he ought to behave himself in the house of God."

We have room for only one short extract; and we insert it because it contains a very useful caution. "By all means

carefully avoid mere convivial parties. Business, acquaintance, and other causes, may sometimes lead you into such company as a serious christian would not choose, and in which he can find no pleasure; where the conversation may not only be unprofitable but hurtful, and the glass may be pushed around with a celerity dangerous to your virtue. Here special care and circumspection are necessary, or a wound may be received that will not soon be healed, and a stain contracted which years may not be sufficient to obliterate, and which will cost many penitential tears and many a painful sigh on the retrospect." "We have known instances of a diabolical scheme having been concerted, by the deriders of serious religion, when they have had a pious individual in their company, to throw him off his guard and draw him into sin, that they might have the infernal pleasure of rejoicing and triumphing in his fall. So active are the agents of the christian's grand adversary; and such the malicious pleasure that infidels and scorners can feel in the overthrow of a virtuous character. They are the young and inexperienced that are most in danger. The absurd practice of drinking toasts is but too common, and an unwary person may be led ignorantly to drink such as profane persons would greatly delight to witness. It is best to have nothing to do with them."

We are requested to announce, that a second edition, enlarged, of Mr. Jarrom's *Supplementary Hymn Book*, will shortly be published, price in sheep, 2s. or neatly done up in calf, 2s. 6d.

The LIFE of the REV. DAN TAYLOR.

The readers of the G. B. R. are respectfully informed, that considerable advance is made in the *Life of the Rev. Dan Taylor*; and that it is hoped, in a few months, to be ready for the press. It is designed to include an accurate detail of his life and labours—an account of his works—and a view of his character as a man, a christian, a minister, and a tutor; interspersed with extracts from his diary, correspondence, and unpublished manuscripts. It is expected, that the whole may be comprised in an octavo volume, of three or four hundred

pages, on good paper and type; and that the price will be six or seven shillings. But should the work exceed the estimate, the author *engages to deliver it to subscribers at seven shillings.*

As portraits of Mr. D. Taylor are not uncommon, it is proposed, to leave it to the choice of the purchaser, whether or not the Life shall be accompanied with one. Those who desire it, will be supplied with an excellent likeness, from the last plate, engraved in his seventy-first year, at an advance of sixpence each copy.

Many of the friends of the deceased having expressed a strong wish that the work might be published in numbers, in order that they may the sooner receive it, and that it may be more easily purchased by the numerous admirers of Mr. T. who are not in affluent circumstances; it is intended, for their accommodation, to deliver it to such as desire it, in *four or five parts*, price 1*s. 6d.* each: the first part, if it please God to continue life and health, will, it is hoped, be sent to the churches, with the G. B. R. for May, 1819; and the other parts, with the succeeding Numbers of that Work.

It is requested, that ministers and others, who wish well to the undertaking, will endeavour to ascertain the number of copies that may be wanted in each church; and to forward the information to the Author, before January, 1819: specifying how many purchasers prefer receiving it in parts, or in one volume; and how many wish their copies to have portraits. As the impression will depend on the orders received, the Author intreats his friends to favour him with their communications, in due time.

The author gratefully acknowledges his obligations to many of the friends and fellow-labourers of the late Mr. D. Taylor, for their friendly and liberal communications of letters, &c. and trusts that those who may be in possession of any documents or facts, that will assist in tracing his labours, or delineating his character, will have the goodness to favour him with them, as soon as possible: and he assures them, that they will be received with respect, and, if required, carefully returned.

MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTION.

The following Lines were composed by the Rev. Mr. Munkton, Vicar of Harringworth, Northamptonshire, and presented to the friends of the deceased, as a suitable inscription for his monument. We insert them as a proof of the esteem in which this worthy clergyman held his dissenting brother.

“ To the Christian Memory of
WILLIAM CURTIS,
Pastor, during twenty years, over
the General Baptist Church
at Morcott.

His dependence on Christ was real and active;

His Life, holy and of good report;

His Ministry, faithful;

And his Death, triumphant.

He exchanged Grace for Glory,

September 10, 1817 : Aged 70 years.

‘ Be ye followers of them, who through faith and patience,
inherit the promises.’ PAUL.”

INSCRIPTION ON A WATCH PAPER.

HERE, reader, see, in youth, in age, in prime,
The stealing steps of never-standing Time:
With wisdom mark each moment as it flies;
Think what a moment is to him that—dies.

J. P.

HYMN,



*Sung at the laying the foundation of the New Meeting-house at HOSE, after a discourse, from Hag. i. 6, 7.
See page 36.*

Great God of wisdom, love, and grace,
See us assembled in this place;
In mercy all our hearts prepare
To worship Thee with holy fear.

Our hymus of praise we raise to Thee,
That mortal creatures such as we
United are with one accord
To build a house for Thee, the Lord.

Our hearts, dear Lord, with love inspire,
 Help us to feel sincere desire
 Our gratitude and love to shew,
 For all the gifts Thy hands bestow.

And may the sacrifice we bring,
 Acceptance find with Thee, our King :
 Our efforts, Lord, vouchsafe to bless,
 And crown the whole with great success.

May list'ning crowds, within this place,
 Hear and receive Thy gospel grace :
 May youth be taught Thy word to know,
 And wise unto salvation grow.

MISSIONARY REFLECTIONS.

CHRISTIANS! view the untaught Negro,
 Dark in colour, sunk in mind,
 Lost in heathen mystic darkness,
 Fed by priests, with husks and wind.
 See him pain'd, and vainly trying
 Peace and comfort to obtain !
 Hear him groan, while prostrate lying,
 Praying to his gods in vain !

See him smart with bitter anguish !
 Oppress'd by guilt, how deep his moans !
 Hear him call, and wail, and languish !
 Still his idols mock his groans !
 See him now the rocks ascending—
 Flinty rocks, of frightful hue !
 Or on slender boughs suspending,
 O'er the hideous deeps below !

See him still his course pursuing,
 Still he sighs, and inly mourns ;
 Gloomy horrors and forebodings
 Rack his mind where'er he turns.
 If, perchance, a hope should rise,
 'Tis like a meteor to his sight,
 Which beams awhile, then disappears,
 And leaves, in deeper gloom, the night.

See him still by ignorance led
 To the fancied paradise,
 Faintly now he bows his head ;
 Crush'd and mangled, lo, he dies !
 His Juggernaut can't him relieve,
 Nor Ganges wash his stains away ;
 These cannot teach him to believe,
 Nor point the way to endless day.

Must mortals still in such a state,
 Submit to error's galling chain ?
 And can no friendly arm avert
 The terrors of his gloomy reigu ?
 Must still his leaden sway depress
 So large a portion of mankind ?
 Becloud each thought, shut out each ray,
 That tends t' exalt the human mind ?

No ! exclaims each gen'rous breast :
 No ! replies the heav'nly word :
 The greatest and the least shall be
 Taught to love and serve the Lord.
 The glorious light of gospel day
 Begins already to appear ;
 Illumes the east, shines in the south,
 And gilds the western hemisphere.

See many running to and fro,
 The banners of the cross to spread ;
 Braving death in thousand forms,
 Still by love and zeal are led
 Onward, thro' the boist'rous sea,
 Sandy deserts, wilds forlorn,
 Pois'nous climes, and beasts of prey,
 Far from friends and country borne.

Sons of Afric, tribes of Hindoo,
 Barbarian claus, whate'er your names,
 Hear the gospel trumpet sounding,
 Embrace the freedom it proclaims.
 Kindly own the precious Saviour,
 Let him rule with sov'reign sway,
 Then will your souls from sin be cleansed,
 And reign in bliss an endless day.

THE
GENERAL BAPTIST REPOSITORY.

No. L.—Vol. IX.—February 1st, 1819.

MEMOIR of the REV. B. POLLARD, late of QUORNDON, LEICESTERSHIRE.

(Concluded from Page 6 of last Number.)

MR. POLLARD entered on the work of the ministry with the most ardent and disinterested zeal. While he was exemplary for diligence in business, he was distinguished for his spirit and activity in the service of the Lord. The wide extent of the church at Loughborough, at that time, afforded an ample field for the exercise of his daily improving talents. His exertions were peculiarly successful at Quorndon; and, in 1780, it was found necessary to enlarge the place of worship, for the accommodation of the rapidly increasing church and congregation.

In 1783, Mr. P. lost his mother by death, with whom he had, till then, resided; and soon afterwards united in marriage with Miss Squire. As some of his consort's connections were affluent and not partial to the General Baptist cause, obstacles were thus raised to his favorite engagements; but these did not abate his zeal or diminish his exertions. While conscientious in his attention to all relative and domestic duties, he remembered his obligations to his Saviour, and suffered nothing to prevent his disinterested labours to promote his glory. He not only punctually took his part in the stated Lord's-day and week-day lectures, belonging to his own extensive society; but seized, with eager pleasure, every opportunity to extend the knowledge of the precious gospel to other unenlightened places. The warmth of his address, dictated by the ardent feelings of his pious soul, rendered his occasional services eminently acceptable and useful. He was the honoured instrument of introducing the G. B. cause into several neighbouring

villages; and contributed much to the success of the gospel in the populous towns of Nottingham and Leicester.*

This large church was deprived of their worthy pastor, Mr. J. Grimley, in 1785; and involved in difficulties which they had never before experienced. On this occasion, Mr. P. manifested such watchful solicitude for the welfare of the members, many of whom were the fruits of his own ministry, and was so assiduous in his endeavours to supply the lack of service occasioned by the decease of his highly esteemed pastor, that his brethren soon turned their eyes to him, as a fit person to succeed in the vacant office. After due deliberation, he accepted their affectionate invitation, and was ordained pastor over the church, Nov. 27th, 1787; when Mr. S. Deacon gave the charge from John xxi. 13. "Feed my lambs;" and Mr. N. Pickering addressed the people.

The distance of Mr. P.'s abode at Swithland from the centre of his pastoral labours being inconvenient, he purchased a plot of ground at Quorndon, and erected a comfortable habitation, with suitable conveniences for carrying on his business as a mason and stone engraver, to which he now added a hardware and stationer's shop. These, in connection with his pastoral avocations, certainly called for vigorous activity and unwearyed diligence; but his promptitude, punctuality and assiduity enabled him to fulfil every engagement, with commendable propriety, and prevented, in a good measure, those disagreeable effects which too frequently are caused by a minister being obliged to involve himself in secular pursuits. The cause of religion continued to prosper; and, in 1790, three commodious galleries were added to the meeting house. At this time, Mr. P.'s cares were increased, by having to watch over a beloved father, whose mental faculties had declined so as to render constant superintendance necessary, and an afflicted partner, whose feeble state of health frequently required his care, when the fatigues of the day rendered rest and sympathy highly desirable to his exhausted powers of body and mind.

Amidst all these difficulties, this zealous servant of God excused himself from no labour by which he could promote the

* The particulars of these events may be seen in the G. B. History. Vol. II. pp. 163 and 175.

cause of his divine master. Besides his very numerous engagements in the service of a church, which now spread over nearly thirty villages; and for which he preached regularly six or seven times every week, often in as many different places; he was frequently invited by sister churches to assist on public occasions. He assisted in the ordinations of Mr. Goddard, at Rothley, Mr. Hardstaff, at Kirkby Woodhouse; Mr. J. Taylor, at Derby; Mr. Jarrom, at Wisbeach; Mr. Ewen, at March; and Mr. Stevenson, at Loughborough. He preached at the opening of the meeting houses, at Nottingham, Broughton and Hinckley; and on the last occasion, he had for his fellow labourers, the Rev. R. Hall, of Leicester, and D. Taylor, of London. He was also called to pay the last token of respect to several deceased ministers by preaching their funeral sermons.

As it was impossible for one preacher to occupy all the stations belonging to so extensive a society as that over which Mr. P. then presided, his brother J. Pollard was called to assist him; but after labouring some years with considerable acceptance, he was obliged to decline the sacred work, on account of his weak state of health. Several others were successively employed as his fellow labourers; but, owing to various causes, their services were of short duration. At length, the inconvenient extent of the church suggested the expediency of an amicable division. This was an attempt in itself of great delicacy; but was rendered more difficult by the attachment of all parties to their worthy pastor. The discussions were long and arduous; but were brought to successful issue in 1804. The patience, affection and prudence, which distinguished the conduct of Mr. P. during this trying season, contributed much to the happy result of the measure. For some time after the division, he preached and administered the ordinances alternately at Loughborough and Quordon; but, from that period, was esteemed the pastor of the church at Quordon.

Mr. P. continued, as long as health permitted, the same diligent and conscientious discharge of the important duties of his office at Quordon, which had marked his preceding years. His church had established a flourishing Sunday School; and Mr. P. addressed the scholars once a fortnight, before the morning service. When this address fell on the day of the

Lord's supper, he had five times to engage in the course of the day: at nine in the morning, at the school; at half past ten, and at two in the afternoon, public worship; to administer the ordinance, when he usually addressed the communicants from some portion of scripture; and to preach in the evening frequently at a considerable distance. Nor was he less assiduous in the more private duties of a christian pastor. At the church meetings, he used to explain a passage of holy writ, and to deduce from it such practical observations as suited the circumstances of the church or individuals. He frequently visited his people. His visits indeed were generally short, but highly interesting and edifying. He lost no time in desultory conversation, silenced all slander and tale bearing; and in his easy and familiar way introduced some useful and spiritual subject; animating the weak, confirming the wavering, and reproving the wandering with equal fidelity and affection. In all things, he ordered his conversation so as to administer grace to the hearers; and left the sound of his Master's feet behind him: following the example of the primitive disciples, and preaching Christ from house to house. In short, he watched over the flock committed to his charge, as one that knew he must give account.

At one period, the views of our deceased friend respecting some important truths of the gospel were much clouded, and his mind, perplexed by artful reasonings, much distressed: but he afterwards regained his former confidence. In his latter days, he earnestly cautioned young ministers and young christians against ensnaring and curious speculations, and recommended a filial and implicit regard to the oracles of truth.

Mr. P. naturally warm hearted, was particularly attached to all the members of his family. He had three sons and four daughters. Four of his children died in their infancy; but one son and two daughters survive him. During his residence at Quorndon, he had four apprentices, all of whom bear cheerful testimony to the kindness and moderation with which he treated them as a master; and the readiness and diligence with which he instructed them in their business, and contributed to their present and eternal happiness. His eldest daughter married Mr. S. Hull, one of her father's apprentices. A dreadful accident which happened to this young man, in the prosecution of his trade as a mason, by which several of his

bones were broken and his life endangered, gave Mr. P. a painful occasion to display the strength of his regard by all the tender offices of affection. He instantly repaired to the scene of affliction, and with the most parental solicitude soothed the sufferer, and comforted the desponding partner of his life, repeating these friendly visits as oft as possible during the whole confinement of the patient.

Returning on the outside of the coach to Quorndon, one very severe day, after performing this office of love, he took a violent cold, which appears to have brought on the cough, that led to his dissolution. He had previously enjoyed a great portion of health, and had never been subject to any serious or long indisposition. And his last complaint, though it baffled the power of medicine, was not so violent as to prevent him, for a considerable time, from the occasional exercise of his ministry; and as his outward frame decayed, his zeal for his God and affection for his people, appeared to grow more ardent. Oct. 8th. 1816, he attended the ordination of his esteemed brother, Mr. Stevenson, of Loughborough; and, besides other engagements, he offered the ordination prayer. On this solemn occasion, he felt a return of the animation of his former days, tempered by the experience of his long profession, and poured out his soul with such holy fervour and genuine piety, as transported the delighted hearers, and melted most of his fellow worshippers into tears of sacred joy. He himself was conscious of the heavenly influence, and said afterwards, that if he ever prayed in his life it was on that occasion. The last public service in which he was engaged, was a funeral sermon, preached at Quorndon, on the decease of Mr. D. Taylor, of London, who had been highly esteemed by him, through the whole course of his ministry. He delivered this discourse with great weakness of body, and continued interruptions from his cough; but, his affection for his departed friend carried him through the mournful service. He made no attempt after this to discharge the public duties of his ministry, but waited with resigned patience, for his dismission from this state of trial. He was perfectly aware that the hour of his departure was at hand; but, through faith in Him who had conquered death; he viewed his approach without fear. He was able to read the scriptures; which afforded him great consolation. Much of his time was spent in devout meditation;

and, as he approached the borders of eternity, his graces gained strength and shone with increased lustre. In a conversation, a few weeks before his death, with his esteemed neighbour Mr. Stevenson, on being asked whether he had any desire to live, he replied, with a tone and strength of voice, that recalled the recollection of his best days, his countenance illuminated with pious joy, "No, indeed! why should I wish to live? My work is done; and what a glorious prospect have I before me! to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God!" The evening before his death, in the contemplation of immediate dissolution, when all his surrounding relations and friends were bathed in tears and overcome with sorrows, he alone remained unmoved, and calmly remarked, "I mean to be tranquil." Nor did his heavenly Friend disappoint his trust. A short time previous to his departure, he desired his son-in-law to pray with him, when he appeared to join devoutly in the sacred exercise, and at the conclusion, with a voice distinctly audible, added his solemn "Amen." When his friends rose from their knees, he continued perfectly composed, with his hands in each other lying on his breast, and his eyes steadfastly fixed upwards, and in a few moments expired without a struggle or a groan, April 6th. 1818. Thus serenely closed the mortal life of this active, zealous, and useful minister of the glorious gospel.

About a fortnight before his decease, he received the following animating letter from his long-tried and highly valuable friend, Mr. J. Freeston, of Hinckley.

"*Dear Brother Pollard,*—I expect brethren Stevenson and Miller every minute. It has this moment occurred to my mind, to send two or three lines by them. They have informed me, that you are near the end of your journey. A little while ago I thought I should have gone first; but, to human appearance, Providence has determined otherwise.—Farewell, my beloved brother, until we meet again in our heavenly Father's kingdom, behold our blessed Saviour's glory, and join in the society of the just made perfect.—Infinite and everlasting goodness has conducted your vessel nearly into port, and you have your eye on the delectable shores of a blissful eternity. The same goodness will, I trust, in due time, at the best time, conduct my little bark into the same peaceful haven, where we shall unite our hearts and our voices most melodiously, in

celebrating the praises of Him that sitteth on the throne and of the Lamb. Blessed be God for such a prospect. O what has divine grace done for us! What praises are due to a merciful and pardoning God! Remember, my dear brother, that He is faithful that has promised: remember who has said, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." May God make your dying moments easy—your soul most serene and tranquil in departing—your confidence most firm—your hopes most lively—and your anticipations most delightful. May you taste of heavenly bliss before you have quitted the body.—And may the Lord pour down on your dearest connections of his grace, that they may all so improve the day of visitation, as in due time they may follow you to the celestial mansions.—Once more, farewell.

May your dying eyes in rapture view,
The glorious Friend who dy'd for you.
Dy'd to ransom—dy'd to raise
To crowns of joy and songs of praise.

Your's, affectionately,
J. FREESTON."

The remains of Mr. P. were deposited in a vault belonging to the family of Mrs. P. and were borne to the grave by six of the members, who had long enjoyed the benefits of his pastoral care. The pall was supported by six ministers, and notwithstanding the rain fell incessantly during the whole day, the meeting house was crowded to excess. Mr. Brand, of Castle Donnington, introduced the solemn service, by reading a hymn. Mr. Orton, of Hugglescote, then offered up a very affecting prayer. Mr. Stevenson delivered an appropriate discourse, from Dan. xii. 53. "They that be wise, shall shine as the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." Mr. R. Smith, of Nottingham, afterwards addressed the audience on the character, labours, &c. of his departed friend and fellow labourer; and Mr. Brand closed the affecting interview by a prayer at the tomb.—Surely we may indulge the hope, that impressions were made on this mournful and interesting occasion, which the cares and vanities of the world will not easily erase.

To enlarge, by way of eulogium on the talents and character of the worthy subject of this Memoir, would be directly contrary to his own request, when, in the contemplation of his

departure, he charged the minister, who preached his funeral sermon, to say very little concerning *him*. Yet the following outline, drawn by one who knew him well, may be useful to survivors.

"As a man of talent, Mr. Pollard certainly rose beyond mediocrity. His power of invention was considerable; his imagination warm, vigorous, and uncommonly fertile. His judgment, though sometimes rather precipitate, was generally correct and solid; his memory, capable of grasping a vast number of ideas, and of retaining them a long time. His volubility of expression was almost peculiar to himself. If the style of his sermons sometimes inclined to the verbose, and was less stately and nervous than might have been expected from a perfect orator, the severity of criticism will be disarmed by recollecting that, as appears from the former part of this Memoir, he had enjoyed few of the advantages of even a common education. The wonder therefore is—not that his compositions were imperfect—but that they were not much more so. As a public speaker, he possessed a strong, clear and sonorous voice. His action too, dictated purely by the feelings of a heart naturally warm and affectionate, animated by the love of Christ, and of immortal souls, was bold, strongly expressive, and therefore usually very appropriate. From a combination of the whole there resulted a torrent of native eloquence not easily to be resisted.

"The character of the deceased, as a man of business, was marked by uprightness and punctuality. As a husband and father, for conjugal affection and parental tenderness, he had few equals. As a friend, he was warm, ingenuous, sincere and faithful. As a christian, the tongue of calumny herself has been able to fix no blot on his character. As a minister, he was zealous, active and persevering: as a pastor, patient, vigilant and tenderly solicitous to promote the best interests of his flock."

To these observations of his friend it may be useful to add two laudable traits in the character of the deceased, which well deserve imitation.—He was in the regular habit of *early rising*. A person who was long an inmate in his family, observes, that he would generally be up between five and six o'clock in the most inclement seasons of winter, and at five or before, in the summer. His mornings were devoted to study and writing on

business. Often before break of day, he had written four or five letters or orders—arranged a sermon—studied an exhortation, &c. &c. To this excellent custom he was indebted in a great measure, for the ability to discharge with regularity and success, the various and often perplexing duties that devolved on him as a man of business, a head of an afflicted family, a frequent preacher of the gospel, and a pastor of a numerous and scattered society.

His friend has remarked above that “his judgment was sometimes precipitate.” The warmth of his feelings, and the pressure of his engagements did not indeed allow him leisure, always to weigh a subject sufficiently before he decided upon its merits. But he was, on all occasions, open to conviction; and when once he perceived his error, was ready to retract it openly, and eager to acknowledge his mistake. This was especially the case when any hasty expression, either in conversation or letter, had reflected on the character or fidelity of a friend. With the utmost frankness and affection, he seized the first opportunity to atone for his precipitancy, by rectifying his statement, and begging pardon of the party whom he supposed he had injured. Of this amiable disposition, the Editor of the G. B. R. has witnessed many interesting and affecting instances during an intercourse of twenty years; which has impressed on his mind a grateful respect for the memory of his departed friend, that will, he trusts, outlive the grave.

Such was our departed brother, the loss of whom will be sensibly felt and long deplored by the church which he served, the neighbourhood in which he dwelt, and the Connection of which he was so useful and honourable a member. May He with whom is the residue of the spirit, soon raise up a man after his own heart, to supply his place and imitate his virtues.

On the SCARCITY of MINISTERS.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

I have several times read, and each time with increasing pain, the statement of *Circumspector* respecting the decrease of Pastors and Ministers in our connection. And while with him I sincerely rejoice that the connection is increasing in

almost every direction, with him I am convinced that the evils complained of must be remedied, or greater evils will ensue. I am glad he has introduced the subject, and hope it will not be dismissed till the causes are made fully to appear; nor till an effectual remedy is provided. The title of his piece is however, very defective, as it would lead a person to suppose that there is an actual decrease of ministers; whereas the number has greatly increased, although it is not so great in proportion to the present number of members, as it was in 1800. For the statement asserts, that there were in 1800 twenty-six Pastors and forty-five unordained Ministers; and in 1817, thirty-four Pastors and sixty-one Ministers: making an increase of eight Pastors and sixteen Ministers. And when we consider that our brethren Pickering, Smith, Bartol, Young, Whitaker, S. Deacon, sen. S. Deacon, jun. Corah, Burgess, Brewen, Tarratt, Taylor, and Pollard, have been in the above period removed from their labours to their reward, (and others have deserted the Connection) this will make the number of ministers added about forty, which calls for joy and thankfulness.

I have long seen, often said, and frequently lamented that sufficient provision is not made for our ministers. The apostle declares that it is no great thing, that those who minister in spiritual things should receive of the people comfortable temporal supplies, which he calls "carial things;" and we know that "God has ordained that those who preach the gospel should live of the gospel." To Circumspector's first question, viz: "To what cause or causes can this decrease of ministers be justly ascribed," I would answer, one cause is, "*Their scanty incomes.*" Some of our ministers have difficulties in a pecuniary point of view, of which ministers of other denominations, generally speaking, know nothing.

Another cause of the decrease is, all eyes are looking to the Academy as the nursery for ministers, who are, when occasion calls, to be transplanted into different parts of the vineyard, and while churches expect supplies from the Academy, they are neglecting the gifts which are in them. But our Academy, however beneficial it may be to the students, will be of very little service to the Connection, unless the Churches regard the Christian precept, which says, "Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all

good things." For if this duty is neglected, the Churches must not expect acceptable supplies from thence, nor from any where else. A young man brought up among us, and who was represented to me as a sound General Baptist, was a very few years since admitted into an independent Academy, he soon became a Calvinist, and an advocate for infant sprinkling, and is now a pastor in that denomination. It is not so easy for people, especially for young persons, to act purely from principle as some may imagine. Many things unite to bias the mind, of which people are not always aware: And without meaning the least reflection on our students, I freely confess, that unless they are comfortably provided for by the churches which may invite them to become their pastors, it is not to be expected that they will stay long with them. The young men will have read "Who planteth a vineyard and eateth not of the fruit thereof? Who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?" "Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn." "For our sakes no doubt this is written, that he that plougheth should plough in hope." &c. &c. Some will say, our former ministers laboured without pay; true, and some do now, but that is no rule—the word of God must be our rule. Besides, the comforts of life were then much cheaper and more easily procured than now; and as other denominations make better provision for their ministers than they did formerly, as they understand the scripture direction on this point better than they did, it is but reasonable to expect that we should understand it too, and act accordingly.

To remedy the evil, two things must be pursued with diligence and perseverance. First, make better provisions for the ministers, and secondly, call into exercise the talents of the young men in our churches. These will need more than ordinary encouragement; for thinking on the advantages of the regular students, they will feel their own insufficiency the more by the comparison; and will conclude that, were they to exercise their gifts, it is impossible for them to be acceptable, and that the utmost they can hope for will be, to hew wood and draw water, like the Gibeonites, for the altar of the Lord, while the others will feast on the few sacrifices which may come to hand. Your's, respectfully

Hampshire.

A LAY PASTOR.

*An ORIGINAL LETTER of the late REV. W.
BURGESS, of FLEET, LINCOLNSHIRE.*

Fleet, Monday, August 24th, 1812.

My dear Christian Friend and Brother,

I duly received your first letter, written the beginning of July, and likewise another letter, written the beginning of this month ; in both which you apologize for not speaking to me when at the Association at Wisbeach. For the satisfaction of your mind, I now assure you that I am, and have been fully content with your apology, and sympathise with you under your spiritual troubles, which it seems were a principal obstruction to your having an interview with me. I have known what it is in my time to be tossed to and fro with doubts and perplexities, and can therefore feel for such as are in heaviness through manifold inward temptations. But I trust you will yet be enabled to say, though perplexed, yet not in despair—persecuted, but not forsaken, cast down,—but not destroyed, 2 Cor. iv. 29. These are trying sifting times, wherein Satan seems to have much of his malignant will against us, that he may sift us as wheat. It is a comfort, however, for Christ's tried followers, that he prays for them, that their faith fail not.

Though your way be dark and comfortless, and your soul be greatly discouraged; because of the way, yet I have the satisfaction to perceive by yours, that although faint, yet you are pursuing. The Lord seems to be alluring you into the wilderness, into "a land that is not sown." You have little or none of the sweets and comforts of religion, and yet you hold on : still you follow him. And will not this turn out for your spiritual good, think you? It is easy and pleasant to go on under the smiles of his countenance, and the caresses of his loving hand—but of these you are now deprived; and still you hold on your way. Will there not come a time, think you, when the Lord will remember this for your good? It may do you good to read Jer. ii. 2. how the Lord addresses his people Israel, in reference to their following him in the wilderness, where he led them from Egypt to Canaan. May that gracious Redeemer and Lord who consoled his afflicted church when stripped, spoiled and dilapidated by its enemies,

spiritually fulfil in your heart what he promised when he said, " O thou afflicted, tossed with tempests, and not comforted. Behold I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires." Isa. liv. Let me exhort you to wait on the Lord, and be of good courage, in so doing he will strengthen your heart : and you will find that " unto the righteous, light shall arise of the darkness." " Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove, covered with silver; and her feathers of yellow gold." Psa. Ixviii. 13. Plead such promises with him in prayer. And in the strength of grace imitate the prophet when he said ; " I will wait upon the Lord that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him." Isa. viii. 17. And expostulate with thy soul as David did with his, Psa. xlvi. Read the whole Psalm, for I am persuaded much of it will apply to your feelings and your griefs.

Amidst your darkness, I perceive you have a gleam of light, which discovers to you two dangerous ends which your temptations have in view, and which therefore the tempter designs, if he can, to accomplish. It is a good thing to discover the intention of an enemy, as it tends to put us on our guard, and thereby disconcert his designs. Pray, and strive to cast your burden on the Lord. Endeavour to stay your mind upon him, that your mind may, according to his promise, be kept by him in perfect peace : that so, the peace of God ruling in your heart, you may be able to attend to your business with comfort, and with good effect, and be preserved from that embarrassment in your worldly affairs, which might subject religion to reproach. As you foresee the danger, guard against it. " The prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself." You also discover that another tendency of your temptations is, to separate you from God's children, his house, his word, &c. Counteract the tempter in the strength of the Lord, by making, or continuing to make, God's children your associates, his house your home, and his word your rule and guide : thus resisting the devil, you know the promise : " He shall flee from you." The snare will be broken, and your soul regain liberty.

I wish I could assist you on the subject of prudence and zeal being properly united. " I wisdom dwell with prudence," is the language of heaven. Prudence should dictate to us what

is our duty, and the best means of accomplishing it. But oftentimes zeal will be foremost, and suggest and dictate many things as our duty, without considering or furnishing us with suitable means for the end : or, which is much about the same thing, teach us to hope and expect more from the means than they are calculated to effect. Though Jesus Christ was not afraid to meet death in the great work of human redemption, and accordingly, when he knew Judas was about to betray him, and his hour being then come, went as usual to the mount of Olives ; yet, on a former occasion, he no longer walked in Jewry because the Jews sought to kill. Zeal might have suggested, that he might preserve himself by miracle, or that his Father might miraculously preserve him ; or, if he perished, then it was in a good cause, &c. but all such considerations as these, were set aside by his prudentially withdrawing himself. Zeal generally overlooks circumstances, suitableness, ability, &c. and is for hazarding all unnecessarily. Prudence eyes the necessity, suitableness, ability, &c. and then lets zeal urge her forward, in a cheerful and probable hope of success. Prudence and zeal will therefore appear properly united when means and ends are proportionate, and a probability of success animates our attempts.

As to the difference between the testimony of a good conscience and self-praise, the best way of discovering if there be any difference, will be to know what we mean by self praise. The testimony of a good conscience is a consciousness of having done right—it is self approbation ; and if approbation and praise be synonymous, as they nearly are, then the difference is so trifling that we need not make ourselves uneasy about it. But if by self praise be meant vaunting, boasting and glorying over others, as the Pharisee did over his neighbour, the poor publican, then the difference is so great and so dangerous, that we ought to guard against it, because “ he that exalteth himself shall be abased.”

Excepting a word or two about religious tracts, I have attended to all the particulars mentioned in your two letters. I can only say that I think their distribution may be useful, that I expect some use will arise from them ; but I dare say my hopes are nothing near so sanguine as yours. I am aware of the inattention most of them will receive. Human nature does not relish bitter pills, though concealed in sugar or in

plums; as soon as ever their bitterness is tasted, it will be disposed to spit them out again. Nevertheless, who can tell? Here and there an individual may still be benefitted, and therefore I am a member of a Tract Society. Hoping you will excuse my delay which, on sundry accounts, I could not well avoid; and trusting that, when you receive this, it may prevent your seeming to have occasion to complain with the Psalmist, "No man careth for my soul;" and earnestly desiring the few thoughts I have penned may be blest to your peace and comfort, I remain,

Your sincere and Christian friend and Brother,

W. BURGESS.

P. S. It strikes me that your temptations originate from such considerations as the following, and those considerations may possibly arise in part from your own excessive tenderness of conscience, and partly from the enemy working upon it, pushing matters beyond prudence, expediency, or even ability, and then accusing and condemning you for feeling backward to do them; I have thought, then, that as on the one hand—zeal without prudence borders on rashness and presumption; so on the other hand—prudence without zeal borders on cowardice. And therefore to avoid the imputation of cowardice, your own thoughts and the enemy together are pushing you forward, from time to time, to rash and presumptuous undertakings, under the notion of zeal.

TEMPTATIONS to INFIDELITY SILENCED.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

Wisbeach, Oct. 20, 1818.

DEAR SIR,

The insertion of the following Extract from the Life of Mr. Baxter, in your periodical work, will be esteemed a favour. It is probable that the work from which this is taken is in the hands of few of your readers, and that it will be new to many of them. At the same time, it is calculated to be useful; especially to such as labour under temptations similar to those which the author describes. They will perceive that to entertain doubts concerning the scriptures and the christian religion, is no new thing; that the very eminent and pious Mr.

Baxter was sometimes harrassed with such temptations. They will see also by what considerations his mind was relieved; and by adopting a similar process, I doubt not, they themselves will obtain benefit. It is highly probable that many christians are at times tempted to infidelity, who never open the state of their minds to any of their fellow christians, from an apprehension that the case is so singular and the temptation so enormous, that it ought not to be mentioned; and who therefore continue, sometimes for a great while together, in very much pain and distress of mind. Did such know that the temptation is not unusual, even with very eminent christians, that circumstance would of itself, in many cases, afford great relief; and to be informed in what manner they acted, and how they obtained deliverance, would be a further advantage. The Extract from Mr. Baxter is as follows:

"At one time, above all the rest, being under a new and unusual distemper, which put me upon the present expectation of my change, and going for comfort to the promises as I was used, the tempter strongly assaulted my faith, and would have drawn me towards infidelity itself. Till I was ready to enter into the ministry, all my troubles had been raised, by the hardness of my heart, and the doubtings of my own sincerity; but now all these began to vanish, and never much returned to this day; and instead of them I was now assaulted with more pernicious temptations; especially to question the certain truth of the sacred scriptures, and also the life to come, and immortality of the soul. And these temptations assaulted me, not as they do the melancholy, with horrid vexing importunity; but by pretence of sober reason, they would have drawn me to a set led doubling of christianity."

"And here I found my own miscarriage, and the great mercy of God. *My miscarriage;* in that I had so long neglected the well settling of my foundations, while I had bestowed so much time in the superstructures and the applicatory part. For having taken it for an intolerable evil, once to question the truth of the scriptures and the life to come, I had either taken it for a certainty upon trust, or taken up with common reasons of it, which I had never well considered, digested, or made my own. Insomuch as when the temptation came, it seemed at first to answer and enervate all the former reasons of my feeble faith, which made me take the scriptures for the word

of God; and it set before me such mountains of difficulty in the incarnation, the person of Christ, his undertaking and performance, with the scripture chronology, histories and style, &c. which had overwhelmed me, if God had not been my strength. And here I saw much of the *mercy of God*, that he let not out these terrible temptations upon me, while I was weak and in the infancy of my faith; for then I had never been able to withstand them. But faith is like a tree, whose top is small, while the root is young and shallow; and therefore as then it hath but small rooting, so is it not liable to the shaking winds and tempests, as the big and high grown trees are: but as the top groweth higher, so the root at once grows greater, and deeper fixed, to cause it to endure its greater assaults."

" Though formerly I was wont when any such temptation came, to cast it aside, as fitter to be abhorred than considered of, yet now this would not give me satisfaction; but I was fain to dig to the very foundations, and seriously to examine the reasons of christianity, and give a hearing to all that could be said against it; that so my faith might indeed be my own. And at last I found that nothing is so firmly believed, as that which hath been sometime doubted of."

" In the storm of this temptation, I questioned awhile whether I were indeed a christian or infidel, and whether faith could consist with such doubts as I was conscious of; for I had read in many papists and protestants, that faith had certainty, and was more than an opinion; and that if a man should live a godly life, from the bare apprehensions of the *probability* of the truth of scripture, and the life to come, it would not save him, as being no true godliness or faith. But my judgment closed with the reasons of Dr. Jackson's determination of this case, which supported me much: that as in the very assenting act of faith, there may be such weakness, as may make us cry, *Lord increase our faith; we believe, Lord, help our unbelief:* so when *faith* and *unbelief* are in their conflict, it is the effects which must shew us which of them is victorious. And that he that hath so much faith as will cause him to deny himself, take up his cross, and forsake all the profits, honours and pleasures of this world, for the sake of Christ, the love of God and the hope of glory, hath a saving faith, how weak soever; for God cannot condemn the soul that truly loveth and seeketh him: and those that Christ bringeth to persevere in the love of God,

he bringeth to salvation. And there were divers things which in this assault proved great assistances to my faith."

" 1. That the being and attributes of God were so clear to me, that he was to my intellect what the sun was to my eye, by which I see itself and all things: and he seemed mad to me that questioned whether there was a God; that any man should dream that the world was made by a conflict of irrational atoms, and reason came from that which had no reason, or that man, or any inferior being was independent, or that all the being, power, wisdom and goodness, which we converse with, had not a cause which in being, power, wisdom and goodness, did excel all that which it caused in the world, and had not all eminently in itself which it communicated to all the creatures. These, and all the suppositions of the Atheist, have ever since been so visibly foolish and shameful to my apprehension, that I scarce find a capacity in myself of doubting of them; and whenever the tempter hath joined any thing against these, with the rest of his temptations, the rest have been the easier overcome, because of the overwhelming cogent evidence of a Deity, which are always before the eyes of my soul."

" 2. And it helped me much to consider that though God must needs be related to us as our *owner*, our *governor*, and our *benefactor*; in that, he is related to us our *Creator*; and that therefore we are related to him as his *own*, his *subjects*, and his *beneficiaries*; which as they all proceed by undeniable resultancy from our creation and nature, so thence do our duties arise which belong to us in those relations, by as undeniable resultancy; and that no shew of reason can be brought by any infidel in the world to secure the rational creature from loving his Maker, with all his heart, and soul and might, and devoting himself and all his faculties to him from whom he did receive them, and making him his ultimate end who is his first efficient cause; so that godliness is a duty so undeniably required in the voice of nature, and so discernable by reason itself, that nothing but unreasonableness can contradict it."

" 3. And then it seemed utterly improbable to me that this God should see us, to be losers by our love and duty to him, and that our duty should be made to be our snare, or make us the more miserable by how much the more faithfully we perform it. And I saw that the very possibility or probability

of a life to come, would make it the duty of a reasonable creature to seek it, though with the loss of all below."

"4. And I saw by undeniable experience, a strange universal enmity between the heavenly and the earthly mind, the godly and the wicked, as fulfilling the prediction, Gen. iii. 15, The war between the woman and the serpent's seed being the daily business of all the world. And I saw that the wicked and haters of godliness, are so commonly the greatest and most powerful and numerous, as well as cruel, that ordinarily there is no living according to the precepts of nature and undeniable reason, without being made the derision and contempt of man, if we can escape so easily."

"5. And then I saw that there is no other religion in the world, which can stand in competition with christianity: heathensim and mahometanism are kept up by tyranny and beastly ignorance, and blush to stand at the bar of reason: and judaism is but christianity in the egg or bud. And mere deism, which is the most plausible competitor, is so turned out of almost all the whole world, as if nature made its own confession, that without a Mediator it cannot come to God."

"6. And I perceived that all other religions leave the people in their worldly, sensual, and ungodly state; even their zeal and devotion in them, being commonly the servants of their fleshly interest: and the nations where christianity is not, being drowned in ignorance and earthly-mindedness, so as to be the shame of nature."

"7. And I saw that Christ did bring up all his serious and sincere disciples to real holiness and to heavenly-mindedness, and made them new creatures, and set their hearts, and designs, and hopes upon another life; and brought their sense into subjection to their reason, and taught them to resign themselves to God, and to love him above all the world. And it is not likely God will make use of a deceiver for this real visible recovery and reformation of the nature of man, or any thing but his own seal can imprint his image."

"8. And here I saw an admirable suitableness in the office and design of Christ to the ends of God, and the felicity of man: and how excellently these supernatural revelations do fall in, and take their places in subservency to natural virtues; and how wonderfully *faith* is fitted to bring men to the love of God; when it is nothing else but the beholding of his ad-

mirable attractive goodness in the face of Christ; and the promises of heaven, as in a glass, till we see his glory."

"9. And I had felt much of the power of his word, doing that which reason now telleth me must be done; and shall I question my physician when he hath done so much of the cure and recovered my depraved soul so much to God."

10. "And as I saw these assistances to my faith, so I perceived that whatever the tempter had to say against it, was grounded upon the advantages which he took from my ignorance, and my distance from the times and places of the matters of the sacred history, and such like things; which every novice meeteth with in almost all other sciences at the first, and which wise, well studied men can see through."

"All these assistances were at hand before I came to the immediate evidences of credibility in the sacred oracles themselves: and when I set myself to search for those, I found more in the doctrine, the predictions, the miracles, antecedent, concomitant, subsequent, than ever I before took notice of: which I shall not here so far digress as to set down, having partly done it in several Treatises, as *the Saints' Rest*, Part ii. *The Unreasonableness of Infidelity*; *A Saint or a Brute*; in my Christian Directory; and since more fully in a Treatise, called, *The Reason of the Christian Religion*; my *Life of Faith*, &c.

"From this assault I was bound to take notice, that it is our belief of the truth of the word of God, and the life to come, which is the spring which sets all grace on work, and with which it rises or falls, flourishes or decays, is actuated or stands still, and that there is more of this secret unbelief at the heart than most of us are aware of; and that our love of the world, our boldness with sin, our neglect of duty are caused hence. I observed easily in myself, that if at any time satan did more than at other times weaken my belief of scripture, and the life to come, my zeal in every religious duty abated with it, and I grew more indifferent in religion than before: I was more inclined to conformity in those points which I had taken to be sinful, and was ready to think why should I be singular, and offend the bishops and other superiors, and make myself contemptible in the world, and expose myself to censures, scorns and sufferings, and all for such little things as these, when the foundations themselves have so

great difficulties, as I am unable to overcome. But where faith revived, then none of the points or concerns of religion seemed small, and then man seemed nothing, and the world a shadow, and God over all."

"In the beginning I doubted not of the truth of the Holy Scriptures, or of the life to come, because I saw not the difficulties which might cause doubting: after that I saw them and I doubted, because I saw not that which should satisfy the mind against them: since that, having seen both difficulties and evidences, though I am not so unmolested as at the first, yet is my faith I hope much stronger, and far better able to repel the temptations of satan, and the sophisms of infidels than before: but yet it is my daily prayer, That God would increase my faith, and give my soul a clear sight of the evidences of his truth, and of himself, and of the invisible world."

Baxter's Life and Times, page 21—4. Edit. 1696.

J. W.

REFLECTIONS on the PRESENT STATE of the JEWS.

By every one who regards the declarations of scripture, and attentively observes the conduct of Divine Providence, the history and present state of the Jews will be contemplated with great interest. Our curiosity, if not our gratitude for blessings we have received through that nation, may excite us to consider the present state and the future prospects of the people who were once the chosen of the Lord, the objects of his peculiar regard, "to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all God, blessed for ever. Amen." When we consider the present fallen and degraded state of this people, and reflect on their obstinate rejection of all evidence in favour of the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth, and the divine authority of christianity, we are surprized, and are disposed to ask, "Have they stumbled that they should finally fall?" Are they for ever cast off from God, and rejected from the covenants of mercy? Several circumstances in their history, as well as many portions of scripture, forbid us to draw this conclusion, and direct

us to consider the present state of the Jews, as an example of divine indignation against unbelief, as a fulfilment of prophecy, and as portending some important designs respecting them in the future dispensations of Providence.

The present state of the Jews ought to be considered as an example of indignation against unbelief.

The Israelites were favoured with every evidence that reason, and, we may almost say, that prejudice could require, of the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth, and the Divine origin of christianity ; yet, from the beginning to the present day, they have generally rejected this evidence, and continued to treat these sacred subjects with intire indifference. The scriptures of the Old Testament, which they in general profess to revere, so plainly point out the change of the Levitical dispensations for another more simple and spiritual, that they might by these be well prepared to receive the gospel. See Jer. xxxi. 31—34. The scriptures so plainly speak of the Messiah who was to come, and, by a variety of considerations, so point out and limit the time of his appearance in the world, that, when the Lord Jesus came, it was very generally believed by them that the Messiah was at hand. “We know that Messiah cometh;” said the Samaritan woman. “When he is come he will tell us all things.” In these words she expressed not only her own belief, but also the conviction of the whole nation. Josephus says, “That which chiefly excited the Jews to the war against the Romans, was a dubious oracle found in their sacred writings, that *about that time*, one of them from their parts should reign over the world.” But notwithstanding the predictions of his coming, and their expectation of his approach, owing to the erroneous ideas they had formed of his character, when he came, he was to them “as a root out of dry ground, devoid of beauty or comeliness, that they should desire him.” “He came unto his own, but his own received him not.”

