

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

PayPal

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

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

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_general-baptist-repository_01.php

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. X.

London:

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

1821.

ADVERTISEMENT.

It is with feelings of unfeigned gratitude and respect, that the Editor of the G. B. R. presents himself before his friendly readers, to take his leave of them, as the sole conductor and proprietor of a work, which has, for twenty of the best years of his life, been a principal object of his attention. While he begs his kind friends to accept his sincere thanks for the patronage and assistance which they have afforded him; he would gratefully acknowledge the goodness of divine Providence, that has favoured him with such continued health and strength as has enabled him to publish it, for so long a period, without interruption. If this publication has been made, in any measure, instrumental in promoting the instruction or the edification of his brethren, he would ascribe the glory to Him who alone giveth success.

In looking back on the progress of this work, and the manner in which it has been conducted, the Editor is well aware that his want of leisure and ability have prevented him from making it what he wished it to be. He has, however, the satisfaction of knowing that it has been acceptable to many; and he flatters himself that it has contributed, though very feebly, to the advantage of the New Connection of General Baptists. For their benefit it was originally intended; and through the whole of its course, he has laboured honestly to promote their edification. With them he now leaves the work; and prays that the blessing of God may render what is agreeable to his will, yet more useful; and graciously pardon all its imperfections.

Many and great are the changes that have taken place in the New Connection during the publication of the G. B. R. Often has it been the painful task of the Editor to record the deaths of venerable and useful ministers and members of churches whom he highly esteemed, who at the commencement of the work, were actively and usefully engaged in supporting the cause of the Redeemer on earth. May those who have now entered into their labours, imitate their diligence, disinterestedness and zeal; and be blest with still greater success in building up the walls of our Zion! Indeed the retrospect, though interspersed with painful occurrences, is highly

pleasing. During the period already alluded to, the Connection has more than doubled its number of members. The list of churches has increased in a similar proportion, and many of them are rapidly improving in numbers and graces. Our exertions for propagating the gospel, have greatly extended since 1802. Then we had no institution for this laudable purpose except our infant Academy; now we have both a foreign and a home Mission, which are liberally supported and promise to be very useful. Then our Connection was hardly acknowledged in the religious world; but at present it is every day becoming better known. May our activity and success in promoting the common cause of christianity obtain us an honourable rank among our brethren of other persuasions. All these favourable circumstances ought to inspire us with sincere gratitude to the King "that reigneth in Zion;" and animate us to increasing diligence in our exertions to extend his interest.

It has, at length, been determined, that this publication should henceforth belong more immediately to the Connection: and that all the profits that may arise from it should be devoted to the support of its public institutions. The Editor therefore now appears before his friends as the agent of the Association. In this situation, he trusts that he shall experience increased encouragement and support from every member of the Connection: and he assures them that he shall feel himself bound to increased endeavours to render that part of the work assigned to his management, more worthy of their patronage. In those endeavours, he knows he shall be effectually assisted by his worthy colleague in the publication. And, if the undertaking be duly supported by the churches and ministers, there is good reason to hope that the New Series will be interesting and extensively useful.

SHAKESPEAR'S WALK,

Nov. 1, 1821.

CONTENTS OF VOL. X.

	Page
Assurance of Faith and of Hope illustrated & distinguished	21
Academy, G. B. Plan for improving the	53
Anecdote on giving Reproof.....	66
Appleby. Preaching introduced at	141
Bible, a Friend of social order	71
Bible Society. British and Foreign	144
Bible Anecdotes.....	177
Baptists defended	169
Brown's (W.) Recantation of Socinianism	218
Christian Fund. Anniversary of the	42
Conscience, a Case of, by Rebecca	73
Collecting for Meeting-houses. Remarks on.....	105
Ceylon. Letters from a Relative, at	114
Co-operation of church members, recommended	199
Contention, an Essay on, by John Taylor	208
Christian Religion. The primitive simplicity of, by J. Taylor.	250
Christmas Singing. Remarks on	162—223—251
Church Members. Dispositions and Tempers becoming...	307
CONFERENCES.	
<i>Lincolnshire</i> , at Bourn	88
Chatteris.....	137
Fleet and Gedney	39
March	237
Spalding	270
Sutterton	284
Wisbeach	39
<i>Midland</i> , at Belper.....	136
Castle Donnington	38
Diseworth	38
Hugglescote	38
Leicester, A. D. L....	270
Loughborough	184
Nottingham, (B. S) .	270
Wimeswold	88
<i>N. Lincolnshire</i> , at Crowle	315
Epworth	316
Kirton	40
Misterton ..	315
Retford	89
<i>London</i> , at Chatham	40
Church Lane	238
Sevenoaks	315
Tring	137
<i>Warwickshire</i> , at Austrey	41. 48
Burton	41
Netherton	185
Sutton Coldfield... 41	271
Wolvey	185
<i>Yorkshire</i> , at Burnley	41
Birchcliff	186
Halifax	42
Heptonstall Slack... ..	42
Lineholm	138
Manchester	185
Queenshead	42
Shore	41
Stayley Bridge	188
Debts on Meeting-houses; a plan for paying, by J. T....	75
David; the Judgment of, from the Malay	225

CONTENTS.

Page.

DEATHS of	DEATHS of		
Adderley, John	79	Lawson, Richard ... 268	
Ambler, Martha	82	Nash, Mrs. 135	
Bartol, Mary	133	Parkinson, Robert ... 232	
Bicheno, Ann	181	Phelon, Wm	85
Bore, Mary	267	Spencer, John	36
Chapman, Ann	236	Smart, James	84
Deacon, John	264	Scott, Joseph	86
Hardy, James	234	Stocks, Hannah	182
Kingsford, John	87	Woolaton, Susanna... 87	
Election and fore-knowledge, on 1 Peter, i. 2.....		27	
Enquiries respecting old G. B. Publications		32	
Freeston. An Address at the Grave of the Rev. Joseph		33	
France. Religious Information from		47	
Genealogies of our Saviour. Remarks on the.....		7	
Gospel. The Divine Character of the.....		49	
General Baptist Repository and Missionary Observer		278	
Hindoos. Religious Barbarities of the		15	
Heathenism. Converts from.....		69	
Hindoo Marriages illustrative of Scripture		198	
Harris. Memoirs of Mr. Samuel.....		241	
Home Missionary Society, G. B. Formation of.....		281	
Institutions. Progress of Religious.....		284	
Itinerant Fund. A plan for improving the		163	
Jew. A Letter from a converted		156	
Jews. Conference with a Colony of.....		179	
Joseph: History of, improved		257	
Kingsford. Memoirs of the Rev. John		97	
Kingsford. Reflections on the funeral of the Rev. J.....		126	
Kingsford. An Explanation respecting the Rev. J.		172	
Literary Acquisitions in unfavourable circumstances		301	
Moral Law. The Perpetual Obligation of the.....		11	
Miscellaneous Information.....		91	
Monitor's Answer to Rebecca's Case of Conscience		123	
Monitor's Advice to Rebecca, defended		214	
Missionary Labours. A call to		31	
Missionary Intelligence		44	
Missionary Exertions. Impropriety of Inactivity in		53	
Missionary Anniversary, G. B. 1820		89	

CONTENTS.

	Page.
Missionary's Example	117
Missionary Anecdote.....	227
Missionary Hours.....	263
Missionaries, G. B. sent out for India	273
————— Arrival at Madeira.....	313
Missionary Society, G. B. Anniversary 1821	273
Missionary Labours. The hopeful nature of	295
Missionary, Female. Mrs. Egede	194
Manchester. New Church formed at	189
Meeting-house, New, opened at Appleby.....	187
————— on the Colne Road.....	187
————— at London	317
————— at Norwich.....	140
————— at Staley Bridge.....	43
Meeting-house re-opened at Heptonstall Slack	43
————— at Queenshead.....	271
————— at Wirksworth	188
Ordination of J. Austin, at Rothley	139
————— of J. Burch, at Gedney Hill	139
————— of W. Brand, at Portsea	272
————— of G. Dean, at Lineholm	187
————— of J. Green, at Barton	91
————— of J. Henham, at Sevenoaks	138
————— of W. Thompson, at Norwich	140
————— of J. Wallis, at London	186
Preference of our own things to Christ's.....	158
Prayer. Directions for Public and Private.....	167
Public Spirit in Religion, exemplified in Nehemiah	227
Punctuality, The Importance of.....	289
Predestination and Fore knowledge	78
Paganism, The Cruelty of	111
POETRY. On Affliction	286
On Deism	191
By a Lady going out as a Missionary	47
To Mrs. Adderley and Family	95
The dying Infidel	96
On Phil. i. 21	94
The Resurrection	239
To-morrow	328
Queries on Gen. vi. 7, and Eccles. vii. 15, 16, 17, answered	55

CONTENTS.

	Page
<i>Query</i> on Eccles. x. 2.30, <i>Answered</i>	66
—on Endowments	132
—on Withdrawing from Churches 64.....	132
—on American Baptists.....	132
—on Prov. xx. i. 18... ..	132
—on Luke xiv. 26.	202
—on Isa. xxxii. 30.	203
—on Marrying Unbelievers.....	203
—on neglecting Public Worship 111.....	204
—on Isaiah xii. 3.....	205
—on Psalm xix. 5.....	205
—on treating Sunday Scholars.111.....	206
—to J. J. L.....	207
—on Christmas Singing.....	223, 251
—on John vi. 37.....	220
—on the means of increasing Congregations	301
REVIEW of	
Birt's Reply to Burder	322
Bolland's Riches of Divine Grace.....	142
Clarke's Sermon on J. Kingsford and R. Owen	92
Freeston's Last Legacy.....	45
Hooper's Address to the Young	232
Jarrom's Funeral Sermon for George the Third	44
— Letter on Dissent	319
Kinghorn's Defence against Hall.....	189
Pike's Swedenborgianism depicted	144
Taylor's (D.) Compendious View.....	288
Scripture illustrated from the Customs of the Hindoos.....	1
Salvation not to be obtained by our own exertions	107
Scriptures. Directions for the Profitable Study of the ...	311
Taylor. The Works of the late Rev. Dan 67, 121, 231, 310.	310
Taylor. Memoirs of the Rev. Dan	46
Thoughts. The Importance of guarding our	173
Truth. The Force of	261
Williams. Biographical Sketch of Roger	165
Young Minister. Advice to a	165
Young Christian's Dying Farewell	303

THE
GENERAL BAPTIST REPOSITORY.

No. LV.—Vol. X. May 1st, 1820.

*SCRIPTURE ILLUSTRATED from the CUSTOMS
of the HINDOOS.*

Collected from Mr. WARD'S View of the History, Literature, and Religion of the Hindoos.

NOTHING is more common in India, than to see travellers and guests eating under the shade of trees, near a house. Even feasts are never held within doors. The house of a Hindoo serves for the purposes of sleeping, cooking, and of shutting up the women; but is never considered as a sitting or a dining room. This appears to have been the custom formerly in Canaan; as Abraham, instead of inviting the angels, whom he took for travellers, into his tent, desired them to rest themselves under a tree, and fetching the provisions to them, “stood by them, under the tree, and they did eat.” Gen. xviii. 1—8.

The Hindoos always scrupulously avoid, if possible, marrying a younger son or a younger daughter before the elder. The words of Laban are literally what a Hindoo would say on such a subject. “It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the first-born.” Gen. xxix. 26.

When a Hindoo meets a friend after absence, he throws his arms round him, and his head across his shoulders, twice over the right shoulder and once over the left. Does not this illustrate the scripture phrase of “falling on the neck” of a person in an embrace? Thus Esau ran to meet Jacob, and “embraced him, and fell on his neck.” Gen. xxxiii. 4. See also Gen. xlv. 14. xlv. 29. Luke xv. 20. Acts xx. 37, &c.

At an Hindoo entertainment, the dishes are not placed on the table, but messes are sent to each individual, by the master of the feast or his deputy. This was the manner in which

Joseph entertained his brethren. Gen. xliii. 34. When a strong attachment subsists between two or more persons of the same cast, one sometimes invites the others to come, and sit by him and eat from the same dish, as a mark of great friendship. Does not our Lord allude to this custom, as an aggravation of the perfidy of Judas Iscariot, when he observes, "It is one that dippeth with me in the dish," that shall betray me? Mark xiv. 20.

In times of famine, it is usual in India to sell children for slaves to prevent their perishing with hunger. So the Egyptians intreat Joseph: "Buy us and our land for bread." Gen. xlvii. 19. In the Burman empire, whole families are often sold to discharge the debts of the father. This appears to have been the custom in Israel. 2 Kings, iv. 1. Matt. xviii. 25.

The natives of Bengal never go into their own houses or the houses of others with their shoes on, but always leave them at the door. It would be a great affront not to attend to this mark of respect in visiting; and to enter a temple without pulling off the shoes would be an unpardonable offence. In conformity to this, Moses, when he approached the divine appearance in the burning bush, was directed "to put off his shoes." Exod. iii. 5. And Joshua, in the presence of the Captain of the Lord's host, was commanded to "loose his shoes from off his feet." Josh. v. 15.

A Brahmin of a certain class preserves the fire which was kindled at the time of his consecration to the office, and never suffers it to go out; using the same fire at his wedding, and in all his burnt offerings, till at length, after his death, his body is burnt with it. Thus the sacred fire on the altar of the tabernacle was never extinguished. Lev. vi. 13.

Sometimes when a Hindoo asks a favour of a superior, he sits down in his presence in silence; or if he solicits some favour of a god, as children or riches, he places himself before the idol, in a waiting posture. It was in this manner that David "sat before the Lord." 2 Sam. vii. 18.

The Indian god Vishnoo is said to sleep four months in the year; and each of the other gods has some particular business assigned to him, which is represented as occupying his whole attention. And, according to their fables, their gods are often out on journeys or expeditions. Elijah's irony therefore to the worshippers of Baal was peculiarly pointed; "He is a

god: either he is walking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth and must be awaked." 1 Kings xviii. 27.

The carcases of poor Hindoos and of persons who have received public punishment, are cast into rivers, and floating to the sides are devoured by dogs, vultures, crows and jackalls. In India, the disgusting sight of jackalls devouring human bodies may be seen every day. So ravenous are these animals, that they frequently carry off infants as they lie by the breast of their mothers; and sick persons, who lie friendless in the streets, or by the side of the Gangs, are sometimes devoured alive by them, during the night. Persons in a state of intoxication have been thus devoured, as they lay in the streets of Calcutta. The Anathema of the Psalmist, lxiii. 10. "They shall become a portion for foxes," or as it ought to be rendered "for jackalls," is plain and striking to a Hindoo. Nor would the circumstance of Jezebel's corpse being eaten by the dogs appear incredible to him. 1 Kings, xxi. 23.

The houses of the natives of India are chiefly built of earth and mud, with a few bricks baked in the sun. These walls, owing to the sandy quality of the earth, seldom adhere long together, but soon begin to split and separate. Hence you can seldom enter the house of an indigent Hindoo, without seeing a literal fulfilment of the prediction of the prophet. "He will smite the great house with breaches, and the little house with clefts." Amos, vi. 11. In the clefts of these mud walls it is not unusual for poisonous reptiles to conceal themselves, and fatal accidents have happened in consequence. To this the same writer refers, chap. v. 19. "He went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him." Thieves in Bengal very frequently dig through the mud walls, or under the clay floors of houses; and entering unperceived, plunder them, while the inhabitants are asleep. This seems to have been the practice in the days of Job, who says: "In the dark, they dig through houses which they had marked for themselves in the day time." Job xxiv. 16.

If a rich Hindoo present any thing to an inferior, the latter, as a mark of respect, puts it on his head. When an offering of cloth, for instance, is received at a temple, the receiver not only places it on his head, but binds it there. Thus Job

proposed to esteem and respect the book written by his accuser. "My desire is," he remarks, "that mine adversary had written a book; surely I would take it on my shoulder, and bind it as a crown to me." xxxi. 36.

In Hindoostan, a curtain or awning is spread over an area in which companies sit at weddings, feasts, and religious festivals; underneath which are suspended dragons and other devices, giving it the appearance of the spangled heavens. May not the Psalmist allude to a covering like this, when he says, "He stretcheth out the heavens like a curtain?" Psalm civ. 2.

In India, white cotton is the dress of all the inhabitants, and the beauty of their garments consists not in their shape, but in their being clean and white. The exhortation therefore of the wise man, Eccles. ix. 8, "Let thy garments be always white," would be very expressive to a Hindoo. A Hindoo catechist, addressing a native christian, on the necessity of correctness of conduct observed: "See how welcome a person is whose garments are clean and white! Such let our conduct be; and then, though we have lost our cast, such will be our reception." A happy illustration of the preacher's advice!

In some parts of Bengal, whole villages are every now and then swept away by the river Ganges, when it changes its course. This river frequently runs over districts from which, a few years before, it was several miles distant. The appearance of the country on these occasions forcibly reminds us of the scripture phrase, "To a nation whose land the rivers have spoiled." Isa. xviii. 2.

Iron pens are universally used, in some parts of India; with these the natives form the letters by making incisions in the palm leaf. This pen is broad at the top, and on one side sharp like a knife, to prepare the palm leaves. Books thus written are very durable. To this mode of writing the prophet alludes. Jer. xvii. 1. "The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron."

The different sects of Hindoos make the distinguishing mark of the sect upon the forehead, with powdered sandal wood, or the clay of the Ganges. To this custom the sacred writers frequently refer. See Ezek. ix. 4. Rev. vii. 3. ix. 4. xiii. 16. xx. 4, &c.

The Hindoos annually worship the implements of their

trades, that they may obtain success in their various callings. The Jews seem to have had a similar custom. "They sacrificed unto their net, and burnt incense to their drag; because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous. Hab. i. 16.

A Hindoo believes that the repetition of the name of God is an act of adoration. He takes a string of beads, and repeats the name of his guardian deity, or of any other god: counting by his beads ten, twenty-eight, one hundred and eight, two hundred and eight: adding to every one hundred and eight, not less than one hundred. Some use their fingers instead of beads; and it is said that a person obtains whatever he seeks by this act of adoration. This repetition forms an essential part of the daily worship of a Hindoo; some devotees continue it day and night, year after year, except when eating or sleeping. In this practice, the pagans have been imitated by too many, who call themselves christians, especially by the Roman, Armenian and Greek churches; notwithstanding our Saviour's express prohibition, "Use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do." Matt. vi. 7.

The fishermen in Bengal build their huts, in the dry season, on the beds of sand, from which the river has retired. When the rains set in, which they often do very suddenly, accompanied with violent north-west winds, the waters pour down in torrents from the mountains; and, in one night, multitudes of these huts are swept away, and the place where they stood, is the next morning undiscoverable. A fine illustration of our Saviour's parable. "Every one that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them not, shall be likened to a foolish man who built his house upon the sand. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell." Matt. vii. 26, 27.

Hospitality to strangers is esteemed among the Hindoos as a work of merit. The traveller, when he wishes to rest for the night, goes to a house, and says, "I am to be entertained at your house to night." The master gives him water to wash his feet, a seat, tobacco, water to drink, &c. After these refreshments, they give him a new earthen pot to cook in, rice, split peas, oil, spices, &c. If the stranger be only a traveller, he departs in the morning without ceremony; but if he remain in the place, he is expected to continue a guest to the same

person; as to go to a second, after he had been hospitably received by the first, would be esteemed a great affront. A native officer to the Danish East India Company was peculiarly famous for his hospitality to strangers. Upon an average, upwards of two hundred strangers were daily fed at and from his house; and, it is said, that he expended, in this manner, upwards of six thousand pounds annually. If a person refuse to entertain a stranger, the sins of the guest are to be conveyed to him, and all his works of merit become the guest's. If a family are unable through poverty to entertain a guest, their sacred books order that they shall beg for his relief. The observant reader will perceive that these Indian customs throw a great light on the instructions given by our Saviour, when he sent forth the seventy disciples and the twelve apostles. Matt. x. 9—15. Luke x. 3—11.

The bed of a poor Hindoo is seldom more than a single mat, or a cloth as thick as a bed quilt. Men carrying such beds may be daily seen on the highways. It was probably such a bed on which the impotent man lay, at the pool of Bethesda, which our Lord ordered him to take up and carry away with him. John v. 9. See also Mark ii. 9—11. Matt. ix. 6.

A deranged person at liberty in the street is almost an unknown object in England; but it is a very common sight in India, where there are no public asylums for these unfortunate beings. Lunatics wander about in this country in all manner of dresses, and frequently without any dress at all; some perish while wandering in the streets. This appears to have been the case formerly in Judea. "There met him out of the city a certain man which had devils a long time, and wore no cloaths, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs." Luke viii. 27.

The vultures are extremely ravenous after dead bodies, and it is remarkable how suddenly these birds appear upon the death of an animal in the open fields, though a single one may not have been seen on the spot for a long period before. So true is the observation of our Lord. "Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles (rather, "the vultures") be gathered together." Luke xvii. 37.

Respectable householders have a room which they call 'the strangers' room,' and which is especially set apart for the use

of guests. To such a room our Saviour probably alludes when he directs his disciples to inquire "Where is the guest chamber?" Mark xiv. 14.

The Hindoos walk home from bathing barefoot, and on entering the house wash their feet again. Does not this illustrate our Lord's observation; "He that is washed, needeth not save to wash his feet?" John xiii. 10.

The common winnowing fan of the Hindoos is square, made of split bamboos; and the corn is winnowed by waving the fan backwards and forwards, with both hands, over the corn. To such an instrument the Baptist alludes when he says of our Lord, "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor," &c. Matt. iii. 12.

ON THE GENEALOGIES OF OUR SAVIOUR.

DEAR SIR,

In compliance with the wish of your "Constant reader," G. B. R. Vol. ix. p. 226. I send you a few remarks on the real difficulties and seeming inconsistencies of the Genealogies of our blessed Saviour, as recorded by Matthew and Luke. If you think them likely to be useful, they are at your service.

1. Matthew, who was himself a Hebrew, and wrote for the use of the *Hebrews*, proposing to prove to *them*, that Jesus is the true Messiah and legal king of the Jews, traces his genealogy, from Joseph, whom the Jews esteemed the real father of Jesus, through David from whom he derived his title to the crown, to Abraham from whom the Messiah was to descend. As this Evangelist wrote for the Jews, at a time when they abounded in numbers and were solicitous to destroy the christian religion; and in a place where access to the public records was easy, and every Jew had an opportunity of detecting any error in a genealogy which, belonging to the royal family of David, was peculiarly important and preserved with peculiar care; had any error existed, it would doubtless have been triumphantly proclaimed. No Jew however ventured, at that time, to dispute the accuracy of Matthew's account; and this is a sufficient proof that it agreed with some record of established authority amongst them.

2. Luke was a Greek, and wrote for the *Gentiles*. He therefore traces the pedigree of Jesus, from Mary his real mother, to Adam the common father of mankind, to whom had been promised a Saviour for the benefit of the whole human race. In doing this, Luke has shewn the descent of Jesus, through the family of Nathan from David; and thus proved at once both his title to the throne of Israel, and his claim to the confidence of the world.

The chief difficulty attending this hypothesis arises from Luke not mentioning the name of Mary. He says, "Jesus was supposed or reckoned to be the son of Joseph who was the son of Heli." But it is easy to observe, that Joseph would be properly called the son of Heli, if Mary his wife was Heli's daughter. That this was the case, we may conclude, because, it was the custom of the Jews not to reckon a wife by name in their genealogies, but to reckon the husband in right of the wife. Thus, Ezra, ii. 61, we read of persons who were enrolled as the children of Koz, the children of Barzillai; because Koz had married a daughter of Barzillai: just as Luke tells us that Joseph was the son of Heli, because he had married Heli's daughter. In confirmation of this supposition, an ancient Jewish Rabbi expressly calls Mary the daughter of Heli. And, if both Evangelists have given us the pedigree of Joseph, we have no genealogy of our Saviour recorded; as both these writers assure us that Jesus was not the natural son of Joseph.

Allowing then that Matthew gives the genealogy of Joseph, and Luke that of Mary, it would be absurd to expect, either that the number of persons mentioned, or the names by which they are registered, should be the same in both catalogues. As Matthew traces Joseph to David through Solomon his son, and Luke traces Mary to the same monarch through Nathan another of his sons, and as the descendants of Solomon and Nathan intermarried with each other, it is reasonable to suppose, that in some instances they would correspond, and in others differ. And thus we find it. From David to the captivity, they differ; during the captivity, they agree: and after it, they again proceed in different lines. Where they are the same, the families of Solomon and Nathan united: when they differ, the families diverged into different branches.

It is presumed that if the foregoing remarks be considered,

many of the seeming inconsistencies between the two accounts will vanish. That there are however some real difficulties will not surprize a candid enquirer when he reflects :

1. That it was the custom of the eastern nations to omit persons of less note when reckoning their ancestors. An Arab, descended from Mahomet, would trace his pedigree up to that impostor, in a very few names ; in the same manner in which Matthew began his gospel. " Jesus the son of David, the son of Abraham." It is therefore easy to conceive, that in filling up this outline, he omitted several names, probably because they were omitted in the legal record which he copied. Indeed we know, that he has omitted three, and there is some reason to suspect that others are also passed over. This however would be perfectly understood by the Jews for whose use he wrote ; and being conformable to their custom, would form no objection to his accuracy.

2. It is obvious from the known customs of the Jews, that a man amongst them might have two or even three fathers. Suppose a man to marry and die childless, his younger brother would marry his widow ; and the first born male of this second marriage would be the *natural* son of the second brother, but the *legal* son of the first. And should this son grow up and marry an heiress, as it was the custom of the bride's father in such cases to adopt his son-in-law, he would then have a third father to whom he must be registered as his heir and successor, and the preserver of his family name. From these sources, it is obvious that considerable difficulty and obscurity must arise in understanding the pedigrees of families traced back to remote times.

3. The acknowledged difficulty of expressing the names of any language, especially the Hebrew, exactly in the letters of another has caused considerable confusion. It was almost impossible to give the exact sound of many names, recorded in the Old Testament, in the Greek in which the Evangelists wrote. When these Greek translations are again translated into English, it is to be expected that the original Hebrew will be much disguised. This confusion is increased by the well known fact, that among the ancients, the same person had frequently several names. Add to this the errors which have crept into the text, either from carelessness or ignorance, in transcribing the Hebrew and Greek, before the art of print-

ing was invented: errors which, without a constant miracle, could not be avoided, and which would be no where more likely to occur than in copying catalogues of proper names.

With these remarks in view, and many others which might be added, the humble christian will not feel alarm at finding some difficulties in reconciling the two genealogies of our Saviour with each other, or with the historical parts of the Old Testament. He will bless God, that they are not more numerous and important, and will satisfy himself that they admit an explanation perfectly consistent with the divine authenticity and authority of the sacred pages. Many learned and pious writers have examined the subject with great care, and have done much towards answering all the objections of infidels, founded on this part of the sacred scriptures. It would however be improper to fill the pages of your miscellany with disquisitions on dry points of criticism or chronology, of no practical use. Yet you will perhaps afford me room to add the pertinent answer which the late Bishop Watson returns to a bold objection of the notorious Thomas Paine: as it rests on principles level with the capacity of the humblest inquirer; and may serve as a specimen of the replies which have been made by the defenders of scripture to their opponents.

Paine, in his hardened and decisive manner, had said, "From the birth of David to the birth of Christ is upwards of 1080 years, and as there were but twenty-seven generations mentioned by Matthew, to find the average age of each person when his first son was born, it is only necessary to divide 1080 by 27, which gives forty years for each person. As the life of man was then of the same extent as it is now, it is an absurdity to suppose that twenty-seven generations should all be old bachelors before they married. So far from the genealogy being a solemn truth, it is not even a reasonable lie." To this the bishop replies. "This argument assumes the appearance of arithmetical accuracy, and the conclusion is in a style which even its truth could not justify: yet the argument is good for nothing. Read the books of Chronicles and you will find that the three generations are omitted in the genealogical list of Matthew, between Joram and Ozias. I inquire not in this place whence this omission proceeded. Whether it is to be attributed to an error in the genealogical tables from whence Matthew took his account, or to a corruption of the text of

the evangelist; still it is an omission. Now if you will add these three generations to the twenty-seven you mention, and divide 1080 by 30, you will find the average age when these Jews had each of them their first born son, was thirty-six. Nor was it necessary that they should have been old bachelors, though each of them had not a son to succeed him till he was thirty-six; they might have been married at twenty, without having a son till they were forty. You assume also in your argument that the first born son always succeeded the father in the list—that is not true. Solomon succeeded David; yet David had at least six sons who were grown to manhood before Solomon was born: and Rehoboam had at least three sons before Abijah who succeeded him. It is needless to cite more instances to this purpose; but from these and other circumstances which might be insisted upon, I can see no ground for believing that the genealogy of Jesus Christ mentioned by Matthew is not a solemn truth." Thus calmly and conclusively does this great man refute the hasty and impudent arguments of the prince of modern infidels. J.

ON THE PERPETUAL OBLIGATION OF THE MORAL LAW.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

If the following observations in reply to the queries of *Gilboa*, (G. B. R. Vol. ix. p. 256,) be thought likely to be useful, your giving them a place in your next number will oblige,

Your's respectfully, J. J. L.

When the Lord Jesus began his public ministry, the peculiar nature of his instructions would arrest the attention and excite the suspicions of his hearers. The licentious, impatient of the restraints imposed by the law of Moses, would probably hope that the rules of this new teacher would be less rigid and austere. Others who were zealous for the law, would anxiously inquire, whether his design was to propagate a system subversive of that to which they were so warmly attached, or to expound its precepts more fully, and confirm it with stronger motives. At once to put an end to all doubt

on the subject, he declared, in his first public discourse, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets: I am not come to destroy but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Matt. v. 17, 18. This solemn declaration is of itself sufficient to establish the perpetual obligation of the moral law. For whether it refers exclusively to the moral law, as the context would lead us to conclude, or extends also to the ceremonial law, as some suppose, the moral law is certainly included; and the perpetuity of its obligations positively asserted.

But it is not from this text alone that we conclude that the moral law was not abrogated by the mission of our blessed Saviour. The same doctrine may be proved from the entire harmony of the precepts of the gospel with the ten commandments. From the confidence with which it has been asserted, that believers in Christ have nothing to do with the moral law, it would be reasonable to expect a marked discordance between its precepts and the principles of the gospel. But is there any such disagreement? Certainly not. The law says, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me:" and the apostle of the gentiles declares, "To us (christians) there is but one God." The law commands, "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image to worship it:" and the inspired ministers of the gospel tell their auditors, "We preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities to the living God." The law enjoins, "Honour thy father and mother:" the apostle exhorts, "Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." Does the law decree, "Thou shalt not kill?" the divine legislator of the new covenant extends the precept, thus, "I say unto you, whosoever is *angry* with his brother, without a cause, is in danger of the judgment." The prohibition of the law is, "Thou shalt not steal:" the exhortation of the Gospel, "Let him that stole, steal no more." The law enjoins, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour:" but the precepts of christianity are more express, "Putting away lying, speak every man the truth with his neighbour." Moses commands, "Thou shalt not covet any thing that is thy neighbour's." And Paul exhorts, "Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have."

From this brief parallel, which might easily be extended, it is plain that the strictest harmony exists between the precepts of the moral law and the injunctions of the gospel: and that the latter not only recognizes the authority of the former, but explains and enforces it. If therefore the commands of Christ and his apostles demand obedience from christians, to talk of believers having nothing to do with the moral law is a mere quibble on words, and approaches to a contradiction in terms. Whatever seeming objections may be made to this doctrine, we may be assured, if we allow the consistency of scripture, that they are only apparent; and admit of a satisfactory solution. Perhaps in this state of darkness, we may not see clearly the mode of answering all of them; for we know only in part. The time however is approaching when we shall know as we are known; and then these difficulties will vanish. In the mean time, the following observations on the objections stated by Gilboa, may perhaps be useful to persons in the circumstances to which he alludes.

1. The morality of the fourth commandment, respecting the sabbath, appears to refer to the *proportion* of time to be devoted to the Lord, rather than to the *specific day* of the week. "Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work; but the seventh is the sabbath of the Lord thy God." If therefore christians observe this proportion, they fulfil the moral law. And it is certain, that no rule could be established as to the precise day which would be of universal application. For it is morning, noon, evening, and midnight, in different parts of the world, at the same moment: so that when the sabbath was commencing in one place, it would be closing in another; and while the inhabitants of the former were engaged in the sacred duties of religion, the inhabitants of the latter would have entered on the labours of the week. Nor have we any proof that the seventh day, observed by the Jews, had been preserved from the Creation, and regularly reckoned from the day when God rested from his labours. If, therefore, the divine Legislator of the Hebrews fixed the sabbath on the seventh day, and the adorable Founder of christianity, on the first, the morality of the precept continues the same; and those who observe the latter, pay full obedience to its requirements.

2. In 2 Cor. iii. 7—18, the apostle is evidently drawing a

parallel between the Mosaic dispensation and the christian, with a view to shew the superiority of the latter over the former. It is obviously the ceremonial and ritual economy that is abolished, and not the moral law; which, as we have seen, has been adopted and confirmed by the gospel. If its connection with the Levitical system be dissolved, it is only that it may shine with greater lustre, be understood with more clearness, and guarded with more solemn sanctions in the religion of Jesus Christ. "If that which was done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious."

3. When the apostle says, Gal. iv. 4, 5, that Christ "was made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law," the whole context shews, that the redemption there intended is from that state of bondage and pupilage to which the Levitical economy subjected its votaries, into that liberty and adoption which believers in Christ enjoy. Or, if we extend its meaning to the moral law, there is nothing said of either believers or unbelievers being discharged from "all obligations to obey it." Indeed, to redeem persons from the obligation to obey a righteous law, does not seem a very clear or consistent expression. But when the subjects of a just law have violated its injunctions, and are thus become exposed to the punishment denounced against the transgression of it, to redeem them from this curse which they have justly deserved, is a noble, perspicuous and cheering idea. That this was the gracious purpose for which Jesus Christ came into the world and died on the cross, is the current language of every part of revelation.

4. It is asked, "How can God be just in giving a law which he knew man, in his fallen state, could not possibly obey, and yet condemn him for disobedience?" Here it may be observed, that the moral law obtains its authority, not from the command of a superior, but from the nature of things; and would have been obligatory on every rational being, had it never been enjoined. To love the Lord with all his heart, and his neighbour as himself, will be the duty of man, as long as the Lord is his Creator and Preserver, and his neighbour is his fellow creature. Nor is it easy to conceive how he could be redeemed from "all obligation to perform this duty," as long as he continued to stand in these relations to his Maker and his neigh-

hour. This is certain, that neither Christ nor his apostles considered this obligation as removed; for one principal end of their ministry and writings was to enforce it. As this law therefore depends on the station which man occupies in the order of nature, and as he was created capable of obeying it, if he by sin has rendered himself incapable of fulfilling its demands, his voluntary and sinful incapacity does not alter the relation in which he stands, nor absolve him from the duties required by that relation: nor could the Governor of the universe, consistently with his unchangeable perfections, repeal the law or weaken its sanctions. Man had incurred the penalty: and "the law knows nothing of mercy." In these desperate circumstances, Divine Benevolence displayed itself conspicuously in providing a Saviour: and, under the gospel, sinners are not said to be condemned because they do not keep the law; but, because they neglect the remedy which infinite wisdom and boundless love have provided for them. "He that believeth not is condemned already; because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God." John iii. 18.

Since then the moral law continues still to exhibit the will of God, and to require our perfect obedience, let us often compare our conduct with it, and be deeply humbled on a review of our imperfection and guilt. Let us feel our need of a Saviour to deliver us from the punishment to which our daily transgressions of the divine commands justly expose us; and apply, with affectionate gratitude, to Him "who has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." Gal. iii. 13. He is the only refuge for sinners; and "he will in no wise cast out any that come to him."

RELIGIOUS BARBARITIES practiced by the HINDOOS.

"The dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty," is an assertion of the inspired poet, verified by the history of every nation, where the benign influence of christianity has not been felt. The gentle Hindoos have indeed been often represented as an exception to this general observation. They have been painted as the mildest and most humane

of mortals; and their religion as a system of kindness and benevolence. This idea has been encouraged by some who have returned from India, after taking a distant and superficial view of the manners of the natives. A more accurate and impartial survey, however, has dispelled the delusion, and afforded painful proof that the idolatry of this benighted people assumes the common character of the superstition of other nations. In order to set this subject in a proper light; and to excite in the breast of every reader a pity for their degraded and oppressed state, and a desire to impart to them the blessings of that religion, which, while it ascribes glory to God in the highest, promotes peace on earth, and inculcates good will to man, we shall insert a brief description of the *religious murders* constantly perpetrating among the Hindoos. It is abstracted from a late publication by Mr. Ward, of Serampore; and is the result of long and accurate examination, in circumstances peculiarly favourable for the discovery of the truth.

The sacred books of this mild religion teach, that it is highly pleasing to the gods, and the means of securing great felicity in a future state, for widows to burn themselves on the same funeral pile with their deceased husbands. As their law permits every man to have as many wives as he can support, and as the females are often betrothed when very young, this horrid tenet produces daily crowds of victims to superstition. On some occasions, ten, twenty, or thirty women are consumed by the hands of their own children with the remains of one man. Sometimes girls of ten or twelve years old devote themselves to the flames in honour of a man with whom they have had little acquaintance; or matrons of fourscore consume their worn out bodies with the partners of their former affection, or more frequently the objects of their dread. Nor is the custom confined to the higher classes of society: the wife of the humble artificer, whose poverty or rank forbids him to aspire to the honours of burning, is buried alive with her dead partner.

The number of women who are thus sacrificed every year is appalling. Dr. Carey ascertained, by actual enumeration, that between two and three hundred widows were burnt alive, on the funeral piles of their husbands, in the year 1804, within thirty miles of Calcutta. And, on the most moderate compu-

tation not fewer than five thousand perish annually, in this manner, in the extended regions of Hindostan: indeed, many circumstances render it probable, that the actual sufferers annually exceed twice that number.

Nor is this the only species of self destruction required or sanctioned by the religion of India. In various other modes, the miserable inhabitants are daily sacrificing their lives to please their sanguinary deities. Many, in the presence and with the assistance of their nearest relatives, drown themselves in the river Ganges, which they are taught to esteem a work of religious merit, followed by immediate happiness in a future state of existence. Some burn themselves alive; and others, as an act of devotion, cut off their own heads, with an instrument ingeniously contrived for that horrid purpose. One throws himself from a precipice in honour of a favourite god; while another withdraws himself into a wilderness, and falls a prey to wild beasts, or perishes through cold on the mountains, while proceeding on religious pilgrimages. Hundreds every year cast themselves under the wheels of the ponderous car of the Indian Moloch, Juggunath; or, are consumed by disease and famine on their journeys to their numerous holy places.

But it is not by the voluntary surrender of their own lives that the Hindoos endeavour to obtain the favour of their gods; the lives of others are frequently sacrificed to the same object. Besides the arts of persuasion used by the priests to induce persons to devote themselves, there are not wanting instances in which force is used to compel the reluctant victim to complete the dreadful act; as to withdraw, after having once engaged, would entail infamy, not only to the party concerned, but on all his connections. And such is the ascendancy of superstition, that hundreds of infants are every year sacrificed by their unnatural parents, as offerings to their bloody gods; either in fulfilment of vows formerly made, or to obtain some future favour. Sometimes these innocent victims are drowned in the Ganges; at others they are hung in a basket on the boughs of trees, and left to perish.

“It is difficult,” says the Author, “to form an accurate estimate of the number of Hindoos who perish annually, the victims of superstition; but I now record as correct a conjecture on the subject, as I am able.”

Widows, burnt alive at the funeral pile	5000
Pilgrims, perishing on the road to, and at sacred places	4000
Persons drowning themselves, or buried or burnt alive	500
Children immolated	500
Sick persons whose death is hastened at the Ganges ...	500
	<hr/>
	Total... 10500
	<hr/>

“ In the opinion of every person to whom I have shewn the manuscript, the calculations fall far below the real fact. But if these calculations are not beyond the truth, what an horrible view do they present of the effects of superstition. Since the commencement of the Brahminical system, millions of victims have been immolated on the altars of its gods; and notwithstanding the influence of Europeans, the whole of Hindostan may be termed a field of blood unto this day.”

Such is the general result of Mr. W.'s investigation; and every feeling breast must be deeply affected with the mass of crime and misery which it exhibits. We shall however add a few detailed instances, from the same Author, which may assist the imagination in forming a more adequate conception of the guilt and cruelty of paganism in its mildest form.

Some years ago, thirteen women burned themselves with the body of their deceased husband, at a place called Oola. After the pile, which was very large, had been lighted, and a quantity of pitch thrown into it, to make it burn more fiercely, another of his wives came, and insisted on sharing the honour of burning. While the previous devotions were repeating, her resolution failed, and she wished to escape; but her son perceiving this, pushed her into the fire. The poor woman, to save herself, caught hold of another woman, a wife also of the deceased, and pulled her into the fire, where they both perished.

About the year 1796, a Brahmin near Calcutta dying, his wife, at a late hour of the day, went to be burnt with the body. She was fastened on the pile, and the fire kindled. The night being dark and rainy, the poor woman contrived to disengage herself from the dead body, and creeping from the flames, hid herself in some brushwood. It was soon discovered that there was only one body on the pile. The relatives.

immediately took the alarm ; and searching for the trembling sufferer, the son dragged her forth, and insisted that she should either throw herself on the pile again, or else hang or drown herself. She pleaded earnestly for life, at the hands of her son—but she pleaded in vain. The son urged that he should lose his cast ; and that therefore she should die or he would. Finding expostulations ineffectual to induce her voluntarily to embrace death, the son, with the assistance of his relatives, bound her hands and feet, and threw her on the funeral pile, where she was quickly consumed.

In the year 1799, thirty-seven females were burnt on the pile of one Brahmin, who had more than a hundred wives. When the fire was kindled only three were present ; but it was kept burning three days. When any one arrived, the ceremonies were performed, and they threw themselves into the flames. On the first day, three were consumed ; on the second, fifteen ; and on the third, nineteen. Some of these were forty years old, and others scarcely sixteen : the first three had lived with the deceased ; the others had seldom seen him.

So late as 1812, a wealthy Brahmin was burnt within three miles of Serampore, who had married twenty-five women. Thirteen died during his life ; the remaining twelve perished with his remains on the funeral pile, leaving thirty children orphans.

Some years ago, as two Brahmins were returning from bathing, they saw a poor old man sitting on the bank of the river, and asked him what he was doing there. He replied that he was destitute of friends, and was about to renounce his life in the Ganges. One of the Brahmins urged him not to delay then ; but the man seemed to hesitate, and observed that it was very cold. The other, hinting to his companion that he wished to see the sport before he returned home, reproached the trembling wretch for his cowardice ; and seizing his hands, led him to the edge of the bank, where he made him sit down, rubbed over him the purifying clay, and ordered him to repeat the proper incantations. While he was thus employed with his eyes closed, he slipped down, and sunk into the water, which was very deep, and rose no more. These are the Brahmins, whom some affect to represent as the mildest and most amiable of men.

In 1812, a leper was burnt at Cutwa. A pit about ten cubits in depth was dug, and a fire placed at the bottom of it. The devoted wretch rolled himself into it; but instantly on feeling the fire begged to be taken out, and struggled hard for that purpose. His mother and sister, however, thrust him in again, and thus perished a man who might to all appearance have survived several years. He died with the notion, that by thus purifying his body in the fire, he should receive a happy transmigration into a healthful body; whereas if he had died by the disease, he would, after four births, have appeared on earth again as a leper.

When a woman has been long married and continues childless, it is common for the husband and wife to make a vow to the goddess Gunga, that if she will bless them with offspring, they will devote the first-born to her. If after this vow they have children, the eldest is nourished to a proper age, three or four or more years, according to circumstances; then, on a day appointed for bathing in any holy part of the river, they take the child with them, and encourage it to go farther and farther into the water, till it is hurried away by the stream or pushed into it by its inhuman parents. Sometimes a stranger seizes the child, and brings it up; but it is abandoned by its parents from the moment it floats in the water, and if no one be found more humane than they, it infallibly perishes.

If an infant refuse its mother's breast, or decline in health, it is said to be under the influence of some evil spirit. Such a child is sometimes put into a basket and hung up in a tree where this spirit is supposed to reside. It is generally destroyed by ants which are here very large, or birds of prey. If it should not be dead at the expiration of three days, the mother receives it home again, and nurses it; but this seldom happens. In the north western parts of Hindostan, the horrid practice of sacrificing female children as soon as born has been known for time immemorial.

"I must leave it," concludes Mr. Ward, "to the pen of the future historian and poet, to give these scenes that just colouring, which will harrow up the soul of future generations. I must leave to them the description of these legitimate murders, perpetrated at the command and in the presence of the high priests of idolatry; who, by the magic spell of super-

stitution, have been able to induce men to quit their homes, and travel on foot a thousand miles for the sake of beholding an idol cut out of the trunk of a tree, or dug from an adjoining quarry; to prevail on men to commit murders to supply human victims for the altars of religion—on mothers to butcher their own children—on friends to force diseased relatives into the arms of death, while struggling to extricate themselves—on children to apply the lighted torch to the pile that is to consume the living mother who has fed them from her breasts and dandled them on her knees.”

The ASSURANCE of FAITH and the ASSURANCE of HOPE, ILLUSTRATED AND DISTINGUISHED.

(*A Fragment, by the late Mr. D. TAYLOR.*)

Assurance of Faith has a regard to the word of God, and believes and rests on that alone, because that alone is offered to my faith. Assurance of Hope not only rests on the word of God, but also on the work of God. There is not a word in the Bible that gives any hope to the man who has not the evidence of God's work wrought on his heart; none that gives the hope of heaven to any other. To attain the assurance of hope, therefore, I must not only look into my Bible, but into my heart, in order to prove that I am born of God, that I am renewed in the spirit of my mind, that I am begotten again, that I love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth; because the scriptures continually declare that none shall go to heaven, but those who know this work of God's Spirit. I cannot therefore have assurance of hope without examining whether I be in the faith, and proving my own self, as I am commanded to do; that my evidence of the work of grace may be clear, and that I may see and feel that I answer to the description given in God's holy word.

The grounds on which assurance of faith and assurance of hope depend are very different. In assurance of faith I have only to examine into the truth of the word which I believe, and the evidence I have of that truth. I enquire—‘Did Christ come into the world to save sinners?’ ‘Is he able to save sinners?’ ‘Is he willing to save sinners?’ ‘May sinners,

without money and without price, come to him and be saved?" These questions the blessed word of God answers in the clearest and fullest manner; and my heart, resting on this answer without the least hesitation or difficulty, is the assurance of faith. But the assurance of hope employs the mind on very different subjects. Its enquiries are, 'Am I brought to repentance for sin?' 'Do I believe on the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity?' 'Have I the evidence that I am passed from death unto life, because I love the brethren?' 'Do I feel the purifying nature of divine grace in my heart?' 'Have I a due regard to Christ?' 'Have I learnt of him and been taught of him so as to put off the old man with his deeds, to be renewed in the spirit of my mind, and to put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness?' My assurance of hope is founded on the evidence of this; and is therefore more or less full and confirmed, as this evidence is more or less clear.

Assurance of faith and assurance of hope, however, have both regard to the word of God, and both take their root from that word, and are built upon it. The word of God tells me, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. I as a sinner confide in him that he will save me. The word of the living God declares, that those, and those only, who are born again shall inherit the kingdom of God. I dare not so much as expect heaven, till I know that I am born again. To expect heaven till I know this, is to impose upon my soul, and to plunge myself into a dreadful delusion. Assurance of faith and assurance of hope, are both by the assistance of God's Holy Spirit. Those that believe, believe through grace; and those that have the hope of the righteous, have it by the Spirit of the living God. There is another passage, Heb. xv. 13. O that it may be brought close to all our hearts! "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy, and peace in believing; that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost." Assurance of faith and assurance of hope will both be attacked by our enemies. The devil exerts all his infernal power to keep the sinner from believing in Christ: and therefore we are told in the parable of the sower, that "when a person has heard the word and understandeth it not, the devil cometh and taketh away the word out of his heart, lest he should believe and be saved." Satan,

in like manner, is constantly endeavouring to darken the mind, to divert the soul and mislead the affections of a child of God, in order that he may not have that assurance of hope which his soul desires. But they may both be maintained by the grace of God. Assurance of faith is the ground of assurance of hope. When my heart is confidently living upon the promises and the grace of the gospel, my soul rises in holy expectation of its blessings; and I triumph in the thought of being, in due time, in possession of them all. "I rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

Assurance of faith is always a duty, and always the duty of every man that has the Bible to read. There cannot be a moment in our existence in which this is not a duty, and in which the want of this is not a crime. Paul therefore does not talk of the assurance of faith as a distant thing, but charges it upon them to whom he wrote, and calls them to it as a duty: "Let us draw nigh in full assurance of faith." Heb. x. 22. John also asserts, "This is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ:" and unbelief is so dreadful an evil, and so abominable a sin that "he that believeth not shall be damned." Our Lord says, "They are condemned already who believe not, because they have not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God." It is an awful consideration; but it is an absolute certainty, that it is not only the duty of every man to believe, but to believe without doubt or hesitation. It is not only distressing to my soul to have any defect in my faith, but it is sin; because I have the fullest evidence of every thing that I am to believe, in God's holy word, and every thing so plain that God himself says, "The way-faring man, though a fool, shall not err therein." Hence our Lord reproved his disciples because of their unbelief; and cried once and again, "O ye of little faith, why do ye doubt?" It is evident, then, that not only unbelief, but a small degree of faith is sinful in the sight of God. I desire to feel it every moment, that the want of assurance of faith is a crime of an abominable nature in the eyes of that God that made us, as well as inimical to my own happiness.

But this cannot be said immediately and directly of the assurance of hope. I have no authority to expect any thing without evidence. If I have not the evidence that I am a

child of God, I can have no hope, I ought to have no hope of any kind, of going to heaven. A false hope is a dreadful deception. If I am not acquainted with the Lord in a clear manner, and my evidence be not satisfying, my hope ought not to be of a satisfying nature. I never ought to take any thing for granted in the things of God ; never to rest upon any thing short of God's own word. And if I have not a clear view that I am a child of God, I can never prove, and consequently ought never to believe, that I am an heir of God, because they are inseparably united. If therefore I am not diligent to know the state of my soul, my negligence will fly in my face, my evidence will appear uncertain, and I cannot have " the full assurance of hope to the end."

Once more. Though both faith and hope arise from the word of God, yet they differ in a very important degree in another respect. Nothing is required in the person that believes in Jesus Christ, but faith in him. He is invited to come to him as a poor sinner, and receive him in his heart ; to come to him without money and without price, to come to him as wretched and miserable, and poor and blind, and naked. But assurance of hope is built in part on holiness. There is no possibility of any but those who are holy entering into the kingdom of heaven. Nothing that is defiled or polluted shall ever enter there. Those that are followers of Christ here, and those only, shall dwell with him where he is, to behold his glory. " If any man serve me," says the Saviour, " him will my Father honour." My assurance of hope then is necessarily built upon my holiness, and the evidence I have that holiness is planted in me by the grace of God. They both, however, tend to one glorious end. We believe the divine testimony concerning Jesus Christ, in order that our souls may be delivered from the guilt and from the power of sin ; that we may be justified freely, and have a title to eternal life. We look forward in a joyful hope of eternal glory, that, animated by that hope, we may " press toward the mark for the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus." And when by the power of faith and the exercise of hope we shall have finished our course with joy, our faith will be lost in sight and our hope in everlasting enjoyment.

ANSWERS TO QUERIES.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

SIR,

At page 204 of the last volume of the G. B. R. an enquirer wishes to be favoured with a few remarks on two passages of scripture. As none of your more able correspondents have noticed this request, if the following hints meet your approbation, they are at your service.

The first passage is Gen. vi. 6, 7, in which Moses informs us, that, in consequence of the general wickedness of the world before the flood, "it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at the heart," &c.

The difficulty, I suppose, that strikes the enquirer, is, how a Being of perfect felicity and immutability can be said to *repent*: since even Balaam could say, "God is not the son of man that he should repent." Num. xxiii. 19. To assist the honest mind to understand this phraseology, which is not unusual in scripture, a few brief observations may be useful.

We know so little of the nature and operations of the Deity, and have so few ideas which are not derived from earthly sources, that, when we have occasion to speak of God, we are often obliged to employ expressions which, in their strict and proper sense, apply only to man. This has been the fruitful cause of error and iniquity. When men, unaided by the light of revelation, heard God spoken of in language applicable to imperfect mortals, their depraved natures led them to understand it literally; and feign to themselves gods degraded by every weakness, and polluted by every vice known among mortals. Hence probably arose many of the absurd and disgusting tales which disgrace the mythology of every idolatrous nation. But those who have the oracles of divine truth to direct their conceptions, ought carefully to avoid interpreting those terms, which necessity compels us to adopt when describing the character or conduct of the Almighty, in any sense inconsistent with those sublime ideas which he has given of himself in his holy word.

Thus, for instance, repentance, when applied to a fallible creature, includes a sense of having acted wrong, sorrow for this error, and a change in the future conduct from what had

been previously pursued. But it is obvious, that an all-wise and perfectly just and good Being, as the scriptures every where represent the Almighty to be, can never act wrong, and therefore can never have a conviction of having done so. Nor can a God who possesses infinite and interrupted bliss be ever affected with sorrow; nor He with whom there is no variability nor shadow of turning, ever alter his conduct or act inconsistently with himself. Sin will always be the abominable thing which his soul hates, and holiness well pleasing in his sight. But hence it is evident, that the same persons, by a variation in their conduct, may at one time be the object of his anger, and at another of his love. Creatures may assume different characters; but the Creator says, "I am the Lord; I change not."

When, therefore, the inspired historian tells us, that "it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and grieved him at his heart;" he intends to express God's displeasure at the wickedness of that generation. He saw it, as a tender father sees the folly and stubbornness of a rebellious child, which not only excites his anger, but grieves him, and makes him wish that he had been written childless. It does not intend any passion or uneasiness in God, but denotes his just resentment against sin and sinners; against sin as odious to his holiness, and sinners as obnoxious to his justice.—"Does God thus hate sin? and shall not we hate it? Hath our sin grieved him to the heart? and shall not we be grieved and pricked to the heart for it? O, that this consideration might humble us and shame us; that we may look on him whom we have thus pierced and mourn." *Henry.*

The other text, referred to by your correspondent, is Eccles. vii. 15, 16, 17. On this a few observations must suffice.

The preacher had employed the former part of his discourse in describing the various modes by which men endeavour to attain happiness in this life, and the vanity and inefficacy of those methods. In this chapter, he begins to lay down some maxims of prudence, by the observance of which, a person might hope to pass through the scenes of life with less inconvenience than he otherwise might suffer. He had observed the course of human events with too much sagacity to promise his hearers perfect security or uninterrupted felicity. He knew that, in this imperfect state, where human depravity and human passions have

so much influence, it sometimes happens, that the virtue of a good man exposes him to danger, persecution and death; while the very vices of the wicked often promote his prosperity in society, and preserve him from destruction. "All things," he observes, "have I seen in the days of my vanity, there is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in his wickedness," verse 15.

But, although in this life, sometimes the wicked flourish while the righteous are oppressed, yet prudence and moderation may often enable a good man to escape much of this danger. In order to this, the wise man advises his hearers to guard against too rigid a strictness in indifferent matters, intemperate zeal in defending or propagating the truth, and an unreasonableness severity in censuring others; as well as against a too curious solicitude to account for the dispensations of divine providence and the cause of human events. By such excess a person frequently exposes himself to trouble and vexation without benefitting others, and wearies his own spirit by needless anxiety which sometimes undermines his constitution. Something like this appears to be his intention, when he exhorts, "Be not righteous over much, neither make thyself over wise: why shouldst thou destroy thyself?" verse 16.

The opposite extreme however is to be carefully avoided. Some, to escape being suspected of being over righteous, run into the borders of sin and folly, and expose themselves to the snares of vice, till, drawn on by the force of temptation and the strength of their corrupted natures, they fall victims to their crimes, or become dreadful monuments of divine vengeance, in a premature death. "Be not," says Solomon, "over much wicked, nor be thou foolish: why shouldst thou die before thy time?" verse 17.

S. O.

ON ELECTION AND FOREKNOWLEDGE.

Thoughts on 1 Peter i. 2.

The Apostle Peter addressed his first Epistle to certain strangers, scattered throughout various countries of Asia, whom he describes as, "Elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto

obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." 1 Pet. i. 2. This passage has given rise to some controversy, and it is desirable to ascertain its true meaning.

The persons to whom Peter wrote were "sanctified by the Spirit, obedient, and sprinkled with the blood of Christ." This was their present character; and the sacred penman seems anxious to guard his readers from supposing that they were formed into this character, in consequence of their being previously elected to it, by expressly informing us, that they were elected because they bore this character. They were elected, he says, not *to* sanctification, but *through*, or as Dr. Doddridge renders it, *by means* of sanctification, *unto* obedience, &c. There is not the most distant allusion to the sovereign, personal, unconditional election of individuals, without any regard to merit. The Apostle plainly states the cause of the choice made of these persons: and every one who possesses the graces for which they were chosen may claim the privileges which belong to the elect. In short, it is an election of character, not of persons: and the obvious intention of the passage is to confirm the assertion of David, "Know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself." Psalm iv. 3. A glorious and interesting truth, which ought never to be forgotten by those who profess to be the children of God.

But, some may object that believers are, in other parts of scripture, said to be "chosen from the beginning," and "before the foundation of the world," when their characters had not been displayed nor their conduct known; and therefore these could not be the ground of the choice made of them. The Apostle, as if he foresaw this objection, distinctly states, that the strangers to whom he wrote were elected, "*according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.*" That is, the Omniscient to "whom all his works from the beginning of the world are perfectly known," foresaw, that the persons addressed would be partakers of this sanctification, obedience and faith; and, in conformity with his holy will, that all who were partakers of those graces should be his people, he chose them for his elected ones. But this choice, it is obvious, was not an arbitrary act; it was according to the foreknowledge that God was possessed of their future character; and was neither personal in the strict sense of the word, nor unconditional.

It may be inquired, "If God foreknows with certainty who will accept the gospel, are not those individuals personally elected to everlasting life? and must not they irresistibly attain that felicity to which they are appointed?" Or, in other words, does not certain foreknowledge imply absolute fore-appointment? This is confessedly a difficult subject and has occasioned volumes of controversy. When we indulge in metaphysical inquiries respecting the powers and operations of our own minds, we are often involved in obscurity and uncertainty. But, when we attempt to understand or explain the attributes or operations of the Deity, we are quickly lost in the profundity of the subject; and compelled to confess the weakness of our powers. Past and future are terms connected with time, and cannot perhaps be applied with strict propriety to Him who is from eternity to eternity; and beholds, at one glance, all things past, present and to come. We ought, when speaking of His incomprehensible essence and perfections, to proceed with the most profound reverence and sincere modesty; and always to remember that we cannot by searching find out the Almighty to perfection. We may however, on this mysterious subject, venture to remark, that foreknowledge does not necessarily suppose fore-appointment by the party that foreknows. I may foresee that an event will happen, without having any controul over that event. I know to-day, speaking after the manner of men, that the sun will rise to-morrow; but I neither fore-ordain that such an event shall take place, nor has my foreknowledge any share in producing it. Were my knowledge of causes and effects more accurate and extended, I might foresee that a free agent would pursue a certain line of conduct, yet my foresight have no controul over his actions. An experienced Tutor surveys his pupils, as they sit before him, and from his acquaintance with their various tempers, abilities and connections, can foretel with tolerable certainty the general conduct which each will pursue in future life, and the probable effects of that conduct. But his sagacity, which can thus in a measure penetrate the veil of futurity, has no share in producing the events which he foresees. Each of his pupils selects his own course, and pursues his own inclinations, unconscious of the forebodings of his preceptor, and uninfluenced by his predictions. Now is it not easy to conceive, that a Being of infinite wisdom, who can at

once see all the circumstances in which any individual will be placed, in the whole course of his existence, is intimately acquainted with all the springs of human actions, understands the thoughts of man afar off, and knows perfectly the connection of causes and effects; is it not easy to conceive, that such a Being can certainly foresee all events, without either fore-ordaining them, or causing their occurrence?

This, however, is reasoning; and, at the best, unsatisfactory and deceptive. But we may depend with perfect security on the declarations of a faithful and all-wise God. He has assured us, that "He is no respecter of persons;" that "He is not willing that any should perish;" that Jesus Christ tasted death for every man; and made a propitiation for the sins of the whole world; that "whosoever believeth on him shall have eternal life: and that when any finally perish, it is not because no provision is made for their salvation, nor because they were fore-ordained to destruction; but "because they will not come to Christ that they may have life."

Instead therefore of seeking for vain excuses, let each reader seriously reflect "How shall I escape, if I neglect so great a salvation?"

W. SAILL.

In pursuance of the plan suggested by T. H. B. in the last number, our friendly correspondents are requested to favour the Editor with a short Essay on the true meaning of the Apostle, Rom. viii. 28, 29, 30, in time for the next number.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

If you will allow the following Query a place in your valuable miscellany, it will be esteemed a favour, by

Your's, respectfully,

A. F. S. W.

What is meant by Solomon, Eccles. x. 2, when he says, "A wise man's heart is at his right hand; but a fool's heart is at his left?"

EVIDENCES OF A CALL TO MISSIONARY LABOURS.

In a Letter to a Friend.

BELoved BROTHER,

With respect to your Queries on the subject of a call to be a missionary, a few things have crossed my mind, which I will now briefly communicate. Enlargement is not necessary.

1. A person must be a converted, pious man, or it is not to be expected he can be proper for a missionary. The more pious, other things being equal, the more fitted he is for it.

2. I conceive too, a person is not fit to be a missionary, unless he feel some concern for the heathen; a desire for their conversion; and a wish for the kingdom of God to be promoted among them. It is almost necessary for a real christian to feel something of this; and if God call a person to the work, it is reasonable to suppose he will excite in his mind a concern for the salvation of the heathen.

3. Gifts for the work, are to be possessed before any one can rationally conclude, that God has called him to it. It is very unlikely that God should appoint any one whom he has not qualified. But what are gifts for the work? In addition to piety, and a concern for the conversion of the heathen, I suppose, moderate health and strength of body; a sound judgment; a readiness of utterance; some acuteness in arguing, &c. In my view, a man's qualifications are of very great importance, not only as it regards the success of his efforts, but also his being called to it. It is not enough, that a missionary have a general knowledge of the gospel, and divine things; he should be a man possessed of much general information, and in his manner calculated to excite respect.

4. A person must be able to see his way clear to leave his present situation. If providence designs him for a missionary, it is reasonable to suppose that a way will be opened for him to be at liberty for the work; and, if that cannot be, it would seem he is not called. And

5. As a way may be expected to be opened for him at home to quit his former situation, so also it is to be supposed, that there will be an opening for him abroad; a prospect of his

being supported and protected; an opportunity given him to exert himself to preach the gospel.

6. Again. In a person's judging of his call to this work, I suppose he must pay considerable regard to the opinion of his friends who are the most pious and judicious; who know him most, and are best acquainted with his qualifications. They can judge perhaps better than he.

Lastly. If, after considering these things, with any other which bear on the point, and seeking divine wisdom, it appears to a person to be his duty to engage, in that case, in my apprehension there is reason to think that God has called him to the work. If he is pious; concerned for the salvation of the heathen; qualified in some tolerable degree; is, or may be, at liberty; has a fair prospect of exerting himself; his friends think it right for him to engage; and, after seeking divine direction, he is disposed to engage, surely he has reason to consider it his duty.

W.—*Dec. 22d, 1819.*

J. J.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

I shall esteem it a favour, if through the medium of the G. B. R. you will permit me to enquire, if any of your readers possess an old hymn book, formerly in use among our Connection, containing a Poem on "Absolute Predestination," said to be written by the late Mr. A. Booth, before he left the General Baptists. And also, if any copies can be obtained of the late S. Deacon's "Account of the G. B.'s." Likewise two small pieces of the late Mr. D. Taylor's—"The faithful and wise Steward." And "The duty of searching the Scriptures." If the above can be procured and forwarded to me, I will very cheerfully remit a remuneration for them.

I remain,

Most cordially your's,

J. MANN.

4th April, 1820.
36, *Commercial Road,*
London.

**ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE GRAVE OF
THE REV. JOSEPH FREESTON.**

The reign of death is universal: extending over all nations, ranks and ages. His victories are frequent: thousands are daily falling under his mighty hand. We are so accustomed to the sight, that it almost ceases to surprize, affect or alarm us. But can we see what death has done here, and remain unaffected? If we can, it is a dreadful sign of the want of thought, or of the absence of real religion.

A great and a good man is fallen: an ambassador of Christ,—a gospel herald, who has often blown the trumpet in Zion—one who watched over, and was anxious for souls. When such perish shall we not lay it to heart? One would think that He who has the power of death would say to the ghastly monster, “Let these alone: they are doing a great work; they are turning many to righteousness; they shall live to the age of Methuselah.” But not so. He has commissioned the tyrant to take one and another even of these, in the midst of their days; in mercy to them; but in judgment to those among whom they have laboured almost in vain.

Such events have sometimes awakened the careless, have induced reflection, and brought conviction to the heart: have made a lasting wound on the conscience, which never could be healed till the blood of Christ was applied to it by faith. Yes, ministers, when gone to their reward, are often more thought of, more prized, and their sermons and sayings more valued, than when present with us; so that, like Sampson, they have done more execution at their deaths than in their lives. May it be so here. Then will the glorified spirit of our departed friend feel its happiness augmented, at the resurrection of the just, in meeting some at the right hand of Jesus, whom he left in the broad road, who will be his joy and crown of rejoicing.

But if any of you have remained hardened under his ministry to the last, and yet feel not—if you continue so till you die, how will you meet him at the judgment day? Will he not be a swift witness against you? Yes. Let us place you at the bar, and suppose the Judge saying, “Who are you? an heathen?” ‘No.’ “An Indian?” ‘No.’ “A Briton?”

What? Were you born in that land of light? Do you know God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent? Do you know them so as to love them?" Speechless. "Under whose ministry did you sit? Did he never tell you?" Still speechless. "Did you, my servant Freeston?" "Yes, Lord, I told him plainly of his state. I set before him his guilt and danger, and thy love, thy dying love. I urged him to flee unto thee for refuge. I charged him to repent and believe the gospel. I told him what his end would be if he did not. I prayed for him and talked to him; but he was, all day long, disobedient and gainsaying person." "Depart, thou cursed, into everlasting fire." "Lord, have mercy upon me!" "Because I called, and you refused, I stretched out my hand and you did not regard, I will laugh at your calamity; I will mock now your fear is come. You shall go away, into everlasting punishment."

But while some will meet our departed friend in the judgment with dread, others doubtless will meet him with joy. I trust there are many interred in this ground who will, at the resurrection, rise to everlasting life. There are preachers and hearers, pastors and people, those who have sowed and those who have reaped. Will not these rejoice together? Will not a Smith, a Shipman, a Freeston stand in the midst of the flock, as so many under shepherds, and with extacy exclaim, "Now the Chief Shepherd appears. He is come to gather his dispersed from the four parts of the earth. Did we not tell you that he would come? Did we not urge you to be looking for this blessed hope? Did we not charge you to be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord? Did we not assure you that your labour would not be in vain?" "You did:" will be the reply of numbers, "And we esteemed you then for your works' sake: and now indeed we highly esteem you in love." But they can say no more. Christ descends to receive them—they are caught up to meet the Lord in the air—to sit at his right-hand and to enter into joy:—and through eternal ages there will be tokens of the greatest respect and affection between pastors and people, while both unite in fervently adoring the Shepherd and Bishop of souls.

Having these persuasions and prospects, let us take a momentary leave of our deceased friend and pastor: rejoicing that while he is gone—he is gone before us—gone to a better

country—gone from labour to rest—from suffering to enjoyment—from faith to sight—from an imperfect society of saints who are only renewed in part, to a perfect society of angels and saints in glory—from the footstool to the throne, where all tears are wiped away. The earthly vessel, which was once the receptacle of heavenly treasure, is now broken. It contains—it can impart no more. Freeston has preached his last sermon to you—poured out his last prayer to God for you. You may say, “Oh! that I could hear him again;” but it is all in vain. He has closed his labours, whether you have regarded them or not. May a consciousness of disregard, so far as any of you feel it, rouse your attention to his successors, and cause you in future so to hear that your souls may live.

We now commit his body to the ground, in a lively hope of its glorious resurrection, when this corruption shall have put on incorruption; and this mortal, immortality.

Then, thou, dear partner of his cares, wilt see him again—not with an enfeebled, emaciated body—not with a pale or yellow countenance—not with trembling legs, tottering hands, dim eyes—not to watch, with painful fear, the last beating of his pulse, or drawing of his breath. No. Thou shalt see him, in immortal youth, with a healthy countenance, bearing the image of the heavenly; no more subject to weakness, imperfection, pain or death. With these expectations suppress the heaving sigh,—sorrow not as one that hath no hope.—Your connection is only dissolved for a moment; it shall re-commence in a state of vast improvement, and continue for ever. Under the present painful bereavement look up: fix your eyes on Him who ever liveth, who has promised to be a husband to the widow, and bids you trust in him. May you, my afflicted friend, always pour out your heart before him. May you still see his superintending care over you, and great care for you, in many an unexpected and encouraging instance. May you talk of his mercy and faithfulness to your children in time to come; and, at last, leave the world, declaring to his honour, that not one word has failed of all that the Lord has spoken!

You, children of our departed friend, you have seen the end of one of your parents: and what is your wish? That yours may be like his? Not as respects the circumstances attending his affliction, but the state of his mind. When death was evidently fixing his fatal dart in his vitals, I asked him, if his

mind was tranquil. He said, "Yes, He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure; and it is all my salvation and all my desire." I enquired if he suspected, now at last, that there was any fallacy in the foundation of our hope. "No:" he replied, "if there be any alteration in my views, it is a more firm persuasion, that nothing but the atoning blood and perfect righteousness of Jesus can be our defence, at the bar of God." In the course of this conversation, he observed that the 713th Hymn in our collection was very expressive of his views and experience; and with fervour, exclaimed, "What a pleasing thought it is, that though I am now conversing with christian friends, I may be out of the body before morning, and associated with angels and the spirits of just men made perfect." Thus, ye children, you may see something of his happy state, and pleasing prospects as death drew near. Would you have this happiness and these prospects? Then cleave to your father's God, trust in the same Saviour in whom he trusted, and pursue the same course of devotedness to him through life; be as familiar in your intercourse with the Lord, as firm in your reliance on Jesus, as fully bent on reaching the kingdom of glory, as he was—so shall your last end be like his.

Ye members of the church, remember him who has had the rule over you, whose faith follow. O see that you regard his instructions and admonitions; remembering that Christ is the same, and that your Lord expects fruit yet to arise from the seed which his servant has sown among you. You are now in a bereaved state; as sheep without a shepherd. Keep close to one another, and each of you to God. Be much in prayer, that your way may be directed to obtain a pastor after God's own heart. In the mean time, do not despise the weakest assistant. Cherish every effort, though feeble, made by any good man to feed and strengthen you. And live in hope, that ere long an Elisha may arise to build up the walls of Zion, and that the Lord will again appear in his glory. Amen.

GENERAL BAPTIST OCCURRENCES.

OBITUARY.

April 16th, 1819, Mr. JOHN SPENCER, pastor of the General Baptist Church, at *Shore*, in Yorkshire, died, in the

seventy-seventh year of his age. He was awakened to a sense of his spiritual danger when about twenty-seven years old; and by the advice of a pious neighbour, he for some time attended, in rotation, at the worship of the Methodists, particular Baptists and General Baptists. He soon however settled with the last; and joined the church at Birchcliff, then under the pastoral care of the late Mr. D. Taylor. With this church, he continued an honourable, useful and active member for about twenty-four years. He was frequently employed in conducting public prayer meetings; and his exercises of this nature being approved by his friends, they encouraged him to attempt to exhort occasionally; and, in a short time, called him regularly to the work of the ministry. For twelve years, he was employed as opportunity offered; and during the latter part of that period preached at Shore. His labours there were acceptable; and he was invited to be their minister. In 1792, he settled with them: and continued to serve that small interest for twenty-seven years. His success, for a long time, was very small; owing principally to the ignorance and poverty of the inhabitants. After he had laboured, with diligence, fidelity and patience, for eight or nine years, to warn sinners of their danger, and to set forth Christ as a Saviour, it pleased the Lord to grant an answer to his many prayers; and some impression appeared to be made on the minds of a few. Some additions were made to the church, during the ten succeeding years; and the number of members, which, when he removed to Shore, amounted to no more than six or seven, had, in 1808, increased to forty-three. But the remainder of his course was attended with less success: his advanced age, and several other circumstances contributing to prevent the extension of the cause. As a preacher, he was very plain; and confining himself to the essentials of christianity, he exhibited the gospel freely, and very usefully explained christian experience. A stranger to the learning of the schools, he read very few books besides the Bible. From this he drew all his own support, and this supplied him with all his furniture for the instruction and edification of his hearers.

In his old age, he was afflicted with the asthma, which for many winters prevented him from preaching. This complaint confined him for several months to his house, before it overcame his naturally strong constitution. During his affliction,

his mind was pleasingly supported by the truths which he had preached to others; and he enjoyed unshaken confidence to the end. Mr. James Taylor, of Heptonstall Slack, preached his funeral sermon, from Phil. i. 21, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain:" a text chosen by the deceased himself, as descriptive of his own happy experience.

CONFERENCES.

The MIDLAND CONFERENCE was held, at *Castle Donington*, Sept. 1819; when it was agreed that Mr. J. Deacon should be requested to take a journey to Lincoln, to inquire into the present state of the G. B. interest in that city, and the prospect of future encouragement. Messrs. Pickering and Heard were desired to inspect the trust-deeds of Ashford and Bakewell Meeting-houses, and to take the necessary measures. The Treasurer of the Itinerant Fund was requested to advance £5 towards the expences of supporting the G. B. cause at Burton-upon-Trent; and, it was strongly recommended to the churches in the Midland district, to collect for the Itinerant Fund as soon as possible.

The next meeting of this Conference was held at *Discworth* Dec. 28th 1819; when Mr. Stevenson preached, in the morning, from Rev. xxii. 14; and Mr. Purcell, in the evening. This meeting was interesting: being enlivened by a reference to the subject of missions. The friends at Hinkley were advised to apply for ministerial aid to the neighbouring churches; and it was recommended that the churches should supply Hinkley to the utmost of their power. A small piece, written by the late Mr. Freeston as his last advice to his flock, which was read to the church and congregation after his decease, was recommended to be published; and a friend present, generously engaged to bear any loss that might accrue; but that the profits, if any, should be devoted to the use of his widow. The legality of the register of births used in some dissenting congregations, having been questioned, this Conference recommended the church at *Kegworth*, to write to the Secretary of the Deputation for protecting the civil rights of Dissenters, on the subject.

This conference assembled again, Tuesday, April 4th, 1820, at *Hugglescote*. In the morning Mr. Hoë opened public

service by prayer; and Mr. Pickering preached from Psalm xvii. 1—3. In the evening, Mr. Cramp, of Longford prayed; and Mr. Ingham, of Duffield, preached from Psa. xxvi. 8, 9. The public services were well attended, and it is hoped the effect will be a blessing.

The LINCOLNSHIRE CONFERENCE was held at *Wisbeach*. Oct. 14th, 1819. Cases from Chatteris and Church-lane, London, were considered, and advice given. Mr. W. Bampton was recommended to exchange with neighbouring ministers, in preference to administering the Lord's Supper himself at Yarmouth. Mr. Everard was requested to correspond with the Secretary of the G. B. Missionary Society, to obtain information, and communicate the same to this conference, that it might be apprised of the progress of the cause; in order to keep up a missionary spirit amongst the churches. On the preceding evening, Mr. Rogers preached from Psa. viii. 4; and Mr. Bissill, at the conference, from 2 Chron. vi. 41. Mr. Kinghorn, of Norwich, opened the meeting with prayer.

This conference was held again, Jan. 27, 1820. On Wednesday evening, at Fleet, Mr. Munro prayed, and Mr. Peggs preached, from Judges, v. 17. At Sutton, Mr. Abbott opened the public service by prayer, and Mr. Payne delivered a discourse from 2 Cor. vi. 14. At this meeting, Mr. Peggs gave a relation of the exercises of his mind in reference to his offering himself to the committee as a missionary, and requested the advice of the conference. He was unanimously advised to offer himself; and to take the first opportunity of engaging in a work to which he was deemed to be called of God. Advice was also given respecting the best means of reviving the G. B. interest at Lincoln; and supplies arranged for Chatteris.

The next meeting of this Conference was at *Gedney-hill*, April 13, 1820: when Mr. Ewen opened the meeting with prayer, and Mr. Bampton preached, from Gal. ii. 20. In the evening, Mr. Everard prayed, and Mr. Peggs preached, from Acts xvii. 16, 17. At this meeting, the measures which had been adopted to constitute the Gedney-hill branch of Fleet Church a distinct society were approved. As the Methodist Sunday-schools had withdrawn from the union, formerly existing in this district, and were considered as extinct, it was unanimously resolved, that it was desirable to establish an Union among our own schools; and that the teachers in every

school belonging to our respective churches be consulted, and the result brought to the next Conference, when the necessary steps may be adopted. Supplies were also arranged for Chatteris: and advice given in cases from Yarmouth and Ipswich. The next Conference to be at Bourn, June 8, 1820.

The NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE CONFERENCE met at *Kirton*, Dec. 22 1819; when Mr. Watson preached, on the evening preceding, from 2 Cor. viii. 9. On the day of Conference, Mr. Skidmore preached, from Acts iii. 6: and Mr. W. Smedley from Rom. xv. 19. This meeting advised the friends at Kirton, to state their case to the Midland Conference and solicit assistance. The Church at Killingholm were advised to establish regular church and prayer meetings, as a means of reviving religion among them. Mr. Skidmore was requested to obtain as much assistance as he could, and endeavour to keep the meeting-house at Misterton open every Lord's day. And it was agreed to consider, at the next Conference, of the best method, of giving more effectual support to the Itinerant Fund in these churches. The next Conference to be at Retford, on the Wednesday in Whitsun-week. The preachers; Messrs. Stocks, of Kirton, and R. Smith of Nottingham; or, in case of failure, Messrs. S. Watson and W. Smedley.

The LONDON CONFERENCE was held at *Chatham*, April 5, 1820. On the preceding evening, Mr. Wallis of London preached, from Rom. xii. 1; and, on the evening of conference, Mr. Hobbs, of Berkhamstead, from 1 Cor. xv. 5, 8.

Considering the low state of our interest in that town, both services were well attended. The reports of the state of religion in the different churches, were highly encouraging. A supply was arranged for Chatham once a month till the next meeting; ministerial assistance was promised to Sevenoaks. Messrs J. Kingsford and J. Farrent, were requested to visit the few friends at Wrotham. A case was drawn up and signed by the scribe, to be presented to the next association, requesting that the plan for the liquidation of the debts on meeting-houses, which was offered to the last annual association, should be re-considered. The members of this Conference were desired to bring to the next meeting a report of the state of their respective vicinities, with regard to population and religious and moral cultivation. Mr. A. Taylor was requested to prepare an essay on the nature and importance of Punctuality,

to be read at the next Conference; which will be held at Tring, Hertfordshire, on the first Wednesday, in Oct. next. Preacher for Tuesday Evening, Mr Henham, and in case of failure Mr. J. Kingsford; for Wednesday Evening, Mr. J. Wallis, and in case of failure, Mr. J. Farrent.

The WARWICKSHIRE CONFERENCE was held, June 3, 1819, at *Sutton Coldfield*; when Mr Cheatle preached, from Gen. xlix. 4; and Mr. Barnes from Rom. x. 16. This meeting was well attended; and it is hoped some profitable conversation took place respecting the best means of promoting the cause of the dear Redeemer.

Sep. 28, 1819, this Conference assembled again at *Burton-upon-Trent*. Messrs. Cheatle and Green preached: the former from Psa. xxxiii. 11, and the latter from Zech. xiii. 1. The friends at Burton were advised to exert themselves in a pecuniary way for the support of the cause in that place: and some supply was arranged for Sutton church, left destitute by the death of its pastor.

The last meeting of this Conference was held at *Austrcy*, Jan. 4, 1820: when Mr. Goadby preached, from Psa. lxxxix, 27; and Mr. Green, from Rev. ii. 13. some supply was arranged for Sutton; and the meeting was enlivened by a reference to the G. B. Mission. The next meeting will be held at Wolvey; on the Thursday in Whitsun-week.

The YORKSHIRE CONFERENCE was held at *Burnley*, May 31st, 1819, Mr. James Taylor opened the public service, and Mr. Wallis, then on his journey from Glasgow, preached from 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18; at this Meeting, supplies were arranged for Brearly, Staley Bridge, and Queenshead. Monies received and paid on account of the Itinerant Fund; an account of which was forwarded to the Association. Thanks were voted to Messrs. Jonathan Ingham and Thomas Smith, for their gratuitous itinerating, since the last meeting. Mr. John Midgley was advised to remove to Shore, to succeed Mr. John Spencer, lately dead. The Church at Heptonstall Slack, was encouraged to build a place of worship at Hawkholnden, as soon as a sufficiency of money was obtained.

This Conference was held, at *Shore*, August 9th, 1819, Mr. Hollinrake opened public service, and Mr. Asten preached, from Psalm, lxxxix. 15. Supplies were arranged for Brearly, and Staley Bridge. Mr. Hodgson informed the meeting, that three

hundred and twenty yards of land, at Blackdainbridge, near Hawkholmden, had been purchased, and about seventy pounds in money, subscribed, towards the erection of a place of worship at Blackdainbridge.

This Conference assembled again at *Halifax*, Oct. 18, 1819, Mr. Ellis prayed, and Mr. Hurley preached, from 2 Cor. ii. 14; at this meeting, arranged supplies for Brearly and Staley Bridge. Begging letters from Ashby, Birmingham, Fleet, and Kirton, were referred to the Conference, next preceding the Association of 1820. From the disturbed situation of the country, on account of various political meetings held in different parts, the members of our churches were advised to abstain from politics, and especially from all political meetings.

The next meeting of this Conference was held at *Heptonstall Slack*, Dec. 27, 1819. Mr. Midgley prayed, and Mr. Hurley preached, from Psalm xxxvi. 5. Arranged supplies for Staley Bridge. A begging letter from Staley Bridge was deferred to the next meeting. A similar letter from Whitechapel, London, was deferred till the time the other begging letters are discussed. The Treasurer of the Itinerant fund received £3.16s. 7d. and paid £6 4s. 6d. on account of that fund. To meet the deficiencies of the fund, such of the churches as have not collected for it, are desired to attend to it before Midsummer.

The last meeting of this Conference was held at *Queenshead*, April 4, 1820: when Mr. Midgley opened the public service, and Mr. Dean preached from Rom. xii. 18. A supply was arranged for Staley Bridge, till next meeting. Mr. Hurley was desired to supply Nantwich and Tarporley two Lord's days, in the beginning of May. It was recommended to all our churches to collect for Staley Bridge new meeting house, in the course of next summer; and the Queenshead church were encouraged to enlarge their meeting house, provided they can raise one half the expence.

THE CHRISTIAN FUND.

The Anniversary of the *Christian Fund* was commemorated at Fleet, Jan. 26, 1820. It was very numerously attended, Mr. Bissill preached, from Luke x. 25,-37, the Parable of the Samaritan. In the evening, Mr. Peggs preached, and the usual collection was made.

NEW MEETING HOUSE OPENED.

On Lord's day, Nov. 21, 1819, a neat commodious meeting house, measuring sixteen yards by seven and a half within, was opened at *Staley Bridge*, near Manchester, by Mr. Asten, of Burnley, and Mr. William Hurley, of Queenshead. In the afternoon, Mr. Hurley opened the service, and Mr. Asten preached, from Exodus, xx. 24. In the evening, Mr. Asten opened the service, and Mr. Hurley preached, from Nehemiah, xiii. 2. Suitable portions of Scripture were read at the commencement of both services; and nearly twenty pounds collected on the occasion. May the great head of the church smile on this undertaking; that sinners may be converted and finally brought to everlasting glory.

MEETING HOUSE RE-OPENED.

From the crowded state of their congregation on the sabbath day, through the number of hearers and the introduction of their sunday school to divine worship, the friends at *Heptonstall Slack* have been induced to enlarge their meeting-house, by carrying back the west wall. It is now seventeen yards by thirteen within, and has a gallery on three sides. The roof has been taken off from the meeting, Mr. J. Taylor's house, and the vestry; and the whole elevated. The vestry has been enlarged, and an upper room added to it, for the benefit of the sunday school, church meetings, and Conferences. The cost of this undertaking, has been about four hundred pounds; and it is acknowledged now, when finished, to be a very considerable improvement. This meeting-house was re-opened, October 24, 1819, by Mr. J. Taylor, of Slack; Mr. William Hurley, of Queenshead; and, Mr. John Fawcett, the Son of the late Dr. Fawcett, of Ewood-hall. Mr. J. Taylor preached in the morning, from Isaiah liv. 1, 2, 3; Mr. William Hurley in the afternoon, from Psalm cxxii. 9; and Mr. J. Fawcett in the evening, from Psalm xxvi. 8. The congregations, especially in the afternoon and evening, were very large and respectable, and all the opportunities highly interesting. Collections were made in the afternoon and evening, and above twenty pounds obtained. May the Lord choose this Zion for his habitation, and may many sons and daughters be born here!

MISSIONARY INTELLIGENCE.

Several associations have lately been formed in aid of the G. B. Mission. Mr. Hoe and the Secretary, visited Barton, Barleston, and Hugglescote, and met with a friendly reception. Associations have been formed at these places, and at Friar Lane in Leicester, Melbourn, Ticknall, and Queenshead: and several other churches are preparing to join them. At the meeting of the Committee at Diseworth, in December last, Messrs. Slater and Glover, who had been admitted on probation, were fully engaged as Missionaries. A very pleasing letter from Mr. Ward of Serampore, was read; and an answer drawn up, conveying the thanks of the Committee to Mr. Ward, with assurances of their high esteem for his character.

Quarterly Papers, No. 7.

In addition to the above intelligence, we are informed, that Mr. James Peggs, late of Norwich, and Mr. Wm. Bampton, of Yarmouth, have offered themselves as missionaries, and been accepted: that it is intended to ordain one of them at Loughborough, some time in June, when Mr. Ward will assist; and that it is in contemplation, if possible, for both the missionaries to accompany Mr. Ward, on his return to India, by way of America, which is expected to take place in July next.

 REVIEW OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE GOODNESS OF GOD to his late Majesty George the Third; A SERMON, occasioned by his DEATH: By JOSEPH JARROM. pp. 34, 8vo. Price 1s.

This discourse is founded on Psalm xci. 16. "With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation." This gracious promise, the preacher considers as eminently applicable to our late venerable monarch. Length of days both as a man and a king was certainly granted to him; and this author attempts to prove that God shewed him his salvation—in the almost uninterrupted enjoyment of health and strength during a considerable part of his life—in preserving him from the influence of unruly passions and the indulgence of sensual gratifications—in the preservation of his life when attempts were

made by violence to take it away—in preserving him from foreign enemies—and in the general prosperity and happiness of his reign. In illustration of the last particular, Mr. J. endeavours to shew, that the late reign was more auspicious than the preceding ones, in the equitable administration of justice, in respect to the many important discoveries and improvements made in it, in the arts and sciences—in the prosperity of trade and commerce—in the accession of territory and increase of population—in the preservation of our laws and liberties—and, especially, in the encouragement given to morality and religion, and the extent to which they have prevailed. The author then proceeds to pay a tribute of respect to the piety of our deceased sovereign, and concludes with a few useful practical instructions.

Though we fear that some of our readers will hardly be willing to subscribe to every political sentiment which this discourse contains; yet the general strain of it is manly, loyal and constitutional. We feel obliged to the worthy preacher for having on this, as well as on a former interesting occasion, stepped forward to prevent the disgrace which might have attached to the New Connection, if, among the number of royal funeral sermons which are daily issuing from the press, none of our ministers had published his sentiments. For whatever may be thought of some of the measures of government, no well-informed protestant dissenter can, without ingratitude and injustice, forget the obligation which every sincere christian owes to George the Third, for his steady, intelligent and conscientious protection of the rights of conscience, through the whole of his long reign.

THE DYING PASTOR'S LAST LEGACY TO HIS FLOCK, by
JOSEPH FREESTON. pp. 32. 8vo. price 6d.

The late pious Mr. Freeston, to whom the prospect of death and eternity was familiar, after having spent forty years in diligently, zealously and, in many instances, very successfully exhorting sinners to turn to the Lord, and saints to maintain a conversation becoming the gospel, felt a desire to address those amongst whom he had laboured twenty years, after his mortal remains had been consigned to the silent grave. With this view, when the king of terrors was evidently ap

proaching him with hasty steps, he drew up an exhortation to his people, in which he very seriously and very affectionately entreats them carefully to cultivate inward, vital, spiritual religion in their own souls, and zealously to promote the peace and prosperity of the church and the success of the gospel in the congregation. To this, the author subjoins an address to the congregation full of tender solicitude for their eternal welfare, and the most urgent persuasions to give themselves up decidedly to the Lord. In a postscript, he observes: "Nothing besides the hope that what I have here written may make a deep impression on the congregation, has induced me to write it, and to request that it may be read slowly and distinctly to them. Would it not be best to give notice, on the preceding Lord's day, that, next Lord's day in the afternoon, such a piece will be read. It may draw more together, and also some of the congregation may be present who otherwise would be absent; and thus the prospect of doing good made greater. O! that God may bless it for good! J. F. July 20th, 1819." We understand the wish of the departed minister was complied with, and the congregation must have been deeply affected with this token of their pastor's solicitude for their best interest which had thus triumphed over death itself. May his pious intentions be fully accomplished!