By a reception of the Messiah, and faith in his sacrifice, the numerous transgressions of Israel would have been purged away ; but when, in addition to all their insults to the servants of God, they rejected and killed his Son, their iniquity became of too deep a die ever to be purged with sacrifice or offering. This was the sin that filled up the measure of their iniquity. For this the Romans were commissioned to go

against them, to cast a trench about them, to compass them round and keep them in on every side, to destroy their temple, to plough up the very foundations of their city, to destroy the inhabitants, to lead into captivity and to disperse them over the whole world. The Jews may therefore be considered in their present state as a monument of Divine indignation against the rejection of the Messiah and his glorious gospel.

In the present state of this people, we have also a very striking illustration of the truth of prophecy. Peculiar as their situation on many accounts is, there is scarcely any aspect in which it can be viewed that does not afford some evident testimony to the truth of scripture.

Their general dispersion is in itself a remarkable fact and deserving of consideration as a fulfilment of prophecy. No other people were ever so much dispersed over the face of the earth as the Jews. Like citizens of the world, they appear to be dispersed into every part. Perhaps there is no place mentioned in modern history, in which are not found some of the descendants of Abraham. Their enterprizing and avaricious spirit causes them to submit to any inconveniences of climate or of custom to obtain wealth. In the cold regions of the north they exist; and they abound in the east, in Africa, and in most countries of Europe. Thus they proclaim to the world the Divine inspiration of the Bible, which so many ages before the event said, “The Lord shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies, and thou shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth. And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth to the other.” Deut. xxviii. 25. Jer. xxix. 18.

The reproach in which they are every where held is another striking evidence of the truth of prophecy. Though this people are dispersed into all nations, they are respected by none. Legislators and private individuals appear to look on them with suspicion. This, on the one hand, is sufficiently manifest by the many penal statutes which have been passed by several courts of Europe against the Jews, and, on the other, by that general detestation in which they are held by the people. Most of the European governments have, at one time or other, evinced their dislike to this people by their banishment or some other afflictive and opprobrious mark. From our own country they were banished in the reign of Edward I. and

were not permitted to return and settle again until the time of Cromwell. In 1783 a statute was passed to naturalize them; but, on the petition of all the cities of England, it was repealed in 1784. To these public marks of disesteem may be added the reproach which is every where attached to the character of a Jew. Doubtless there are among them some individuals who deservedly enjoy the confidence and esteem of their neighbours; but, has not the name of a Jew in general become proverbial for all that is bad in cunning, duplicity and deception? Whether their general conduct is such as to merit this disesteem and derision or not, the existence of the fact clearly accords with the predictions of ancient prophecy. Speaking to Israel in anticipation of their rebellion, Moses says, "And thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a by-word among all nations whither the Lord shall lead thee. And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind." Deut. xxviii. 37, 65. With this also agree the words of the Lord by the prophet Jeremiah. "I will deliver them to be removed to all the kingdoms of the earth, to be a curse and an astonishment, and a hissing, and a reproach, among all the nations whither I have driven them." Jer. xxix. 19. Reference might be made to many other predictions of similar import; but leaving the attentive reader to enlarge for himself—we proceed to notice

Their existence as a separate people, and union among themselves as an additional evidence of the truth of prophecy. To a reflecting mind, the present existence of the Jews, after the numerous severe wars, defeats and persecutions which they have endured, will appear as a very remarkable circumstance. The reader will remember that the city of Jerusalem was depopulated, and the inhabitants carried into captivity by the Babylonians. In the space of about seventy years, a few of them returned, and after they had restored the city and adjacent country to something like its ancient strength and beauty, and had considerably multiplied in number, about forty years after the ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Romans went against them; and, after reducing them to the utmost distress of famine and despair, by a close siege, of about six months continuance, they totally destroyed the city and temple,

together with about *thirteen hundred thousand* of the inhabitants, besides about *ninety thousand* taken prisoners and led into captivity. When this is considered, in connection with the distresses they have ever since continued to experience, their existence as a people is nothing less than a continued miracle. The potent empires of Babylon and of Rome, by which they were conquered and enslaved, are no more; and yet the Jews continue like the bush which Moses saw, always burning but unconsumed.

Their existence as a distinct people at the present is, under God, to be attributed to their tenacious observance of their peculiar customs, and to their union among themselves. Though living among all people, they intermingle with none. Notwithstanding the attempts which have been made by the Inquisition, and various other means, to destroy their peculiar customs, and to swallow them up among the nations, they still continue a distinct people, proclaiming to the world the vanity of all human attempts to annul the declarations of the prophetic page. For the Lord hath said, "And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the Lord their God." "I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee; though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee; yet will I not make a full end of thee; but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished." "Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night. If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then shall the seed of Israel also cease from being a nation before me for ever." Lev. xxvi. 44. Jer. xxx. 11. xxxi. 35, 36.

Thus evidently is the present state of the Jews a striking illustration of the truth of ancient prophecy. It also appears to portend some important design respecting them in the future dispensations of Divine Providence. Nothing less than the watchful superintendence of Jehovah could have preserved this people, under all the disasters they have endured to the present time. Doubtless there is yet some important end to be answered by them as a body, otherwise it is reasonable to suppose that, like other nations once great and powerful, they

would cease to be. Other nations were for a time instruments for some work in the hand of Providence; and, when the work was performed, they were laid aside and consumed by all-devouring time; and the present existence of this people is an evidence that they are an instrument not yet out of use. What are the particular designs of Providence respecting them, it is not perhaps easy to determine. It certainly is no inconsiderable circumstance that they are preserved as an ocular demonstration of the truth of scripture prophecy. But it is reasonable to suppose that something still more important remains to be accomplished by them. There appears to be good reason to believe that, as a body, they will be converted to the Christian faith; and, that the gospel, having gained this triumph, will then march through the earth conquering and to conquer. The infidel will then either renounce his principles, or be constrained to gnash his teeth in private, and the kingdoms of the world will become the kingdoms of the Lord and his anointed. It is presumed that this is not a mere speculation, but a divine truth, founded on numerous passages of holy writ. What, for instance, but this can be the import of the following language? "I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his first born." "God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew. For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceit, that blindness in part is happened unto Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved, as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob, For God hath concluded them all in unbelief that he might have mercy on all." Zech. xii. 10. Rom. xi. 2, 25, 32.

Encouraged by such cheering language, the house of Israel looks forward to a brighter day. At present its inhabitants are dispersed through the earth, as silent monitors of the evil of that incredulity which they awfully exhibit. While they obstinately resist all evidence in favour of the divine origin of Christianity, to an attentive mind they very powerfully reiterate the apostolical admonition, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from

the living God?" Influenced by that spirit of darkness which has blinded their minds, they appear involuntarily to say to us; "Attend with all possible seriousness to him that speaketh in the gospel, do not imitate our fatal example and always resist the Holy Spirit; shut not your eyes against the sun of righteousness, lest, in righteous judgment, Jehovah should say respecting you as he did of us," Go to this people, and say, 'Hearing ye shall hear and shall not understand; and seeing, ye shall see and shall not perceive.'

The evidence derived from the history and present state of the Jews, in favour of scripture-prophecy, appears conclusively to proclaim the Bible as the book of God. Jehovah claims it as his peculiar prerogative to declare the end from the beginning; and he challenges all pretenders to a divine nature to "shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that they are Gods." If then we have in our hands a book containing predictions which there is every reason to believe were written more than three thousand years ago, and those predictions are now fulfilling before our eyes, who can refuse to acknowledge that book as the offspring of Divine inspiration? Let the humble mind be confirmed by this consideration, in its reverence for the Bible, and be stimulated to peruse it, and be guided by it as by the divine councils. Let it retain this as a barrier against all the sophistry and ridicule of infidelity, and thus be encouraged, whoever may oppose steadily to act on the principles laid down in the Bible, which will continue, though heaven and earth shall pass away.

IOTA.

*ORIGINAL LETTER from the late REV. J.
BERRIDGE.*

No. III.

Everton, Nov. 17th, 1784.

DEAR AND HONOURED SIR,

I received your favour of the 8th, conveying a friendly hint to myself and some friendly relief for the poor. You have my thanks for both. An elbow-nudge, occasionally given, is of more use sometimes than a sermon. For preachers often study to say smart things, and letter writers too, which yield more

pleasure than profit; but elbow-hints bring close and secret instruction to the heart. Pray, Sir, do not part with your elbows; but reserve them for myself and others on needful occasions. What a mercy! You may daily seek and find Jesus on your knees, when you cannot always trace him where you might expect him, in a disciple's letter. Yet what is a christian letter without Christ, but a disciple without his master? Where Jesus dwells he will, at length, become Lord-paramount—all in our love and trust and hope—uppermost in our preaching and hearing, praying and singing, writing or talking. Grace is best discovered by the value it gives us for Jesus; and where he is highly valued, he will engage our adoration, love and trust, and these will command a cheerful obedience. As grace groweth, Christ will increase and we must decrease. John iii. 36. He will rise higher in the love, trust and value of the heart, and self will sink lower and lower, till Christ becomes all, and we become nothing. What a blessed exchange is here of self for Christ! that is of folly for wisdom! of weakness for strength! of beggary for riches! of death for life! Your Joseph shews when grace entereth a bosom, Jesus becomes the heart's darling, the joy and trust of it. All obedience without this only nourisheth self-righteousness and self-applause; and will end in shame and woeful disappointment. Joseph also sheweth that when Christ becomes a sinner's chief joy, self is felt the chief of sinners. But what could the religious sort mean by asking Joseph whether a saving change was wrought in him. We used to say at College, that the fellows of St. John's College had a recipe of their own for making latin, it was such crabbed stuff; and it seems this religious sort have got a recipe of their own for making christians: else why did they ask Joseph about his change of heart, when it plainly appeared by his words, looks and whole conduct, that his heart was changed, truly taught to love Jesus? This is regeneration, a new heart, that makes a child of God; and without this all convictions of sin and present reformation will come to nothing. This is the true circumcision mentioned by Moses, when he says, "The Lord will circumcise thine heart, to love him with all thy heart and soul, that thou mayest live." And this regeneration is, like circumcision, an instantaneous operation.

It will be well if Mr. Bowman is prevented from publishing a Sequel to Mr. Newton, otherwise it may stir up some animosity between the gospel clergy and dissenting ministers. Dr. Mayhew will certainly step forth to the fight again; it seems to be his element: and Mr. Bowman, I fear, has too much pepper or spleen to endure chopping with the Doctor's cleaver. Through mercy, I have neither ability nor inclination for controversy, which often proves a gospel bear-garden, where the combatants are bruising each other, and he that deals the hardest blows seems the cleverest fellow. By birth and education, I am both a churchman and dissenter. I love both, and could be either; and wish real gospel ministers of every denomination could embrace one another. And though I do think the best christianity was found before establishments began; and that usually there are more true ministers out of an establishment than in it; and that establishments are commonly of intolerant spirit; and draw in shoals of hirelings by their loaves and fishes; yet I am very thankful for an establishment which affords me a preaching-house and an eating-house, without clapping a padlock on my lips, or a fetter on my foot. However, I am not indebted to the mercy of church-canons or church-governors for itinerant liberty; but to the secret overruling providence of Jesus which rescued me, at various times, from the claws of a church commissary, an archdeacon and a bishop; and kept up my heart by a frequent application of the words, "They shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord." Jer. i. 19. Hitherto the Lord has delivered me, and I trust will deliver me. No weapon formed against me has yet prospered. May this gracious God be evermore your mighty protector, and fill your heart and fill your house with his blessings.

With becoming and gratitude, I remain,

Your affectionate Servant,

JOHN BERRIDGE.

SCARCITY of MINISTERS.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

Permit a plain man, deeply indebted to divine grace, and sincerely desirous of the prosperity of Zion, to offer a single

remark on the important subject introduced by Circumspector in the last number of your Miscellany. Without designing any reflection on particular ministers, I fear that one great cause of the scarcity of preachers in the New Connection, is the little attention paid by the pastors of churches to the young men in their congregations. Whenever either business or study prevents a minister from cultivating an acquaintance with his flock, from studying their different tempers, dispositions and abilities, and forming habits of friendly intimacy with them, many evils must ensue. Nor is it one of the least that many young men of sterling piety, good natural ability, and considerable aptness for ministerial services, languish in obscurity, unnoticed and unencouraged. Who are so well qualified to search out these hidden treasures, to examine their real merit, to polish their roughnesses, and introduce them advantageously to the notice of the public, as our ministers? But in order to do this, they must cultivate an intimacy with these young men. Intimacy begets respect, respect produces love, and love banishes reserve. The whole talents, disposition, and views of the man are exhibited to a friend whom he thoroughly esteems and may be fostered, corrected and improved at pleasure.

Hoping that our ministers will excuse the freedom of this hint, and pay it that regard which, on examination, it may appear to deserve, I am,

Your's, respectfully,

Leicestershire.

A LAYMAN.

STRICTURES on a LATE PLAN.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

In your number for August, you have given your readers a detailed account of the "Plan," drawn up by Mr. J. Taylor, and presented to the Association, at Boston. I think it must be allowed that Mr. T. has thought pretty closely on the subjects which he has introduced; and displayed, in a good degree, those talents he is so well known to possess; and I hope, has been actuated by the best of motives. But notwithstanding all that might be said in favour of his regulations, yet, in my humble opinion, there are some ideas stated, which are objectionable. Permit me to glance at a few.

In article iii. note 4th, Mr. T. observes; "But this term *ministers*, I should restrict to such only as are ordained by imposition of hands, and approved by the Association." This restriction would not sit very easy on the minds of several of our worthy ministers; near two thirds of whom, would be excluded from taking any part in the Association, without being chosen as delegates by their respective churches. This could not with propriety be generally expected, as several of the officers of churches have been in the habit of attending the Association, in that capacity, for twenty, thirty, and some forty years; and it would be a very delicate case to select a young minister as a delegate, to supersede an experienced officer, whose piety, zeal, and indefatigable exertions, had contributed so materially to the cause of Christ, in that church which he had so long represented. And if note 6th, article iii. is to be acted upon, thirty-seven, out of seventy-four churches, will send only one delegate each; so that the proposed *restriction* will affect nearly half the churches in the Connexion; and some perhaps in a very serious way. Suppose, for instance, a church of seventy members, having a popular young minister, highly esteemed, and two or three officers; one of whom, (by his serious demeanour, and long standing,) has rendered himself highly respected, and for a number of years has been employed as one of the representatives of the church at the annual association. At the ensuing annual meeting, this church cannot agree who to send as delegate: the junior part warmly recommending the young minister, while the more advanced in years, are anxious to choose their former representative; not out of any disrespect to the minister, but that they may not appear to neglect *him* whose years and experience enables him to represent them much better than a young man who has not resided long amongst them. A difference of opinion appears, which cannot be decided until the next church meeting. In the mean while, each party think themselves right, and endeavour to persuade others to be of the same opinion; and when they meet again, perhaps at the end of a warm discussion, after each side has been greatly irritated, perplexed, and their minds much injured, the business is decided by a very small majority, to the dissatisfaction of the large minority. And should a party be formed, which is no uncommon case, it would be difficult to

say what might be the consequence. The regulation proposes, as a necessary qualification, that a minister shall be "ordained by imposition of hands." No doubt but this would stimulate some, perhaps several, to offer themselves as candidates for ordination, who have hitherto lived in the omission of it, for ministers must either comply with the injunction, or be totally discarded by the association; unless the people for whom they preach, will, from time to time, qualify them for attending the association with their ordained brethren. It is further added, "And approved of by the association," this part of the sentence contains the very essence of the note; and is a striking display of a love of power. If an individual church, after due deliberation, make choice of a minister, it is not reasonable to suppose that that church is the best able to judge of his moral character, and the other necessary qualifications he ought to possess, without subjecting him to the mortification of being discarded by the association? When I reflect on this regulation, and the effects it may probably produce in the connection, it brings to my memory Horne Tooke, Esq. and the means made use of to procure his expulsion. In my opinion those persons who sit under the preaching of the different ministers, and who pay their salaries, &c. are the proper persons to say who shall compose the association.

I think, Sir, Mr. T. should have given some reasons for proposing an alteration in the representation of the General Baptists, in their annual meeting, before he had made the propositions in article iii. note 6th, the fact is, he asks a question, and, without answering it, or giving any reason, proposes to alter the established plan by introducing a proportionate one. Did he apprehend that the association had been, or was in danger of being too numerously attended? If he had taken the number of persons who have attended for the last eighteen years, he would have found that fifty exceeded the average; so that there was nothing to apprehend from that source. There is no doubt in my mind, but the plan, if adopted, would diminish the numbers of the representatives: for churches that lie near the association, generally send more representatives than the new plan would admit of: while other churches, that are at a great distance, omit sending any on account of expences, &c. and I do not see any reason whatever, to suppose that the churches would be more anxious in

sending their quota of representatives. It appears to be the opinion of Mr. T. that safety rests in a small number of counsellors; whereas Solomon of old said, "In the multitude of counsellors there is safety."

If these lines are not too imperfect for the public eye, and you should favour me by giving them publicity, I may again intrude on your patience, with a few more observations on the proposed regulations.

Nottingham.
Sep. 12th, 1818.

Your's, affectionately,
OBSCURUS.

QUERY.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

It will greatly oblige several of your readers, and may probably do much good, if some of your able correspondents will inform us, whether it be proper, in any case, to baptize a person who will not avail himself of an opportunity of joining a baptist church. Or, if it be improper, what degree of evil attaches to such a practice, and what are the considerations which shew it to be so.

PHI.

GENERAL BAPTIST OCCURRENCES.

SOME ACCOUNT of the GENERAL BAPTIST CHURCHES at FORD and WENDOVER, in BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

As the churches at Ford and Wendover stand candidates for admission into the New Connection, we have taken some pains to trace their history. The want of proper documents has rendered our success very partial; but we flatter ourselves the following particulars will be deemed worth preserving.

Both of these churches appear to be the remains of a society of General Baptists, which flourished in the seventeenth century, under the name of the church at Cudington. The first notice which we have seen of this interest is in 1683, when it was spread over a considerable extent of country; and maintained regular preaching at Cudington, Wendover, Thame, Crendon,

Bledlow, Scrubwood, Wycomb, Mistenden, &c. Its pastor was Clement Hunt, who was afterwards raised to the messenger's office. He was an active useful minister, and highly respected: frequently called to set in order distant churches, and discharge the other duties of his office. His assistants in the preaching of the gospel, at the above date, were Messrs. Coker, Wild, Iony, Delafield, Sturch, Goss, Headach, &c.

These professors sustained their portion of persecution during the reign of the Stuarts. Crosby relates, that an informer who had insinuated himself into favour, by pretending to be of their sentiments, led them into free conversation on the severity of the government towards dissenters; and having gained an acquaintance with their character and sentiments, laid an information against Mr. Headach, who it seems was a man of property, for having uttered treasonable words. Mr. Headach was immediately seized, and actually brought to the bar to be tried for his life. But at this juncture, some of the former base practices of the accuser being providentially discovered, he instantly fled out of court and left the country. Mr. Headach was consequently discharged in default of witnesses, and lived long afterwards, an useful preacher and respectable deacon of this society. To the latter office he was chosen in 1689, together with Mr. John Darvill. Crosby says that he was a man well reputed amongst his neighbours. He died about, A. D. 1700.

In 1669, when the Act of Toleration was passed, it was resolved at a church-meeting, that they could not approve or subscribe to the articles of the Church of England mentioned in that statute. This resolution caused some uneasiness; as several of the ministers, and amongst others Mr. Headach, qualified themselves according to the provisions of the act. The church censured them for acting contrary to its decrees: they professed repentance for their disobedience, and the matter dropped. This society appears to have been numerous, and orderly; very liberal to the poor members; but not very munificent to their ministers. At this time, it formed part of an union of five neighbouring churches which were closely connected, and on important occasions consulted together by their representatives. They zealously co-operated with the General Association, in opposing the errors of Mr. Caffin: Mr. Hunt

attending all the meetings of that assembly and taking an active part in its proceedings.

About the close of the seventeenth century, a difference of opinion respecting the extent of the atonement made by the death of Christ, gave rise to much contention amongst them, and issued in a division. The calvinistic party withdrew, and formed a separate church at Hadnam, under Mr. Hore. Soon afterwards Mr. Goss was associated with Mr. Hunt in the pastoral office; but the peace of the society was for a long time disturbed, by a misunderstanding between these two ministers. In 1707, Mr. Goss was excluded from fellowship; and Mr. John Crips was elected elder in his room.

Mr. Hunt died, about 1720; and Mr. Crips survived him only a few years. For some time, there appears to have been no pastor, and Mr. Hobbs, probably of High-Wycombe, visited this people once a month and administered the ordinances.

Many years previous to this time, regular preaching had been established at *Ford*. The success had been so great that church-meetings were held there, and the society took its designation from this village..

"The church of Christ at Ford being met together, July 16th, 1739, under a just sense of their present state and want of pastors and deacons, did unanimously call to the pastoral office their beloved brethren Robert Iony and William Allen, and also their beloved brethren Richard Dover and Thomas Symonds, to serve as deacons." These officers were accordingly ordained on the following day, by Messrs. William Stanger and Richard Drinkwater, two respectable messengers of the baptized churches. The above record of this transaction is signed by forty-five members. The meeting-house was soon after repaired, and a degree of revival took place.

In following years, the interest in this neighbourhood shared in the decline of the General Baptists in other parts of the kingdom. The union of the distant stations of this once extensive society was gradually dissolved; the branches either dying away or becoming distinct churches. For many years, during the middle of the last century, we entirely lose sight of the church at Ford; and indeed it seems that the cause itself had almost disappeared. About 1780, Mr. E. Sexton, of Chesham, in his excursions for preaching the gospel, visited Ford. At that time, the prospect was very discouraging.

No minister of the General Baptist denomination had preached there for many years : the particular baptists had occupied the meeting house, and began to claim a right to it. But Mr. Sexton frequently repeated his visits and preached for them ; and after some time, other ministers joined him. The cause in a degree revived, and the Lord's supper was occasionally administered to them. At length, about 1808, Mr. John Sexton began to preach for them every sabbath ; the hearers increased considerably, some additions were made to the members, and the cause assumed more regularity. In 1817, Mr. J. Sexton was invited to accept the pastoral office, and was ordained, May 27th. (See G. B. R. Vol. viii. p. 181.) Since this solemnity, the church has enjoyed peace, and the prospect is encouraging.

A donation of land belongs to Ford church, which is placed in the hands of trustees, and produces about thirty pounds yearly. There is also a small house for the accommodation of the minister.

It appears from the above account, that *Wendover* formed a principal preaching station of the church at Cudington so early as 1683. It continued united with that flourishing interest till towards the middle of the succeeding century ; and probably experienced similar changes as the neighbouring interest at Ford. About 1780, the cause here was nearly extinct ; and the meeting house was used by the Calvinists. About that time, Mr. E. Sexton and his associates began to visit it, and soon became constant in their labours at Wendover. Their efforts were crowned with some success : several being brought to a knowledge of the truth. The prospect continuing to improve, Mr. W. Darvill, an assistant minister, at Chesham, has for several past years laboured constantly at Wendover with acceptance and success. The public worship is well attended ; additions are made to the church ; and the present appearances are very promising.

OBITUARY.

Oct. 28th, 1818. Died, aged twenty-eight, Mrs. LUCY DEACON, wife of *Mr. Frederic Deacon*, of Leicester. She was the only surviving child of the late Mr. Dalby, of Shangton, in the county of Leicester. Her parents both died during

her childhood, and she was left under the care of her maternal grandfather, Mr. Lewin, of Tur-Langton, in the same county, who gave her a liberal education in one of the principal boarding schools in Leicester. From a child, Lucy possessed a serious turn of mind, and being intimately acquainted with a family in the town, which generally attended the worship of God, at the General Baptist Chapel, in Friar-lane, she occasionally heard the gospel there, especially when visits to that family, or the regular vacations gave her a suitable opportunity. During this period, she became acquainted with some of the friends, and took great pleasure in religious conversation with them. Her serious impressions in time became more and more deep, and evinced the commencement of a good work in her heart. She was greatly humbled under a sense of sin, and saw and felt, the infinite importance of the sacrifice of Christ, as the only remedy for her wounded spirit. This was her entire dependence, and the only source of her hope. But such was the natural texture of her mind, that she was always subject to a degree of despondency, from an apprehension of her own unworthiness, and sinfulness: on which account she could not think herself a fit subject to join a christian church. Of this opinion, however, there were none beside herself; for it may be truly said, that those who were most intimately acquainted with her entertained the fullest persuasion of her conversion and piety.

In the year 1811, she was married to Mr. Frederic Deacon, and continued to manifest a growing concern about eternal things. She was diligent in her attendance on the means of grace, and seriously devoted to the service of God. Her mind, however, was somewhat unsettled respecting a few doctrinal points, as she had for some time, leaned rather toward Calvinism. These sentiments excited, in her tender mind, pain and distress; for she was too ready to imagine that she was not one of the elect, and of course, that her salvation was more than doubtful. Such also was her sense of the purity, and dignity of true religion, and with the acuteness of her feelings, and the extreme tenderness of her conscience, that she could scarcely ever think herself a christian. Still, however, though her comfort was diminished from these causes, her piety did not decline. She endeavoured to live a life of faith on the Son of God, "and even against hope believed

in hope." She was steady in her attention to moral, and religious duties, and was not merely respectable as a professor; but was very devotional, being in the habit of frequent retirement for reading and prayer.

Though she was inclined to Calvinistic sentiments, she was not possessed of an illiberal spirit; but sincerely loved all who loved Christ, and bore his image in their tempers and lives.

As she possessed a good education, so she was also a woman of agreeable and engaging manners. And though her person was above the ordinary standard for symmetry and beauty, yet she was far removed from ostentation and vanity. Her good sense taught her how to maintain a becoming dignity, without assuming an air of supercilious consequence. Her sympathy was of the tenderest kind. The poor and afflicted she delighted to relieve, and if possible, to pour into their hearts more of the consolations of the gospel than she claimed for herself.

Her frame was exceedingly delicate; but her activity in the discharge of every family duty was incessant. As a mother, she was most tender and affectionate, yet had that self-command which eminently qualified her to train up her children in a very superior manner. She was ever ready to instil into their infant minds, the purest and noblest principles, and never failed to sanction her instructions by a worthy example. The education of her dear children, was a matter which lay near to her heart; and about which, even to the last, so long as she was capable of speaking, she evinced a most feeling concern.

The commencement of her last illness was only about twelve days previous to her death. She attended at the meeting-house on the day when it was re-opened, Oct. 14th; and in the evening presided at the table, when some of the ministers who were engaged in the services of the day, honoured the family with their company. Little was it then imagined, that on that day fortnight she would be in eternity! Alas! how uncertain is human life! Never did she appear to more advantage than on that memorable evening, enjoying the company of those whom she revered and loved: but she was destined to shine in a more honourable society, even among "the spirits of just men made perfect."

The disease which terminated her valuable life, was the typhus fever. At its commencement, she had some forebodings of its fatality. Her mind, for some days, was much exercised about her eternal state, and she felt considerable distress lest she should be lost ; fearing that she had deceived herself, or that she was not a character which would be finally approved. But, blessed be God ! the Son of righteousness arose with healing in his wings, and chased away the gloom and the mist, and gave her a cheering prospect of the heavenly Jerusalem, as the place of her eternal abode.

During the latter days of her illness, she was in a state of comparative insensibility, and gradually sunk under the weight of her sufferings. At length, she fell into the cold arms of death, to become a sojourner in the tomb ; but it was in the cheerful hope of rising again in the image of her glorious Redeemer.

On the Friday following, Oct. 30th, her remains were deposited in the family vault in Friar-lane Chapel ; which vault indeed had been finished but a day or two before the commencement of her affliction. How little was it apprehended that it was so soon to be opened for the reception of one, in whose life the hopes of an affectionate husband and four lovely children seemed almost necessarily to centre !

The Rev. Robert Hall very kindly officiated at the time of the interment, in the presence of a numerous and weeping audience. The portrait which he drew of her character on this mournful occasion, was from the life, and excited peculiar emotions in all who beheld it. The same gentleman, at the particular solicitation of the whole family, preached a funeral sermon on the Lord's-day evening, Nov. 8th, from Phil. i. 21. "To die is gain." The interest excited at this time was beyond all former example in this town, in reference to any private character, in the memory of the oldest person living. Almost an hour before the commencement of worship, the meeting-house was nearly filled : and such was the pressure of people of all denominations to gain admittance, that it created the most serious alarm. Above two thousand persons were crowded within the walls, the seats being generally filled double, and every spot of room was completely occupied. Some hundreds waited about the doors : and the street, to a considerable extent, was blocked up. More than a thousand people, it

is believed, could not gain admittance even in the chapel yard, and of course, were obliged to retire, without hearing a word of the sermon; which was peculiarly pathetic and impressive, and admirably adapted to the character of the deceased, and the state of the audience. May a lasting blessing attend the awful solemnity! and may they, especially who feel the main pressure of this afflictive dispensation, be supported by an almighty arm, be resigned to the sovereign will of Jehovah, and be prepared for every future trial, and for that happy state, where "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes!" Amen.

Leicester.

J. D.

**EXTRACT of a LETTER to the EDITOR from the REV.
J. HOBBS, one of the PASTORS of the G. B. CHURCH
at BERKHAMSTEAD.**

My dear daughter MARY HOBBS, was baptized and admitted to fellowship with the church at Berkhamstead, May 17th. 1812, from which time to the period of her death, her conduct was consistent as a christain and a church member. In the early part of July, 1817, she ruptured a blood vessel in the lungs; which we apprehended would soon remove her to an eternal state. But it pleased God to bless medical efforts and check its progress; although it terminated ultimately in a consumption, under which she languished fourteen months. Her state of mind, at an early period of the disease, is thus expressed in a letter to her sister Elizabeth, then at Wrotham, in Kent, dated, Sep. 24th. 1817.

"I feel very ill, but not so near death, I think, as you suppose. Do not think, my dear, that I wish to drive that solemn moment from my thoughts. No, I am sometimes enabled to say with composure, "Welcome." I sometimes think I am highly favoured; I feel no particular pain as many do. I feel that this earthly house of my tabernacle is dissolving; but, there is a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. It is a great delight, when from close examination, we feel the earnest of that inheritance. I feel no transporting views of the love of Christ; but, he is my rock; in him will I trust, for he has become my strength and my salvation."

Oh ! my dear, how little do we know of the value of redeeming grace and dying love : but,

Soon shall we see, and hear, and know,
All we desir'd or wished below,
And every power find sweet employ,
In that eternal world of joy.

I must conclude, trusting, that God who has been our guide and protector through life, will be our support in death. May we all meet at last where parting is not known."

From the time she was first confined, she continued a prisoner of the Lord, without being able to enjoy a single opportunity for public worship ; yet no one heard a murmur from her lips. She used to say frequently, " Pray that I may not be impatient." A few nights before her departure, she said to her sister Sarah, who was watching with her, " Sarah, I have read in the Pilgrim's Progress of Christian and Hopeful passing through the river ; and when Christian began to sink, Hopeful said, ' Be of good cheer, brother, I feel a sound bottom.' Oh Sarah, what a mercy it is to have a sound bottom to rest our hope upon when passing through the river of death. How sweet eternity will be, after these sufferings. I wish, I were going to enter in this night ; but my sufferings are small." She said to her mother, " I am sinking, and I wish so to continue till I sink into the arms of Jesus." Two days before she died, she had a violent fit of coughing. As I stood by her wiping the drops of sweat from her face, she said, " Father, this is hard work ; but it is what I expected to pass through before I enter into glory. What a balm it is to the afflicted, to be surrounded by sympathizing friends ! How many in my situation have no kind hand to wipe their agonizing brow ! What cause have I to be thankful !" She mentioned, Heb. xii. 2. which she wished Mr. Sexton to improve at her funeral, and selected appropriate hymns for the solemn occasion.

The day before her death, she had another violent struggle with her cough ; but recovering a little, she said, " Father, this is dying," and wished me to pray with her : after which, she was easy and enjoyed a comfortable night. The next day, Saturday, 12th. about three in the afternoon I asked her, how she felt her mind, she replied, " Comfortably composed ; cleaving to Jesus who keeps me from the power of the enemy." I said, " He is a sure foundation," she answered, " Yes he is,

to all who cast anchor upon him. What should I do without him now?" This was her last conversation. The pains of death came on soon afterwards, and rendered her incapable of speaking; but she appeared perfectly sensible. About eight o'clock, I was standing by her, the rest of the family around the bed, she looked at me with great earnestness, laid her dear head in my bosom, and in a few minutes departed without a sigh or groan, aged twenty-three years and three months.

Eleven days previous to this event, my dear mother left this vale of tears in the full assurance of faith and hope, aged eighty-three. May the voice of these solemn bereavements be heard; and regarded by me and mine, that we may not be slothful; but the followers of them that through faith and patience now inherit the promises. On Friday, Sep. 18th. the remains of my dear child were interred in our burial ground. Brother Sexton, spoke at the grave, and delivered an affectionate and impressive discourse from the passage she had chosen, to a numerous auditory. May it prove profitable to their souls.

I remain, dear Sir, affectionately yours,

JOSEPH HOBBS.

MARY, the eldest daughter of N. HURST, of Nottingham, was seized, by a malignant fever, on Tuesday morning, Dec. 22nd, 1818; and on the evening of the next day, she expired. A stroke so sudden and unexpected, has overwhelmed her parents with grief, and excited the tenderest sympathy of their friends. With the Shunamite of old, they desire to acquiesce in the will of God, and to say, "It is well;" though like her, their "souls are bitter within them." Their affliction is greatly alleviated by the persuasion, that "it is well with the child." Young as she was, being not more than thirteen years old, she had begun to seek the Lord. During the two last years of her short life, she had manifested a serious concern for the salvation of her soul. This concern was sometimes so great as to occasion her much distress: and the constant effect of it was to lead her daily to peruse the scriptures, and other religious books. She read, in a short time, Dr. Doddridge's Rise and Progress twice through, and took great delight in Lavington's Sermons to young people. By these means, she was led to seek salvation only through the blood of Christ Jesus. Her heart, naturally warm and affec-

tionate, felt strongly attached to all the followers of the Lamb ; especially to such as conversed with her on sacred subjects. "O," she would exclaim, "they are my best friends ; I love them for the pains they take with me."

Under these encouraging circumstances, it was natural for her delighted relatives to look forwards, with pleasing anticipation, to the period when she would make a public profession of religion, and become an ornament and a support to the cause of her Saviour. But He who is wise and gracious has seen fit to disappoint their fond expectations ; and to transplant the bud which they hoped would soon bloom in the church below, to a happier clime, to flourish in the paradise of God.

We beg leave to call the attention of all our readers, but especially of young females, to the three preceding articles. They are pregnant with useful instruction and solemn warning ; and awfully demonstrate, that neither youth, beauty, health of body, accomplishments of mind, nor even excellence of character, can preserve their possessors from the stroke of death. They teach, in strong language, the necessity of living habitually in a state fit to meet the approach of the king of terrors, should he visit us when we least expect him. What an unspeakable blessing to these amiable young persons whose deaths we have just recorded ! what an abundant source of consolation to their mourning friends, that they had learnt to remember their Creator in the days of their youth, and been enabled to lay hold on the hope set before them in the gospel ! May every youthful reader seek for grace to imitate them in this most important part of their character, and be determined, through the assistance of divine grace, to secure the "one thing needful." Then should their Lord come at an hour when he is least expected, they will be ready to receive him with joy.

Dec. 26th, 1818, died in his seventy-sixth year, Mr. JOHN TAYLOR, of Queenshead, near Halifax, Yorkshire. He was originally a member of the independent church at Halifax, under the Rev. Titus Knight ; but in 1771, joined the General Baptist Church at Wadsworth, under his brother Mr. D. Taylor. In a short time, he was called by that society, to the work of the ministry ; and was very instrumental in introducing the gospel into the neighbourhood of Queenshead, which was then destitute of the means of grace. In Sep. 1773, he

was ordained pastor over the newly-formed church in that place; and continued to labour there with diligence, fidelity and acceptance for more than forty-six years, till removed to the church above. Through all this long period, he was enabled to adorn the doctrines which he taught by a corresponding conduct, and to preserve the esteem of all who knew him. Indeed, it has afforded the most heart-felt satisfaction to his relatives to observe, that the affection and respect of his friends and neighbours increased with his years; and were the most conspicuous when the infirmities of age rendered them most desirable.

In the former part of his course, he laboured hard in the cause of his Saviour, and endured much fatigue; but for many years previous to his death, feebleness of constitution, weakness of sight, and other concomitants of old age rendered him incapable of active exertion; and plainly indicated that nature was approaching to a dissolution. On Dec. 8th, the symptoms assumed a more serious character; but he was not confined till the 23d, and rested from his labours on the 26th. His remains were interred, Dec. 31st, in the burying ground belonging to his own church; when the Rev. Mr. Cockin, independent minister of Halifax, in compliance with the wish of the deceased, kindly officiated at the funeral and delivered an appropriate discourse from 1 Cor. xv. 55. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Ten of the neighbouring ministers testified their regard to their departed brother, by attending on this occasion; and a vast crowd of the neighbours was collected.

As we hope, in future numbers, to present our readers with a *Memoir* of this venerable minister, we forbear, at present, any further enlargement.

CONFERENCES.

The MIDLAND CONFERENCE was held at Derby, Sept. 29th, 1818, when Mr. Preston, preached, in the morning, from 2 Cor. iv. 5; and Mr. R. Smith, in the evening, from Gal. iv. 18, first clause. There was but little business attended to and few ministers present. It was decided at this meeting, that the next Annual Association should be at Derby. Messrs. Felkin, Stevenson, &c. were requested to prepare a plan to

render the Conferences more interesting. Some conversation took place on the subject of the Missionary Society, and several ministers addressed the audience.

The LONDON CONFERENCE met at *Smarden* in Kent, Oct. 7th, 1818. From the reports to the meeting it appeared that nine persons had been added to the church at Smarden during the preceding six months; and, that they hoped the work of the Lord was going forward:—that the cause of religion at Wrotham had suffered through the effects of false reports, but they trusted the storm was almost blown over, as their congregations had improved, one person had offered as a candidate for baptism, and hopes were entertained of others. This Conference advised the friends at Wrotham to suspend their present afternoon service, and endeavour to penetrate into the neighbouring villages:—and the church at Seven Oaks was unanimously admitted into the Conference.

This meeting strongly recommended that every member of a church exert himself to the utmost, to promote the cause of religion in his own place; especially by pecuniary support—that every church send a representative to the Conference, if possible: or at least a written account of its state:—and that individuals conscientiously attend all means of grace; especially private and family prayer, and the public worship on the Lord's day morning; and that each minister enforce these duties on his own friends.—The next Conference to be at Seven Oaks, on the Tuesday in Easter Week, when Messrs. Farrent and Hobbs are appointed to preach; and, in case of failure, Messrs. Bicknell and Rose.

The YORKSHIRE CONFERENCE was held, at *Halifax*, Aug. 10th 1818. Mr. H. Asten opened the public service, and Mr. James Taylor preached, from Luke xi. 21, 22. At this meeting, an immediate collection was recommended for Lidgate new meeting house—Mr. Asten was requested to supply Burnley, as often as he could till the next Conference, and to spend a few Lord's-days at Nantwich—and some inquiries were made respecting Doncaster.

The same Conference assembled at *Queenshead*, Nov. 6th 1818; when Mr. Ellis preached, from John iii. 17. This meeting desired the churches to collect for the Itinerant Fund—requested Mr. Dean to supply Nantwich two or three Lord's-days, as soon as convenient—empowered Mr. Wilson to engage

a room for preaching at Doncaster—and, as Mr. Spencer is totally laid a side from preaching, arranged supplies for Shore till next meeting.

The last meeting of this Conference was held at *Birchcliff*, Dec. 25th, when Mr. R. Ingham, of Duffield preached, from Acts xv: 36. On this occasion, supplies were arranged for Shore—Mr. Ellis was requested to write to Kirton, to enquire the state of the church in order that the friends might judge whether they could render them any assistance—and the case of the new meeting-house at Belper, was recommended to the churches composing this Conference,

NEW MEETING HOUSES OPENED.

A new Meeting House was opened, by the General Baptists, Nov, 12th 1818, at *Seven Oaks*, in Kent. Mr. Rose, of Headcorn, preached in the morning, from 1 John iv. 8; Mr. J. Kingsford, of Battersea, in the afternoon, from Hag. ii. 7; Mr. Farrant, of Great Suffolk-street, Southwark, in the evening, from 2 Cor. viii. 9. Messrs. G. W. Purcell, of Wrotham, Pickering, of Orpington, Henham, of Seven-oaks, and G. Compton, of Harston were engaged in various parts of the public service; all of which were respectably attended, and much sacred pleasure appeared to be enjoyed. It is pleasing to hear that, in the short time which has elapsed since the opening, the congregations have so increased, that they cannot be accommodated; and that it is in contemplation to erect a gallery.

By looking back to G. B. R. vol. viii. p. 41, our readers will see the origin of the G. B. church at *Lidgate*. The cause has continued to advance; but the room in which they assembled, being wanted by the proprietor, they found it necessary to erect a meeting-house. An attempt was made to collect subscriptions, and the success was encouraging. Mr. Hodgson of Slack exerted himself in favour of the infant cause; and nearly two hundred pounds were raised. Ground was purchased, and a meeting-house erected; measuring eleven yards by nine within, with a decent gallery, which was named *Bethel*, and will cost nearly five hundred pounds. It was opened, Jan. 1, 1819. Mr. Hollinrake introduced the service, in the morning, by prayer; and Mr. J. Taylor preached, from Gen. xxviii. 16—19. In the afternoon, Mr. Allat prayed, and Mr. R.

Ingham preached, from Psa. cxxxvii. 5. 6. In the evening, Mr. Akroyd prayed; and Mr. James Hodgson preached, from Zech. iv. 7. Mr. Asten gave out the hymns throughout the day, and read suitable portions of scripture. The congregations were large, serious, and attentive; and, it is hoped, the transactions of this solemnity, will be blest to the good of the rising cause. The meeting-house stands at *Lincholm*, about a quarter of a mile from Lidgate.

REVIEW of NEW PUBLICATIONS.

AN AFFECTIONATE ADDRESS to DISSENTERS in general, and Village Congregations in particular, founded on Gal. vi.
10. 12mo. pp. 12. price 2d.

The object of this sensible little tract, is thus expressed by the author. "In some instances we know, and in many others we hope, it is the case, that those who hear the gospel do help one another in temporal matters; yet it is a painful fact, that in many places, villages in particular, numbers who profess religion, do not encourage each other in their respective callings. It is to this particular, therefore, that we beg leave, in a more especial manner, to call your attention; by shewing: 1, the necessity and importance of professors in general, and members in particular, making it a point of conscience to deal with each other in the concerns of life: and, 2. The reasons which may be assigned for the neglect of this duty."

After discussing these topics, the piece concludes thus:—

"It is not unfrequently the case, amongst some denominations of professing christians, that in villages, the smallness or poverty of the congregation, necessitates the minister to turn his attention to some worldly employment or business, for his support. Although it must be acknowledged, that it is very injurious for one who has to minister in holy things, to entangle himself with the affairs of this life; yet when necessary, it is commendable and praise-worthy on his part, rather to labour with his own hands, than to leave his people destitute of the means of grace. If your minister is so circumstanced, is it not your duty to encourage him, to deal with him in preference to another, or if he has a school, to do all you can to countenance it? To whom should he look for support but to his own friends? As in such cases, there are generally many

who do but little for him in any other way, surely this is the least they can do; and though it should be attended with some little inconvenience or labour, remember his labour for you, and shew that you esteem him *very highly in love* for his work's sake. Must it not be a great discouragement to him, nay, can he think you sincere in your professions of friendship, whilst you number yourselves amongst them who muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn? And this you certainly do, whilst you will make no sacrifice to serve him. To serve him, did we say? Is it not rather to serve yourselves, and keep your pulpit occupied? For the ox that is muzzled cannot long continue to tread out the corn; and that minister who is not worth this preference, is not worth keeping; nor that people who will not shew this preference, worthy of a preacher."

We trust this tract, which has been published by our friends in Norfolk, and is well suited for general usefulness, will not be suffered to fall into oblivion. The plainness and simplicity of its language, and the nature of the subject, render it very proper for circulation, among our country churches; and we flatter ourselves, that the lowness of its price will induce many who wish to promote the cause of the Redeemer, to distribute it freely, where-ever circumstances may point out a necessity for admonition, on the obvious, but too much neglected, duty which it inculcates.

IMPORTANT ADVICE to Churches involved in PECUNIARY DIFFICULTIES, with Motives to enforce it: from an occasional Address, by the late Rev. D. TAYLOR. J. MANN, London. 12mo. pp. 12. pr. 2d.

This advice was inserted in the G. B. R. Vol. vii. page 262; and is now re-printed, at the request of the London Conference; see G. B. R. Vol. viii. page 138. It is published, in this small and cheap form, in order that it may conveniently be put into the hands of individuals. And it is presumed, that the finances of any religious society would be materially benefited, if a number of these Tracts were purchased, and a copy presented to every member. But, as the piece itself is already before our readers, we forbear any remarks; and only add that orders will be thankfully received by the Editor, J. MANN, Commercial Road, London.

THE
GENERAL BAPTIST REPOSITORY.

No. LI.—Vol. IX.—May 1st. 1819.

*SCRIPTURE ILLUSTRATED by the ANCIENT
MODES of DRESS.*

THE skins of animals were the most ancient covering which men adopted: and in the use of these the great Creator condescended to instruct our first parents, when the unhappy consequences of their fall rendered clothing necessary to hide their shame. Gen. iii. 21. They continued to be worn by the Hebrews long after the art of weaving was invented, and were not wholly laid aside in the latest periods of the Jewish state. The different skins which were assumed as garments probably had some respect to the character of the wearers. The Nimrods clothed themselves in the spoils of lions and tigers, as trophies of their prowess in hunting and war; while the more virtuous and peaceable part of society, of whom the world was not worthy, were glad to escape the fury of those sons of violence, and wander about in sheep skins and goat skins, destitute, afflicted and tormented. Heb. xi. 37. Elijah was described as a hairy man, that is, a man clothed in a skin with the hair on, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins. 2 Kings i. 8. And John the Baptist, whom Elijah had prefigured, was clothed with camel's hair, with a girdle of leather about his loins. Matt. iii. 4. Mark i. 6.

In after times, the dress of the ancient Hebrews consisted of two garments: a coat which they wore next to their bodies, and a cloak or mantle that was thrown over it. To these two garments the prophet alludes when he informs us, that the three Jewish children were thrown into the fiery furnace, bound in their coats and their other garments, or mantles, as it is rendered in some versions. And our Saviour, when teaching his disciples forbearance under injuries, says, "Unto him that

smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to take thy coat also." Luke vi. 29. The prophet also describing the rapacious and cruel exactions practised on the needy, by their oppressors, observes, " Ye pull off the robe with the garment from them that pass by securely as men averse from war." Micah ii. 8.

The coat or inner garment was made to fit tight round the neck with a collar, but hung loose down even to the feet. When the wearer was reposing himself and unoccupied, this garment flowed loosely round him; but when called to any exertion, it was confined with a girdle about the waist. Thus our blessed Lord rose from supper and laid aside his upper garment or cloak, and took a towel and girded himself, John xiii. 4. That is, he collected the flowing skirts of his coat or inner garment round his waist. And Peter, when awakened out of sleep by the angel, was first directed to gird himself, or confine his inner garment in a state proper for travelling, and afterwards to cast his outer garment about him, and to follow the celestial guide. Acts xii. 8.

The coat was sometimes woven like a stocking in its proper shape and size, without any seam. Such probably were the coats of fine linen of woven work which were made for Aaron and his sons. Exod. xxxix. 27. And such was the garment which our great High Priest wore previous to his crucifixion, John xix. 23. " His coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout."

These coats were generally white, especially those worn by the wealthy, which were not so much exposed to the effects of perspiration or dust. Thus Solomon, when recommending a life of happy and elegant enjoyment, says, " Let thy garments be always white, and thy head lack no ointment." Eccles. ix. 8. Thus also the Levites, at the dedication, were arrayed in white linen. 2 Chron. v. 12. And the blessed in heaven are represented as " walking in white," " clothed in white raiment," &c. Rev. iii. 4.—iv. 4.—vii. 9. &c. The young and gay however indulged themselves in wearing these inner garments of divers colours and fanciful patterns; and sometimes their parents were weak enough to bestow such marks of distinction on their favourites. Joseph's coat, of many colours, will easily occur to the mind as an instance of this, Gen. xxi. 37. Princesses, in David's time, were distin-

guished in a similar manner. 2 Sam. xiii. 18. And the unhappy mother of Sisera seems to be able to anticipate no higher prize for her victorious son, as she fondly thought him, than "a prey of divers colours of needle-work, of divers colours of needle-work on both sides, meet for the necks of them that take the spoil." Judges v. 30.

It was usual in journeying to carry two of these inner garments or coats for the convenience of change. But when our Lord sent forth his apostles to preach the gospel among their countrymen, in order to teach them to rely on his providence for a supply of their wants, forbade them to take two coats; assigning as a reason, "The workman is worthy of his meat." Matt. x. 10.

Their coats were, as has been already intimated, fastened close to the body with a girdle. Among the poor this girdle was generally of the same materials as the coat itself. This was the case with Elijah and John the Baptist, who were clothed in skins, and had girdles of leather. 2 Kings i. 1. Matt. iii. 4. In times of distress or mourning, when coarse sackcloth was worn next the body, a slip of the same, or even a piece of cord served for a girdle. Isa. iii. 24. xx. 2. 1 Kings xx. 32. In prosperous times, the girdles were objects of ostentation and pride. The wealthy, especially the ladies, wore them composed of costly materials and richly ornamented. The girdle of the high priest was of fine twined linen and blue and purple and scarlet, of needle-work. Exod. xxxix. 29. It was one of the employments of the females to prepare these ornamented parts of dress, which as we have seen were decorated with needle-work. Solomon therefore describes a good wife as "making linen and selling it, and delivering girdles to the merchants." Prov. xxxi. 24. They were given frequently as rewards for services performed, or as tokens of remembrance between friends. Thus Joab tells the man who brought him the information of Absalom's being intangled in the tree, "Why didst thou not smite him there to the ground? and I would have given thee ten shekels of silver and a girdle." 2 Sam. xviii. 11. And Jonathan, to shew his friendship and affection to David, gave him his robe, his weapons and his girdle. 1 Sam. xviii. 4. Much of the splendour and magnificence of eastern dress consisted in the richness of the materials or the excellence of the workmanship of their girdles. John there-

fore represents the heavenly ministers and their divine master as being "girded with golden girdles." Rev. i. 13. xv. 6.

It is obvious that the wearing of this part of dress had the effect of strengthening the body, and fitting the wearer for more vigorous exertion. Hence to gird a person or to put on his girdle became proverbial for endowing him with ability to perform any action; and to loose his girdle was descriptive of enfeebling his powers or depriving him of strength or courage. Thus the Psalmist observes, "It is God that girdeth me with strength." Psa. xviii. 32. The wise man also describes a virtuous wife as "girding her loins with strength, and strengthening her arms." Prov. xxxi. 17. The Almighty, says Job, " poureth contempt on princes, and weakeneth the strength of the mighty," that is, according to the original, "looseth the girdle of the strong." Job xii. 21. When the impious King of Babylon beheld the hand writing on the wall, his thoughts troubled him, so that, say the Hebrews, "the girdle of his loins was loosed," which our translators have rendered the joints of his loins were loosed, the evident idea being that his fright deprived him of strength. Dan. v. 6. And when the prophet wishes to describe the vigour and impetuosity with which the nations shall hasten to execute the vengeance of God, he tells us, "None shall be weary nor stumble among them; none shall slumber nor sleep; neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their shoes be broken. Isa v. 27. And the same inspired penman, when describing the strength, stability, and equity of the government of the Messiah, declares, "Righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins and faithfulness the girdle of his reins." Isa. xi. 5. And when threatening a wicked minister of state with a transfer of his office to his rival, he says, "I will strengthen him with thy girdle," that is, give him thy power and influence. Isa. xxii. 21.

The outward garment of the ancient Israelites was a square piece of stuff or cloth, not fitted to the body, but in the form of a large shawl, and worn, as females at present use that part of their dress, slung over their shoulders, hanging down behind and folded across the breast. The borders and corners of this garment were adorned with fringes and embroidery, according to the taste and wealth of the owner, and they were of various sizes. Our translators call this part of dress, cloak,

mantle, robe, and sometimes by the general term, garment or clothes.

The usual mode of covering the head was to bring the corner of the mantle, which, at other times, hung down between the shoulders, over the head : and if the wearer wished to conceal his countenance, he had only to bring it towards over his face, and the mantle became a veil, and was so called. It was thus that Elijah, on a memorable occasion, "wrapped his face in his mantle." 1 Kings xix. 13. It was usual thus to cover the face in times of distress or when exposed to shame. David, when he fled from Absalom, as well as when he mourned for his unworthy son, "covered his face." 2 Sam. xv. 29.—xix. 4. As soon as Haman had fallen under the displeasure of his royal master, the obsequious courtiers covered his face. Esth. vii. 8. And when the Prince of peace was most unjustly and cruelly disgraced, one part of the ignominy which he endured was the having his face covered. Mark xiv. 65. When Ezekiel was made a type of the sorrow and disgrace which impended over his country, he covered his face that he saw not the ground. Ezek. xii. 6. And, in evident allusion to this practice, the Psalmist prays, "Let my adversaries be clothed with shame ; let them cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a mantle." Psa. cix. 29.

It was usual to lay aside these cloaks when engaged in active operations, and to leave them at home when they went abroad to labour. Thus those zealots who undertook to stone Stephen to death, committed their clothes to the care of Saul while they executed their horrid purpose. Acts vii. 58. And our Saviour, to express the danger of delay in fleeing from the miseries that were coming upon the devoted city of Jerusalem, advises those who had gone out to labour in the fields, not to lose their precious moments in returning to fetch their garments which they had left at home, but instantly to consult their personal safety, by flight. Matt. xxiv. 18.

The mantle being large and easily taken off, was frequently used to tie things up in for the sake of easy conveyance. Thus Gideon spread a garment to receive the ear-rings of the Midianites. Judges viii. 25. Boaz also presented Ruth with six measures of barley which she carried to her mother in her veil or mantle. Ruth iii. 15. To this Agur alludes, when he says, that "The Lord has bound the waters in a garment." Prov. xxx. 4. That is, the Creator manages the mighty

ocean with as much facility as a person carries any article tied up in a mantle.

The parts of this mantle that hung round the feet were denominated the skirts; and when the wearer was wealthy, were large and flowing. Saul evidently wore one of this description; or David could not easily have cut off a piece of it unperceived by Saul, and not afterwards observed by his attendants. 1 Sam. xxiv. 4. &c. Samuel had before this laid hold of the skirt of Saul's mantle and rent it. 1 Sam. xv. 27.

It was not uncommon for the Jews to fold portable articles in the skirts of their mantles and carry them about with them; especially when they wished to conceal what they carried. To this practice the prophets allude when they speak of the blood of innocents being in the skirts of Jerusalem, Jer. ii. 34. filthiness being in her skirts, Sam. i. 19. and bearing holy flesh in the skirt. Hag. ii. 12.

This part of dress affords some beautiful figures to the Hebrew poets, which we cannot fully understand without forgetting our confined modes of dress, and contemplating an eastern monarch, clothed in his ample mantle ornamented in the most costly stile. The Psalmist, to describe the glory of the Almighty, observes, "Thou coverest thyself with light as with a garment." Psa. civ. 2. And Job, to express the manner in which the sea is encompassed by the atmosphere and retained in its place, represents the Almighty as saying, "I made the cloud the garment thereof, and darkness as swaddling bands." Job xxxiii. 9.

The ancients used to adapt their dress, especially their outward garments, to the circumstances in which they were placed: wearing mean and black garments in affliction, and costly white garments in seasons of prosperity. Hence we read of "garments of praise:" Isa. lxi. 3. of "garments of vengeance:" Isa. lix. 17. of "garments of salvation, and robes of righteousness." Isa. lxi. 10.

A coat and a mantle constituted a suit of clothes, or what the scriptures term a change of raiment. As much of the riches of the ancients consisted in a well furnished wardrobe, it was usual to make presents of these changes of raiment to one another, either as tokens of affection or rewards for services. Thus Joseph, to shew his peculiar attachment to Benjamin, gave him five changes of raiment, Gen. xlvi. 22: and Sampson proposed thirty changes of raiment as a prize to him.

that should expound his riddle. Judges xiv. 12. Naaman also, amongst the other presents which he took to reward the prophet for curing his leprosy, included ten changes of raiment. 2 Kings v. 5.

The Jews always wore shoes or sandals; and it was reckoned a mark of affliction and disgrace to go barefoot. Thus when David was driven into exile by his rebellious son, he had his head covered and went barefoot. 2 Sam. xv. 30. And Isaiah, to prefigure the captivity of Egypt, walked naked and barefoot. Isa. xx. 2. Hence to pull off the shoe of another was to disgrace him, as failing in some duty. Deut. xxv. 9. Ruth iv. 7. On the contrary when a person was restored from distress and disgrace to opulence and honour, the putting on of shoes is frequently mentioned as one important particular. When the prophet had induced the Israelites to send back their captive brethren in an honourable manner, they arrayed them, shod them, and gave them refreshments. 2 Chron. xxvii. 15: and when the repentant prodigal returned to his paternal habitation, one of the first cares of his rejoicing father was "to put shoes on his feet." Luke xv. 22. The shoes of the common people were made of the cheapest materials and of very little value. It was therefore a state of the deepest oppression to which the poor and needy were reduced when they were sold for a pair of shoes. Amos ii. 6.—viii. 6. But the shoes of the wealthy were composed of the finest skins, and often highly ornamented. Thus we read of "beautiful shoes," Cant. vii. 7, and of being "shod with badger skins." Ezek. xvi. 10. The shoes of warriors were sometimes made of iron or brass. Deut. xxxiii. 25. This enabled them to annoy, throw down and tread under foot their enemies. Thus the Psalmist exclaims, "Over Edom will I cast out my shoe." Psa. lx. 8.—cviii. 9. That is, I will trample upon them and subject them to my power: a prediction which was literally fulfilled. 2 Sam. viii. 14.

The NATURE and GUILT of TALE-BEARING.

"*Thou shall not go up and down as a Tale-bearer among thy people.*"—MOSES.

There are some vices which fall in so easily with our depraved natures, that they are often indulged in with very little

remorse, and encouraged by others without reflection. Such is the mischievous habit which is understood by *Tale-bearing*. We take a mean delight in listening to thigs to the disadvantage of our neighbours. It flatters our pride, soothes our self-love, and gives us, at least, a comparative triumph over them. Instead therefore of discouraging those who are guilty of this vice, we are too ready to admire and encourage them; and to applaud their effusions as the sallies of innocent wit. It would be well indeed, if this improper conduct was wholly confined to the world; but, alas! professors of religion are too apt to fall into it: and the peace of christian societies is frequently interrupted by the effects of tale-bearing. Yet this practice is highly offensive to God, injurious to our neighbour, and prejudicial to ourselves: and the same law that forbids murder, theft, perjury and adultery, does in as express terms declare, "Thou shalt not go up and down as a Tale-bearer among thy people." It may therefore be useful to consider—the motives to this sin—the nature and several kinds of it—the baneful effects produced by it—and the best means of avoiding it.

1. Some indulge themselves in this hateful practice through mere indolence. The apostle, complaining of those who had learned to be idle, adds, as a consequence, "that they wandered about from house to house, and became tattlers also, and busy-bodies; speaking the things they ought not." 1 Tim. v. 13. When men have nothing to do at home, they naturally begin to direct and censure the conduct of their neighbours; and a ridiculous story or well-invented calumny serves to fill up the blank hours that hang heavy on their hands. An idle body and a busy body are characters apparently inconsistent, and yet extremely well fitted for each other: nor is it uncommon to see persons very indefatigable in promoting a report, in which they have no concern, who, in an affair of consequence that nearly interests themselves, can be perfectly easy and indolent. These corrupt even idleness itself, and render it still more odious.

An inquisitive and impertinent curiosity, an itch to know other peoples' concerns, impels others to seek after and report rumours respecting their neighbours. They act as spies on the liberties of their brethren, and are fond of taking examinations without authority. They are always spreading nets for reproach, fishing in unquiet waters, tracing the footsteps of their acquaint-

ance, and upon the hunt after scandal. These are well described as "going to and fro in the evening, making a noise like a dog, and going round about the city." Psa. lix. 6.

One, not content with prying into matters that do not concern him, must be meddling in the affairs of others; and make himself a party in them. "Every fool," says Solomon, "will be meddling." Prov. xx. 3: and Peter ranks meddlers amongst the most infamous characters. 1 Pet. iv. 15, He blows the coals and revives expiring quarrels: manures and cultivates scandal, that it may bring forth fruit in abundance. Another is more avowedly bent on mischief, and makes a trade of calumny: a tale in his mouth is like a stone in a sling, a messenger of death at a distance. He disturbs the peace of families by his reports. "A whisperer separateth chief friends," and "A fool's lips enter into contention: his mouth calleth for strokes." Prov. xvi. 28—xviii. 6. And strokes of this kind are very often bloody and dangerous: as bad as the piercing of a sword or the biting of a serpent.

Malice and revenge prompt us too often to the guilt of tale-bearing. When we are at enmity with our neighbour, our tongue is a weapon always at hand; and his reputation is an object within our reach. When we cannot injure his person or his fortune, "our tongues may devise mischiefs, like a sharp razor, working deceitfully." Psa. lli. 2. A spiteful heart naturally breaks out into this sort of revenge: and there is no doubt but that from this corrupt source have proceeded many of those slanders, which will never be cleared up till the great day of accounts.

Many fall into the sin of tale-bearing from a desire to bring down the characters of others to their own standard, that they may have the credit of being no worse than their neighbours. These will report the worst of their brethren, that they may make an interest for their own vices, and sin on freely, upon the authority of numbers. Having involved their companions in their own crimes, they then measure themselves by themselves: in doing which an inspired writer declares they are not wise. 2 Cor. x. 12.

Some indulge in tale-bearing through a motive of censoriousness, under the plausible pretence of promoting reformation of conduct and christian purity. They suspect without cause, put the worst construction upon every appearance, and make long

harangues against the failings of those, who, all the while, may perhaps be wrongfully accused. Nor will the good intention of these tale-bearers atone for their slanders. In vain do they plead their zeal for piety : the sweetest language is too often the cover of hypocrisy. " His words," says David, " were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart : his words were softer than oil, yet they were drawn swords." Psa. iv. 21.

But perhaps, the most usual motive for tale-bearing is simply to raise a laugh or promote ridicule : Holy David laboured under this calamity when he complained, " They that sit in the gate speak against me ; and I am the song of the drunkards." Psa. lxix. 12. There is hardly any thing prevails more in conversation than this wicked custom. The fancy is always on the alert : and there is not a circumstance of ever so little weight, in the lives or affairs of others, which we are not ready to play upon, and make a subject of raillery and derision. Indeed, when wit and satire bestow all their force on vice and corruption in general, they are talents not unworthy of applanse ; but, when they touch upon names and attack individuals, the jest grows serious ; and this accomplishment, instead of being agreeable, sinks into downright lunacy. " As a madman," says Solomon, " who casteth firebrands, arrows, and death ; so is the man that deceiveth his neighbour, and saith, Am I not in sport ?" and to shew what sort of deceit is intended, he immediately adds, " Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out ; so where there is no tale-bearer, the strife ceaseth." Prov. xxvi. 18, 20.

2. We are guilty of the sin of tale-bearing when we propagate a false report which may injure our neighbour's reputation. A lie is in itself highly criminal, but when it is prejudicial to others it becomes doubly hateful. God expressly forbids this practice, " Thou shalt not raise a false report. Exod. xxiii. 1.

But we may commit this sin without uttering direct falsehoods, by adding to or diminishing from any report of a slanderous nature, so as to alter the aspect of the story, and render it more injurious to our neighbour. This is a mixture of lying and injustice ; and when we thus sow tares among the wheat, though ever so artfully, it is evident that " an enemy has done it." The accusers of Stephen were remarkably guilty of this unfair practice. They deposed, " We have

heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us.' As Stephen had plainly threatened the impenitent Jews with destruction, and did actually preach that gospel which abolished the ceremonial part of the law, their evidence was so far strictly true. But, as he had preached salvation to the Jews if they would repent, and the fulfilling not abolishing of the moral part of the law, as foretold by Moses himself, their concealing of this part and their addition of "speaking blasphemous words against this holy place and the law," quite overthrown their testimony, and they are expressly called false witnesses. Acts vi. 13, 14.

Again, though a report respecting our neighbour be strictly true, yet if we misconstrue his intentions, mistake his meaning, lay on any false colouring of our own, or insert any ill-grounded suspicions of our own devising, and so put forwards the story in this false light, we are guilty of the sin of tale-bearing. That which was in itself an innocent or perhaps an indifferent matter, becomes, through our misrepresentation, a crime. The mote in our eye becomes a beam in our brother's, and it is not his conduct but our judgment deserves to be blamed. Our eye may be evil, because he is good. At the trial of our Saviour, the two witnesses against him declared, that they had heard him say, "he would destroy the temple, and raise it again in three days." This evidence was verbally true, for our Saviour did actually utter these words. John ii. 19. But because they misunderstood his meaning, and attributed that to Solomon's temple which he designed of the temple of his body, they are branded as false witnesses. Matt. xxvi. 60. Thus also, when some of the tribes of Israel had left the camp at Shiloh to return to their own possessions, it was reported, that they had built an altar on the borders of Jordan; and it was presumed that this altar was intended for idolatrous worship. The fact was correct, but the inference was false. And though, on the first report, their brethren had determined to make war on them, yet when the builders had explained their motives, that it was erected only as a witness between them and their countrymen, they laid aside their hostile intentions, and expressed their satisfaction at their conduct. John xxii. So fatal might have been the effects of attributing false motives to an indifferent action.

We are also guilty of tale-bearing when, though we relate the truth respecting our neighbour's conduct, we accompany it with some censure on him, by forming a rash judgment of his actions, not according to his principles of right and wrong, but in conformity to our own more rigid and perhaps unreasonable notions. All men have not the same rule to walk by in matters of less moment; and what one may think lawful another may condemn. Our brother may in things indifferent, like Paul, esteem all such things lawful; and why should his liberty be judged by our consciences? 2 Cor. vi. 12.—x. 29. We should beware how we make our own rigour the pretext of censuring others; and, if we are so very strict in the regulation of our conduct, we ought to be as strict in the government of our tongue.

When we revive a dormant slander, or charge our neighbour with a fault of which he has perhaps long ago repented: when we censure him for any of the calamities that have befallen his ancestors or his connections; or revile him for the misconduct of his children or relatives; or when we reproach them for his sake, we are, in all these cases, guilty of the sin of tale-bearing. If our brother has committed a fault and since repented of it, we ought not to repeat it; but forgive it, as we hope God will deal with us in the same case. If God has declared that the son shall not bear the iniquities of the father; nor the father answer for the crimes of the son, we ought to conform to his rule. When private calamities befall any one, we should not conclude, as the Jews did of the blind man, "Either this man has sinned or his parents;" but remember what our Lord says of those on whom the tower of Siloam fell, and of those whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. Luke xiii. Calumny is not a blessing that we should seek to entail it, or take pains to nurse and keep it alive when it is ready to expire. It is one of the marks of an ungodly man, that "he diggeth up evil; and in his lips is a burning fire." Prov. xvi. 27.

Again. As we are enjoined to confess our sins one to another, and have frequent opportunities of prying into the failings and infirmities of our friend and neighbour; if, in such cases, we expose his nakedness or reveal his secrets, we become highly guilty of this odious vice. Solomon seems to make this practice the distinguishing mark of the crime: "a

tale-bearer revealeth secrets." Prov. xi. 13. There is hardly any thing in common life that renders a person more despised and hated than this treacherous faculty, or occasions more inveterate malice and irreconcilable enmities among acquaintances. These are "the words of a tale-bearer, which are as wounds, and go down into the innermost parts of the belly." Prov. xviii. 8. These are injuries for which no atonement can be made. A person may forgive, but he never can trust a betrayer of secrets.

Lastly. If we have no hand in inventing or first propagating a report to the injury of our neighbour, yet if, when it is contrived by others and put in circulation, we take it up and convey it forwards, or assist in its circulation, we are still guilty of the sin of tale-bearing. In this case, as in the affair of robbery, the receiver is as bad as the thief. This drudging to other men's crimes, and labouring to promote their injurious purposes is a very mean office, and carries with it double infamy. Hence John ranks the man who loveth a lie, with him who maketh it; and both with dogs, sorcerers and the blackest of all characters, both in this world and another. Rev. xxii. 15. And the Psalmist describes a citizen of Zion, as one "that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour." Psa. xv. 3.

In short, whenever we report any thing, whether true or false, respecting our neighbour, that has a tendency to injure his character or lower him in the esteem of those to whom it is reported, without an evident call of duty to make the disclosure, whatever be our motive, we become *tale-bearers*, and incur all the guilt of that odious crime.

(To be concluded in the next Number.)

ORIGINAL LETTERS from the late REV. JOHN BERRIDGE.

No. IV.

Everton, May 3rd, 1773.

DEAR AND HONOURED SIR,

Your papers keep up a good spirit, and do not evaporate on the reading. The former wines were good, but your last bot-

VOL. 9.

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tle, I think, is best of all. It is well brewed for the stomach, and much disposed to whet the appetite and quicken digestion. Happy it is, when both a bride and her groom have the heart to become common brewers for Jesus Christ. I cannot relish doctrinal preaching, or doctrinal printing : it leaves a careless sinner and a formal professor just where it found them. Discourses are likely to do good, when, like your paper, they stimulate reflection, force a reader to rummage his bosom, set the sinner a quarrelling with himself, and push a lazy pilgrim on the trot.

I can despair of no serious Arian, after the change which has been wrought in myself. Near thirty years I was an avowed enemy to Christ's divinity ; and when God had given me some knowledge of his Christ, and sent me forth to preach his gospel, it was three years before I was fairly rescued from this quicksand. You judge exceeding right, to stand still and avoid disputings : they only gender strife, and stir up pride. A sweet behaviour joined with secret prayer, will do more in this matter, than a thousand eager disputations. Perhaps, before you have worn another pair of shoes out in supplication, Mrs. —— may behold her Saviour's godhead, and exult in it. The paper shews, she is endowed with a vein of manly sense, and what is better still, a strain of serious piety.

I return you hearty thanks for the inclosed paper, and will now tell you what I do with my money, and how the paper will be applied. My living is one hundred and sixty pounds a year : one hundred of which defrays the expence of house-keeping, horse-keeping, servants'-wages, my own raiment, and sunday food and liquor for poor pilgrims, who come to church from afar. I keep no company ; pay no visits but preaching ones ; and receive no visits, but from the travelling christians, who are welcomed with some hashed meat, unless they chance to come on boiling days, which are twice a week. The work of God has extended itself from Everton, by means of field-preaching, into four counties, viz. Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Essex, and Cambridgeshire. Near forty towns have been evangelized, many of which lie at a great distance from each other ; and two lay preachers ride from town to town, preaching morning and evening every day. These are yearly allowed twenty-five pounds each, to provide themselves with horses and cloaths, and defray turnpike expences. There

are also six sunday preachers, who often want support, and receive it from me. By this means, the gospel is preached without charge to the hearers; no collections are made, which mightily stoppeth the world's clamour. But, Sir, besides these constant outgoings, I have a thousand other occasional demands upon me. The flocks in every place are very poor, and often distressed on account of their religion. Labouring men have been turned out of work; and some, who are unable to work, through sickness, lameness, or old age, have been deprived of parish collections, or received a very scanty one, because they are Methodists. These you may think will apply to me for relief.—True, you reply; but how are you able to relieve them?—I will tell you, Sir. When I began to preach the gospel, I was possessed of one hundred and forty pounds in money, and a paternal inheritance of twenty-four pounds a year.—The money was first expended: then I sold some useless plate and books for fifty pounds; this also was expended. Lastly, I sold my inheritance, which is not half expended. I scatter my mites about, because I am trading for another world. What silver and gold is left behind me will profit me nothing; but what is freely given for Christ's sake, will find a gracious recompence. The world would call me a fool for this traffic; but they will see and own hereafter, that I carried my goods to the best market.

The walls of my house are made of plaster, and very leaky in some parts, and I fear the wood work is decayed. They have wanted repairing for some years, but I could not find a heart to repair them, because of the expence. Some part of your donation shall now be applied to this purpose, and the rest to Christ's poor.

My health, through mercy, is better; and I am able to travel two or three days a week to preach. It would delight you to see, how crowded my cathedrals are, and what abundance of hearers they contain, when the grain is threshed out. I believe more children have been born of God in any one of these barns, than in St. Paul's Church or Westminster Abbey.

The Lord direct you in all your concerns; and keep you travelling right forward in the way to Canaan, with a warm heart, a cool head, a nimble foot and praying lip. Grace and peace be with you, and with your obliged and affectionate servant,

JOHN BERRIDGE.

No. V.

Tabernacle, March 12th, 1779.

DEAR AND HONOURED SIR,

I purpose, God willing, to wait upon you at _____ on Sunday evening, the 21st instant. I shall preach at Tottenham in the morning, and when afternoon service is over will set off, at five o'clock, in a Hackney coach. I had much rather travel in a Hackney carriage, on a Sunday, than in your own; because it would prevent your coachman from attending on the afternoon ordinance.

My heart is much grieved at the mighty efforts making by popish priests, and at the horrible speeches uttered by popish hearers, who rejoice in the prospect of Smithfield fires, and think the kingdom is their own. Indeed the land was never so ripe for popery since the reformation as now; and unless the Lord Jesus appears to our rescue, we are likely to be overwhelmed by it. The mighty ones care not what religion is established, because through infidelity they have discarded all religion: the bishops and clergy are become such dumb dogs, not a single one will bark at the popist beast: the mean ones, through ignorance and profaneness, are ready to take up any profession for a mess of pottage. The late bickerings and literary duellings among the shepherds call for a lancet, to let out the hot blood: and the much worldly conformity among professors, seems to require a fan to separate the chaff from the wheat. What will be the issue, I know not: but this I know, the Lord reigneth, and will be a sanctuary to all his real people. May the Father of mercies bless you and yours with all spiritual blessings, and with a rich abundance of them. With much gratitude, I remain, your affectionate servant,

JOHN BERRIDGE.

OBSERVATIONS ON JEPHTHAH'S VOW.

In reply to VIRIDUS, G. B. R. Vol. IX. p. 6.

Every attempt to ascertain the sense of the sacred scriptures is laudable; and when it tends to reduce the difficulties which lie in the way of simple minds, or to wrest from sceptic infidelity the seeming inconsistency on which it so eagerly

fastens, in order thereby to ridicule the young convert out of his faith and his comfort together, such an attempt becomes important and should be encouraged. Your correspondent *Viridus* is entitled to our thanks, therefore, for attempting to furnish "a solution of the difficulty in Jephthah's vow," even though others, as well as myself, should be unable to adopt the interpretation he has offered.

That Jephthah really offered his daughter as a burnt offering to God, the following reasons incline me to believe.

1. The words of Judges xi. 31, taken in their most obvious sense, declare this to be case. For "though the particle here used be sometimes disjunctive, and may in such places be rendered by *Or*; yet this only happens when the things to which it has reference, are *manifestly* distinct and different from each other; and never where one of the things to which it relates includes the other," as it does in the present case, even according to the sense give by *Viridus*: for certainly to offer any thing to Jehovah for a burut offering, is, at the same time, to make it the Lord's. Instead of the vow "containing two parts" distinct in their objects, and speaking of things as different from each other as a man and a kid; it seems that the latter member of the sentence merely explains the former; thus, "He shall be the Lord's, by being offered to him for a burnt offering." a mode of speaking so common in the Bible, that it may seem invidious to offer examples.

2. The facts upon record strongly corroborate this exposition. The Hebrews were, at the time of Jephthah, in the common practice of idolatrous worship: and therein human sacrifices were offered as in the highest degree propitiatory. And it is very plain that the land of Canaan was, by the Israelites themselves, deeply defiled with the blood of human sacrifices. Psa. cvi. 37.

But there is not, so far as I can recollect, a single instance of a child devoted to perpetual virginity among the Jews. Nor could they, above all nations, consider such an act as being likely to procure the divine favour.

Thus it seems, that whether the "*priests*" were or were not concerned, the Israelites found means to offer human victims. But I see no reason for the assertion that "the priests would not have offered Jephthah's daughter for a burnt offering." The priests of that day do not appear to have possessed more

virtue than the people. Gideon made an Ephod, and *all* Israel went astray after it. Micah could find a son of Levi to be priest to his idols, which was as plainly forbidden as human sacrifices could be. See Judges vii. 27.—xvii. 7, 12.

All know what manner of priests the sons of Eli were, 1 Sam. ii. And none who knows these things should be astonished that Jephthah could find a priest to offer his daughter. Especially as it was done in fulfilment of a vow, which seemed to have been accepted of the Lord, who granted Jephthah victory.

It is not clear that "Jephthah could not intend to vow a human sacrifice" to Jehovah. The times in which he lived were times of extreme ignorance and depravity. He had been some time banished his own land, and compelled to associate with men of ruined fortunes, to live in arms, and to subsist by rapine. Neither his habits, nor his associates were calculated to improve his piety or tenderness, or to increase his virtue or religious principles. Probably if he saw any form of religion during his exile, it was idolatry reeking with the blood of human sacrifices.

It is likely however, that Jephthah did not consider the probable consequences of his vow, at the time of making it. "Out of the doors of his house, might come forth" a lamb, or a heifer, or a servant. His conduct and language, verse 35, prove that he had not anticipated such a meeting as that he had with his daughter. But though he did not foresee the sad consequences of his vow when he made it; yet having made it, he considered that he was bound to abide them. For it was what the Hebrews call a *devoted thing*. No evasion must be sought after, and no redemption could be allowed. No devoted thing which a man devoted to the Lord, must be redeemed; but must be put to death, whether it was man or beast. Levit. xvii. 28, 29. Jephthah seems to have considered his vow as coming under this law, when he cried, "I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back;" verse 35. And it is highly probable that the priests would so interpret it, and thus have no scruple about sacrificing this daughter of Jephthah.

3. *Authority*, the best that applies to the subject, is in favour of this interpretation. Both the Chaldee Paraphrast and

Josephus agree that Jephthah sacrificed his daughter as a burnt offering ; and they severely censure him for so doing.

Whether therefore I consider the passage itself, or the facts by which it is illustrated, or turn to inquire of those whose authority in the matter is most to be valued, I am compelled to conclude that the daughter of Jephthah really fell a martyr to the rashness and ignorance of her imprudent father. And if so, she has left an admonition written with her own blood, to those who suffer themselves to enter into engagements before they have ascertained what may be the consequences of them.

Whatever be the difficulty resulting to the defenders of divine Revelation from the common acceptation of Judges xi. 31, we must endure it, if the above remarks be just. I do not see however that any difficulty results from Jephthah's having sacrificed his daughter, any more than from Esau's selling his birthright, or Abram's denying his wife. The Bible records the fact, but gives it no commendation. It is a mere historic record : No more. I fear I shall be thought to ask more room than the subject demands. I will only add, that the foregoing remarks are not intended to provoke controversy, but to elicit truth. Should Viridus see reason to think differently, and shew that the above reasons are incapable of supporting the position to which they are applied, it will not be pertinaciously defended, but gladly exchanged for one that shall seem to be better supported.

P.H.

A PLAN FOR AFFORDING PECUNIARY ASSISTANCE in BUILDING and REPAIRING MEETING HOUSES.

The Readers of the G. B. R. will recollect that, at the last Annual Association, the undersigned were requested "to digest a plan by which our churches might be enabled to co-operate more effectually, in rendering pecuniary assistance, in cases of building and repairing Meeting-houses." (*Minutes*, case 6, page 16.) Sensible of the importance of the object, they have given it some attention ; and beg leave to submit to the candid consideration of the churches composing the New Connection, the Out-lines of a Plan, which appears to them most likely to attain the purposes specified. They hope that, by this means,

their friends will have an opportunity of examining how far the proposal merits their support; and will be prepared to send their representatives to the ensuing Association, properly instructed on the subject; so that this scheme may then be either adopted, modified, or rejected, as the united wisdom of their brethren may determine. This plan is not recommended to the Connection as a *new* scheme. The same principles were recommended, in an early number of the G. B. R. by a correspondent, who assumed the signature of *Rotalnif*, and excited considerable attention. Similar principles were also recognized in the proposals read by *Mr. James Taylor*, to the Boston Association, and since published in this Miscellany, (See G. B. R. vol. i. p. 266, and vol. viii. p. 249.)

The plan which they wish, respectfully, to submit to the consideration of their brethren, is briefly this:

1. Instead of the usual mode of collecting from place to place, let each church agree to raise a sum for the proposed object, equal to the amount of one half-penny a week, or two shillings a year, for each member returned in their states, and send it annually to the Association: each church being left at full liberty to raise this sum in what mode it may judge best suited to its own circumstances; whether by weekly, monthly, quarterly, or annual subscriptions, or by public collection, or in any other method it may approve; but every church who agrees to the plan, being considered as positively engaged to raise the money in some mode. This would produce, in the present extent of the connection, *seven hundred pounds per annum.*

2. Let an account of all the debts, owing by the several churches, with the dates when each was contracted, be sent annually to the Association: and let two proper persons be appointed, at each meeting, to divide the money to be distributed to each case, in proportion to the amount of the debt, and the time it has been owing.

3. Let each church be expected and required to continue all prudent exertions for the liquidating of its own debts, in addition to the assistance it may receive from this plan, and as a condition of receiving such assistance.

4. Let the sum subscribed by each church towards the general object, the sum paid to each case, and the sum raised annually towards its own relief by each church receiving a di-

vidend, be printed in the Minutes of the Association, signed by the Distributors.

5. In future, let no church receive the benefit of this Fund, which undertakes the building or enlargement of a meeting-house, without the approbation of the Association, or of the Conference of the district to which it belongs; or till its case has received the sanction of the Association.

Having thus stated the outlines of the plan, it may not be improper, perhaps, to glance at a few of the advantages which it is presumed to possess.

1. It would be a bond of union among the churches; and excite and cherish a spirit of affection and attachment. The proposers are well aware, that no power is acknowledged in the Connection, by which such a measure could be imposed on the different societies; but if the advantages of the plan could be made so evident as to induce all the churches cordially to adopt it, and conscientiously to act upon it, they hope that it would draw the churches together by the experience of reciprocal benefits, endear them to each other by a sense of mutual dependance, encourage them to co-operate effectually in other objects; and thus have a happy tendency, to make them in reality, what alas! they are now only in name, *One Connection*.

2. It would promote equality, and prevent one from being burdened, that another may be eased. At present, a few churches support almost the whole expence of building meeting-houses, &c. for the whole Connection; while too many seldom come forward as members of the general body, unless when they want assistance. This plan would relieve the former, and bring the latter into an honourable participation of their labours, and thus be highly advantageous to both.

3. It would supersede the necessity of a minister leaving his charge for weeks or months together, to collect for the debt on his meeting-house; and thus prevent that injury, which both the church and the pastor too often sustain, by frequent and protracted separations.

4. It would save all the expences incurred by journeys to collect. Expences which, frequently bearing a large proportion to the sum collected, greatly diminish the relief afforded, and lay a heavy additional burden on the friends of Religion.

5. It would, in the course of six or eight years, remove all the present incumbrances on the meeting-houses belonging to the Connection; supposing that each church that is in debt would be able only to discharge one fourth of its debt in that time by its own exertions. After this is done, it is probable that a yearly subscription of one shilling for each member would be sufficient for the ends proposed. Or the surplus might be appropriated to the support of the Itinerant Fund and the Academy.

6. It is supposed that this plan has the sanction of apostolical authority. When it was necessary to raise a sum for a religious object in a primitive church, Paul did not travel from place to place, to make collections; but directed that the sum required should be raised at each station, by weekly subscriptions, while he pursued his great work of preaching the gospel in other parts, and be ready for him to receive on his arrival; especially requesting that there might not be collections made when he was present. 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2.

The proposers submit this plain statement to the consideration of the churches, and cheerfully leave it to their decision, whether this plan be the best adapted to accomplish the object referred to them. As the object, however, is essentially important to the prosperity of that cause in which they are engaged, and which they esteem to be the cause of Truth; they earnestly hope that the object will not be lost sight of till some practicable and effectual means be adopted for its accomplishment: and shall sincerely rejoice if any method, more effective and eligible, can be devised than the one recommended in this proposal.

*London.
2nd April, 1819.*

J. FARRENT,
A. TAYLOR.

N. B. It has been suggested that it might be more eligible for the Association, or a Committee appointed by it, to examine the particulars of each case, and proportion the relief to the *nature* and *urgency* of each. But it is doubted whether this would be practicable, for want of time; or whether it might not occasion jealousy and dissatisfaction. If this, however, should be preferred to the mode contained in the proposal, it would not affect the essentials of the plan.

THE RIGHTS OF CONSCIENCE.

Maintained and illustrated in the case of WILLIAM PENN and WILLIAM MEAD.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

In a volume of State Trials published in 1772, is the following interesting account of the celebrated William Penn, and his companion William Mead. As it displays a magnanimity on the part of the sufferers for conscience-sake, and a steady adherence to truth and justice on the part of the jury by whom they were tried, perhaps it may not, at the present crisis, be unacceptable to the readers of your Miscellany. I am, Sir, your's,

A. ZOUCH.

Leicestershire, Feb. 26, 1818.

The great and intrepid Englishman, William Penn, the founder of Philadelphia in America, and from whom the large tract of land, Pennsylvania, in which it is situated, took its name, was born in London, A. D. 1644. His father, who was an admiral of some note, not only assisted in the capture of Jamaica, during the protectorate of Cromwell, but also served with applause under the Duke of York. Having distinguished himself in a sea-fight with the Dutch, he was knighted, and admitted into favour, notwithstanding his zeal during the usurpation.

Young Penn completed his education at Christ-church, and, as he gave an early presage of his future talents, a fond father, doubtless formed high expectations of so accomplished a son. But those hopes were apparently blasted by a most extraordinary event; for our Oxonian suddenly became a convert to the doctrines of the *Quakers*, a new and obscure sect; suspected by the royalists, and odious to the reigning monarch. The enraged parent remonstrated in vain; his threats to discard and even to disinherit his son were of no avail. The admiral, however, never forsook him entirely; but often rendered him effectual assistance.

In 1667, being at a meeting at Cork, he and several others were apprehended and committed to prison. During his imprisonment, he wrote a letter to the Earl of Orrery, mentioning his confinement, &c. and the Earl forthwith ordered his

discharge. On his return to London, replete with zeal, he wrote and published his work, *The Sandy Foundation Shaken*, which occasioned his committal to the Tower. While in this fortress, he wrote a piece for the express purpose of shewing the benefits to be derived from suffering, entitled, *No Cross, No Crown*.

On his release, he persisted in his common course of life, and frequently preached in public; but notwithstanding this, the admiral at length became reconciled to him, and bequeathed him his whole property, which was pretty considerable. That very year in which the latter died, was rendered memorable by the bold, manly, and patriotic conduct of a son, who, notwithstanding the singularity and seeming quaintness of his religious opinions, would have conferred honour on the noblest family in the kingdom. Persisting in his original intentions, and neither swayed by worldly interests on the one hand, nor alarmed by the fear of a very jealous, capricious, and arbitrary government on the other, Mr. Penn pursued that career which he considered to be pointed out by a sense of duty. As a body of soldiers had taken possession of the meeting-house in Grace-church Street, August 15th, 1670, he preached in the immediate vicinity. On this, he was apprehended, committed by the Lord-mayor, and tried for the same, along with William Mead, another eminent quaker, at the Old Bailey, on the 1st, 2nd, 4th, and 5th of September following. On this occasion, the bench consisted of Samuel Starling, *Lord-mayor*: John Howell, *Recorder*: Thomas Bludworth, William Peak, Richard Ford, Sir John Robinson, Joseph Sheldon, Richard Brown, *Aldermen*; and John Smith and James Edwards, *Sheriffs*.

It is important here, that the names of the jury should be also recorded, not only as a mark of respect to them, but also as an example to their fellow-subjects: their names were Thomas Veer, Edward Bushel, John Hammond, Charles Milson, Gregory Walklet, John Brightman, William Plumsted, Henry Henley, James Darnask, Henry Mitchell, William Lever, and John Bailey.

The indictment purported, "that William Penn and William Mead the latter, late of London, linen-draper, with divers persons, to the jurors unknown, to the number of three hundred, did unlawfully assemble, and congregate themselves with force of arms, &c. to the disturbance of the peace of our lord the

king; and that William Penn, by agreement between him and William Mead, did take upon himself to preach and speak, in contempt of the said lord the king, and of his law, to the great disturbance of his peace, &c."

Having pleaded "not guilty," the court adjourned until the afternoon, and the prisoners, being again brought to the bar, were there detained during five hours, while house-breakers, murderers, &c. were tried. On the 3rd of September, the same ceremony took place as before; only with this difference, that on one of the officers pulling off the hats of the two prisoners, the lord-mayor exclaimed, "Sirrah, who bid you pull off their hats? put on their hats again."

Recorder to the prisoners. "Do you know where you are: do you know it is the king's court?"

Penn. "I know it to be a court, and I suppose it to be the king's court."

Recorder. "Do you not know there is respect due to the court? Why do you not pull your hat off?"

Penn. "Because I do not believe that to be any respect."

Recorder. "Well, the court sets forty marks a-piece upon your heads, as a fine for your contempt of the court."

Penn. "I desire it may be observed, that we came into the court with our hats off; and if they have been put on since, it was by order of the bench; and therefore not we, but the bench, should be fined."

After this, the jury were again sworn, on which, Sir J. Robinson, Lieutenant of the Tower, objected against Edward Bushel, as he had not kissed the book, and therefore would have him sworn again; "though, indeed, it was on purpose to have made use of his tenderness of conscience in avoiding reiterated oaths, to have put him by as being a juryman, apprehending him to be a person not fit to answer their arbitrary ends."

James Cook, the first witness, being called, swore that he saw Mr. Penn speaking to the people in Gracechurch-street, but could not hear what he said, on account of the noise. Richard Read deposed exactly in the same manner, and to the same effect; but added, that he "saw Captain Mead speaking to Lieutenant Cook, yet what he said, he could not tell." The third witness was equally incompetent to prove any thing

against Mr. Penn ; and "as for Captain Mead, (said he,) I did not see him there."

Mr. Recorder Howell. "What say you, Mr. Mead, were you there?"

Mead. "It is a maxim in your own law, that no man is bound to accuse himself : and why dost thou offer to ensnare me with such a question? Doth not this shew thy malice? Is this like unto a judge, that ought to be counsel for the prisoner at the bar?"

Recorder. "Sir, hold your tongue ; I did not go about to ensnare you."