After this statement, it would be superfluous to say any thing in recommendation of this Tract, which is now published for the benefit of the Author's widow. An address from the pen of Mr. Freeston, composed in such solemn and interesting circumstances, must be highly valuable and instructive; and we sincerely hope that the circulation of it will be sufficiently extensive to render the publication an acceptable assistance to his surviving family.

The Readers of the G. B. R. are respectfully informed that, *MEMOIRS of the REV. DAN TAYLOR, late Pastor of the General Baptist Church, Whitechapel, London; with copious EXTRACTS from his DIARY, CORRESPONDENCE, and UNPUBLISHED MANUSCRIPTS, and a good PORTRAIT,* are just published, in one Volume octavo, pages 336; price in boards, 7s. 6d. and may be had of the Editor

RELIGIOUS INFORMATION.*Extract of a Letter from France.*

“ There is now at Paris a Bible Society, similar to that in London. It was formed about a year ago. There are also Societies for Religious Tracts, in various places of France and Switzerland; and an Evangelical Magazine, printed at Geneva. Does it not seem, my friend, that some rays of “ the Sun of righteousness ” are beginning to break forth over our country, and to penetrate the dark minds of our benighted countrymen? that some “ dry bones ” are beginning to move? and, that, in the midst of this great harvest some ears are beginning to grow to maturity? Let us pray to “ the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest,” that he may bring back his dispersed children, and give his churches pastors after his own heart, who shall declare the truth as it is in Jesus to the edifying of the church, the conversion of sinners and the glory of his holy name. Oh! what a delight, what a comfort would it be for one to meet with some servants of the meek and lowly Jesus, with whom I might co-operate according to my feeble means and knowledge in this noble work. Pray for this, my brother.

LINES,

Written by Mrs. SHAW, previously to her leaving ENGLAND for AFRICA, as a MISSIONARY.

1. England, adieu; dear native land farewell;
On thy blest shore, I must no longer dwell;
For duty calls and bids me speed away,
To Afric's sultry clime without delay.
Then why complain? Since God has bid me go,
Why do my eyes with briny tears o'erflow.

2. Sutton, alas, must I bid thee adieu;
The place where first the vital air I drew?
My friends, my kindred must I leave behind?
Distracting thought! it harrows up my mind.
My sinking heart with grief is sore opprest;
And waves of sorrow roll across my breast.

3. Farewell, dear children, whom I long have taught,
 May you, in early life, to God be brought;
 Give unto him your hearts without delay;
 And, O my children, never cease to pray,
 The time is short, and life will soon be o'er;
 Farewell; we part, perhaps, to meet no more.

4. But, O my much lov'd mother, must we part?
 The thought's replete with woe, and rends my heart:
 Must I no more your kind attention prove?
 Farewell! but, O remember, God is love.
 Hush'd be the storm that rages in my breast:
 Blest Spirit, come, and charm my griefs to rest.

5. My darling boy, I must leave thee behind,
 Alas! what poignant anguish fills my mind,
 Thy infant prattle must I never hear?
 And will thy artless plaints ne'er reach my ear?
 But, 'tis my mother's wish, it shall be so:
 Sweet boy, farewell: to Africa I go.

6. Impell'd by duty thus to leave my home,
 A stranger in a foreign clime to roam;
 May God preserve me on the stormy wave,
 Stretch out his arm Omnipotent to save!
 Lord, bless my infant girl, my husband bless;
 And crown our feeble efforts with success!

7. May I, a worthless worm, show forth his praise,
 And glorify my God in all my ways;
 Esteem the glitt'ring toys of earth as dross;
 Gladly for Jesus sake sustain the cross:
 Through grace, may I pursue the narrow way,
 That leads to God, to heaven, and endless day.

8. Farewell, my country, home, and friends, farewell;
 For I, alas, must soon with strangers dwell.
 May God preserve my country from distress;
 O make my friends partakers of his grace!
 And when this transitory life is o'er,
 O may we meet on Canaan's blissful shore!

THE
GENERAL BAPTIST REPOSITORY.

No. LVI.—Vol. X. Aug. 1st, 1820.

The DIVINE CHARACTER of the GOSPEL.

THE Gospel of Jesus Christ contains in itself a mass of evidence, the brightness of which, like the regent of the day, must dazzle and confound, if it do not convince and correct its opponents.

Christianity has all the evidence of the Mosaic œconomy in support of its divine origin.

It would be easy to produce a number of positive proofs that the Jewish dispensation of religion was founded on the authority of God. The very concessions which it always made, speak decidedly in its favor. It exhibited the way of salvation to those who were under it, and was radically complete, considered as a typical dispensation; yet separately viewed, it was confessedly imperfect. It only professed to be the shadow of a more glorious œconomy, which it was intended to introduce. It predicted the establishment of the gospel, and its own abolition. As the immediate consequence, it disclaims all further obligations, and gives up the whole body of its evidence in favor of the Gospel, by which its design is accomplished. On this ground, the christian dispensation appears to be the form of revealed religion advanced to maturity; and the gospel is in this respect the word of the Lord.

The divine authority of christianity acquires additional evidence from the character of its Founder. He openly professed that he was a prophet, divinely appointed to publish the will of God. Were his claims then properly supported?—It is certain that the Old Testament scriptures had encouraged the Jews to expect such a character. They had declared that God spake by Moses, saying “I will raise them up a prophet from among thy brethren, like unto thee, and will put my

words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him." The same Scriptures had likewise foretold the time of his coming, the place of his birth, the circumstances of his life, and the manner of his death. The question is, were these prophecies accomplished in Jesus? Let the Old and New Testament be carefully compared, and it will appear that they were, with astonishing exactness. "Of the things predicted concerning him," says Jortin, "some were miraculous, some improbable, some seemingly irreconcilable, and all of them beyond the reach of human conjecture, and yet, in him they all centered, and were united and reconciled." This single circumstance clearly evinces the divine inspiration of the Old Testament prophets, who predicted so extraordinary a person; it establishes the prophetic character of Jesus, who so exactly answered their predictions;—and in both respects, it proves the gospel which he preached was the word of the Lord.

The validity of his claims was likewise supported by his moral deportment. His publicity exposed him to detection; and had he been an impostor, he was not without the strongest temptations to betray himself. What then does the general conduct of Jesus testify concerning him? Did he appear to be actuated by motives of worldly ambition? Did he flatter the great? Did he shrink from public scrutiny? Did he promise himself a security from sufferings, or endeavour to evade them? Directly the reverse of all these. Considering the conduct of our Lord, in a civil or religious point of view, what could be more amiable? How untainted his morals! how exalted his piety! how fervent his devotions! how patient in his sufferings! how heavenly in his affections! how benevolent to mankind at large and to his most inveterate enemies! and in all these respects, how steady and uniform on every occasion! Are these the works of him that hath a devil? Is this the character of an impostor?

Jesus did not rest the credit of his divine commission on mere assertion, on the coincidence of circumstances, nor on the exemplariness of his conduct. When John sent two of his disciples to enquire whether he was the promised Messiah or not, he ordered the most convincing facts to answer the enquiry. "In that same hour, he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were

blind he gave sight." Then he said unto the messengers, "Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and to the poor the gospel is preached." What a satisfactory reply would this be to an impartial mind! These miraculous testimonies were often repeated. Previous to his death, he publicly foretold his resurrection on the third day; and he rose accordingly. He promised his disciples, that after his ascension he would pour out his spirit upon them in an extraordinary manner, and thereby qualify them for their apostolic work. On the day of Pentecost this was accomplished, to the astonishment of those who beheld it. What shall we say to these things? Would God so repeatedly, and so wonderfully interpose for the confirmation of the gospel, if it had not been really the word of the Lord? Admitting the truth of these facts, the divine authority of the christian religion is established on the firmest basis. Among the miraculous circumstances on which christianity is founded, there are some which even now present themselves to our senses; namely, the accomplishment of its prophecies. The progress and permanency of christianity were foretold by Jesus. The evident accomplishment of these predictions is entirely unaccountable, except on the ground of divine interposition. Our Lord foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, and the dispersion of the Jews; and for nearly eighteen hundred years past, the event has miraculously corresponded with the prediction. The evidence of the divine origin of the gospel, arising from the fulfilment of its prophecies, continually acquires fresh strength; and more than any other circumstance whatever, leaves infidelity without excuse.

But the gospel needs no foreign testimony. Christianity speaks for itself. It bears the marks of divine origin in its own nature. Those who have not the opportunity or ability of minutely examining its external evidences, see enough in itself to convince them, that it is the word of the Lord. It gives us the clearest discoveries of God. Where do we behold such grand, such rational displays of the power, the wisdom, the holiness, the justice, the love and mercy of God, as those which the Gospel exhibits? It portrays the attributes of Jehovah in such a manner, as none but the heavenly mind

could conceive; and yet in such a style, as every person of moral taste must admire and adore. It presents us with such a view of mankind, as we might reasonably expect a just and holy God would give. It declares that we are fallen from a state of original purity and happiness; that we are universally depraved in our nature; that we are in a state of guilt and condemnation; that we are utterly unable to save ourselves. This is a description of man, which would never have been published by man himself; and yet it is such as gives correct ideas of God; its truth is confirmed by experience; and its tendency is such as accords with the design of religion, to excite in individuals an earnest concern for their best, their eternal interests. Thus it approves itself unto reason. The Gospel does not leave the sinner in the hands of despair. It reveals a system of mercy divinely adapted to our miserable circumstances. It publishes a salvation which, both in its nature and method, exceeds every human contrivance—a salvation entirely independent on human merit, and founded in the freeness and the sovereignty of divine grace: it exhibits the manifold wisdom of God, devising a way whereby sin might be awfully punished, and yet graciously pardoned; whereby justice and mercy might shine with harmonious splendour, in the salvation of the ungodly. The gospel informs us that Jehovah, Father, Son and Spirit, designed from eternity to magnify the riches of divine grace, by redeeming an innumerable multitude of sinners out of all nations, and kindreds, and people and tongues; that, for the accomplishment of this purpose, Jesus, Jehovah in our nature, came in the fulness of time, to atone for the sins of all mankind, by the sacrifice of himself; that his blood cleanseth from all sin; that by his obedience, many shall be made righteous. This gospel declares that Jesus, having finished his work on earth, is now exalted a Prince and a Saviour; that “he is able to save to the uttermost, all who come unto God by him;” “that whosoever cometh unto him, he will in no wise cast out;” “that those that believe on him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.” This method of salvation approves itself to the wounded conscience, as the contrivance of infinite wisdom. Here it finds rest, and no where else but here. Whilst the gospel so amply provides for the pardon of sin and acceptance with God, it is equally concerned for the interest of holiness. No reli-

gion is comparable to the christian in this respect. All its doctrines have a practical tendency. It requires purity of principle as well as of action. It forbids the least as strictly as the greatest sins. It contains the purest precepts of morality; and not only enforces them by motives the most powerful, but promises the energy of the holy Spirit of God, to make them effectual. In all these respects, its nature is evidently divine; and its tendency so beneficial, that were its influence universally experienced, earth would become a heaven. The advantages resulting from it, both in time and eternity, are incalculable. Was the sacred volume of divine truth deposited in the most distant corner of the globe, it would be our highest interest to obtain it, though at the greatest hazard and expence. Eternal thanks be to God, that its glorious and important doctrines are understood, maintained and faithfully preached in our native country. May the Lord Jesus send forth his light and truth through all the nations of the earth; that mankind individually may soon become acquainted with our God and his great salvation. Amen.

Your's sincerely, &c.

St. Ives, Hunts. June 27th, 1820.

THE IMPROPRIETY OF INACTIVITY IN MISSIONARY EXERTIONS.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

At the Lincolnshire Conference, held at Long Sutton, Jan. 26th, 1820, I was pressed to preach, on some subject connected with my proposed labours among the heathen. At the request of a respected brother in the ministry who was present, I send you the outlines of the discourse: hoping, if you see fit to publish them, that they may promote the great cause in which I wish to spend and be spent.

I am, your's in the bonds of the gospel,

W—April 11th, 1820.

P.

"Why did Dan remain in Ships." Judges v. 17.

Whatsoever things were written in the scriptures, were written for our admonition. The history of the Jewish people can-

not fail of being useful for "doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness." May "those things which happened to them for examples" be regarded by us "upon whom the ends of the world are come." The chapter out of which the text is taken contains a song of triumph over the conquered enemies of Israel; and is worthy of peculiar regard; not only for its religious sentiments, but the poetic excellencies with which it abounds.

The history connected with the text is briefly this. The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and he sold them into the hands of Jabin, king of Canaan, that reigned in Hazor, who had nine hundred chariots of iron; and twenty years he mightily oppressed them. When they cried to the Lord, he sent them deliverance by the hands of Barak and Deborah. Some of the tribes, as Zebulun, Naphtali, Ephraim and Manasseh, engaged with the enemy; but others, from various motives, "came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty."

In the passage before us, the prophetess reprobates the inactivity of the Danites and the pusillanimity of Gilead who abode beyond Jordan, and of Asher who continued on the sea shore and abode in his breaches. Contemplating the efforts of the present day, that the kingdoms of this world may become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ, and beholding the activity of some denominations or tribes of christians and the remisness of others, the subject which the text suggests, the impropriety of inactivity in missionary exertions, appears suitable.

This impropriety will appear when it is considered that such conduct is *unreasonable, injurious and sinful.*

I. *Unreasonable.* Why did Dan remain in ships? Was it from ignorance, indifference, or fear? Could it be from ignorance? Was Dan unacquainted with the state of the country: the descent of Barak, and the assurance of victory from the lips of Deborah? The inquiry supposes an acquaintance with these things. But how improper that a family and a tribe in Israel should know the state of the whole body of the people, and yet remain inactive! The General Baptists, though few among the thousands of Israel, are recognized as a tribe, and gladly would many of the tribes hail their increase and assistance in the wars of the Lord against the heathen. Viewing

the past, do they not say, "Why did Dan remain in ships?" Has it been from ignorance of the necessity of our help? Surely we have known the numbers, ignorance and misery of the heathens. Why then remain inactive? Was Dan chargeable with indifference? This supposes knowledge, but a want of spirit to engage in the undertaking. It is too evident that the Danites were reprehensible in this respect. Why have we as a body done nothing for the heathen world? Have we been indifferent to their state? Some who have lacked information or means of concentrating their force may have betrayed something of this temper; but, for the credit of my people, I trust indifference has not made us inactive. Was it not rather attributable to fear? Perhaps Dan would say, "We are sailors and not soldiers. Would you take us out of our element! We are unable to do any thing from our fewness, our inexperience and the weakness of our attempts." But how easily this frivolous excuse would be answered by the pointed and convincing inquiry before us, "Why did Dan, a tribe, remain in ships?" Has it not been fear that has enervated our minds? Have not our ministers said, What can we do? But can we look the christian world and the perishing heathen in the face without confusion, when it is reiterated by each, "Why does Dan remain in ships?" The Moravians were but six hundred when they commenced their missionary labours; we are more than seven thousand; and shall we fear? "Let the weak say I am strong."

2. But further it is *injurious*. Why did Dan remain in ships? By so doing the brethren's hands were weakened, an opportunity given to the enemy to triumph, and personal injury sustained. The Danites acted in an injurious manner by weakening the hands of their brethren. Numbers in war are important. Their absence might be felt in depressing the minds of those who "jeopardied their lives on the high places of the field." When numbers are neuter the circumstance is to be reprobated. "Why abodest thou among the sheepfolds to hear the bleating of the flocks?" Our inactivity in missionary labours has been felt. Numbers give strength, and the greater impression is made upon the strong holds of sin. Opportunity was given to the enemy to triumph. Had all the tribes possessed the spirit of the Danites, Israel had remained in bondage. Had the few tribes that engaged been overpow-

ered, how would the enemy have vaunted. (See verse 28—30.) The inactivity of christians in the propagation of christianity has caused many to question the divine origin of it. How do heathens, deists, and infidels attack us on this ground? When shall this abomination that maketh desolate, cease? When shall it once be? "O Lord how long." What can we say to the enquiry. "Why did Dan remain in ships?" Have we not suffered the heathen to persevere in ignorance and idolatry? The prince of this world hath triumphed over the prince of peace. But his day is coming to fall. Personal injury was sustained. Pusillanimity was dishonourable and enervating to the tribe. Was it not felt in future, personal or general efforts? He who shrinks from a difficult service will be ready to say, on every trifling occasion, "A lion is in the way." The turning away of the simple shall slay them. This sentiment is evident from what is observed in individuals, churches and bodies of christians that are inactive, or partially engaged in missionary labours. Do we, brethren, see it and bewail it? Had we a prosperous mission, how would our ministers and churches feel the spirit of glory and of God resting upon them! Considering the state of our Connection, I have thought the words of Nehemiah suitable for us; particularly as applied to missionary labours. "Ye see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burnt with fire: come and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach." Nehemiah ii. 17. "They shall prosper that love thee." Psalm cxxii. 6.

3. This conduct is *sinful*. "Why did Dan remain in ships?" They obeyed not God's command, disregarded the openings of divine providence and forbore to destroy their enemies. The Danites disobeyed the divine command. Their service was required as well as that of the other tribes. The disregard manifested appears very great, if we may suppose its turpitude equal to that of the inhabitants of Meroz, concerning whom it was said, "Curse ye, Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof: because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." The gospel of the kingdom is to be preached among all nations. The commission of Christ to his church, is "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." To neglect this, where a door of utterance

is opened, is manifestly contrary to the command of Christ. They neglected also to improve the openings of divine providence. Twenty years Israel had been oppressed, but now an opportunity was afforded of throwing off the Canaanitish yoke. "Why then did Dan remain in ships?" Opportunity of time is the beauty of time. "A wise man discerneth time and judgment." Dan was culpable in lying in ships and losing the opportunity of serving the common interest of the country. As a body, a feeling for the heathen has been rising for several years in our Connection, but we have thought "we lacked opportunity." Now an opportunity is offered. Mr. Ward, of Serampore, says, in a letter to the secretary of your Missionary Society, "If you will send a missionary to Bengal, I am sure he will be hospitably received at Serampore, and a place of labour recommended. On the eastern borders of Bengal, and in several large places in Hindostan, he might be employed with great propriety. The exact spot would be better selected after his arrival at Serampore. Any aid in the power of Serampore, as an asylum, advice, correspondence, &c. I am sure he may rely upon; and so far as a brotherly concern for his welfare would go, would be one of us." Will not the neglect of this opening of providence be sinful? "Who is there among you of all his people! The Lord his God be with him and let him go up." 2 Chron. xxxvi. 23. The tribe of Dan neglected to destroy their enemies. The Canaanites destroyed many of them; and yet when the enemies of the Lord were to be cut off, Dan remained in ships.—Neglect of missionary labours is awfully sinful, when considered in reference to the final state of souls who are taken off in their sins; and their blood will be required at our hands. While we are controverting and purposing, heathens are dying daily, hourly and momentarily. "Why do we remain in ships?" O the heinous crime to be prodigal, from supposed prudence, of the blood of our brethren! "Lord, lay not this sin to our charge!" "Deliver us from blood guiltiness." The prosecution of this view of the subject is insupportable to the enlightened and feeling mind. Oh that with a consentaneous motion we might rise to save souls from death!

On this subject we observe—How important the propagation of christianity! The salvation of myriads is connected with it. "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not

heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?"—How valuable are opportunities to promote it. These now present themselves. Hear the cry, "Come over into Macedonia and help us." Time is passing away. Redeem the time because the days are evil!—How imperious the call to improve them! "If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death and ready to be slain, if thou sayest, behold we knew it not, doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it?" and he that keepeth thy soul doth not he know? and "shall not he render to every man according to his works?" Prov. xxiv. 11, 12. May we, as part of the people of God, be instrumental in giving enlargement to Israel! and "may the Redeemer soon have the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession!"

J. P.

PLAN FOR RENDERING THE GENERAL BAPTIST ACADEMY MORE EXTENSIVELY USEFUL.

The following Plan was addressed to the venerable Secretary of the Academy, by the active minister whose signature it bears, and read at the late Association. After some discussion, that meeting requested the writer to permit it to be published in the G. B. R. for the information of the churches; that it might, in the course of the year, be duly considered. With this request, he has kindly complied; and it is hoped, that the ministers and representatives at the next Association will then be prepared to discuss its merits.

DEAR BROTHER SMITH,

On a late visit to Hoton Hills, I entered into conversation on the subject of this letter with our esteemed Brother Bennett. The *subject* is one of no ordinary importance, whatever may be thought of the remarks which are here made upon it: Whether we turn our eyes through the narrow limits of our own Connection, or extend our view to more distant regions of that wide field—the world, we still behold the infinite importance of having the churches of Christ adequately supplied with able and pious ministers. The great defection from the faith

of the gospel, that took place in an early age among the churches that were scattered over the vast regions of Asia, is stated to have sprung from that fruitful source of evil, the want of able and faithful ministers. In our Connection, we behold this evil exerting its baneful influence. Churches continuing year after year destitute of ministers, and the proportion between acceptable ministers and churches gradually and yet rapidly lessening. We hear of some dying—of few coming forward to devote themselves to the ministry; and even of those few we see some, after a short stay at the Academy, leaving it to retire into comparative neglect and obscurity. But can no cause be assigned for this state of things? I think there may. Bear with me, then, if I attempt to show that the very system on which our Academy is established, is one which keeps the number of ministers small, and which even lessens the respectability, comfort and influence of some of those who are educated in it; and which thus proportionably injures the churches that they serve. Think not that, in the observations I am going to make, I intend the slightest disrespect to the managers or the tutor of the institution. Nothing is further from my design. I blame the system; not those who manage the Academy, nor our esteemed brother who is at the head of it.

During the course of the last one hundred and fifty years, three distinct systems have been pursued among the dissenters, for raising up a supply of ministers for the churches of the Lord. I do not mean to say, that, in every instance, where one of these has been adopted, the others have been neglected. At times two have been intermingled, yet still the systems are distinct.

The first was that of our pious forefathers.—It consisted in the designation of their children to the ministry. Anxious for the glory of God, anxious in many instances, that the son should cultivate the field, in which the father had laboured, they devoted their children to the sacred work. In many instances, where the piety which had warmed the father's heart glowed in that of the son, children thus devoted to the service of God, became eminent blessings to the churches of Christ; but in many other instances, the result was dreadfully different. The system was radically wrong; and the awful ruin of those numerous Presbyterian churches, that once constituted the

glory and strength of the English Dissenters, may be adduced as a proof of the baneful influence of *unconditionally* devoting children to the ministry ; before it can be visible whether they become partakers of real piety. I have used the expression *unconditionally*, for, instead of censuring, I would rather highly commend that pious parent, who endeavours to give the minds of his sons an early bias for the sacred work, and who, if he sees real religion taking possession of their hearts, assists them, no matter how soon, if this previous requisite be apparent, to devote themselves to so important an employ.

Another system, not liable to the objections of the last, but securing many of its advantages without its evils, has been that of educating for the ministry young persons of decided piety and good natural talents, and whose minds have been fixed on that employment. This system now prevails to a great extent among various bodies of Christians, and I conceive might be very advantageously united to that pursued in our Academy.

The third system is that which has been adopted in our Connection.—That of giving a short education to young men of approved piety, who have previously become tolerable preachers. The following of this plan exclusively appears liable to the objections I have mentioned. It keeps the number of ministers small. Real talent is often united with a degree of diffidence that could never undergo the ordeal, which these young men are required to sustain.—Had it been universally practised, our Doddridges, and Wattses, and others like them, would probably have never been known as preachers of the everlasting Gospel.—Many, who have tolerable preaching abilities, would feel daunted and discouraged at the view of preaching to different congregations, composed partly of aged christians, that in this way a judgment might be formed of their talents. Many others, who, if their talents were nurtured, might become useful in the church, would feel it absolutely impracticable to pass through such an examination. Perhaps I may without impropriety mention myself in illustration of this last remark. I have no reason for supposing that I could have preached before I went to the Academy. My mind indeed was set upon the ministry ; but I might as well have been examined in flying as in preaching, and the result would

probably have been as satisfactory in one case as in the other. I once tried to compose a sermon, but with all my pains got no further than the introduction, which, as far as I recollect, was chiefly made up from the chapter whence the text was taken.

The exclusive pursuit of our present system, *which introduces the students to the Academy much later in life than many might otherwise be introduced, and which then allows them but a short time there,* it is to be apprehended, in various instances, tends to lessen the comfort, respectability and usefulness of some, that engage in the ministry. In consequence of not receiving so good an education as they might enjoy, if admitted earlier and continued longer, their comfort is lessened, as they have not the same means of obtaining a comfortable livelihood, as they would have if possessed of a better education. It is very frequently the lot of ministers to be schoolmasters. Now it is very evident that a well educated man can conduct a more respectable school, and consequently obtain better prices than one of a much inferior education. In many situations, such a person, by devoting a comparatively small part of his time to private teaching, might earn as much as could be obtained by constant drudgery in a day school at low prices. It is true, the object of an Academy is to form ministers, not schoolmasters; but if ministers must frequently become schoolmasters, or be engaged in the work of tuition, it is no inconsiderable advantage for them to be enabled to fill such a station, as shall least interfere with their other duties, or most promote the comfort of their families and themselves. While, in this way, the present system lessens the comfort, it also lessens the respectability and usefulness of *some* ministers. I do not mean to insinuate that learning can give respectability where piety is wanting; or that an affectation of learning is useful for the pulpit, as few things are there more disgusting, or show a greater want of real religion; but where a good measure of learning is united with piety, there certainly is a better opportunity for usefulness than there would otherwise be. Piety, if connected with poverty, in the present state of some of our churches, will meet with insults, from which it would else be exempt. It will be trampled upon. That minister will have a superior opportunity for promoting the prosperity of religion, whom the people see labouring for their welfare, while they know that he is not dependent upon them, but

that, with God's blessing, he possesses resources for obtaining a livelihood for himself and family, if they and he had no connection. There is reason to believe, that in most cases such a person will be more respected by his flock, and will have a better opportunity of winning their affections, and of checking evil in its bud, than another, possessed of equal talents and equal piety, but who is seen to be so wholly dependent on his people for support, that if they were to withdraw their aid he would probably sink into absolute poverty. It is needless to attempt to shew that the prosperity of a church depends much on the minister that labours in it, and on the esteem which his people entertain for him.

Having used this freedom in pointing out defects, permit me now to suggest what I conceive might prove some remedy for them. It is, in addition to the present plan of educating young men, that have actually become preachers, to adopt that of giving a *good* education for the ministry to young persons of decided piety, who may be members of our churches, who appear possessed of good natural talents, and whose desire it is to engage in the great work of the ministry.

I have mentioned *decided piety* where this is evident, youth would be no objection. Some knowledge respecting the talents of such might be obtained in various ways,—an observant minister will perceive them. And the inclination of their minds for the ministry, might be viewed as an indication of their call, by the Lord Jesus Christ, to that important work.

If this plan should to some appear novel, let it be remembered, that it is in reality no novelty. It is the identical system, that has brought into the service of the church of Christ many of those who have been its brightest ornaments. Alleine and Owen, and Bates, and Flavel, and Howe, and Doddridge, and Watts; and multitudes more might be mentioned who were *in this way* trained up for their important labours. It is the very system that has brought forward, for public usefulness, many that now occupy considerable stations in the church. It is the plan which has been, and still is, successfully pursued in various Academies. It is the system of the Homerton Academy. It is so far so at the Hoxton one, that it is not there requisite for the students to have preached before they enter. If the system is thus found beneficial for two institutions, that send out from fifty to sixty

ministers every four years, there can be no risk in attempting it. I had the account respecting the latter of these institutions from a minister of this town, formerly a student there; who informed me that he *had not preached*, and, if I mistake not, had not so much as even prayed before two friends previously to his admission. It is, and always has been, the system at the Wymondley Academy, that institution which was formerly under Dr. Doddridge's care. Several that were my fellow students there, have since been called to important stations in different parts of the country. And the same system is pursued at Rotherham Academy, &c. &c.

Some of the advantages of this system are the following—Young men are sooner habituated to study. There can be no doubt that it is much more advantageous to form such habits at sixteen or seventeen, than at four or five and twenty. By the early formation of a studious habit, several years are gained for mental improvement; and not merely several years, but years at that time of life, when there is commonly a better opportunity for retirement and study than following years afford. By beginning to learn sooner in life, young men may learn much more than they could do if this commencement were delayed nearer to the time when they must plunge into the bustling cares of a church, a family, and a business or a school. It may be obvious that I am supposing more time than is now allowed to be afforded such young men at the Academy. This is essential to the success of the plan. The usual time, in some such institutions, is four years.

I anticipate some objections.

It may be thought that this system would have a tendency to puff up the mind. But may we not appeal to experience and observation to prove the contrary? Who are more ridiculously proud of learning, than some who, having got a very little smattering, set up for learned men? A little learning produces frequently much more self importance, than a greater measure of it. A little learning may fill a mind with pride, which, when better instructed, would be humbled by a sense of its own ignorance.

Some perhaps may say, this plan is a system for making ministers, which is the Lord's prerogative. Why may we not, on the same ground, object to the use of all means for the propagation of religion, and urge that it is taking God's work

out of his hands to attempt to make sinners christians? Besides the recommendation contained in this letter, is not to take any serious youth and educate him for the ministry, but only those who in ways already mentioned; give some indication that the great Head of the Church is willing to employ them in his service. To this may be added,—If this system intruded on the office of Christ, would he have blessed it to qualify, for distinguished usefulness, a large majority of the most eminent men, that ever shone in the church below? That he has done so in modern ages is incontrovertible. It may be further objected, that the expence of educating some might be lost, as they might prove incompetent. Have none done so even in our little institution on its present system? It may be said—Some perhaps would relinquish the work for which they were designed. Have none relinquished it that were educated at the expence of our funds?

Still it may be urged, our funds are not sufficient for the support of such a system. But have we not reason to believe they would increase if more good were produced by them? and if it were obvious that so many were educating, as to occasion an imperious demand for aid? In most charitable institutions the best way to increase funds is to display that spirit of energetic exertion, which runs the institution into debt, and which thus, in a way more forcible than mere words, tells the friends of religion that they must help, or the institution sink.

Accept in good part these remarks, and believe me,

Dear Brother,

Your's sincerely,

J. G. PIKE.

Derby, March 9th, 1820.

QUERIES.

1. Suppose a sum of money be left for the support of a minister, is it right to appropriate such money towards liquidating a debt on a meeting house?

2. Suppose a person withdraw from a church without assigning any formal reasons for his conduct, ought a vote of exclusion to be passed upon him?

3. As it appears that the General Baptists are numerous in America, might not some good arise from our Connection opening a correspondence with them?

G. B. MINISTER.

4. In what way shall "the wicked be a ransom for the righteous, and the transgressor for the upright," as stated Prov. xxi. 18. ?

B.

ANECDOTE.

In the summer of 1818, as a professor of religion was employed in a field, three strangers joined him, and entered into conversation. One of these disgraced himself by a frequent indulgence in profane swearing. The good man reproved him very seriously, and spoke freely on the wickedness and awful consequences of such language. After conversing about twenty minutes, they separated; and, for many months, nothing further came to the knowledge of the friendly monitor. But in the course of last summer, he having occasion to pass through the same field, when the mowers were at work, one of them laid down his scythe and ran after him. No sooner had the mower overtaken the passenger, than he began to bless him and to express the warmest gratitude and affection towards him. "You *are* the man!" he exclaimed, "I thought you *were*! Do not you remember reproving a man last year for swearing? Your reproof indeed had not the proper effect on the person to whom it was addressed; he still continues a profligate character. But what you said had such an effect on my mind, who was then his companion in folly, that I could never afterwards rest till I had found Christ. In him I trust I can now rejoice. I hope too, it had a good effect on the other man who was with us, as he seems to be much altered since and seriously inclined. My wife also has been brought to the knowledge of her Saviour, and we can now rejoice together."

What a blessed encouragement does this simple fact afford, to seize every opportunity of dropping a word of admonition; to cast our bread on the waters, and expect to find it after many days!

ANSWER TO A QUERY.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

SIR,

At page 30th of the present Vol. of the G. B. R. A. F. S. W. wishes to be informed what is meant by Solomon, Eccles. x. 2. when he says, "A wise man's heart is at his right hand, but a fool's heart is at his left." If none of your abler correspondents should furnish you with a more satisfactory answer, the following hints are at your service.

As it is evident, that the passage cannot be understood literally, we must endeavour to find some just figurative meaning. It is obviously a proverbial saying, and was probably well understood in the days of Solomon; though the precise allusion may not, at present, be easily ascertained. Commentators, I believe, have generally adopted one of two principal grounds of explanation; either of which gives an important sense to the text.

Amongst the ancient Pythagoreans, a sect of moral philosophers, who borrowed much of their knowledge from the east, it was usual to express the course of a man's life by the letter Y. The single line, at the bottom of the character, was made to represent that part of life which includes infancy and childhood, and is indifferent to good or evil. But as the youth advances in age, he comes to a time when his path seems, like the upper part of the letter, to be divided into two branches which proceed in different directions; and he is called to make his own choice in which he will pursue his future course. The path of virtue and wisdom represented by the line on the right hand, and the path of vice and folly denoted by that on the left, equally solicit his attention. At this critical juncture, the heart of the wise inclines him to the right hand path of virtue and happiness; but the natural depravity and imbecility of the fool impel him along the tempting road of vice on the left, and plunge him in present disgrace and future misery. This interpretation seems very consistent with the hieroglyphic mode of imparting instruction, which we know was then commonly adopted in those countries.

Some, however, dislike this explanation; and suppose that, as the right hand is usually either through nature or habit,

more strong and active than the left; and, as a person performs any action with it more gracefully and easily than with the other, the preacher intends, in the passage before us, to say, that a wise man takes a proper view of his object, chooses suitable means to accomplish it, and acts, on all occasions, with propriety and effect, like a man who uses his right hand. On the contrary, the fool frequently mistakes his aim, blunders in the plainest concerns, and whatever he is called to perform does it in an awkward, left-handed manner.

Your correspondent will adopt which of these interpretations appears most natural. The former is perhaps most agreeable to the ancient parabolic mode of delivering precepts. Whatever the original allusion might be, the design of the sacred writer is evident. He intends to impress on his reader the important truth, that wisdom and virtue excel folly and vice as much as the right is esteemed more honourable and is usually more dextrous than the left.

PATER.

THE WORKS of the LATE REV. DAN TAYLOR.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

Several of the works of our late venerated Friend, Mr. Dan Taylor, I am informed, are out of print. They will, no doubt, be speedily re-published; but before this is attempted, if it be not unbecoming in me, I should be glad to enquire, whether his writings, which have already been extensively useful, and are eminently adapted to promote the best interests of mankind, might not appear in some more permanent form, than in detached pamphlets. A uniform edition of his works, if presented to the public, would be a great blessing to many; and would most probably secure to distant posterity the benefit of an acquaintance with them. Many considerations, I think, render this very desirable.

The writings of our departed Friend are distinguished by a high degree of excellence. The sentiments of many are expressed, in saying that few publications better deserve to be extensively known. The subjects on which his pen was employed were, in general, of great importance; his manner of treating them clear and forcible and scriptural; and they tend

in a direct and powerful manner to promote the interests of truth and holiness. These qualities cannot fail to recommend them to intelligent and pious persons. None who were acquainted with Mr. Taylor can forbear to acknowledge, that of his numerous useful endowments, one of the most conspicuous was, that he was "mighty in the scriptures;" and a very slender acquaintance with his writings will evince, that he wielded "the sword of the Spirit," in defence of the truths and institutions of the New Testament, with distinguished ability and success. His theological views were little influenced by the subtleties and refinements of metaphysical speculations; they were, as far, perhaps, as the imperfection of our present condition admits, inspired and controlled by the testimonies of God.

To the New Connection of General Baptists, the writings of Dan Taylor have been long and deservedly endeared. From the time of its formation, they have contributed, in no small degree, to its defence and prosperity; and certainly it would be a great advantage to the body, to perpetuate the writings in which their leading tenets are clearly and scripturally stated. To these, the productions of a leading man, or, as some would rather it should be expressed, *the* leading man in the Connection, other denominations might be referred, for a statement of our doctrines. Not to mention other topics, his triumphant and unanswerable defences both of the great and fundamental truth, which he very properly denominates "the glory of the gospel," that Jesus Christ is the *propitiation* for the sins of the **WHOLE WORLD**; and also of the neglected and frequently insulted institution of our Lord, *believers' baptism*, entitle his works to an extensive circulation till time itself shall be no more. Our enquiring young friends in general, and our young ministers especially, would derive great benefit from having in their hands a lucid and satisfactory exhibition, and an able defence of our principal doctrines. This would have a happy tendency to preserve young minds from being misled by the specious arguments, or fashionable style, of others; who too frequently build their hypotheses on human inferences and deductions, instead of adhering closely to what the Lord hath spoken.

Now, Sir, if you would not deem it improper to publish these few observations in the **G. B. R.** some proper person

might be induced to favour the Connection with a statement of the number of volumes, and probable price of an edition of the works of the late Dan Taylor; and thus an opportunity would be afforded to his numerous readers and friends, of expressing their views and wishes on this business. Many I am persuaded would think this measure highly subservient to the prosperity of our denomination.

I remain, Dear Sir,

Your's very sincerely,

Louth, 23d June, 1820.

F. CAMERON.

CONVERTS FROM HEATHENISM.

At the sixteenth Anniversary of the *British and Foreign Bible Society*, held at Freemason's Hall, London, May 3rd, 1820, Lord Teignmouth in the Chair, Dr. A. CLARKE stepped forwards, accompanied by two natives of the Isle of Ceylon, and spoke to this effect:

"MY LORD,

Though I have been long a labourer, through the mercy of God, in his cause in the world, I have never had sufficient courage to come forward to speak of the labours in which I have taken a part. I have never attended a meeting here, without seeing every place I could have wished to occupy, occupied, with the greatest effect, by some other person who has performed his part better than I could have done. The reason I now stand here, is, to give an account of the two men who are before you. Some years ago, this Society granted a sum of money for the translation of the Scriptures into the Cingalese language. Some of the copies got into the temple of the worshippers of Budhu, and the two men now by me were of the number of those who read. They were astonished; they were affected. One fact struck them, that Jesus Christ, the Author of that volume, had associated with himself persons who were fishermen. They were of the fishermen's cast at Ceylon; and it struck them, that, if the Author of this religion did associate with persons of that profession, and they became the means of spreading the knowledge of the gospel through almost the whole world, perhaps it might please Him to use them who are fishermen also, to make known his gospel to their countrymen. Your Lordship will see that it was ex-

tremely difficult for them to make known what they felt; one of them had been brought to the temple at five, and the other at six years old; and they regularly proceeded through all the gradations till they became high priests. But they thought, if they could come to this country, which was a place where the christian religion was professed, they might become thoroughly acquainted with the divine word, and see the persons who had sent this blessing to them. They went to a man, celebrated for his deep learning, and asked him, if he had considered the christian system. He said, "The religion of Budhu is the moon, the religion of Jesus Christ is the sun." This affected them deeply: and, hearing that Sir Alexander Johnson was about to return to England, on account of his lady's health, they requested permission to come with him. He hesitated, and put them off; but they were so deeply affected with what they had read, and their determination was so strong, that they left their temple, their friends, and their country, put off in a boat, came up with the ship, then under weigh, were, at their earnest request, taken on board, and arrived in England, May 7th, 1817. They knew not a word of English, but were well acquainted with this New Testament, which they had compared with the doctrines they had preached to their people, and the doctrine of Budhu in general. I took them into my house, laboured hard with them with many prayers, and not a few tears. I had to encounter all the prejudices of their minds, and their subtle system of ethics; and I had to rejoice, and I am sure your Lordship and this assembly will rejoice with me, in seeing the light of heaven dawning upon their minds. They became desirous of receiving christian baptism; but I wished to have further satisfaction. At length, I could not defer it longer: they received this ordinance according to the rites of the Church of England; and I trust this solemn season will never be forgotten by them. Since then, they have received the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. I have thus the honour of presenting to your Lordship, and this meeting, some of the fruits of the labours of the British and Foreign Bible Society. The christian society to which I belong had the honour of their education; but we should never have had that honour, if your Lordship and this Society had not, by your grant, had that book printed; and I know not that there ever came to your table more glorious proofs of the success of your endeavours.

They are here before you, saved from all their superstition ; saved from their belief of transmigration, which, as your Lordship knows, has been the grand bar in their country to all that is good ; they are saved, I trust, to every verity of the christian religion ; and this will be a ground of your Lordship's exultation, that you have been the means of sending to them this light to lighten the gentiles."

THE BIBLE THE FRIEND OF SOCIAL ORDER.

Extracted from speeches made at the Anniversary, mentioned in the last Article.

The BISHOP of GLOUCESTER addressed the chair, thus :—
 " May I be permitted to dwell, for a short time, on the subject of the enemies of Revelation, and an occurrence which has excited the attention, not only of every statesman, but of every christian and every subject of the realm, to the perpetration of a crime which I shall not mention. What has been the principle chiefly apparent in the leaders of this design ? Hatred of the Bible and of its restraints and injunctions. Every where that hatred was avowed : or its precepts completely perverted, when they could not venture to avow a hatred of the Bible itself. I happened to know from undoubted authority, that every one of those individuals had, previously to the commission of their crime, avowedly renounced his faith in the scriptures. They found in those scriptures an avowed opposition to their principles and their practices ; they would not renounce these principles and practices, and therefore renounced the Bible. Such is the absolute, marked contradiction between the scriptures and crimes like theirs ! It has been seen, in a variety of circumstances during the past year, and I think can hardly be denied by any one, that the testimony of the enemies of religion, in their conduct, has proved the truth of its doctrines, while they have been defended by every resister of faction and every decided friend of the laws of his country. Well then, my Lord, may we, amidst whatever trials we may meet with, call to mind this reflection and be comforted. But, my Lord, there are grounds not only for negative but positive praise to this Institution. Bible Associations have been found effectual means of converting a

large community of several thousand persons, once murmuring and disaffected, into a body of quiet, peaceable, industrious mechanics. Five years ago, we saw the extensive community alluded to in a state of remarkable tumult and disorder, though they were in no greater distress than they were last year. But its streets were not now crowded with idle and disaffected inhabitants. A Bible Association had been formed there; and the time of trial came; the loom failed to produce more than a scanty subsistence, less and less every day. What was the consequence? Cheerful submission to the will of God and a desire to labour in any way. Their walls and their cottages echoed with these words, "Be patient, be quiet, be obedient to your superiors; better times will come." Surely then, my Lord, we shall now say with tenfold warmth to this Society, "Go on and prosper; go on and be the happy instrument, in every country, of uniting princes and people, and of binding them in no common bonds, but in the bonds of the gospel; go on until the lion shall lie down with the lamb; and till the whole earth be filled with the glory of the Lord."

The Rev. B. W. MATHIAS, a clergyman from Ireland, stated: "We have, in Ireland, some desperate characters, called Ribbon-men, who are unhappily frequently in a state of tumult and disorder. In some of those tumults, lives have been lost, and some of the parties have paid the forfeit of their own lives to the laws of their country. By chance, shall I say?—No, by divine providence, one of the copies of the Irish Scriptures came into the hands of one connected with eight other Ribbon-men. He was struck with it himself and read it to his companions. They became interested in it; and the happy effects were that they all renounced their attachment to ribbonism. Would you see the influence of infidelity? go to Cato-street:—would you see the influence of the Bible? look at the eight Ribbon-men."

The Rev. *Walter Griffith*, in the course of his speech, observed: "It is now about forty years since my attention was first awakened and turned to the study of the sacred scriptures. At that time, there appeared in the great bulk of the people of the United Kingdom, an astonishing apathy about the word of God. There were, it is true, a few who appeared to avow themselves as his followers; but they were extremely averse to come forward, and avow themselves as such in a public

manner. But, my Lord, this Society has formed an establishment, around which the cowardly may rally and avow themselves without a blush. To this period, my Lord, succeeded another, called the age of reason; but which was in truth the age of infidelity, impiety and misery. At this period, arose this Society, as it were to form a bulwark against that anti-christian spirit which then threatened the land; and it has had the honour of seeing the Bible in higher repute, and more cordially believed, than it perhaps ever was in Great Britain before. The age passed away, and passed away in a great measure through the influence of this Society: and what do we now see, my Lord? Princes of the blood, dignitaries of the church, and all that is illustrious by birth, or venerable for learning and piety, surrounding this Institution this day. Reference has been made, by those who have preceded me, to that terrible evil, infidelity. At my first acquaintance with religious subjects, infidelity seemed to be confined to a class of persons whose situation in life prevented them from giving effect to these mischievous principles; but in later days, it has descended even to the lowest orders of society; and what has been the effect it has produced? Hatred to God, and contempt of princes. I am one of those, my Lord, who are neither surprised nor discouraged by the late fruits of impiety and infidelity in this country. I see in these the manifestation of a principle which has long existed in the world, but which I have no doubt will cause this blessed book to be more highly esteemed than it has hitherto been. I have no higher wish than that infidelity may ever be coupled with disloyalty and impiety. But I correct myself, I have a still higher wish; and that is, that the friends of religion may put on righteousness as a garment, and judgment as a robe and a diadem, and shine forth as lights in the world, and form by these means the most-striking contrast to the advocates of infidelity.