Penn. "We confess ourselves so far from recanting, or declining to vindicate the assembling of ourselves to preach, pray or worship the eternal, holy, just God; that we declare to all the world, that we do believe it be our indispensible duty to meet incessantly upon so good an account ; nor shall all the powers upon earth be able to divert us from reverencing and adoring our God who made us."

Alderman Brown. "You are not here for worshipping God, but for breaking the law ; you do yourselves great wrong in going on in that discourse."

Penn. "I affirm I have broken no law, nor am I guilty of the indictment laid to my charge ; and to the end, the bench, the jury and myself, with these that hear us, may have a more direct understanding, I desire you would let me know, by what law it is you prosecute me, and upon what law you ground my indictment."

Recorder. "Upon the common law."

Penn. "Where is that common law?"

Recorder. "You must not think that I am able to run up so many years, and over so many adjudged cases, which we call common law, to answer your curiosity."

Penn. "This answer, I am sure, is very short of my question ; for if it be common, it should not be so hard to produce."

Recorder. "Sir, will you plead to your indictment?"

Penn. "Shall I plead to an indictment which hath no foundation in law? If it contain that law you say I have broken, why should you decline to produce that law, since it will be impossible for the jury to determine, or agree to bring in their verdict, who have not the law produced, by which they

should measure the truth of this indictment, and the guilt, or contrary, of my fact?"

Recorder. " You are a saucy fellow; speak to the indictment." (*At this time, several of the bench urged hard upon the prisoner, to bear him down.*)

Penn. " I say it is my place to speak to matter of law; I am arraigned a prisoner; my liberty, which is next to my life itself, is now concerned: you are many mouths and ears against me, and if I must not be allowed to make the best of my case, it is hard. I say again, unless you shew me, and the people, the law you ground your indictment upon, I shall take it for granted, your proceedings are merely arbitrary."

Recorder. " The question is, whether you are guilty of this indictment?"

Penn. " The question is not whether I am guilty of this indictment; but whether this indictment be legal? It is too general and imperfect an answer to say, it is common law, unless we knew both what and where it is; for where there is no law, there is no transgression; and that law which is not in being, is so far from being common, that it is no law at all."

Recorder. " You are an impertinent fellow; will you teach the court what law is? It is *Lex non scripta*, i. e. unwritten law; that which many have studied for thirty or forty years to know, and would you have me to tell you in a moment?

Penn. " Certainly, if the common law be so hard to be understood, it is far from being common; but if the Lord Coke, in his Institutes, be of any consideration, he tells us, that common law is common right, and that common right is the great charter of privileges, confirmed 9 Hen. III. 29. 25 Edw. I.; and 2 Edw. III. 8. Coke Instit. 2. p. 56. I design no affront to the court, but to be heard in my just plea; and I must plainly tell you, that if you will deny me *Oyer* of the law, which you say I have broken, you do at once deny me an acknowledged right, and evidence to the whole world your resolution to sacrifice the privileges of Englishmen to your minister and arbitrary designs."

Recorder. " Take him away: my lord, if you take not some course with this pestilent fellow to stop his mouth, we shall not be able to do any thing to-night."

Lord-mayor. " Take him away, take him away; turn him into the Bail-Dock!"

Penn. "These are but so many vain exclamations. Is this justice or true judgment? Must I therefore be taken away, because I plead for the fundamental laws of England? However, this I leave upon your consciences, who are of the jury, and my sole judges, that if these ancient fundamental laws, which relate to liberty and property, and are not limited to particular persuasions in religion, must not be indispensably maintained and observed, who can say he hath a right to the coat upon his back?"

Recorder. "Be silent there."

Penn. "I am not to be silenced in a case wherein I am so much concerned; and not only myself, but many ten thousand families besides."

They now dragged him into the Bail-Dock; but William Mead, being still left in court, spoke as follows. "You men of the jury, here I do now stand, to answer an indictment against me, which is a bundle of stuff, full of lies and falsehoods; for therein am I accused, that I met by force of arms, unlawfully and tumultuously. Time was when I had freedom to use a carnal weapon, and then I thought I feared no man; but now I fear the living God, and dare not make use thereof, nor hurt any man. You men of the jury, who are my judges, if the Recorder will not tell you what makes a riot, a rout, or an unlawful assembly, Coke, he that once they called the Lord Coke, tells us, that a riot is, when three or more are met together to beat a man, or to enter forcibly into another man's land, to cut down his grass, his wood, or break down his pales, &c."

Recorder. "I thank you, Sir, that you will tell me what the law is:" (scornfully pulling off his hat.)

Mead. "Thou mayest put on thy hat, I have never a fee for thee now."

Alderman Brown. "He talks at random; one while an Independent, another while some other religion, and now a Quaker, and next a Papist."

Mead. "Turpe est doctori cum culpa redarguit ad ipsum."

Lord Mayor. "You deserve to have your tongue cut out."

Recorder. "If you discourse in this manner, I shall take occasion against you."

Mr. Mead having been now also thrust into the Bail-Dock, the following charge was given to the jury, in the absence of the prisoners.

Recorder. " You have heard what the indictment is: it is for preaching to the people, and drawing a tumultuous company after them; and Mr. Penn was speaking. If they should not be disturbed, you see they will go on; there are three or four witnesses that have proved this, that he did preach there, and that Mr. Mead did allow of it; after this, you have heard by substantial witnesses, what is said against them. Now we are upon the matter of fact, which you are to keep to and observe, what has been fully sworn, at your peril."

Penn. (With a loud voice from the Bail-Dock.) " I appeal to the jury, who are my judges, and this great assembly, whether the proceedings of the court are not most arbitrary, and void of all law, in offering to give the jury their charge in the absence of the prisoners. I say it is directly opposite to, and destructive of, the undoubted right of every English prisoner, as Coke, in the second Inst. 29. on the chap. of Magna Charta speaks."

Recorder. " Why you are present; you do hear, do you not?"

Penn. " No thanks to the court that commanded me into the Bail-Dock; and you of the jury take notice, that I have not been heard; neither can you legally depart the court, before I have been fully heard, having at least ten or twelve material points to offer, in order to invalidate their appointment."

Recorder. " Pull the fellow down; pull him down."

Mead. " Are these proceedings according to the rights and privileges of Englishmen, that we should not be heard?"

Recorder. " Take them away to the hole."

(To be concluded in the next.

On the SCARCITY of PREACHERS.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

I was pleased with the introduction of *Circumspector's* Query, respecting the scarcity of preachers in the New Connection, into your last number but one; and gratified to observe that two sensible correspondents took it up in your last. I am persuaded that both the *Lay-pastor* and the *Layman* have assigned true reasons for the fact; but I apprehend that they

have not hit upon the only, nor perhaps the chief causes: Will you permit me to occupy a page or two in your Miscellany, in stating frankly, what I think to lie at the root of the evil of which Circumspector so justly complains?

I conceive, then, that a change in the tempers, the tastes, and I fear, the piety of the hearers, contributes not a little to keep up and increase the scarcity of ministers in our churches. In the last century, when the gospel was newly introduced into many parts, the great object of the hearers was to learn the way of salvation and the doctrines and precepts of christianity. Unacquainted with the beauties of composition, despising the aids of literature, and intent only on the great purpose of edification, they would walk, on a dark and cold winter's night, six, eight, or twelve miles to hear a preacher expound, though in an inartificial method and unadorned style, the great truths of the gospel. It is a fact well known to your aged readers, that many of the most laborious and successful ministers, at the period to which allusion has been made, were plain, illiterate men, unfurnished with any qualifications beyond a competent acquaintance with their bibles, a deep concern for the salvation of their own souls, and an ardent zeal to snatch the souls of their careless neighbours from everlasting misery. These good men never attempted to allure by the graces of oratory, nor even to prevent satiety by studying variety. Their general and almost uniform business was to explain the ruin of man by nature, his utter inability to recover himself, and the gospel plan of recovery by a Redeemer. They would have taken guilt to themselves if they had delivered one discourse, in which these important topics had not maintained a prominent place; lest a single hearer, who had never heard them before, should have left the assembly ignorant of them. It is true, that the great personal interest which they themselves felt in these important subjects, and their anxious solicitude to snatch their fellow sinners from the danger to which they saw them exposed, gave an animation to their delivery, and an earnestness and affection to their manner which do not always accompany the well turned periods of a polished sermon; and it well deserves the consideration of every modern preacher, how far those excellent parts of the former mode may be resumed with success or propriety. But it is a fact, that these preachers

were, at the time, highly popular and crowned with the most extraordinary success.

Now it is obvious, that preachers of this description would be easily procured in the circumstances in which they then were. Nothing was necessary to fit a man for this sacred employment, besides decided piety, a moderate acquaintance with the leading doctrines of his bible, a tolerable fluency of speech, and natural fortitude of spirit. In the first warmth of profession, these accomplishments could not be uncommon. As long, therefore, as the people simply heard for edification, and had neither the opportunity nor the inclination to seek after more polished instructors, there would be an abundance of ministers. This state of things continued longer in some places than in others; but that it was generally the case is too well known to require confirmation.

Let us now look at the present state of things. Many causes have conspired to produce a great change both in the circumstances and tastes of the hearers. Godliness has the promise of this life: and it is an allowed fact that the regularity, economy, and industry, which real religion inculcates, have a natural tendency to raise persons to a higher rank in society. It can, therefore, excite no surprise, that the descendants of the original members of our churches are richer, more polished and better instructed than their progenitors. This is no disgrace to them. But it is to be feared, that, with the poverty and rusticity of their fathers, they have lost something of their relish for the simple truths of christianity, their solicitude for the safety of their own souls and their zealous concern for the salvation of others. It is to be feared, that too many, having been trained from their infancy in the habit of attending the means of grace, and early instructed in the theory of religion, take up with a confused idea that they are in a safe state, and need no instruction. These, therefore, attend public worship more through habit, or a desire to be gratified, than with a view to their personal edification. This induces them to look for qualifications in a preacher far different from those which roused their uncultivated parents to a sense of their danger, and prompted them to flee from the wrath to come. The honest and blunt exhortations of former times, would discompose their delicate nerves; and be condemned as vulgar and ill-bred. The unvarying repetition of the same truths, though ever so

important, would be branded as dull and tiresome. The provincial accent, or the incorrect, or ill-constructed sentence, would disgust their refined ears, and shut out the most edifying and necessary truths, if thus conveyed. Hence, in order, to be acceptable, a person must possess various accomplishments, unknown to the preachers of former days, and despised by their hearers. To attain these qualifications, require both talents and opportunity, which fall to the lot of but few. It is, therefore, to be expected that the number of ministers will decrease, in exact proportion as the taste, cultivation, and shall I venture to add, the lukewarmness of the people increase. What encouragement can a young man have to venture on the sacred work, when he sees that members of his own church will leave their places, if necessity supply the pulpit with a person of sound principles, good character and competent knowledge, who is wanting in some of the accomplishments of a fine speaker?

Were the heart more deeply impressed with a sense of guilt and danger, it would rejoice to hear of a way to obtain mercy, though dressed in language ever so homely. Had we a proper sense of our own ignorance, we should suppose it possible that we might receive instruction from the observations of a plain, experienced christian, though his manner of imparting them might not be the most regular. Were this the case, the respect with which a beginner would be heard, and the edification which humble christians would not blush to confess they received from his well-meant labours, would animate him to study for greater usefulness, and stimulate him to more acceptable exertions. In short, were people to hear for edification and not gratification, it would do more towards removing the scarcity of which your friend C. complains, than either academies or private encouragement; and secure a succession of useful, though not, perhaps, learned ministers.

It is sincerely hoped, that the intention of the writer will not be misunderstood. He is no advocate for ignorance, nor enemy to learning. He knows many happy and noble instances, in which high cultivation of the intellectual powers has been rendered highly subservient to the success of a minister's labours. Nay, he is persuaded that; when the heart is right with God, when a preacher has a due experience of personal religion, the acquisition of learning will render him generally more useful than he would otherwise have been. But he does-

fear that both personal and relative religion has sustained a real injury, from a practical if not a professed idea, that edification in hearing a preacher depends on his talents of composition as an orator. The plainest christian may understand the most essential truths of christianity; and the most cultivated mind may be profited by a self-application, and unprejudiced attention to these truths even in the most uncultivated language. Were hearers to attend the means of grace with a desire of edification simply, the excellencies or defects of the speaker would be objects of minor importance; and young men would be more ready to enter on the sacred work. When a proper relish for serious and experimental instruction is manifest, there will seldom be found a scarcity of serious and experimental christians willing to impart it.

If, Sir, you should judge these hasty observations worthy a place in the G. B. R. and if they should be blest to awaken any of its readers to self-examination and reformation, the design of the writer will be fully accomplished; and it is presumed that the cause for Circumspector's complaints would gradually diminish.

Yours, &c.

SCRUTATOR.

QUERIES.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

If you think proper to give the following Queries a place in your next number, it would oblige one who proposes them with a sincere desire to obtain instruction. And if any of your correspondents would favour you with judicious answers, they might be satisfactory to others as well as to,

Your's, &c.

D.G.

I. Which is the most prudent, scriptural and edifying method of conversing with a person who appears truly awakened to a sense of his guilt and danger as a sinner against a merciful and holy God, and sincerely desirous of laying hold on Christ as a Saviour; but is still unable to experience that satisfaction to his mind which he labours to obtain?

2. How do we reconcile our Saviour's assertion, John iii. 13, that "no man hath ascended up into heaven," with the account of Elijah's ascent, as recorded 2 Kings ii. 11?

GENERAL BAPTIST OCCURRENCES.

OBITUARY.

September 21st, 1819, died at Wisbeach, in the thirty-seventh year of his age, RICHARD MILES WALLER, a native of Godmanchester, near Huntingdon. Mr. W. was one of those who remember their Creator in the days of their youth. His disposition seems to have been naturally serious and thoughtful. But what appears to have been a principal means, in the hand of Providence, of informing his understanding, was his serving his apprenticeship in a pious family. This was at St. Ives, Huntingdonshire. The family attended the ministry of the Rev. G. Birley. Under his ministry, our young friend was led to choose the good part, and devote himself to Christ according to his own appointments. He was baptized in his seventeenth year, and united to the General Baptist Church, at St. Ives, of which he continued a steady and consistent member till the expiration of his apprenticeship, when he removed to Wisbeach. This was in the year 1812, and from that time till his death, he was a pious, useful, and respected member of the General Baptist Church at that place.

Mr. Waller never had a strong constitution; and it was the opinion of himself and his friends that he would not be long lived. His appearance indicated consumption; and it appeared probable, he would sometime fall a prey to that complaint. But how blind is man! and how uncertain his conjectures respecting what to-morrow may bring forth! His death was what may be considered sudden. He had indeed been ill, and had had medical attendance, nearly a month, previous to his dissolution; but it was not apprehended, till a few days before he died, that he was in any particular danger. At one time, his medical attendants supposed his disorder was in his liver; at another that it was a reitting fever. It is most probable that he had an inflammation in some of the viscera; as on the night of Saturday, the 17th, a mortification evidently commenced. Till then his friends were not seriously alarmed

respecting the issue of his complaint. He continued till five o'clock, on Monday morning, when his spirit relinquished its clayey tenement, and entered into rest.

Though our friend was called away unexpectedly, both in regard to time and manner, it is pleasure to reflect, and it demands thankfulness to God, that he was found ready. During his illness, he conversed very cheerfully with his friends respecting what might be the event, and was resigned to the will of God. And when at last it was apparent that death was at hand, and no hope would be entertained of his surviving many hours, and such were the apprehensions which he himself had, he felt no alarm in the prospect of the change. The foundation on which he had built, the death of Christ as his atoning saviour, he found a firm support to his soul. Relying on him, he met death with fortitude. He said to some of his attendants, if in his circumstances he had religion to seek, how deplorable would be his condition; but he thanked God it was not so; that he had an interest in Christ, and felt his mind supported and comfortable in the view of eternity. He admonished and exhorted his friends who visited him, in the most affectionate manner, respecting the concerns of religion; especially the young; reminding them of their importance in a dying hour. He wished he had all his young friends with him, that he might talk to them on these subjects. Though his bodily sufferings were at times exceedingly severe, yet he bore them with the most exemplary patience. He retained his understanding till the last; and during the night previous to his death, though so greatly exhausted, he attempted to repeat several verses of hymns; but dwelt with peculiar pleasure on,

O ! the sweet wonders of the place," &c.

And,

" There on a green and flow'ry mount
Our weary souls shall sit;
And with transporting joy recount
The labours of our feet."

He frequently too addressed his Creator in the language of prayer and praise, and strikingly exemplified the justness of the wise man's remark, that while the wicked are driven away in their wickedness, the righteous have hope in their death.

He was interred on the Thursday evening following, when a discourse was delivered on the occasion from Rev. i. 18. *I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen ; and have the keys of hell and of death.*

The deceased was in many respects a very exemplary christian. He had clear views of the way of salvation, and was well grounded in the truth. He was not one who is tossed about with every wind of doctrine; but was anxious to grow up into Christ, his head, in all things. The divinity and atonement of Christ, the universality of his death, the influence of his spirit, the doctrine of regeneration, &c. he considered as the pillars of christianity; and while he believed them, he was anxious to live under their influence. He was no formalist in religion, his principal care was to possess it in its power. He carried it into the family, the social party, the closet, and the whole of his secular employment. In his attendance on the means of grace, he was diligent and constant, not only on Lord's days, but on all other occasions, as far as he had opportunity. He possessed a useful gift in prayer, and willingly assisted in conducting prayer meetings. At the same time, in his disposition he was in a high degree modest and unassuming. He sought peace and prosperity to the church; and as his manner was conciliating, he was often successful in removing animosities, and reconciling friends. It may justly be said of him, that according to his ability he was ready to every good work; the interest which he took in conducting the Sunday School, the Missionary Society, and the Wisbeach Bible Association, is an evidence of this. He occasionally was prevailed on to deliver a word of exhortation in public: and though his talent in this way was not considerable, yet what he said was so scriptural and delivered with so much modesty and affection, that generally he was well received. In the summer of 1817, he was appointed a deacon, an office which he filled with credit to himself, and advantage to the church.

He has left an afflicted widow in a state of pregnancy, and one child, almost entirely unprovided for, to lament their loss of him. We are ready to think it would have been well had his life been preserved to his family and the church. But God has determined otherwise; and his dispensations are all righteous. May he be a husband to the widow, and a father to the fatherless; may he raise up in his churches others to occupy the

places of those he removes to himself; and may not we, who at present survive, be faithful followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Amen.

Mr. JOHN WHITWORTH, of Measham, near Ashby de la Zouch, departed this life, September 15th, 1818. Upwards of thirty years he was a member of the General Baptist Church, at Ashby and Packington. And during the greater part of that period, he filled the office of deacon; particularly in the Measham branch of the church. He was a man of considerable activity. In his business he was industrious and persevering, and in the duties of religion, assiduous beyond many. The diligent manner in which he seconded the efforts of his pastor, contributed greatly towards the erection of the Baptist Meeting-house, at Measham.* He was frequently engaged in speaking a word of exhortation among his friends at Measham, and sometimes in other places: but latterly his bodily infirmities rendered him incapable of this exercise. As a christian, he was not without his weaknesses, some of which were very visible to his friends; but he had also his excellencies. He possessed the savoury influence of the gospel in his heart, and from the abundance of his heart he was often disposed to speak to his carnal neighbours, as well as to his religious friends. He often visited his poor friends, and conversed with them; and not unfrequently relieved their temporal as well as their spiritual necessities; and in this, he was careful not to let his left hand know what his right was doing. Towards the latter end of December, 1816, it pleased the Great Disposer of events to visit him with a paralytic stroke. Though he grew so much better as to be able to walk about and to attend the Meeting, yet he gradually became weaker till the stroke was repeated, which suddenly terminated his life. During his affliction, he never murmured at the dealings of Providence; but seemed resigned and happy. His mind was richly stored with the promises of the gospel; and frequently, when visited

* This Meeting-house was erected A. D. 1811, and opened by Mr. Samuel Deacon, of Barton, October 6th, by two appropriate sermons. Since then a new gallery has been erected in front of the pulpit, and last summer a considerable piece of burying ground adjoining the Meeting-house was purchased and walled round.

by his friends, he would apply them to his own case in a very happy manner : " I know," said he, " whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." He often repeated the last verse of one of Dr. Watt's Hymns, as expressive of his own experience :

" Father, I wait thy daily will
 Thou shalt divide my portion still,
 Grant me on earth, what seems thee best
 Till Death and Heav'n reveal the rest."

His remains were interred in the Baptist burying ground, at Measham ; and on Lord's Day, September 27th, a funeral sermon was delivered to a numerous and attentive auditory, from Job xix. 25, 27. " I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth ; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God ; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold and not another."

J. G.

November 15th, 1818, died at Hose, in the vale of Belvoir, Leicestershire, SARAH ROUS, a worthy member of the G. B. Church, at Broughton, in the twenty-eighth year of her age. Her mother has long been an esteemed member of the same church, and an inhabitant of Hose. In her childhood, she had many serious thoughts ; but they vanished like the morning cloud or the early dew ; and her mind was led away with the pride and vanity of this world. About seven years before her death, the Lord was pleased to stir up her careless mind, and to recal her to a sense of the danger of her ways, and cause her to attend to the one thing needful. Soon after she gave herself up to the Lord in baptism, and was cheerfully received into the fellowship of the church : and, through divine grace, was enabled to adorn her profession by a suitable conversation. During the last two years of her pilgrimage, she was extremely afflicted, especially in winter, and often confined to her bed. In her sharpest sufferings her patience was exemplary, and not a murmur escaped from her lips. Being in some measure restored, she repaired to the means of grace, and seemed to enjoy with increased pleasure the house, the worship and the children of her God.

It was the lot of this pious young woman to be placed in low circumstances ; but her zeal for the cause of God made

her exert herself to the utmost for its support. When it was necessary to build a house for God, at her native village Hose, she cheerfully sold her best gown and gave all the produce towards so noble a design. She was very useful in instructing the young persons at meetings for prayer and conversation; and was carried out in these labours of love far beyond her strength. Her bible was her constant companion, and from its sacred contents she drew all her opinions, and rested on it all her hopes. At her last interview with her young friends, she was peculiarly cheerful, and seemed in a very happy state of mind. On the afternoon of November 7th, she said to her aged mother, "I feel so overpowered with the presence of the Lord, that I shall not stay much longer on earth. I will look out my funeral text and hymns for that occasion." She accordingly turned to 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," &c. and then folded down the hymns she preferred. When she had finished, she was carried to her bed speechless, and lay in a state of great agony till the morning of the 15th, when she entered into glory. Her remains were interred in the new burying ground at Hose, and a funeral discourse delivered from the text she had chosen, to a very large congregation.

March 31st, 1819, died at Mile End, in the sixtieth year of his age, Mr. LEONARD KEPPELL. He was a native of Germany, but came over to this country in his youth. In 1787, he was baptized by the late Mr. Dan Taylor, and joined the church under his care: of which he continued, an honourable member to the time of his decease. Being exemplary for industry and integrity, he was enabled, some years ago, to retire from business with a comfortable independence. He employed his leisure, in serving the church and exerting himself, as far as his abilities permitted, in promoting the cause of his Redeemer. His imperfect knowledge of the English language prevented him from being useful as a speaker; but his benevolence and uprightness rendered him highly valuable as a deacon; to which office he was ordained in 1815, after he had, for a long time, discharged most of the duties belonging to that station. His loss will be very severely felt by the church; in its present destitute state, and the poor members will long respect his memory.

For several years past, his constitution has been gradually sinking ; and it was painfully evident to his observing friends, that his dissolution was approaching ; and for many months before his death, he was himself well aware that he was leaving this world. His mind however was tranquil, resting on that Saviour whom he had so long served. When the king of terrors advanced still nearer, and it was plain that the hour of his departure was at hand, his confidence remained unshaken. Though unable to speak intelligibly, yet he was perfectly composed ; and frequently, in faltering accents, expressed his joy that he had not then to seek a Saviour, but knew in whom he believed. He was interred in the burying ground belonging to the Methodist Chapel, St. George's in the East. On this occasion, Mr. Farrent, of Great Suffolk Street, officiated ; and on Lord's Day, April 18th, the same minister preached a funeral sermon for our departed friend, at Church Lane, from Rev. xiv. 13. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord," &c.

CONFERENCES.

The MIDLAND CONFERENCE was held at *Hinckley*, April 13th, 1819. In the morning, Mr. Hoe preached from 1 Tim. i. 15 : and in the evening, Mr. Brand, from Phil i. 16. The meeting was unanimously of opinion, that it would be eligible for the ministers to meet together, for mutual advice and edification, on the evening preceding the Conference, at the house of the minister of the church where the conference is held ; and most of the ministers present agreed, if circumstances permitted, to adopt this plan. It was also unanimously agreed to have a prayer-meeting on the morning of the conference, to open precisely at eleven. The objects to be kept in view at these prayer-meetings, are—the increase of ministers—the increase of vital godliness in the hearts of the members—the blessing of God on ministerial labours—and the extension of the Redeemer's cause. Any minister disposed to speak for a few minutes, to have permission. And the conference earnestly recommend it to their friends in general, that, in their prayer meetings, and family and private devotions, the subjects just mentioned should always be remembered. It was also thought, that the advantage of the conference would be improved, if the sermon^s

were more generally of an experimental and practical nature. The subject proposed for conversation, at the next conference, is "Church Discipline."

The LINCOLNSHIRE CONFERENCE was held, at *Fleet*, Jan. 7th, 1819. On the preceding evening Mr. Payne, of Morcott, opened the public service with prayer, and Mr. Jones, of Louth, preached, from Heb. vi. 17, 18. Mr. Rogers was chosen secretary of the conference for the two succeeding years; and, in consequence, Mr. Jarrom was called to the chair. A case from the neighbourhood, requesting ministerial assistance, was withdrawn, as coming only from a part of the church: the conference judging it highly improper to countenance distinct and separate efforts, without the sanction of the church to which the parties, making such efforts belong.—Mr. Jarrom was requested to arrange a plan for Mr. Pike's visiting this district at Easter, in order to excite and promote a missionary spirit among the churches. The representatives were requested to lay the Loughborough money-case before the churches, to obtain their concurrence to collections being made, and a plan arranged for visiting them at Midsummer.

This Conference was again held at *Tydd St. Giles*, April 13th, 1819. Mr. Jarrom was called to the chair. In the evening, Mr. Pike, of Derby, who was visiting the churches in the district, in conformity to the resolution of the preceding conference, preached, from Isa. li. 3, 4, 5. A case from Gedney-hill, complaining of the want of the ordinances amongst them, was considered, and referred to the pastor of Fleet church, with the promise of some ministerial aid, to enable him to gratify their wishes. It was also recommended to the friends at Gedney-hill to consider of the propriety of inviting Mr. Birch to take the pastoral office over them, as the best means of removing the evils of which they complained. A case respecting the time of the next Association, was discussed, when it appeared that the conference strongly recommended, that it should be, at the usual time, the Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, in Midsummer week, as the most convenient to many of the representatives. A case from Church Lane, respecting the propriety of removing Mr. Bissill to London was considered, and advice given, which was forwarded to the parties concerned. Mr. Bampton, who now labours at Great Yarmouth, requested the conference to send a minister to examine into the state of the

interest at that town, in order that a proper report may be made to the ensuing Association; and Mr. Bissill was unanimously appointed to attend to that business. The next conference to be at Gosberton, the first Thursday in June.

The YORKSHIRE CONFERENCE was held, at *Staley-Bridge*, Feb. 23rd, 1819. Mr. Hollinrake preached, from Eph. vi. 19. This meeting advised Mr. R. Stocks to go and labour at Kirton, for two or three months; and arranged supplies for Manchester and Shore till the next conference. As the season of the year, and the distance of the place from the other churches, caused this meeting to be thinly attended, several cases were necessarily postponed.

This Conference was held again, at *Lineholme*, April 12th, 1819, when Mr. Pickering preached, from Psa. Ixiii. 24. At this meeting, it was agreed—to collect for the meeting-house at Rose, after next Midsummer—to request Messrs. Hollinrake and J. Taylor to go to Nantwich, and assist at the ordination of Mr. Cooper—to desire one of the ministers to visit Doncaster, and open the place lately engaged there for preaching—to arrange supplies for Shore, Manchester, and Brearley—to desire Mr. Hodgson to draw up a case to the next Association, referring the supply of Manchester and Doncaster to that assembly—to advise the church at Slack to enlarge their meeting-house—and to take some steps preparatory to erecting a place of worship at Hawkholmenden.

This conference request the attention of the Connection to the following statements, that they may be prepared to assist in the prosecution of the objects to which they relate: 1. A very convenient room has been engaged at *Manchester*, in Fleet Street, formerly occupied by the Methodists, for the use of the General Baptists, and the prospect is encouraging. 2. At *Doncaster*, Mr. T. Wilson, by the advice of this conference, has engaged a lofty and commodious room, in Mail-coach Yard, French-gate, formerly used as a place for preaching by the Joannites; which, it is expected, will be opened by the General Baptists the second Lord's day in May. 3. At *Brearley*, five miles from Halifax, towards Hebden-bridge, a very handsome detached room has been engaged for the same purposes, and by the same parties. Public worship has already been conducted in it two Lord's days; and attended.

by large congregations. The rents of all these places are very low.

The WARWICKSHIRE CONFERENCE was held, at *Austrey*, Jan. 13th, 1818; when the friends there were advised to continue their endeavours to obtain a preaching place at Tamworth: and some interesting conversation took place respecting the Missionary Society. Messrs. Green and Cheatle preached; and the services were well attended.

This conference met again at *Sutton-Coldfield*, May 15th. No place had then been obtained at Tamworth, but the design was not abandoned. A letter, on Spiritual Improvement, was read and approved. Mr. Barnes preached, and much christian pleasure was enjoyed.

The next meeting of the same conference was at *King's Heath*, Sep. 25. The friends at Sutton were advised to fit up a place for public worship, which they had hired at an easy rate: and some observations were made on the means of supplying an old General Baptist meeting-house at Netherton, which had been offered by the trustees.

The last meeting of this conference was held, at *Austrey*, Jan. 5th, 1819; when Messrs. Jarvis and Cheatle preached. Some useful remarks were made on the necessity of encouraging young men to come forwards to the work of the ministry; and the churches were advised to form societies for the distribution of religious tracts.

The LONDON CONFERENCE was held, at *Seven-Oaks*, Kent, April 14th, 1819: when Mr. Farrent, of Great Suffolk Street, was chosen chairman; Mr. Rose, of Smarden, moderator; and Mr. Purcell, of Wrotham, scribe. The states of the churches were then read; and, on the whole, were rather discouraging. This meeting advised Mr. Parcell to leave Wrotham as soon as convenient; and requested Mr. Henham, of Seven-oaks, to pay every attention to the interest at Wrotham, should it be left without a minister. The friends at Seven-oaks were advised to take the meeting-house, which has been erected by an individual, into their own hands, invest it in trustees, and use every effort to raise the purchase-money. A case was considered respecting the propriety of admitting persons into a church, when one-third of the members object to it; and, it was unanimously recommended, that such candidates should

wait some time, to see whether the objectors cannot be reconciled to their admission.

In consequence of a case from Great Suffolk-street, it was resolved to recommend it to all churches belonging to this Conference to defray the expences of a representative to each meeting, in order to obtain a more full attendance and a more effectual co-operation. And the better to carry this design into effect, a subscription was entered into by the persons present, as individuals, towards defraying the expences of those representatives whose churches are too poor to defray them, and it was determined to solicit the subscriptions of others for the same object: Mr. Farrent was appointed Treasurer, to whom the sums already subscribed are to be forwarded every six months, and by whom other subscriptions towards the same object will be thankfully received.—Certain Rules, prepared by Messrs. J. Farrent, W. Bicknell, and A. Taylor as a constitution for this Conference, were read, and, with some slight alterations, approved and adopted. In considering the general question, several places were mentioned as meriting attention and affording facilities for extending the cause of religion; but the scarcity of ministers at present prevented any attempt to occupy these promising stations. In the evening, Mr. Farrent preached, from Mark x. 15, 16. The next Conference to be at Church-lane, Whitechapel, London, on the first Wednesday in October next.

OPENING OF NEW MEETING HOUSES.

In consequence of the unhappy contentions in the church at *Nottingham*, Mr. R. Smith and his friends have erected a new meeting-house, in Broad Street, which was opened for public worship, November 22nd, 1818. The building is about sixteen yards and a half by fourteen and a half, and is prepared for a gallery, should one be wanted. There is also a vestry fourteen yards long by five yards wide, with a school-room over it which is computed to accommodate above two hundred scholars. The expence of the whole will not be less than sixteen or seventeen hundred pounds: so that, after the very great exertion which the friends have made, and the very liberal assistance which they have received from various respectable persons in the town of other denominations, there still remains

a heavy debt ; and the friends will feel thankful to those churches or individuals who, sympathizing with them in their difficulties, will generously assist in liquidating it.

The ministers engaged at the opening of this meeting-house were Mr. Sevenson, of Loughborough, and Mr. Jarrom, of Wisbeach. The former preached, in the morning, from Psa. xix. 7. "The law of the Lord is perfect converting the soul :" and in the evening, from 1 Tim. i. 15. "This is a faithful saying," &c. Mr. Jarrom preached, in the afternoon, from Isa. lxii. 1. "For Zion's sake will I not hold my tongue," &c. The congregations were large and numerous, and near seventy pounds were collected. There is reason to hope that the Redeemer's kingdom will be promoted, and God glorified by this undertaking. May these hopes be fully realized.

December 25th, 1818, a place newly fitted up for a meeting-house was opened, at *Holbeach*, in Lincolnshire, one of the four branches of the church at Fleet, which will seat two hundred persons. In the morning, Mr. Bissill, of Satterton, preached from Acts x. 21. "What is the cause wherefore ye are come?" In the afternoon, Mr. Cameron, of Louth, delivered a discourse from Eph. iii. 18, 19, and in the evening, another from Matt. xiii. 44. The sermons were appropriate; the congregations large and attentive; and about ten pounds were collected towards the expence of the fitting up, which will exceed ninety pounds.

In answering the inquiry in his text, Mr. B. took occasion to advert to the History of the General Baptists in this town, in the seventeenth century, and declared, "We are come to regain the ground we had lost, to recover the station from which the violence of persecution had driven us." (See History of G. Baptists, Vol. I. p. 214.) It seems, however, that the present interest owes its rise to the exertions of the late Mr. Burgess, who made an attempt to introduce the G. B. cause into this town, in 1803; and preached there weekly with some encouragement, for three years. Mr. Rogers has resumed his labours, and the success has led to the opening of this commodious place of worship. Since this event, public service has been maintained thrice on the Lord Days, and once on the week days, the place has been well filled, and not unfrequently crowded to excess, and the prospect is encouraging.

CHRISTIAN FUND.

The Anniversary of the *Christian Fund* was celebrated at Fleet, January 6th, 1819, and was numerously and respectably attended. Mr. Walker, of Wisbeach, delivered an appropriate discourse, from Heb. xiii. 16. "But to do good and communicate, forget not : for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." In the evening, after a sermon by Mr. Jones, of Louth, a liberal collection was made for the poor. The very numerous and distressed cases relieved, in the course of last year, has considerably reduced the funds of this society.

ANNUAL ASSOCIATION.

The ensuing ANNUAL ASSOCIATION of the New Connection of General Baptists will be held, at *Derby*; and commence on *Tuesday, June 22nd, 1819*, at six in the evening, and continue the 23rd, 24th, and 25th. The preachers appointed are Messrs. *Freeston, Jarrom and Rogers*; or, in case of failure, Messrs. *Everard, Cameron and Bissill*. The Inn, the *Fox and Owl, Bridge Gate, Derby*.

THE LATE MR. S. DEACON'S MANUSCRIPTS.

Any person who is in possession of original letters from the late Mr. S. Deacon, of Barton Fabis, or any manuscripts or documents, that might assist in giving a detailed account of his Life and Labours, are respectfully desired to transmit them to Mr. J. Green, of Barton; who will receive them thankfully, preserve them carefully, and if required, return them punctually to the owners.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

From the last report of this noble Institution, it appears, that the number of copies of the Holy Scriptures issued by the Society in the year ending March 31st, 1818, had been, *eighty-nine thousand, seven hundred and ninety-five Bibles, and one hundred and four thousand, three hundred and six Testaments*: making, with those circulated at the Society's expence from different presses on the Continent, the total,

issued by this Institution, in somewhat less than thirteen years, more than Two Millions of Bibles and Testaments.

The net Receipts of the Society during the last year; including sales of Bibles, &c. amounted nearly to *eighty-seven thousand pounds*; and the total Payments to *seventy-one thousand pounds*.

POETRY.

LIFE.—A POEM.

The morning rose serenely great,

The golden rays adorn'd the village spire,

The fields were deck'd in all their flow'ry state,

And all the woodlands bless'd the warbling choir :

When *Junius*, full of peace and joy and hope,

Enter'd with rapture on the rural scene,

And said "Thus shall my life, in gentlest slope,

Ascend the hill of strength, descend the placid green :

No storm shall rise, no cloud appear,

To dim the glorious skies, or darken life's unvarying year."

But ah, fond youth, why do such hopes beguile ?

Say, why the phantom life such prospects shows ?

Why thus displays its sweets and spreads its smiles ?

Let *Senex* answer, for he woful knows.

He too was young, and rich and blithe and lov'd ;

And said, "Thus shall my years in pleasure stay."

But scarce had he his part in life approv'd,

Ere all the faithless beauties fled away :

His morn, tho' fair, his noon not bright,

Damp and destructive was his ev'ning's air,

And long and dreary his tempestuous night.

Thus *Senex* far'd, and thus shall *Junius* fare,

Unless exempted from life's common lot;

His noon is scudding up with clouds of care,

And soon his early joys will be forgot.

And up the hill with difficulty press'd,

Where black'ning clouds of anxious sorrow hang,

Soon shall he feel the world's embitter'd pang,

And long to quit for scenes of truth these dreams of rest :

Till push'd and slighted, trembling, tott'ring, weak,

He drops into the grave, and shoots th' eternal lake.

Close by his side, as closely by his fate,
 I too shall travel thro' the crowded way ;
 And had I power my lot to regulate,
 “ Be mine an even state,” my soul would say :
 “ Where, not too high, too low, too dull or bright,
 The scenes ; too swift, too slow, my hours ; too deep,
 too slight,
 My thoughts ; my eye should roll o'er peaceful scenes :
 O'er hills of flow'rs should stroll, and rilly water'd greens.
 Till fancy, tir'd with joy, should sink to rest ;
 And reason waking all her pow'rs employ,
 On brighter scenes, among the truly bless'd.”

PHL.

*VERSES, sung at the FUNERAL of the late Mr. B.
POLLARD. April 10th, 1818.*

If councils wise and motives strong
 Could render mortal dear ;
 So spake the venerable tongue,
 That now lies silent here.

The faithful friend, the brother born
 To feel a brother's woe,
 Is from our world by angels borne,
 That we his worth may know.

Our Pastor's dead—Go, virtue, weep ;
 Thy sons will drop a tear ;
 While his remains in silence sleep,
 Releas'd from ev'ry care.

On Abraham's bosom he's reclin'd,
 Or on his Jesus breast,
 Or in his children's arms entwin'd
 With full salvation blest.

To meet him there, O bliss unthought !
 Around the sapphire throne ;
 There shall the teacher and the taught,
 Adore th' eternal One.

P.

THE
GENERAL BAPTIST REPOSITORY.

No. LII.—Vol. IX.—August 1st, 1819.

The NATURE and GUILT of TALE-BEARING.

"Thou shall not go up and down as a Tale-bearer among thy people."—MOSES.

(Concluded from the last Number, page 109.)

THE baneful effects of the mischievous sin of tale-bearing are many and grievous; but it may suffice to shew that it involves those who are addicted to it in *folly, guilt and danger*.

The *folly* of indulging this disposition is obvious. When we are curious to inquire into the concerns of others, and forward in censuring and reporting their faults, it naturally provokes them to turn our own weapons upon us. It is indeed, commonly observed, that we are usually most ready to blame our neighbour for that very thing of which we are ourselves frequently guilty: and then, what greater folly can there be, than to expose our own nakedness, by endeavouring to uncover that of others, and to give ourselves as deep a wound as that we were aiming to inflict on them? Besides the arrow we shoot at others, may perhaps fall short, or only raze the skin and make a slight scar: while the imputation of being a backbiter, which we certainly bring upon ourselves, will be a lasting blemish and not easily removed. We may perhaps fasten some little reproach on those we calumniate for a pardonable infirmity; but, at the same time, by habituating ourselves to slander, we procure to ourselves the worst and blackest of characters, and are despised, shunned and abhorred by those who best know us, as insects who feed on putrefaction, or reptiles that haunt the tombs and prey upon the dead. In return for the mean gratification of tale-bearing, we gain the disesteem and abhorrence of every person of principle and virtue, and are treated as the pests of society. A sad exchange! a remarkable proof of the most egregious folly!

Farther : what can be more ridiculous, than such conduct as will certainly make us many unnecessary enemies and set us at variance with all the world ? For “ a man of an ill tongue is dangerous in his city ; and he that is rash in his talk shall be hated.” The false witness is paid for his perjury, and the thief enjoys himself in his spoil ; but when the slanderer has strip'd his neighbour of his best jewel and treasure, reputation, he gets nothing by his malicious enterprize, and therefore stands convicted of downright folly.

Let us also reflect that malice is often disappointed, and calumny itself frequently is over-ruled for the benefit of those whom it was intended to injure. Thus, after the death of our Saviour, when the Jews accused him with being an imposter, and charged his disciples with a design to steal away his body ; that very slander, wicked and groundless as it was, and the precautions to which it led, of sealing and guarding the holy sepulchre, contributed very much to the clear conviction and triumphant glory of his resurrection. Matt. xxvii. and xxviii. And when detraction is thus foiled, it becomes the object of ridicule and contempt. Often indeed the consequences are more serious ; in many instances, when we mean only to divert ourselves at the expence of our neighbour, our laughter is turned into mourning and our jesting into earnest. A rash word may bring our persons or our fortunes into danger ; an idle tale may involve us in lasting trouble and vexatious contentions ; and, while our neighbour's good name remains unsullied, our folly may be made manifest.

Nor is the *guilt* of tale-bearing less than the folly of it. When the report concerns public affairs, it may tend to nurse dissatisfaction and produce sedition. Hence the Apostle connects in one group, as vices nearly allied, “ backbiting, whispering, swellings, tumults.” 2 Cor. xii. 20. Thus a tale-bearer becomes guilty of a breach of obedience to lawful authority ; and may involve himself in the sin of rebellion. And if the tales which are circulated be of a private nature, the author incurs the charge of bearing false witness and making false accusations ; a practice destructive of private happiness and subversive of the welfare of society.—It may, indeed, be affirmed, that the crime under consideration partakes of the guilt of murder. Our Lord, after repeating the precept “ Thou shalt not kill,” subjoins very solemn injunc-

tions against railing and calumny. Matt. v. 22. And the apostle, after mentioning some "whose mouths are full of cursing and bitterness," immediately adds, "their feet are swift to shed blood." Rom. iii. 14, 15. Hence Solomon declares, "the words of the tale-bearer are as wounds; and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly." Prov. xviii. 8. It appears then, that, in the language of inspiration, "the words of the wicked lie in wait for blood;" Prov. xii. 6. and that the tale-bearer and the murderer are in the same guilt, and will be exposed to the same condemnation. Thus also Moses couples the tale-bearer and the thief, "Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another." Lev. xix. 11. Malice, envy, revenge, deceit, oppression, and a vast number of other black crimes, are all ingredients in the guilt of this sin, which occasions mischief in societies and propagates wickedness through vast numbers. For calumny is the beginning of strife, and is as when one letteth out water. He who opens the sluice, and pulls down the dam, must stand accountable for the flood, which breaks in and bears down all before it. Nor is this all: to complete the heinousness of the guilt and to finish the character, the tale-bearer is represented as acting the part of the devil and sharing in his condemnation. He is compared to the old serpent, "Surely the serpent will bite without enchantment, and a babbler is no better;" Eccles. x. 11. "his mouth is full of cursing, deceit and fraud; under his tongue is mischief and vanity; adders' poison is under their lips;" Psa. x. 7, cxi. 3. In short, the devil takes his name from calumny, and is thence styled "the accuser of the brethren." Rev. xii. 10.

To these hints on the folly and guilt of tale-bearing it may be proper to add a word or two on the *danger* of this pernicious habit. There can be no true peace to those who indulge in it. They are engaged in continual vexations and perpetual contests, which keep them in a state of war and contention; and their persons, their families and their fortunes, exposed to daily hazards and dangers. "The evil-speaker shall not be established in the earth: and a prating fool shall fall." Psa. cxl, 11. Prov. x. 8, 10. And the apostle, in reference to this crime, advises, "If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." Gal. v. 15. The tale-bearer is in the midst of enemies; and

can never be secure in his credit : for the same measure that he deals out to others, returns with advantage upon himself; and it is but natural for his neighbours to be as severe in censuring him, as he is in censuring them. His mind also can never be at peace, nor his conscience at rest. The ghosts of those whom he has murdered with his tongue, will continually haunt him ; and the mischiefs done by his reports will daily present themselves to his recollection, and cause him constant anxiety. By this sin, the very life of religion is destroyed, and the soul unfitted for holy duties. They " who brought up an evil report were excluded from the sanctuary, and died before the Lord." Num. xvi. 37. And the apostle of the Gentiles, ranks whisperers and backbiters with the haters of God. Rom. i. 29, 30. But what is of the most solemn importance, this sin endangers our eternal salvation ; and provokes God, in a particular manner, to judge us as severely as we have censured others. We should remember, when we blame others and circulate reports to their disadvantage, that we are not ourselves without faults ; and therefore the advice of the penitent thief is good : " Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation ?" Luke xxiii. 40. Tale-bearing also is almost necessarily attended with falsehood and misrepresentation ; and " every liar shall have his portion in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone." Rev. xxi. 8. .