A CASE OF CONSCIENCE.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

I can hardly conceive a more useful purpose to which a publication like yours can be devoted, than the removing of the

doubts and directing the steps of the honest but wavering christian. I venture, therefore, with your permission, to lay my case before your readers and to beg their advice as to the path of duty.

I am a member of a small country church, consisting of persons who possess little of this world's treasure; but are placed, by unavoidable circumstances, in a situation that calls for great pecuniary exertions to support the cause of the Redeemer amongst them. My friends are pleased to suppose that I have some influence, and urge me to exert it, to increase the funds of the society, which must either be vastly increased or the cause must sink. They consider it as the first duty of every one connected with it, and use many arguments to convince me that all other objects ought, at present, to give place to it.

But, while I am weighing their strong reasons, other persons come forward and inform me, that the extension and establishment of the General Baptist interest, which I cordially believe is founded on the Oracles of Divine Truth, are of greater moment than the welfare of any individual church, especially such a low and insignificant society as ours, and therefore demand superior attention. They therefore entreat and charge me, by every consideration of regard to truth and love to the Saviour, to exert myself to the utmost in procuring support for the Academy and Itinerant Fund; on the effectual encouragement of which, they assure me, the future prosperity, if not the existence, of the New Connection depends.

These doubtless are serious arguments, and would probably produce their full effect, if their impression was not weakened by a third party, who interrupt the pleadings, and assert that, the concerns of a single church or the prosperity of our diminutive Connection are objects of infinitely less importance than the salvation of hundreds of millions of our fellow immortals, who are perishing in the darkness of paganism, without the opportunity of hearing the sound of the gospel, or the name of the Saviour. They insist with great warmth, that every motive both of christianity and humanity should impel me to devote my utmost influence and my most strenuous exertions to establish and carry into effect the G. B. Missionary Society. And, to incite my zeal, they inform me, in terms of rapturous approbation, how many of the pious and active of my own sex, in

different parts of the Connection, are assiduously labouring to promote this grand, this all-eclipsing object; whose praises are most eloquently set forth at our public anniversaries, and whose names will be handed down to posterity as "The Female Friends of the Heathen."

Now, Mr. Editor, you know, I dare say, that Ladies are not wholly devoid of vanity; and I confess my ambition is fired at the dazzling prospect. But I hope my predominant wish is to *do right*, and to employ my talent, be it more or less, to the glory of Him who gave, *in the way that he will best approve*. It would, therefore, be conferring a real obligation on me, if you or some of your judicious correspondents, would, in your next number, inform me whether, in the circumstances in which I am placed, it is my duty to employ my influence in favour of the funds of our society—or the Academy and Itinerant Fund—or of the Missionary Society. As others besides myself may wish to improve the talents they possess rather than bury them in the earth, and yet be doubtful as to the *proper* means of doing it, a few plain and practical remarks on this subject may be useful to many as well as to your perplexed but respectful friend,

July 1st, 1820.

REBECCA.

PLAN FOR PAYING OFF DEBTS ON MEETING HOUSES.

At the London Association, in 1818, two brethren 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." This they attempted: and that the Connection might have an opportunity of considering their plan, inserted it in the G. B. R. Vol. ix. p. 115, published May 1st, 1819. The essential principles of this proposal were, that each church should engage to raise annually, in any way it may choose, a sum equal to two shillings for each member; and that this sum be remitted to the Association and divided amongst the burdened churches, in proportion to the debts of each and the time those debts have been contracted. The subject was conversed about at the Derby Association; but no conclusion adopted. At the recent Association, at Spalding, it was again brought

forwards by a case from the London Conference. Another plan however was then produced; and after some discussion, it was resolved, that the consideration of both should be deferred till the next year, and that the new plan also should be inserted in the G. B. R. to enable the churches to examine its merits, and compare it with the former. This is done in the following article; and it is hoped that the churches will carefully consider the subject, and that the members of the next Association will be prepared to adopt some effectual measures on a subject which calls for immediate and serious attention.

To the G. B. ASSOCIATION, held at Spalding, 1820.

Last year, a plan was laid before the Association for the relief of those churches which are burdened with debts on their Meeting-houses; and, as it is intended to introduce that plan again, permit me to make a few remarks on the subject.

1. All those, who have been under the necessity of solliciting the aid of our churches, have met with so much disappointment and confusion, that they have been often wearied and discouraged. The present method of recommending cases to our churches is a disgrace to the Association, a mockery of those whose cases are recommended: it appears to make no impression on some churches, whilst others are materially burdened by it.

2. If all our churches could engage to collect once a year, only, for the assistance of churches in debt; it would afford as much relief as can be at present expected. This is indeed a very easy thing; no church would be hurt by it; the labours of a foreign minister would more than compensate the expence.

3. If any further plan be adopted, it should stand on the foregoing basis, apply to all objects, and be practicable. In the extending state of the Connection, its wants are greater and its resources are, also, greater. It is nearly impossible for a feeble minister to visit all our churches in a reasonable time. Many cases approved by the Association are of so small an extent that they do not require the aid of the whole Connection.

4. Suppose, therefore, that the Connection be divided into seven districts, viz. 1, London. 2, Leicestershire. 3, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire. 4, Warwickshire. 5, North

Lincolnshire. 6, South Lincolnshire, and 7, Yorkshire. Suppose, also, that a case have two or three or more districts assigned to it, according to its importance: or, if a case be admitted to a general collection, yet two or three years may be allowed to complete that general collection. For example; there are four cases before our church to which we have not attended, viz. London, Fleet, Birmingham and Ashby. Suppose, the Association should agree for London to collect throughout the whole Connection, and the others only through four districts each. Then, if Mr. Wallis, of London, take three districts this year, four districts will remain for the other churches, one may have two districts and the others one district each. Before the next Association, other cases will, we hope, arise; and London may have two districts, and some then more pressing case may have three or four districts for the next year, &c.

By this plan, several cases will be constantly receiving aid, every minister who has to collect will have as much to do as he can well execute; and no church will be burdened, because no church will have to collect more than once a year, and once for each case. As the arrangement of all these collections is supposed to take place at the Association, the ministers interested may, by taking advantage of their journey to the Association; save much travelling expence.

6. With respect to those cases which have been partially attended to, if a consolidation of them all were made, and a general collection throughout the Connection speedily accomplished, it might set them at rest, and be more honourable to the Association than the delay and neglect with which they have been treated.

7. The Association will excuse these remarks, they are only designed as hints for them to improve upon. Something wants doing to assist in the cases under consideration; may you be guided, by divine assistance, to find out the best way.

JAMES TAYLOR.

N. B. As the writer of the above lines had no expectation that they would be printed, he has to acknowledge their obscurity; yet it appeared best to suffer them to appear in their native state, in deference to the Association. The writer reserving to himself the right of adding a few explanatory observations, if spared another quarter.

PREDESTINATION AND FORE-KNOWLEDGE.

THOUGHTS ON ROM. viii. 28—30.

If any difficulty attaches to this passage, it arises chiefly from giving a wrong sense to the term "*Predestinate*." It has been thought to signify the absolute, irreversible and arbitrary fixing, from all eternity, of the final states of man without any regard to the character of the individuals. But the apostle seems anxious to guard against such a doctrine. Those who were to be the partakers of the happy privileges of which the sacred penman had been speaking, were indeed predestinated by God to this blessedness. But this divine fore-appointment was not an arbitrary act of sovereignty, it was founded on a fore-knowledge of the characters of the parties. "Whom he did fore-know, he also did predestinate." Indeed the original word, here rendered *predestinate*, never intends an unconditional sovereign fore-appointment of future events, without regard to any fixed principle; but always signifies to fore-appoint according to certain constituted bounds or limits. And if we wish to learn what was the limit of this fore-appointment, the text will inform us: he predestinated to the enjoyments of the favours here enumerated, such as he foresaw would be conformed to the image of his Son. For the words "*to be*" are inserted by the translators; and the original reads thus: "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate, conformed to the image of his Son." This passage therefore conveys the same truth, as 1 Peter i. 2: "Elect according to the fore-knowledge of God," &c. and the remarks in the last number of the G. B. R. on that text, will apply to the elucidation of this.

Thus it is evident that, on the common acceptation of this celebrated passage, it perfectly coincides with the general tenor of scripture, that "God will have all men to be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth." There are, however, strong reasons for believing, that this noble Epistle has been very unhappily misunderstood, because men have applied, to individuals what belongs to nations, and referred to eternity transactions which have taken place in time. But this is a subject too important for the limits to which these remarks are necessarily limited.

A. Z.

In pursuance of the design of these papers, we solicit a short essay on Eph. i. 4—6, for the next number.

GENERAL BAPTIST OCCURRENCES.

OBITUARY.

Dec. 25th, 1819, died Mr. JOHN ADDERLY, of *Mount-sorrel*, Leicestershire, aged fifty-three: a valuable member of the General Baptist Church at Quorndon. He was a native of the village in which he died, where his parents lived respectably in competent circumstances. He gave early symptoms of strength of mind and a thirst for information. While apprentice to his father's business, he was frequently seen at the window of his bed-chamber, with his book, at three o'clock in the morning. In every situation through life, he was diligent in business, and remarkable for punctuality and regularity. In 1788, he married Mrs. Mary Kirk; an union which proved a constant source of happiness. By her he had two sons and four daughters, who all, except one daughter, survive their father.

From his childhood he was the subject of serious impressions; and, though he lost his father when he was only sixteen years of age, was preserved from those vices to which the young too often fall an easy prey. Soon after his marriage, he began to attend the public worship of the Methodists; and his convictions increased to unhappiness. One dark evening, returning from hearing preaching at a distance, his mind being deeply affected, he kneeled down under a hedge to pray for the forgiveness of his sins: and though he did not find complete deliverance, yet he felt a degree of consolation from those words, "Thou God seest me;" and was encouraged "to commit his ways unto the Lord, that he might direct his paths." In this state, he continued for some time, till hearing a sermon on salvation by grace through faith, he was enabled to say, "Behold God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. O Lord, I will praise thee; though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away and thou comfortest me." He continued united with the Methodists for many years, with much spiritual advantage, till a circumstance occurring in the society with which he was connected, with the management of which he was highly dissatisfied, he peaceably withdrew himself from their communion. Before this event, he had occasionally heard Mr. B. Pollard, of

Quorndon, preach at Mountsorrel, with considerable satisfaction, and feeling now the importance of being in fellowship with the people of God, he turned his attention to the reasons of believers' baptism. This subject had already engaged his thoughts; and a more serious examination soon convinced him of its propriety. He was baptized Sep. 1st, 1815, and received into the church at Quorndon, of which he continued an useful and honoured member till death removed him to the church above. But though he became a baptist on principle, and could, when occasion required it, defend his opinion with spirit; yet he cultivated an extensive charity to those of other denominations, who honoured the Redeemer; especially for the Methodists as a body he retained a cordial regard. This conduct gained him the esteem of all who knew him, even though they differed from him in sentiment.

In the early part of his life, he felt symptoms of asthmatic affection; to which he then feared he should at last fall a victim: and the event proved that his fears were too well founded. For several years past, he was under the necessity of sleeping with a fire in the room: and from Oct. 1817, to the time of his dissolution, his affliction was at times almost insupportable. Every method that affection could suggest to lighten the pressure, was assiduously practised by his tender family, and neither expence nor trouble was spared to alleviate the sufferings of a beloved husband and an honoured father. His patience and resignation were exemplary during the whole severe trial, and his fortitude edifying. It was his happiness to have acquired an extensive acquaintance with the volume of inspiration; and his views of the leading truths of the gospel were clear and evangelical. He was deeply humbled under a sense of his own unworthiness, but was enabled with unshaken confidence, to depend on the atoning sacrifice of Christ for acceptance with his God. He frequently spoke of the grace of his heavenly Father, and the amazing condescension and love of his Redeemer, in strains of the highest admiration; while his soul overflowed with unfeigned gratitude, that he had been made the object of that grace and love. His exhortations to his family were fervent and frequent. He daily reminded his partner how often she was indisposed, pathetically entreating her to stand ready to follow him: and exhorted his children to cleave to the Lord and unite with his

people. He was in the frequent habit of mixing his addresses with the most fervent prayers to the God of all grace, for the choicest of his favours on his beloved family. About ten weeks before his death, it was thought advisable that one of his daughters, who had been for several years indisposed, should be removed to Leicester, to enjoy the attendance of an eminent physician; but she died in eleven days after her removal. A few days before her death, her relatives who were with her, wrote to inform her father, that she could not live long, and that she expressed a great desire to see him. Unfit as he was for the journey, yet he resolved to venture, under the idea that he might be useful to her. When she saw him, she exclaimed with hands uplifted, "Oh, father, how I longed to see you! I shall never go home any more." The affected parent replied, "Never mind that, my dear: I hope there is a better home than mine provided for thee." "I hope there is," she replied: "but we want help by the way." "Yes," he rejoined, "and it is that consideration that has brought me here. I want to point thee to the Lamb of God. It is not thy life I desire; but thy eternal happiness. Dearly as I love thee, I can freely give thee up, if thou hast a saving interest in Christ." After more pious and instructive conversation, he poured out his soul in prayer over his dying child, with a fervour, that struck all present with astonishment. During the short time she survived this interview, he was confined to his bed, and never afterwards saw her. When informed of her departure, he calmly observed: "The Lord gave; and I trust the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord."

During the last three weeks of his affliction, he spoke with difficulty. What he was able to say, however, abundantly evinced that, through abounding grace, he was ripe for glory. Prayer and praise were his constant employment; and the promises, as he used to say, his meat and his drink. A friend visiting him, observed, "I think you appear much worse." "Yes," he replied, but I am resigned. I wish to be Christ's in life and Christ's in death.' One of his weeping family observing, "What a loss shall I sustain by your death!" he said, "O, my dear, that does not give me a moment's pain: I am sure the Lord will provide for thee." At another time, when it was remarked to him, "The Apostle speaks of these

light afflictions; but I think yours are heavy;" he instantly replied, 'They are light when compared with that eternal weight of glory, which they are working out for us.' A few days before his death, one of his daughters said, "Father, I hope you feel Jesus precious." 'Yes,' he returned with great emphasis. 'I do. I feel no declension in spirit. Salvation is made perfect by Christ Jesus.' During the last night of his life, as his daughter was sitting on his bed, he began to repeat those verses of Mr. Wesley's,

" Hide me, O my Saviour, hide
Till the storm of life be past;
Safe into the haven guide;
O receive my soul at last."

When he reached the word "storm," his voice failed him; and, by a significant glance, he requested her to finish it. This she instantly did; and, at the conclusion, he distinctly said, "Amen." This was nearly the last word which he spoke. He lay several hours in a state approaching to insensibility. His daughter continued holding his hand in hers. At length, she perceived his pulse to cease, and he expired without a struggle.

His remains were interred, Dec. 29th, in the G. B. burying ground at Quorndon, when Mr. Stevenson, of Loughborough, delivered a suitable discourse, from Rev. xiv. 13. And on Lord's day, Jan. 9th, Mr. Felkin, of Kegworth, improved the event from Job xiv. 14. May his admonitions and example be blest to his surviving relatives, and may we all be "followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises!"

Feb. 7th, 1820, Mrs. MARTHA AMBLER, a worthy member of the G. B. church at Queenshead, departed this life, aged thirty-four years. Her parents were industrious, but inattentive to religion: and her mother died when her daughter was only fourteen years old, leaving her father a widower with eight small children, the youngest of whom had scarcely completed his first year. She was thus called to exercise great care and tenderness over her younger brothers and sisters, to whom she acted as a mother. Busily engaged in her domestic concerns, she lived careless of religion, till April, 1804; when being present at the administration of baptism by Mr. James

Taylor, who was then on a visit to his father, the remarks made by him at the water roused her fears. She went home deeply affected, and took down an old book which had long lain neglected on the shelf, and it proved to be the New Testament. She opened it in one of the gospels, and read, as well as she was able, an account of the sufferings of Christ. This deepened her impressions; and induced her to attend on the means of grace and seek the company of the female professors. They soon introduced her to their experience meetings, where she was taught the way of salvation; and by the influence of divine grace, led to confide in a crucified Saviour. She was baptized, Aug. 4th, 1804, and joined the church at Queenshead.

In Feb. 1806, she married Mr. *Peter Ambler*, but as he was then engaged in the militia, they did not live much together till 1814. Soon after they were permanently settled, she expressed a marked disapprobation, of the vicious habits in which her husband indulged, and freely pointed out the dreadful consequences that would follow to himself, if he persisted in them; hinting at the same time at the grief it would occasion her. Having a real affection for his wife, and sincerely wishing to make her happy, he was persuaded to attend with her at her place of worship. As she had now learnt to read the scriptures with ease, and was blest with a good memory, she was better qualified to instruct him. It pleased the Lord to bless her pious efforts and the preaching of his word, and July 30th, 1815, she had the great satisfaction of seeing her husband devote himself publicly to the Lord, and be received as a member of the church. On this occasion, she observed to him: "The Lord has now given me to see the day. I often prayed for while you were absent. I will praise him for it as long as I live." From that time to the day of her death, they were fellow-helpers of each other's joy, and happy sharers in the privileges of religion.

About a year before her death, she was afflicted occasionally with a cough, which grew more alarming towards the autumn of last year. Medical advice was then procured, but without effect. About three months before her death, she was very much cast down, under a conviction of having done so little to promote the cause of her Redeemer, who had done so much for her. She soon however recovered her confidence. Her afflic-

tion was heavy; but she bore it with great patience. One day after a severe fit of coughing, she exclaimed, "O! how ill I am! what must I do?" Her husband observed, "You must strive to be patient." She eagerly replied, "Have I been impatient? I never meant to be impatient. I never coveted another person's health, or wished to be like them, or thought hard of the Lord for my being afflicted. I knew it was his will, and therefore it was my duty to submit." A few weeks before her death, she called her husband to her bedside, and expressed a wish to converse with him. After mentioning several domestic concerns, she proceeded in the most affectionate manner to give him very serious advice and caution respecting his conduct after her death: exhorting him especially to cleave to the Lord Jesus Christ and his dear cause. She pointed to several instances, which they had known, of professors who, after the death their of wives, had fallen away: adding, "O! do not imitate them. You see my work is done; I am going home. This is not our rest; but there remaineth a rest for the people of God. You will soon have to follow me: I am but a step before you. I wished to say what I have said to you, that I need not carry it on my mind any longer. And if you have any thing to say to me, say it now: for I desire to have my mind engaged with nothing any more in this world, but with my Saviour and heaven." After this she continued depending on the promises of scripture, and her evidence brightened and faith increased as she drew nearer her dissolution. About an hour before death, she desired her husband to pray with her, which he was enabled to do with tolerable freedom. At the conclusion of the exercise, she added a loud "Amen." She soon after turned her face to the wall, appeared absorbed in prayer or praise, and, in a few minutes, tranquilly breathed her last.

Her remains were interred, Feb. 11th, in the G. B. burying ground at Queenshead, and, on the 20th, Mr. Hurley improved the event from 2 Kings xx. 1. "Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die and not live:" a passage which she had often wished to hear read as a funeral text.

Died, at Birmingham, July 27th, 1819, Mr. JAMES SMART, aged sixty-eight years, formerly minister of the G. B. church at Sutton Coldfield. In 1815, he went to reside in Wales, but returned to Warwickshire in 1818. Since that period, he has

preached partly at Sutton, and partly in the places adjacent to Birmingham: frequently walking more than twenty miles, and preaching twice on the Lord's day. He was a man of strong confidence in his Redeemer, of deep humility and unostentatious piety. His public discourses were plain, and evidently dictated by love to the souls of his hearers. To convict the sinner of his crimes, and to lead the penitent to the cross of Jesus, were the great objects for which he perseveringly laboured; and his labours were crowned by the Master whom he served with considerable success. His last illness was short. It found him waiting for his change. He died, and was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace."

Jan. 2d, 1820, Mr. WILLIAM PHELON departed this life, at Halifax, Yorkshire, in the thirty-second year of his age. He was the son of Mr. P. Phelon, whose death was recorded in the G. B. R. Vol. ix. page 220, and was baptized in 1810, and joined the church at Queenshead. In Aug. 1812, he was called to the work of the ministry, and his services were well esteemed by his friends. His labours were zealous and frequent. Some time ago, the Yorkshire friends made an unsuccessful attempt to establish the G. B. cause at Apperley Bridge; in which our deceased brother laboured with such zeal as if he had known his time was short. As a christian, he honourably filled the station in which Providence had placed him; and was ready to contribute, according to his ability, to the support of the cause of Christ and for the relief of distress.

About Christmas, 1819, he was taken ill, and never afterwards regained even moderate health. His complaint seems to have baffled the skill of the physicians, who always declined saying what it was. At some times, it affected his head, and at others his legs, which were greatly swelled. He suffered considerable pain, which at times arose to agony. Every means were used to relieve him, but all proved ineffectual. He supported his heavy affliction with holy fortitude, and bowed to the will of his heavenly Father with humble submission. Towards the close of his life, his patience and resignation were exemplary. Though surrounded by an affectionate wife and five very young children, whom he was evidently soon to leave destitute, he depended on the promise of his God, who had

said, "Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me." A few days before his dissolution, he was visited by a friend, who found him in a composed frame. Being asked respecting the state of his mind, he observed, "How sweet and precious are those blessed promises which the Lord has left in his word! how cheering to know that I have a Father in heaven! how grateful to be able to feel and to say, 'My God, my Father!' and to remember that, "if the earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens!" repeating the whole passage with much feeling and correctness. After this he was able to speak very little, and lay in a state of insensibility till he resigned his soul into the hands of his Creator.

May the Almighty fulfil all his words to the disconsolate widow and helpless orphans, upon which he caused his servant to hope! May they be followers of the steps of their departed relative on earth, and at last join him in the realms where there shall be no more death.

Dec. 24th, 1819, died at Birmingham, Mr. JOSEPH SCOTT, the only surviving son of Mr. Scott, G. B. minister at Chatteris. For many years, he had been connected with the Methodists; but some time since left them, and attached himself to the G. Baptists, whose principles he had always approved; though he was prevented by death from uniting with their society at Birmingham. He was highly esteemed by his religious acquaintance, took great delight in spiritual conversation, and though a man of business, his affections were evidently set on things above. Detraction of the absent he would never permit, and always laboured to put the best construction on the actions of others. His last illness was occasioned by a cold, which brought on an inflammation of the bowels, that speedily snatched him from his weeping friends. During this affliction, his mind was very comfortable. Being asked, if his prospects for eternity were clear, he replied, "Yes: all is right in that respect:" adding, on another occasion, "I the chief of sinners am; but Jesus died for me." His sudden unexpected death produced a great sensation amongst his friends, and excited a general sympathy for the widow and three small children, who were thus deprived of a most affectionate husband and tender parent. May they imitate his vir-

tues! His funeral sermon was preached, to a large and deeply affected congregation, from Psalm xxiv. 9.

The deceased possessed respectable ministerial gifts; and might, had he been spared, have been very useful in the various stations occupied by the church at Birmingham. On the Lord's day preceding his decease, it was resolved to invite him to address the Sunday scholars occasionally in the school room; but before this resolution could be communicated to him, his soul had joined the general assembly of the spirits of the just made perfect.

Aug. 11th, 1819, died at Thurlaston, Mrs. SUSANNA WOOLATON, aged eighty-two, who had been a member of the G. B. church at Friar-lane, Leicester, for thirty-five years. In her long pilgrimage, she had been the subject of many vicissitudes; but, in every situation, conducted herself with propriety, and brought forth her fruit in her season. About twelve years ago, she went to reside at Thurlaston under the care of an affectionate daughter. Here she was near the sanctuary, and encircled by kind and attentive friends, with whom she frequently enjoyed, what she highly prized, the opportunities of religious conversation. As her bodily infirmities increased, she possessed a growing sense of the importance of inward religion, and a vital interest in Christ as a Saviour. Her attachment to her Redeemer and his cause, and his disciples, daily gained new force as her end approached.

Her last affliction was short and severe; but she was enabled to support it with patience and look to its issue with joy. Jesus was to her a well-known and long-tried friend, in whom she could confidently put her trust. On her death bed, she was reminded of his complete ability to save; when she said, with a smile that shewed she felt the truth of her assertion, "He can and He will." After a short pause, it was observed, "You know whom you have believed," to which she replied, with a joyful energy, "I do." In a short time after this she expired. Her funeral sermon was preached, to a crowded and attentive congregation, from Rev. vii. 13—17: a passage which she herself had chosen.

May 6th, 1820, departed this life, Mr. JOHN KINGSFORD, the respected pastor of the G. B. church at *Portsea, Hants*, aged fifty-five. He was the founder of the church over which he presided, and had been highly useful in promoting the in-

terest of his Redeemer. His last illness, the pleurisy, was short and severe; but he bore it with a fortitude and resignation worthy of the christian minister, and expired in firm reliance for acceptance on the merits of that Saviour, whom he had so long preached to others. We hope to be able to present our readers with a biographical memoir of this valuable servant of Christ in our next number; unless it should be superseded by a separate account which some of his relatives have in contemplation.

CONFERENCES.

The MIDLAND CONFERENCE was held at *Wimeswold*, June, 1820, when Mr. Orton received the thanks of the meeting for his excellent sermon. Mr. Stevenson was requested to draw up a plan, to be laid before the Association, for rendering the Itinerant Fund more efficient. A Letter from Mr. Pike was read, recommending a change in the principle of admission into the G. B. Academy, which produced considerable discussion; and it was determined to lay it before the Association. The next meeting to be at *Belper*, on the last Tuesday in Sep. next, when Messrs. Pickering and Orton are appointed to preach; or, in case of failure, Messrs. Goadby and Brand. Inn, the George and Dragon.

The LINCOLNSHIRE CONFERENCE was held at *Bourn*, June 8th, 1820, Mr. Binns, Chairman. The Sunday School Union was again discussed; and, after much desultory conversation, it was referred to the Teachers of the various schools to determine on the propriety of a general meeting. The case from *Belper*, requesting a collection in this district at Midsummer, was referred to some future more seasonable opportunity. The ordination of a missionary in this district was agreed to be at *Wiskeach*, when it suits the convenience of the parties concerned. On Wednesday evening, Mr. Abbott opened public service with prayer, and Mr. Jarrom preached, from Psalm cxix. 25. On the following evening, Mr. Everard prayed, and Mr. Peggs preached, from Acts xvi. 9, 10. The next Conference to be at *Chatteris*, on Thursday, Oct. 19th, 1820. Messrs. Rogers and Bissill to preach; or, in case of failure, Messrs. Lilley and Everard.

The NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE CONFERENCE was held at *Retford*, May 24th, 1820, when Mr. Stocks preached, from 1 Cor. i. 23, and Mr. Watson from Rom. x. 1. The case of Kirton was recommended to the Association. The friends at Doncaster informed this meeting that they had given up their late place of worship and taken another, at the annual rent of £2. 12s. 6d.—that their hearers were few and their prospects gloomy, and requested the opinion of the meeting as to their future conduct. They were advised, as the rent was small and the place licensed, to continue, and apply to the Association for pecuniary assistance. Supplies were arranged to assist Mr. Skidmore to maintain public worship, every week, at Misterton, till the next Conference. The Itinerant Fund was strongly recommended to the serious and cordial attention of the churches connected with this meeting. The next Conference to be at Misterton, Dec. 26th, 1820, when Mr. W. Smedley is appointed to deliver a discourse on “*Mutual support and exertion.*”

GENERAL BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

The *Annual General Meeting* of this Society was held, at *Spalding*, June 28th, 1820, when Mr. John Heard, of Nottingham, was called to the chair. Mr. Pike, the active Secretary of the Institution, read the Report, stating the progress of the Committee, during the last year. From this interesting document, it appears that considerable advances have been made in two very important parts of their design; the increase of their Funds, and the obtaining of proper persons to send out as missionaries. With regard to the former, it appears that the Society possessed, at the first of April last, about £1000, which sum must have been since considerably increased; that though the annual income of this society was probably over-rated when stated, at the last Anniversary, to be £500; yet, that during the past year, it had amounted to £777. 1s. 1½d. and that from the progress which the missionary spirit is making in various parts of the Connection, and the zeal and activity displayed by its friends, there is good reason for hoping that this income will augment rapidly, when the undertaking assumes a more interesting form, and its missionaries are actually gone forth to evangelize the heathen,

It has been stated already, in the G. B. R. that, besides two young men who have been for some time preparing for the service of this Society, Messrs. Peggs, late of Norwich, and W. Bampton, late of Yarmouth, have offered themselves for the great work; and we learn with pleasure from this Report, that it is probable one or both of them will soon set out for the scene of their intended labours, in company with Mr. Ward, who is expected shortly to return to India, and who has cordially agreed to lend them his valuable countenance and instruction. A letter has also been addressed to Drs. Carey and Marshman, the senior missionaries at Serampore, mentioning some stations of great importance; and requesting them to obtain information on the practicability of establishing a mission in one of these stations. Under the auspices therefore, of these judicious and experienced veterans in the missionary cause, it is confidently hoped, that this society will soon enter on its active labours.

We cordially agree with the Committee in congratulating the friends of this Society on the very encouraging success which has crowned its efforts, and the evident proofs which already appear, that the blessing of Providence attends its progress. May it go on and prosper!

The Report concludes with some earnest exhortations to perseverance and increased exertion; particularly in the formation of Missionary Associations: for the conduct of which it gives some good directions. These may probably appear in a future number of the G. B. R.

After the reading of the Report, the usual business of such meetings was gone through: and several interesting addresses were given. The principal speakers were the Chairman, the Secretary, Messrs. Jarrom, Peggs, William Pickering, R. Clark, W. Bampton, R. Smith, J. Wallis, and J. Farrent. Messrs. Seals and Pike were re-elected to the offices of Treasurer and Secretary, and Messrs. Jarvis Miller, R. Smith, W. Pickering, T. Hoe, T. Parkinson, T. Stevenson, J. Heard, J. White, J. Green, W. West, T. Orton, and J. Bennett, were chosen to form the Committee for the ensuing year.

ORDINATION.

On Thursday, July 6th, Mr. J. Green was ordained to the Pastoral office over the G. B. church at Barton, Leicestershire. Mr. Orton, of Hugglescote, opened the morning service with a short prayer, and, after singing a hymn, Mr. Goadby, of Ashby, read the Epistle to Titus. Mr. Payne, of Morcott, offered the general prayer, and Mr. Goadby delivered an introductory discourse. Mr. Orton asked the questions both of the church and of the minister, and offered the ordination prayer. Mr. Jarrom, of Wisbeach, delivered the charge, from John xxi. 15, 16, 17; which, with singing and prayer, concluded the morning service. In the afternoon, Mr. Peggs opened the meeting with prayer, and Mr. W. Pickering, of Nottingham, delivered a discourse to the people, from Psalm cxviii. 25, latter clause. In the evening, several persons were set apart to the deacon's office. Mr. Orton asked the questions, Mr. Jarrom offered the prayer, and Mr. Orton then addressed them from Acts xx. 28. Mr. Barnes, of Austrey, besides giving out most of the hymns, concluded the whole with prayer. Though a temporary gallery was erected, the place was crowded to excess. The services were rather long, but far from tedious; and the general sentiment throughout the day was a deep solemnity mixed with holy joy. Such a day, hundreds who were there had never before witnessed. May the solemnities of it be long remembered, may the great Head of the church smile upon the covenant engagements of that day, and may the good effects be felt in the church and neighbourhood for years and years to come. Amen.

 MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION.

We are requested to correct an error in the Minutes of the Yorkshire Conference, page 42 of the last number. The ground at Blackdainbridge was not *purchased*, as there stated; but was *given*, by a generous individual, for the purpose of erecting a place of worship.

Proposals have been issued, by Mr. *J. G. Pike*, of Derby, for publishing *Memoirs of the Rev. JOSEPH FREESTON, late Pastor of the Baptist Church at Hinckley*. This work will be chiefly compiled from materials in Mr. Freeston's hand

writing; and the profits devoted to the use of his widow. It will be printed, on good paper, in 12mo. price to Subscribers 3s. 6d. A number of copies will also be struck off, on a very fine paper, which will be delivered to subscribers at 4s. Subscribers' names will be received by the ministers of the various Baptist churches, by Mr. G. Wilkins, Derby, and by Mr. R. Baynes, Ivy-lane, London.

The author solicits the loan of interesting *Letters* of the deceased from such of his friends as may have preserved them: which he promises carefully to preserve and restore if required. We hope that this laudable design will meet with liberal encouragement: and should any of our readers find it more convenient to notify their names as subscribers to the Editor of the G. B. R. he will, with pleasure, transmit them to the author.

On Nov. 1st, 1820, will be published, God willing, the *first Part* of the MEMOIRS of the Rev. JOHN TAYLOR, late Pastor of the General Baptist Church at Queenshead, Yorkshire, collected from his own papers, with extracts from his Letters, Manuscripts, &c. This work will correspond, in size, paper and type, with the *Memoirs* of the late Rev. DAN TAYLOR, and will be completed in *Three Parts*, price *One Shilling* each; or, in *One Volume*, stitched, price *Three Shillings*. The Parts will be published with the succeeding numbers of the G. B. R. but it is hoped, that the Volume may be had complete, in the course of a few months, by those who wish it. Orders for the Work, either in Parts or Volumes, may be forwarded to the Editor, or any of his agents; and it is requested that an early communication may be made, as the number printed will be regulated by the orders received.

REVIEW.

The faithful Minister's Consolation and Triumph: a SERMON delivered at Lyndhurst, Hants, May 28th, 1820, on the occasion of the decease of the Rev. R. OWERS, of Southampton, and the Rev. J. KINGSFORD, of Portsea. By THOMAS CLARKE, 8vo. p. 30. Price One Shilling. Mann, London.

The Author of this useful discourse is the Pastor of the G. B. church at Lyndhurst, and had been for many years intimately acquainted and closely connected with the two neighbouring ministers, whose deaths he has here attempted to improve. Their dissolution therefore naturally affected him. "How mysterious," he observes, "are the ways of Providence! Both of these ministers had seen a large and commodious place of worship erected for their respective congregations; and in the prospect of greater usefulness, were called, within forty-eight hours of each other, to appear before their Lord and Master, to give an account of their stewardship. May their death be the means of stimulating ministers and people to be more active in the cause of God, and to pay an unremitting regard to personal religion, that when the hour of their dissolution appears, they may have a good hope of being for ever with the Lord!"

To assist his readers in this salutary improvement of the solemn events is evidently the leading object of the pious writer in the sermon before us, which is founded on 2 Cor. ii. 14, 15. "Now thanks be unto God which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us, in every place. For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved and in them that perish." From this text, the preacher draws four observations. 1, "That the ministers of the gospel are the servants of God to accomplish his purposes among mankind. 2, That the important message which they deliver is attended with different success. 3, That their own salvation depends, not on the success of their ministrations, but on the purity of their principles and a personal interest in Christ. And 4, That such is the glorious nature of the gospel of Christ, that it causes the minds of christian ministers to rise superior to every difficulty, and to triumph in Christ as their Saviour." On each of these propositions, he makes pertinent and edifying remarks; and, after paying a tribute of respect to his departed friends, concludes the discourse with some useful practical lessons of improvement.

This sermon is dedicated to the bereaved churches, and well deserves their serious attention, not merely as an honourable monument to the memory of the deceased Pastors, but as containing excellent hints of advice to themselves in their des-

titute circumstances. It may also be recommended to the careful perusal of ministers; and will supply them with many judicious cautions, directions, encouragements and motives, in the conscientious discharge of the important duties of their sacred offices.

PARAPHRASE on PHIL. I. 21.

Sung at the FUNERAL of Mr. SPENCER.

1. Let us, in all things be resign'd,
Obedient to our Saviour's mind;
Of life or death no more complain;
"To live is Christ—to die is gain."
2. We leave with him the time or way,
That brings us to the realms of day,
He doth our fleeting breath retain;
"To live is Christ—to die is gain."
3. If here we serve our gracious Lord,
In heav'n we meet a large reward:
Although our labours are but vain,
"To live is Christ—to die is gain."
4. If now our sufferings should be great,
They only make our rest more sweet:
Whilst we improve a bed of pain,
"To live is Christ—to die is gain."
5. Whatever be our state below,
Christ makes it work for good, we know:
His grace all trials can sustain;
"To live is Christ—to die is gain."
6. Some from the thoughts of death would fly:
We stand prepar'd to live or die:
To us this privilege is plain,
"To live is Christ—to die is gain."

LINES

Occasioned by visiting Mr. John Adderley, who died at Mountsorrel, addressed to his surviving Family.

To die, how solemn yet how sure!
 To all the human race,
 But mark, how happy, how secure
 Enclos'd in sov'reign grace.

Temptation's furious storms may rise,
 And foaming billows swell,
 The saint to Christ his refuge flies,
 And calmly says, "'Tis well."

Ye mourners for my brother gone,
 But gone to realms of light,
 O follow him, press vig'rous on,
 Till faith is turn'd to sight.

Think of his counsel, for your good
 'Ere from this world he fled,
 And choose fair virtue's sacred road,
 Obedient to the dead.

The dead! ah no! he lives, he lives!
 Releas'd from nature's strife,
 Uncloth'd of all that sorrow gives,
 And swallow'd up of life.

The air of Paradise he breathes,
 Salubrious, unconfin'd,
 Deck'd with fair Eden's blooming wreathes,
 Of beauty most refin'd.

Fraught with religion, mighty pow'r
 His soul could sweetly sing,
 In the last separating hour,
 "Oh Death! where is thy sting?"

"Thanks be to God, my victory
 Is thro' the slaughter'd Lamb,
 'Tis giv'n of God, 'tis given to me,
 All glory to his name."

" From Jesu's side rich pardon, fall,
 Sov'reign, abundant free ;
 And while his word proclaims ' For all,
 My faith replies, ' For me !'
 " What is affliction's bitter cup ?
 Jesus more bitter thine ;
 Yet thou didst freely drink it up,
 And this shall sweeten mine."
 Yes, yes, he liv'd from day to day,
 On Jesus crucify'd ;
 And when his life was worn away
 Sweetly in Jesus dy'd.
 Finish'd our course, may you and I,
 Of glory stand the heirs ;
 Just as the righteous may we die,
 Our latter end like theirs.

E. P.

THE DYING INFIDEL.

Injur'd soul ! I pray thee stay :
 Yet, O yet thy flight delay :
 Christless, vainly mercy crying,
 Oh the bitter pangs of dying !
 Stop, stern Death, thy hand refrain,
 And let me live my life again.
 Hark ! the furies speak my doom ;
 Come they say, to tortures come,
 Death hath all his terrors brought ;
 Ev'ry sense with horrors fraught ;
 I pant for breath. What ! must I die ?
 Oh, wretched soul ! where wilt thou fly ?
 Vain world, farewell ; its joys, adieu !
 Eternal torments are in view,
 I see my Judge and King :
 Life's spent ! time's past ! I sink, I go,
 O, conscience ! now thy pow'r I know ;
 O, death ! I feel thy sting.

Norwich.

THE
GENERAL BAPTIST REPOSITORY.

No. LVII.—Vol. X. Nov. 1st, 1820.

*MEMOIRS of the late Mr. JOHN KINGSFORD, the
FOUNDER and PASTOR of the GENERAL BAP-
TIST CHURCH, Clarence Street, Portsea, Hants.*

THIS worthy minister of Jesus Christ was descended from a family which has been long known in the county of Kent, especially about Canterbury, in the vicinity of which many of that name reside; several of whom are opulent and respectable. He was born, at a village about four miles from Canterbury, in the year 1765. His family were General Baptists. A place of worship, which he often attended when a child, was built by his grandfather and another near relative, and occupied by them for many years; but it has now fallen into the hands of the Independents. In this place, it is believed, the deceased received his first serious impressions under the ministry of a distant relative, the Rev. Sampson Kingsford, pastor of the G. B. church at Canterbury: who still survives, and enjoys, in a good old age, the high esteem of a large and very respectable circle of acquaintance. May his useful life be yet long protracted, and his end be peace!

At an early part of his youth, Mr. J. Kingsford was bound apprentice to a worthy tradesman at Canterbury, where he had full opportunity of enjoying the means of grace. These means were made effectual; and before he had attained his eighteenth year, he solemnly gave himself up to the Lord: being baptized and admitted a member of the G. B. church, in that town, Sept. 8, 1782. As long as he continued with this society, he gave pleasing evidence of genuine piety, and was highly esteemed by his christian associates.

Soon after the close of his apprenticeship, he removed to London; where he formed an intimacy with the late Mr. Dan

Taylor, which ripened into a friendship that continued to the death of that honoured minister. He did not, however, remain long in London; but soon went into Buckinghamshire, where divine Providence seemed to afford an opportunity for his settling in business. Here he joined the G. B. church at Cheaham, in May, 1785; being regularly dismissed from the church at Canterbury. The friends with whom he was now associated soon observed his ardent piety and his superior talents for usefulness. Not long after he joined them, he was invited and encouraged to exercise his abilities as a preacher; and frequently laboured, at Chesham and its dependant stations, with considerable acceptance. His services and character are still remembered in those parts with affection and esteem.

In 1787, Mr. K. received an invitation to become the assistant minister to Mr. Mills, the pastor of the ancient G. B. church in Thomas Street, Portsmouth. In this removal, a very striking interposition of divine providence appeared in his favour. A gentleman of great respectability, a member of the church at Portsmouth, in order to facilitate the settlement of Mr. K. resigned his business and his house to him, upon terms honourable to himself, and very advantageous to a young man setting out in life. This arrangement laid the foundation for the very creditable and comparatively independent station, with respect to temporal concerns, which, under the blessing of heaven, he supported through life.

The first years of Mr. K.'s joint labours with Mr. Mills passed in harmony, and with a degree of mutual satisfaction; but there were many things which prevented a cordial union between them. The great difference in their sentiments respecting some important points in religion was a principal obstacle to their hearty co-operation: for Mr. Mills denied the divinity of our adorable Saviour and the doctrines connected with it. It may perhaps appear surprising to some, that Mr. K. would unite with a minister of this description; but it should be recollected, that his earliest connections were with those who inclined to such opinions; and it is probable that he himself might not then have that clear and decided conviction of the certainty and importance of the contrary truths which he acquired in after life; though there is sufficient evidence, that he was always strongly inclined to them. And it may be added also, that probably some of his

fellow members, if not the minister, made advances in their errors, and became more and more opposed to the doctrines of the divinity and atonement of Christ, to which Mr. K. became daily more strongly attached. This was the unhappy fact with many of the old G. B. churches, at the time now under consideration.

This increasing difference in opinion probably gave rise to Mr. K.'s wish to build another place of worship, at a proper distance from that in which Mr. Mills laboured. As the inhabitants of the town and its environs were rapidly increasing, there appeared to him a wide sphere for ministerial exertions in several places, where the population was numerous and the means of hearing the gospel inconvenient. With these views, he fixed on Clarence Street, a populous neighbourhood without the fortifications of Portsea, where there was then no place of worship. He and two others commenced a subscription towards accomplishing their design; and they were generously supported by most of the members of the church with which they then stood connected. A small meeting-house was soon built; and opened, Dec. 16, 1798, by Mr. (now Dr.) Bogue, of Gosport. It cost nearly two hundred pounds, and measured twenty-five feet by twenty. Here Mr. K. laboured diligently, and his labours were crowned with success. Before the close of the next year, the congregation had increased till the place was too small to contain them. It was, therefore, enlarged, by adding fifteen feet to the length of the meeting-house and erecting a large vestry.

While the cause of Christ thus flourished in Clarence Street, the dissatisfaction in the church at Thomas Street, on account of differing sentiments, increased. Both parties probably became more decided in their views of divine truth: and it appeared evident that they could not continue to act together, either with comfort or success. A separation therefore took place, by mutual arrangement, in 1801; when Mr. K. and sixteen of his friends were formed into a distinct church in Clarence Street. The new society immediately elected Mr. K. as their pastor; to which office he was ordained, Oct. 2, 1802. On this solemn occasion, his friend, Mr. Dan Taylor, of London, gave an impressive charge to the young minister, from Tit. i. 7. "A bishop must be blameless as the steward of God." And his

relative Mr. J. Kingsford, then of Deal, addressed the church, from Thess. v. 12. 13.

This worthy pastor and his flock being thus united in gospel order, went on and prospered. His labours were arduous, constant, and successful. The hearers increased, and the word preached was made effectual to salvation. Many professed their faith in Christ, and were added to the church, as seals of his ministry. In 1804, these pleasing circumstances rendered it necessary to unroof the meeting-house, enlarge its dimensions, and erect a front gallery.

Mr. K's doctrinal sentiments, agreeing with those of the New Connection, it was natural for him and his brethren, exposed as they were to the reflections and opposition of the various denominations around them, to wish an union with that increasing body. They accordingly proposed themselves to the Association in 1805, and were cordially received. The number of members then had risen from sixteen to forty-nine, and the hearers were numerous. This encouraging success induced them in the following year to construct a gallery, on one side of their place of worship; to which, in 1808, they added another on the remaining side. But though their number of hearers continued to increase, yet, for some years after this period, but few came forward to join the church. This doubtless was the source of deep regret to the pious mind of the pastor; and induced him to recommend the establishment of regular prayer meetings, which were diligently attended. Sensible that, except the divine blessing crowned the efforts of himself and his friends with success, all their exertions would be fruitless, they were earnest and united in supplication for it. The happy effects were soon apparent. "The Lord hath not said unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain." The word reached the hearts of the hearers; and in 1812 and the year following, twenty-five were baptized and received into fellowship.

In 1814, their borders were again become too strait for them; and they found it necessary to add thirty-two feet to the length of the meeting-house. Thus at last, a spacious and commodious place of worship was formed; measuring seventy-two feet by thirty-three, at an expence of nearly two thousand pounds. In all these erections for the cause of Christ, the deceased took an active share; and laboured with

full purpose of heart towards their accomplishment. And surely to be instrumental in erecting a house for God on earth, in which the worship and homage, that bears a resemblance, to that of the heavenly state, is offered to the Majesty of the universe, is a good and an honourable work. If, angels as they pass by the abodes of men ever stop to notice the edifices of human structure, we may presume that the temples where the saints so often assemble to keep holy day, are contemplated by them with peculiar delight. And it is with celestial joy, that they wing their way from these humble tabernacles below, to the palace of God in heaven, to communicate to the saints in light, the news of fresh victories gained by the blood of the Lamb."

In this house, Mr. K. was employed with increasing success, and derived sacred pleasure from publishing the glad tidings of salvation, to a crowded and attentive audience, from the increase in christian graces and enjoyments in those who had believed the gospel, and from the frequent proofs which he received that sinners were turned to the Lord. In this place, he administered the ordinance of believers' baptism to one hundred and fifty-four persons; and many were waiting as candidates at the time he was called to his reward. At his decease, the church consisted of nearly one hundred members.

But in a state so fluctuating as the present, where the faithful minister of Christ is called, not only to labour but to suffer for his Master, and to endure hardship as a good soldier, it was not to be expected, that the high satisfaction which Mr. K. derived from the success of his endeavours to promote the cause of the Redeemer, should long continue without a mixture of pain. He was subject to the afflictions which are the common portion of the man, the christian, and the minister. That God, who crowned with his sacred influences the planting and watering of his spiritual garden, permitted some weeds to spring up, and some blights to happen, which considerably diminished the happiness, and sometimes disappointed the hopes of his faithful servant. Nor was he a stranger to heavy trials from different sources, which, no doubt, often deeply affected his mind; and disposed him to exclaim, "O that I had wings like a dove, that I might fly away and be at rest." Yet, under all his trials, he was graciously enabled to trust

in the promise of his heavenly Father, "that all things would be made to work together for his real good."

During a large part of his life, Mr. K. enjoyed a good state of health. About ten years previous to his decease, he was visited with a very painful and protracted disorder, attended with symptoms very alarming. But it pleased the great Physician to raise him up from the borders of the grave, to restore him to health, and strengthen him again to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. This delightful employment he continued with few interruptions till within three weeks of his dissolution. There is indeed reason to believe, that his exertions in the sacred work brought on a tenderness of the lungs and an inclination to inflammation; which was increased, in a few of his latter years, by a tendency to corpulency. An affection of the lungs appears to have been his principal complaint, in the illness which terminated his labours. This indisposition lasted only about three weeks; but the greater part of this short period, he suffered much from a violent cough, accompanied with a great difficulty of breathing. His afflictions were indeed heavy; yet his mind was preserved calm and perfectly resigned to the will of his heavenly Father. In the near prospect of death, he maintained a steady unshaken confidence in the mercy of God flowing from the great work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Every part of his demeanour, in the trying hour, bespoke the christian who had committed his soul into the hands of his Almighty Saviour, with a full persuasion that he would support him through the gloomy valley, and receive his departing spirit to the mansions of eternal glory. When a female relative and christian friend inquired how he was; he replied, "I labour hard for breath; but I am in the hand of the Lord to do with me as he pleases. He knows best. All is right." On another occasion, he said: "I am easy both in body and in mind. I have a good foundation to build my hopes upon, as a poor sinner." His friend observed; "The Lord Jesus is a good foundation:" to which he answered, "I know it." Some time afterwards, he remarked, "I can breathe better." She said, 'I hope the worst is over:' to which he replied, "I am not sure of that; the will of the Lord be done; the parting day must come." One evening, his friend, taking leave of him, said, 'The Lord be with you

this night to support and comfort you ;' and he instantly replied, " He will : I have no doubt of it. I have no doubt."

On the day preceding his death, his weeping family flattered themselves that the danger was past ; and their honoured parent would be restored to their prayers ; but He who giveth no account of his ways had determined otherwise. At twelve o'clock on the following day, May 6, 1820, he repeated, " It is all right. All is well ;" and soon after closed his eyes on all sublunary objects. This dismission from the body was so easy, that scarce a struggle could be perceived. " Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright : for the end of that man is peace."

The loss of such a man could not but be deeply felt by his family, the church, the Connection to which he belonged ; by a large circle of friends, and by the neighbourhood in which he resided. This was strikingly and most affectingly evinced on the evening on which the last mournful office was performed : an evening long to be remembered. The scenes of woe which were then presented very naturally directed the thoughts to that pathetic description of the funeral of the first christian martyr : " Devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him." The tomb, which he had chosen for himself, was the old baptistery which had been reserved, for that purpose, at the enlargement of the Meeting-house. In this spot, where he had often stood, with holy joy, to administer the sacred ordinance of baptism, were his mortal remains deposited, in the presence of a vast multitude of afflicted spectators. On this affecting occasion, Mr. D. Miall, the particular baptist minister, at Portsea, read Psa. xc. and engaged in prayer ; and Mr. J. Kingsford, of London, the relative of the deceased, delivered a discourse, from Phil. iv. 21. " For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

Our deceased friend enjoyed but few advantages of education. He was, in early youth, called to devote much of his time and attention to business of a secular nature ; and through the whole of his future life was closely engaged in trade. He conducted business, with great credit and considerable success, in one house, for the space of thirty-three years. His opportunities for mental improvement, were, therefore, very slender ; and he never made any pretensions to literary excellence. But nature had endowed him with strong intellectual faculties ; he possessed a sound, clear, and manly judgment ; and had studied

his Bible with considerable care. On most important subjects in religion, he had formed his conclusions from an attentive examination of that sacred volume; and was steady, open, and intrepid in the avowal and defence of what he esteemed the truth. His temper was firm, honest, and affectionate, and his manners plain and unaffected. Without any attempts at display, his conversation was entertaining and instructive. Unconcerned as to ornament, his public discourses were full of important matter; delivered in a style, unadorned but very impressive; and with an earnestness that caught the attention and reached the hearts of his hearers. His disinterestedness was exemplary. Though depending for pecuniary supplies on his secular employments, and serving the church, for nearly his whole life, without any remuneration from them; yet his ministerial diligence and zeal, his pastoral care, his affectionate visits, his paternal solicitude for the welfare of his flock, and his readiness to assist the distressed, whether in body or mind; could not have been greater or more constant, had he depended on the people for his whole support. In short, to use the words of one who knew him well, "as a tradesman, a neighbour, a son, a husband, a father, a christian, and a minister, such a combination of real excellencies was exhibited in his character and conversation, as few individuals have the happiness to attain. His history is not indeed marked by a variety of incidents, nor rendered interesting by any extraordinary change of circumstances; but his life was a practical illustration of that scripture declaration, 'the path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.' He rose from comparative obscurity, shining with a steady and increasing lustre, during the morning, noon, and afternoon of life; and it was the pleasure of his divine Master to remove him to shine in another sphere, before the shadows of the evening came on."

The loss of such a man leaves a blank that will not easily be filled. To his family and immediate connections, it is irreparable. The church, of which he was the honoured founder and the affectionate pastor, demands the peculiar sympathy of every friend to the interests of the Saviour's kingdom. May it be preserved from every precipitate or imprudent measure! May its members be enabled, in their destitute circumstances, to cultivate an increased attachment to the sacred

course in which they are engaged; and feel this affecting dispensation a strong inducement to love one another more fervently, and to endeavour with greater care, to preserve the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. And may he, with whom is the residue of the spirit, in due time, send them a successor to their late pastor, who shall not only occupy his place, but be influenced by his views, and follow his steps as far as he followed Christ.

ON COLLECTING FOR MEETING-HOUSES.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

SIR,

I am sorry to say any thing, in this public way, on the subject of begging for meeting-houses; but as I pledged myself, if spared, in your last Number, you must excuse the few following remarks.

1. On the subject in general. The difficulty is not in framing a plan, but in acting upon it. If our churches can be brought to assist in cases recommended by the association, in any way, the object would be attained that all have in view. But—

1. It appears to me that the association is too forward and careless in recommending cases; not considering or enquiring whether they can be attended to or not. When our churches have four or five cases already before them, and four or five recommended, what can ensue but the embarrassment now manifest and felt?

2. I am afraid, also, that the members of the association approve and recommend cases in a disingenuous way; satisfying themselves with lifting up their hands, with moving or seconding the recommendation of a case, without any design to support it in their own church or neighbourhood. I should be happy to believe that none has supported a case at the association by his vote, who has not discouraged the same case when he has returned home.

3. But the mischief has risen to its present alarming height, by the encouragement given to those, whom, to use a scripture phrase, I must denominate "Robbers of Churches." Men, who having not the fear of church, conference or association before their eyes, without the consent of any, enter towns and villages, and by the dint of importunity and impudence, obtain money of

individuals. These rob the churches they assail; they also rob other churches, who, like the sick man of Bethesda, are waiting to be admitted, but who, through these robberies, are put off from year to year, and are often finally disappointed.

II. On the new plan of consolidation. We should be thankful to any one who is disposed to benefit the connection by his advice, in so difficult a case as this. But—

1. The plan for every member in all our churches to raise two shillings annually for the relief of begging cases, cannot be carried into effect. Those churches, consisting of a few rich persons, may agree to it. But there are not many such churches, we hope. Poverty is a characteristic of the christian church. A large majority of our members are poor, many need assistance. Should not our members do as much for their minister, for the Academy, Itinerant-fund, for foreign missions, and for many other objects, as for begging cases? When a church cannot raise as much for their own debt, is it reasonable to expect them to raise this sum for the debts of others?

2. But if this plan were adopted and acted upon, the distribution of the money would be attended with insurmountable difficulties. The large debts of a few churches would nearly swallow up all the collection. I need not tell you, Mr. Editor, who are so well acquainted with the rules of fellowship, that if £500. were to be divided amongst ten churches, and four of those have debts amounting to £3000. that there will be little left for the other six churches, suppose all theirs amounted only to £1000. And—

3. Very probably many of those churches, with two or three hundred pounds of debt, are more burdened than some with double or treble the quantity of debt. Our brethren at Lineholm are in danger of being annihilated as a church with a debt of £400. whilst some churches, that I could easily name, are not injured in the least with as great or greater debts. Equality in any case is not easily obtained, but if every one give to Lineholm or London case according to his conscience and knowledge, there should be no murmuring.

III. On the old way revived. I hope no one will blame the length of these observations, Nothing scarcely need to be said on the lines I had the honour to present to the last association, and which unhappily found their way to your miscellany. I may however be permitted to observe,

1. That the plan of every church making a collection for a sister church when burdened with debt, is as old as our Connection, is as universal as the christian church. Whilst it was acted upon, there were no complaints. The departure from this has caused the grievances that must be removed, or they will issue in the disgrace, if not the ruin of the Connection.

2. The little circumstantial arrangement of districts, arises out of the enlarged state of our Connection; and, if adopted, may expedite and regulate collections.

3. But we must not lose sight of each minister collecting for his own case.—He understands it best—he is most likely to exert himself in preaching and travelling on behalf of his own people, his own temporal interest, and the interest of religion in his own neighbourhood. The stimulus and excitement that a foreign minister has over a congregation and collection, cannot be so easily estimated by a planner at his desk, as a plodder on the highway. I have exerted myself in behalf of collections at home, and obtained as much as was expected; but when a strange minister has come on behalf of the same object, he has obtained twice or three times as much. A strange minister draws together hearers that do not regularly attend, and raises a collection without any burden to the church. Excuse my well meant remarks.

J. T.

The DANGER of DEPENDING ON OUR OWN EXERTIONS for SALVATION.

The plan of human redemption, devised by the blessed God, and revealed in the scriptures, is admirably adapted to humble mankind, and for ever to perpetuate the honour of God. According to this glorious system of divine grace, there is, in one view, much for sinful man to perform; in another, there is considerable truth in the assertion that is sometimes made, that there is nothing for man to do, in order to salvation. In the use of provided means, the sinner must work out his own salvation, or he will never be saved; while the provision of these means, and the efficacy imparted to them are entirely of divine grace. But is there not a natural disposition in man to do something as the *meritorious means* of success in religion and of final acceptance?

How commonly do men reason in reference to the enjoyment of glory and happiness, as if they were to be the reward of their merit! "We have," say they, "never done any one any harm; we do justly and love mercy; we are desirous of doing to others as we would wish them to do to us; and if this is not the way to heaven, which can be the way?" To such an enquirer we may reply, All that is here stated has respect to your fellow men; but the whole of religion does not consist in our duty towards each other. In addition to this, have you always loved God, with all your heart, and soul, and strength? If so, you are obedient to his commandments; for it cannot comport with supreme love to God to be disobedient to his revealed will. And, let it be remembered, that his great command, under the gospel, is, that you should repent and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only and sufficient Saviour. Eternal life is not to be enjoyed as the reward of merit, but, as the gift of God, freely bestowed on all them that believe on his dear Son. Without a humble trust in Christ, all our good works are as so many cyphers. They stand for nothing while alone; but, when they are the genuine produce of faith in the Lord Jesus, and of the influence of his spirit, they are very valuable. Trust no more then to the merit of your own works,

"Fly to the hope the gospel gives,
The man that trusts the promise lives."

But this spirit of dependance on human exertion, appears not only in the general works of morality, it extends also to the ordinances of the gospel. We refer now, not so much to an attendance on the ministry of the word, though in this, it is frequently apparent, but, more particularly, to the positive institutions of religion, Baptism, and the Lord's supper. In reference to baptism, it has frequently excited surprise that any who were not truly converted should desire to attend to that ordinance. But that this is the case, and that, by one means or other, the unconverted too frequently succeed in their applications, is painfully evident, from the instances of gross impropriety and irreligion that are not unfrequently manifest in persons soon after their baptism. When the real character is thus displayed, every member of the church is shocked; and with surprise asks "What could induce such a person to be baptized?"

We cannot indeed think that there is any thing gratifying in the ordinance of baptism that should lead the irreligious to desire it; but we apprehend that, in general, when it is desired by such, it is, in their estimation, to make up the want of serious experimental religion. They probably have attended the ministry of the word, and have been, in a measure, affected with a view of their sinful condition and the necessity of future happiness; they have proposed the important question, "What must we do to be saved?" This has been known to some warm hearted friend, who has thought the very best of his enquirers; and, without sufficient instruction on the one hand, or evidence of faith on the other, the importance of baptism has been stated; and, in as much as this is *doing* something, it is joyfully acceded to by the supposed converts. At the time, they are probably very sincere; but, not really believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, they satisfy themselves with having been baptized, and now they live at ease. But these, having no root in themselves, endure but for a time; for, on the appearance of temptation, they consequently fall to their own wounding, and to the hurt of their friends.

Should not this teach circumspection, in the admission of candidates to baptism? If the above statement is true, it is to be feared that, in some instances, the administration of baptism has been a real evil. If it had been deferred, it would probably have prolonged and deepened conviction of sin, and induced the penitent to flee for refuge to the Lord Jesus; but baptism being administered, has probably tended to allay convictions, to dissipate fear, and to cause the self-deceived sinner to say, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace." Care then should certainly be taken, lest we should in any measure, contribute to the deception and misery of any one. "There is" says Mr. Henry "a foolish proneness in those that have rendered themselves unworthy of the substance of christian privileges, to catch at the signs and shadows of them. It is not only justice, but kindness to such to be denied them: for, by usurping that to which they have no title, they affront God and make their sin the more heinous; and, by building their hopes on a wrong foundation, they render their situation the more difficult, and their ruin the more deplorable."

The spirit of dependence on means, without a sufficient regard to the end, is not peculiar to individuals; it may be imbibed by

collective bodies. The writer wishes to be very far from even thinking slightly of the efficacy of scriptural means, for increase in spirituality, and for all the purposes of church discipline, when used in humble dependence on the great head of the church; but when he sees a disorderly and thoughtless people, multiplying means and constituting officers, he fears it is under the influence of the same spirit as prompts the unconverted to be baptized. The people see there is something wrong, and, not suspecting that it originates in the deficiency of their personal piety and habitual seriousness; instead of correcting what is amiss by becoming more heavenly minded, they multiply means and institute offices, by the influence of which, they may be goaded to duties and privileges, which they have no heart willingly to regard. Such persons seem to forget, that one of the most amiable features of christianity is its simplicity. With few ceremonies and few offices, under the gracious influences of the Saviour, the gospel maintains the most delightful order in a church, and the sublimest peace in the hearts of individuals. But, when the simplicity of the gospel is overlooked, when ceremonies are multiplied and offices instituted, for the name of which we may in vain search the New Testament, the beauty of the gospel is spoiled, and a system is introduced, which in the end, must be burdensome to its supporters, and tend to secularize the minds of all that depend on it.

From the whole, it may be remarked, that, in religion, nothing is of essential value without a humble trust in the Lord Jesus Christ and a sincere dedication of heart to him. Nothing will maintain the life of religion in the soul, but careful circumspection and daily fervent communion with the blessed God. Where these are habitually and conscientiously maintained, in the diligent use of the few and simple means prescribed by the gospel, every thing will look fair and flourishing. But without serious personal devotion, ceremonies may be multiplied and offices instituted as numerous and unscriptural as those in the papacy, but all within will be barren as a desert, and fruitless as a withered branch. There will be a ponderous body with a gaudy appearance, but ICHABOD may be inscribed upon it, for the glory is departed.

J. J. L.

QUERIES.

1. How must we reconcile our Saviour's declaration, Luke, xiv. 26, with those passages which command us to honour our parents, love our enemies, &c.

2. What does the prophet mean? Isa. xxxii. 20, T. B. I. L.

3. How far is a rule for church government, that positively forbids a member marrying an unbeliever, authorized by the word of God, or conformable to the practice of the primitive christians? And, when such a rule is violated, is exclusion from the church justifiable? ENQUIRER.

4. What line of conduct ought a church to pursue with those members who habitually neglect the public worship of God and the ordinances of his house; but are not guilty of any gross acts of immorality? SINCERUS.

5. What are we to understand by salvation, Isa. xii. 3? And what is the import of that text? J. B.

6. What does the Psalmist mean by the "iniquity of my heels," Psal. xlix. 5? IGNOTUS.

7. In some of our Sabbath Schools, a certain custom prevails, which, to every thoughtful mind, that has the cause of Christ at heart, and the good of souls in view, appears to be unnecessary and unprofitable. In one school, at Christmas last, the children were feasted with plum cake; at a second, with cake and wine; at a third, with plum pudding and roast beef; and the cost of the above, was defrayed out of the funds of these schools. Would it not have been more congenial with the word of God, and the christian character, to have relieved some indigent school or church; or assisted the Itinerant fund, Baptist mission, &c rather than to have pampered the appetites of the young with unnecessary dainties? If some one of your able correspondents would please to insert in your useful miscellany, a few observations on this important subject, it would be highly interesting, beneficial, and instructing, to your numerous readers; and greatly oblige, yours, respectfully, J. B.

THE CRUELTY OF PAGANISM.

The following shocking accounts of religious murders, annually perpetrated, by the Dahomians, a pagan nation of Africa, are related on the authority of a medical gentleman who

resided on the spot, about 1804. As he was no missionary, nor connected with any professors, but attached to the army, his report will not be suspected of partiality. The horrid facts which he states, on his own knowledge, strongly corroborate the scripture truth, "that the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty."

"At a particular season of the year, generally in March or April, a grand annual festival is held, to which the governors of the towns, the captains of ships, and other strangers are invited. When, amidst the general enjoyment of festivity and mirth, deeds are done, from which the civilized mind recoils with horror, and which it cannot contemplate without feeling an ardent desire to see mankind raised from that state of savage ignorance and superstition which leads to acts so monstrous and unnatural."

"In order to *water with their blood*, the graves of the king's ancestors, and to supply them with servants of various descriptions in the other world, a number of human victims are yearly sacrificed in solemn form; and this festival is the period at which those shocking rites are publicly performed."

"Scaffolds are erected outside the palace wall, and a large space fenced in round them. On these the king; with the white strangers who think proper to attend, are seated, and the ministers of state are also present in the space beneath. Into this field of blood, the victims are brought in succession, with their arms pinioned; and a priest laying his hand on the devoted head, pronounces a few mystical words; when another man, standing behind with a large scymetar, severs the sufferer's head from his body, generally at a single blow. Each repetition of this act is proclaimed by loud shouts of applause from the surrounding multitude, who appear to be highly delighted with the power and magnificence of their sovereign. The victims are generally prisoners of war, reserved for this purpose; but should there be any lack of these, the number is made up from the most convenient of the monarch's own subjects. These scenes are likewise enlivened by a number of people engaged in savage dances around the scaffolds. Should the foot of one of these performers slip, it is considered as an ill omen; the unfortunate performer is taken out of the ring, and his head instantly struck off, whilst the dance continues without interruption, as if nothing unusual had occurred. The

number sacrificed on these occasions is variously stated; but a gentleman, who actually attended at three of these festivals, counted each time, not fewer than sixty-five."

"Their bodies are either thrown out into the fields, to be devoured by vultures and wild beasts, or hung up by the heels in a mutilated state, on the surrounding trees: a practice exceedingly offensive in so hot a climate. The heads are piled up in a heap, for the time; and afterwards disposed of in decorating the walls of the royal palaces, some of which are two miles in circumference, and often require a renewal and repair of these ornaments."

Adahoónza, one of their kings in 1785, after a successful attack upon Badagry, a neighbouring district, having a great number of victims to sacrifice, ordered their heads to be applied to this purpose. The person to whom the management of this business had been committed, having neglected to make a proper calculation of his materials, had proceeded too far with his work, when he found that there would not be a sufficient number of skulls to adorn the whole palace. He therefore requested permission to begin the work anew, that he might, by placing them farther apart, complete the design in a regular manner. But the king would by no means give his consent to this proposal: observing, "that he would soon find a sufficient number of Badagry heads to render the plan perfectly uniform;" and, learning that a hundred and twenty-seven were required to complete this extraordinary embellishment, he ordered that number of the captives to be brought forth, and slaughtered, in cold blood."

"Two Englishmen, who had frequent opportunities of visiting the bed-chamber of another petty sovereign, found the passage leading to it paved with human skulls. They were those of his more distinguished adversaries, captured at different times, and placed in that situation, "that he might nightly enjoy the savage gratification of trampling on the heads of his enemies." The top of the little wall which surrounded this detached apartment, was adorned likewise with their jaw bones."

The immolation of victims is not confined to this particular period; for, at any time, should it be necessary to send an account to his forefathers of any remarkable event, the king dispatches a courier to the shades; by delivering his message to whoever may happen to be near him; and then ordering his

head to be chopped off immediately; and it has not unfrequently happened, during the present reign, that, as something new has occurred to the king's mind, another messenger has instantly followed, on the same errand."

"It is considered an honour where his majesty personally condescends to become the executioner, in these cases; an office in which the present king prides himself in being very expert. The governor was present on one occasion, when a poor fellow, whose fear of death outweighing the sense of the honour conferred upon him, on being desired by the king to carry some message to his father, humbly declared, on his knees, that he was unacquainted with the way: on which the tyrant vociferated "I will shew you the way," and with one blow made his head fly many yards from his body, highly indignant at the least appearance of reluctance."

GOOD NEWS FROM A FAR COUNTRY.

Some years ago, a young man, who had been a member of one of the churches of the New Connection, was induced, from untoward circumstances, to enter into the army. His views on religious subjects suffered a lamentable declension, and he became a professed Socinian. But, being led in the course of service to the island of Ceylon in the East Indies, a gracious Providence interposed to recover him from error. From this island, he addressed several letters to his anxious mother, who has kindly permitted us to make the following extracts; which we trust will both gratify and instruct the readers of the G. B. R.

Colombo, 8th August, 1819.

"Only half of the regiment has reached this place yet; but when every thing is settled we hope to be comfortable, and not to be removed again for some years. The present season is the coolest part of the year: we have fine showers of rain occasionally, and the heat is not greater than that of the summer in England. All marches are performed in the night, or very early in the morning. All laborious work is performed by the natives, and Europeans are not allowed to expose themselves to the heat of the sun. We are all as well as we can reasonably expect to be, after such a great change of climate and mode of

living, and trust to the goodness and power of our Heavenly Father for protection and support in this, as in every other situation."

"The country is certainly very fine, and capable of producing almost every thing in abundance; but it is in a state of nature, wild and uncultivated. The wants of the natives are few and easily supplied, and they therefore possess no excitement to industry. All the cloathing they wear, is a piece of calico wrapped round the waist; and their food is almost all rice. If rice is scarce, they have an ample resource in the cocoa-nut, which supplies them with both meat and drink. We have seen no country yet that can be compared with England; and shall not cease to look forward with pleasure to the day, which shall return us to her shores; should God, in his mercy, see fit to grant us that favour."

"There are several English missionaries here; but I have not yet heard any account of the result of their exertions. That part of the island which I have seen, appears to be full of inhabitants: many of whom are nominally Roman catholics; but are doubtless as ignorant of the religion of Christ, as the thousands of their pagau neighbours who never heard his name. O may this thick darkness soon be chased away, and the sun of righteousness arise upon this land!"

"Colombo, 8th November, 1819.

"I have been here very little more than three months; yet events have taken place which, as they respect myself, at least are of infinite importance. Probably you do not know that, for several years, I have been a decided Socinian; that is, a disbeliever of the deity and atonement of Christ, and all the doctrines connected with these fundamentals of christianity. When I publicly avowed myself an unitarian or Socinian, I refrained from noticing the circumstance to you; fearing it might excite uneasiness in your mind on my account. And as I then thought that no opinions whatever, though they might retard, would prevent, the final happiness of any individual, I had no anxious wish to unsettle your mind, or to lead you to think as I did."

"Soon after my arrival here, I addressed a letter to one of the missionaries, freely stating my opinions, and requesting he would favour me with any books he might have, calculated to

assist me in my enquiries after religious truth. This led to an interview; in which I was greatly surprised to find him a Baptist, and I obtained from him some books on the Socinian question. I read a volume, containing a vast mass of scripture arguments against me, without feeling their force; but a view of the moral tendency of the two systems, written by the late Rev. Andrew Fuller, was the means, under the direction and influence of the divine Spirit, of bringing conviction to my mind. The force of his argument seemed to be irresistible; and was backed by my own experience. It appeared to me to be desirable that the orthodox system should be true, while I entertained no hope of finding it to be so. But, at length, the Holy Spirit was pleased, in mercy to my soul, so to take of the things of Christ and shew them to me, that they appeared reasonable and worthy of all acceptance. The gospel plan of salvation, through the righteous atoning sacrifice of the only begotten Son of God, which before was to me as foolishness, now beamed in all its lustre to my mind, as the power of God and the wisdom of God. I saw it was a means of justification suitable for God to adopt and for man to accept; a way of reconciliation, which secured the justice and vindicated the holiness of God; while it left room for the exercise of mercy; a way in which he could be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

"Colombo, 20th February, 1820.

"With respect to temporal mercies we have been highly favoured: hitherto we have all been preserved from any dangerous sickness. The children thrive very much; and, for myself, I have no hesitation in saying, that this climate is better adapted to my constitution and habits, than that of England. I have never yet found the heat oppressive in the shade: nor will it ever be so cold as to render sedentary employment uncomfortable, which was very often the case at home. I find that I can perform more business here than at home. I can remain at my desk a longer time with comfort to myself; and after a laborious day, can retire without having all my faculties benumbed. Now that we are getting accustomed to the country and the manner of living, we find ourselves very comfortable; we have good bread, beef, pork, fowls, fish, rice, and fruits of numerous kinds. The greatest deficiency is vegeta-

bles; which I hope in a great measure will be remedied in time. Potatoes and cabbage have not been found to succeed well yet; but peas, kidney beans, cucumbers, pumpkins, onions, raddishes, lettuce, and other vegetables common in the country, as yams, sweet potatoes, &c. are to be obtained. Rice however is the great substitute both for bread and roots; and I can eat it almost as heartily as a native. We live in an extraordinary pleasant situation. The pay-master has taken a house about a mile from the garrison or fort where the troops are principally stationed, and we occupy one end of it. It is quite a retired country residence, on the border of a lake, surrounded with fruit trees of various kinds, and spare ground; part of which has been already converted into a garden, which I intend to improve and extend. In fact I have never been fixed so agreeably since I became a soldier."

"On the score of religious privileges, I have also much to say. I enjoy every spiritual blessing which you have at home, the public means of grace, the ordinances of the christian church, fellowship with its visible members, the communion of saints, and an abundant supply of valuable religious books; together with the counsel, advice, assistance and prayers of a faithful minister and pastor. What more can I desire in any part of the world? These privileges, and the light of God's countenance, are sufficient any where. These make the dreary wilds of Iceland or Greenland to blossom as the rose, and the sandy deserts of Africa to flourish as the garden of Eden. What then must be these oriental isles, which nature alone has made a Paradise! Bless the Lord, O my soul."

THE MISSIONARY'S EXAMPLE.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

On my return from the last association, my thoughts were carried back to the platform, from which I had heard so many able speeches, in behalf of a foreign mission; and from thence I was transported in my meditations to the heathen lands. I fancied myself surrounded with pagan idolaters, and exposed to difficulties of which I had formed no previous conception. This led me to inquire, with earnest importunity, What shall I do?

I know indeed for what purpose I was sent here; but what course shall I pursue with the greatest probability of success? I felt anxious for the advice of experienced missionaries, and soon ran over the names of several who had been laborious and considerably successful. But alas! I could not obtain that detailed account of their proceedings which my circumstances rendered highly desirable. At length, I recollected, that I carried in my pocket a particular account of one of the first and most successful missionaries of Jesus Christ. I took out my New Testament; and after reading, in the Acts, the travels, perils, labours, &c. of the Apostle Paul, I turned to his celebrated Epistle to the Romans. An attentive perusal of this Epistle inspired me with fresh courage, as it appeared to be the very thing I wanted to direct me in all my proceedings. I determined to take it for my guide; and, keeping in view the difference of country and circumstances, endeavour in my missionary exertions to copy the spirit and conduct of that highly favoured servant of Christ. Will you permit me, Sir, to exemplify my meaning, by a brief survey of the character of the apostle of the gentiles, considered as a missionary?

A missionary should entertain exalted ideas of the dignity and importance of his office. This is necessary to enable him to support the contempts and scoffs which will probably assail him from all quarters. Now Paul expressly declares, in the beginning of his address, that he was "not ashamed of the gospel of Christ;" and the whole history of his life proves the truth of this assertion. He assigns a sufficient reason why he is not ashamed of the gospel, a reason not derived from education or prejudice, or the schools; but from his own happy experience. "It is," he says, "the power of God to salvation to every one that believeth." He had found it the power of God to the salvation of his own soul. Without this happy knowledge, founded on personal enjoyment, there is great danger, that a missionary, in the midst of the attacks to which he is exposed, will become ashamed of the gospel—ashamed to confess it—ashamed to preach it—ashamed and incapable of defending it against the cavils of its adversaries. But this primitive missionary was so fully convinced of the excellency of the truth which he taught, that, instead of being ashamed of the gospel, he *gloried* in being "the minister of Jesus Christ to the gentiles;" and cherished a sacred ambition to preach the

gospel where Christ had not been previously named, lest he should build on another man's foundation. And, unless a missionary entertains proper ideas of the importance of his message, and the honour of being the instrument of conveying it to the nations that sit in darkness, he is little prepared to undergo the fatigues and meet the dangers of his arduous employment.

This exalted view of his work will also excite a strong desire to be engaged in it. Paul was *ready* to preach the gospel in Rome also, he *strove*, used his best endeavours to obtain access, and preach in places where the gospel had not been heard. He was desirous of improving every opportunity to extend the kingdom of his Saviour over regions which heretofore had been the willing subjects of Satan. This view of his work also disposed him to adopt every lawful means of fixing the attention and conciliating the esteem of those whom he addressed. And that missionary will be most successful who most closely imitates him, and, as far as conscience permits, becomes all things to all men, that he may by any means save some.

A person who undertakes the arduous task of enlightening the heathen ought also to possess the necessary qualifications for his noble enterprize. Though the apostle does not indeed enumerate all the requisite qualifications, yet he informs us he did not run before he was sent. "He was a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, and separated to the gospel of God." Grace was given to him of God, "that he should be the minister of Jesus Christ among the gentiles." Nay, so convinced was he, that he was called to this work, that he tells the Corinthians, that a dispensation of the gospel was committed to him, and that, if he neglected to preach the gospel, he should subject himself to great danger. "A necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel." Now, though we ought not to expect to be called to missionary labours in the same extraordinary manner as the apostle was, yet, as our being furnished with the proper talents and with ability, disposition, and opportunity to use them, indicates a call to the work; so the want of these, is a strong evidence that we are not thus called. The qualifications for this great work are various and important; but a contemplation of the character of Paul, and his conduct on various occasions, will furnish the best exposition of them.

To his history and his writings, therefore, I apply myself, to ascertain whether I possess the endowments proper for a missionary.

Further. Supposing that I am in some measure properly called and gifted for the sacred work; yet, no sooner do I reach the place of my destination, than I cast my eyes around and see the whole land covered with briars and thorns, of vast extent and most baneful natures. These must be removed before the foundation can be laid, or the superstructure raised. Now my heart fails, and I exclaim, "Who am I, and what is my father's house?" "Who is sufficient for these things?" I feel the want of the advice of experience. I turn again to my example, and notice how he proceeded in preparing the Romans for the reception of the gospel. He was desirous of erecting the edifice in that part of the capital of the world, which was then enveloped in pagan darkness; and in order to clear the ground, he levels all his force against those errors, prejudices, and habits, which would oppose the cordial reception of the gospel. He demonstrates the impossibility of any man obtaining justification by his own works and obedience. He proves that all are under the law, and therefore exposed to punishment for the breach of it—that none can be justified by the works of the law, because none can fully observe it. Thus he shews the necessity of being justified by faith, freely by the grace of God, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Having taken away all their false foundations, the ground is prepared for laying the true one. Hence I learn, that my business, as a missionary, is to gain an acquaintance with the worship, the sacrifices, the hopes, and the fears of the heathens among whom I am placed; that I may be able to convince them that it is impossible for them to obtain the favour of God, and eternal happiness by these methods. That all their exertions, all their atonements, all their offerings, will not avert the anger of their offended Creator, and that it would be in vain were they to give the fruit of their bodies for the sin of their souls.

But were the message of the missionary to stop here, and only convince them of the fallacy of their present hopes, the poor heathens might justly hate him, and drive him from their shores, as one who wished to torment them before the time. But having thus removed the rubbish, he proceeds to lay the

true foundation: having convinced them of their danger, he publishes to them good news of full deliverance by Jesus Christ. He exhibits Christ as the only Saviour, the way, the truth, and the life; as wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. He gladly holds out rest to the heavy laden, directs them to look to the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world, assures them that "being justified by faith, they have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

On this foundation, the apostle raised a glorious superstructure, "a building of God," composed of "living stones." The churches which he planted among the heathens, consisted of such as were "born of the spirit"—"renewed in the spirit of their minds"—"made new creatures in Christ Jesus"—"justified through faith in the blood of Christ"—"sanctified through the spirit of Christ"—"had put on the Lord Jesus Christ"—"were baptized into his death and had risen to newness of life"—"had their fruit unto holiness and their end everlasting life."

Thus I have glanced at the views, disposition, and character of this "wise master builder"—his qualifications for the work and his call to it—the method he took to clear the ground for the spiritual building which he proposed to erect—the foundation which he laid—and the materials which he built upon that foundation. Surely, thought I, no missionary need be at a loss with such a guide; nor be discouraged with such an example of success in his hands.

J. H. G. B. M. F. S. P. N.

THE WORKS OF THE LATE MR. D. TAYLOR.

In compliance with the wish of his esteemed friend, Mr. Cameron, in page 67, of the last number, a wish which has been seconded by many others, the EDITOR of the *G. B. R.* takes the liberty of submitting a few hints, to the New Connection, respecting the works of its venerated founder and successful defender, the late Mr. *Dan Taylor*.

I. Most of his publications are, at present, out of print; and there is little probability of their being re-published in separate pamphlets. Some are already lost; or at least, all the endeavours of the writer to obtain them have been ineffectual: others are fast hastening into oblivion; and unless some method be adopted to prevent it, in a short period, none

of them will be found, except in the possession of a few scattered individuals.

2. Some of Mr. T.'s early productions, having been superseded by his later publications on the same subjects, might, therefore, be omitted in an Edition of his Works. But the greater part of his writings are employed in stating and defending those views of divine truth, which distinguish the New Connection from other denominations. From the increase of that Connection in numbers and respectability, it becomes highly desirable that its sentiments should be well understood, both by its own members, and their brethren of other persuasions. And should these works be suffered to fall into oblivion, there are no others to which either friends or enemies could be referred for a full account of our doctrines: nor is it probable, that any such are likely soon to appear.

3. Mr. T.'s works may be conveniently classed under three heads, *Practical*, *Controversial*, and *Miscellaneous*. Each of these would make a good sized octavo volume. The price would greatly depend on the number printed; and that must be regulated by the encouragement received. Allowing that a moderate edition could be disposed of, it appears, from a careful calculation, that *each of the volumes*, printed uniformly with the *Memoirs of the Author*, would contain about *five hundred pages*, and might be sold for *ten shillings*. This would amount to little more than the price at which they were rated by the Author, in separate pamphlets. And whoever is acquainted with the principles on which that good man sold his works, will not suspect that a uniform edition, on good paper, can be offered on lower terms.

4. It would however be highly imprudent for any one to undertake the publication on these terms, or indeed on any other, without a reasonable security, that he would receive sufficient encouragement to secure him from actual loss. This might perhaps be best obtained by previous subscription. The works might be delivered in *monthly* numbers, price *one shilling* each; and subscriptions might be received, either for single volumes or the whole set. The publication would thus be completed in two years and a half; in a manner easy to the purchaser, and, in a degree, safe to the publisher. In making these statements, the object of the Editor is to put the members of the Connection in possession of facts, on which to

form their own judgments respecting the propriety of making any attempt to effect a re-publication of these works. If it should meet the approbation and support of the churches, the object might easily be accomplished: and he would cheerfully undertake the superintendence and risk of a uniform edition. He leaves it to their serious consideration: and will be ready to receive any communications, on the subject, with which the friends of the General Baptist cause may favour him.

There are a few interesting unpublished Manuscripts of the same author, which ought to be preserved; and might be included in the proposed volumes.

A CASE OF CONSCIENCE ANSWERED:

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

In the last number of your miscellany, your correspondent, *Rebecca*, proposed a case of conscience of considerable importance to all who sincerely wish to improve the talent with which they are intrusted, in a manner the most acceptable to God and the most useful to man. If none of your able correspondents have furnished you with any thing more to the purpose, the following cursory remarks are at your service.

Before I proceed, however, it may perhaps be necessary to state, that I am a friend to missionary exertions; and should rejoice to see our churches earnestly and successfully engaged in their support. I have always, from the first formation of the G. B. Mission, contributed my mite to its funds, and should be sincerely happy, did my circumstances permit me to promote its interests more effectually. That man who can be indifferent in such a cause, betrays a lamentable apathy in his views of the value of immortal souls, and exhibits unhappy symptoms of a want of love to his fellow sinners, and of zeal for the glory of his Saviour.

But when I have heard ministers and other leading men, on public occasions, represent the mission of such transcendently superior importance, as to demand our first attention, in preference to the concerns of our own Connection, the cases of our churches, or the relief of their necessities: when I have been informed that some churches which have, year after year,

raised thirty, forty, or fifty pounds in support of the mission, could only be induced to contribute two, three, or four pounds, in aid of a sister church of acknowledged importance to the Connection, struggling under unavoidable and almost insupportable burthens: when I am told that some of these churches are in arrears to their own minister, and suffering their own financial concerns to sink into embarrassment;—when I hear it whispered, that sometimes individuals defer the discharging of just debts, because they have to pay such a sum to the missionary collector;—when these reports reach me, I am compelled to conclude that “these things ought not so to be;” and to exclaim, “Those ye ought to have done, and not to have left the other undone.”

I am persuaded that Rebecca, as long as her “predominant wish is to do right,” will not fall into these errors. There are two apostolic rules, which, if judiciously applied and faithfully obeyed, will prevent such disorderly conduct, and guide your perplexed correspondent into the path of duty. The rules to which I refer are “let every thing be done *in order* ;” and “render to all their dues.” These two precepts appear sufficient to direct us in our honest enquiries, on this subject. Permit me to attempt a brief explanation of my meaning.

In the various relations of society, whether civil or religious, there are some claims upon our attention more imperative than others. It would perhaps be desirable that I could support every laudable institution, and supply all the temporal and spiritual wants of my fellow creatures. This however is impossible; and, as I cannot attend to all, I must select such as have the greatest claim to my regard. Every christian’s first duty is, to provide for those of his own house. He that neglects to do this, according to the ability and opportunity with which providence favours him, denies the faith, and is worse than an infidel. Now that cause of Christ, that christian society, with which an individual stands personally connected, is his spiritual home. By becoming one of its members, he engages himself to support its interests, both by his exertions and his property, as far as his means extend. And it would be as reasonable for a person to expect to share the comforts and provisions of a family, who refused to contribute his proportion towards the expences of it, as for a member of a christian church to expect to enjoy the privileges and advan-

tages of fellowship, without bearing his proportion of the expences and labour of supporting religion in that place. The person who devotes his studies and his labours to the spiritual edification of a society, ought to be supported. Places of worship must be built and kept in repair. Many incidental charges will arise and must be defrayed. Now what can be more equitable than for those who receive the advantages to unite in bearing the burthen. This is obviously the dictate of reason; and it is no less the command of scripture. "The labourer is worthy of his reward." "The Lord hath ordained that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel." "Let him that is taught in the word, communicate to him that teacheth, in all good things." These and many other passages are full to the point; and make it the imperative duty of those, who are united in the privileges of a church, to unite in the support of it. Indeed, if, in order to assist general objects, I neglect to contribute my part towards the necessary expences of the interest to which I belong, I act as dishonestly and as unscripturally as a member of civil society would do, who starved his family and defrauded his creditors, to endow an hospital or relieve strangers.

When the just demands of her own church are satisfied, Rebecca will easily perceive that the object which claims her next attention, is the assistance of those churches which are of the same principles, and united in the same Connection. The union that subsists among them, as members of the same body, certainly gives them a right to her sympathy and assistance, in preference to others. All the arguments already adduced will apply in this case. The Connection is, in an extended though very proper sense, our own house. We partake in all the advantages derived from the union; and ought to be ready to take our share in any claims which may be made on the body, and willing to assist in bearing each others burthens. This will apply, not only to the assisting our sister churches in times of need; but also to the support of those institutions which are designed to promote the prosperity and increase of our Connection. If I neglect these for other objects, however valuable, I neglect to provide for my own house, and am chargeable with all the guilt of such neglect.

The support of our own church and of our own Connection are imperative duties that result from our solemn engagements with God and his people; and cannot be omitted or partially attended to without sin. In ascertaining what claims these have upon us, as individuals placed in certain circumstances, the greatest vigilance ought to be exercised, that nothing influence our determination but a single eye to act uprightly, as in the sight of a righteous God. Neither the applause nor the censure of our friends, neither a wish to be popular nor a fear of being singular, should induce us to act contrary to what conscience dictates as our duty. But when these duties are conscientiously performed, then the numerous institutions for promoting the temporal and spiritual good of our fellow creatures, which are the glory of our age and country, will certainly arrest the attention and obtain the support of every true christian, whom providence has blest with ability to assist them. Rebecca then will feel herself at liberty to indulge the generous impulses of her own breast and enroll herself among the "Female Friends of the Heathens." And as she believes the G. B. principles are "founded on the oracles of divine truth," she will naturally be most anxious to support a mission built on those principles.

"Let every thing be done in order;" and "render to all their dues."

Hoping these desultory observations may be useful, not only to Rebecca, but to many others in similar circumstances,

I remain, your's, in haste,

MONITOR.

REFLECTIONS

On attending the FUNERAL of the Rev. JOHN KINGSFORD, of Portsea. In a Letter to a Friend.

My dear Sir,

It has been my intention, from the evening I left home to attend the funeral of our dear friend at Portsea, to write you some particulars of my visit, and reflections on that afflictive and mournful occasion. Indeed it has given me real pain, that I should have so long delayed it. "Forgive me this wrong," and permit me, though late, to make my intended communications.