Indeed we cannot describe the danger and odiousness of this sin better than in the strong words of an apochryphal writer. " Curse ye the whisperer and double-tongued ; for such have destroyed many that were at peace. A backbiting tongue hath disquieted many, and driven them from nation to nation. Strong cities hath it pulled down, and overthrown the houses of great men. A backbiting tongue hath cast out virtuous women and deprived them of their labours. Whoso hearkeneth to it shall never find rest, nor ever dwell in safety. The stroke of the whip maketh marks in the flesh ; but the stroke of the tongue breaketh the bones. Many have fallen by the edge of the sword ; but not so many as have fallen by the tongue. Well is he that is defended from it, and hath not passed through the venom of it ; who hath not drawn the yoke thereof, nor hath been bound in the bonds thereof : for its yoke is a yoke of iron, and its bonds are bonds of brass," Ecclus. xxviii. 14, 20.

If therefore the practice of tale-bearing involves us in such folly, guilt and danger, we ought to guard against it with the utmost caution, and use all proper methods to prevent ourselves from being led into it. In order to this, we must set a watch over our lips, and be careful how, when, what, and before whom, we speak. This will preserve us from abundance of evils: for "whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue, keepeth his soul from troubles." Prov. xxi. 23. And our Saviour assures us, that "those things which proceed out of the mouth, come from the heart, and defile a man." Matt. xv. 18. Hence James insists at large on the necessity of thus governing the tongue. "Behold," he says, "we put bits in the horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn about the whole body. Behold also the ships, which, though they be so great and are driven of fierce winds, yet they are turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth. Even so the tongue is a little member and boasteth great things. Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth! and the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue amongst our members, that it defileth the whole body, setteth on fire the course of nature, and is set on fire of hell." Jam. iii. 3, 6.—It would also assist in avoiding this ensnaring sin, if we cultivated a habit of silence. Silence is safe and prudent. "Even a fool," observes Solomon, "when he holdeth his peace is accounted wise; and he that shutteth his lips esteemed a man of understanding." Prov. xvii. 28.

Again. We ought, when we do speak, to consider what we are about to utter, and not pour out our words hastily, rashly and at random: for the wise man justly observes, "Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words: there is more hope of a fool than of him." Prov. xxix. 30. Nor must we, unless duty oblige us, speak all we know; to avoid this is one principal mark of a sound and prudent judgment. While the inner parts of a fool are like a broken vessel; and he can retain or conceal nothing.

We should likewise avoid believing all we hear, and listening after such things as no way concern us. We must set a watch over our ears as well as our tongue, and reject and disown those who go about with idle tales, and under pretence of news, would infuse scandal into our minds, and make us partakers of their sins. It is "the wicked doer,"

says Solomon, " who giveth heed to false lips, and a liar that giveth ear to a naughty tongue." Prov. xvii. 4.

In all cases relating to our neighbour's reputation, we ought not to judge rashly and without proper authority. It is our Saviour's command, " Judge not." Matt. vii. 1. And there is good reason for this prohibition. For unless our neighbour will unreservedly open himself, we can have no competent knowledge of his affairs; and shall be liable to form a wrong judgment through want of sufficient information. " What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man which is in him?" 1 Cor. ii. 11. " And he that speaketh evil of his brother, judgeth the law." Jam. iv. 11. that is, he sets aside the law as an insufficient judge, and arrogantly usurps its place and office. But, if duty call us to animadvert on the conduct or characters of others, let us endeavour to do it with tenderness and caution, and so avoid all reasonable occasion of offence, for " woe to that man by whom the offence cometh." Matt. xviii. 7. Let us attend to the apostolic advice " to speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle; shewing all meekness unto all men." Tit. iii. 2. And let us always bear in mind the description of charity, that most excellent of graces, " which beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, and thinketh no evil." 1 Cor. xiii.

In every case when we have occasion to speak of others, let us set before us that universal evangelical precept of doing to others as we would they should do to us; and make it the constant rule of our conduct. This would induce us to make our neighbour's case our own, to defend his character when attacked; and if he had unhappily given just occasion of censure, to endeavour to apologize for him, and to think the best of him; asking our own consciences whether we are without sin, before we cast the first stone at him. It is also our Saviour's command, to love our neighbour as ourselves; and the apostle declares that " he that hateth his brother is a murderer." 1 John, iii. 15. We ought " to follow peace with all men: to study to be quiet, and do our own business." 1 Thess. iv. ii. Such a temper is a sure remedy against tale-bearing. Industry and employment will keep us out of the way of the whisperer and backbiter; and preserve us from idleness, the nursing mother of scandal and detraction.

And since we are assured that the tongue is an unruly evil,

which no man can tame, let us earnestly implore the assistance of divine grace, which alone can enable us to overcome the propensities of our corrupted natures, and strengthen us in the discharge of duty. Let us constantly petition the God of all grace, in the words of holy David, "to set a watch before our mouths, and keep the doors of our lips." Psa. cxli. 3.

Lastly. Let us consider God's dealings with us, and our hopes of mercy with him. If his judgments were to be strict, who would be able to stand? As therefore we expect favour from him, let us shew it to our brethren; and be courteous, merciful and forbearing. Let us look to the consequences of our slanders and calumnies, every one of which is noted down in his book; and the severe reckoning to which we shall one day be called, "Death and life," says Solomon, "are in the power of the tongue." Prov. xviii. 23. God has threatened "whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I destroy." "I will destroy him with mighty and sharp arrows, and with hot burning coals." Psa. ci. 6, cxx. 3. And surely it is our highest duty and interest, to be careful what we say, since for "every idle word that we shall speak, we shall give an account in the day of judgment; for by our words we shall be justified, and by our words we shall be condemned." Matt. xii. 36, 37.

The RIGHTS of CONSCIENCE.

*Maintained and illustrated in the Case of WILLIAM PENN,
and WILLIAM MEAD.*

(Concluded from page 125, of the last Number.)

The Jury were now desired to go up stairs in order to agree upon a verdict; and the prisoners remained in the slinking hole. After an hour and a half's time, eight came down agreed, but four remained above, until sent for. The bench used many threats to the four that dissented; and the Recorder, addressing himself to Mr. Bushel, said, "Sir, you are the cause of this disturbance and manifestly shew yourself an abettor of faction; I shall set a mark upon you, Sir."

Alderman Sir J. Robinson, Lieutenant of the Tower. "Mr. Bushel, I have known you near these fourteen years: you have thrust yourself upon this jury, because you think there is some service for you; I tell you, that you deserve to be

indicted more than any man that hath been brought to the bar this day."

Mr. Bushel. "No, Sir John, there were threescore before me; and I would willingly have got off, but could not."

Alderman Bludworth. "Mr. Bushel, we know what you are."

Lord Mayor. "Sirrah, you are an impudent fellow; I will put a mark upon you."

The jury being now sent back to consider their verdict, remained for some time; and on their return, the clerk having asked in the usual manner, "Is William Penn guilty of the matter wherein he stands indicted, or not guilty?" the foreman replied, "Guilty of speaking in Gracechurch-street."

Court. "Is that all?"

Foreman. "That is all I have in commission."

Recorder. "You had as good say nothing."

Lord Mayor. "Was it not an unlawful assembly? You mean he was speaking to the tumult there."

Foreman. "My lord, this is all I had in commission."

Here some of the jury seeming to buckle to the questions of the court; Mr. Bushel, Mr. Hammond and others, opposed themselves, and said, they "allowed of no such terms as an unlawful assembly;" at which the Lord Mayor, the Recorder, Sir J. Robinson, the Lieutenant of the Tower, and Alderman Bludworth, took great occasion to vilify them, with most opprobrious language; and this verdict not serving their turn, the Recorder expressed himself thus: "The law of England will not allow you to part, till you have given in your verdict; go therefore and consider it once more."

On this the jury declared, that they had given in their verdict, and would give no other. They withdrew however, after demanding pen, ink and paper; and returning once more, at the expiration of half an hour, the foreman addressed himself to the clerk of the peace, and presenting the following decision, said, here is our verdict: "We the jurors hereafter named, do find William Penn to be guilty of speaking or preaching to an assembly, met together at Gracechurch-street, the 14th of August last, 1670; and that William Mead is not guilty of the said indictment."

"Foreman, Thomas Vere: Edward Bushel, &c. &c.

Lord Mayor. "What! will you be led by such a silly

fellow as Bushel? An impudent canting fellow; I warrant you, you shall come no more upon juries in haste: you are a foreman indeed! I thought you had understood your place better."

Recorder. "Gentlemen, you shall not be dismissed till we have a verdict that the court will accept, and you shall be locked up without meat, drink, fire, and tobacco: you shall not think thus to abuse the court; we will have a verdict, by the help of God, or you shall starve for it."

Penn. "My jury, who are my judges, ought not thus to be menaced; their verdict should be free, and not compelled; the bench ought to wait for them, but not forestal them. I do desire that justice may be done me, and that the arbitrary resolves of the bench may not be made the measure of my jury's verdict."

Recorder. "Stop that prating fellow, or put him out of the court."

Lord Mayor. "You have heard that he preached, that he gathered a company of tumultuous people, and that they not only did disobey the martial power, but the civil power also."

Penn. "It is a great mistake; we did not make the tumult, but they that interrupted us. The jury cannot be so ignorant as to think that we met with a design to disturb the civil peace; since, first, we were by force of arms kept out of our lawful house; and met as near it in the street, as the soldiers would give us leave; and, secondly, because it was no new thing, and it is known we are a peaceable people, and cannot offer violence to any man. The agreement of twelve men is a verdict in law; and such a one being given by the jury, I require the clerk of the peace to record it; as he will answer at his peril. And if the jury bring in another verdict, contradictory to this, I affirm they are perjured men in law." Then, looking towards them, he emphatically added, "You are Englishmen, mind your privilege; give not away your right!"

One of the jury having pleaded indisposition, and desired to be dismissed, the Lord Mayor said, "You are as strong as any of them; starve them, and hold your principles."

Recorder. "Gentlemen, you must be contented with your hard fate, let your patience overcome it; for the court is resolved to have a verdict, and that before you can be dismissed."

Jury. "We are agreed."

The court now swore several of its officers to keep the jury all night, without meat, drink, fire, &c. and adjourned to seven o'clock next morning, which proved to be Sunday. They were then brought up as before; when having persevered in their verdict, Mr. Bushel was reproved as a *factional fellow*, by the Lord Mayor; on this he replied, that he acted "*conscientiously*." The other observed, that such a conscience would cut his throat; "but I will cut your's (added he) as soon as I can."

Mr. Penn now asked the Recorder, if he allowed the verdict given in respect to William Mead? The magistrate replied, "No;" as they were both indicted for a conspiracy, and one being found "*Not guilty*," and not the other, it could not be a verdict."

Penn. "*If Not guilty* be not a verdict, then you make of the jury and Magna Charta but a mere *nose of wax*! I affirm, that the consent of a jury is a verdict in law; and if William Mead be not guilty, I am clear, as I could not possibly conspire alone."

The jury again received a charge; were sent out; returned, and presented the same verdict. On this, the Recorder threatened Mr. Bushel, and said, "While he had any thing to do in the city, he would have an eye on him!" The Lord Mayor termed him a pitiful fellow, and added, "I will cut his nose."

Penn. "It is intolerable that my jury should be thus menaced. Is this according to the fundamental laws? Are not they my proper judges by the Great Charter of England? What hope is there of ever having justice done, when juries are threatened, and their verdict rejected? I am concerned to speak, and grieved to see such arbitrary proceedings. Did not the Lieutenant of the Tower treat one of the jury worse than a felon? And do you not plainly seem to condemn such as factional fellows, who answer not your ends? Unhappy are those juries who are threatened to be fined, and starved, and ruined, if they give not in verdicts contrary to their consciences."

Recorder. "My Lord, you must take a course with that same fellow."

Lord Mayor. "Stop his mouth. Jailer, bring fetters, and stake him to the ground."

Penn. "Do your pleasure : I matter not your fetters."

Recorder. "Till now, I never understood the reason of the policy and prudence of the Spaniards, in suffering the Inquisition among them ; and certainly it will never be well with us, till something like unto the Spanish Inquisition be in England."

The jury were once more required to give another verdict ; Mr. Lee, the Clerk, was also ordered to draw up a *special one*, which he declined ; and the Recorder threatened to have the jurors "carted about the city, as in Edward III.'s time." The foreman remonstrated in vain, that any other verdict would be a force on them to save their lives ; and the jury refused to go out of court until obliged by the Sheriff. On this, the court immediately adjourned until the next morning at seven o'clock, when the prisoners were, as usual, brought from Newgate, and being placed at the bar, the clerk demanded, "Is William Penn guilty, or not guilty?" Foreman. "Not guilty!" "Is William Mead guilty, or not guilty?" Foreman. "Not guilty!" The bench being still dissatisfied, each of the jury was required to answer distinctly to his name ; which being done, and they proving unanimous, the Recorder spoke as follows :

"I am sorry, gentlemen, you have followed your own judgments and opinions, rather than the good and wholesome advice that was given you. God keep my life out of your hands ! But for this, the court fines you forty marks a man, and (commands) imprisonment until paid."

William Penn. "I demand my liberty, being freed by the jury."

Lord Mayor. "No, you are in for your fines, for contempt of the court."

Penn. "I ask if it be according to the fundamental laws of England, that any Englishman should be fined, or amerced, but by the judgment of his Peers, or jury ? since it expressly contradicts the 14th and 29th chapters of the Great Charter of England, which says, "No freeman ought to be amerced, but by the oath of good and lawful men of the vicinage."

Recorder. "Take him away, take him away ; take him out of court."

Penn. "I never can urge the fundamental laws of England, but you cry, '*Take him away, take him away!*' But it is now the order, since the Spanish Inquisition hath so great a place in the Recorder's heart. God Almighty, who is just, will judge you all for these things."

Both jury and prisoners were now forced into the Bail Dock, for non-payment of their fines, whence they were carried to Newgate. These proceedings, of course, aroused the attention of a nation, justly jealous of the government of such a profligate and arbitrary prince as Charles II. and indignant at the conduct of such a judge as Howel.—Sir Thomas Smith, about a century before, had considered the fining, imprisoning, and punishing of juries to be violent, tyrannical, and contrary to the custom of the realm of England; while the celebrated Sir Matthew Hale, who had been chief Baron of the Exchequer and chief Justice of the King's Bench in this very reign, observed, in his *Pleas for the Crown*, p. 313, that it would be a most unhappy case for the judge himself, "if the prisoner's fate depended upon *his directions*: and unhappy also for the prisoner; as, if the judge's opinion must rule the verdict, the trial by jury would be useless."

Edward Bushel, a citizen of London, whose name deserves to be handed down to posterity with applause, immediately sued out a writ of *Habeas Corpus*. Upon the return, it was stated, that he had been committed for that, contrary to law, and against full and clear evidence openly given in court, and against the direction of the court in matter of law, he, as one of the jury, had acquitted William Penn and William Mead, to the great obstruction of justice. This cause was heard in the superior courts; and after a solemn argument before the twelve judges, the above was resolved "to be an insufficient cause for fining and committing the jury." They were accordingly discharged, and they brought actions for damages. Eleven years after this, William Penn bent the whole force of his capacious mind to a great and noble undertaking. Having, in 1681, obtained from the Crown the grant of a large tract of land in America, since named Pennsylvania, after himself, as a compensation for the arrears due to him, as executor for his father, he took over with him a colony of Quakers, and formed a city which he called *Philadelphia*, or *The City of Brethren*, in allusion to their union and fraternal affection.

After thus laying the foundation of a future empire, and establishing a body of excellent laws, this truly great man, who reflects so much lustre on the name of Englishman, returned to his native country, and died at Beaconsfield, in Berkshire, in the seventy-fourth year of his age, A. D. 1718.

A. ZOUCH.

QUERY ANSWERED.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

In the 50th Number of the G. B. R. page 81, a correspondent proposes as a Query, "Whether it be proper, in any case, to baptize a person who will not avail himself of an opportunity of joining a baptist church?" If you please, the following remarks in reply shall be submitted to the candid consideration of your readers.

Great advantages, doubtless, result to individual christians, and to the cause of Christ in general from the mutual intercourse of believers, in a church capacity. Considerations of a very influential kind, may be justly urged to induce christians to unite together in the bonds of the gospel; yet, I do not at present see that it would be improper to baptize a believer in Christ, though he may not intend to unite with a baptist church. The propriety of such a proceeding seems apparent from the following considerations:

1st. Baptism is a duty incumbent on christians, before they enter into church fellowship; and, as an intention to omit one duty does not disqualify from an attention to a previous duty, it does not seem improper to baptise a person who does not intend to join a baptist church.

That it is the duty of christians to be baptized before they enter into church fellowship, is the full conviction of the writer, and it is here taken for granted. If then baptism is the *first* duty of a believer, with what appearance of propriety shall any one attempt to stop him in his career of obedience to the Lord's commands, because he does not intend to go to the extent of that, which, by another, may be thought to be his duty? On what ground could a baptist minister say, to one who gives credible evidence of faith in Christ, and

desires to be baptised, "I rejoice to think that you are a servant of our common Lord, and, that you see the propriety of believers' baptism; but if you intend not to perform the subsequent duty of being united with a baptist church, I cannot think it is right to aid your performance of the former duty of baptism?" Would not such an address be equivalent with saying, "I believe you do right in desiring to be baptised, but I think you should go further than that; and, if you do not see proper to go so far as I think is right, I must prevent your attending to what we both think right?" Surely it is much more congenial with the spirit of the gospel to rejoice in every appearance that is manifested of any one increasing in the knowledge of his Lord's will, and to endeavour, by every proper means, to enlarge his information and to strengthen his christian principles.

This reasoning seems conclusive in favour of baptising any sincere believer, whether he desire admission into a baptist church or not, unless the scriptures establish an inseparable connection between baptism and fellowship with some particular church; but we notice,

2d. That the New Testament does not seem to require any stipulation, on the part of the candidate for baptism, that he will be united to any particular church.

It will probably be allowed that there is not any express requirement of this kind. Without any stipulation of this sort, the apostles, agreeably to the command of their gracious Master, baptised all that came to them with a credible faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. They did indeed teach the new converts the propriety of being united together in the capacity of churches of Christ; but, it does not appear that they ever made an intention to unite in church-fellowship a term of baptism. But perhaps, it will be said, that it was a matter of course for christians, in the primitive age of the gospel, after baptism to be united to a church of Christ. It was; and so it is now. But general practice does not give any thing the authority of law in the church of Christ. Every thing, indispensibly necessary to be regarded, is not left on the feeble sanction of general practice, but is either made the subject of express command, or may be clearly deduced from such command. General as was the practice of baptised Christians uniting in church fellowship, in the first ages of christianity,

there seems to have been at least one exception. A particular account is given of the faith and baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch; but I know of no record of his uniting with any particular church.

3. Baptism seems to be an ordinance initiatory, not into any particular society of Christians, but into the general profession of the Christian faith. Unbelievers are brought to the knowledge of the truth, and by baptism they make an open confession of their devotedness to the Lord Jesus. If they entertain any proper sense of the value of Christian fellowship, they will then be easily induced to unite with a Christian church. Every scriptural motive to this should be affectionately urged upon their attention, and, if they unite with any religious communion, there is certainly a peculiar propriety in their uniting with one of the baptist denomination. Not only is this proper on account of the correspondence in religious sentiment; but, if the individual Christian receives the authority of believers' baptism, he must suppose that the sprinkling of infants is a mere human innovation, and, consequently, that all the first churches were baptist churches. If the newly baptised person be not previously determined to unite with a baptist chnrch, every consideration of this kind ought to be urged to direct his choice of the people with whom he should associate in religious ordinances; but, to make any thing of this kind an indispensable prerequisite to baptism, would seem to overstep the bounds prescribed by the New Testament.

IOTA.

REFLECTIONS on ETERNITY,

Eternity is one of the most comprehensive words that can be spoken. It impresses and overpowers the thonghtful mind. Who can fathom eternity! Where shall we begin to consider it! An angel were unequal to the subject. Let us contemplate it in its *general view*, and in *reference to its distinct states*. Eternal God! inform and affect the mind relative to a subject of so much importance.

Eternity is a duration, without beginning and without end. God only hath immortality, I Tim. vi. 16. The high and lofty One that inhabiteth "eternity; whose name is holy." Isa. lvii. 15. Time is a fragment of eternity. The earth, the

seat of time, is a narrow neck of land betwixt two unbonnded seas. Hence it is written " before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God." Psa. xc. 2. An adequate description of eternity surpasses the power of man, because the subject transcends his most enlarged conceptions. Yet, as we are affected by descriptions of a thousand things that cannot be fully delineated, an imperfect description of eternity may be useful. On a certain occasion Christ seemed to labour for expression, Matt. xi. 16. Oh, how much more may the best informed concerning this subject, adopt the language of the prophet, " Ah, Lord God! behold I cannot speak, for I am a child." Jer. i. 5. Duration is its striking feature. What is the duration of *man's life*? Our age? the ages of the patriarchs? of the antediluvians? " My age is as nothing before thee." Time itself is short. The duration of the longest human life bears no proportion to eternity. What the *works of man*? These aim at perpetuity. What the duration of the ancient castle, city or monumental pile? The Egyptian pyramids are supposed to have stood three thousand years; but what is this duration to eternity? The works of man shall crumble into dust, and " like the baseless fabrick of a vision, leave not a wreck behind." Can the *age of angels* compare with eternity? These morning stars rejoiced when the foundations of the earth were laid. Spirits know no distinctions of time; but we can meditate upon the probable period of their existence; and lay it by the line of eternity. A child discovers its disproportions. Let the *most extended landscape* assist our conceptions. From the high mountain what a scene presents itself! But this is necessarily terminated by the horizon. Not so the boundless scenes of eternity! One speaking upon this subject says, the view which we have of eternity, is like that which the sailor has of the ocean. In the midst of the world of waters he gazes round, the heavens bound his view. He sees but a small part of the ocean. How little then can we comprehend of eternity.

" Boundless fathomless abyss!
Without a bottom or a shore."

The ancients represented eternity by *a circle*. Striking emblem! Who can find the end of *a circle*? Such the round of eternity. The diameter bears a certain proportion to the cir-

cumference, but the proportion of the line of time in the circle of eternity, puzzles the wisest mathematician. But let us come to calculations.—

What the amount of the age of every human being from the creation? Take the wings of an angel. View the population of the Antediluvian-world; the Israelitish nation; the Assyrians; Persians; Greeks; Romans. Glance at Europe, Asia, Africa and America. What the aggregate of the ages of all the human beings? Immense the number. Doddridge has beautifully expressed this thought:

“ Blest be the man—statesman or patriot he,
Or hero call'd, who doth his country save.
But let him save a world. Then calculate
Her population vast—and let the enormous sum
Be multiplied by the full age of each,
And ev'ry individual man; the weal,
The eternal weal of *one* immortal soul
Outweighs the whole. For in eternity
There shall a point arise, when ev'ry soul
Shall have more years existed than the sum
Thrice told, of all the years of human kind
Accumulate:—for it shall live for ever.”

What is this to the number of every object beheld by mortal eye! View the myriads of men, animals, birds, fishes, insects, blades of grass, leaves, drops of rain, sands upon the sea shore. Lift up your eyes, and if you can, number the stars of heaven. Inconceivably great the number of objects in heaven and earth! But is that number the date of eternity? St. Cyprian has a striking thought; a ball of sand as large as the earth, wasting a grain of sand in a thousand years. Time would accomplish this; but what has time to do in relation to the duration of Eternity! Mr. Wesley has the following thought—the ocean enlarged to include all the space between the earth and the starry heavens, decreased a drop in a thousand years. Boundless idea! Yet this is less in proportion to Eternity than a drop of water to such an ocean. Oh Eternity, Eternity! how dost thou baffle every attempt to describe thee! Another writer suggests—a girdle round the earth, a span wide, filled with figures. Eighteen figures are hundreds of thousands of billions, double it—treble it. Who can compute the days of eternity? Once more; all the hea-

venly bodies consolidated into one globe, diminishing a grain of sand in a million years. What is our earth to some of the planets, and what any of them to the sun? But in vain does the labouring mind attempt to describe that which is beyond conception.

“ Imagination’s utmost stretch—
In wonder dies away.”—

The subject rises in importance when we consider it in its *more particular view, in reference to its distinct states.* The sacred scriptures reveal two kinds of beings—angels and men; two characters of each—good and bad; and two states in eternity for each, according to their respective characters. These are evident truths of the oracles of God, and have an intimate connection with the subject under consideration. Contemplate eternity in its

“ Distinct abodes, sulph’rous or ambrosial.”

The happy state of eternity is called heaven. ~ Here is the abode of the Eternal. He is surrounded with angels and the spirits of just men, made perfect. Here is the seat of light, life, love, joy. There are pleasures for evermore. This glory and felicity is inconceivably great. “ Since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, besides thee, what thou hath prepared for him that waiteth for thee.” Isa. xiv. 4. Psa. xxxi. 17. Scripture descriptions are of the most exalted nature, a kingdom, a crown, a throne, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. This state of happiness is eternal. As one says of eternity, “ it is this that makes a hell of hell, a heaven of heaven.” It is said that, nothing that is sweet is perpetual: or nothing that is perpetual is sweet. This is true as it respects the present state, but the reverse holds in reference to the future. Heaven would cease to be heaven could its bliss terminate. The apprehension of its suspension, much more its annihilation, and most of all, of its giving place to eternal misery, would damp its enjoyment. But the duration of the saint’s happiness is the period of Christ’s existence,—“ Because I live ye shall live also.” The Christian has in prospect—“ a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” This is the hope laid up for him in heaven, of which he has heard in the word of the truth of the gospel. In the prospect of this, well may he say,

" Mingled with all the shining band
 My soul would there adore;
 A pillar in thy temple fix'd
 To be remov'd no more."—

But that volume which reveals a happy state in eternity, reveals also a miserable one. To this let us turn our attention—The existence of two distinct states in the eternal world is evident. "The way of life is above, to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath." Psa. xv. 24. "The hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and come forth; they that have done good to the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." John, v. 28, 29. The thoughtful mind inquires, Is the state of misery as well as the state of happiness eternal? The Scriptures answer in the affirmative. This appears from various declarations respecting the subject, Mark, ix. 44, 46, 48. Matt. xxv. 41, 46. 2 Thes. i. 6. Rev. xiv. 10, 11. from the tenor of the words of the Gospel; Mark, xvi. 16. 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10; Gal. v. 19, 23, the same word being used to express the duration both of future happiness and of misery; Matt. xxv. 46. 2 Thes. i. 9: and particularly the deep silence of scripture respecting the termination of future punishment. What ground have we to suppose that the gulph between heaven and hell will become passable? Will it be said that Acts, iii. 21. declares it? Where have the prophets spoken of such a restitution of all things? Is not the restitution said to take place previous to the second revelation of Christ?

And is hell as well as heaven of eternal duration? How impressive this view of the subject! To have no rest day nor night! Oh, doleful place! "there their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched." How insupportable the thought of an eternal separation from God, and the pleasures that are at his right hand for evermore!

In the prospect of eternity we see *the true nature and value of time*. Eternity stamps the dignity and worth of time. View the importance of an hour in reference to its connection with Eternity.

" 'Tis these mismeasur'd ruin all mankind."

How important also appears religion. This is the art of improving time in reference to eternity. Futurity stamps a

reality and importance upon vital religion. *How absurd the indifference* of true believers to eternal things! "Is it in time to hide Eternity?" This absurdity is often seen. When shall we who are not of this world, act according to our character? *What madness is indecision in religion!* A point of time, a moment's space may decide your eternal state. Be wise to day. How long halt ye? Will you not say with the lepers at the gate of Samaria, "Why sit we here till we die?" How lamentable the state of those who are destitute of any interest in Christ! Can it be that the love of Christ in rescuing from hell by his death, is thought an uninteresting subject? Mistaken soul! Angels desire to look into these things. Awake and live. May it be the concern of every heart. "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" Isa. xxxiii. 14. And may this eventually lead to faith in Christ Jesus, who is "the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him!" Heb. v. 9..

J. N.

The HISTORY and CHARACTER of the PATRIARCH JOSEPH, IMPROVED.

No. V.

Some time ago, we took a view of Joseph's public conduct towards the Egyptians, when he was raised to the government of their country; let us now observe his behaviour, while filling the same high station, as a son and a brother.

When the Ishmaelites carried Joseph into Egypt, it appears that his family lost all traces of him. His cruelly-deceived father mourned for him, as for one of whom he had been for ever bereaved; and his jealous brothers gave themselves no trouble to learn the fate of him whom they had so basely injured. It is probable that, during many years, Joseph had no means of communicating with his afflicted father. Considering the little intercourse that existed, at that period, between distant countries, it seems almost certain that fourteen years elapsed before he had it in his power to open a correspondence with him. With his parent alone could he have any inducement to maintain any communication. His unnatural brothers neither desired nor deserved his notice. Indeed their trea-

chery had been such, that Joseph might think it dangerous to acquaint his family with his existence; lest it might lead their disappointed malice to machinations still more wicked and desperate; and thus involve him in greater danger, and them in deeper guilt. But, when he became chief governor of Egypt, and could command the influence and resources of his royal master, it is not easy to conceive any adequate reason, why he should suffer the seven years of plenty to pass over, without acquainting his affectionate and mourning father with his prosperity and honour. Every trait, however, in his character, and the whole of his future conduct, forbid us to suspect that this omission proceeded from the want of proper affection towards his relatives. Perhaps his conduct in this point might be under the immediate direction of heaven, that the purposes of divine Providence might be accomplished. It is plain, at least, that this want of correspondence led to important results, and was instrumental of the most salutary effects on the obdurate hearts of his unhappy brethren.

Whatever was the cause, it appears that, in the second year of the famine, no intelligence respecting Joseph had reached the ears of his father, or any of his sons. More than twenty-one years had passed, since the latter had treacherously delivered him, for a slave, to a company of strangers; and the former, on an examination of his blood-stained garment, had exclaimed, "It is my son's coat, no doubt an evil beast hath devoured him;" and resolved in the anguish of his grief, "I will go down into the grave to my son mourning." During this interval, many changes must have occurred in so large a family. The elder sons of Jacob had now families of their own; but they seem to have all dwelt together, under the superintendence and authority of their venerable parent. The famine, which God had foretold by Joseph, had now reached Canaan, the residence of Jacob, and spread dismay over the stoutest countenances. His sons looked on each other in desponding inactivity; but he obtained information that the Egyptians possessed large magazines of corn, and were willing to sell it to foreigners. He immediately despatched, to obtain a supply from this favoured people, all his sons except his youngest, Benjamin, the son of his beloved Rachel, and the brother of his lost Joseph. Him the affectionate old man

detained at home ; " lest peradventure mischief should befall him."

The ten patriarchs arrived at the metropolis of Egypt, in company with many other strangers, who had repaired thither with the same object in view. Joseph, though so highly elevated, did not think it beneath his dignity to superintend the sale of the corn; and instantly recognized his brothers among the purchasers. His brethren however could not recollect, in the person of the chief governor of the land, exercising the duties of his high station, the ill-treated and suppliant youth whom they had formerly sold for a slave. Unuspicious of the kindred of the person to whom they addressed themselves, they approached this great man with the most profound respect; and bowed themselves before him with their faces to the ground. This literal fulfilment of his youthful dreams, recalled past transactions to his memory ; and determined him not to discover himself to his brethren, till he had some evidence that the rancour and malice, which formerly occupied their minds, had given place to more virtuous feelings. He therefore assumed a stern countenance, pretended to doubt the purity of their motives and charged them with being spies. This led, as Joseph probably designed it should, to an explanatory vindication of themselves, in which they detailed their domestic circumstances, and gave their unknown brother a very acceptable account of his father and brother Benjamin, concerning whose welfare he was affectionately solicitous. Still affecting to suspect their intention, he committed them all to prison for three days ; and then sending for them, he proposed that one of them should remain in custody, while the others returned into Canaan with food for their families ; and that on their bringing their youngest brother, whom they had mentioned, the hostage should be set at liberty. These terms being accepted ; he took Simeon and bound him before their eyes.

Joseph, in order more effectually to disguise himself, pretended not to understand the language of the sons of Jacob, and conversed with them by an interpreter. They therefore, discoursed in his presence without restraint ; and began to acknowledge their guilt in their cruel treatment of their brother, and to confess that his blood was now required at their hands.

These symptoms of contrition deeply affected his tender heart, and he turned from them and wept: but persevered in his attempts to bring them to a sincere repentance. He therefore detained Simeon; but dismissed the rest with provision for their starving households; and directed that, at their departure, each man's money should privately be put into his sack.

When these travellers arrived at home, and informed Jacob of the events of their journey, the old man's grief was excessive. And it was not till pressed by the want of food, and encouraged by Judah's becoming surety for his safe return, that Jacob consented to permit Benjamin to accompany his brethren into Egypt. They took every precaution to secure a favourable reception; carried double money, besides the price of their former purchase, which they had found in their sacks, and a present of the choicest productions of Canaan. Their pious father dismissed them with his earnest prayers for their success: "God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin;" adding with a kind of desponding resignation, "If I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved." Little did the aged patriarch think, that the man of whom he entertained such awful apprehensions was his own favourite son, whom he had formerly decked in a coat of many colours.

Joseph received his brothers on their second visit, with great favour. He released Simeon, invited them to his house, made them an hospitable entertainment, and dismissed them, in a very courteous manner, with provisions for their families. But desirous of proving their affection to their father, and their regard to his youngest son, and of procuring still stronger evidence that they had sincerely repented of their former wicked and inhuman treatment of himself, he directed his steward to secrete a valuable cup in the sack belonging to Benjamin. They had not proceeded far on their journey homewards, when they were overtaken by the steward and accused of having stolen the cup belonging to his master. Conscious of innocence, they indignantly denied the charge, and invited him to search their baggage. He proceeded to examine their sacks; and, after having searched all the rest, found the property in Benjamin's sack. Confused and alarmed, they all returned to the governor's house, and prostrating themselves on the ground before him, confessed their guilt, and gave themselves up to

his mercy ; acknowledging that they might justly be all detained as his slaves. The governor, with well dissembled moderation, disclaimed any wish to confound the innocent with the guilty, and declared, " The man in whose hand the cup is found he shall be my servant ; and as for you, get you up in peace to your father ?

Thus had Joseph, with great address, placed his brothers in circumstances peculiarly adapted to discover their real dispositions towards his father and his brother. Had they not entertained real affection for both, there was presented to them a fair opportunity of leaving Benjamin, as a slave among strangers ; and pleading his dishonesty with his father, as the cause of their deserting him. But on this declaration, Judah approached the governor with great respect ; and, in a strain of eloquence at once natural and pathetic, represented the affectionate regard of their aged father for his youngest son, and the grief that it would occasion to the old man if his brethren returned without his favourite child ; stated that he had become surety for his safety, and concluded his speech in these affecting words : " Now, therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad, a bondman to my lord ; and let the lad go up with his brethren. For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me ? lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come on my father." This noble proposal, and the pious reason on which it was founded, removed all Joseph's doubts, and convinced him of the sincerity of the reformation of his brethren. Having ordered strangers to withdraw, he gave a vent to his feelings, and wept aloud ; exclaiming, " I am Joseph ; doth my father yet live ?" This unexpected information struck his astonished brethren with amazement, and deprived them for a time of the power of speech. They recollect all their cruel and inhuman treatment of him, and stood confounded at his presence. But, as soon as his feelings permitted, he kindly endeavoured to remove their anxiety, by excusing their conduct, describing the happy effects which, under the controul of divine providence, it had produced, and adverting to the great advantages which his present station would enable him to procure for his relatives. After affectionately embracing them, and confirming his reconciliation with valuable presents, he sent to his father, with the joyful news of his prosperity and honour, an earnest

invitation to remove with all his descendants into Egypt, to partake of all the affluence to which Providence had raised his favourite long lost child. They therefore set out for Canaan, loaded with presents, and accompanied with carriages proper to convey Jacob and his large family into Egypt. At parting, Joseph dismissed them with the salutary admonition. " See that ye fall not out by the way."

We have glanced thus rapidly over these interesting transactions, not only because we hope they are familiar to our readers, but especially because we are persuaded, that no other narrative could equal the affecting simplicity and natural eloquence of the sacred penman's. To this we therefore refer for a more detailed account; while we endeavour to draw some instruction from that part of the history which has passed under our review.

When our way is hedged in, and clouds darken our prospects, we are too apt to sit down in despair, and conclude that it is in vain to make any attempts to remove our distress. It seems the sons of Jacob fell into this error, and when the famine was sore in the land, stood " looking one on another," in hopeless inactivity. Their old father, who doubtless was as deeply affected with the wants of his family as they were, looked round for relief, and was successful. He heard there was ~~born~~ in Egypt, and this intelligence led to all the subsequent important transactions.

How vain are all the attempts of mortals to prevent the accomplishment of the purposes of the Almighty! The sons of Jacob conceived a violent jealousy against their brother, because some of his dreams had intimated that he would rise to an elevated situation, and they should be humbled before him. In order to frustrate these prophecies, they treacherously sold him to a company of strangers, who carried him into Egypt. Thus their own envy promoted the very object which it was most anxious to defeat: and the sending of Joseph into that country opened the way to his future honour. In numerous instances, the same observation applies. We ought never to be induced to swerve from the path of duty, with a view to counteract any thing we apprehend is likely to beset us; for, by acting thus foolishly, we always incur the guilt of transgression, and often accelerate what we wished to prevent.

What a troublesome companion is a guilty conscience! No sooner were the brethren of Joseph suspected by the governor of Egypt, than they recollect all their barbarous conduct towards the unhappy youth. Though twenty years had elapsed, yet the sting of guilt continued, and they lived under a dread of punishment. The remembrance of their crime haunted them, at every turn, and inspired them with a constant fear of the displeasure of a God of justice. "We are verily guilty concerning our brother; therefore is this distress come upon us. His blood is required at our hands :" were the uncomfortable reflections which harassed their minds and depressed their spirits under every calamity. How desirable then it is to have a conscience void of offence! What tranquillity it inspires in the hour of distress! What courage in the season of danger! "The wicked flee when no man pursueth; but the righteous are bold as a lion." Prov. xxviii. I.

How frequently do we mistake the nature of events and the designs of Providence! Jacob in the anguish of his soul exclaimed, "Me have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away. All these things are against me." Short-sighted mortal! all these things are parts of a divine plan by which an all-wise God is securing the comfort and honour of thy declining years, and the welfare of thy numerous family. Prudence as well as piety teaches us to resign ourselves and our concerns into the hands of our heavenly father and leave him to direct our paths. He often, in a very unexpected manner, turns our sorrow into joy, and makes what we are ready to esteem our greatest calamities the instrument of our highest blessings. How dark soever the prospect may be, or how intricate soever the path by which we are led, he has promised that "all things shall work together for good to them that love him." Let us take care to be of that happy number; and then we may with perfect confidence trust to him to fulfil his gracious promise.

How amiable does a forgiving and affectionate temper render its possessor! When Joseph was convinced of the sincere repentance of his brethren, instead of upbraiding them with the horrid crimes of which they had been guilty towards himself, he endeavours to extenuate their faults, and to reconcile them to themselves. No sooner had he informed them "I am Joseph

your brother whom ye sold into Egypt;" than, as if afraid that they should feel too keenly the just remorse which the recollection of that wicked transaction would naturally occasion, he immediately adds, " Be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves that ye sold me hither, for God did send me before you to preserve life. God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God." Such soothing language did this good man adopt towards those who had acted so unworthily towards him. He was desirous of restoring them to peace of mind, and laboured to assure them of his perfect goodwill; and was sincerely pleased when he had gained their confidence. In the simple but expressive language of Scripture, " He kissed all his brethren and wept upon them ; and after that his brethren talked with him."—How different was the conduct of this worthy man from that which is too generally adopted. We are too prone to magnify offences, to aggravate injuries, and to judge harshly of our neighbour's character, especially when we think he has done wrong to us. Thus we often exasperate offenders, widen breaches and perpetuate contentions ; while a conduct like Joseph's has a happy tendency to conciliate the minds of our enemies, to heal divisions and terminate quarrels. " A soft answer turneth away wrath ; but grievous words stir up anger."

How necessary and proper it is to unite prudence and piety in all our transactions ! Thus the patriarch Jacob, when he had consented to send his sons the second time into Egypt, first delivers to them the money which had been found in the sacks at their return from the first journey ; supposing it might have been an oversight, of which his integrity forbade him to take an advantage. He then prepares a present of the choice productions of Canaan to conciliate the favour of the stern governor ; and lastly, yields to part with his favourite child in conformity to his demand. Having taken all these prudential measures, he commits the result in humble prayer to the Almighty. This is an excellent pattern for our imitation. In every case, we ought to adopt every proper method to secure success ; and, when we have done all we can, to leave the issue to Him, who alone knows whether it will be for our real advantage that our designs should be accomplished.

How uniform and constant was Joseph's attention to the duties of his station ! We have already had repeated occasion to notice this trait in his character : and the account before us recalls our observation to it. Though tenderly solicitous to entertain his brethren, and especially his beloved brother Benjamin ; yet, when they arrived in Egypt, and presented themselves before him, at the public sale of provisions, he appears to have suffered their arrival to cause little interruption of business. He consigned them to the care of his steward and directed him to conduct them to his house ; but denied himself the satisfaction of conversing with them, till the usual avocation of dinner released him from the obligations of duty. And here too we observe the pleasing effect of this conscientious and diligent discharge of duty. His royal master had set so just a value on his services, and contracted such an affection for his person, that he was eager to promote any object that could gratify so faithful a servant. Nor was his goodwill confined to the monarch ; but, what is seldom the case, extended itself to the courtiers. It pleased Pharaoh well, and his servants, to hear that Joseph's brethren were come. " Seest thou a man diligent in business ? he shall stand before kings."

It may, perhaps, be proper to remind our youthful readers that, great and good as Joseph certainly was, yet like all the sons of men, he was imperfect ; and therefore that *all* his conduct was not designed, by the sacred historian, as a pattern for our imitation. He seems to have given too much into the conversation of the courtiers, and was too ready to swear by the life of Pharaoh. It must also be acknowledged, that some parts of his treatment of his brethren approached too near to deceit and falsehood ; and did not evince that reverential regard to truth and ingenuous conduct which ought always to distinguish our transactions with our fellow creatures. These are doubtless specks in the character of this otherwise excellent patriarch, which, although they may be palliated by the darkness of the dispensations under which he lived, and the circumstances in which he was called to act, can never be justified ; and ought never to be imitated. " Swear not at all," and " Lie not one to another," are precepts sanctioned by divine authority ; which no one can neglect without incurring guilt.

On the SCARCITY of MINISTERS.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

I am pleased to observe that interest, which several of your correspondents have taken in the concerns of the New Connection of General Baptists; especially with the discussions that have been occasioned by the Query respecting the scarcity of ministers. These sensible writers have enumerated the following causes, which all, I doubt not, contribute to produce the evil so justly lamented. The inadequate support given to our present ministers; the neglect of ministers and churches in encouraging such as appear to possess preaching abilities, and bringing them forwards in the sacred work; the decay of real piety in the hearers, and a distaste for the plain unornamented discourses which formerly were useful and acceptable; and the natural consequences of the united operation of these causes, the backwardness of persons who may be duly qualified to engage in the sacred work, when they observe the small support, the little encouragement and the slight and disrespect which those who are engaged in it usually receive. To these causes, suggested by others, permit me to add, that our present mode of instructing young men for the ministry does not appear capable of furnishing a number of acceptable preachers, proportionate to the wants of our churches, and fitted to the taste, I had almost said, the vitiated taste, of the times. At present, if a minister wishes to be popular, he must acquire a certain polish in language and manners; lest the delicate eyes of his hearers should be hurt by his vulgar air, or their delicate nerves should be discomposed by hearing plain truths, told in homely phrase. What reception such hearers would have given to the preaching of a few poor illiterate fishermen, I dare not venture to guess. But, if these qualifications are indeed necessary, it is evident that the scale of our academy is far too limited to leave us any hope that it can supply all our churches with popular preachers.

It is however of little advantage to point out evils, unless we can direct to suitable remedies. Permit me then to hint at the proper remedies for the different evils which have been mentioned.

The first is the inadequate support afforded to our ministers. This is perhaps the most difficult to remove of any of the causes that have been assigned: yet something might be done, even in this case, did we duly consider what we owe to faithful and laborious ministers. Let us think how they have to watch over us, as those that must give account; how they have to search the oracles of divine wisdom and truth for nourishing food for our souls; and when they have found a passage which they judge to be suited to our spiritual wants, how they have to labour and toil to collect the most useful ideas, arrange them in proper order, and clothe them in the most affecting language, in order that we may be benefitted. Let us follow them into their closets, and hear how they wrestle with God in prayer, that their labours in the study and in the pulpit may be made useful to our souls. Let us follow them again to the same retreat, when returned from their public labours, and observe how they complain that their labour is in vain; how they mourn over their own weakness and insufficiency; and are ready to take all the blame on themselves that so little fruit appears. By thus silently observing their conduct, and diligently and impartially listening to their warm and affectionate addresses from the pulpit, we shall be convinced of their sincere desire to do us good; and conclude that all this studying and praying and preaching must take up much of their time and attention, for which a recompence ought to be made. Let us inquire, "Are their circumstances comfortable? and have they the means of obtaining an honest living?" If not; let every member take the matter home to himself, and solemnly ask his own conscience, "Do I contribute my part towards his support?" "Do I endeavour with all my power to make him comfortable?" Or, "Do I forget him except when I see him in the pulpit?" Do not some members of churches, if they deserve the name, seldom mention their minister, unless for the purpose of finding faults in his sermons or his conduct? If any of us have formerly been so ungrateful, let us be wise, repent and do our first works. Let us esteem them very highly in love; and then, no doubt, we shall be ready to assist them in worldly matters. It is certainly our duty to assist them, though our apparel should not be so costly, or our furniture so genteel, as at present. We shall feel the truth of this observation, at that great day, when Jesus shall say, "I was

hungry and ye gave me no meat, I was naked and ye clothed me not. Inasmuch as ye did it not to the least of these my brethren, ye did it not to me."

Another complaint is, that our aged ministers do not properly encourage those who appear likely to be useful in the sacred work. The mere noticing of this will I trust lead to a remedy. A word is sufficient for the wise: and we ought not to rebuke an elder, but intreat him as a father. I would therefore hope, that our worthy ministers will be careful not to give any occasion for reflections of this nature. The future prosperity of the Connection, if not its existence, depends on a sufficient supply of ministers. And who are so likely to discover and cultivate the talents which young men may possess, as their pastors? I would, most respectfully, but most earnestly, intreat these fathers in Israel to look about, with assiduous care, for latent gifts; and when found, to foster and encourage them with parental attention. And let young preachers, or those who are looking forwards to the great work, be encouraged to place a friendly confidence in their pastors, and to consult them in all cases of doubt or difficulty. This will lead to reciprocal esteem, and greatly aid in forwarding the great thing wanted, a supply of preachers.

But one of your correspondents, Sir, traces the scarcity of ministers to a decay of real piety in our churches, which prevents them from relishing the plain truths of the gospel, in plain language and delivered by plain men. He even intimates that some members will leave their places and ramble to strange meeting-houses, when their own pulpit is occasionally supplied by a person who is not a great scholar. Indeed, Mr. Editor, such conduct does not merely denote a decay of piety, but leads one to doubt whether it is not really extinct. Let such get more deeply impressed with the worth of their immortal souls—the deplorable state they are in by nature—the awful misery to which they are exposed—the wrath of God which hangs over every impenitent sinner—the brittleness of the thread of life which keeps him from falling into everlasting flames; and they will find more important objects claim their attention, when attending the preaching of the gospel, than the elegance of the diction or the graces of the elocution of the preacher. The salvation of their souls will be the chief object of their solicitude; and English souls may be converted

to God; without the preacher being acquainted with latin or greek. I hope I know something of the way of salvation; and I believe the ministers who have taught me this were, and still remain, totally ignorant of any of all these fine things; yet I trust that I love them not a whit the less on this account. They have warned me to flee from the wrath to come—have shewn me the way of salvation through a crucified Redeemer—and have instructed me in the duties and privileges of a christian. I love them ardently for the benefits I have received of them; and sincerely pray that I may be enabled, through the influence of divine grace, to make a proper use of what they taught me. I trust they will accept this tribute of gratitude from one who, at present, must remain unknown. Were all hearers to reflect on their own ignorance and sin, and to consider the necessity that they should become acquainted with the great truths of the gospel, and be saved from the guilt in which they are involved and the misery to which they are exposed, they would be induced to listen to the sermons they hear for the sake of information and instruction, rather than criticism. And, it is presumed, that more of this might sometimes be obtained from the plain discourse of an experienced, though unlettered, christian, than from the polished harangue of a great scholar.

These considerations should influence us, had we no other view than our own personal edification, not to despise the well-meant and often very useful attempts of plain preachers; but to treat them and their labours with respect. If, however, we wish for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom and the prosperity of his cause, we shall feel it our duty to encourage the weak attempts and foster the slender gifts of young preachers, in hopes that these beginnings, though perhaps not very promising, may yet, under the blessing of heaven, be matured to usefulness and respectability. It has often been observed that persons, whose first attempts did not seem to encourage great expectations, have, through prudent treatment, grown up to considerable eminence in the church, and been instrumental of much good. When, therefore, we discourage a preacher, merely because he is not at present as correct or edifying as we could wish, we do all in our power to deprive the church of one, who may, for any thing we know, be designed for great usefulness. Every thing must have a beginning; and if we refuse to hear young preachers, because their

labours are not equally interesting as those of their older and more experienced brethren, we take the readiest method to destroy entirely the ministry. Perhaps it might have a good effect, if a church made it a rule, when any of its members left their place, because he did not like the preacher, to appoint the absentee to preach himself. This must have a happy result; for if, on trial, he should discover ministerial gifts, they might be cultivated and made useful. If he failed, he might learn to exercise patience and forbearance towards those who engage in a work which he finds too hard for him.

The last cause of the present scarcity of ministers that has been mentioned is, that the present mode of instructing young men for the sacred work is insufficient for the supply of the wants of the Connection. The Academy, either on its present scale, or any scale to which it is likely to be raised, cannot furnish a number large enough for the increasing demand. And while destitute churches are all looking to the Academy, many of them must remain destitute. But can nothing be done to remedy this evil? Might not two or three ministers in each district be appointed to instruct the young preachers, called forth in their own neighbourhood, in those branches of learning most essential to the proper and useful discharge of their great work? And might not part of the funds, now appropriated to the support of the Academy, be very usefully applied to remunerate the teachers, and supply the learners with books? Or, if this was objected to by the managers of the Academy, might not a distinct fund be raised for this purpose? and the Academy be usefully employed in furnishing a more complete education to those whose abilities and leisure might enable them to make a proper use of its advantages?

I hope, Mr. Editor, if you see fit to insert these remarks in the G. B. R. that you and your readers will be disposed to exercise a due proportion of indulgence to one who never enjoyed any of the blessings of education, and who never before attempted to write for the public. Nothing, but a wish to promote the prosperity of what I esteem the cause of God and Truth, could have induced me to submit these lines to your inspection; for I am, from conviction,

A GENERAL BAPTIST.

Doncaster.

QUERY.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

SIR,

I should esteem it a favor, and hope it might be useful, if some of your correspondents would inform us, through the medium of your useful Miscellany, what sort of *Divination* was practised by Joseph, as is mentioned Gen. xliv. 5 and 15.

I am, yours,

JUVENIS.

ANECDOTE.

A poor man in Nottinghamshire, at eighty years of age, had three children living; one daughter and two sons. The first was an honorable professor of christianity; one son was an avowed deist, and the other a man of very immoral habits. One day the old man said to his sister, "I am going to give my children their fortunes while I am living." His sister, knowing his poverty, smiled, and enquired what he meant. "I have," he replied, "with long saving, laid up a guinea; and I mean to buy each of my children a Bible." He did so: and presented to each their copy, with suitable advice. The happy result was, that the religious daughter persevered till her death, and departed, rejoicing in the Lord. The profligate son was turned from his wickedness, became an exemplary christian, and died in the faith: and the deist, convinced of the divine origin of the scriptures, renounced his opposition, became a regular member of a christian church, and, though in low circumstances, is highly esteemed, by his brethren, for his sincere piety and honourable conduct. The truth of this anecdote cannot be doubted, as we received it from a person acquainted with the parties concerned. What an encouragement does it afford for parents to present their children with a Bible!

REFLECTIONS on the DEATH of a FATHER.

That the cold hand of death will perform his office upon all, is, perhaps, disputed by none; and that sin gave rise to the

necessity of that office is evident : but that the experience of all, at that awful moment, is the same, cannot be allowed. The gospel of the grace of God, offered to all, yet received by few, proves a sure antidote to the evils attendant upon the presence of the king of terrors. Hence the griefs connected with death are materially lessened, when the fear of his approach is removed ; especially where the remedy is so effectually applied, that the messenger is welcomed. I will not say it produced so much in the case before me ; but, when I review the dying moments of a tender parent, who, after enduring a long affliction of body, till he was called upon to resign his breath to him who gave it, never expressed one word respecting the fear of death, I will venture to say, it proved a sure remedy to the evils of sin. Oh, the glorious gospel of the blessed GOD ! it yields peace of mind through life, affords direction and support in the near prospect of death, and gently opens to view the real enjoyment after death, provided by a Redeemer's hand, and secured by his unchanging promise.

And can I entertain the hope that my parent enjoyed the gospel, experienced his support, and is now sharing the glories purchased by his precious Saviour ? Yes ; my heart instantly replies. Are my reasons asked ? I answer, the view he had of that gospel, evinced in the pleasure he took in the triumph of the cross, the anxiety he always shewed for my salvation, his peculiar veneration for the sacred name, the importance he attached to the word and worship of God, recommending a particular acquaintance with the most plain and essential parts thereof, having in early life made a public declaration of his belief in its doctrines, together with that undisturbed confidence enjoyed while viewing the soleinnites of death, humbly looking to the grace of God as the origin of that atonement made by Christ, and always viewing sin as giving rise to the necessity of that sacrifice, and, at the close of a long affliction, saying, " Bless God for what he has done ; and pray that I may have more faith in Jesus,"—faith in Jesus being his living and dying request. These, with many other considerations, have not failed to satisfy me, that a person who was in the habit of deliberately weighing every subject before he gave full credence to it, after living upon the promises of the gospel for forty years, and being for many years, while able, a serious and discreet deacon in the church of Jesus Christ, and

at last dying in peace, must *enjoy* at least a part in the privileges and blessings of the true believer. May that God in whom he trusted afford me every necessary assistance! May I have confidence in the same Saviour, and gently resign my breath whenever my Lord requires it, with the same holy serenity, surrounded by my dearest friends and offspring, and encircled in the dear embraces of my blessed Jesus. Until I am thus removed, help me to tread in the footsteps of an esteemed father, whenever he was enabled to follow his divine Master.

Perhaps what is written may lead some to recognise the person of the deceased; if so, let we say, Can any of you recollect the death of your parent? What were your views and feelings? Were you not ready to exclaim, "*Oh, my father! my father!*" &c. Perhaps this may fall into the hand of some for whose salvation their friends, now gone, had much anxiety. Let such improve the solemn call and flee to the same Saviour: for, in a very short time, we must all combat death. Let us also remember our friend, now gone, is in all probability an eye witness to our conduct; and, should we be so happy as to enjoy the same hope, we may rest assured, his glorified spirit will soon hail us from the shore of the heavenly Canaan, when some kind messenger shall be despatched to convey our spirits to the same eternal abode.

Leicestershire, 1819.

D.

GENERAL BAPTIST OCCURRENCES.

OBITUARY.

HANNAH GARTON was born, at Bassford, near Nottingham, May 17, 1801. Her parents being members of the G. B. church at Nottingham, she was taken from her infancy to attend divine worship with them. She enjoyed the advantages of a good education; but before she had finished it, was seized with the symptoms of a decline. The best medical advice was procured, and every likely means adopted, to check the disorder; but in vain. Her affectionate parents seeing little prospect of her recovery, endeavoured to turn her attention to a preparation for that awful event, which, they feared, would soon take place. But, though she possessed many amiable

qualities, and was of an affectionate disposition ; yet when the subject of religion, and a preparation for death was introduced, she always appeared reserved. This was a source of great anxiety to her afflicted friends, who saw her hastening to meet her God, and were doubtful whether she was prepared for the solemn interview.

From this state of gloomy anxiety, they were however happily relieved, a few weeks before her decease. One of the assistant preachers at Nottingham was introduced to the family ; to whom she seemed particularly attentive. In about a month after the first interview, he was appointed to preach at Basford. The meeting-house is not far from her father's house ; and the invalid, who had not been able to attend divine worship for nine months previously, requested earnestly to be carried to the house of God. Her request was cheerfully complied with ; and she seemed interested in the various parts of the service. In a few weeks, he preached again, when Hannah was again conveyed to hear him, and expressed much solicitude respecting eternal things. On Sept. 20, he went a third time, and as the young woman was now unable to be carried to worship, he called on her after service. At leaving the house, he prayed with them ; and it appeared this prayer was blest as a means of enabling her to trust on that Saviour who had laid down his life for her. Her conversation now became decidedly spiritual ; and she delighted to tell what her Saviour had done for her soul. Oct. 3, she observed to her brother, "I thank you for all the kindness which you have shewn to me, during my illness. I know my time is now short ; but I hope that you will prepare to meet me in heaven ; as I have no doubt but God has prepared for me a crown that will not fade away." On the following day, her sister coming into the room, asked her how she did. She answered, "I am poor in body but rich in soul :" and throwing her arms round her neck, said, "Oh, sister we have loved one another here with more than sisterly affection ! Oh, that I may be permitted to clasp you and your family in my arms in heaven. I have prayed for my brothers and sisters on earth ; and, if it be possible to intercede for them in heaven, I shall do it with delight." To several young persons who came to see her, she said, "You see that my affliction is very great, yet my confidence in God is strong. I hope you will look to him as your

best friend and protector, and your only support in a dying hour. Your time will not be long before you also must throw off this tabernacle." October 4, the minister who had seen her before, again visited his dying friend, and though she appeared to be weakness itself, yet the exertions she made to express her gratitude and respect, were amazing. "I was afraid, she exclaimed, that I should not live to see you, and to tell you how I love you. Oh that prayer, the last time you were at our house! but Jesus Christ will reward you for all you have done for me!" She continued the conversation; and gave pleasing evidence that the means of religious instruction which she had enjoyed had not been unimproved, by the number and pertinency of her quotations from scripture, and remarks on sacred subjects. The minister prayed and she joined with all the earnestness that became her circumstances. Her chamber was indeed the gate of heaven; and when he took his leave, he could not restrain the prayer, "May my children die the death of Hanuah; and their last end be like her's!" On the day following, she requested her parents and all her brothers and sisters to come near her dying bed; when, taking them each by the hand in succession, she said: "Never forget your God; Oh, never forget my dying hour."

For two or three days she was very low, and could not bear even a whisper. On the 10th, she revived a little, and continued easier till about eleven o'clock at night; when she changed for the worse. The pain she endured for five hours was violent, and very distressing to the affectionate spectators. She was afterwards able to converse with her relatives, and prayed for them all particularly, and for her friends in general. About nine o'clock she asked her sister if she could perceive any alteration in her appearance, and desired to see her own face in the glass; which being reached to her, she observed, "Oh! I shall soon be gone!" About an hour afterwards, as her father wiped away the cold sweat from her face, she turned to him and said, "Oh, father! I never sweat drops of blood yet." She then desired all in the room to pray for her departure. When they had finished, she said, "Now I will pray;" and bending forwards begged of God to release her. After this she said with a smile, "I perceive my breath gets shorter;" and in less than an hour calmly expired, in the eighteenth year of her age.

S. T.

January 4, 1818, died WILLIAM EVANS, a worthy member of the General Baptist church at *Nantwich*. In early life, he had been much addicted to the barbarous sport of cock-fighting; but hearing the minister speak pointedly against such practices, he was induced to lay it aside, and became earnest in seeking the way of salvation. Some time afterwards, he found peace in believing, and joined the church. When he had been two years a useful member, he caught a cold, which, by being imprudently neglected, brought on a fatal decline. He bore his affliction with great patience; and though he was a widower with six children depending on him, he cheerfully resigned them to the protection of Him who has promised to be "a father to the fatherless." Towards the close of his illness, he enjoyed strong consolation and felt a growing desire to depart. On the day of his dissolution, he warned a near relative, against the cruel and wicked courses to which he had himself been formerly addicted. But, though the admonition was received with tears and promises, it is feared that it was too soon forgotten. In a few hours after this act of affection, he fell asleep in Jesus. His remains were interred in the General Baptist burying ground, and the occasion improved to a crowded assembly.

Sep. 16th, 1818, died at *Leicester*, Mrs. A. SIBSON, in the twenty-ninth year of her age. Till within three years of her death, she had indulged, in carnal security, the proud spirit of the Pharisee. But, at that time, by the blessing of God on his word, as preached at *Archeucon-lane* meeting-house, she was roused from this dangerous state, obtained clear views of the nature and guilt of sin, and of the way of salvation. By a continued use of the means of grace, and a growing acquaintance with the scripture, she obtained evidence of her interest in Christ, and proposed herself for fellowship, at that place, where she had derived the greatest benefit. She frequently declared that the day of her public espousals to the Redeemer was amongst the happiest of her life; and that she looked upon the privilege of believers' baptism as one of the greatest honours, which God bestows on his people, in the present state. Her conduct as a church member was honourable. She walked steadily with God; her conversation was spiritual and her zeal ardent. The house and worship of God were her delight, and she was singularly regular in her attend-

ance on them. Though not in affluent circumstances, yet by prudence and economy she was enabled to indulge her affectionate disposition in relieving the poor and needy.

The last scene of her pilgrimage was a very affecting one. It pleased God to visit Mrs. S. her husband, and her only child, a boy of seven years old, with the typhus fever: all at the same moment were groaning under this dreadful disorder; unable to assist each other, or even to help themselves. In these trying circumstances, the piety of our departed friend was exemplary. She seemed to have no will of her own, but calmly delivered herself and her afflicted family into the hands of her God, to be disposed of as he saw fit. Being exhorted to aim at perfect resignation, she exclaimed with earnestness, "O! my greatest fear is lest I should murmur. I am willing to bear all the Lord may see good to lay on me, be it what it may." At another time, being asked if she doubted her acceptance in the Beloved, she replied, "O no! I cannot doubt after so many manifestations of the goodness of God to my soul. How can I doubt it?" In this happy frame of mind, she continued through nine days of severe indisposition, when she was released from all her pains. At this time, she and her husband were both apparently so near death, that it was doubtful which would first be called away. On visiting Mr. S. a few hours after the departure of his amiable partner, he was found silent under the mighty hand of God; and earnestly desiring to follow her flight. The father and son were however restored to health.

J. B.

CONFERENCES.

The LINCOLNSHIRE CONFERENCE was held, June 3, 1819, at Gosberton. At this meeting, the next association was agreed to be held at Spalding. Mr. W. Taylor was requested to visit Lincoln, and make some inquiries respecting the G. B. meeting-house, in that city. Supplies were arranged for Chatteris and Gosberton, and the report of Mr. Bissill's visit to Yarmouth was received. On the preceding evening, Mr. Payne prayed, and Mr. Rogers preached, from John i. 16; and on the evening of the meeting, Mr. Payne preached. The next Conference to be at Wisbeach, Oct. 7th, 1819.

NEW CONFERENCE.

Wednesday, June 2nd, 1819, the first meeting of a New Conference was held at *Butterwick*, including the G. B. churches at *Kirton*, *Butterwick* and *Epworth*, *Misterton* and *Retford* and *Gamston*, which for distinction's sake may be styled the **NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE CONFERENCE**. Messrs. *Skidmore*, *W. Smedley*, and *R. Smith* preached; and in the intervals of public worship, the following cases were considered:—1. A case from *Kirton*, requesting advice respecting the means of supporting Mr. *R. Stocks*, who had come from *Queenshead* to labour at *Kirton*, and whose labours appeared to be useful and acceptable.—2. As a people called *Ranters* and others of different sentiments have frequently been encouraged to preach in several of our meeting-houses, the opinion of the meeting was requested respecting the propriety of this proceeding.—3. Can any thing be done by this Conference towards supplying *Doncaster* with preachers?

To these cases the following answers were given.—1. We advise the friends at *Kirton*, to apply to the next Association for some assistance from the Itinerant Fund; and also that they make public quarterly collections at *Kirton* and the other places at which they maintain regular service, and request Mr. *Watson*, of *Butterwick*, to preach for them at each place, and make the first collection: and that they make a report of the success of these measures to the next Conference.—2. We are decidedly of opinion that the admission of the *Ranters* into our places of worship is highly improper. Some of our reasons are, that their mode of conducting divine worship is disgraceful to rational creatures, that their confusion is expressly condemned by St. Paul, 1 Cor. xiv. that the frequent introduction of preachers of different sentiments, usually occasions diversity of opinions in congregations, and leads to disputation and division, and that it is a misapplication of our meeting-houses, which the Trustees ought not to permit; which might discourage exertions in erecting future ones, and thus prove a real injury to the whole Connection.—3. We request Messrs. *W. and G. Smedley*, *D. Cheesman*, *S. Watson*, *R. Stocks*, and *S. Skidmore*, to visit *Doncaster*, each twice, before the next Conference, which is proposed to be held, at *Kirton*, on the first Wednesday after Christmas next.

ORDINATION.

On Lord's day, June 27th, 1819, Mr. JOHN COOPER was ordained to the pastoral office over the General Baptist church, at Nantwich, Cheshire. Mr. H. Hollinrake, of Birchcliff, opened the service by reading suitable portions of scripture and prayer, and Mr. James Taylor, of Hepstonstall-slack, delivered an introductory discourse. Mr. Hollinrake put the usual questions to the church and pastor, and received their answers, with the minister's confession of Faith. Mr. Taylor delivered the charge to the pastor, from 2 Cor. ii. 16, and Mr. Hollinrake addressed the people, from Luke, iii. 10. The whole solemnity was attended with great seriousness; and we trust will lead to lasting benefits to the cause of Christ in those parts.

GENERAL BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

On Tuesday, June 22nd, at two o'clock in the afternoon; agreeably to the appointment of a former meeting, the Committee of the General Baptist Missionary Society, met at Derby. On account of the lamented indisposition of Mr. Pike,* the Secretary of the Institution, some important business, which would otherwise have come before the meeting, was necessarily postponed. It was however thought highly desirable that a general meeting of the supporters and friends of the design should be held the following evening. A request to that effect was presented to the Association, the members of which cheerfully agreed to give up the time after six o'clock on Wednesday evening for that purpose. A general meeting was convened accordingly, which was numerously and respectably attended: Mr. Heard, of Nottingham, being unanimously called to the chair, and having in a neat and impressive Address stated the object of the meeting: in the absence of the secretary, Mr. Stevenson, of Loughborough, was requested to read the following report.

* We are happy to inform our readers, that the alarming indisposition of this minister is abated, and he is now fast recovering his health.

The Committee appointed to manage the affairs of our infant Missionary Society, desire to be suitably admonished and humbled, by that afflictive Providence, which, on this occasion, has deprived them of the presence and valuable assistance of its worthy secretary. In his absence, they are fully aware, that the meeting must be deficient in that information and interest, which his extensive acquaintance with the subject of missions, and his known zeal in the cause could not have failed to contribute. The duty devolving upon your Committee is as yet a very humble one. They have no splendid achievements to record—no signal victories obtained in the field to announce; they are not however on this account disengaged. Effects like the above, can be expected only from mature age and manly vigour; but the Society, of which they are deputed by you as the guardians, is only an *infant in its third year!* They rejoice however to inform you, that it increases in stature; and possessing, as from its nature and design it undoubtedly must, the favour of God, it also rapidly increases in favour with men. Your Committee are happy to state that the sum raised in aid of the funds of the Society has more than doubled in the course of the last year; that it is in a state of rapid increase, and judging from present appearances, they confidently anticipate a still more abundant supply. Exclusive of the sum already contributed, the present weekly and annual subscriptions, to say nothing of congregational collections, will, on the lowest calculation, amount to £500. per annum. It will, at the same time, be recollectcd, that not half the churches in the Connection have as yet engaged in the cause. What then may we not expect from the united exertions of the whole body! Can our ability to establish and support a Mission to the Heathen be any longer doubted? And would it not be injurious to our character as the followers of Him, who was rich, and for our sakes became poor—of Him, who by the Grace of God tasted death for every man: any longer to doubt our disposition to make the attempt? But perhaps, some of you whose hearts burn with holy fervour in this blessed cause, are ready to exclaim, ‘Whom shall we send; and who will go for us?’ Brethren, it is the pleasing duty of your Committee to inform you, that several promising young men are stepping forward and saying, ‘Here are we, send us.’ What remains then, but that you go forward in the strength of Him,

who has promised to give to his Son, the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession? This almost boundless field of Missionary labour, which offers itself to your view will call for the exercise of much prudence and foresight, in selecting the spot, on which you may with the greatest advantage commence your operations. On this account, it is with real pleasure we learn that the venerable missionary, Ward, has recently arrived in this country, from whom your Secretary expects much valuable information on that subject. Brethren, your Committee will conclude their short Report by reminding you, that its subject is momentous as the salvation of innumerable multitudes of immortal souls; that the duty to engage in the cause is unspeakably urgent; and the effects of diligence or neglect solemn as the realities of Eternity!—Oh! Brethren, fly to the great work—engage in it with all your might—the motives to it are infinite! Now is the accepted time. The Heathen involved in darkness and immersed in woe, are before you. Oh! lend your attention to the piteous complaint which every breeze wafts to your favoured shores from countless multitudes of perishing Heathens, “*No man careth for my soul.*” No longer withstand the moving solicitation with which your ears are perpetually assailed, “*Come over and help us.*” Hear your Redeemer say, Go and pluck them as brands from the fire! Do you still want a motive? Take a survey of the final judgment! See the swarming millions of India placed on the left hand! Hear their sentence! Behold them departing to hopeless misery; and as they go in anguish and despair cast a parting look at you; who possessed the means of their instruction and salvation, but cruelly withheld them! How will you endure the silent but cutting reproach conveyed by such a look! Oh! what will you then think of the sacrifices now required of you to attempt their deliverance from darkness, from guilt, and from final ruin! Most assuredly they will then appear as the small dust of the balance without weight and without regard. May the God of Grace excite you to diligence and activity, while it is day, knowing that the night cometh when no man can work.

The following Resolutions were then unanimously agreed to.

On the motion of Mr. Pickering, seconded by Mr. A. Taylor, it was Resolved,

1. That this Meeting is highly gratified with the Report now read, which they receive, and cordially adopt; anticipating with cheerful confidence the full and speedy accomplishment of the object.

On the motion of Mr. R. Smith, seconded by Mr. Wesley,

Resolved. 2. That the Committee for conducting the affairs of this Institution shall in future consist of 12 Members, in addition to the Secretary and Treasurer; and that corresponding Committees shall be appointed in the distant districts of the connection to co-operate with the General Committee.

On the motion of Mr. J. Bissill, seconded by Mr. Seals,

Resolved. 3. That all Subscribers of 10s. 6d. per annum and upwards, and all Ministers whose congregations contribute not less than five guineas per annum, shall be eligible to be chosen on the Committee.

On the motion of Mr. Rogers, seconded by Mr. Preston,

Resolved. 4. That the Committee shall meet four times a year, viz. at Six o'clock in the evening on the Monday preceding the Midland Conference, in September, December, and Easter Week, at the place where the Conference is held; and the fourth Meeting on the Tuesday, in the Association Week, at the place appointed for the Association.—The Secretary and any three of the Committee shall have power to call a special Meeting, at such place as they may appoint.

On the motion of Mr. Jarrold, seconded by Mr. Peggs,

Resolved. 5. That we strongly recommend every church and member of the Connection, to continue, and if possible increase, their exertions in so glorious a cause; and as Auxiliary Societies and Associations have been found the most efficient means of support, we are sincerely thankful to those friends who have been active in promoting their establishment, and indulge the hope that their example will be generally imitated.

On the motion of Mr. Hoe, seconded by Mr. Cheattle,

Resolved. 6. Impressed with the propriety and vast utility of Monthly Missionary Prayer Meetings, we strongly recommend their immediate adoption in every Church.

On the motion of Mr. Deacon, seconded by Mr. Cameron,

Resolved. 7. That there shall be a General Meeting annually, of all the Subscribers and Friends of the Institution, on the Wednesday evening in the Association Week, at the place where the Association is held; when the Committee

shall make a report of their proceedings during the past year; the business relating to the Society shall be transacted; and a new Committee chosen for the ensuing year.

On the motion of Mr. Stevenson, seconded by Mr. Farrent.

Resolved. 8. That the thanks of this Meeting be given to the Treasurer and Secretary, for their past services, and that they be requested to continue the same for the ensuing year.

On the motion of Mr. Wesley, seconded by Mr. Farrent.

Resolved. 9. That the following persons shall constitute the Committee for the present year, —

JARVIS MILLER.	THOMAS STEVENSON.
ROBERT SMITH.	JOHN HEARD.
WILLIAM PICKERING.	JOHN BENNETT.
THOMAS HOE.	SIMPSON MASSEY.
WILLIAM BRAND.	JOHN WHITE.
THOMAS PARKINSON.	GEORGE WILKINS.

Several appropriate and very impressive Addresses were delivered by the Friends who moved and seconded the above Resolutions; the effect of which was visibly evident at the time, and it is hoped will long be felt by those who heard them. After a vote of thanks to the Chairman, for his obliging and able conduct in the chair, which was unanimously carried; Mr. Brand concluded the solemn and interesting opportunity with prayer.

REVIEW OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

PERSUASIVES to EARLY PIETY, interspersed with suitable Prayers. By J. G. PIKE. 12mo. pp. 284, price bound 3s. 6d. Wilkins. Derby.

The author modestly apologizes for adding another to the number of books, for the use of the young, already extant, by observing "Multitudes of the rising generation now exist in Britain, to whom the endeared names of Doddridge, Jennings, Fawcett and others, who have written for the young, are quite unknown. And, possibly, the Most High may deign to make this little volume the instrument of enlightening some youthful mind, that is altogether unacquainted with the works of much more distinguished writers." This remark is just. A new publication will, from local circumstances and personal connections, be put into the hands of many who would

probably never see other authors on the same subject, however numerous and excellent they may be.

This small volume contains, serious, affectionate and earnest, addresses to the youthful reader, with prayers and reflections suited to sensations that are designed to be produced, on the following subjects, which form the contents of so many chapters. Introductory Address and the plan of the work—Scriptural account of the ruined state of man—Some of the sins of youth enumerated—Religion briefly described—Warning against delusive hopes and formal Religion—The worth of the Soul, a reason for early Piety—Testimonies of Scripture to the importance of Religion—Divine love a reason for early Piety—Early Piety particularly acceptable to God, and honoured by him—The advantages of early Religion—The pleasantness of early Piety—the young Christian's future blessedness a motive for early religion—No real good possessed by those who are destitute of Religion—The ingratitude of an irreligious life to God, and its cruelty to the Soul—The vanity of youth a reason for early Piety—Sorrows and dangers of a life of Sin a reason for Religion—The terrors of Death and Judgment a reason for early Piety—The eternal ruin of the ungodly a reason for Religion—The young Reader urged to make his lasting choice—Twenty objections to early Piety, briefly stated and answered—The young Reader urged to make no delay in embracing the Gospel—Addresses to several classes of persons, and directions to the young Christian.

The style is manly; and purposely unadorned with the modern polish. We can heartily recommend the work to the attentive and self applicatory perusal of those for whom it is peculiarly designed, and believe that it cannot be so read without promoting the spirit of serious self enquiry; and producing a very beneficial result. We earnestly pray that the pious ambition of the worthy author may be fully gratified. "The minister of the Gospel," observes Mr. P. "meets with the best commendation, not when the discourse he may have delivered from the pulpit or from the press is much admired, much applauded; but when the sinner becomes dissatisfied with himself, and his pursuits; when the prodigal says, 'I will rise and go to my father'; when the penitent weeps in secret over the crimes that have been brought to his view. Such applause the writer covets; and for such he does not hesitate to pray. He freely confesses

that it is his desire to do something for promoting the kingdom of Christ beyond the narrow limits of his own congregation, and the confined space of a few short years."

*MEMOIRS of the Rev. ARTHUR HILDERSHAM
M.A. Vicar of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, in the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James I. and Charles I. &c. &c. By JOSEPH GOADBY, 8vo. pp. 45, stitched. Price 1s. Mann, London.*

The worthy pastor of the G. B. church, at Ashby, has, in this pamphlet, preserved an interesting account of a pious clergyman of the established church; who, two centuries ago, laboured much for the glory of God in the same town. Mr. Hildersham appears to have been a man of eminent piety, exemplary conversation, and very assiduous in defending the truth. His parents were rigid papists, connected by affinity with Cardinal Poole, and designed to bring their son up for the catholic church, where the greatest preferments waited his acceptance. They however placed him unwittingly, both at school and at the university, under protestant tutors, whose instructions were crowned with success. When young, he declared against the errors of popery, and thereby lost both the estate and the affection of his father, who disinherited him and never afterwards took any notice of him. By the generosity of his friends he was enabled to complete his studies. For a long time, his non-conformity exposed him to the rage of the high church party; and he suffered much from fines, imprisonments, excommunications, &c. All which he endured with christian patience, and died in peace, March 4th, 1631, aged 68 years.

The documents for these interesting memoirs appear to be the most authentic, the narrative is plain and affecting, and the reflections pertinent and useful. We hope the author will receive liberal encouragement; and that the perusal, to use his own words, "may encourage the feeble and persecuted christian to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ; and to gird up the loins of his mind, to be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto him at the revelation of Jesus Christ." These valuable purposes we sincerely think the pamphlet is adapted to answer; and under that persuasion we cordially recommend it to our readers.

THE
GENERAL BAPTIST REPOSITORY.

No. LIII.—Vol. IX.—November 1st, 1819.

*An APPEAL to the CHURCHES in BEHALF of the
ITINERANT FUND.*

THE decayed and destitute state of some ancient General Baptist churches in Lincolnshire had, in 1810, engaged the attention of the New Connection, and excited a desire to relieve them; but how was this to be accomplished without funds for the purpose? At the Association held in London, in that year, it was suggested, "that a Fund to assist in such cases would be highly desirable." It was, therefore, unanimously resolved, "That such a fund should be raised for the purpose of promoting the cause of religion, and the General Baptist interest;" and Mr. J. Heard was appointed treasurer. It was also recommended to the churches "to engage heartily in support of this resolution." Nearly £15 were immediately subscribed. At the Association, held at Melbourne, in 1811, it was resolved, "to abide by the resolution of last year." It was agreed to raise this fund by the voluntary contributions of churches and individuals. The management, application, and distribution of it were vested in the annual Association." Mr. J. Heard was confirmed in his office; and Mr. John Bawell, of Castle Donnington; Mr. J. Bissill, of Sutterton, and Mr. William Ingham, of Heptonstall-Slack, were desired to interest themselves in their different districts." At the same time, the Yorkshire Conference stated their labours at Manchester; and the Association directed Mr. Heard to pay their expence out of this infant fund. In consequence of these mea-

sures, the following sums, in the succeeding years, have been subscribed and disbursed.

In the year	Subscribed.	Expended.
1812	£68 17 8	£23 16 4
1813	29 2 0	15 8 6
1814	28 10 0	33 11 6
1815	38 12 7	22 7 0
1816	40 10 9	35 13 6
1817	32 9 3	71 10 3
1818	40 8 11½	84 13 4½
1819	73 3 10½	83 14 7½

From this sketch it appears, the subscriptions during the former years exceeded the expenditure ; but during the latter years, when the fund began more fully to operate, the expences have far exceeded the income ; and, at the present time, not only is the surplus of former years exhausted, but £10 are in advance by the treasurer. If, therefore, the demands upon the fund in this and future years, should equal or exceed the average of the last three years, it will certainly require an increased support, otherwise a severe injury must be sustained by the Connection. In order to prevent this, the Association held at Derby, directed an article to be drawn up, and inserted in the G. B. Repository, for the purpose of pointing out the nature, object and utility of this fund. It was thought, that if these were well understood, it would unavoidably secure friends and supporters.*

1. As to the *nature* of this fund, it has hitherto been called *The Itinerant Fund*—An itinerant is a person employed in travelling to preach the gospel of Christ ; and is applicable to one or more ministers, who, by the appointment of the Asso-

* It may be allowable to suggest, that if in future this fund were called *The Home Mission*, or the *Home Missionary Fund*, it would be better appreciated. There is a charm in every thing of a missionary nature, which has happily awakened the dormant zeal of the religious world, and is producing the most astonishing and happy effects. It would be highly gratifying to see this fascinating influence aroused in favor of a fund, which certainly possesses the leading characters of a mission.

ation or Conference, are employed as supplies in promoting the cause of Christ wherever their labours may be required.— Hence the fund, appropriated to defray the expences of this mode of spreading abroad religious knowledge, has been called *The Itinerant Fund.*

2. The *object* of the fund is diversified: in some cases, to furnish supplies to churches in a low state; in others, to send a minister, and aid him in a new station; and, in urgent cases, to render assistance in fitting up and paying the rents of places necessary for worship. These are all great and weighty objects. If the design of this fund was merely to strengthen and enlarge the General Baptist Connection, it would be of minor importance; but if, in enlarging the Connection, we are honoured as humble instruments in extending the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ; defeating the designs of Satan; plucking brands out of the burning; reclaiming many from the error of their way, and leading them to be the willing servants of our Lord here, and to dwell with him for ever in his kingdom; then the object, it must be admitted, assumes the highest character.

3. The *utility* of this fund, considered merely on principles of prudence or policy, must be very great; because without some such aid, the Connection cannot possibly extend itself so widely or rapidly. But, if the utility of this fund be viewed in its present and future effects, it rises beyond all calculation. It comprehends the enlightening of many dark neighbourhoods; the reviving of many decayed churches; the strengthening of many weak ones; the eternal honour of Jesus by the triumphs of his cross; the growing splendor of his crown; the joy of angels in heaven at the conversion of many sinners; and the everlasting happiness of, we hope, hundreds and thousands of our fellow men.

Nor is this mere theory, or groundless conjecture. For although this fund has been in operation only eight years, yet the good already done by it, as the following cases will prove, fully justifies our highest expectations.

Fornet St. Peter's, in Norfolk has been visited, and assistance rendered. They have now a church organised, consisting of seventy-six members, a regular ministry, and preaching in nine different places, all which they support themselves. Two

out of the nine preaching places (Banham and Wymondham) have been fitted up by this fund : and very extensive good has been done in the neighbourhood.

Staley Bridge, Lancashire, had for a time preachers, who were chiefly supported by this fund, when it must otherwise have sunk. There is now a church containing eighty members. They are at present erecting a chapel at the estimated expence of five hundred pounds : the three last years they have supported their own cause, and made an annual collection for this fund.

Lidgate or Lineholm, Yorkshire, is circumstanced nearly the same as Staley Bridge ; only their chapel is built, which cost six hundred pounds ; they have a settled ministry, and have supported their own cause one year : twenty-nine members, and prospects are favourable.

At *Netherton*, eleven miles from Birmingham, there were a chapel, school-room, garden, &c. of considerable value, belonging to our denomination, unoccupied ; the trustees, last year, offered it to the Association, and the Birmingham church proposed to supply it for a year, if they would grant the sum of ten pounds out of this fund towards the expences. This has been done—congregations are good (more than two hundred), and the Birmingham church will supply it, the present year, without our guarantee ; hoping the people themselves will pay the expences.

At *Great Yarmouth* a useful chapel has been obtained, and occupied, little more than twelve months. The cause there was reduced extremely low ; two have been added by baptism since the Association, and some others are under serious impressions.

At *Mansfield*, Notts, some years ago, a good chapel was purchased by subscriptions and collections ; it was supplied for some time at the expence of this fund : there is now a church of thirty-two members, a settled minister, and pretty good congregations. They are still aided by this fund, but the sum is reduced every year.

Chatteris, in Cambridgeshire, has been supplied three years at the expence of this fund ; considerable good has been done ; and were it not for some untoward circumstances, the prospects would be very encouraging.

At *Nantwich*, the G. B. interest, which had formerly flourished in that neighbourhood, had disappeared. A poor man gathering leeches, awakened some attention to it. Itinerants were sent by this fund ; the meeting-house and property were recovered, and at length three individuals were formed into a church. Under the fostering care of this institution, the cause increased, and lately a regular pastor has been ordained over a society of twenty members. Another church of twenty-four members, at a few miles distance, has also shared in the benefit, and since joined the Connection. At various other places in the vicinity the cause has been revived, and there is a promising prospect for usefulness. Could the fund support a well-qualified, regular itinerant, in these parts, the effects would probably exceed the most sanguine expectations. The fields are already white to the harvest.

These are places worthy of particular notice : but besides these, assistance has been rendered more or less to Misterton, Butterwick, Kirton, Knipton, Doncaster, Manchester, Wrotham, Wendover, and Burton-upon-Trent. Thus seven churches, containing two hundred and sixty-six members, besides a considerable branch of Birmingham church, has, either partly or wholly been added to the Connection by this fund ; and nine other places have been materially assisted.

The great importance of this fund can be no longer doubtful. What has been done in the short space of eight years, is a very encouraging specimen of what may be expected, through the goodness of the great Head of the church, in years to come ; and those of our churches, and individuals who have generously contributed to this fund, cannot fail to feel a conviction that the Lord Jesus has smiled upon their bounty, and is owning this their work of faith and labour of love, to the honour of his great name, and the salvation of many souls.

The low circumstances of most of our churches, prevent them from attempting any thing expensive in their separate capacities. Their ministers, indeed, are often ready to give their time and labour ; but neither they nor their people can defray the expences of journies, the rent of rooms, the fitting off them up for preaching, &c. Now, what must be done ? Shall promising openings for the spread of the gospel and the salvation of sinners be neglected, and favourable opportunities be suffered to pass away unimproved, for want of pecuniary means ?

Shall the last faint sparks of once respectable Baptist interests be suffered to die away and be extinguished for ever; when, by a little attention, the sacred fire might be re-kindled, and raised into a flame?—Certainly, every true lover of the souls of perishing sinners, every real disciple of the adorable Itinerant, who went about doing good, will spurn the idea. He will exclaim, No. If it be possible, let funds be provided to meet every such case. If it be possible, let not one place be neglected where Divine Providence opens a door, and points out a probability of success. *If it be possible?*—It is possible. It is easy. Sixpence a year from every member of the Connection would, at present, furnish all the requisite supplies. And who would not spare One Halfpenny a month to accomplish so desirable an object? Surely, none who deserve a place in a church of Christ.

This calculation supposes that the exertion is general throughout the Connection. But it is painful to observe, how unequally this and every other burden falls. Out of *eighty-two* churches, of which the Connection at present consists, only *fourteen* made collections for the Itinerant Fund during the last year. And though the list of annual subscribers to this useful institution had considerably increased, yet not more than *fifty* names out of seven thousand were included in it. This certainly ought not so to be. Union, it has often been said, is strength; but union without co-operation is a delusion. Some means of a more general and decided nature will, it is to be hoped, be at last adopted by the general voice of the Connection, to call into action the united energies of *all* the churches, and to direct their operations to some common object. Till that happy period arrive, let the leading members of each church endeavour to instruct their brethren in the existence, the nature, and importance of the Itinerant Fund, and the duty and honour of supporting it. Let the attention of every church be called to this object in proper time, and prudent steps be adopted to render it, at least, a reasonable portion of encouragement. If this be done in every church, an effect will be produced that will set the ensuing Association at liberty to act with effect for the promotion of the cause of truth. When petitions are presented from sinking churches, from districts in which the good news of salvation has scarcely been heard, from individuals who are generously spending

their own strength and property to support promising stations, or preserve from utter extinction languishing interests; the zeal of the assembled brethren will no longer be checked by the chilling enquiry, "How are the expences to be borne?"—An inquiry which has stifled in its birth many an excellent design, and repressed, in their very utterance, the warmest desires of many a benevolent and pious heart. No—this fund will stand ready to give full effect to the most liberal plans, and accomplish with ease the most generous purposes. On the contrary, in proportion as this fund is neglected, the progress of the truth and the prosperity of the Connection must be retarded. Dark places must remain in darkness; declining interests must languish and expire, and infant interests, for want of necessary assistance, must grow weaker and weaker. Instead of the pleasing increase and vigour which have distinguished our late Reports, we may expect to hear of diminution, languishing, and death.

It is not easy to anticipate objections against a plan so obviously excellent. Some perhaps may say, that, in the present scarcity of ministers, proper men will not easily be found to carry the designs of the fund into effect. But it is probable, that persons well qualified will come forward with more readiness, when they find that they are not expected to go a warfare at their own charges. Is it not more than probable, that the operations of this fund, by affording encouragement, support, and employment to ministers who may not be settled with any people, may have a happy tendency to encourage young men, possessing the requisite abilities, to come forward and engage in the sacred work? And may it not reasonably be hoped, that this effect would materially assist in removing the alarming want of preachers, which threatens the destruction of the New Connection?

Others may possibly object, that other institutions of greater importance claim their support. This is an obvious mistake. The Academy and General Baptist Mission are certainly laudable institutions; but a little reflection will shew, that they are only secondary measures. Unless churches be raised, rising interests nourished, and sinking causes revived, the Academy must languish: it can neither expect students nor funds, nor find suitable employment for those who have completed their studies. Unless our cause flourish at home, mis-

sionaries for foreign stations can neither be provided nor supported. Every interest that is raised, every station occupied by itinerants, opens a new nursery for missionaries, and a fresh source of revenue to support them.

If, then, we wish for the prosperity of religion in our own country, or the success of our endeavours to carry the gospel to heathen lands, let the support of the *Itinerant Fund* be the first object of attention in every church. If that prosper, every other laudable institution will flourish; if that languish, all our generous designs will be disappointed, and the prosperity of the Connection itself will be greatly retarded, if not eventually destroyed.

J. A. B. T.

ADVICE TO YOUNG MINISTERS.

On turning over the Harleian Miscellany, I was arrested by a *Letter of Advice to a Young Clergyman, how to conduct himself in the common Offices of Life*, written by a late Right Reverend prelate. Curiosity prompted me to run over the contents of this epistle; and though many of the advices are better suited to clergymen than dissenting ministers, and more conformable to the principles of a national church than of a church of Christ; yet there are some excellent hints interspersed, which are applicable to all who are commencing the sacred work. Conceiving that the following Extracts may be useful to some of our young ministers, I send them for insertion in the G. B. R. if they are judged worthy of that honour.