I left home on Wednesday evening, May the 10th, it having been arranged that the funeral should take place the following day. After I entered the coach, a variety of thoughts crowded upon the mind. I had left my home and my children, without a mother. A much valued friend was expected at my house, whose company would have given me real pleasure. The next day was the annual meeting of a society in London, which I had attended for many years; and at which I had often found a time of refreshment from the presence of the Lord. My mind had been much occupied with secular concerns during the day; and now I was on my way to condole with the disconsolate widow and fatherless children, and to attend the corpse of him with whom I had often held sweet communion. In such a situation, the mind would naturally be engaged with many conflicting and mournful reflections; and I hope they were not unattended with the lifting up of the soul to Him from whom all good proceeds, for the support and comfort of his holy Spirit, who is often pleased to convey light and joy to our minds in dark and sorrowful seasons.

After musing for some hours, I became heavy with sleep; and this sweet restorer of our exhausted strength and spirits closed my eyes, and induced for a short time a forgetfulness of sorrow and care.

When I came to Portsea, and particularly to the parts where I had often walked with my dear deceased friend, my mind was much affected, and much more so, when I arrived at the door of the house in which I had often received a hearty welcome by him, who heard not my step, nor welcomed me with his friendly countenance. I soon found, as the coffin was closed, I could see him no more, till I meet him in that house which is eternal in the heavens.

A more painful scene was now to take place, I had to meet the weeping widow and her afflicted sons. This I was enabled to do with as much composure as I could expect; but it was indeed a sorrowful meeting. Ah! what a change death makes; and especially when he takes away the head of a family and a shepherd in the church of Christ. After some time, I sat down to breakfast: the house, the room, the table were the same; but, alas! the master was not. Breakfast being ended and the devotional duties of the morning concluded, I requested permission to retire: and withdrew into the room in which the

remains of my late much beloved friend lay. I shut the door against all but myself and the dead; and it seemed as though I had come to the verge of mortality, and stood between the dead and the living. It was indeed a solemn place and a solemn hour. I was not permitted to see the corpse, but the coffin, at the foot of which I took my stand, preached me a most solemn sermon, and knocked aloud at my too-forgotten, yet now thoughtful, heart. In addition to the many impressive things which it seemed to speak to my soul, it shewed my own name engraved on the plate of the coffin, and thus made me, at the same time, the spectator and the object of mortality. Oh! that I may often look back at the thoughts, desires, and resolutions, which passed through my mind in this chamber of death; and may the friend, who shall come into the room where I may thus sleep, have the same cause to mingle joy with the tear of sympathy as I had, while gazing on the coffin which inclosed the mortal remains of him, whose glorified spirit is now among the saints in light.

When the hour drew nigh, to convey the remains of the master, husband, and father, from the house in which he had lived more than thirty-three years, it was a trying scene indeed. The widow, the sons, the relations, the members of the church, the physicians, who had in vain used so much skill and labour to keep him from the grave, the crowded streets, the seventy or eighty couple from his congregation, which formed themselves in order to follow the regular mourners, made an impression upon the beholder, which cannot be so well described as conceived. When we arrived at the chapel, the spectators and mourners were very numerous and deeply affected. The corpse was placed on the table, from which the hands of the deceased had so often distributed the emblems of the body and blood of his suffering Lord. The service was begun by singing a solemn and impressive hymn, composed by one of his sons. The scriptures were read and the general prayer offered, by the Rev. Mr. Miall, the venerable and respectable pastor of the particular Baptist church at Portsea. The text chosen to improve the solemn event was Phil. i. 21. At the close of the sermon, the body was committed to the earth, in the old baptistery: and at that moment, the scene was distressing indeed. In addition to the general feeling of sorrow, I believe three, if not four, persons were in

strong convulsions; which occasioned great confusion, and lessened that silent solemnity, which no doubt would have otherwise attended this part of the mournful service. When the solemn ceremony concluded, I advanced to the tomb, to take my last farewell of the mortal remains of him who in life I so much esteemed and loved. May nothing interrupt his peaceful dust. Over it the feet of the humble worshipper will often walk, but it will not disturb the sleeping inhabitant below. In safety rest, till that great morn, when thou shalt

“Burst the tomb in sweet surprize,
And in thy Saviour’s image rise!”

With many tears we returned to the house of mourning; and a mournful evening indeed we passed, till the hour came to retire to rest. And as I reflected, when alone, with affectionate sympathy, on the desolate condition of her who had thus lost her beloved companion and long-honoured husband, and of the children deprived of the counsels and countenance of a highly respected parent, I felt great relief in being able to commit them, in earnest prayer, to the protection of him who is “a Father of the fatherless, and a Judge of the widow.”

The following sabbath, which, at the request of the family and friends, I spent with them, was assuredly a day of great melting of heart, and of solemn and holy joy.

The preacher, who addressed the congregation on the evening of the funeral, having been requested to preach on the Lord’s Day, appeared to have arranged his discourses so as to embrace three objects. 1. The triumphant declaration of the deceased pastor to his people. “For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” Phil. i. 21. 2. The spirit and disposition which the family and the people should manifest of pious resignation. “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.” Job. i. 21. 3. The great encouragement for the family and the church to commit their cause to God, with full assurance of his tender care over them. “As one whom his mother comforteth in Jerusalem.” Isa. lxxvi. 13.

At the close of the public service, in the afternoon, the people, now left as sheep without an earthly shepherd, surrounded the table of the Lord, to commemorate his matchless love, in dying to redeem a guilty world. The Lord’s supper

is always a solemn and affecting season, when it is truly received; but the circumstances on this occasion made it particularly so. On the last ordinance day, only five weeks previous, their pastor was with them; but now they saw a stranger in his place. Their father in the gospel had changed his seat at the table for the dark vault beneath. The hands which had, so lately, broken and distributed the bread, had now forgot their cunning. Those eyes which, but a short time since, wept with tenderness and love, were now closed, to open no more till the morning of the resurrection. The tongue, which five weeks before, giving utterance to the feelings of a heart unusually impressed, had said, "this may be the last time we shall all meet at the table of the Lord: some of us probably, before another ordinance day, may be taken away, and perhaps it may be me." that tongue was now stiff in death and silent in the grave. Such an event could not fail to produce strong impressions on the pious and tender mind. Indeed the tears, the looks, the sighs, bespoke the heart melted and humbled before the Lord. But the sorrow was far from being without a mixture of holy joy. It appeared that He, who had opened all the tender springs of the soul, from whence sorrow so largely flowed, poured into it such a sense of his presence and love, that the sorrow of earth and the joy of heaven mingled together in the hearts of these followers of the lamb, though bereaved of their pastor and friend. O! may they always be under the care of the chief shepherd, and in due time be favoured with a pastor who shall feed them with knowledge and spiritual understanding.

As I was obliged to leave Portsea the same evening, the hour after the service was spent with the weeping widow and her family, in company with several friends. This, like all our hours, passed fast away. A little part remained which we spent at the divine footstool, in committing ourselves, and particularly the bereaved family and church, into the hands of Him who has so graciously promised "to guide us by his counsel, and afterwards receive us to his glory." There may we have the happiness to meet our mutual friend, and spend with him and all the redeemed a long eternity,

"In wonder, love, and praise!"

I am, my dear SIR, your's affectionately,

K.

QUERIES ANSWERED.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

As I suppose, that the greatest part of the queries inserted in your Miscellany, are proposed by persons really desirous of information, I have often been grieved to see many questions remain unanswered. It must be a painful disappointment to the proposers. To prevent this, in some measure, I beg leave to offer a few remarks on the queries in your last number, pages 64 and 65.

The three first questions are signed a *G. B. Minister*. He first inquires. "Suppose a sum of money be left for the support of the minister, is it right to appropriate such money towards liquidating a debt on the meeting-house?" To this I feel no hesitation in answering in the negative. Every person has a right to dispose of his own property, for what purposes he pleases; none can justly divert that property to a different object, unless circumstances render it impossible to apply it to the purposes of the donor. If, therefore, a sum of money, or any other property, be left to a church, expressly for the support of the minister, when that church has a minister who is regularly called on to serve it, he is entitled to the benefit of the property, and any attempt to deprive him of it, either for paying debts or any other object, would be defrauding him of his due. How far a minister may see fit, in particular cases, voluntarily to waive his right, and leave such property to the disposal of the church, is another question. But, even in that case, the minister can only resign it during the period of his own services. His successor would be intitled to it, on his settling with the people: as the acts of his predecessor could not affect his just claims.

When a church has no settled minister, but the services are performed by occasional supplies, it does not follow that these supplies can make any demand on such an endowment. The people may then devote what part they please to these visitors, and apply the remainder to any purpose connected with the cause of Christ to which the property was given. But the whole ought always to revert to the minister whenever one settles with them.

2. To the minister's second query: "Suppose a person withdraw from a church without assigning any formal reasons for his conduct, ought a vote of exclusion to be passed upon him?" I should also say, No; provided that there is no other charge against him. Church fellowship is a voluntary act, and every one has an undoubted right to enter into it, and to withdraw from it whenever he thinks proper. No true christian, who is duly instructed, would dare to trifle in so important a matter: but he is responsible alone to God and his own conscience for his conduct. Exclusion is the highest punishment to which a church can resort; and to inflict it on an occasion when a man is only exercising his undisputed privilege is arbitrary and unjust. Many cases may occur in which it may be a great advantage to the church from which a person withdraws, for him not to state the reasons for his conduct; and it might greatly injure the cause, were he compelled to do it.

But when a member of the church is accused of improper conduct; and wishes to withdraw during the investigation of the charges, the church ought to proceed with the examination; and, if sufficient cause should appear, even to exclusion. This appears necessary, or a church would be deprived of the power of expressing its disapprobation of the most scandalous crimes. Unless this was done, the society might be exposed to the greatest reproach; and its discipline rendered nugatory.

3. Your correspondent's suggestion, in his third query, respecting the General Baptists in America, is important, and deserves attention. I hope he will bring it to the next association, as a case from his church or conference; and that some proper person will be appointed to open a correspondence with our transatlantic brethren. The advantages of such a measure are many and important; but they are too obvious to need enumeration.

4. On the same page, another querist wishes to be informed, "In what manner the wicked are to be a ransom for the righteous, and the transgressor for the upright," as stated, Prov. xxi. 18. Perhaps the intention of the wise man, in this obscure text, is to assert, that sometimes, in the dispensations of divine Providence, the righteous are delivered from distress or danger by the wicked being involved in afflictions similar to those which threatened the righteous: or, as he

expresses it, Prov. xi. 8. the righteous are delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead." Many instances of this nature are recorded, both in sacred and profane history; but your limits will only permit us to glance at two. When Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, invaded Judea, with an overwhelming force, uttering the most fearful threatenings against the pious Hezekiah and his trembling subjects, and no human probability of effectually opposing him appeared, the attention of the invader was called to the Egyptians and Ethiopians, who had marched to attack him. He turned his fury against these enemies, and they became the victims of his power, while the Jews were left, for a time, in peace. It was probably to this circumstance that the prophet Isaiah, who was a witness of the transactions, alludes, nearly in the words of Solomon, when he says, in the name of the Lord, "I am the Lord thy God, the holy one of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom; Ethiopia and Seba for thee." Isa. xxxvii. 8. 9.—xliv. 3. Thus also; when the ship, in which Jonah was wickedly fleeing from the presence of the Lord, was tossed by a tempest, and the innocent mariners were in danger of perishing, that disobedient prophet was no sooner thrown overboard, than the sea ceased from raging, Jonah i. The wicked in this case, became the ransom, or the price of deliverance for the righteous. See also the case of Achan: Josh. vii. and of the sons of Saul; 2 Sam. xxi.

RESPONSOR.

GENERAL BAPTIST OCCURRENCES.

OBITUARY.

February 29th, 1820, died, in the seventy-seventh year of her age, Mrs. MARY BARTOL, the widow of Mr. John Bartol, formerly Pastor of the G. B. church at Spalding. She was the second daughter of the venerable Mr. Gilbert Boyce, of Coningsby, whose praise is still in many of the churches. Through his instrumentality, she was taught to fear the Lord in her youth. It is not certain, at what precise age she was awakened to a serious concern, for the salvation of her soul; but it was at an early period. Her surviving sisters believe that she was baptized by her father, and became a member of the G. B. church at Coningsby, before she attained her twentieth year.

If so, she had a place in the house of God for nearly sixty years.

Mrs. B. was distinguished for stability of character. Though she wished grace and peace to all who loved the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, yet she was firmly attached to the doctrines and discipline of the General Baptists. She loved the habitation of God's house: perhaps few have exceeded her in a regular conscientious attendance on the means of grace, both on Lord's days and week days. She walked in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless.

Her last illness continued twenty weeks, and was very severe. During the whole of this trying season, as well as in her preceding years, she found the doctrines of the divinity and atonement of Christ of the first importance to her mind; Jesus was the foundation of her hope, the source of all her delights, and her All in all. She frequently expressed the most unlimited confidence in "God her Saviour," for pardon and eternal life. In the midst of her sufferings, she was resigned to the will of God, and patiently waited till her change came. She saw, as she expressed it, that "the Lord was gently taking down her frail tabernacle," but she reposed her mind on the merits of a Saviour's blood, and tranquilly marked the successive decays of nature: having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. She frequently looked back, with holy gratitude, on the way by which God had brought her through the wilderness; and exclaimed "What shall I render to the Lord for all his mercies to me? My father's God has been my God; has supported me under the greatest trials and most painful bereavements; and has proved himself a father to my fatherless children, and a husband to their widowed mother."

In her last illness, she experienced the presence of the Lord, in a peculiar degree. One morning she said to her friends, "The Lord has manifested his loving kindness to me, during the night, in such a degree, that I could not tell whether I was in the body or out of the body. I have had a sweet foretaste of that future bliss, which God has prepared for all that love Him." From that time, her confidence increased. She was peaceful and serene till she sweetly slept in Jesus.

Mr. H. Everard preached her funeral sermon, on the day of her interment, March 5, to a very crowded and affected audito-

ry, from Rev. xiv. 13. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

Mrs. NASH departed this life, July 11, 1820, in the sixty eighth year of her age. She was baptized, in 1792, and became a member of the G. B. Church, then under the pastoral care of the late Mr. D. Taylor. She continued an active, honourable member of this church till 1811, when she accompanied the seceders from that communion, and ultimately united with the society in Great Suffolk-street; in the fellowship of which she continued till her decease. The distance of her abode, and her advancing years and increasing infirmities, prevented her from attending in her place, as regularly as she wished; but when she could not worship with her own friends, she went, with her family, to the Methodists. For, though steady in her own views of divine truth, she was no bigot. She was exemplary for many christian virtues; and always took more pleasure in speaking of the excellencies than of the faults of her acquaintance.

Her health had previously declined, and this induced her husband to remove into an airy situation. But her mind was chiefly employed on the concerns of the soul; and she paid little attention to external accommodations. About two months before her death, while visiting a friend's family, she observed, that this might probably be the last time that they should see each other in the flesh, as she was sensible of her increasing weakness. She talked with great composure of her approaching dissolution, and though she acknowledged herself unworthy of every blessing, both temporal and spiritual, yet she possessed a settled confidence of her interest in the love of Jesus: for she knew that he died for sinners, and therefore for her. Early in the morning on which she died, she expressed a strong desire to see her children, to give them her last blessing. They were sent for; but, before they arrived, she expired. Death however did not find her unprepared. The final struggle was short. In the midst of it, she said, "Come, Lord Jesus." And, as if anxious to be released, she repeated, with considerable emphasis, "Lord Jesus, come *quickly*." Then, without uttering another word, she resigned her happy spirit into his blessed hands.

Her funeral sermon was preached, July 23, by Mr. Farrent,

her pastor, to a numerous, attentive and affected congregation from Prov. xiv. 32. "The righteous hath hope in his death."

CONFERENCES:

The MIDLAND CONFERENCE was held at *Belper*, Derbyshire, Sept. 19, 1820. Mr. W. Pickering preached, in the morning; and Mr. Orton, in the evening. At this meeting, the case of *Belper* was recommended to the churches. It was also requested by this conference, that the churches connected with it should pay an early attention to the recommendation of the last association, respecting the case of *Church Lane*, London: and Mr. Pickering was desired to correspond with Mr. Wallis on the subject of collecting for it; and to suggest that the most effective plan would be, for Mr. Wallis himself to visit the district*. *Lineholm* case was referred to the Easter Conference. Mr. Pike having resigned the office of secretary to this meeting, Mr. Hoe was appointed to succeed him. It was agreed that the autumnal meeting of this Conference should, in future, be held on the last Tuesday but one in September. The interest of this meeting was considerably increased by some observations made in answer to the question "What more can be done to promote the cause of religion?" Mr. Smith urged the importance of bringing forwards young men, gifted with ministerial talents, to enjoy the advantages of the academy; and Messrs. Pike, Stevenson and Pickering recommended zeal in missionary exertions. The next Conference

* In connection with the case, so kindly noticed by the *Midland Conference*, we are requested to state, that the friends in *Church Lane* have commenced the building of their new meeting-house, which will probably be covered in before this number reaches the hands of the readers of the G. B. R. Not being able, at present, to obtain the loan of a sufficient sum, they have only contracted for the carcass and the timbers of the floor and galleries. These will cost upwards of £1100, which must be paid in a few months. They are straining every nerve to help themselves; and hope the Connection will not suffer them to stop in an undertaking of acknowledged importance to the whole body.

to be at Loughborough, on the last Tuesday in December. Preachers, Messrs. Pickering and Goadby. Inn, the Black Horse, High Street.

At this Conference, it was agreed the next Annual Association should be at *Loughborough*, at the time mentioned in the last Minutes. We hope our friends at Loughborough will favour us with the names of the preachers and of the inn, for the next number of the G. B. R.

The LINCOLNSHIRE CONFERENCE was held at *Chatteris*, Oct. 19, 1820, when Mr. Ewen was chosen chairman. An hour was spent in prayer; in which Messrs. Rogers, Peggs and Jarrom engaged. Cases requesting relief in defraying debts on meeting houses, were read from Belper and Stayley Bridge; and it was recommended to the churches in this district, to collect for Belper as soon as possible, and to correspond with Mr. Ingham on the subject. Stayley Bridge was deferred for the present. Supplies were arranged for Chatteris. On the preceding evening Mr. Lilley opened the public worship, and Mr. Rogers, preached from 2 Tim. i. 10. On the following evening, Mr. Ewen opened the meeting, and Mr. Lilley preached, from 2 Cor. vi. 1. The next Conference to be at Sutterton, on the Thursday before Christmas day.

The LONDON CONFERENCE assembled at *Tring*, Herts, Oct. 4, 1820. Mr. Sexton opened the meeting, and was chosen chairman. Messrs. Hobbs, Farrent and Sexton gave some interesting information respecting the state of religion in their respective neighbourhoods. Mr. A. Taylor not having sent the Essay which he was appointed to write for this Conference, is requested to prepare it for the next. The state of the churches, as reported at this meeting, was upon the whole encouraging, and religion appears to be on the advance. Advice was given respecting the supply of Tring, after Mr. Ewen's removal. Mr. Sexton was requested to visit Chatham, and to co-operate with the committee for affording them further ministerial supply. The earliest possible assistance was again promised to the Church-Lane friends in the erection of their new meeting-house. Mr. Sexton reported that he had visited Portsea, in conformity with the request of the Association, spent two Lord's days with the church in that place, baptized six candidates, and administered the Lord's supper:—that they are in a grieving state, on account of the loss of their late

highly esteemed pastor;—that there are some dissentions among them, but a most encouraging prospect of good being done if a suitable minister could be obtained to settle with them. It would be well, if efforts were made to find and recommend an experienced, lively minister to them. A case from Suffolk-street was referred to the next Conference. Mr. Farrent preached, in the afternoon, from 1 Tim. i. 15; and Mr. J. Mann, in the evening, from Psa. i. 1. The next conference to be at Great Suffolk-street, on Wednesday in Easter week, 1821. Messrs. Hobbs and Rose to preach; or, in case of failure, Messrs. Sexton and Henham.

The YORKSHIRE CONFERENCE assembled at *Linholm*, May 22, 1820. In the forenoon, Mr. Dean was ordained over the newly-formed church in that place; of which solemnity we hope to have an account in time for the next number. A supply was arranged for Staley-bridge; Mr. Hoe was admitted to collect for Hose in the beginning of June; and the Manchester case was referred to the Association.

Aug. 21, 1820, this Conference met again, at *Staley-bridge* when Mr. Abbot preached from 1 Cor. ix. 16. Mr. Hodgson was requested to visit Nantwich. A case from Ashford was referred to Mr. Pickering. The friends at Manchester, desiring to be formed into a distinct church, were advised to consult the brethren at Staley-bridge, and the next Conference was appointed to be at Manchester, Nov. 7: that, if the measure be agreeable to all parties, it may be carried into effect.

ORDINATIONS.

On Lord's-day, June 11, 1820, Mr. J. HENHAM was ordained to the pastoral office, and Mr. J. Thorpe to the office of deacon, in the General Baptist church, *Seven Oaks, Kent*. Mr. Sexton, of Chesham, opened the morning service by prayer. Mr. J. Kingsford, of Battersea-fields, delivered an interesting discourse, on the nature of a gospel church. Mr. Garrett, of Chatham, concluded the service by prayer. Mr. Farrent, of Great Suffolk-street, opened the service in the afternoon. Mr. Sexton put the usual questions to the minister, the deacon and the church; offered up a comprehensive ordination prayer, and delivered a solemn charge, founded on 1 Tim. iv. 16. Mr. J. Kingsford introduced the evening service by prayer; Mr.

Farrent preached a very useful sermon; and Mr. Heigham, of Seven Oaks, concluded with prayer. The services were all well attended, and the presence of the Lord was enjoyed by many.

On Tuesday, June 20, 1820, Mr. J. AUSTIN was ordained to the pastoral office over the G. B. Church at *Rothley*, Leicestershire. Mr. Orton, of Hugglescote, opened the morning service, with a short prayer; and, after singing a hymn, Mr. Ingham, of Duffield, read suitable portions of scripture, and offered the general prayer. Mr. Orton delivered an interesting discourse; and Mr. Deacon, of Leicester, asked the questions both of the church and of the minister, and received their answers, with the minister's confession of faith. Mr. Orton offered the ordination prayer, and joined with several others in imposition of hands. After which, Mr. T. Stevenson, of Loughborough, delivered a very affectionate charge to the minister, from 1 Tim. iv. 10; which, with singing and prayer, concluded the morning service. In the afternoon, Mr. Deacon opened the meeting with prayer, and delivered a discourse to the church from 1 Thess. v. 12, 13. In the evening, Mr. T. Wesley, of Newtown, prayed; and Mr. Orton preached, from Phil. i. 27, last clause. Though the weather was unfavourable, the meeting-house was crowded to excess. The services were solemn and interesting; and we trust impressions were made on the minds of many that will not soon be forgotten. May the blessing of the great Head of the church rest upon both the minister and the people, that they may grow in piety, and increase in usefulness.

Aug. 2, 1820, Mr. JOHN BIRCH was set apart to the pastoral office over the newly-formed G. B. church at *Gedney-Hill* late a branch of Fleet church. Mr. Jarvis commenced the service by reading the scriptures. Mr. W. Bampton engaged in the general prayer. Mr. Jarrom delivered the introductory discourse, and asked the usual questions. Mr. Ewen offered the ordination prayer. Mr. Rogers gave the charge to the minister, from 1 Pet. v. 3, 4. In the evening, Messrs. Scales and Flint were set apart to the office of deacons; when Mr. Everard addressed them and the church, from Eph. iv. 3; and Mr. Lilley, of Tydd St. Giles, engaged in prayer. Mr. Peggs read out the hymns at all the services. The whole was peculiarly gratifying to a people who had been so long as sheep without a shepherd.

It is with pleasure we have to notice the recent revival of religion in the ancient church of St. James', *Norwich*; founded by the venerable Thomas Grantham. About three years since, a new meeting-house was erected, upon the scite of their old one, capable of holding five or six hundred people, which was opened, June 18, 1817. On this occasion, Mr. Jarram, of Wisbeach, preached, in the morning, from Acts xiv. 7. Mr. Rogers, of Fleët, in the afternoon, from Phil. iii. 8. Mr. Peggs, then a student at Wisbeach, from Isa. xii. Mr. Hall, of Forncett, engaged in the devotional exercises. In the beginning of 1818, Mr. Peggs was invited as a supply, and was useful to them in the revival of religion in the church. He continued with them till the commencement of the present year, and was succeeded by Mr. William Thompson, who had recently removed from London to Norwich; and who, while a local preacher among the Methodists, had been baptized, about ten years ago, by the late Mr. Dan Taylor. The congregation increasing under his ministry, considerable additions being made by baptism to the church, he was invited to become their pastor, and accepted the invitation.

Mr. THOMPSON was ordained, Oct. 11, 1820. Mr. Kinghorn, the particular baptist minister, introduced the service by reading and prayer. Mr. Rogers delivered the introductory discourse, asked the questions, and received the minister's confession of faith. Mr. Jarrom offered the ordination prayer with imposition of hands, and addressed the charge to the pastor, from 1 Tim. iv. 16. Mr. Alexander, the independent minister, concluded the service. In the evening, Mr. Beaumont, an independent Methodist, read and prayed. Mr. Rogers then set apart two deacons, by prayer and imposition of hands. Mr. Stevenson, of Loughborough, addressed the church, from 1 Thess. v. 12, 13, and Mr. Waller, of Yarmouth, concluded with prayer.

OPENING OF A NEW MEETING-HOUSE.

October 12, 1820, a new meeting-house, that will seat from two to three hundred people, called Prospect Chapel, near King-street gate, *Norwich*, situated in a part of the city where there is no other dissenting chapel, was opened for public worship. In the morning, Mr. Hall, of Forncett, began with reading and

prayer; and Mr. Rogers preached, from Micah iv. 1, 2. In the afternoon, Mr. Jarrom read and prayed; and Mr. Stevenson delivered a discourse, from John xx. 17. In the evening, Mr. Stevenson read and prayed, and Mr. Wigg, who is intended to be minister of the place, and was recently baptized by Mr. Thompson, preached, from Luke xxiv. 46. Mr. Hall gave out suitable hymns at all these interesting occasions.

Prospect Chapel is private property, belonging to Mr. Davy, of Norwich, who has given the use of it, for two years, without interest, in the prospect of a second church being raised in that city; to which, if, through the blessing of heaven, the labours of Mr. Wigg should be successful in accomplishing, he will dispose of it, upon trust, on moderate terms.

INTRODUCTION of PREACHING into APPLEBY.

Some years ago, a person of the name of William Hear, a native of Appleby, a large and respectable village in the county of Leicester, removed to Birmingham, where he resided several years. He became a particular baptist, and still continues of the same profession. Being advanced in life, and his health much impaired, he resolved to return to Appleby, with a view there to end his days. Soon after his arrival, he invited Mr. Barnes, of Austrey, which is about two miles distant, to preach in his house; for which he obtained a certificate of its registration. As Mr. Hear well knew the leading views of the general baptists, and Mr. Barnes knew the sentiments of Mr. Hear, they mutually agreed to abstain from controversy; being well united in the essential doctrines of the gospel. The commencement of preaching in Appleby, by dissenters, soon roused the resentment of the high churchmen; who were possessed of wealth and great influence, and felt as much alarmed as if the village had been infected with the plague. Mr. Hear, being a tenant under the principal gentleman, was informed that he must either desist having preaching in his house, or quit it. Not being able soon to provide another situation, the preaching in his house was discontinued, but was then begun in the street. This was worse still; for now the plague was not shut up in a dwelling, but let loose to infect the whole atmosphere.

But preaching in the open street is not always comfortable, or convenient. It was not long before another house was

offered, and after that another, which was accepted, and is still occupied.

In the summer of 1819, some premises were offered on sale, and Mr. Hear purchased them, with the express design of appropriating them to the cause of Christ, providing the friends at Austrey were willing to re-purchase them, and to build a meeting-house on the ground. If they refused the offer, his design was, to endeavour to introduce the particular baptist cause, by offering the purchase to that body. But the friends at Austrey gladly accepted the proposal, and have purchased the premises, and vested them in the hands of trustees, for the use of the G. baptists for ever. The erection of a small meeting-house is commenced, under the direction of Mr. Hear, who, perhaps, is better qualified to manage such a concern, than most men of his profession.* It is hoped that it may be opened in October.

The friends, at Austrey and Appleby, intend to defray the expence of the erection of the chapel at Appleby themselves, hoping that their liberality, in this case, may excite a more speedy and effectual exertion of the churches in the connection, in behalf of the case of Austrey, which remains, at present, a burthen on a few individuals, or perhaps a single individual, which ought not to be so borne.

REVIEW of NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE RICHES OF DIVINE GRACE, as displayed in the interesting Experience and happy Death of MARY WHITAKER, late of Swineshead, near Boston, Lincolnshire. A SERMON, preached at Swineshead Church, Feb. 20, 1820, by the Rev. WM. BOLLAND, M. A. Third Edition. pp. 36. Price, in stiff covers, 6d. Noble, Boston.

The young woman, whose experience is recorded in this discourse, occupied the situation of a servant. She had been seriously inclined for some time, and attended the means of grace; but had not been made a partaker of the saving power of divine grace, till her last illness, which attacked her in the midst of health, and carried her to the grave in less than a

* Mr. Hear is a builder and joiner; and was engaged in the creation of the chapel at Austrey, which is remarkable for its neatness and cheapness.

fortnight. The worthy clergyman, who has paid this tribute of respect to her memory, appears to have attended her during this short interval, with commendable assiduity. By the operation of the Holy Spirit, his instructions were crowned with a happy success; and she died rejoicing in her Saviour, and exhorting all who visited her to "seek Jesus." These words the preacher has adopted as a text; and has interwoven many highly useful and judicious admonitions, with an interesting account of the deceased. This Sermon has already run through two editions; and is now published, in a neat portable form, embellished with a view of Swineshead church, and the funeral procession. It forms a very proper book to present to young female servants, and to girls leaving sunday or charity schools, and going out into the world. The language is simple, and the sentiments scriptural. We have no hesitation in recommending it to our readers.

On one occasion, this dying young woman said to her minister—"The Bible is true, it tells no lies—preach from it, preach from it,—it is all true!" On this incident, the author makes some sensible remarks on the folly of rejecting the only book that can support the mind both in life and death: and introduces the following anecdote, "which had lately come to his knowledge, and which particularly tends to shew, by way of awful contrast with the happy and glorious death, above recorded, the dreadful and horrible effects of those infidel and deistical opinions which have lately so much prevailed."

"A minister of the gospel, living at Manchester, was met in the street by a stranger, who asked him if he was a minister, and requested him to go directly to see a poor dying man, who was in a most deplorable state of mind. On reaching the house of the dying man, he found him in a most pitiable condition. The man was aware he was about to enter into eternity, and was utterly without hope. He told the minister, that he had joined himself with a set of men who had ruined him for ever. He said that, on a certain evening, he had assembled with a large party of them, for the express purpose of burning their Bibles; which purpose they had effected with every mark of contempt which they could possibly heap on this blessed book. The poor man further said, that he had never had one moment's peace since; and that this dreadful act laid on his conscience like a dead weight. The minister endeavoured to

point him to the 'Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world,' and spoke to him of the love of Him, who commissioned the apostles to preach, in His name, repentance, and remission of sins, beginning at Jerusalem; and the poor man appeared to be more tranquil, and to listen with some composure to what was said. At this time, some of his companions in sin came into the room. At the sight of them, he shuddered and shouted aloud, and then fell to cursing them bitterly; told them all they had ruined his soul, and again cursed them all to hell flames; till his body being worn out with the violence of his exertions, he sunk down and—*expired*.

SWEDENBORGIANISM depicted in its true Colours: or a Contrast between the Holy Scriptures and the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, on a Variety of important Subjects. By J. G. PIKE. 8vo. pp. 48. Wilkins, Derby.

This pamphlet is designed to expose the errors of the Swedenborgians, which, we understand, have gained some proselytes in the neighbourhood of the author. To those who are in danger of being misled by the reveries of the baron, it supplies a powerful, and we should hope, an effectual antidote. It details many strange and revolting particulars from the writings of that visionary, and ably contrasts them with the scripture doctrines on the same topics. If this tract really "depicts Swedenborgianism in its true colours;" and the statements are authenticated by references to the avowed works of the founder and his friends, one would be tempted to conclude, that its folly and absurdity would prevent any person of common understanding from embracing it. But we think that those who are not in danger of the infection, may very prudently spare themselves the task of perusing the disgusting details which occupy these pages.

BRITISH and FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

The number of Bibles issued by this grand Institution during the year ending March 31, 1820, is 115,775 and of Testaments 141,108, making a total of 256,883, copies. These added to what has formerly been distributed, raise the amount to upwards of *two millions five hundred and fifty thousand* copies of the holy scripture.

THE
GENERAL BAPTIST REPOSITORY.

No. LVIII.—Vol. X. Feb. 1st, 1821.

*A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH of ROGER WILLIAMS, the
FOUNDER of the State of RHODE ISLAND, NORTH AMERICA.*

THE formation of the first Baptist church in America, is connected with many interesting circumstances, which well deserve to be more generally known. The founder of it was a man who did honour to human nature; and whatever were his own doctrinal sentiments, which is a point not easily to be decided at this distance of time, the church which he was the instrument of establishing professed, long before his death, General Baptist principles, and continued to maintain them for more than a century. The historian of the American Baptists, himself a Particular Baptist, informs us that, "This church has experienced some changes as to its doctrinal sentiments. It was first founded on the Particular or Calvinistic plan: in process of time they became what our English brethren would call General Baptists, and so continued, for the most part, for more than one hundred years. Since 1770, they have been verging back to their first principles; and now very little of the Arminian leaven is found among them. From first to last, the Bible without comment has been their Confession of Faith." *Benedict's History*, pp. 486, 487. A few biographical sketches of the excellent father of this respectable society cannot therefore be unacceptable to the readers of the G. B. R.

Mr. ROGER WILLIAMS, a native of Wales, was born in 1598; and from his infancy, exhibited proofs of talents and piety. When yet a boy, he was observed by Sir Edward Coke, taking notes of a sermon during its delivery. That eminent lawyer obtained a sight of his papers, and was pleased with the judicious selection that the youth had made of the most striking passages in the discourse. The modesty with which

the writer received his praises, joined to the judgment displayed in the extracts, induced Sir Edward to propose to the parents of the youth, to take him under his own care; to which they readily assented. In compliance probably with the wishes of his patron, young Williams entered on the study of the law; and the road to fame and emolument lay open before him. But this pursuit suiting neither his taste nor his principles, he soon relinquished it; and, with the consent of his liberal friend, turned his attention to divinity. This study he prosecuted with so much success, that Sir Edward was encouraged to procure him episcopal ordination. For several years, he laboured, as a clergyman of the church of England, with great acceptance, and maintained a character which gained him general respect. His vigorous mind, however, and his pious soul soon discovered the imperfections of the national church, and embraced the opinions of the puritans. With honest intrepidity, he avowed and defended his new views; and following the leadings of truth, carried his principles of dissent farther than many of his associates. It is supposed, that he obtained some clearer views of liberty of conscience than his contemporaries in general entertained, from the conversation and writings of his patron; but it is most probable, they resulted from a careful examination of his bible. His open profession of these sentiments, exposed him to much trouble and persecution. After suffering much from the clergy, he determined to leave his native country, and seek liberty and peace in the deserts of America, which had been then recently planted by persons who, like him, had been driven from their homes, for the sake of a good conscience.

He embarked for America, Feb. 5, 1631. On his arrival at Boston, in New England, he was invited to settle as a minister at Salem, a neighbouring town. It is probable that Mr. W.'s views, on certain points, were known in America before his arrival; for the magistrates of Boston expressed their disapprobation of his residing so near them, and the invitation was withdrawn. Mr. Williams was however soon afterwards called by the church at Plymouth, the capital of an adjoining county. Here he preached upwards of two years, and was highly esteemed by the governor and people. At the close of that period, the request from Salem was renewed with increased earnestness. His friends at Plymouth warmly

opposed the removal; but it was at length permitted, by some of the leading men in the council, lest, as they said, "he should run the same course of rigid separation and anabaptism, which one Smyth, of Amsterdam, had done;"—a plain intimation, that he was supposed to favour the principles of that eminent General Baptist. Mr. W. accordingly removed to Salem, and many of the church at Plymouth followed him; the governors of Boston endeavouring in vain to prevent this settlement.

At Salem, Mr. W. prosecuted his ministry with great success, and was indefatigable in his exertions to promote both the temporal and spiritual welfare of his congregation. He himself tells us that "it pleased God, by excessive labours on the Lord's days and thrice in the week, at Salem, by labours night and day, with his own hands, for the maintenance of his charge, and by travels, both by day and night, in attending the courts of his persecutors, to bring him near unto death." For it is a lamentable fact, and very degrading to human nature, that the settlers in New England, though they had not long before been driven by persecution from their native country, had not learnt to respect the rights of conscience; but wished to maintain an uniformity in religion by civil authority. Mr. W. who differed from them on many important points, and certainly had far more correct views on the subject of religious liberty, was, on this account, particularly obnoxious to the leading men, both in church and state. After much wrangling and dispute, they summoned him before the council, and exhibited charges against him, as a broacher of new and dangerous opinions, and a defamer both of the magistrates and churches. These novel and tremendous doctrines were thus stated at the trial, by one of the magistrates; and the accused, who records them, acknowledges that the particulars were rightly summed up. "Mr. Williams," said he, "holds forth these four particulars: 1. That we have not our land by patent from the king; but that the natives are the right owners of it: and that we should repent of such a receiving it by patent. 2. That it is not lawful to call a wicked person to swear or pray, as being acts of God's worship, 3. That it is not lawful to hear any of the ministers of the parish assemblies in England. 4. That the civil magistrates' power extends only to the bodies, goods, and outward estates of men." To these

charges he pleaded guilty; and was so far from recanting them, that, to adopt his own expressions, "he maintained the rocky strength of them, before his judges, to the satisfaction of his own and others' consciences; and declared himself ready, through the Lord's assistance, not only to be bound and banished, but to die also for them in New England, as for most holy truths of God in Christ Jesus." This resolute declaration cut short the proceedings; and a sentence of banishment from the jurisdiction of the court was passed against him, in October, 1635. Six weeks were allowed him to prepare for exile, which was afterwards extended to six months, on condition that he would not "go about to draw others to his opinions." But in January, 1636, the governor was informed, that he received and preached to companies in his own house at Salem, even on such points as he had been censured for; and that he had converted about twenty persons to his doctrines, who proposed to go with him to form a settlement in some unclaimed part of the country. This intelligence roused the fears of his enemies, who apprehended much danger from an experiment of this nature; especially as they knew "many of the people were much taken with the persuasion of his godliness." They determined, therefore, to send him back to England, in a ship, then ready to sail. They summoned him to Boston; but as he was probably aware of their design, he sent an excuse for not attending them. An officer was immediately dispatched, with a pinnace, to seize him and convey him on board; but when he arrived at Salem, he was informed that Mr. W. had three days before left the town.

Thus driven from his family, his friends, and civilized society, in the midst of a severe winter, and labouring under great bodily indisposition, this honest man sought a refuge amongst the savage Indians. As he had openly pleaded their cause and defended their rights, he found them much more friendly than his own countrymen. He obtained a grant of land from one of their Sachems or chiefs, and prepared to settle on it; but the governors of Plymouth claiming it, as belonging to their patent, Mr. W. was obliged to venture further into the wilderness. Accompanied by a friend and an hired servant, he crossed the river that bounded the territory of the English, and threw himself into the protection of the natives. He was

received in a friendly manner; but the inclemency of the season and the rude habits of the Indians exposed him to great hardships. "I was tossed up and down", he says, "for fourteen weeks, in a bitter winter season, not knowing what bread or bed did mean." True to his principles, he determined to obtain, by fair purchase and treaty, the consent of these wandering tribes, to appropriate a part of this wilderness to his own use. He effected his purpose; and obtained full possession of a tract of land, in that part of the country which has been since known by the name of Rhode Island. But his distance from the colonies, and the danger which attended his being personally seen there, occasioned him much trouble and expence, both in making the purchase, and preparing it for his residence. The expence and loss he sustained in his temporal concerns could not, he assures us, be repaid by many thousand pounds. He persevered: and, grateful to his Creator for his guidance and blessing, he called his intended settlement *Providence*.

In the spring, it is probable, that his family removed to this retreat; and the ensuing summer doubtless afforded them leisure to improve their accommodations. He cultivated the friendship of the savage tribes, among whom he had taken up his residence; by his attentions and fair dealing, acquired an influence over them and their chiefs, which was of vast advantage to all parties. Recollecting the situation of the multitudes who were then suffering for the sake of religion, he formed the generous idea of making Providence "A shelter for persons distressed for conscience;" of whatever denomination. With this view, he invited some of his friends to join him; and several accepted the invitation. To these, he made over, for the mere nominal consideration of thirty pounds, a joint property with himself in the lands which he had purchased. Thus the foundation was laid of a state which has always been the asylum of civil and religious liberty.

But Mr. W. had scarcely entered on his project when events transpired which threatened not only his safety, but that of all the American colonies. In 1637, several powerful tribes of Indians, provoked by the manner in which the English had dispossessed them of their territory, entered into a formidable league to cut off the intruders, and invited other natives to join in the design. In this important juncture, the govern-

ment of Boston found it necessary to apply to the man whom they had so rigorously persecuted; as he alone was judged to possess sufficient influence to avert the danger. They accordingly wrote to Mr. Williams, requesting him to use his utmost and speediest endeavours to break the league. On the receipt of the intelligence, this generous patriot forgetting their former injuries, determined to risk every danger to serve his countrymen. "The Lord helped me," he says, "immediately to put my life into my hand, and scarcely acquainting my wife, to ship myself all alone in a poor canoe, and to cut through a stormy wind with great seas, every minute in danger of my life, to the Sachem's house, a distance of twenty-five miles. Three days and three nights, my business forced me to lodge and mix with the ambassadors of the hostile tribes, whose hands and arms reeked with the blood of my countrymen; and from whom I could not but nightly look for their bloody knives at my own throat. When God wonderfully preserved me, and helped me to break in pieces the designs of the enemy, and to promote and finish, by my travels and labour a league, between two of the most powerful neighbouring Indian chiefs and the English; which enabled the English forces to march through their country in pursuit of the hostile tribes. I entertained these British troops at Providence, and used my utmost endeavours that they should be well accommodated. I marched with them to the camp of our Indian allies; and brought my countrymen and the barbarians to a mutual confidence and complaisance in each other. Though I was ready to have marched further, yet upon agreement that I should remain at Providence, as an agent between the court and the army, I returned, and was interpreter and intelligencer, constantly receiving letters from the governor and council at Boston." By these exertions, this exile became, as his enemies confessed, the saviour of the English colonies. The governor of Boston and several of the council, had the gratitude to propose, when the danger was past, that his banishment should be revoked, and that some mark of public approbation should be bestowed on him: but this act of justice was prevented by the intrigues of those who had already shewn themselves the decided opposers of the liberty of conscience.

Religious persecution still continued to disgrace the adjacent states, and obliged many conscientious families to seek

shelter at Providence. As several of these agreed with Mr. Williams in his approbation of believers' baptism, and were fully sensible of the importance of church fellowship, they were desirous of enjoying this privilege. But, as none of them had been baptized, according to their present views of the ordinance, none of their own company was qualified regularly to baptize others. It was, however, impossible, in their circumstances, to obtain a proper administrator; and they agreed, in 1638, that Mr. Ezekiel Holliman, a person of superior gifts and piety, should baptize Mr. Williams; who should baptize Mr. Holliman and ten others. These twelve formed themselves into a Church, and chose Mr. Williams for their pastor. Thus was formed the first Baptist Church, on the continent of America. At first they met for worship in a grove; unless in bad weather, when they assembled in private houses. It was not till 1700, that they built a meeting-house.

Mr. W. exercised his ministry with great diligence till 1643, when the number of inhabitants being increased and several towns founded, it was found necessary, in order to check the incroachments of neighbouring states, to obtain a charter for this growing settlement from the British government. Mr. W. was chosen as the most proper agent to negotiate this business, and was requested to proceed to England for the purpose. He therefore resigned the pastoral office into the hands of Mr. Chad Brown, one of his associates, and embarked. Through his exertions, a charter was obtained, dated March 17, 1644; by which the settlers were empowered "to rule themselves by such a form of civil government as by voluntary agreement of the majority should be thought most suitable to their condition." This gave Mr. W. an opportunity of bringing his favorite principles into action. He returned with the charter, and immediately proceeded, in conjunction with his associates, to form a system of government. One of the first legislative acts which they adopted, declared, that "every man who submits peaceably to the civil government in this colony, shall worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, without molestation". This noble principle was considered an essential part of the constitution of Rhode Island; and has been maintained, for nearly two centuries, with the most jealous vigilance. It was interwoven into every part of the civil government, and extended its influence to all transactions.