COLLECTOR.

" Above all things let me deter you from too curious an examination of those sacred mysteries which are the objects of our faith, but are not within the narrow limits of our understanding. I have trembled to hear a young preacher, with too much warmth in his head as well as in his heart, state all the objections which infidelity, with all its wicked industry, has ever been able to make against our religion, only to show his own ingenuity in answering them. But how grievous is his offence, if any of his auditors, who had never heard, till that

hour, any one of these objections made, and probably never might have had their peace disturbed by hearing them made, should not think his answers full and satisfactory. Beware, therefore, I beseech you, in quiet minds, never to raise doubts nor start difficulties merely for the merit of solving them."

" If you should be so lucky as to rise in the church, do not, I beseech you, be, or affect to be, rigidly severe against sectaries or any set of men, merely on account of difference of opinion. If all who fear God and work righteousness are accepted of him, do not anathematize or reject those whom it is our duty to believe that God hath not rejected. Although we ought to be stedfast in our faith, yet I cannot but think it a religious and highly commendable fear, when we forbear to censure others, only for differing in opinion from us, from an awful apprehension of its being possible they are in the right, and that we ourselves may be mistaken. For, consider a little : we have revelation—so have they ; we have reason—so have they. Many things we differ in, yet very few of them are essential to salvation ; and those which are so, must wait their determination from infinite wisdom. Therefore, in the first place, with regard to yourself, be sober, be careful, be vigilant, be not blown about with every wind of doctrine ; but labour incessantly to confirm and strengthen those that do well. And, in the next place, with regard to others, be meek, be patient, be merciful ; remember that your adversary is your brother, and be not bitter against him, but at all times avoid that " zeal which is not according to knowledge."

" As to the respect which you may justly claim to yourself, it is the hardest thing in the world to give advice in. For hardly any one amongst us thinks he has enough, which is the reason why he has so little. But as you have a right to require that I propose some rule for you to go by, let it be this, to demand only so much respect as you really deserve. Now this you will say leaves you, as it found you ; since you cannot easily form a judgment of your own deserts. If that be the case, then let the world form a judgment for you ; and it is highly probable that it will form a favourable one. Think you deserve no more, or rather less than you do really receive ; for this will be a certain method to raise you to that very respect you wish to have shewn to you, and will, at the same

time, preserve humility in yourself. The truth of the fact is really just thus: it is our contending so apparently for so much respect, which very often, if not always, deprives us entirely of it. Men have ceased from worshipping images. Though they revere the priesthood, they abhor priestcraft. They will not, they ought not to regard us merely for our habits; but to inquire what manner of spirit we are of. Nothing can make a proud man more odious, unless it be that he is a proud priest; and believe me, from experience I speak it, if we would have any uncommon deference and regard shewn us from the laity, we must take it by courtesy, and not as a matter of right; for they are at all times ready to give us proper respect, if we do not insist on it as a debt, which they are obliged to pay merely on account of our office."

"The only thing that remains for me to mention to you, is christian charity. I had rather be employed in one act of benevolence, than expound the whole Apocalypse. There is nothing so much mistaken as charity. Some confine it to an ostentatious alms-giving, where the act pays itself. Some place it in giving to all men a good character, which renders their good word of no value to any man, and which seems to me to flow rather from an abject servility of spirit than from any religious motive: yet sure to part with the superfluities of life, which we know not how otherwise to employ; and to blow off our praises to others, when they cost us nothing, and are nothing worth, cannot deserve to wear the name of charity;—that virtue rises to a higher pitch, it streams with every bleeding wound, and sighs with every aching heart: it is delighted to be employed, and places all its good in procuring happiness to others; had rather remove distress than build palaces; and says to the unhappy, 'Mine is your misery, for ye are my children.' This is, or this ought to be, the distinguishing characteristic of the servants of Christ; without which, knowledge and learning are a reproach, and all pretences to piety and solemn austerity, impious and pharisaical."

ON JEPHTHAH'S VOW.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R

DEAR SIR,
As the solution of the difficulty respecting Jephthah's vow

was acknowledged to be a quotation, I am under no obligation to support it. Yet, as it strikes me that the remarks of PHI. are not well founded, I beg leave to make a short reply.

1. Respecting the construction of the particle, *Vau*, I do not pretend to determine myself. My knowledge, or rather ignorance of the Hebrew, renders me unfit. But the author of the quotation (Parkhurst) has sufficient weight with me to make me think, that he understood the subject. He contends, that if our translation gives the sense, the particle signifying for (*Lamed*) ought to have been prefixed to "a burnt offering," according to Gen. xxii. 2. 13. While the construction for which he contends, i. e. "I will offer to him a burnt-offering," is both natural and frequent. See Gen. xxxvii. 4. 2. Sam. xx. 5. 2 Sam. xv. 4. and many others. So that the grammatical sense of the words requires this construction.

2. Notwithstanding what PHI. has said of the idolatry of Jews, and the readiness with which Jephthah's vow, in PHI.'s idea of it, might be accomplished, there still appears a difficulty, next to impossibility, in its being done. It is allowed the Jews were very wicked, it is allowed that they offered up human victims: still, however, the difficulty recurs. The following remarks may, perhaps, make it appear.

1. It will, I think, be generally allowed by those conversant in mythology, that sacrifices were not offered promiscuously to the different deities; but every god had his peculiar sacrifices, manner of worship, priests, &c. A careful regard was had to these things, and a breach of these rules and orders would have been considered as sacrilege. Jehovah had his proper kind of sacrifices, as well as the heathen gods. But the sacrifices offered to him were not human victims.

2. It is evident, that the vow was made to Jehovah, who held human victims in the greatest abhorrence. Can we then suppose that Jephthah would vow a vow, and attempt to offer a sacrifice in order to obtain the success of an enterprise, which vow and offering were repugnant to the feelings, and contrary to the law of the Being to whom they were made?—Such a conduct would be the most likely means to ensure, not the success, but the ruin of the enterprize.

3. How much soever the Jews were charged with idolatry and the sacrifice of human victims, they are never, as far as I know, charged with offering human victims to Jehovah.

4. There would be no difficulty in finding priests wicked enough to practise idolatry, and to offer human victims. But the question is, "Would any do this to Jehovah?" Their offering of a thousand to Moloch is no proof at all. Indeed, it is quite contrary to reason itself, to suppose that such a thing COULD be done. If we allow that every sacrifice is intended either to procure the favour, or to deprecate the wrath of the Being to whom it is offered, it follows, of necessity, that this sacrifice must be such an one as that Being approves. How then can we suppose, that Jephthah would take a method directly opposite, and try to obtain the favour of Jehovah by that which must awfully offend him?

Lastly. Can we suppose, that God would permit such a thing to be accomplished, even if it were attempted? If Uzzah must be struck dead for touching the ark, 2 Sam. vi. 6, 7; if Nadab and Abihu must perish for strange fire, Numb. iii, 41; can we suppose that God, at this period, when miraculous interpositions were so frequent, would permit his altar to be stained with human blood?—These things appear to me, when put together, to make it more than probable, that Jephthah neither did, nor intended to sacrifice his daughter.

I might remark, on the extraordinary assertion of PHI, that if Jephthah offered his daughter, there is no more difficulty than in the affair of Abraham denying his wife, &c. But I am afraid I have said too much.

Your's, sincerely,
VIRIDUS,

QUERY.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

If any of your learned Correspondents will favour me with a few remarks in your next Number of the G. B. R. on the two following portions of Scripture, viz. Genesis vi. 6, 7. and Ecclesiastes vii. 15, 16, 17. it would much oblige,

An ENQUIRER.

THE GRAND DESIGN OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY, and the PROPER MEANS OF ACCOMPLISHING IT.

*An EXTRACT from a CHARGE by the late Mr. DAN. TAYLOR,
from 1 Tim. iv. 16.*

Observe, I beseech you, my dear brother, the great object to be constantly kept in view—*the salvation of yourself and those that hear you.* Important object indeed! O that you and I may never lose sight of it! Allow me to dilate a few moments on these very striking and important expressions.

1. Observe, you are not this day called to live a life of ease, grandeur, or carnal pleasure; not to labour to aggrandize yourself, or to obtain the riches of this world. If you act the part of a good minister of Jesus Christ, as I hope you will, you must aim at something as far superior to all these gaudy trifles, as the heavens are higher than the earth; as eternity exceeds the momentary duration of the present life.

2. Remember, your own salvation as well as that of others is inseparably connected with your conduct as a man and as a minister. Awful thought!—You may preach to others, and yourself at last be a cast-away; disapproved of the God that made you; in whom alone is all your happiness, both for time and eternity: yet this is not an uncommon case. Our Saviour assures us, that at the great day, *many* will be found to be of this unhappy number. Pause awhile, Sir; and give this affecting subject a serious consideration. Let it not, however, discourage you—you need not despond; but rouse and be attentive to your great work. It is indeed a great work. The undertaking is exceedingly solemn and important; and the execution arduous and difficult. You will also probably have many enemies and much opposition. You are now to consider yourself, not only a *soldier* of Jesus, but an *officer* and *leader* in his army. You must take the advice which you will often give to others: “Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil,” &c. Eph. vi. 10—18.

3. When you are called upon to save yourself, and those that hear you, you are sensible that you are not called to do either by any power or merit of your own. It is a truth which I trust you cannot forget, and which you will frequently, with

all possible earnestness, inculcate, that "Jesus Christ came to save sinners;" and that "there is not salvation in any other." If ever you be saved, it must be by him only; and you will, not only in time but to all eternity, unite with the redeemed of the Lord, in singing "To him that loved us and washed us from our sins, in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests to God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen!" In ascribing the conversion or salvation of others to a minister, the holy penmen evidently intend, that he is the instrument, while God is the sovereign agent of their salvation. In the same sense, they speak of believing husbands and wives saving their partners—of believers saving those who err from the truth; by converting them from the error of their ways. The apostle Paul himself, in this view, endeavoured to save his countrymen, the Jews; and was made all things to all men, that he might by all means save some.

4. Yet remember, my brother, these are not merely words of course, they have a very important signification: a signification which ought to awaken every power of our souls, to attempt what they most clearly intend. We have no power to save or to destroy the souls of men; but God has appointed means, which we are to use to that end; and, with that design, to be instruments in this great work: as the passages above referred to evidently demonstrate. The means are naturally adapted to the end; as we might shew at large, would the limits of our time admit. And when these means are faithfully and diligently used, they are generally in some considerable degree successful. Here let me remind you, my dear brother, as it were by the way, that "the gospel of Christ is the power of God to salvation, to every one that believeth." This divine declaration ought to be, as it were, written before the eyes, and engraven upon the heart of every minister. O that it may be engraven upon your heart and mine! My brother, as you value your own soul and the souls committed to your care, I entreat you, that you endeavour to keep it in view, wheresoever you go and in all that you do. In your prayers, in your studies, in your pastoral and occasional visits, in your ministration of the word and ordinances, and in all your conduct, never lose sight of your great object to save yourself and them that hear you; never forget this one fact,

that "the gospel of Christ is the power of God to salvation, to every one that believeth."

Let me entreat you to consider continually, that you are called to save yourself as well as your hearers. You are a fallen creature, as well as they. You have sinned, as well as they. You have a corrupted nature, as well as they. Satan and the world are enemies to your salvation, as well as to theirs. You are an accountable creature, as they are. You, as well as they, must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that you may receive the things done in the body, according to that you have done, whether it be good or bad. By the same rule, you must also be judged; and if found at last in a state of sin and unbelief, you must be as certainly condemned as they. Only your condemnation will be greater and more dreadful, in proportion to the superior advantages you enjoy, and the more important charge with which you are entrusted. You must, as well as they, be saved from sin here, and devoted to Christ, or you cannot be happy hereafter; for without holiness no man shall see the Lord. But, O the cheering thought! if you are such a man, such a minister, as you ought to be, then you will be happy in this world and the next, and may indulge the animating hope that many will be "your joy and crown of rejoicing, in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming."

Impressed with these considerations, my dear brother, I proceed to call your most serious attention, secondly, to the means by which these important ends are to be accomplished, by which you shall save both yourselves and them that hear you. "*Take heed unto thyself and to thy doctrine.*"

1. In the first place, you must take heed to *yourself*. In every sense it is true and necessary to be observed, "that a tree must be good in order that its fruit may be good." Nor can you have any ground to expect success in your ministry, unless your heart, life, and labours, be such as God will approve, and such as will recommend yourself and your high and holy calling to the approbation of all candid and impartial men.

2. Your conversion to Christ, we suppose, to be implied in the profession you have this day made, and the charge which you have voluntarily taken upon yourself. For how can you

explain or recommend that to any tolerable advantage, which you do not yourself experience? or, direct others in a way to which you yourself are a stranger? It will not, however, be improper or unprofitable, frequently to re-examine yourself even on this head. A continued, satisfactory evidence, that you are a child of God, will be of great advantage to you in every part of your life, and your ministry. It will embolden you against opponents, and support you under many trials; which, if you be a good minister of Jesus Christ, you must expect.—But supposing you to be truly converted, and your life to be, in the general, as becomes the gospel, there are yet many things respecting yourself to which you must pay a close attention, if you wish to be an eminent and useful minister. We mention a few.

1. Take heed that you be *humble* and *diligent*. Humility and diligence are radical qualities of the ministerial office. You can never be too sensible that pride and sloth are the bane of all that is truly excellent, and the ruin of ministers when prevalent in their hearts. They prevent improvement in knowledge and in grace, and render the person in whom they reign the object of contempt.

“Genuine *humility* arises from a proper sense of our meanness, depravity, and unworthiness before God. If you frequently compare yourself with the majesty and purity of the divine Being, you will see abundant reason to acknowledge your meanness and depravity! And if you add to these the consideration of the sins which you have committed, and the imperfections of your best performances, you cannot be easily forgetful of your great unworthiness. Let these, therefore, be frequently the subjects of your serious meditation; and be earnest in prayer that they may so operate upon your mind that you may be kept truly humble.

Diligence is requisite in every concern of life, and in every situation. Without it, we trifle away time to little purpose. In order to excite yourself to it, consider the nature and greatness of your work, and how much depends upon the right performance of it. The work to which you are this day called is abundantly sufficient to employ all your time. Its parts are various, and all require much thought and attention. You have to search the scriptures with peculiar assiduity, to compare one part with another, and to make yourself at least

so far master of the whole, that you may be at no loss to illustrate and defend any part of the counsel of God. You must be able, when necessary, to state the facts on which the authenticity of scripture is founded, and by which it is confirmed. At all times, but especially in the present day of prevailing infidelity, this is of great importance. You must explain the doctrines of scripture so clearly that all may understand them: and confirm them, not by “I think”—“it may be”—“I doubt not”—or, “it cannot be denied;” but by the express testimony of God himself; that none may be able to gainsay or resist, but those who dare contradict the Bible. You must so clearly and so fully explain and enforce the various duties of scripture, that none of your hearers may plead ignorance, or if possible be easy in their consciences, in the neglect of them. You must detect and expose iniquity in all its forms and branches; you must cry aloud and not spare; but shew men their transgressions, “whether they will hear or whether they will forbear.” Nor must you fail to mention the dreadful threatenings of God against all that do iniquity. You must take care clearly to describe repentance, faith, regeneration, and conversion; and to explain the nature and effects of that change, and of that holiness without which no man can see the kingdom of God; that the unconverted may be sensible of their dreadful condition, and not “perish for lack of knowledge; and that none may be content with the form while destitute of the power of religion.—You must explain the nature, design, and use of all divine ordinances, and enforce them on the consciences of your hearers, both as duties and privileges. This must be all done by scripture evidence, that every thing may stand on its own proper ground, and be attended to from scriptural principles and motives; in order that the faith, profession and practice of your hearers may not “stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God.”

Now, sir, this will require great diligence and much labour, especially for some years, till the scriptures become familiar to you, and you have entered into the spirit of them. Then your great work will become easy by natural consequence. To this end, you must study to shew yourself “approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” You must “meditate on these things and give yourself wholly unto,

them, that your profiting may appear to all." You must "dig for sacred wisdom as for silver, and search for her as for hidden treasure." And you are not to confine yourself to the closet or to the pulpit, nor to any stated public services; but take all opportunities more privately, by occasional visits and otherwise, to accomplish the great end of your sacred function. In a word, my brother, you must "be instant in and out of season, and must reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all long suffering and doctrine."

To excite diligence and to keep you from indolence and trifling, I exhort you further to consider the several *titles* you will now bear, expressive of the different relations in which you stand to the church, and the duties connected with those relations.—A *pastor* to feed them, as a shepherd, with care and tenderness, and attention to their different spiritual circumstances—Milk for some—strong meat for others. The food must be suitably prepared, and the truth explained, methodized, &c. And as a shepherd, you must take care that they go not astray, nor be any way injured by wild beasts, bad pastors, &c.—A *teacher*, to instruct them with care, fidelity, and sacred skill. They must seek the law at your mouth; and you need much understanding to have the sacred treasures of knowledge from the scriptures ready on all occasions:—to settle their minds, resolve their doubts, to instruct them in all truth, direct them in all religious duty, that they may keep up daily communion with God, and direct their steps in all duty both religious and moral, relative and personal, in the church, and in the world. A *soldier*, and an *officer*, under Christ. You need courage, strength, and resolution against all enemies. You must study every branch of the sacred warfare, with the wiles of their enemies; and how they may obtain wisdom and power to conquer them.—A *watchman*, to warn and alarm of danger, to inform them of the designs of any against them, to see that they are all safe, and to take proper methods to keep them safe. How much vigilance, fidelity and attention are here necessary!—A *guide* or *ruler*, you are to recommend, enforce, and fully explain all the laws of Christ. You must know them, and in order to that, study them. This must be done with prudence, resolution, and impartiality to poor and rich. A minister must here have no friend, take no party, be diverted by no gift, character, or

cause whatsoever.—As a steward, the truth, the purity of the church, and the souls of men, are committed to you ; and you must watch for them as “ one that must give an account.”

When these parts of your sacred work, on which I have touched in this cursory manner, are duly considered, I think you will allow, my brother, that a minister has no time to trifle. All the diligence is necessary of which he is capable. I exhort you then ; nay, if you will admit the expression, without any pretension to superiority or power over you, the most distant idea of which I should resent, I beg leave, in the name of your great Master and of the souls now committed to your care, I beg leave to charge you to attend to your work with all possible diligence.—Beware of loitering—Beware of trifling

—Beware of carnal indulgences—Beware of squandering away your precious time in things that cannot profit you or your people—Beware of reading useless books, and books which are not adapted to increase your capacity, or your furniture for the service of Christ and of men, or which are not adapted to enable, or to quicken you to perform this service more acceptably or successfully—Beware of taking up too much time in unnecessary, useless, and ceremonious visits. Never let it be said, by any in this congregation, or in this neighbourhood, “ We have a minister who is fond of gossiping.” You have enough to do at home, sir ; and need not employ your time or thoughts in this idle useless manner—Be diligent in visiting your people, when your ministrations and other necessary labours will admit of it ; but remember the great end of your visits, as well as public ministry, is to “ save yourself and them that hear you.” By making your visits short, you will be able to make them numerous, and much more valuable to, and valued by the people of your charge. Be diligent on all such occasions in thinking what to speak, and how to speak for the advantage of those you visit, to answer the glorious purpose which is always to be kept in view by every faithful minister of Jesus Christ. Shall I be permitted to add, let your diligence appear in the care you take, not to indulge yourself too much in sleep. This is prejudicial both to body and mind ; and a man who would be eminently useful, must be continually on his guard against it.

“ In a word, take care that you be diligent in all respects, frequently call yourself to account as in the sight of God ; place

yourself often, as before his awful tribunal; ask yourself, Will this conduct, will this indulgence be approved there? Does this indulgence, or this conduct tend to the salvation of my own soul, or to the souls of them that hear me? Use every means with yourself to keep up a lively sense of your great work, and the solemn account you are soon to give, and to rouse your every power to activity and diligence.

2. Take heed to yourself that you preserve a *spiritual frame* of mind. Not only that you have no relish for the enormities or the carnalizing amusements of life; but that you maintain a warm and vigorous ardor for spiritual employments and spiritual enjoyments, for spiritual meditation and conversation. Without this, you will often omit opportunities of doing good to the souls of men; or, if such opportunities be improved at all, it will be only by halves, and in a dry, slovenly, and careless manner. This will prepare you for improving every hint which may drop from any with whom you converse, for the benefit of your own soul, and the souls of others. This will engage your attention to the most spiritual and profitable exercises, and the most practical parts of Scripture. It will prepare you for advising, admonishing, and reproofing, with a becoming temper, and in the most acceptable and profitable manner. A spiritual frame of mind will make your labours pleasant and your difficulties easy. At least you will bear the greatest difficulties with much more patience, than you otherwise could do. It will frequently suggest matter and method of useful discourse, both in private conversation, and in your public ministry. It will often both furnish you with ideas, and direct you in the manner of expressing them. By such a frame of mind, and such effects from it, you will learn more completely than from any theory that "the heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips."

(To be continued.)

ON THE SCARCITY OF MINISTERS.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

Various, doubtless, are the causes of the scarcity of ministers in the churches composing the New Connection; several of which have been properly noticed, and suitable advice given:

in former numbers of your Miscellany. One cause, however, which none of your judicious correspondents have mentioned, appears to me worthy of attention. It too often happens, that when young men are approved by the church to which they belong, as possessing ministerial abilities, and worthy of encouragement, that they have very few opportunities of exercising their gifts. Their own pastor, probably, is seldom absent, and they have preaching only in the meeting house; so that there seldom occurs any opening for them to engage in the sacred work. Through this neglect their gifts are uncultivated, their zeal cools, and they gradually lose all disposition for an employment which, by its infrequency, becomes irksome. Thus promising candidates are often lost, and the scarcity of preachers augmented.

Might not this evil be removed, if the members of churches, who live in villages, at a distance from the usual place of worship, were to open their doors for the preaching of the gospel, and invite these young men to exercise their gifts occasionally at their houses? Were this done, it would not only prevent such young men from being lost, and afford them very convenient opportunities of addressing hearers of different characters; but might, under the divine blessing, be a means of extending the kingdom of the Redeemer, and promoting the salvation of sinners. This, if attended by a conscientious regard to the direction of our blessed Saviour, Matt. ix. 38. might do much toward obtaining a more efficient and numerous ministry.

Your's, &c.

North Lincolnshire, Sep. 25, 1819.

W. T.

QUERIES.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

May I be permitted, through the medium of the G. B. R. to return my thanks to IOTA for his kind attention to my Query on the baptizing of those who do not intend to join a Baptist church: and to request, from some of your Correspondents, an answer to the following.—

If a member of an independent church, or of a Methodist society, requests to be baptized and received to our fellowship, is it necessary that any application be made to the church or society to which the candidate previously belonged?—And if

such church refuse to dismiss the said member, what is proper to be done with respect to him? Can he properly be received into our fellowship under those circumstances?—And if he can, by what method?

PHI.

SIR,

As the subject of missions to the heathen world has lately much engrossed the attention of the Connection, it is not improbable, that several individuals have been seriously considering the nature of a call to missionary labours. To such, as well as myself, an answer to the following Query could not fail of being highly acceptable.—How may a person satisfactorily ascertain that he is called to engage in the important work of a missionary?

P. N.

SCRIPTURE ILLUSTRATED by CUSTOMS relating to CIVIL JURISPRUDENCE.

The Jews *anciently* had but two civil courts, called the greater and less Sanhedrim.—The business of the latter was to take cognizance of all minor offences; the heavier matters being ever reserved for the greater court.

Neither of these courts seem to have possessed the power of putting any man to death while our Saviour was on earth. And to this he appears to refer in Matt. v. 22. “ Whosoever is angry with his brother without cause, shall be in danger of the judgment,” or sentence of the less court. “ And who-ever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council;” the sentence of the greater Sanhedrim. But he that shall say, “ Thou fool,” shall be in danger of something which neither of these courts can now inflict; something equal to death by burning, like that inflicted on their children in the valley of the son of Hinnom, where they caused them to pass through the fire to Moloch.

While the power of death was in the hands of the Jews, it was vested in this greater court. And in all cases of trial of one pretending to divine inspiration, and where life was concerned, it was the only competent tribunal. In the days of our Redeemer’s ministry, this court met only at Jerusalem: to this he refers when he says, “ For it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem,” Luke xiii. 34. as a prophet cannot be put to death but by the sentence of the great San-

bedrim, which sits at Jerusalem. To this court our Lord was conducted for his mock-trial. "They led Jesus away to the high-priest, and to him came all the high priests and the elders, and the scribes," Mark xiv. 53, "And the high-priests and all the *council* sought false witness against Jesus," ver. 55. "And they all condemned him to be worthy of death," ver. 64. Such was the great Sanhedrim, and such its disgraceful employment, when the Redeemer came to give his life for his murderers.

In courts were advocates, whose business was, on the one part, to state the facts in evidence, and to urge the sentence of the law; and on the other part, to plead for the accused. Tertullus pleaded against Paul, Acts, xxiv. 1. And the town-clerk of Ephesus tells Demetrius and his party, "If they have a matter against any, the law is open, and there are *deputies*, let them implead one another," Acts xix. 38.

In the court, the place for the pleader was on the right hand of the accused, whether he pleaded for or against him. "The Lord shall stand at the *right hand* of the poor"; that is, to plead his cause, and so "to save him from them who would condemn his soul," Psal. cix. 21. "Satan stood at the right hand of Joshua to resist him"; that is, by pleading in opposition to him, Zech. iii. 1. To this custom is the allusion in John, ii. 3. "If any man sin, we have an advocate." And those delightful words, Rom. viii. 34. are illustrated hereby; "Who shall condemn, when Christ is the advocate?" How can the elect be lost, when they not only have an advocate at *their right hand*, ready to plead for them; but their advocate is one so honoured in the court, as to have a place assigned him at the *right hand* of the Judge? What comfort must flow to every true Christian, when he reads this with understanding!

When the trial ended, the judge did not pass sentence in a sitting posture, but *rose up* for that purpose; and declared what had been proved against the prisoner, and what the law determined with respect to him. "The men of Nineveh shall *rise up* in judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them," Matt. xii. 41. "Wicked as the men of Nineveh were, they had still sufficient sense of good and evil left, to decide against such conduct as yours; and the rights of judgment, if left in *their hands*, will be surely vindicated, by your

condemnation. How much more surely shall you be condemned by the judgment of the Holy One of Israel."

If the accused was not proved guilty, it was the duty of the judge to declare this to the court; and thus help to vindicate an injured man from the calumny cast on him by his adversary. How effectually is this done, when God himself is the judge; and what honour redounds to him for his impartial decisions. "When thou, O God, *arose to judgment*, to help all the meek of the earth, surely the rage of man shall turn to thy praise; the remainder of wrath thou wilt restrain," Ps. lxxvi. 10. After a false imprisonment, Thou wilt not suffer a false sentence to pass, in order to please a vindictive oppressor; but, restraining him by thy just judgment, men shall praise Thee as an impartial judge, and so much the more, as the tyrant appeared more *fierce* to carry his cruel purpose into execution.

Officers were always in court ready to execute the sentence of the court as soon as it was delivered. To this summary method of doing justice our Lord alludes, Rev. xxii. 12. "I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every man as his work shall be."—To do justice in a summary manner. To *these officers* there is an allusion, Luke xi. 58. "The judge shall deliver thee to the *officer*, &c."

In all important cases, two witnesses were indispensably required, but if there were more, it was considered so much the better. "One witness shall not rise up against any man to cause him to be put to death," Deut. xix. 15. Numb. xvii. 6. "By the mouth of two or three witnesses may every word be confirmed," Matt. xviii. 16. 2 Cor. xiii. 1. The Sanhedrim could not therefore convict our Lord on the evidence of testimony, because they could not find two who agreed in charging him with any important crime. "For many bare false witness against him; but their testimonies agreed not together. And certain bare false witness saying, we heard him say, "Destroy this temple, &c.—But their witness yet agreed not together," Mark xiv. 58, 59. The high-priest was therefore compelled to have recourse to the method of adjuration, and *compel* Jesus to answer, in order to convict him upon his own confession; and when he had owned himself the Son of God, their deep distracting care was over: their pressing necessity ended. "What further need have we of

said the high-priest exultingly, Matt. xxvii. 63, 65. Thus confessing what they had felt before this moment, on the subject of the witnesses.

The prisoner was placed on an elevation exactly opposite to the judge. The great process at the last day is described by many figures taken from these courts; and from this particular circumstance we are told, that we shall all stand *before* the judgment-seat of Christ, Rom. xiv. 10. or "must all appear before" it, &c. 2 Cor. v. 10, alluding to the elevation of the accused party. To this some refer, 1 Kings xxi. 9. "Set Naboth on high among the people, and set two wicked men before him, and let them witness against him."

In passing a capital sentence, the judge and the witnesses laid their hands on the head of the culprit, saying, "thy blood be on thy own head:" meaning, it is thy own criminal conduct, and not any thing false in our testimony, or unjust in the sentence, which deprives thee of life. We are clear. How well had it been for Pilate, had his declaration, "I am innocent of the blood of this just man," Matt. xxvii, 24, been true in this sense, in which doubtless he meant it! And when the insatiated Jews cried, "His blood be on us," &c. ver. 25, it was an answer to Pilate's tacit accusation of them—"You say he is a just man—and that it is not any unjust tyrannical decision on your part, as judge, which deprives him of life. This implies that our testimony is false, or our previous sentence against him is unjust. God is the avenger in such cases—we are prepared to take the consequences!" Wretched men! Surely some of them thought on this, when forty years after, God made inquisition for blood in Jerusalem!

Before the sentence was declared, any person was allowed to come forward and testify, that the accused was registered (that is lived) near him, and to speak what he knew of his character. Nor was the trial thought to be well conducted, unless care was taken to invite such testimony.

Perhaps this may illustrate Isaiah liii. 8, which we read thus. "He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who shall declare his generation?" but which some would translate thus—"He was deprived of his *advocate*, and his *judgment*, i. e. proper and fair trial; and none shall declare his register," that is, none shall be called to speak to his dwelling among them, and to his good conduct in time past.

Those who understand Hebrew, know how very slight an alteration is required to produce this reading; and all know how well it agrees with facts in the history of our Lord's mock trial.

JOHN.

A HINT to the UNGODLY CHILDREN OF PIOUS PARENTS.

(AN EXTRACT.)

I have known (said Mr. L.) the grace of God for nearly thirty years; but in spite of all my advice, my five sons and two daughters, all grown up, ran on in the broad road to destruction. This cost me many a prayer and tear; yet I saw no fruit of all my labours. In January last, I dreamed that the day of judgment was come. I saw the Judge on his great white throne, the holy angels sitting round him, in the form of a half moon; and all nations were gathered before him. I and my wife were on the right hand, but I could not see my children.

I then thought that I must go and seek them; so I went to the left hand, and found them all standing together; tearing their hair, beating their breasts, and cursing the day that they were born. As soon as they saw me, they all caught hold of me, and said, "O father! we will part no more!"—I said, "My dear children, I am come to try, if possible, to get you out of this dismal situation." So I took them all with me; but, when we were come within a bow-shot of the Judge, I thought he cast an angry look, and said, "What do thy children with thee now?—they would not take thy warning when upon earth: they shall not share the crown with thee. Depart ye cursed!" At these words, I awoke, bathed in sweat and tears. A few days after this, as we were sitting all together on a Sabbath evening, I related my dream to them: no sooner did I begin, but first one, then another, yea, all of them, burst into tears; and God fastened conviction on their hearts. Five of them are now rejoicing in God their Saviour. I believe God is at work with the other two; so that I doubt not that he will give them also to my prayers."

This good old saint, before he exchanged time for eternity, had the happiness of seeing the remainder of his children converted to the truth as it is in Jesus, and adorning the doc-

trine of God our Saviour, by useful lives.—Reader, realize that awful scene, in which thou must shortly bear a part. Behold the Judge seated on his great white throne, and the whole race of Adam summoned to his tribunal. The angelic armies stand in silent suspense. The books are opened. The secrets of all hearts are disclosed. The hidden things of darkness are brought to light. O, the perplexity! the distraction that must seize the impenitent rebels, when, speechless with guilt, and stigmatized with infamy, they stand before all the armies of the sky, and all the redeemed of the earth! What a favour would they esteem it to hide their ashamed heads in the bosom of the ocean, or even to be buried beneath the ruins of the tottering world! What will become of them in this day of severe visitation!—this day of final decision? Whither betake themselves for shelter or for succour? Alas! it is all in vain; it is all too late: to justify themselves is still more impossible; and to make any supplications, utterly unavailable. Reader, “Behold! now is the accepted time; Behold now is the day of salvation.”—“Seek the Lord while he may be found; and call upon him while he is near.”

The RULES of the LONDON CONFERENCE.

(Inserted at the Request of the last Meeting.)

[*See G. B. Occurrences.*]

1. That this be called the *London Conference*.
2. That the Conference shall consist of the pastors and representatives of the churches at Berkhamstead, Chesham, and Tring, Chatham, Church-Lane, London, Ford, Great Suffolk Street, Southwark: Sevenoaks, Smarden and Staplehurst, Wendover and Wrotham.
3. That these churches be divided into three districts, *viz.* the Hertfordshire, the Kentish, and the London. And that the meeting be held at some church in each district in regular rotation.
4. That each church shall be at liberty to send six representatives, and that the pastors be members of Conference by virtue of their office.
5. That any church desiring admission into the Conference, must make application at one meeting, and the decision be

made at the next meeting. No church to be admitted unless four-fifths of the members present vote in its favour.

6. That the business of this Conference be to attend to the state of the churches—to consider cases that may be presented from churches or individuals—and to consult what more can be done for the advancement of religion among us.

7. That each church belonging to this conference do send to each meeting a written account of the state of religion among them, and of its progress since the last meeting; and that they do in this account nominate their representatives.

8. That a Chairman, Moderator, and Scribe be chosen at each Meeting, and that these officers be (if convenient) selected from different churches; and that some person be appointed, to whose care the book containing the minutes of the proceedings shall be intrusted.

9. That two sermons be preached at each meeting of this Conference, one on the evening of the Conference, and one on the preceding evening. The minister and representatives of the church at which the next meeting is to be held, shall have the right of nominating the preachers for such meeting. The nomination to be made at the close of the Conference, and the parties nominating are to make the appointment known to any one nominated in his absence.

10. That the meetings of this Conference shall be held on the Wednesday in Easter week, and on the first Wednesday in October, each year.

11. That the members only shall have a right to vote on any question; but the company and assistance of any member of any church in the Connection, shall be esteemed a favour.

GENERAL BAPTIST OCCURRENCES.

OBITUARY.

July 23, 1819, died at Halifax in Yorkshire, MR. PATRICK PHELON, a worthy member of the G. B. church, at Queen's-head, aged fifty-eight years. He was a native of Ireland, and had been brought up a rigid Roman Catholic. In his youth, he entered the army, and the regiment to which he belonged being disbanded at Halifax, upwards of thirty years ago, he settled in that town and married a native; by whom he had many children. One of his sons is at present an assistant min-

nister at Queen's-head. His large family obliged him to labour hard for their support; but his industry and economy carried him honourably through life.

After his settling at Halifax, his catholic prejudices were gradually weakened; and being naturally of a social turn, he began to converse with his neighbours on religious topics. He soon felt that he was ignorant and sought instruction; and, amongst others, received great benefit from the communications of a good old woman, who was connected with the Methodists. He obtained clearer views of his state as a sinner, and was anxious to learn the way of salvation. He attended several places of worship; but his ancient prejudices and his new associates, conspired to give him a dislike to the Dippers, as the Baptists were then called. Going out, however, one Lord's-day morning, without any fixed intention as to the place he should attend, he met with a neighbour, who invited him to accompany him to the G. B. meeting-house. Mr. P. after much entreaty consented, though very unwillingly; and to adopt his own words, as he afterwards used to take great pleasure in relating the incident: "When I got to the chapel, who should be there in the pulpit but little Dan*", and he was, I assure you, a workman. He was preaching to the children of God, and gave such a description of their character, and their present and future enjoyments, as convinced me that I was not one of the happy number." The excellency of the discourse induced our deceased friend to attend in the afternoon, when Mr. T. preached from—"Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." Under this sermon, Mr. P. obtained clear views of the way of salvation, and was enabled to embrace the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour. In the evening, he followed Mr. T. to a village some miles distant, and heard him deliver a discourse from Joshua's pious resolution. "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." From this time he attached himself steadily to the G. Baptists; and continued an honourable and zealous member of their communion till his death. He was very partial to the labours of Mr. D. Taylor, and cheerfully walked to places at a great distance to have the pleasure of hearing him.

* The late Mr. Dan Taylor, who then resided in Yorkshire.

Our deceased friend maintained a steady confidence and a lively faith through the whole of his profession. He seldom was cast down or discouraged, but, on every occasion, acted as one who knew in whom he had believed. His disposition was peculiarly amiable; and he was always ready to give the most faithful and affectionate counsel. He sought opportunities of introducing the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and was always forward to speak in his praise, as one who was able to save to the uttermost. Those who had the happiness of joining with him at private meetings, will long remember, with sacred pleasure, his lively, affectionate and edifying prayers, when his whole soul seemed to be engaged with God. In visiting the sick he was peculiarly useful, in encouraging the drooping soul to trust in the all-sufficient Saviour. Indeed, the animation and confidence with which he usually spoke of the ability and willingness of Christ to save sinners, were so remarkable, that amongst his intimate friends he obtained the appellation of *Great-heart*.

On Lord's day, July 10th, Mr. P. attended the worship of God, and was observed to be more lively than usual. On the following Wednesday, he was seized with an inflammation of the bowels, which in ten days terminated his life. The writer of these hints visited him twice a day, during the greatest part of his illness; and he is pleased to record, to the honour of his God, that the strength of this afflicted Christian was proportioned to his day. His afflictions were very severe; but his faith was firm. When his friend entered his dying chamber, his usual language was, "O my brother, are you come again to see me?—The Lord bless you! I am very comfortable in my mind. I know by experience in whom I have believed. Paul's Saviour is Patrick's Saviour. What could poor Patrick do, if he had the Lord Jesus Christ to seek now?—O how I rejoice in my Saviour. I am perfectly resigned to the will of my heavenly Father. If he should be pleased to take me away now, for me it will be far better; but if he spare me, I hope my spared life will be spent in his service, and to his glory." An aged friend went with the writer to visit him on his death bed, and observed, "We are very near our end:—happy will it be if we arrive safe on Jordan's peaceful shore;" when he hastily replied, "I do not like that manner of talking. I cannot do with ifs." A medical gentleman who at-

tended him, to whom he had preached Jesus, observed, "I never visited such a man before; he knows the way to heaven." As his end approached, his evidence grew brighter, his faith stronger, and his hope more animated; and at last he died in peace. May we not be slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." His death was improved from Lam. iii. 24. "The Lord is my portion, saith my soul: therefore will I hope in him," D. G.

June 2, 1819, died in her twenty-third year, MARY STAN-NARD, an esteemed member of the G. B. church at Ipswich, Suffolk. She was born totally blind; but having the small-pox very severely, when about six years of age, she obtained sufficient use of her eyes as to be able to find her way comfortably about the town. From a child she was remarkable for quietness and steadiness, and about six years ago became regular in her attendance on the means of grace with the General Baptists. It pleased the Lord to bless his word, and she was soon brought to enjoy peace in believing. She determined to give herself up to her Saviour, and proposed herself as a candidate for baptism and church fellowship. Owing to various circumstances, more than a year elapsed before she attained her object. During this painful state of suspense, the opposition of her parents and friends rendered her path more trying; yet she bore all with patience and meekness, kept up a constant attendance at public worship and prayer meetings; and at last was received with great satisfaction into the church.

Her constitution was naturally delicate, and last winter she sunk into a decline, which soon confined her to her bed. She bore her affliction with fortitude; and always appeared happy in her mind. She frequently observed, that the Lord had done great things for her soul: and took every opportunity of advising believers to hold out to the end, and sinners to seek for salvation while they enjoyed health and strength: "for," she would say, "what could I do now, if I were ignorant of salvation by Christ? I should not know how to think, how to pray, or how to converse on spiritual things. But, bless the Lord, he has opened mine eyes and my understanding." She took great pleasure in repeating several hymns, which she had learnt by heart, especially Watts's Psal. 91. part 2, and the third hymn of his second book. When her disorder had re-

duced her almost to a shadow, on putting her withered arm out of bed, to shake hands with a friend, she observed, "Here is not much food for the worms; but the sooner I am gone the better. How happy I used to be when we walked together to the meeting. I cannot now go with you, but I am still happy; and shall soon be happier in a better place, where the inhabitants shall never say they are sick." She was earnest in prayer for herself and friends; but particularly for the eternal salvation of her honoured parents, which seemed to lie near her heart to the last.

After a confinement to her bed of five months, she fell quietly asleep in Jesus: and her pastor, Mr. Jackson, in conformity with her previous request, improved the solemn event, from 2 Tim, iv. 7, 8.

Aug. 18, 1819, died at Woodthorp, near Lougborough, Mrs. ELIZABETH SLEE, aged forty-four years. She was the youngest daughter of Mr. Pepper, of Woodhouse; and enjoying the advantage of religious parents, was early taught the great truths of the gospel, and the infinite importance of eternal things. These pious instructions produced happy effects. While very young, she was the subject of serious impressions, and became anxiously inquisitive respecting the way of salvation. By the divine blessing on the means, she was enabled to rest by faith on the Saviour of sinners, and give herself up to his service. Soon afterwards she offered herself as a candidate for baptism, and was unanimously received into the G. B. church at Quorndon, then under the pastoral care of Mr. B. Pollard; a minister whom she very highly esteemed in love for his works' sake.

In April, 1799, she was married to Mr. Joseph Slee, a member of the same church: and four days afterwards, was suddenly deprived of her father. This stroke left them in possession of the farm on which he had lived, which they occupied till 1813, when they removed to another. At this removal she contracted a violent cold, and from that period her health began to decline very sensibly. Her new situation also greatly increased her cares, and rendered it impossible for her to attend so regularly as she had done hitherto on the public means of grace. This was a constant burden to her mind, and occasioned her much heart-felt sorrow. In the course of the last summer, her health grew worse. She had an attack of

the typhus fever; medical assistance was obtained, and she appeared to recover; but a second attack quickly succeeding, destroyed all the hopes of her friends.

Through the whole course of her profession, her conversation adorned the doctrine of God her Saviour. She laboured to promote peace in the church and in the family. The conversation of lively Christians was her delight; and she drew much comfort from a constant perusal of the word of God. In her last illness, which was very painful, she enjoyed a firm and tranquil state of mind; and when the king of terrors approached, she met him with a calm courage, and was enabled to resign herself into the hands of her Saviour without dismay. Her last advice to her afflicted husband was peculiarly appropriate and salutary; may it influence all his future conduct and experience. Her remains were interred in the burying ground Belonging to the G. Baptists, at Woodhouse; when Mr. Westley preached; and, on the following Lord's day, her death was improved in an appropriate discourse to a crowded auditory, at Loughborough, by Mr. T. Stevenson.

OPENING NEW MEETING-HOUSES.

On Lord's day, May 2d, 1819, was opened the General Baptist meeting house, recently erected at *Belper*, in Derbyshire. Messrs. Felkin and Preston preached on the occasion to very crowded auditories; the former in the morning and evening, from 1 Cor. xv. 14. and Matth. xiii. 33.; the latter in the afternoon, from Matth. vi. 10. The services were very interesting, and the sum of £32 was contributed on the occasion. *Belper* is a populous and improving market town, four miles north of *Duffield*. It contains seven thousand inhabitants, the greater part of whom seem favourable to the Dissenters. The friends at *Duffield* commenced preaching there in the month of August, 1817. They hired and fitted up a room capable of seating about two hundred persons, which was crowded from the very first day. The number of hearers soon became so great, that many could not gain admission, and those who succeeded were very uncomfortably situated. They therefore consulted the Midland Conference on the propriety of building, and were encouraged in the attempt. They also laid the proposal before the London Association, where the mea-

sure was cordially approved, and the case recommended to the "prompt and liberal" assistance of the churches. Under these circumstances, a plain, commodious, substantial stone building has been erected, measuring within fourteen yards by twelve, and accommodated with a gallery opposite to the pulpit, six seats deep. The ground on which it stands, was the gift of an individual. The whole expence, including nearly three hundred yards of burying ground, is £800. Towards this sum, nearly £200 have been raised by subscriptions and collections. For the liquidation of the rest, they have entered into subscriptions of a penny a week, and hope to raise something considerable in the course of the year. They also look with confidence to the churches in connection, for their generous aid in this attempt to extend the Redeemer's kingdom, and should be thankful for immediate assistance according to their ability. The members composing the Duffield church are generally poor; their calls for rent are considerable; their number has been diminished by the loss of the friends at Shottle and Wirksworth, who are become a distinct church; and their very existence as a church is of short duration. On these accounts, assistance would be very acceptable, and as their exertions to spread the G. B. cause have been great, they trust they shall not look to the Connection in vain.

R. I.

BARROWDEN is a considerable village, a mile east of Macclesfield. In October, 1791, Mr. ARNOLD, an inhabitant, a person of considerable talent, and deacon of the church at Macclesfield, licensed a house here for public worship; and invited Mr. Burgess, of Fleet, to open it. Mr. Arnold prayed, and Mr. Burgess preached, from Rev. iii. 20. This was supposed to be the first sermon ever preached by a Dissenter in this village. The attendance was numerous and encouraging. Mr. Arnold continued to preach regularly once on the Lord's day, till 1811; when he was laid aside by a stroke of the palsy. During his long affliction, which lasted five years, there was but little preaching, owing to the difficulty of obtaining supplies: and the spark which had been kindled, was nearly extinguished. After Mr. Arnold's death, his widow, observing with pain the awful state of darkness and sin in which her neighbours were involved, determined to erect a small meeting house at her own expence, on her own premises. This she

did, and it was opened July 1, 1816; when Mr. Curtis, of Morcott, prayed, and Mr. Creton, of Bilsdon, preached to crowded congregations. A respectable young man was engaged to supply it for a year; before the conclusion of which, the church at Morcott obtained a pastor, who fixed his residence at Barrowden.

After this event, preaching was maintained, in this village, every Lord's day evening, and once on a week day. The place was soon found to be too small for the increasing congregation. Many, from time to time, were under the necessity of retiring because they could not gain admittance, nor sometimes even approach the door. There was also a Sunday school, consisting of eighty children, none of whom could be admitted to hear the word of life. The wish for a larger place of worship became general, and the necessity urgent. In consequence, a building was erected, which measures thirty feet by twenty, high enough for a gallery, should one be needed; with a school room adjoining to it, at an expence of £500. This was opened September 16, 1819. Mr. Lilly commenced the morning service with prayer; and Mr. Jarrom, of Wisbeach, preached from Rom. iii. 1, 2. In the afternoon, Mr. Everard, of Spalding, prayed; and Mr. Sexton, of Chesham, preached from Psal. cxviii. 25. Mr. Millar, of Oakham, opened the evening service, and Mr. R. Smith, of Nottingham, preached from Hag. ii. 9. The services were well attended, and a handsome collection was made. The prospect continues pleasing and encouraging.

E. P.

On Lord's day, September 26, 1819, a very neat meeting-house was opened at *Austrey*, near Tamworth. In the morning, Mr. J. Deacon, of Leicester, preached from 2 Chron. vi. 18, 21. and in the afternoon, Mr. T. Stevenson, of Loughborough, delivered a discourse from Psal. xxvii. 4. The congregations were large and respectable; being much augmented by friends from neighbouring churches, who contributed liberally towards the expence of this commodious place of worship. Its interior dimensions are thirty-six feet by twenty-four, with a vestry, measuring twenty-four feet by ten and a half, over which are two stories for school-rooms. In the front is a gallery five seats deep. It is said that the whole expence will not much exceed £500. This meeting-house is thought to be, for its size, the neatest, best executed, and cheapest in the

whole Connection; and reflects great credit on the abilities, integrity, and economy of the builder, Mr. Hair, of Appleby. The services were impressive; and will, it is hoped, be long remembered for good, by those who attended: and there is reason to hope, that this convenient building will induce many in the villages and its vicinity to adore their Creator—and behold his beauty—and to hear the everlasting gospel. The sum collected at the doors was about £41. which, added to what has been previously subscribed, amounts nearly to £200.

J. D.

ANNIVERSARY.

On Lord's day, October 10, 1819, was held the anniversary of the re-opening of *Friar-lane Meeting-house*, Leicester, when two excellent sermons were preached by the Reverend F. A. Cox, M. A. of Hackney, from Psal. xxix. 2. and Isa. xxvii. 2. 3. In the evening, the Rev. R. HALL, M. A. introduced the service. £34 were collected at the doors, which raises the sum, already subscribed by the church and congregation, to £666. About £760 remains to be discharged, which it is intended to raise by periodical subscriptions, &c.

ANNUAL ASSOCIATION.

June 22, 23, 24, and 25, 1819, the ANNUAL ASSOCIATION of the New Connection of General Baptists was held at Derby; when more than eighty Representatives from the different churches were present. Mr. James Taylor, of Heplondall Slack, was chosen chairman; Mr. J. Bissil of Suterton, deputy chairman; Messrs. J. Farrent and A. Taylor moderators. The states of the churches read at this meeting, though of varying purport, were on the whole encouraging. The number baptized, during the last year, was five hundred and eight; and the clear increase two hundred and seventy four. The Connection, at present, comprises eighty two churches, containing seven thousand four hundred and twenty eight members, thirty eight pastors, and seventy five unordained ministers. This assembly was conducted with great unanimity; many important cases were considered; and a disposition to exert themselves for the promotion of the cause of the Redeemer was very pleasingly evident. At the close of the public services

collections were made for the Academy, Itinerant Fund, and General Baptist Mission, which amounted, on the whole, to nearly £30; and a sum of money being wanted for a case to which the Itinerant Fund was inadequate, upwards of eighteen pounds were subscribed in the space of a few minutes.

On Wednesday morning, Mr. Farrent opened public worship with prayer, and Mr. Jarrom preached, from Jer. viii. 22. In the afternoon, Mr. Orton prayed, and Mr. Rogers preached from Acts, ix. 31. In the evening, there was an interesting meeting of the Missionary Society. On Thursday evening, Mr. Cheattle prayed, and Mr. Everard preached, from Isa. xii. 1—3.

CONFERENCE.

The *London Conference* was held at Church Lane, Whitechapel, October 5, 1819, and was well attended. On the preceding evening, Mr. E. Sexton, of Chesham, preached, from Rom. i. 9; and on the evening of conference, Mr. Farrent, of Great Suffolk Street, delivered a discourse from Micah, vi. 6. 8.—The business of conference was transacted with great cordiality; and from the reports made by the different churches, it appeared that the kingdom of Christ was making some progress. It was agreed that the constitution adopted by this meeting should be inserted in the G. B. R. for the information of the churches concerned. Messrs. Farrent and Kingsford, of Battersea, were desired to inquire into the state of our few friends at Wrotham, to render them what assistance appeared proper, and to report their success to the next conference. It was also resolved, that the meeting, heartily approving of the plan for liquidating debts on meeting houses, proposed to the last Association, regret that it was not adopted: and agreed that a case be sent from this conference to the next Association, requesting the re-consideration of it. The ministers present engaged to exert themselves to the utmost, to assist the friends in Church Lane, in erecting their intended new meeting house, and requested them to publish in the G. B. R. an abstract of the trust-deed for the projected premises, supposing that it might be of service to other churches in forming similar instruments.—The next conference to be at Chatham, on the Wednesday in Easter week; Messrs. Hobbs, Farrent, and Wallis to preach; or, in case of failure, Messrs. J. Kingsford of Battersea, and J. Kingsford, of Portsea.

MISSIONARY INTELLIGENCE.

In February last, Mr. John Slater, a member of the church at Derby, offered to devote himself to the service of the heathen. His application was laid before the Committee at a meeting held in May, but the Committee, sensible of the vast importance of caution on a subject of such a nature, as the choice of persons for missionary labours, would not form any hasty decision. In May, Mr. John Glover, also a member of the church at Derby, made a similar offer of his services. These two offers were considered at a special meeting of the Committee held at Loughborough, on the first of September. It was then determined that two of the Committee, Messrs. R. Smith and Heard, should visit Derby to converse with these young men, and make proper enquiries respecting them. They accordingly paid an early visit to Derby, and after a further discussion on the subject at the Committee meeting, held at Castle Donnington, on Monday, the 27th of September last, it was determined that the offers of these young men should be accepted, so far as to receive them on probation for three months. They are to commence a course of studies, to assist, should they be finally accepted, in preparing them for their future labours; and the Committee unanimously invited the minister of the church to which they belong, to take them under his care and instruction.

Within a few months, associations to support and promote the sacred Missionary cause, have been formed in various churches, and others are in contemplation. In the churches at Broad Street and Stoney Street, Nottingham; in those of Quorndon, Boston, Ilkiston, Duffield and Belper, and in various other places, these beneficial and productive societies have been lately instituted, and in some of these places with very considerable success.

Contributions recently received.

Mr. Taylor, Duffield, a donation,.....	£	4	0	0
From Barton and Barlestou, by Mr. Massey,.....		24	2	0
The subscribers' names will appear hereafter.				
From Shottle and Wirksworth,.....		6	0	0
From Thurlston.....		1	3	0
Collection at the Association,.....		11	0	0
Mr. Garrett, Chesham, annual,.....		2	2	0

Quarterly Papers, No. 6.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION.

The Treasurer of the *Itinerant Fund* has received £3. for the support of that institution, from the church at Wirksworth and Shottle; which was omitted through mistake in the account published in the Minutes of the last Association.

Mr. Pike, of Derby, has a second edition in the press, of "*The Consolations of Gospel Truth displayed, in various Anecdotes, &c.*"

A GENERAL HISTORY of the BAPTIST DENOMINATION in AMERICA, and other parts of the World. By DAVID BENEDICT, A. M. Pastor of the Baptist Church in Kentucky, Rhode Island. In two Volumes, 8vo. Boston, (America) 1813.

The title of this work is sufficiently characteristic of its object, and it is what it professes to be. The writer appears to be a member of the Particular Baptist Denomination; but his history extends to the Baptist denomination generally. In the former part of the work he has appropriated a chapter to each of the following subjects, "a summary view of Ecclesiastical History;" "a Miniature History of Baptism;" "a General Account of the Baptists in Foreign Countries and Ancient Times;" "and the events at Munster." On so many subjects, and most of them so extensive, it is not to be expected the author should attempt any thing beyond a general view. He has, however, condensed much valuable matter within a small compass; extracted principally from Robinson, Mosheim, Milner, and a few other writers. If his remarks on many of the above points are not the most erudite and convincing, they at least shew the firmness of his principles and decision of his character, as a Baptist.

Chapter V. treats of the Baptists in the United Kingdom. His materials seem to be derived chiefly from Crosby, Rippon, Ivimey, and the Baptist Magazine. We extract the following paragraphs respecting the *particular Baptists* in England: "We have already shewn that the number of churches in 1798, was 361; and in 1790, it was 312, and in 1768, it was 217. If they have increased in the same proportion for fifteen years past, they must now amount to about four hundred and fifty, which I conclude is not far from their number.

"I know of no method by which we can determine, with any degree of certainty, the number of members in the churches. Dr. Rippon, in the notes which are subjoined to his list for 1798, has given the number of upwards of seventy of the smaller churches, which run from eleven to a hundred and forty, but average about fifty-five. But he informs us, that the ancient churches in London, Bristol, and elsewhere, contained then from a hundred and fifty, to three and four hundred, and some more. If we compute the number of churches at four hundred and fifty, and these on an average to contain eighty members, it will make the sum total of thirty six thousand; which is probably not far from the number of particular Baptists in England."

The author complains he has been able to gain but little information concerning the *General Baptists* in England. He conjectures that, in 1790, the sum total of them might amount to ten or twelve thousands. This will probably be thought by some too large a number. In the principality of Wales, the Baptists appear to amount to twelve or fourteen thousands. In Ireland there are not many hundreds; but in Scotland, the Baptist interest is rapidly increasing, and at present numbers several thousands.

In his account of the American Baptists, especially of the Calvinistic class, the author is the most full and minute. He goes through each state in order; gives an account of the introduction of the Baptist interest in each of them, where it could be done; the progress it has made; the number and names of the different associations in them; and often interesting accounts of particular churches, and noted individuals who have exerted themselves in spreading the cause. Had he been somewhat more minute in his account of some sects of Baptists, who have departed from the Calvinistic creed, he would have afforded us additional pleasure. According to our author, in 1813, the year in which his work was published, there were in the British settlements of North America, and the United States 111 associations, containing 2223 churches, 1797 ministers, and 178496 members; unassociated churches 194, having 119 ministers, and 9719 members. Besides these, lie reckons those who hold weekly communion, six churches, six ministers, and 130 members. Free-will Baptists, as he calls them, 150 churches, fifty ministers, and 10,500 members; such as

call themselves Christians, forty churches, forty ministers, and 5000 members; Tunker Baptists, twenty churches, thirty ministers, and 1500 members; making the whole denomination of Baptists in America, to amount to 2633 churches, 2142 ministers, and 204,185 members.

The work contains an account of the principal public institutions belonging to the Baptists, both in Europe and America, the Baptist mission in India, and other interesting subjects connected with the Baptists and other religious denominations.

On the whole, we consider this an interesting work, conveying much information respecting the Baptist denomination in America, and demanding the perusal of all who wish to become acquainted with the history of that people.

The following EXTRACT, respecting a body of General Baptists in America, will probably be interesting to the readers of the General Baptist Repository.—It would seem, from several parts of this history, that the General Baptist interest is making considerable progress in the United States, and some parts of British America. The Extract is as follows :

"Arminian, or Free-Will Baptists."

"From nearly the beginning of the Baptists in America, there have been some who have opposed a number of the principal articles in the Calvinistic creed. For a long time, most of those brethren resided in Rhode Island and its vicinity, where their history has been related. For some years, there were many of those, improperly called separate Baptists, in Virginia, and the more southern states, who were called Arminians, because they maintained that, by the sufferings of Christ, salvation was made possible for every individual of Adam's posterity. The issue of the contest on this point may be found under the head of Virginia. And besides, there have always been some churches, and many individuals, who have objected to some of the strong points of Calvinism, or adopted them with some peculiar modification. But no very considerable party of this character arose until a little more than thirty years ago, when one was founded by Elder Benjamin Raudal, of New Durham, New Hampshire. This Elder Raudal, as his biographer observes, was led, about 1780,

to object against the whole doctrine of John Calvin, with respect to eternal, particular, personal, unconditional election and reprobation : and propagated the following maxims, viz. 1st. That all men have sinned and come short of the glory of God. 2d. That Jesus Christ has died for all men, and, by the grace of God, has tasted death for every man. 3d. That the grace of God, which being the salvation, hath appeared to all men. 4th. That Christ's ministers are commanded to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every nation, and that he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved ; but he that believeth not, shall be damned."

" This zealous minister was assiduous in propagating his opinions, and endeavouring to persuade others to renounce what he used to call the *hydra monster Calvinism*. A number soon fell in with his views, broke off from the Calvinistic churches in New Hampshire and the district of Maine, and from a small beginning they have arisen to a large community, which is scattered in different parts of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, New York, the Canadas, and in some other places."

" The first minister who united with Elder Randal, was Pelatiah Tingley, A.M. then of Sandford, Maine. He was a native of Attleborough, Massachusetts, a small distance from Providence, Rhode Island, and was a graduate of the college in that town. After him, Samuel Wicks, and other ministers, were convinced of what they esteemed the dangerous errors of Calvinism, and united in Elder Randal's opposition. This party was as strenuous for believers' baptism as before ; they were, like all new sects, very sanguine in their new discoveries, and from a distinguished article in their doctrinal system, they were denominated *Free-Will Baptists*. This appellation is reserved by some of the community, and objected to by others. Of late years they, seem to prefer denominating themselves simply *Christians*, and their Churches, *Churches of Christ*. But as all, who make a religious profession, account themselves Christians, and as all religious bodies profess to be *Churches of Christ*, these terms are indefinite for an historical narrative, I have therefore taken the liberty of applying to these people the name by which they are generally distinguished."

" Mr. Randal, their founder, is said to have been very suc-

cessful in his ministry, not only in propagating his peculiar opinions, but in persuading sinners to repent; he was also, at times, much opposed in his ministrations: but this increased his zeal, and under him and his associates, a number of churches shortly arose. The one at New Durham, the place of his residence, was formed in 1781; this church soon became large, and spread its branches round in different directions: and other churches at Little Falls, Woolwich, Georgetown, Edgecomb, Little River, New Gloucester, and Parsonsfield, arose not long after the mother body was founded. These Free-Will churches soon found it expedient to form what they called General Meetings, which they held at different places once a quarter. The first of the kind was held at Phillipsburg, Maine, in 1783, and consisted of delegates "from all the branches of the little brotherhood." They next proceeded to form a yearly meeting, which was composed of delegates from each quarterly one, and at the close of the yearly meeting is held the Elders' Conference, in which all the elders meet to consult on the general interests of their community. In 1810, there were among these people, six associations or quarterly meetings, viz. Gorham, Edgecomb, and Farmington, in Maine, New Durham, in New Hampshire, and Strafford and Hardwick, in Vermont. In the three meetings in Maine, there were at that time, between forty and fifty churches, about as many preachers, and upwards of two thousand members; and it is probable that the three other quarterly meetings were as large, if not larger than these."

"Mr. John Buggell, of Parsonsfield, Maine, a preacher in this connection, began in 1811, to publish a periodical work, entitled a "Religious Magazine," and which was to contain a history of this community. From the first number of that work some of these sketches have been selected. Other numbers were to have been forwarded, but for some reason they have not come to hand; these brief hints, must, therefore, suffice for the history of this extensive community." I. W.

MISSIONARY EXTRACTS.

CHRISTIAN NEGROES in the ISLAND of TRINIDAD, extracted from the Report of Mr. Adam, the Missionary, who paid them a visit in 1817.

Another part of the island, to which, in the providence of God, my mind has been directed, and which appears to me of

considerable importance, must now be noticed. One day, in walking, I met with a negro with a book in his hand, when the following conversation took place :—“ I am glad to see you with a book in your hand ; are you learning to read ? ” His reply was, “ I am learning to read a little, Sir, as often as I can.” “ Shall I give you a lesson ? Sit down.” He sat down. It pleased me much to have an opportunity of speaking to him of Jesus, and of teaching him to read his word. I again asked, “ Where did you come from ? ” “ From America.” “ Do you ever attend any place of worship ? ” “ I have not been to any preaching-house since I have been here, but to that of our black preacher at N——.” This led to a long conversation and inquiry ; and I promised I would, as soon as possible, visit his people, and speak to them of the word of God. He expressed much thankfulness, and told me they would be thankful too. Hearing this, in the beginning of June last, I made all the inquiry possible concerning them, and every information was encouraging. The malignant fever, which has carried so many to eternity, attacked me a few days after ; and, though I could leave the house in a week, the weakness, intermitting fever, &c. which it left behind, hindered me from going till the month of September. I constantly made inquiries concerning this people ; and although I obtained much information, yet, on my arrival amongst them, I was compelled to say that half had not been told me.

The people whom I visited are negroes, who were brought from America, in the end of the year 1815, and about the middle of 1816. They were taken in some of the forts of America during the war, were then slaves, but are now free. On their arrival, the Governor appointed them land to cultivate, and ordered *rations* to be given them, until it should produce something for their subsistence. Their number is from 600 to 650, besides many children : and to me they appeared to claim peculiar attention, as being by so peculiar a dispensation of providence brought to this place.

In company with Mr. Stewart, I waited on Mr. Mitchell, the Commandant of the district, which is called South Napa-vista. It is with gratitude I state, that wherever I came, the object of my visit seemed anticipated ; and I was expected to engage in that which I count not only my highest duty, but greatest pleasure, viz. to teach sinners the love of a Saviour. I have for some time had the honour of this gen-

Heman's acquaintance, and it was necessary that I should wait upon him at this time, to receive his approbation of the object I had in view. From him I was to receive full information respecting the American negroes, of whom, generally, he entertained a very favourable opinion. I had no sooner mentioned the object of my journey, than he in effect said—the land, the people, are before you; any plan you can form for their instruction, or any exertion you choose to make for their improvement in religious knowledge, will give me pleasure, and I am sure will meet with the decided approbation of the Governor. I was much encouraged by this reception, and was thankful that these poor people were under such care. Mr. Mitchell has shown towards them, in a temporal view, the utmost affection and kindness. He emphatically styles them, *his children*. Indeed, they needed the affectionate care of one who would parently feel for them, and they enjoy it. His amiable lady also has attended to the sick amongst them, and they gratefully remember her kindness. At the close of the evening the Bible was laid on the table, and, without formal request, the family was called, and the numerous domestics, to surround the family altar. This is pleasant to the missionary or minister, who does not wish to say, "I am a man of religion;" but that the Bible should thus be, as it were, taught silently to say, "You, Sir, are a minister of religion," by those who wish to enjoy it. The negroes, &c. joined in prayer, and we afterwards retired to rest.

Sabbath, Sept. 20.—Arose at day-break, to pursue the pleasures of the Sabbath. Those of anticipation during this day, exceeded any thing I had experienced before in this island. The thought, that *six hundred* poor negroes, brought into a state of freedom by the horrors of war, brought from the land that gave some of them birth, and in which others had enjoyed some endearing relationships; that these, the most advanced of whom could scarcely read a chapter in the Bible, should yet retain their delight in the things of religion, and that, under the providence of God, I was then on my way to speak to them of the great salvation, were to me most cheering considerations. The birds that flew over my head—the sun that just gilded the tops of the trees—yea, the grass that grew at my feet—all, all seemed to join with me in praising the name of Him that brought me there.

Mr. Stewart having promised to accompany me, and to afford any facility I might require, I hastened to his house, and found him and his family anxiously waiting my arrival. We took a hasty breakfast ; and, having committed ourselves and our cause into the hands of God, went on our way rejoicing. I was accompanied by Mr. Stewart and his son. After pursuing our course through the woods for about three miles, we reached the first village ; and I shall not easily forget the sensations of my mind on approaching it. Had I even been an infidel, it seemed to me as though I could not have refrained from breaking out into an exclamation to this effect :—“ The religion of these people must be good, for it has made them industrious.” The village showed a great extent of cultivation ; and, considering that only one year had elapsed since their arrival, and that of that period five months had been dry weather, it was surprising. Negroes are accustomed to work on the Sabbath day : here, a solemn stillness prevailed : the sound of the axe, the hammer, or the hoe, was not heard ; each one seemed to vie with his neighbour in the pleasure of being first at the worship of God. It was not to accommodate themselves to my design, for few of them knew that I should be with them. When we approached the house where they were assembled, one of them gave out a hymn, in which the others joined. This spectacle of a number of poor black people, surrounded with woods, far from the habitations of white men, singing the praises of God, excited in my mind feelings which I will not attempt to describe. We afterwards proceeded to the house ; and on our return they sung the two hymns of Dr. Watts, beginning—“ My soul come meditate the day,” and, “ That awful day will surely come,” I afterwards prayed with them, and preached from John iii. 16. viz. “ God so-loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life.” About seventy were present—all very attentive; and I trust it was to them, as to myself, a season of refreshment. Whilst I remained here, a messenger arrived to request I would visit the next village, and preach to them the word of God. It is necessary to observe, that these people are distributed among ten or eleven villages, distant two or three miles from each other. The people have chosen one from among themselves in each village, to officiate on the

Sabbath day. The name of the man who conducts the worship at this village, is Job Townsend; he has a solemn appearance, but I was grieved to learn that he could not read a word. I expressed my satisfaction, however, in seeing him thus employed; his reply was, "The Lord, Sir, I trust, has been gracious to me; and it is my duty, and my pleasure, to do all I can for the good of others." We afterwards mounted our horses, and proceeded to the next village. Few things have a more pleasing effect on a pious ear, than the voice of praise, and particularly when heard from the midst of a wood. This pleasure we enjoyed, as we ascended the brow of the hill on which the village stood. We heard a sound, not "of music and dancing," but of the praises of God, and the woods sweetly echoed to the sound. Our guide called out, "They are in Meeting now, Sir." On coming to the door, some came out to welcome me, saying, "We are ready, Sir." They have in this village a small place erected for the worship of God, and seats and a table, and withal a small reading desk. The person's name who officiates here is William Hamilton, a young man, who bears an excellent character. I preached to them also from the same text, viz. John iii. 16. I afterwards urged them to instruct each other; and as they had a few books among them, and some of them could read, I suggested that these should teach the others; and that the persons who might be thus taught, should give for every quarter of an hour's instruction one half hour's labour to his teacher. This idea pleased them, and met with the approbation of Mr. Mitchell. After singing a few hymns we left them, and I promised, if spared, to see them again in two months.*

POETRY.

THE SWEETMEATS.

A pious pilgrim bless'd a board,
With costly viands crown'd,
Regardless of the splendid hoard,
That glitter'd all around.

* From the want of time, the state of his health, and other circumstances, Mr. Adam was unable, on this occasion, to visit the other villages.

A pot of sweetmeats near him stood ;
 On this he cast an eye ;
 Seem'd quite forgetful of his food,
 And drown'd in reverie.

But gushing tears, at length, betray'd
 The anguish of his breast ;
 And heavy sighs their passage made,
 That shew'd a heart oppress'd.

' O ! sons of pomp and vanity !'
 The prudent sage began,
 ' In this small vessel you may see
 ' The history of man.

' This pot an emblem true conveys
 ' Of earth, and all its joys ;
 ' And shows the thousand various ways,
 ' How man himself destroys —

' Behold the busy, anxious flies,
 ' That hover round these sweets,
 ' See ! how, like us, each insect vies,
 ' Till each his ruin meets.

' Some on the borders gently tread,
 ' And sip with cautious touch,
 ' While others eagerly are led
 ' To plunge, and take too much.

' The first, from danger soon are freed,
 ' By no strong tie detain'd ;
 ' The second justly are decreed
 ' The death their rashness gain'd.

' Hence, mortals, wisely learn to shun
 ' False pleasure's fatal cup :
 ' Drink lightly ; or you'll be undone,
 ' Engulph'd and swallow'd up.

' You, like the one, who gently taste,
 ' When death shall call aloud,
 ' To bless'd abodes, with joy shall haste,
 ' And quit the giddy crowd :

' But if, by passions blindly led,
 ' That no true medium know,
 ' With quick destruction on your head
 ' You'll sink to endless woe.'

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*SCRIPTURE ILLUSTRATED by the EASTERN
CUSTOM of COMMUNICATION by SIGNS and
SYMBOLS.*

THE people of the East are grave and silent. Many of the transactions which amongst us are directed by words, are by them managed by signs. This is especially the case in the intercourse between superiors and inferiors; it being deemed disrespectful for the latter to speak in the presence of the former. The most important orders that a master can give, or a servant receive, are frequently communicated in profound silence. They have a kind of language for the fingers; and by various positions of them give orders to their domestics, who are watching to receive them. A remarkable instance of this is related by a respectable traveller, who thus describes an interview with an eastern prince:

"The customary ceremonies were over, and the prince continued to discourse familiarly with the ambassador; when an officer coming into the hall and approaching the prince, whispered something in his ear, and we observed that the only answer he received from him was a slight horizontal motion with his hand; after which, the prince instantly resuming an agreeable smile, continued the conversation for some time longer. We then left the hall of audience, and came to the foot of the great stair-case, where we remounted our horses. Here nine heads, newly cut off, and placed in a row on the outside of the first gate, completely explained to us the sign which the prince made use of in our presence."—Another intelligent traveller observes, "The eastern ladies are waited on, as are also their female visitors, with surprising order and diligence, even at the least wink of the eye or motion of the finger, and that in a manner almost imperceptible to strangers."

Does not this custom of the Orientals throw a light on the words of the Psalmist? "Behold," says the sacred poet, "as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress, so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until that he have mercy upon us." Psal. cxxiii. 2. That is, "We look up to thee, O Lord, for some token of thy mercy and protection, with as much diligence, anxiety and care, as the menial servants of the rich and powerful watch the hands of their superiors, to catch the slightest intimation of their will and receive their commands."

But it was not the hands alone which were used as signs. On solemn occasions, especially when prophetical messages were delivered, the prophets frequently accompanied their predictions with symbolical actions, which were designed and well adapted to render their messages both more explicit and more impressive. Many instances of this nature will easily be recollected by the intelligent reader of the sacred volume; we can mention only a few.

When Jeremiah was directed to foretel the destruction and disgrace which would fall on the Jews, on account of their sins, he took a linen girdle and buried it in the earth, till it was decayed and rendered unserviceable: then, shewing this mouldering girdle to his countrymen, he exclaimed: "Thus saith the Lord, after this manner will I mar the pride of Judah and the great pride of Jerusalem." Jer. xiii. 1. 11.— When the same prophet was commissioned to predict the subjugation of the kings of Syria and Palestine to the king of Babylon, he was directed to make yokes and bonds, and to put them on his own neck and to send them to the princes against whom the threatening was directed. Jer. xxvii. And when Hananiah, the false prophet, wished to persuade the king of Judah that these gloomy predictions would not be accomplished, he took the yoke from off Jeremiah's neck and broke it; saying, "Thus saith the Lord, Even so will I break the yoke of king Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, from the neck of all nations, within the space of two full years."

When Ezekiel was sent to denounce the approaching captivity of the children of Israel, he not only delivered the awful message in words, but, to impress them more sensibly with the subject, *acted* it over in their sight. . . . He brought forth his stuff by day as stuff for captivity, and in the evening he

digged through the wall with his hand. He brought it forth in the twilight and bare it upon his shoulders in their sight, and said, I am your sign. Like as I have done, it shall be done to you: ye shall remove and go into captivity," Ezek. xii. 6. See also, chapters iv. v. xxiv. &c.

Isaiah also, under the divine direction, adopted a similar method, and walked naked and bare-footed three years, for a sign against Egypt and Ethiopia. Chap. xx. In the eighth chapter, the conception, birth, and growth of the son of the same prophet is made the symbolic prediction of the deliverance of his country from the hand of its enemies. Indeed, so frequently were this servant of God and his family employed as symbols of the divine will, that he declares: "Behold I and the children whom the Lord hath given me, are for signs and for wonders in Israel, from the Lord of Hosts which dwelleth in Mount Zion." Isa. viii. 18.

From these instances, and many others which might be selected from the Scriptures, compared with the accounts which the best travellers give of the customs of the East, we may infer, that when the prophets in the Old Testament were divinely directed to act a portion of the information they wished to convey to the people, they adopted the method daily practised in those countries. Action, as a system of communication, was familiar to the spectators, and though adapted to excite their attention, was very intelligible to their understandings.

These remarks will assist us in the explication of a passage which has caused not a little dispute. We allude to Isa. vii. 14—16. compared with Matth. i. 22, 23. Ahaz, the wicked king of Judah, and his family, were thrown into great consternation from an invasion of his territories; by the armies of two neighbouring states. Isaiah was sent, by the command of the Lord, accompanied by his infant son, to encourage the affrighted monarch, and to assure him of speedy deliverance. This gracious message was received with incredulous hesitation, and the prophet proposed to give a miraculous attestation of its truth. This offer was declined by the king, probably through unbelief, though under the modest plea of an unwillingness to tempt the Lord. On this the prophet exclaimed, "Hear ye now, O house of David! Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? Therefore the Lord

himself shall give you a sign : Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know (or, till he know) to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the (or this) child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings." The evangelist Matthew, after recording the miraculous conception and the birth of our Saviour, observes, in evident allusion to this prophecy, " Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold a virgin shall be with child and shall bring forth a son ; and they shall call his name Emmanuel." Matth. i. 22, 23.

Now supposing Isaiah to speak throughout of the same child, there is an obvious difficulty arises, how a prophecy which was to be completed in the course of a few years after it was given, could be fulfilled in an event which did not take place till more than seven centuries afterwards ; or, supposing it to have received its accomplishment in our Saviour, how it could then be a sign to Ahaz of a political deliverance which was promised should be almost immediately granted to him and his people.

These difficulties will perhaps be removed, by supposing, that the prophet, in verses 14 and 15, had a direct and immediate reference to the miraculous conception and birth of Jesus Christ ; and, in the 15th verse, changes the subject, and speaks of his own son, Shear-Jashub, who accompanied his father. On this supposition, Isaiah addresses the royal family to this effect, " Fear not, O house of David, the destruction which threatens to cut off your existence. God is mindful of his promise to your great progenitor, and will keep your family from extinction till he has gloriously performed it. In the fulness of time, the virgin shall conceive in a supernatural manner and bear a son, who shall be exclusively the seed of the woman ; and shall be called and really be, Immanuel, or God with us. But yet this God among men, shall be truly human, and be fed, during his infancy, with the food common to children." Then pointing to his own son, whom probably he held in his arms, he proceeded—" And for your present support and comfort, I assure you, that before this child, who now is in a state of infancy, like that in which Immanuel shall appear on earth, shall be able to distinguish the nature of foods

or arrive at years of discretion, the kings that now invade your country shall be laid in the dust."

In defence of this interpretation may be urged,

1. The *sublime manner* in which the prediction is introduced. Ahaz had been offered a sign, and permitted to choose it in the depth, or in the height above. This the monarch had contemptuously refused, when the prophet, jealous for the honour of his Maker, replied: "Hear now, O house of David, Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign. Behold—" Now, after all this energy, it is natural to expect that the sign which Jehovah himself would give, should be something striking, important, and worthy of omnipotence. But if it was, as some have supposed, merely that a woman, newly married, should conceive in a natural way, and bring forth a son, it was a fact so common as to be totally unworthy of the pomp with which it is announced. On the contrary, that a young woman, a pure virgin, should, in a miraculous manner, conceive and bear a son—that this son should be a being of such transcendent nature as to be strictly God with man—and that he should come into the world for the all-momentous purposes for which the blessed Saviour came, are circumstances of such grandeur and interest, as to justify the interference of Jehovah, and to warrant the energy of the introduction.

2. The *signification* of the word translated *virgin*. This Hebrew word is used only in six other places of the Old Testament, in all of which it means a virgin, in the strict and literal sense of the term. Its etymology, from a word that signifies to conceal, favours that meaning. That this was its usual signification, is evident also from its being translated by the Seventy, who wrote before the birth of Christ, in the passage before us, by a Greek word of the same restricted application. Why then should we venture to give it a sense here contrary to its acknowledged import?

3. The *presence* of Shear-Jashub, Isaiah's son, at the interview. When we hear the Lord command the prophet,— "Go forth now, and meet Ahaz; thou and Shear-Jashub thy son," and recollect how frequently symbolical personages were employed in delivering the messages of the Almighty, it is reasonable to suppose, that the son, as well as the father

should hear a part in the communication. But unless the prophet pointed to him, and spoke of him, when he said, "Before this child shall know," &c. there is no allusion made to him in the whole conversation. The chief objection to this supposition is, that the transition from the prophecy of the Messiah to the temporal deliverance of the Jews, from the child of the virgin to be born after seyen hundred and fifty years, to the son of the prophet then standing before them, is too abrupt and indistinct. This abruptness is, however, much increased by our reading: *the child*, instead of *the child*, which Hebrews tell us the original requires; the latter would more easily lead us to think of some child who was present at the interview. But this ambiguity only exists in reading the account; there could be no hesitation at the time of speaking. When Isaiah, having finished that part of his message which related to the future glorious birth of the Saviour, took his son by the hand, and presenting him to the panic-struck monarch, said, "These future things shall all be fulfilled in their season: for before this child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings," the audience could not mistake his meaning. It would be plain to them that the former part of this sublime prediction related to some remote event; and that to allay their present fears, as well to give them a pledge of the certain accomplishment of those future promises, the Lord had graciously assured them, that their now dreaded invaders should within a few years, be utterly destroyed. Nor could they, during this short interval, ever look on Shear-Jashub without recollecting this soothing assurance; and every advance which this child made towards the age of discretion, would be a new encouragement for them to reflect on the hastening period of their deliverance. Nor could the pious Jews behold the gradual growth of this interesting boy, without looking forward to that Immanuel, whose growth had been so closely prefigured by his, to that child which was to be born; that rod out of the stem of Jesse, so beautifully described, by the same prophet, in subsequent chapters. See chap. ix. and xi.

4. The name that was to be given to this son of the virgin; *Immanuel*, or God with us. Though it was usual for the Jews to give significant names to their children, and fre-

quently to introduce in them an allusion to the Almighty, to express their gratitude for some mercy received! or their prayer for some blessing on themselves or their offspring, yet we never read that they called any of their children *God*, especially *God with us*. The very name, therefore, of this extraordinary child, denoted his exalted nature, and would lead every pious Israelite to look forward to that son which was to be given, who, amongst his other magnificent titles, should be called “*the Mighty God*”, Isa, ix. 6. And it is remarkable, that this illustrious name occurs only once again in the Old Testament, and that is in the following chapter of the same prophecy; when the Being to whom it is applied, is represented as the peculiar proprietor and sovereign of the land of Israel. Speaking of the invasion of the Holy Land by the Assyrian king, the sacred writer says, “The stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel.”, Isa: viii. 8. Now, whom could the prophet intend in this passage but He who is emphatically styled “*The God of Israel*,” and who calls Israel his inheritance?

The only plausible objection against this explanation of the passage in question, which has not been anticipated by the foregoing remarks, is the incongruity of supposing, that a sign should happen *after* the event of which it was a token. This, however, is, in a great measure, obviated by observing, that the great design of the divine message was to remove the fears entertained by the royal family, the house of David, of their speedy extinction; that the promise that Immanuel should arise, at some future time, in that family, was a pledge that the house of David should be preserved till that event took place; and that the greater the distance of time before this prediction was fulfilled, the longer the period for which the existence of the house of David was secured. Whilst the assurance, which was immediately given, of the speedy removal of their temporal calamities, would instantly relieve their minds from their present alarms. Nor is this the only instance in which the Scriptures represent one event as a sign of another; though the latter, in point of time, happened before the former. When the Lord appeared to Moses in the burning bush, and commissioned him to deliver his countrymen from the bondage of Egypt, he told him, “This shall be a token unto thee that I have sent thee: when thou hast

brought forth the people out of Egypt; ye shall worship God upon this mountain." Exod. iii. 12. Here the worshipping of God on mount Horeb happened long after the mission of Moses, of which it was appointed the token; Again, when Sennacherib invaded Judah, in the days of Hezekiah, and this same prophet Isaiah was sent to the king to predict the defeat of the invader, he gave a future event as the sign of the truth of his prediction. "This," he informs the monarch, "shall be a sign unto thee, ye shall eat this year such as groweth of itself, and the second year that which springeth of the same; and in the third year, sow ye, and reap and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit thereof," Isa. xxxvii. 30.

If these remarks tend to remove the doubts of any conscientious reader, and to confirm his veneration for the Scriptures, the end of the writer will be answered, and his labour abundantly rewarded.

S. O.

*The grand DESIGN of the CHRISTIAN MINISTRY,
and the proper MEANS of accomplishing it.*

An EXTRACT from a CHARGE by the late Mr. D. TAYLOR,
from 1 Tim. iv. 16.

(Concluded from p. 212.)

3. Take heed to yourself that you preserve a *patient spirit*. No situation in the world is free from perplexities within, and provocations without. But the minister of Christ, above all other men, is frequently exposed to those perplexities and provocations: yet there is no one to whom patience and composure of mind is more necessary, nor in whom peevishness, fretfulness, and wrath, are more unbecoming or injurious. Patience is therefore recommended by the Apostle as one important excellency in the ministerial character: 1 Tim. iii. 3. Those whose peculiar province it is to "warn the unruly, to comfort the feeble-minded, to support the weak", have great need, on their own account, as well as on the account of others, to "be patient toward all men." 1 Thess. v. 14. Those on whom it is indispensably incumbent, not only "to preach the word and to be instant in season and out of season," but also to "reprove, to rebuke, and to exhort", have need to-

do it "with all long suffering," as well as "with all authority and doctrine," 2 Tim. iv. 2. Tit. ii. 19.

If you, my dear brother, make it your ambition, as I trust you will, to be a good minister of Jesus Christ, besides opposition from a wicked world, you will find many difficulties and perplexities in studying and unfolding "the whole counsel of God." You will probably have to grapple with many embarrassments in your family and circumstances. You will have to deal with persons of different characters; and sometimes with those of the most rugged tempers. You will have many laborious days, and possibly many sleepless nights, arising from the most anxious and the most incessant endeavours to serve the interests of those, who will be so far from gratefully acknowledging your favour, that they will resent it with indignation, and treat you "as their enemy because you tell them the truth." Gal. iv. 16. You will probably find such changes amongst those whom you most tenderly love, and even most cordially esteem, as will, for a while at least, astonish you. Some, who would, at one time, had it been possible, have plucked out their own eyes and given them to you, will perhaps, at another time, without any cause of which you are conscious, treat you with marked indifference, if not with malice; and will scarcely fail to revile and reproach you.

From these causes, and many others, you will frequently find that you have need of patience, in so arduous an employment, attended with so many difficulties, and connected with so many infirmities of your own, both of body and mind.

4. Take heed to yourself that you maintain an *affectionate temper*; especially towards the people among whom you labour. It has often been said, that if parents had not that particular affection for their children to which all others are strangers, and of which indeed they are incapable, it would be impossible for them to go through the labours they do in their education. It is at least, equally true of gospel ministers; that if they have not a peculiar affection for the souls of men, they will never be able to go through their great work with the diligence and patience above mentioned. It was evidently this strong love which animated the apostle in his unparalleled labours and sufferings, he could say, from his heart, "being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to

impart unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls; because ye were dear unto us." 1 Thess. ii. 8.

With such affection as this, hardships become easy, and the work of the Lord is our delight. An affectionate temper will also excite in us such a regard to what we say and do, as to preserve us from many improprieties. Our language and conduct are of very great importance, that we may offend none, but as far as possible oblige all men and conciliate their regards to the gospel and interests of our blessed Redeemer.

An affectionate regard to the souls of men will preserve us from indolence and inattention to their best interests. It will awaken us to pursue every means, both in our stated and occasional labours, whereby we may promote their happiness and administer to them in their distresses.

To possess and promote such a temper, meditate much on the great things that belong to their eternal welfare: such as their fallen, helpless, ignorant state—the many things that may ensnare, pollute, and destroy them—the eternal heaven which they have to pursue, and the everlasting hell that will be the portion of all who die in ignorance and sin. Consider their dependance on you, as God's instrument for their good; that it is the office to which you are appointed of God, while they are immersed in the concerns of life, and too much diverted from their danger and the means of help—that they contribute to your temporal support, that you may as far as possible be the guardian of their souls.

5. Take care that you be daily *improving in every grace*, (2 Pet. iii. 18) and in all *ministerial furniture*. (1 Tim. iv. 14, 15.) You expect others to grow, how much more ought you! You have most need of it, and most opportunity for it. It will be most important to yourself and others. Whereas, if you do not grow in grace, and improve in divine life, how can you call them to it—set them an example of it—and instruct them in the higher and nobler branches of Christianity, unless you have made a proportionable advancement yourself? How can you lead them into the deepest things of God, or bring out of God's treasury things new as well as old, unless you are making proficiency in sacred knowledge and the understanding of the scriptures? O let all your time and talents be employed for these great and important ends.

6. Take heed to the whole of *your behaviour in sacred and common life*. Remember many eyes are upon you. Many will wait for your halting and rejoice in it. Remember you are to be a light in the world in an eminent degree. Take care to be a burning and shining light. Matth. v. 14. John v. 35. You are to be an example. You will be an example of good or bad. "Ministers." I think Baxter somewhere says, "do not go to hell or heaven alone; they take many with them to the one place or the other." O think much of this!

You are to exemplify what you teach; that people may read it in your life as well as in your doctrine. This holy example must go through all your conduct. At home or abroad, in your family, in the church, and in the world, you must shew what genuine christianity is in your own behaviour. In your conduct towards all men, and towards the people of your charge—in every relative and personal duty to your wife, your children, your servants, your other relatives, your neighbours, towards other ministers, and to all other professors—in your reverence, in all civil matters, to the laws and the government of your country—and, in fine, in every part of a holy, harmless, and undefiled conversation, in the cultivation, and exercise of every Christian temper, forget not, my dear brother, that you are bound, by every sacred obligation, to demonstrate that the doctrine of Christ, which you preach, is a "doctrine according to godliness." Survey your character as drawn by an inspired pen, 1 Tim. iii. 2—9. and labour to exemplify it in all your conduct.

I hasten to make a few remarks on the second part of the exhortation, "Take heed to thy *doctrine*." As an introduction, to this permit me to repeat a passage already mentioned. "The gospel of Christ is the power of God to salvation to every one that believeth." Rom. i. 16. A deep conviction that God has given us this gospel as a means of converting sinners; and that there is no other that will ever be effectual, is of such vast importance to a minister, that it can never be too often recollect, nor too closely pursued. It is with this instrument that you are to go forth, my dear brother, "to open their eyes, &c." Acts xxvi. 18, 19. With this observation in view, I exhort,

1. Take heed that *your doctrine be founded on scripture*;

and shew that it is so. This is the end of the word of God. Seldom introduce natural religion as it is called, any further than the scripture explains and recommends it. It is not easy to say what natural religion is, or what would have been the religion of man without revelation. We know that the religion of the heathens is absurd enough. — But the bible is given for a perfect rule, and therefore we do not need it. To the bible none may add, or diminish from it. Reject steadily every thing depending on tradition, opinion, or sentiment. And shew that your doctrine is derived from scripture. Your people are to believe and practise, not because you say it: nor to believe that this or the other is of divine authority, because you assert that the scripture says it, they must see for themselves, and take it up on divine authority, not on yours. “ Make full proof of thy ministry.”

2. While the scripture in general is your authority, let *the New Testament be principally so.* Be evangelical. Remember again, Rom. i. 16. you have every thing in the New Testament in the clearest light; with all the facts and evidences on which your salvation, your hope, and all saving truth is founded. Keep to that above all.

3. Let much contained in every sermon, if possible, *promote inward and experimental religion.* “ From the heart are the issues of life.” Prov. iv. 23. Whatever does the heart good, is to a good purpose. To promote humility and self-abasement for sin, faith and joy in Christ, love to him, and patience in affliction, is the great end of preaching. Gal. v. 22, 23. This, I trust, will be your great object. This must be done by opening the sinfulness of sin,—the purity of God’s law—the corruption and wickedness of the human heart—the total inability of man to save himself—the fulness and excellency of Christ—the greatness and freeness of his salvation—the suitableness of the promises—the readiness of God through Christ to hear prayer—and the way to improve these doctrines in order to obtain the victory over the flesh, the world, and the devil.

4. Remember that though grace is the *source of all good*, yet *holiness* is the end of all grace, of all gospel truth, and of all your ministry. To this are all the truths of the gospel to be reduced: and you, brother, must assist your hearers in reducing them to this end, by shewing them what sensibility