It is the glory of Rhode Island, that no one within her bounds was ever legally molested on account of his religious opinions, and that none of her annals are stained with acts to regulate those important concerns, which lie immediately between man and his Maker. The steady adherence of the inhabitants of this colony to religious liberty exposed them, for a long time, to the censure and insults of their neighbours, and often caused them much ill treatment; but neither solicitations nor threatenings could induce them to relinquish it. So early as 1656, they were pressed hard by four surrounding states, to join with them in crushing the quakers; but they nobly answered, "We shall strictly adhere to the foundation principle, on which this colony was first settled;" and the quakers found an undisturbed asylum in Rhode Island, when they were persecuted and destroyed, in all the other colonies. In 1663, when the restoration had made it necessary to obtain a new charter from Charles. II, they petitioned his majesty "That they might be permitted to hold forth a lively experiment, that a most flourishing civil state may stand, and best be maintained with a full liberty in religious concerns; and that true piety, rightly grounded on gospel principles, will give the best and greatest security to sovereignty, and lay in the hearts of men the strongest obligations to true loyalty." This petition was granted; and on these principles the state has been governed, through all the changes of politics, to the present time.

Roger Williams was the first legislator who fully and effectually established liberty of conscience. Forty years afterwards, William Penn, the celebrated quaker, followed his example; and laid the foundation of the neighbouring colony of Pennsylvania, on principles nearly similar. But though Penn evidently copied Williams; yet the quaker has been held up to the admiration of mankind, and ranked along with the boasted legislators of antiquity; while the generous Baptist, who led the way, has been totally neglected and unknown. Let us hope that an injustice so flagrant will soon be rectified.

The Baptists have sometimes boasted that their denomination was never stained with the guilt of persecuting others; and it has been usual for their enemies to reply, "You never had the power; or probably you would have acted as all other sects have done, when they gained the aid of the civil authority."

For a full refutation of all such insinuations, we may boldly point to Rhode Island; and say, "There is a state founded by Baptists, in which Baptists have always maintained the ascendancy, which has deliberately guaranteed the rights of conscience in the very constitution of their government; and which has uniformly and resolutely protected religious liberty. The Baptists have never availed themselves of their civil or political influence, either to exalt their own party, or to depress their adversaries. Such a conduct speaks volumes in favour of the principles which have supported it.

While Mr. Williams was in London, in 1644, negotiating the first charter for Rhode Island, he took the opportunity of printing several tracts in defence of his principles and conduct. One was entitled "*The Bloody Tenet of Persecution discussed*," a small quarto of 250 pages, which has been noticed by most of his biographers. Another was a small quarto pamphlet of 48 pages, under the title of "*Mr. Cotton's Letter, lately printed, examined and answered; by Roger Williams, of Providence, in New England.* London, imprinted in the year 1644." This tract, which seems to have escaped observation, has been several years in the possession of the writer of this sketch, and has furnished him with some valuable hints. Mr. Cotton was a popular minister at Boston, in New England, and appears to have been looked upon by Mr. W. as a principal instigator of the rigorous measures adopted against him. Mr. Cotton animadverted on Mr. W.'s "Bloody Tenet," in a pamphlet which he called "*The Bloody Tenet washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb.*" To which Mr. W. replied, and styled his piece, "*The Bloody Tenet yet more Bloody, by Mr. Cotton's endeavour to wash it White.*"

We have but little account of the latter part of Mr. W.'s life. He continued to be an active and vigilant guardian, and a strenuous advocate of the interests of the colony which he had planted; and was employed in various offices of trust and importance. We find him, in 1670, ably engaged in pleading the cause of Rhode Island, against the pretensions of some adjacent states. It is pleasing to observe that, though upwards of seventy years of age, he was then enthusiastic in behalf of his favorite liberty of conscience. "The king vouchsafed his promise," he tells his correspondent, "under his hand and broad seal, that no person in this colony shall be

molested or questioned for matters of conscience to God, so he be loyal and keep the peace. Sir, we must part with lands and lives before we part with this *jewel*. I judge you may yield some land and the government of it to us; and we for peace' sake the like to you; but to part with this *jewel*, we may as soon do it as the Jews with the favour of Cyrus, Darius and Artaxerxes." The aged patriot was still animated with the same intrepidity of spirit and piety of disposition which had distinguished his most vigorous days. He concludes the letter from which the last extract is made, with the following challenge. "I have offered, and by these presents do offer, to discuss by disputation, writing or printing, among other points of difference, these three positions. 1. That *forced worship* stinks in God's nostrils: 2. That it denies Christ Jesus yet to be come, and makes the church yet national, figurative, and ceremonial. 3. That, in these flames about religion, there is no other prudent christian way of preserving peace in the world, but by permission of differing consciences. Accordingly I do now offer to dispute these points and other points of difference, if you please, at Hartford, Boston or Plymouth. For the manner of the dispute and the discussion, if you think fit, one whole day in each month in summer, at each place by course. I am ready, if the Lord permit, and as I hope, assist me." *Wm. Sam. Burdett*

"As to myself, in endeavouring after your temporal and spiritual peace, I humbly desire to say—If I perish, I perish—It is but a shadow vanished—a bubble broke—a dream finished—eternity will pay for all!"

Whether this bold challenge was accepted or not, we have not been able to learn; but if it were not, we may safely conclude the failure did not arise from the timidity of the zealous old man.

It does not appear that Mr. W. ever resumed the pastoral office over the church at Providence; though he frequently laboured in the ministry for them. He was often very successfully employed in preaching to the Indians, with whom he had great influence. He induced many of them to abandon their wandering mode of living, and to adopt the arts of agriculture and civilization. He was also the means of forming some of them into christian churches. He studied their dispositions, habits, and history, with great attention;

and published an account of them which was highly esteemed. At length this good and great man died, full of days and honour, in 1682, at the age of eighty-four; and was buried, with every mark of respect, in a portion of his own estate. His wife's name was Elizabeth, by whom he had six children; Mary, Freeborn, Providence, Mercy, Daniel, and Joseph, whose descendants, in 1770, had been traced to the number of two thousand.

The church which he gathered, has sent out many branches; and several religious societies, both of the general and particular sentiment, owe their origin to it. The original church is now rich and flourishing; possesses a very spacious and elegant place of worship and various endowments; and consisted, in 1818, of four hundred and thirty members.

Mr. Williams's sentiments, respecting liberty of conscience, having been generally misrepresented as inimical to government and inconsistent with the peace of society, he was frequently called to vindicate them. On one occasion, he gives us the following happy illustration of his views on this important subject; with which we conclude this sketch. "That ever I should write or speak a tittle that tends to such an infinite liberty of conscience, is a mistake which I have ever disclaimed, and abhorred. To prevent such mistakes, I at present shall only propose this case. Where does many a ship to sea, with many hundred souls in one ship; whose weal and woe is common, and is a true picture of a commonwealth or society. It hath fallen out sometimes that both papists and protestants, Jews and Turks, may be embarked into one ship. Upon which supposition, I affirm, that all the liberty of conscience that ever I pleaded for, turns upon these two hinges: That none of the papists, protestants, Jews, or Turks, be forced to come to the ship's prayers or worship, nor compelled from their own particular prayers or worship, if they practice any. I further add, that I never denied that, notwithstanding this liberty, the commander of this ship, ought to command the ship's course; yea, and also command that justice, peace, and sobriety, be kept and practised, both among the seamen and all the passengers. If the seamen refuse to perform their service, or passengers their freight; if any refuse to help in person or purse, towards the common charge or defence; if any shall mutiny or rise up against their commanders and

officers; if any should preach or write, that there ought to be no commanders nor officers, because all are equal in Christ, therefore no masters nor officers, no laws nor orders, no corrections nor punishments: I say I never denied but, in such cases, whatever is pretended, the commander or commanders, may judge, resist, compel, and punish such transgressors according to their deserts and merits. This, if seriously and honestly minded, may, if it so please the Father of lights, let in some light to such as willingly shut not their eyes. I remain, studious of your common peace and liberty,

ROGER WILLIAMS."

LETTER of a CONVERTED JEW.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

The following Letter was written by Mr. N. Solomon, a converted Jew, who has recently engaged in a translation of the New Testament into the dialect of the Polish Jews; and when it is completed, intends to visit the Continent for its dissemination. It was addressed to an evangelical clergyman; and a copy of it was obtained from one of the zealous female friends of the Jews. Should its insertion in your Repository be thought calculated to excite attention to the Jews, and to induce our churches "to lift a prayer for the remnant that is left;" that instead of being a bye-word and a reproach, they may be "as the dew upon the tender herb," its early appearance will oblige, your's in Christ,

11th Jan. 1821.

J. P.

DEAR SIR,

Truly shall I rejoice and be thankful, if what I was enabled to say at the meeting, should have left any impression either on your own mind or the minds of other christians. But be assured, my dear Sir, it is not in my power, nor in the power of any human being, to keep so great and glorious a subject, as the conversion of the Jews to the cross of Christ, alive in the heart even of pious christians. You say christians treat the subject with comparative contempt, and even object to every thing you can say for it. No wonder, for the great enemy of God and man knows very well, that the conversion of

the Jews will effect the overthrow, the complete ruin of his kingdom of darkness. He well knows that as long as he can keep the Jews in unbelief, and Christians indifferent to the welfare or perdition of thousands of the children of Abraham, so long the whole heathen and infidel world is under his command; and therefore he will rest contented, if Christians do believe that the conversion of Israel will one day take place, provided that they believe that the time is not now come for it. They may believe, that a miracle will be wrought for them; and may be, like the Jews of old, looking for a sign from heaven, provided they can be assured that it is useless to take up those weapons of our warfare which were, and are, and always will be, mighty through God, to the pulling down every strong hold of satan; and bringing every thought, even the most obstinate prejudices of Jews, into captivity to Christ and his gospel. But, my dear brother, let us not look to man but to God. What does it signify whether men believe in the promises of our unchangeable God or not? "Blessed be his name! the foundation of God standeth sure; his hand is not shortened that it cannot save." Has God cast away his people? God forbid. As long, sir, as I shall feel one single spark of the grace of God, within my naturally corrupt and unbelieving heart—as long as I can shed one tear of repentance at the foot of the cross of Christ—as long as I shall experience the virtue of his blood to cleanse and his spirit to renew my heart—as long as I am able to bow the knee to Jesus, and to open my lips in prayer at the throne of grace in his name;—so long, I humbly trust, I shall feel superior to all the objections of the christians and all the obstinacy of Jews; and shall be able to go on in the work and labour, looking to Him whose strength is made perfect in weakness. Remembering always who it is that maketh me to differ; and persuaded that the same power which could rescue me from the ways of ignorance, superstition and unbelief, and bring me into the land of life, light and liberty, can effect this for all my brethren likewise; and the same grace which abounded so freely towards the worst and vilest of sinners, is equally free to all, whether Jew or Gentile.

I am not fond of making loud professions of religion; but I say it to the glory of God and for your encouragement. It is the best I can give you; for it comes from the hearty and is not a mere speculation. Go on, my dear Sir, and do in the

strength of God what, in your situation and calling, you can, to contribute to this temple of Jehovah; and you shall find a great blessing from it, in your own soul, your family, and your ministry. The promise is not yet erased from the book of God, "They that bless thee, Israel, I will bless."

I am, yours, &c.

N. SOLOMON.

The PREFERENCE of our own THINGS, to the THINGS of JESUS CHRIST, reprov'd.

Self love is a principle of such a nature and tendency, that if it is suffered to gain the entire ascendancy in the mind, it will destroy every vestige of public spirit; and be productive of the most serious consequences to the individual himself, and to the society with which he is particularly connected, and over which he has any influence. The most High has placed a guard against the abuse of this principle in the second Table of his Law, comprehended in the sentence "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;" but where this principle has not the entire ascendancy of the heart, it may nevertheless have a prominency in the character of a professing christian, so as to paralyze every effort for the common cause, that requires the sacrifice of ease, of interest, and of whatever we may denominate our own things: and may operate as a dead weight upon those exertions which are required in the support of the ordinary expences of our respective churches at home, and those institutions formed amongst us for the propagation of the gospel, in other places in our own land, and abroad in foreign lands.

It is only in a relative sense that a Christian can call anything his own. Being bought with the price of redeeming blood. Jesus Christ has a propriety in us. All we have and are belong to him as a matter of right, and must be yielded to his will. Those things which we call our own, therefore, are those things which have been intrusted to our care as stewards; partly to be used by us, and partly to be employed in promoting the interest of the real proprietor; to whom shortly we shall be called to give up our accounts, and receive his approbation or displeasure. As men and as christians, we have a civil

right in all things lawful in themselves to be enjoyed, and attainable by lawful means. "All things are lawful for me," says the Apostle, "though not always expedient. Now all those things which are bestowed by the bounty of Providence, and are possessed by us, in various degrees, we may call our own, in this relative sense. Such are the blessings of civilized society, protection of life and property from the state, the exercise of its rights, offices and immunities which may be attended to with a good conscience, wealth and worldly property and possessions attained by inheritance, industry or, by any other lawful means, temporal ease and pleasure, by the use of the divine bounty in the comforts and enjoyments of life in a way consistent with vital godliness and christian profession, a needful care of ourselves and families to provide things honest in the sight of all men; and I may add, those pleasures and satisfaction of mind arising from the enjoyment of contentment, peace, delight, and in short, happiness in whatever falls to our lot in Providence both in our connections and possessions. All these things are lawful in themselves; and it is in the use or rather abuse of these lawful things that many lose their precious souls; by placing them in direct opposition to the things of God and religion, to the commands of Christ, and our duty to him: Matt. xiv. 18, 20. The things of Jesus Christ, in a general point of view, comprise all the duties of religion, the concerns of the soul in reference to God and eternity, as immortal beings destined for another world, dependent upon God and accountable to him. If we trifle with these things, it is sinful and dangerous; and the pursuit after and enjoyment of lawful things will not excuse the neglect of these far weightier concerns of religion and another world. It is the duty of every man therefore, whatever his rank in society or state in life may be, whether rich or poor, to seek the things of Jesus Christ, even that reconciliation and pardon obtained through his mediation and sacrifice, and enjoyed by faith; that holiness of heart, and obedience to his authority, and that devotedness of all to him which becomes those "who are not their own but bought with a price."

More particularly the things of Jesus Christ, are those which relate to his church and kingdom in this world; in which the people of God are more immediately concerned, as the instruments in his hands in supporting and promoting it. Its peace

happiness and prosperity is most dear to Jesus Christ; for he loved the church and gave himself for it. Eph. v. 25, 26, 27. All the privileges and blessings of its members are his special gifts for their use and benefit; and his word and ordinances are the means of their improvement, sanctification and meetness for himself. The ministers of Christ are his servants, whom he honours as instruments for the edification of the body of the church, to rule and govern it according to his own revealed will; to rebuke and reprove, encourage and caution, to instruct and edify: with whom he has promised to be in all their work of faith and labour of love, to qualify and assist them, and reward them for ever. To establish the empire of Christ in the hearts of men, extending his kingdom throughout the world, till all the kingdoms of it become the kingdom of our God and of his Christ, are those things of Jesus Christ, which demand the unwearied attention and unremitting labours of all who are called to the possession of his saving benefits. Indeed the nature of Christ's kingdom is such as admits of no neutrality in the conduct of its subjects. It engages all the powers of the soul in its service: holy love constrains the christian to live to him and obey him, and unites all our interests with his, and all his with our own. And therefore every thing enjoined upon us in connection with his church and kingdom amoung men, and our personal interest, in them, are the things of Jesus Christ which we should all seek.

The conduct of professing christians is reproveable when their own things are so pursued, as that thereby they seek not the things of Jesus Christ. Such was the conduct of some in the Apostles' day, who ranked with the ministers of the word; but were defective in courage and resolution when consulting their own ease. Conferring with flesh and blood, they declined such work as was fatiguing and hazardous; refused to go to stations which exposed them to persecution and danger. For instance, the interest of Christ required that somebody should go to Phillippi. Timothy, who was like-minded with Paul, could not be spared; and nobody else cared to undertake the journey, and risk such treatment as they would probably meet with there. This reluctance is called a not caring for their state; but preferring their own concerns to those of Jesus Christ. Probably, this was the temper which the Apostle resented in Mark. Acts xv. 38. Acts xiii. 13, in Demas,

Tim. iv. 9, who went to Thessalonia, where probably there was less need of him to go. Such a temper and conduct was the very opposite of Paul's: Acts xxiv. 25, who sought not his own profit but the profit of many, that they might be saved. 1 Cor. x. 33. Such conduct in ministers, when the interest of Christ demands their attention, to shun difficulties and dangers, exertions and labours, is a seeking their own and not the things of Jesus Christ. How many, alas! who are called ministers of Christ, care wholly for themselves, and have no care for the things of Christ; but these are hirelings only. Malachi i. 10, Isa. liv. 11. And how lamentable it is that through the negligence of the members of churches, ministers otherwise minded should have their attention so necessarily engaged in providing for themselves and families, as to prevent their full attention to the things of Christ.

The reproof is applicable to common christians as well as ministers, when the cares of life, their temporal things engross their thought and care, so that they have little care or concern, whether the church to which they belong is prosperous or adverse—whether its pastor is comfortably supported or not—feel no interest in its concerns—take no active part in its affairs—neglect church meetings and prayer meetings—and too frequently its solemn ordinances. Ask the reason of these neglects, and you will indirectly find that they are seeking their own things, and not the things of Jesus Christ. The same spirit is observable when the cause languishes for want of pecuniary support; while they are enjoying the luxuries of life, and spare no expence in dress and furniture: or if in humbler circumstances, they that withhold what is in the power of their hand, in supporting the needful expence of religious worship, and in aid of extending the cause of Christ in the neighbourhood or in the world—though they plume themselves with borrowed feathers, and cover their covetous disposition with affected caution and prudence, will it not one day be exposed to the assembled world, that they were seeking their own and not the things of Jesus Christ?

Let it be impressed upon our minds, that those things we call our own, are under the disposal of Providence. He that gave them can also take them away. That talents and wealth unimproved, will be found a real injury to the possessor; who, when is called to an account, he will be treated

as the unprofitable servant, that hid his talent in the earth.— Another year is closed upon us; and we are approaching the confines of eternity, and must soon appear at the tribunal of our Lord. How awful will be the reflections of a dying hour, and a judgment-day of those who, will be found to have preferred their own things; to the things of Jesus Christ! Let us then, as professors of religion, guard against this spirit of the world—against the snares of our own peculiar circumstances—against self-love and carnal security—and unite all our efforts in advancing the cause of our Redeemer in the world—and thereby prove our individual interest in it; then will our Judge say “Well done! good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord.”

Lincolnshire, 1st Jan. 1821.

PHILOS.

QUERIES.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

SIR,

In the last number of your miscellany, your correspondent J. J. L. has manifested a laudable zeal to guard us against depending on our own exertions for salvation. In the course of his remarks, he mentions the multiplying of means, and constituting officers in a church, for which the New Testament affords no authority; and thus goading to duties and spoiling the simplicity of the gospel. I suppose he is not fighting with a shadow; and yet I sincerely hope that the corruptions to which he alludes, are not creeping into our Connection. I am therefore in perplexity, and have consulted several other readers of your work, who feel the same difficulty. We have, therefore, agreed, with your permission, to request that Mr. J. J. L. would inform us explicitly, what *means* and *offices* he intends in his observations. This would operate both as instruction and caution.

Your's, very sincerely,

Warwickshire, 1st Jan. 1281.

Z.

SIR,

It is a custom among various denominations of professors, in the place where I dwell, to go about the neighbourhood, on

the night of Christmas eve, singing christmas carols, accompanied with various musical instruments. As a disposition has been manifested by some of the singers connected with our church to adopt this custom, a letter was sent to one of our church meetings, containing the following inquiries :

1. From whence and with whom did the practice originate?
2. Does the New Testament encourage the practice, either directly or by fair inference?
3. Have we any ground to believe the first Christians practised it?
4. What good object is designed to be answered by it?
5. What is its tendency on society at large, and on those actually engaged in it?

The letter containing these queries, being thrown aside by the meeting to which it was addressed, the writer has been advised to send it to you for insertion in your useful miscellany : and to request some of your correspondents to favour you with such remarks in reply to them, as may enable us to judge rightly respecting the lawfulness and expediency of the customs to which they refer. The insertion of this communication in your next number, will please many of your friends, and oblige, your's respectfully,

Derbyshire,
Nov. 28, 1820.

A CONSTANT READER.

THE ITINERANT FUND.

It will be seen, by referring to the Minutes of the last Association, page 20, that a plan was brought forward for the improvement of the *Itinerant Fund*, which the proposer was requested to publish in the G. B. R. for the information of the churches. The subject has since undergone a more mature consideration; and the following is now submitted to the friends of the institution, with an earnest desire that they would give it their serious attention: and, at the next association, come prepared either to improve and adopt it; or to reject it and substitute a more efficient scheme. The only object of the proposer, is the extension and consolidation of an institution which has already been highly beneficial; and which, if properly supported, would have the happiest effects in promoting the interests of religion and the prosperity of

the New Connection of General Baptists. If these objects be accomplished, it matters little whose scheme is adopted.

1. Let this Institution be called *The General Baptist Itinerant Fund*; and let all who subscribe to it, be considered as members of it.

2. Let its principal object be to assist attempts to introduce the gospel and the G. B. interest into places where they are not already established: but let occasional assistance be afforded towards sending suitable ministers to visit decaying or disorganized churches.

3. For the conducting of this Institution, let the Association appoint a *General Treasurer and Secretary*; each conference elect a *District Committee*, of ten, fifteen, or twenty, according to the extent of its district, of the most active and leading men in the several churches forming each conference; and each District Committee choose a *District Treasurer and Secretary*.

4. Let the business of the District Committee be to endeavour to promote the Funds of the Institution, by subscriptions, donations, collections, or any other method which they may think most likely to be effectual. Let each Committee meet when its Conference meets, and make a report to the Conference of its progress; and let it have power, at the request and with the sanction of its Conference, to appropriate one half of its own funds towards any object included in the general design, which may appear important and urgent.

5. Let each District Secretary prepare an Annual Account of the proceedings of his Committee, and each District Treasurer a statement of his Receipts and Disbursements; and let these be forwarded to the General Secretary and Treasurer, a month at least before each Annual Association: and let two deputies, chosen either by the Committee or Conference, be sent from each district, with the balance of the Cash Account, to the Association.

6. Let these deputies from the districts, together with the General Treasurer and Secretary, compose a *General Committee*, which shall assemble as occasion requires, at vacant hours, during the continuance of the Association. Let this General Committee draw up a Report, from the district returns, of the various cases which have been attended to do, and of the whole operations of the Institution, during the past

year; and a statement of the general Cash Account. Let this Report be submitted to the Association for its sanction. When the Association has received and approved the Report, let an Abstract of it be published in the Minutes, and the Report itself in the G. B. R.

7. Let all the moneys collected for the Itinerant Fund, which have not been appropriated by the District Committees, be under the controul and disposal of the Annual Association.

It is apprehended, that a plan something similar to this, would interest most of the leading persons in our Connection, and by their means most of the other members of our churches, in the prosecution of the grand object, and thus secure it a great increase of support—would unite the different branches of the Connection in one design, and yet leave them at liberty to prosecute such local objects as might demand prompt attention in the course of the year—would prevent the funds of this Institution from being misapplied—would save much of the valuable time of the Association, by rendering it unnecessary to discuss the details of each case in that assembly—and would furnish the churches annually with such examples of the beneficial results of the Institution, as could not fail of interesting every friend of religion in its favour.

ADVICE to a YOUNG MINISTER on his going to labour amongst a PEOPLE.

By the late Mr. DAN TAYLOR.

1. Ponder well the state of man by nature; guilty, depraved, helpless, averse to God. Remember, you must preach doctrines suited to such a state, or you do nothing: for none are naturally in any other state.

2. Consider well the particular state of the people amongst whom you are called to labour; their maxims, prejudices, hindrances, cares, dangers, difficulties to be overcome in attending to the gospel, &c. Obviate and remove these, in the most inoffensive manner you can; and, in public, as much as possible, without mentioning or seeming to aim at that people particularly.

3. Take the plainest texts, and study the utmost simplicity of speech, consistent with the dignity of the pulpit and your own character. Labour to be well understood. Recollect that

you probably speak to those who are very ignorant of the gospel, and may never hear it again.

4. Do not preach too long sermons. Keep the people longing, and keep up your own spirits.

5. Preach and pray as affectionately as possible.

6. Dwell much on plain fundamental subjects: as the danger of an unconverted state—repentance—the work, person and grace of Christ—justification by faith—the nature, objects and effects of faith—the entire freeness of salvation by Christ for the vilest returning sinner—the nature of evangelical holiness—death, judgment, heaven and hell.

7. Do not intrude yourself into the company of any who do not invite you; but when invited, visit cheerfully as time permits. Let not your visits be long; but serious, spiritual and short; and labour to make them beneficial.

8. Do not treat on baptism till you have good evidence that some are truly converted to God; and then do it as plainly, effectually and peaceably as possible.

9. If possible, always avoid controversy of all kinds; but especially in the pulpit.

10. Pray much for spiritual wisdom, for animation, for divine assistance and for success in all your public and private labours. O! do not forget this!

11. Avoid trifling company and conversation; especially avoid the company of young females, unless duty calls to it, for sacred purposes.

12. Keep well employed; and frequently examine the simplicity of your heart and singleness of your eye, to the glory of God and the good of men.

13. Labour, in temper, speech and conduct, to exemplify the spirit and purity of the gospel. Remember 1, Tim. iv. 12. Phil. iii. 16, 17.

14. In study and preaching, chiefly regard Jesus Christ as your teacher, example, ground of hope, and means of converting and saving sinners. Let Christ be all in all.

15. Often call to mind the end of preaching, not to shew others what you can do; but to teach them what they should do. Make it your grand design in the pulpit to please God and save men.

16. Labour to have your own heart affected with what you have to deliver to others.

17. Confirm and explain all you assert by plain and pertinent scripture: but do not make your sermon a concordance.

18. Daily read the most spiritual and practical books; and when you hear, hear the most spiritual and practical preachers, such as do most good, and most affect the heart and conscience. This will keep up a spiritual savour and unction in your mind; and fit and dispose you to prayer, spiritual discourse and spiritual preaching, far above notions and criticisms.

19. Labour to be well acquainted with all the most important parts of practical divinity, and preach much on practical subjects, and unquestionable truths. This is safe and does real good. It has been the practice of the most useful ministers.

20. Accompany all you do with fervent prayer.

DIRECTIONS for PRAYER, PRIVATE AND PUBLIC.

By the same.

1. Consider the importance of prayer; its natural tendency to keep the mind in a right frame, active, serious, and comfortable: and make it your daily practice.

2. Be solemn: and see that the heart be engaged; and that you be earnestly desirous of communion with God in it.

3. Let prayer accompany your reading and hearing the scripture, or any good book; that God may bless it to you, and that you may be able to reduce it to practice. This will be a sweet exercise, and supply you with edifying matter.

4. Use a proper plain style: not pompous nor too low; easy to be understood by all. Use short rather than long sentences.

5. Never be solicitous for novelties or uncommon things in prayer.

6. Consider well the character and perfections of God, your own state and character, your present wants; and fix your eye on the great Mediator, Jesus Christ, through whom alone you can have access.

7. Remember the office of the spirit is to help you; and pray earnestly for the spirit of grace and supplication.

8. Begin both prayer and preaching rather lower and slower than you intend to proceed.

9. Never be transported, however affected. But never be content with the mere form.

10. Use but little action in prayer; chiefly with the hand, or sometimes both hands lifted up.

11. As to your eyes, keep them shut or open, as you find best for yourself; but never gaze about you in prayer.

12. Be methodical: but it may be proper to vary your method, and perhaps sometimes to disguise it; but do not confine yourselves to any one method.

13. Let your transitions be easy, not forced or affected. Make serious pauses, though short, for recollection; for your and the people's sake.

14. Though you pray for others, insist chiefly on those petitions and blessings which best suit your own frame. Warm from the heart, they will warm others.

15. Remember the end of public prayer. Not merely a preface to the sermon, but a solemn act of devotion for general mercies, for yourselves and others. Be general. Remember 1 Tim. ii. 12.

16. Particularly mention the several supposable different circumstances of your hearers. This should never be forgotten in prayer or preaching. A portion in due season. 2 Tim. ii. 15. it will warm your hearts and others: it will enlarge your minds, and draw out your compassionate regards for them, and attach their attention and affections to you; and enable you better to address them. It will sometimes awaken the careless.

17. Be large, full, and particular in thanksgivings, for personal, family, church, and national blessings. This enlarges the mind and cherishes the most improving, purifying, and animating sensations.

18. Adopt as much as may be scripture expressions.

19. Be not too long in prayer; fifteen or, at most, twenty minutes.

20. Have some reference in your prayers to what has been read, sung, or preached. This will have a good effect, to give your people an example how they should improve what they hear, &c. But never let it be a preaching prayer.

21. Take care that all be done solemnly, experimentally, and by the spirit.

BAPTISTS DEFENDED.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

In glancing over the pages of a religious magazine, some days ago, my attention was arrested by the following passage, addressed to the Editors:—"I deem it my duty to profess myself a Baptist, and one of the old school. In the discharge of my functions relative to that ordinance, I am not in the habit of baptizing, in adult age, the christian offspring of christian parents, because I cannot find the slightest traces of such a thing having ever been done by the apostles, or those who immediately followed them." "It is singular, that the only persons baptized, by those who now usurp the name of Baptists, should be such as never appear to have been the subjects of baptism, among the primitive christians."

On reading this curious morsel, I recollected, that I had lately met with something similar in several recent publications, by our pædo-baptist brethren. As it thus appears, that they consider it an argument of some moment, and as its very strangeness may give it importance with minds of a certain cast, will you, sir, permit me to offer a few remarks on it to the consideration of your readers.

The writer does not baptize, in adult age, the christian offspring of christian parents; "because he cannot find the slightest trace of such a thing having been done by the apostles, or those who immediately followed them." This, sir, is as it ought to be. The baptists have long contended that nothing ought to be done in the positive institutions of christianity, which is not authorised either by the precepts or examples of the New Testament; and they rejoice that their pædo-baptists friends have, at length, come over to their opinion. Let them but follow the light which they have received, and baptize none but such as the apostles and their immediate successors baptized, and we shall soon all be Baptists of the old school. Whether we shall baptize in adult age, the christian offspring of christian parents, remains to be examined.

But is not this writer a little disingenuous in his statement of the reasons of his conduct? Is it because they are the christian offspring of christian parents, that he declines to baptize them

in adult age? Is it not, in fact, because they have been, as he believes, baptized in their infancy, that he refuses to administer that ordinance to them? Would he not baptize the christian offspring of christian parents in adult age, if he believed they had not been already baptized? Is it fair dealing then, to assign a cause for his conduct which he knows is not the true one? Would it not have been more manly, if this gentleman had told us why he baptized infants, rather than why he did not baptize adults? But it would hardly have answered his purpose to have said, "I am in the habit of baptizing the infant offspring of christian parents, and indeed, of any other parents, though I cannot find the slightest trace of such a thing being done by the apostles or those who immediately followed them." Yet is not this the real state of the case?

It is, indeed, sir, very singular, that the only persons baptized by the Baptists should be such as never appear to have been the subjects of baptism, among the primitive christians; as the Baptists have always been noted for appealing to apostolic and primitive example. What a strange infatuation must have blinded the learned pædo-baptists, for many centuries past, that they have not sooner made this notable discovery? It would have terminated the controversy at once; and saved volumes of angry disputation. But what is the fact? Our blessed Saviour directed, that those who believed in him and were willing to submit to his authority, should be baptized. His apostles understood his commission, and baptized those only, who made a credible profession of faith in Christ and obedience to Him. The primitive christians, for several ages, closely imitated their example: and there is not one instance to be found, during the two first centuries of christianity, of any being baptized, except such as made, for themselves, a profession of faith and obedience. This is allowed by the most competent judges, even amongst the pædo-baptists themselves. Now in these particulars, the Baptists exactly follow their steps; and, by requiring faith and obedience as requisites for baptism, they baptize such, and such only as appear to have been the only subjects of baptism, among the primitive christians.

But, says this writer, the persons baptized by the apostles were not the christian offspring of christian parents, arrived at adult age; and therefore I will baptize none such. It is true,

that they were not; and for an obvious reason. When christianity was first promulgated in Jewish or heathen countries, it was impossible that there should be any christian offspring of christian parents, arrived at adult age, who had been baptized in their infancy; because their parents were the first christians of their families, and embraced that religion long after the birth of such children. The apostles could not, therefore, baptize such characters as did not exist. As fairly might this accurate reasoner say, "I will not baptize, in adult age, the English offspring of English parents, because there is not the slightest trace of such a thing having ever been done by the apostles or those who immediately followed them." The absurdity of the latter conclusion would strike the most inattentive; and the former is built upon principles equally absurd.

Yet, though there could be no adult christian offspring of christian parents, at the first promulgation of christianity, there might be such in the succeeding ages; and this writer boldly insinuates, that the primitive ages of the church are totally silent on this subject. If he mean, that there is no instance, in the first ages, of persons being baptized in adult years who had been baptized in their infancy, on account of their parents being christians, it is readily granted. The reason is plain. It is because in all the history of the ages immediately succeeding the apostles, there is not one instance of any person being baptized in his infancy. It would then be vain to look for examples of such being again baptized in their riper years. The constant invariable representation, through the two first centuries, is, that persons were admitted to baptism on a personal profession of their own faith and obedience; not on account of the christianity of their parents. This has been abundantly evinced by many learned Baptists; and has never been contradicted by the most accurate researches of their opponents. There are however examples, in very early christian antiquity, of the baptism, in adult age, of the christian offspring of christian parents. It would be easy to mention the names of many, who had been educated in the principles and practice of christianity, who nevertheless were baptized in adult age, on their own profession of faith. But as these remarks have already swelled beyond the limits of your confined publication, and as the

is allowed by the most learned advocates of infant baptism, I forbear to enter into particulars. I shall only add a short extract from a sermon of Basil, Bishop of Cesarea, whom Dr. Wall places 260 years after the Apostles, which he addressed to a numerous congregation, assembled in a christian church. Speaking of baptism, he inquires, "Do you demur and loiter and put it off? When you have been from a child catechized in the word, are you not yet acquainted with the truth? Having been always learning, are you not yet come to the knowledge of it? A seeker all your life long? A considerer till you grow old? When will you be made a christian? When shall we see you become one of us?" Nothing can more explicitly establish the facts, that, although infant baptism had then begun to be advocated by a few, yet, in that age, instruction usually preceded baptism: that it was the voluntary act of the candidate; and that those who had been educated as christians were not baptized till they arrived at adult age and sought it for themselves.

Now, Sir, with these plain observations, I leave your readers to judge for themselves, respecting the truth of this writer's bold assertion. I have no fear for the result.

Your's, cordially,

ARISTARCHUS.

AN EXPLANATION.

In page 104 of the last number of the G. B. R. it is asserted, that the late Mr. J. Kingsford, of Portsea, "served the church over which he was pastor, for nearly his whole life, without any remuneration from them." This statement, though literally true, has been animadverted upon as liable to cause a misunderstanding. The fact is, that that worthy minister enjoyed, during the whole of his ministry, a small annuity from the church in Thomas Street, which rose out of an endowment possessed by that society, and was awarded to him when he left them, in 1798. This however was totally unconnected with the church of which he was pastor, and could not be considered as received from them. For some years before his death, his own church agreed to raise him a certain sum annually; but the amount of this certainly did not

equal the extraordinary expences which devolved on him & their minister. This explanation is inserted at the request of his friends, to take away occasion of reflection from those who might seek occasion.

QUERY.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

SIR,

I am sorry you have suspended the papers on those passages of scripture which appear to militate against the doctrinal sentiments of the General Baptists: and I sincerely hope that they will speedily be resumed. In the mean time, I shall esteem it a favour if some of your friendly correspondents would oblige me, in your next number, with a few thoughts explanatory of our Saviour's meaning, when he says, "All that the Father giveth me, shall come unto me." John vi. 37.

A. F. S. W.

THE IMPORTANCE OF GUARDING OUR THOUGHTS.

Open sins are subject to the observation of our associates. They expose the sinner so much to reproof and animadversion, and frequently bring with them so many inconveniences, that mere selfish prudence, unassisted by any higher motive, will frequently lead men to avoid them. It is the guarding against secret faults; the conscientious endeavour to avoid every thing that would displease God, whether in public or private, that distinguishes the christian from the hypocrite, and marks the real child of God. But the sincere believer often finds it the most difficult part of his duty to preserve his conscience from the guilt of crimes, which are known only to himself and the omniscient Searcher of hearts. After his most careful attention, and earnest prayer for the assistance of divine grace, he feels that he is become filthy in the eyes of a God of immaculate holiness, and is compelled, in the anguish of his soul, to cry out, with the psalmist, "Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults."

The heart of man, the fruitful source of all mischief, is the great scene of these secret faults. "The thoughts of the

heart are naturally evil, and that continually." It is indeed the work of divine grace, "to create in the believer a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within him;" yet the most sincere christian feels, by painful experience, that he still carries about with him a depraved nature, and is exposed to the constant struggles of the law of his flesh, warring against the law of his mind. How often will the man, who watches the working of his own mind, detect himself indulging a train of imaginations, desires and passions, contrary to the reverence which he owes to his Maker, or the love which is due to his fellow creatures? How often has he suffered himself, in solitude, to be puffed up with vain conceit, and thought himself something when he was nothing? How frequently has he given the reins to unhallowed desires, and been ready to covet the blessings which belong to others? Has he not sometimes indulged in gloomy discontent, and nourished hard thoughts against Providence and his associates? And has he never permitted these gloomy reveries to proceed to a feeling of ill will against those who, as he supposes, may have hindered him from possessing some fancied good? Did he never feel emotions of impatience and murmuring at the dispensations of Providence, and rebellion against the Governor of the universe? Did he never, in a dejected moment, entertain unjust suspicions against the friendship, the integrity, or the sincerity of his fellow christians? Has he never been prompted to pry with impertinent curiosity into those secret things which belong alone to God; and in the pride of human reason, to arraign the justice or wisdom of the High and Holy One who inhabits eternity? Has he always maintained such a sanctity of heart, as never to admit ideas which have tainted his soul, and offended Him who desireth truth in the inward parts? Let an enlightened mind, renewed by sanctifying grace, and properly instructed in the extent and spirituality of the divine law, retrace the employment of his thoughts for only a short period, and permit conscience to return faithful answers to these and similar inquiries: and it is presumed he will be compelled to exclaim: "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Who can know it?"

For let us not deceive ourselves, and suppose that these carnal wanderings are not wicked, provided they are confined to our own breasts, and do not break out into words or actions.

The wise man, under the dim light of the Jewish dispensation declared that, "The thought of foolishness is sin." Our blessed Saviour has given an exalted idea of christian morality, by telling us, that "He that looketh upon a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart:" thus placing the unhallowed indulgence of our thoughts, in the same scale of moral guilt, as the actual commission of the crime. Well, therefore, might the inspired apostle assure us, that whatever our conduct may be, "to be carnally minded is death." Nor need we be surprised at these assertions, when we reflect on the baneful effects of giving way to these foolish thoughts. They pollute the soul, and destroy that purity which alone can please a God, "who knows the thoughts afar off." They wound the conscience of the christian, and draw a cloud between him and his Saviour. They plunge him in gloom and despondency; and cause him to walk softly for many a dreary season, They unfit him for communion with his God; and disqualify him for the enjoyment of either public or private devotion. And, till the guilt which burdens his heart be washed away in the blood of the Lamb, he dares not claim his part in the promises of the gospel. But the consequences of allowing improper thoughts to riot unchecked, are still more awful. They naturally lead forward to the commission of public crimes, and plunge the unguarded into the depths of infamy and misery. "Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Then when lust has conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." How necessary then is the caution, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."

^ But how shall we guard our hearts against these vain and wicked imaginations, which come uncalled for, and often injure us severely, before we notice their presence? This is a very important inquiry, and demands our most serious attention. It is acknowledged to be very difficult to keep our hearts; and, without the divine assistance we shall certainly be led astray. Yet if we watch and pray, we may hope that the Lord will, in some good degree, give success to our endeavours. If we labour to preserve on our minds an habitual sense of the presence of an all-wise and all-holy God; and remember that he is intimately acquainted with every move-

ment of our spirits: if we often reflect that "The Lord searcheth all hearts and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts;" it will have a happy tendency to incite us to a holy jealousy over ourselves. We shall, under these impressions, feel a sacred horror, when we discover unholy ideas or unjust passions rising in our breast; conscious that, though we may lock them up from the observation of men, yet they are well known to Him who "will soon judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ." For we should make the awful truth familiar to our own minds, by frequent meditation, that, at the great reckoning day, we shall have to give a strict account, not only for our words and actions, but also for our thoughts. "I the Lord search the heart; I try the reins:" says the Almighty. And what is the design of this scrutiny? "Even to give to every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings." "God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil." If we frequently realized this awful scene, and endeavoured to bring it home to our own consciences, we should tremble at the idea of indulging in mental iniquity. When improper thoughts arose in our minds, or improper passions took possession of our hearts, we should hasten to place them at the bar of the sovereign Judge of quick and dead, and consider how they will appear when exposed to an assembled universe; and what judgment will be past upon them by Him who has pronounced a blessing on the pure in heart. With these views, we should deplore the workings of inward depravity, aspire after conformity to God in the inner man. We should watch the first motions of these domestic enemies, and resolutely banish them from our presence. We should endeavour to store our minds with profitable subjects for meditation; and cultivate that disposition which animated David, when he exclaimed, "I hate vain thoughts; but thy law do I love." "O how I love thy law; it is my meditation all the day." "Mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I might meditate in thy word." Such a temper will be the best guard against the indulgence of those foolish and wicked cogitations, against which these remarks are directed. May such a temper be the happy portion of all who read them! Amen.

BIBLE ANECDOTES,

Extracted from the last REPORT of the BRITISH and FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

A Letter from Messrs. Allen and Grellett, dated Christiana, September 28, 1818, states: "Before we landed in Norway, we had a proof of the want of the Holy Scriptures in that country, and the great eagerness of the people to become possessed of them. The pilot who came on board to conduct the vessel into port, having learnt, by some means or other, that we had Bibles with us, earnestly entreated that he might be permitted to buy one. He lives in one of the little islands with which this harbour abounds; and stated that a single copy which they had among them, had almost excited a quarrel. So many wished to possess it, that they were obliged at last to decide the matter by drawing lots; and much did he regret that the lot did not fall on him. We gave the old man a copy, which he received with marks of the deepest gratitude. We told him, he must consider it as a present from the British and Foreign Bible Society; and that he should call his neighbours together, at suitable times, and read it to them."

An orphan peasant boy, in Russia, came one day to the depository of a Bible Society, and requested a Bible. "On my asking him," says the depository, "what that book contained, and what he intended to do with it," he replied, 'I have been informed that a great deal of what is good is written in it; and much concerning Christ.' "But who is Christ?" "Our dear God; and I should be glad to become acquainted with him." "But where have you heard any thing about him?" "Many of the workmen in our factory go to the minister and get a book from him, in which they afterwards read." "Can you read?" "Tolerably well. I work in the factory; and with my earnings support myself, my mother, sister, and a little brother." I then tried the boy, by desiring him to read a few lines; and was surprised at the fluency with which he did it. Upon my asking him who taught him to read, he said: "The workmen in the factory have given me a primer, and instructed me at times." Pleased with the wish expressed by the boy, I said to him: "There, take the holy book; I make you a present of it. Read diligently in it, but

always with prayer, and a heart turned to the Lord." He took the book: fell on his knees, full of gratitude, and hastily retired from the room, with a countenance brightened with joy. He sat down on the stairs, opened the book with impatience, and read eagerly in it. Then putting it in his pocket, he departed.

After the anniversary of a Bible Society, in Russia, a peasant called on the minister, thanked him for the gratification which the solemnity of that day had afforded him; and with humble bashfulness, requested him to accept of the money he had brought with him, to put out to interest, and annually to employ the interest in providing bibles for the benefit of the parish. The clergyman received the money; and found it to amount to one hundred silver pieces: a surprising gift indeed from a poor Esthonian peasant.

Susan G. a poor, but respectable widow, appeared to one of the committee of the Ladies' Auxiliary Bible Society, at Liverpool, for instruction in reading. She had subscribed for a large Testament, but could not read well enough to *understand it*. That seemed her primary object. As her teacher avoided comments, Susan would frequently make remarks, which evinced her deep interest in the sacred truths she read. With peculiar modesty, she would say, "I never thought so much of the love of God before. It is too high for me: but the more I know, the more I love him for it. My son, who died at sea, used to say, that the poor were not cared for in other countries as they are in this. But only think of my living so long in it, without even thinking of a Bible for my children! If I did not care for my own, what can poor heathen do?"

The fifth Anniversary of the Russian Bible Society was held at St. Petersburg, Oct. 1, 1818; the appearance of which is thus described by Dr. Paterson, who was present on the occasion:—"As the court was absent and many of the inhabitants in the country, it was supposed that only a few would be present. At eleven o'clock we entered the great hall, which, contrary to all expectation, we found nearly full, and in a few minutes it was crowded. Desire and expectation seemed to be visible in every countenance; and we had only to lament that the place could not contain the numbers who were anxious to gain admission. Those who have never witnessed such a

scene can scarcely form an idea of the effect produced by such a motley assemblage. Persons of twenty different nations and languages were present; and many of them in their national dresses. It was delightful to see the bearded peasant and the prince, the craftsman and the minister of state, the layman and the clergyman, christians of all denominations, Jews and Gentiles, assembled for the one glorious purpose of causing the word of the Lord to have free course and to be glorified." The Russian clergy made a conspicuous figure, with their truly enlightened and pious metropolitan at their head. Nor were we less pleased to see the venerable Roman Catholic metropolitan sitting opposite the head of the Russian church, and on his left hand the metropolitan of the Greek Uniates, who was chosen one of our vice-presidents. Notwithstanding the absence of the court, our meeting shone with stars and ribbons worn by the first statesmen, and military and naval officers of the highest distinction. The whole assembly reminded me of the company which John saw "out of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues."

INTERESTING CONFERENCE with a COLONY of JEWS.

Dr. PINKERTON, during a tour on the Continent, in 1818, in the service of the British and Foreign Society, met with a number of Jews in the vicinity of Troki, the former residence of the Dukes of Lithuania. He procured an interview with them; and gives the following account of it to the Society, in a letter, dated July 10, 1818.

In the suburbs of the ancient town of Troki, I paid a visit to a colony of Caraitic Jews, who have inhabited this delightful spot for several centuries past. On entering the house of the Chief Rabbi, I saluted him in Tartar, and, to my astonishment, was answered in the same language. None of them could speak Jewish German, the common language of all the Polish Jews. I inquired, whence they originally were: the answer was; "From the Crimea;" that they and their ancestors have resided in Troki for nearly four hundred years, and that they possess very distinguished privileges from the ancient Dukes of Lithuania and Kings of Poland. The Tartar language is still the only one spoken in their families, though

most of the men could speak both the Russian and Polish. They are neither dressed like their brethren in the Crimea, who have retained the Tartar costume, nor like the Polish Jews, whose dress is peculiar to themselves, but like the common Poles and Russians. The number of the Caraites in Troki, is about 160 souls.

Before I had finished my enquiries relative to these particulars, the house of the middle-aged Rabbi was filled with his brethren, who were all anxious to know who the stranger was, and what he wanted. Our conversation then turned upon the signs of the times, and the coming of the Messiah, and lasted upwards of an hour and a half. I stated the truth to them as clearly and as forcibly as I could. The Rabbi defended his position, that the Messiah was still to come, with the Old Testament in his hand; but, having no Talmudic interpretations to screen himself behind, he was soon greatly at a loss. The people in the mean time were all attention. They had never heard such discourse before. The Rabbi was at last so much touched with what was said, that he changed colour, and turned aside. Another of his brethren, a merchant, then came forward, and, with considerable shrewdness, attempted to defend the cause, in the view of the people; who were now muttering to each other, and anxious to know how all this would end. Having proved to him also, that the Messiah must needs have come, I spoke of the purity and spirituality of the gospel, and of that eternal life which is revealed in the doctrines which Christ taught. The merchant, I found, had read the Polish Testament with considerable attention. The Rabbi stood like one confounded. I never saw any individual in such a state before. I asked them, whether they had ever read the doctrines of Christ and his Apostles in Hebrew. The question seemed to rouse their curiosity to the extreme. They replied, that they had heard that such a thing existed, but that they had never seen the Hebrew Testament. I then inquired, whether they desired to see it. They all replied, that they would be very happy could they get a copy of it. By this time, my caleshe and servant, with fresh horses, were before the door. I took out five copies of the Hebrew Testament, and presented the Rabbi with the first. He seemed to get new animation at the sight of it, accepted it most willingly, embraced and thanked me for it. I then gave a copy to the

merchant, who seemed no less overjoyed, and was warm in his expressions of gratitude. Now the difficulty was, how to distribute the remaining three. All hands were stretched out, and every one cried; "Oh, let me have one also." I was greatly embarrassed. An interesting young man stood near me; several times he stretched out his hand, as if eagerly desiring to grasp the third copy, which I held in my hand, as often he abruptly drew it back again. I read in his countenance a strong combat in his feelings between civility and desire. To him I gave the third. His countenance now shone with gratification and joy, and all present loudly approved the act. A fourth and fifth I bestowed on two other of these interesting people. They all commenced reading with great avidity; and before I left them, gave me proofs of their understanding well what they read. I told them, that I hoped in a short time to hear of their having formed themselves into a community of believers in the Lord Jesus, founded on the glorious truths of that blessed volume which I had just put into their hands. Amid loud expressions of gratitude and wonder, I left the house of the Rabbi, took farewell of this truly interesting little people, and proceeded on my journey. The merchant did not part with me; however, so soon; he walked with me upwards of a verst up the border of the beautiful lake, whose surface, with the charming surrounding scenery, was gilded with the rays of the evening sun. He put many questions to me respecting the signs of the times, and the spread of the gospel; and left me with these words, "I believe, that some important crisis with our people is at hand; what it is I cannot now say.—God will direct all."

GENERAL BAPTIST OCCURRENCES.

OBITUARY.

June 30, 1820, died, at Gedney, Lincolnshire, Mrs. ANN BICHENO, in the thirty-third year of her age. She was awakened to a sense of her spiritual danger, and enabled to flee to the Saviour for deliverance from it, under the ministry of Mr. Jarrom, in her twenty-third year. She was baptized and joined the church at Wisbeach; of which she continued a

useful and honourable member, till 1815; when she removed to Edenham, near Bourn, and united with the church at Bourn. Her afflictions were heavy and painful; but, throughout the trying season, she exhibited a lively example of meekness, christian fortitude and resignation. As her departure drew near, she frequently observed, "What should I do, if I had the Lord to seek in these moments of affliction." To resign an affectionate partner and a dear infant, only four months old, required a hearty acquiescence in the will of her heavenly Father; yet she was enabled to do it, not only with patience but with cheerfulness; and to look forward with rapture beyond the grave, frequently exclaiming, "Come Lord Jesus! come quickly!" (A little before her death, it was observed by a friend, "You know in whom you have believed." "Yes," she replied with joyful energy, "I do: and he will keep what I have committed to him." Then she began to repeat, with sweet composure, a favourite hymn.

Where shall my wond'ring soul begin?
 How shall I all to heaven aspire?
 A slave redeem'd from hell and sin,
 A brand pluck'd from eternal fire.

At the point of death, her only hope for acceptance with God was the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. This supported her, when flesh and heart failed. Her remains were interred in the G. B. burying ground, at Fleet, July, 3: and Mr. Rogers preached a funeral discourse, from Psa. lxxiii. 26.

Mrs. HANNAH STOCKS, the wife of Mr. R. Stocks, G. B. minister at Kirton in Lindsay, departed this life, Sept. 14, 1820, in the twenty-seventh year of her age. She was the daughter of Mr. Stephen Priestley, of Clayton, near Queenshead, Yorkshire. She was early called to the knowledge of the truth; being baptized, March the 27th, 1812; and received, with great satisfaction, into the church at Queenshead, then under the pastoral care of the late Mr. John Taylor. As a member of that church, her conduct was highly praiseworthy. Her modesty, piety, zeal and regularity marked her as a sincere follower of the Lamb. "Her character," says a friend who knew her well, "in the church and in the neighbourhood in which she dwelt, was most excellent." In the latter part of 1819, she married Mr. Stocks, and immediately removed to

Kirton. She was received by the church in that town, with great hospitality and friendship, which they evinced by a multitude of kind offices. Her conduct as a wife and a friend gained the unbounded confidence and affection of her husband, and the high esteem of all who had an opportunity of knowing her. She appeared to enjoy her situation; and was favoured with a greater degree of health, than had usually been her portion.

But while the prospect lay bright before her, and she and her husband were anticipating many days of social happiness and usefulness, the scene was suddenly overcast. The time of nature's sorrow approached. On Sept. 13, she was seized with the pangs of travail, which continued to increase throughout that day and the succeeding night. In the midst of her agony she was frequently observed to be lifting up her soul to Him who had said, "Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee." About eight o'clock in the morning of the 14th, she was delivered of a daughter. But this event, instead of relieving her, appeared to redouble her pains, which increased every hour. Frequent convulsions ensued; and the symptoms of approaching dissolution became very apparent. In this extremity, when death was evidently full in view, her confidence in her God was unshaken. She was heard to address him, when her pains gave her an opportunity. "Lord! I have trusted in thee, and thou hast never deceived me. I shall not now be deceived. Thou hast said, I will be with thee in six troubles, and in seven I will not forsake thee." She continued in this state of agony till five in the afternoon, when she expired, without a groan or a struggle. She was interred on the 17th, in the G. B. chapel, at Kirton; when Mr. S. Watson kindly officiated. On the following Lord's day, her afflicted husband delivered a discourse, on the mournful occasion, from 1 Sam. iv. 19, 20. As the G. B. meeting-house was too small for the number of hearers expected, the Methodists kindly accommodated Mr. Stocks and his friends with their chapel; which was crowded with a most serious and deeply affected audience.

Thus it has pleased the supreme Governor of all events, to disappoint hopes which promised a long period of pleasing and profitable intercourse. Doubtless he has some wise and gracious ends to answer, by this very painful bereavement.

May it be sanctified to the everlasting benefit of all concerned! Especially may the disconsolate widower be supported under this heavy stroke, and enabled to say, with pious resignation, "The will of the Lord be done:" and may he and the orphan babe, thus unexpectedly deprived of a beloved partner and a tender mother, be the care of divine Providence through life; and at death join her in the mansions of bliss, where parting shall be no more.

CONFERENCES.

The MIDLAND CONFERENCE was held, Dec. 26, 1820, at *Loughborough*. In the morning, Mr. Hall, of Forncett St. Peter's, opened public worship with prayer; and Mr. W. Pickering, of Nottingham, preached, from Matt. xxviii. 19. In the afternoon, the members of Conference met for business: when a letter was read from the church at Hinckley, respecting the low state of religion in that place; and the difficulties under which it laboured. The Conference unanimously advised, that the two churches at Hinckley and Thurlaston should unite; and if no serious obstacle lie in the way, that Mr. Yates become the pastor of the whole.—A case from Staley Bridge, requesting assistance in defraying the debt on their meeting-house, was referred to the next Conference. This meeting took into consideration the case from Church Lane, London, respecting the building of their new meeting-house; and, as it was esteemed a case of peculiar importance and urgency, Mr. Stevenson was requested to write to the churches connected with this Conference, enforcing the necessity of an immediate and liberal attention to it; and a committee was appointed to conduct the business.

The LINCOLNSHIRE CONFERENCE was held at *Sutton*, Dec. 21, 1820. In the prayer meeting which preceded the Conference, Messrs. Payne, Everard, Taylor, and Binns were engaged. In the Conference, supplies during the next quarter were arranged for Chatteris.—Mr. Rogers was re-elected to the office of Secretary for the ensuing two years.—The annual Conference, which has usually been held at Fleet, was appointed, in future, to take its regular course.—On the previous evening, Mr. Pocklington prayed, and Mr. Lilley preached from John x. 14. On the evening of Conference, Mr. Rogers

opened the service, and Mr. Jarrom delivered a discourse, from Gen. i. 27.—The next Conference to be at *March*, Mar. 15.

The **WARWICKSHIRE CONFERENCE** met, Jan. 4, 1820, at *Austrey*; when Mr. Goadby preached, from Psa. lxxxix. 27; and Mr. Green, from Rev. ii. 10. Supplies were arranged for Sutton; and Mr. Barnes was requested to take the proper steps for establishing a G. B. cause at Appleby. Some account was given of the Missionary Society; and it appeared that many churches were doing something towards its funds.

This Conference assembled again, May 25, 1820, at *Wolvey*. Mr. Barnes gave an account of the exertions making at Appleby. The friends at Netherton had, since the last meeting, been formed into a distinct church: some had been baptized and others were expected. Those churches which had not collected for Austrey case, were advised to do it as soon as possible. Several useful remarks were made on the subject of vital religion. Messrs. Cottrell and Barnes preached.

The next meeting of this Conference, was held at *Netherton*, Sept. 29, 1820. A case was received from Church Lane, London, soliciting assistance; and the churches were requested to collect for them, and to state to the next meeting when it would be most convenient to attend to this case. The cause of religion appears improving; and the churches advancing. Messrs. Barnes and Cheatle preached.

The last meeting of this Conference, was at *Austrey*, Dec. 28, 1820. The publication of the works of the late Rev. Dan Taylor, was thought desirable by this meeting; and the paper on that subject, in the G. B. R, vol. x. p. 121, being read, the ministers present were requested to inquire how many subscribers could be obtained in their respective churches. Some good observations were made on the means of promoting the religion of Christ. Mr. J. Green preached, in the morning, from 1 John iii. 1. and Mr. Cheatle, in the evening, from Rom. viii. 6.

The **YORKSHIRE CONFERENCE** met at *Manchester*, Nov. 7, 1820. At this meeting, a letter was received from Mr. James Taylor, desiring to resign the office of scribe to this Conference, on account of his afflicted state of body. He was requested to continue in the office; and Mr. J. Hodgson was appointed to assist him. The people at Staley Bridge were encouraged to collect for their meeting-house, among the

Yorkshire churches. Mr. Hodgson informed the Conference of his labours at Nantwich, and received the thanks of the meeting. Mr. H. Asten consented to supply two Lord's days at Nantwich; and Mr. Hodgson was requested to write to Mr. Barrow, and request him and his friends to afford some ministerial assistance to the same people. Begging cases from Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Fleet, London, and Birmingham, were deferred till the next Conference. In the evening Mr. Abbott preached, from John xvii. 1.

This Conference assembled again at *Birchcliff*, Dec. 25, 1820: when Mr. Hurley preached, from Psa. iv. 6. Mr. James Taylor wrote a letter of advice to the friends at Nantwich, who are in a state of great unhappiness; which was approved by the meeting, and directed to be sent. Supplies were arranged for Nantwich. It was recommended to the Yorkshire churches to collect for London, if the friends in that city would send their minister. Messrs. J. Hodgson and J. Mitchell were requested to take into consideration the renewal of the Trust Deeds for the meeting-house at Halifax. Mr. Wm. Ingham resigned his office as Treasurer for the Itinerant Fund; and Mr. John Mitchell was appointed his successor. The churches in Yorkshire were desired to collect for the Itinerant fund.

ORDINATIONS.

On Wednesday, Jan. 10, 1821, Mr. JOSEPH WALLIS was ordained to the pastoral office, over the G. B. church, in Church Lane, Whitechapel, London. Mr. Bissill, of Sutterton, opened the public service, by a short prayer and reading, 1 Thess. ii. and 1 Tim. iii. Mr. Kingsford, of Battersea, engaged in the general prayer. Mr. Sexton, of Chesham delivered the introductory discourse, asked the questions of the church and the minister, and received the answers, together with Mr. Wallis's Confession of Faith. Mr. Sexton then offered the ordination prayer, and joined with the other ministers in the imposition of hands. An impressive charge by Mr. Stevenson, of Loughborough, founded on 2 Tim. iii. 15. closed the morning service. In the evening, Mr. Stevenson prayed, and Mr. Bissill addressed the people, from Heb. xiii. 17. and Mr. J. B. Shenston, of London, concluded the solemnities of the day, with prayer. May the union then publicly recog-

nized, be owned and blest by the adorable Saviour, to the promotion of his kingdom at large, and especially to the prosperity of his cause in that ancient church.

May, 22, 1820, Mr. G. DEAN was ordained to the pastoral office over the G. B church, at Lineholm, Yorkshire. The service was begun by Mr. Asten, of Burnley, who read suitable portions of scripture. Mr. Hurley, of Queenshead, delivered the introductory discourse. Mr. Hodgson, of Slack, engaged in the general prayer, and proposed the questions to the minister and people. Mr. Dean then read his Confession of Faith. Messrs. J. Taylor, of Slack, and H. Hollinrake, of Birchcliff, united in the imposition of hands on the minister; to whom Mr. J. Taylor gave a charge, from Ezek. iii. 17. In the evening, Mr. Midgley, of Shore, prayed; and Mr. Hollinrake addressed the people, from 1 Thess. v. 13. May the Lord bless this union to the church and the neighbourhood!

OPENING OF NEW MEETING-HOUSES.

Nov. 8, 1820, a very neat new meeting-house, erected under the superintendence of Mr. Hear,* was opened at *Appleby*, (see G. B. R. vol. x. p. 141.) The Rev. Robt. Hall, A. M. of Leicester, preached in the morning, from Isa. liii. 6. In the afternoon, Mr. J. Green, of Barton, engaged in prayer; and Mr. J. Deacon, of Leicester, delivered a discourse, from Luke ii. 10. The house was crowded to excess at both opportunities, and the greatest satisfaction and pleasure were manifested in the whole assembly. Upwards of twenty-two pounds were collected at the doors, though a general subscription had been previously made in the neighbourhood. There is much reason to hope, that great good will arise from this small beginning; as the new house continues to be crowded, at the regular opportunities, with attentive hearers, chiefly the inhabitants of the village.

The friends at *Heptonstall Slack* have erected a decent little meeting-house, nine yards by seven, with a gallery, about two miles and a half beyond Slack, on the *Colne-road*.

* The reader is desired to correct an error in the note of p. 142, in the last number, by reading *rection* for *creation*.

This remote neighbourhood has not, in any age, been favoured with the means of instruction and the public worship of God; except at a very considerable distance. The inhabitants appear pleased with their new privileges. On the morning of the Lord's Day, the children are taught to read, and in the afternoon, a sermon is preached. The congregation hitherto has been as large as could be accommodated. This meeting-house was opened, Dec. 29, 1820; when Mr. Abbott prayed, and Mr. James Taylor preached, from Luke xiv. 17. "Come, for all things are now ready." The opportunity was impressive and interesting. May some sons and daughters be born to God in this desolate neighbourhood!

RE-OPENING of a MEETING HOUSE.

For a length of time, Mr. Barrow and his friends had been desirous of procuring a place in which to commence preaching at *Wirksworth*, in Derbyshire. Providence at length opened the way. Some premises were offered for sale, which comprised an auction-room, thirty-six feet long and fifteen wide. These were bought, furnished with pulpit and forms, and opened, July, 21, 1816, by Mr. Felkin, of Kegworth. But this room was soon found to be too small to contain the hearers who wished to attend: and various fruitless attempts were made to obtain a more suitable place and a burying ground. At length, it was resolved, after mature deliberation, to enlarge the old building, by adding eight feet to the length, and nine to the width, and erecting a gallery six seats deep across one end. This has been done; and it is now a comfortable, neat, and commodious place of worship. The enlarged building was re-opened, on Lord's Day, Dec. 17, 1820: when Mr. Pickering, of Nottingham, preached, in the morning, from Exod. xx. 24; Mr. Pike, of Derby, in the afternoon, from 2 Cor. vi. 1, 2; and Mr. Pickering again in the evening, from Eccles. ix. 10. Though the weather was very unfavourable, the congregations were large; and the collections, on the occasion, amounted to upwards of twenty-seven pounds. May the walls of this edifice long echo with the praises of the Redeemer: and may the Lord, when he writeth up the people, count that many were born here!

FORMATION OF A NEW CHURCH.

Nov. 7, 1820, a new G. B. church was formed at *Manchester*. Mr. Hurley read suitable portions of scripture and prayed. Mr. H. Asten made some observations on the constitution and government of a christian church. Mr. H. Hollinrake administered the Lord's supper, ordained Mr. Thomas Hilton to the office of deacon, and delivered a discourse, from I Tim. iii. 13. May the great Head of the church shed his blessing on this attempt; and cause the little one to become a thousand!

ANNUAL ASSOCIATION.

The next annual association of the New Connection of General Baptists, will be held, God willing, at *Loughborough*, to commence on the last Tuesday in June ensuing. The preachers: Messrs. Farrent and Bissill; or in case of failure, Messrs. Everard and Cameron. Inn, King's Head, Highgate.

REVIEW OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

A DEFENCE OF BAPTISM A TERM OF COMMUNION; in Answer to the Rev. ROBERT HALL'S REPLY, by JOSEPH KINGHORN, 6s. pp. 206. xxiii. 8vo.

The ordinance of baptism has given rise to innumerable controversies in the christian world. Disputes have long existed respecting the subjects and mode of it, its perpetuity, the end it is intended to subserve to the recipients, &c. On these points, much has been said and written; and an institution, sufficiently plain in itself, has, to them who have deserted the scriptures as their guide, been involved in the greatest uncertainty and confusion.

Among those who have believed in the perpetuity of baptism, and that it is to be administered by immersion, on a profession of faith in Jesus as the Messiah, there has long been a difference of opinion on the question. "Whether or not, baptism is essential to communion at the Lord's table?" The generality of Baptist churches have always maintained the affirmative; and have restricted their fellowship to those whom they considered as baptized. In this, they have agreed with the general sentiment entertained on the point by professing christians in all ages and countries. There have, however,

from the commencement of the baptists as a separate denomination, been a few among them who have denied the necessity of baptism as a pre-requisite to the Lord's supper; and their practice has been termed *mixed, free, or open* communion. Mr. Robert Hall, of Leicester, has recently distinguished himself, as the zealous abettor of this practice. His first work in its defence, entitled, "*On terms of Communion,*" was published in 1815. It was not to be expected that all the strict baptists, notwithstanding the ability of the author, would suffer this work to pass unnoticed. On the contrary, several took up their pens in opposition to the sentiment which it was intended to establish; and, among the rest, Mr. Joseph Kinghorn, of Norwich, entered the lists against the author; and in the following year, published, "*Baptism, a Term of Communion,*" He contended that the admission of the unbaptized to the Lord's table, is contrary to scripture direction and example; and that consequently it is wrong to practice it. To this, Mr. Hall, in 1818, wrote a "Reply;" and the present work of Mr. Kinghorn, is in defence of his former publication.

It is not to be expected that, in a brief notice of the controversy, we should enter into the merits of it, and mention all the arguments which each writer urges in defence of his peculiar opinion. The question has indeed fallen into able hands; and the reader may expect to see, on each side, every thing of importance which can be adduced. Though Mr. Hall possesses the most surprising powers of intellect, and expresses his ideas with an energy peculiar to himself, to us he does not, by any means, appear to have established the consistency of his opinion with scripture. Mr. Kinghorn has fairly met and rebutted all his arguments; and shewed their inconclusiveness; and, from the precepts of scripture and the uniform conduct of the apostle and primitive christians, he has ably supported the opposite sentiment.

That something plausible may be said in favour of mixed communion, to persons of reflection, will not appear surprising. There is hardly any opinion, how erroneous soever, in defence of which, especially when advocated by the most consummate talents, much that is plausible may not be advanced. That baptism should precede the Lord's supper, according to the plan laid down in the New Testament, there cannot surely be

any doubt in the minds of those who, with any attention, examine the point. A person was not considered a member of the visible church before he was baptised; and certainly none but members of churches were admitted to the eucharist. This consideration is of itself sufficient to prove what was the scripture practice; and can it be right, in the receiving of members, and celebrating the ordinances, to introduce a procedure contrary to that laid down and acted upon in the New Testament? If persons can become visible members of the christian church, and be admitted to the Lord's supper unbaptized, the ordinance of baptism is plainly a useless incumbrance, and the sooner, apparently, it is laid aside, the better. Indeed the practice of mixed communion tends necessarily to the disuse of it: and, in proportion as that prevails, it may reasonably be expected that baptism will be disregarded.

Besides the lawfulness of mixed communion, its expediency is adverted to in the controversy. While Mr. Hall contends that, in various ways, it would operate beneficially, his opponent denies it; and from the reason of the thing and the result in some churches where it has been practised, shews, we think, satisfactorily, that it produces injurious effects, and cannot generally be reduced to practice.

For our part, we feel confident that to be consistent, the baptists must either act on the plan of strict communion, or relinquish their peculiar views of the ordinance in question. It is either an ordinance of standing obligation and intended to occupy its primitive station and use in the church, or it is not. If not; it is folly to contend about it. But if it is, communion must be restricted to the baptized. Certainly we have no information in scripture, that its obligations were ever to cease, or any alterations to be made in its form or design. Indeed, to quote the motto which Mr. Kinghorn has very appropriately inserted, in his title page; "Among all the absurdities that ever were held, none ever maintained that any person should partake of the communion before he was baptized." J. W.

ON DEISM.

"Unto you which believe he is precious." 1 Pet. ii. 7.

In vain are the efforts of man,
To put christianity down;

Endeavour as much as he can,
 It never will be overthrown,
 For however deists condemn,
 Where can an equivalent be?
 What! give up my Saviour for them!
 No—Jesus is precious to me.

I would not the gospel forego,
 Its progress and spirit repress,
 For all the whole world can bestow,
 Or thousands of worlds to possess.
 When faith seems expiring with fear,
 And scarce any comfort I see,
 And hope against hope doth appear;
 Then Jesus is precious to me.

Jehovah, on Zion surveys
 The rage of his impotent foes;
 And laughs at the cold feeble rays,
 Their hatred, and malice disclose.
 E'en let them exult in their plan,
 No comfort or peace do I see,
 Adopt their vague system who can—
 'Tis—Jesus is precious to me.

Jehovah, the darkness dispel,
 By faith I the era survey;
 Delusion and prejudice quell,
 May nations be born in a day.
 In praise may professors unite,
 With hearts, lips, and lives, all agree,
 Be Jesus their highest delight;
 And more and more precious to me.

In mercy afflictions control;
 And may they be ne'er sent in vain;
 But sanctify them to my soul,
 And be my supporter in pain.
 When in the near prospect of death,
 My spirit just ready to flee,
 May I, with my last feeble breath,
 Cry,—Jesus is precious to me.

THE
GENERAL BAPTIST REPOSITORY.

No. LIX.—Vol. X. May 1st, 1821.

THE FEMALE MISSIONARY.

IT is a singular fact, that the country towards the north pole, called *West Greenland*, was well known to the nations of Europe, in the tenth century, and afterwards totally lost. In the year nine hundred and ninety-nine, the gospel was introduced into this inhospitable region, by the Norwegians, who established a colony and planted several towns. During the two succeeding centuries, a series of bishops, sent from Norway, governed this part of the church. The settlement contained various churches and monasteries, and is said to have extended along the coast for upwards of two hundred miles. In the beginning of the fifteenth century, the Norwegians were compelled, by the gradual increase of the ice in the polar seas, to discontinue their intercourse with this colony; and at length it became completely shut up from all access. Left thus to themselves, the knowledge of christianity decayed; and when, in the sixteenth century, this coast was again visited by christian navigators, the people were sunk into the grossest paganism. So completely indeed had every vestige of christianity and civilization vanished, that, if the remains of some churches and other sacred edifices had not been discovered, it would have remained a matter of doubt whether this colony had ever existed.

About 1708, the curiosity of *Hans Egede*, a clergyman of Norway, was excited by reading an account of this ancient colony. This induced him to inquire of an acquaintance, who had visited those parts in prosecuting the whale fishery, respecting the present state of the Greenlanders. The replies awakened in his generous mind a lively compassion for those miserable heathens, whom he considered as the descendants of

the ancient christians. He felt it the duty of every follower of Christ, and especially of every Norwegian, to exert himself for the restoration of these degenerate people. This subject arrested his attention and occupied his mind for a long time. In contemplating it, a strong desire arose in his breast, that he might be made an instrument in this good work. But a wife and children, and other relatives, depending on him for support, he endeavoured to suppress the idea, as incompatible with his more immediate duties. These endeavours were fruitless : and, after a long struggle, he determined, in 1710, to present a memorial to several bishops, entreating them to exert their influence for the conversion of the natives of Greenland. His friends viewed the proposal as visionary ; and engaged his wife and family to dissuade him from it. They at first joined earnestly in the attempt ; and for a time reduced him to a state of great perplexity : till the recollection of our Saviour's declaration, " Whosoever loveth father, or mother, or wife, or children more than me, is not worthy of me," strengthened his resolution, and determined him, at all risques, to persevere. In the mean time, several circumstances occurred, which had a tendency to lessen the attachment of his partner to her present situation. Her husband exhorted her to esteem these as designed by Providence to open the way for the accomplishment of his desires. She was deeply affected with this remark, spread the subject before the Lord in secret prayer, solicited divine direction, and soon gained complete satisfaction that it was her duty heartily to unite with her husband in the prosecution of his great object. She informed her delighted partner of this change in her views ; and his greatest obstacle being thus removed, he immediately forwarded a very pressing memorial to the bishops ; who advised him to wait for a more favourable opportunity,

The project of this zealous minister was thus postponed from year to year, and treated, by some with ridicule, by others with pity, and by many with censure. At length, being now animated by the countenance of his worthy partner, in 1718, he resigned his benefice, and determined to devote himself wholly to the promoting of this object. But when he attempted to take leave of a congregation whom he esteemed, and of near relatives and kind friends, his courage failed, and he was ready to relinquish his purpose. His wife however stood

the trial with firmness ; and not only maintained her own resolution, but stimulated her husband to perseverance. At this time, a report reached them, that a vessel had been lost among the ice on the Greenland coast ; and that the crew having escaped to the shore, had been murdered and afterwards devoured by the inhabitants. This report, which was partly founded on fact, instead of discouraging them, rather inflamed the desire of this determined couple to christianize these degraded immortals. They set out for Bergen with four small children, resolved, if no other way opened, to work their passage to this savage country. They were detained at Bergen three years, before they could obtain any means of prosecuting their design. At last, by sacrificing a considerable part of their private fortune, with the assistance of several merchants and friends, a ship was fitted out, which was called *The Hope*. Mr. Egede, with his family and forty other persons, who accompanied him with a view of forming a trading colony, embarked, May 2, 1721. After encountering much stormy weather and vast quantities of ice, by which their lives were frequently placed in the greatest jeopardy, they cast anchor, July 3, in a river on their desired coast. On an island near this place, which Mr. Egede denominated *Hope Island*, they immediately erected a house with stones and earth, well lined with boards. Of this building they took possession, Aug. 31, after a thanksgiving sermon, by Mr. Egede, from *Psa. cxvii*.

This good man lost no time in commencing his benevolent and pious endeavours, amongst the few scattered natives whom he found in the vicinity of the settlement. He used every method to gain their esteem and confidence ; and though totally ignorant of their language, he attempted, by various devices, to instruct them in the knowledge of divine things. But their intellectual powers were very limited, their ideas gross and sensual, and their views low and groveling ; and it was with the utmost difficulty that he made them comprehend any scriptural ideas of religion.

The ship that brought out these missionaries and their friends wintered at Hope Island, and proposed to return to Bergen the succeeding summer, with such of the native commodities as might be likely to be profitable in trade. It had also been agreed that, as early as possible in the spring, their friends at home should dispatch a vessel with provisions and

either needful supplies for this infant colony. The trade with the natives almost wholly failed during the first winter, partly through the poverty of the country and partly through the ignorance of the settlers. The means of subsistence began to fail towards the spring, and the scurvy attacked many of the company. The store-ship also did not arrive according to their expectations, and affairs assumed a very discouraging aspect. Discontent arose amongst the adventurers. They murmured against their minister for having led them into these difficulties, and declared their determination to return home in the ship that had brought them out. Mr. Egede was thus involved in great perplexity. His conscience forbade him deserting a post of usefulness which he had attained with such persevering exertion; nor could he retain, in this inhospitable country, his wife and children, but at the almost certain risque, if they escaped the violence of the natives, of seeing them perish with hunger. In this distress, he prevailed on his people to promise to stay with him till the middle of June; and, if no ship had then arrived, to leave him some part of their provisions. Six of the men also engaged to remain with him; but, when they understood how small a supply would be left with them, they informed him that, in case of any deficiency, they would take the first opportunity of returning home.

No alternative now appeared to be left; and this devoted missionary found himself, as he thought, compelled to abandon an undertaking on which his heart had been so long fixed, and to return with his companions. This heart-rending resolution he reluctantly adopted, and commenced the preparations for his departure. But here again the courage and faith of his intrepid wife were conspicuous. She opposed his resolution with decision and firmness, positively refused to pack up any part of their goods, and expressed her full persuasion, that a ship had been sent out, and would arrive in safety. The people laughed at her credulity; but her pious husband recovered his confidence in the care of Divine Providence. Their hope was not disappointed. On the 27th of June, 1722, a vessel arrived at Hope Island, with plentiful supplies, and encouraging reports of the disposition of their friends and the government to support the mission.

It is not our intention to trace the progress of this interest-

ing mission : our object being to record the heroic faith of this worthy female, as an example and encouragement to those of her sex who may be engaged in the same laudable but arduous undertakings. We shall therefore only observe, that Mr. Egede and his valuable partner continued to prosecute their benevolent design of instructing the savage inhabitants of this dreary region in the gospel of salvation, through various vicissitudes of encouragement and disappointment, till 1733, when three missionaries, sent by the Moravian brethren, joined them. They were received by the original labourers with open arms, and every assistance afforded them. After these Moravians were settled, Mr. Egede began to entertain thoughts of returning to his native country,—to procure a suitable education for his children who were now advancing to maturity—to recruit his own constitution, which incessant toil and care had greatly weakened—and to endeavour to interest European christians in the more effectual prosecution of the mission. In 1735, he received his discharge, in the most gracious manner, from the proper authorities ; but, on account of the severe indisposition of his beloved wife, he remained till the following summer. It pleased God to take this valuable woman to himself, Dec. 21, 1735, after she had spent almost fifteen years in this inhospitable climate, among a race which had sunk almost below humanity. Her husband felt the loss of so suitable a partner, and paid his tribute of sincere affection to her memory, “ All the praise and pauegyric,” he says, “ with which I can crown her name falls far short of what her piety and christian virtue deserve. I will not expatiate on her excellencies in domestic life, nor describe what a faithful helpmate she was to me, and what a tender mother to her children. Let it suffice me to mention how willing and complying she was to submit to my will, as soon as she got an insight into the resolution which I had formed of forsaking my people and native country to repair to Greenland, that I might instruct the ignorant inhabitants in the doctrines of christianity. For, though friends and relatives vehemently importuned her, that, if she had any regard for her own, for mine, or for our tender children’s welfare, she should dissuade and withstand me in this project, so absurd and so frantic in the eyes of all men ; yet, out of love to God and me, she was induced to join heart and hand with me in my undertaking ; and, like a faithful Sarah, to go with

her Abraham from her own people and from her father's house: not to some paradise, but to a strange land, disagreeable to health and comfort. And it is known to many with what patience, nay, with what alacrity, she put her shoulder with mine to bear her part of the labours and adversities we had to endure: nay how often she comforted and cheered up my mind, when it was disheartened and depressed by such reiterated obstacles and repulses."

This was the grateful testimony of her affectionate husband to the merit of his deceased partner: and Crantz, the historian of Greenland, fully corroborates its truth. "I have had occasion several times," he observes, "to mention this brave, magnanimous woman, whom I may with propriety call a christian heroine. I will only add, that I never heard her name mentioned, by the brethren, but with the most respectful and tender impression: as indeed she treated them, on all occasions, as if they had been her children."

Mr. Egede returned to Norway, in 1736; spent an honourable old age in forwarding the interests of the mission, composed a Grammar and Dictionary of the language of Greenland, which were highly approved, and died in 1758, aged seventy-three years.

HINDOO MARRIAGES.

The following account of the Nuptial Ceremonies of the natives of India, extracted from Mr. Ward's late publication, furnishes a happy illustration of our Saviour's interesting parable, Matt. xxv. 1—13.

In the marriages of the rich, great preparations of music, fire works, illuminations, &c. are made, and vast multitudes are invited to the wedding. Some persons spend more than twelve thousand pounds on the marriage of a son or daughter. At a fortunate hour in the night, the bridegroom, dressed in silk, wearing many gold and silver ornaments, a gold chain round his neck, and a gilt crown upon his head, prepares to go to the house of the bride. He is seated in a gilt palanquin, or in a large open carriage, in which there is room for four servants to stand at the four corners in the inside to fan him, or rather to wave over him a brush made of the tail of the cow of Tartary. The procession, at a magnificent wed-

ding, is very long before the bridegroom's carriage. The servants of the father walk, carrying silver staves; open carriages proceed slowly, containing dancing women and singers; a flag is also carried; and a metal instrument, like a dish, is placed on an elephant, and beat at intervals; the streets are illuminated by the flambeaux and lights which the attendants carry in their hands; and fire-works, placed on both sides of the streets, are discharged as the procession moves along. Horses, camels and elephants, richly caparisoned, are placed in convenient situations in the procession; musicians playing on various instruments are seated before and behind the bridegroom; and at intervals guns are fired.

At a nuptial procession, which I saw some years ago, the bridegroom came from a distance, and the bride lived in Serampore, to which place the bridegroom was to come by water. After waiting two or three hours, at length, near midnight, it was announced, as if in the very words of scripture, "Behold! the bridegroom cometh: go ye out to meet him." All the persons employed now lighted their lamps and ran with them in their hands, to fill up their stations in the procession. Some of them had lost their lights and were unprepared, but it was then too late to seek them; and the cavalcade, something like the above, moved forwards to the house of the bride. There the company entered, a large and splendidly illuminated area before the house, covered with an awning, and were seated upon mats. The bridegroom was carried in the arms of a friend, and placed on a superb seat in the midst of the company, where he sat a short time and then went into the house; the door of which was immediately shut and guarded by sepoy. I and others expostulated with the door keepers, but in vain. Never was I so struck with our Lord's beautiful parable, as at this moment. "And the door was shut." I was exceedingly anxious to be present while the marriage formulas were repeated, but was obliged to depart in disappointment.

THE MUTUAL CO-OPERATION OF THE MEMBERS OF CHURCHES RECOMMENDED.

Every christian should feel a deep interest in a subject which includes his own welfare and that of the church to which he

belongs; the subject of these remarks peculiarly possesses these claims, and is worthy the serious regard of all those who love the gospel of Christ.

By *co-operation* is understood, a "working together." It implies an union of hearts, and an union of exertions in the cause of Jesus Christ. It is the identifying law of his kingdom, and compels us to collect, unite and employ our individual and scattered energies. The apostle Paul has fully described it, I Cor. xii. where it is stated that the members of a christian church should act together with as much regularity and union as the members of the human frame. That there should be no division or separate interests, but that all should have the same care for each other. "Happy is that people that is in such a case!" If this be a correct view of the subject, how frequently are we defective! how much reason have we to mourn our inattention! and how important it is to examine, what considerations are proper to excite and promote in us a disposition to work together.

A tender and affectionate regard to Jesus Christ must be maintained. He purchased the church with his own blood, and is justly considered its head: he directs and influences every part. A steady faith in his death will induce ardent love, and the more we love him, the more we shall love his disciples. This is the foundation of our union and co-operation.

Love to the brethren must be preserved and fostered. Two can neither walk nor work together except they be agreed. Surely it is natural and reasonable, as well as pleasant and useful, for the children of one Father, heirs of the same inheritance, and partakers of the same privileges, to "love one another with a pure heart fervently." The laws of consanguinity are not more binding and sacred than the ties of the gospel. Whenever we recognize a real christian, let his temporal circumstances be what they may, we meet a brother. To him our affection cleaves, we love him for "the truth's sake which is in him." The passion is mutual, and the consequence is, we can work together. Indeed it is not too much to say, that a want of co-operation among church members, may be universally ascribed to the absence of christian love. Oh! let christians then love another, and their exertions to serve the

cause of Jesus will be mutual, and of course successful. "Union is power."

We should endeavour to feel a personal interest in the cause of Christ. We have solemnly, voluntarily, and deliberately espoused it as our own, and should feel as much for its welfare, as we would for that of the families to which we belong. Its concerns must not be left to others, as though we had nothing to do with them. No considerations can justify such neglect; but all conspire to reprove and to condemn it. Let us remember that we have identified ourselves with the cause of Christ, or we shall not co-operate with the saints. David is a proper example to be imitated here, "Because of the house of the Lord," said he, "I will seek thy good." The Jews in captivity, rather than renounce their interest in Zion, would have endured the loss of their hands and tongues. "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning." &c. Psa. cxxxvii.

Our enemies co-operate. Satan, and wicked men unite. Our contest is with flesh and blood, in connection with principalities and powers. The combination is terrific and formidable; and this circumstance renders it peculiarly necessary that christians should avail themselves of all the strength they collectively possess. If they cease to co-operate, they become an easy prey to their enemies; but acting in union, the gates of hell shall not prevail against them.

These considerations and such like are calculated to promote the joint exertion already described, and the advantages attending it are so obvious that they need only to be mentioned.

Each will answer some valuable purpose. We shall live, not live unto ourselves but to him who died for us; and every one of us will "please his neighbour for his good to edification."

Our individual comfort in the cause of Christ will be secured. How distressing to stand alone! and how pleasurable to enjoy the company, and aid of our brethren! how encouraging to the heart, and strengthening to the hands of a minister, and the active officers of a church! Oh, for more zealous co-operation!

The prosperity of religion will be promoted. It is easy of proof, that those churches are the most prosperous and increasing where there is much co-operation. With what fervour does a minister preach! with what application the word is

heard! what plans for the spread of religion are contemplated! and with what success are the schemes of benevolence carried into effect! "The word of the Lord runs and is glorified."

Evil will be prevented, especially those most wicked of all propensities, backbiting, detraction, whispering and evil speaking, which gender confusion and every evil work. With such as are "workers together," these cannot exist. They are unable to breathe the pure air of christian love.

If this subject were more considered by christians of the present day, their own comfort and the increase of the churches, in connection with the glory of God, and the salvation of sinners, would be more abundantly promoted. Thus should we bear some resemblance to that loveliest of examples for which the primitive christians were so happily distinguished; and to whose eternal honour it is deposited in the archives of our religion: that "the multitude of them that believed, were of one heart and of one soul."

Warwickshire, March 8th, 1821.

Z.

ANSWER TO QUERIES,

(See G. B. R. page 111, Vol. X.)

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

In the passage referred to by your correspondent, Luke xiv. 26, and in all similar passages, *hatred* is evidently used in a comparative, not an absolute sense, and *to hate* signifies to love the object in a less degree than we love another. This is the obvious meaning of the term in various places of scripture. One may suffice. Our Lord says, Matt. vi. 24. "No man can serve two masters: for he will hate the one and love the other:" that is prefer one to the other, and so "cleave to one and despise the other." And the adorable Teacher who made the declaration, "If any man come unto me and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple," has given us his own interpretation of his meaning, in the parallel text, Matt. x. 37. "He that *loveth* father or mother *more than me* is not worthy of me: and he that *loveth* son or daughter *more than me* is not worthy of me." The

important truth, intended to be taught in both places, is, that though we ought to love our relatives, and to discharge every duty of affection towards them; and though christianity, when it really influences the heart, will certainly cause its possessor to be more exemplary in every social virtue; yet the Saviour will be the object of supreme affection. And if a case should occur in which our duty to our relatives and our obedience to our Saviour are inconsistent, then the former must give place to the latter. Every earthly connection and every earthly possession must be resolutely sacrificed, sooner than prove faithless or disobedient to Him who has bought us with the price of his own blood. May this be the disposition of every reader of the G. B. R!

A. Z.

If your correspondent T. B. J. L. query *second*, who inquires the meaning of the prophet, Isa. xxxii, 20, will turn to page 102, Vol. VII. of the G. B. R. he will find it stated that, in the eastern countries, while the land contiguous to rivers is still overflowed with water, they cause it to be well trodden by horses, oxen, or asses, and thus prepare it for receiving the rice-seed, which they scatter on the water. To this custom the sacred penman alludes; and as he probably is looking forward to gospel-times, he may refer to the great success that should attend the preaching of christianity, when the apostles and their successors should sow the seed of the word on all hearts properly prepared by the influence of the Holy Spirit to receive it, and not be confined in their ministrations, as the prophet had been, to the Jews.

B. Y.

In reply to the third query, it may be observed, that the propriety of any rule for church government, in addition to those found in the new testament, seems very questionable. If any human rule for this purpose be at all different from the inspired directions, it is evidently improper. If it be a rule to regulate something that the New Testament has not noticed, it is not paying sufficient deference to the silence of scripture. And to make a rule to regulate what God has decreed, is, to say the least, unnecessary and vain. But not to evade the inquiry, let it be observed that the New Testament has positively forbidden believers to marry unbelievers. 2 Cor. xi. 14. and 2 Cor. vii. 39. In the judgment of charity, every

one that has made a credible profession of faith in Christ, and has united himself to the Lord's people, is a believer; it is therefore forbidden to a church member, to use the expression of the inquirer to marry an unbeliever. In too many instances, however this prohibition is disregarded; this rule is violated. When that is the case, should the offending party be excluded from church fellowship? I conceive not. Because, I am not aware that any direction for that is given in scripture. Besides, it will scarcely be contended that, by marrying an unbeliever, a believer necessarily deprives himself of all claim to the christian character, and if he does not, why should he be excluded from the fellowship of christians? Again, this would be to inflict the most severe ecclesiastical punishment, without any probability in most cases, of its being removed on earth. In all cases of moral delinquency, for which members may be excluded, if they are brought to repentance, they may be restored; but, in that now under consideration, there is no room for repentance; or, at least, no opportunity to bring forth fruit meet for repentance, so long as the believer retains his unbelieving partner; and it would certainly not be proper for him to put her away. If it should be asked, what punishment should be inflicted on persons that thus offend? We answer, that which the scriptures enjoin. But, if they recommend none, the case is clear: the offender must be left to the righteous judgment of the infallible judge. May each reader obtain mercy of the Lord in that day!

IOTA.

In offering a word or two in reply to the fourth query, respecting such as absent themselves from social worship, it is taken for granted that, the minister, or other officers of the church, have visited the absentee, and have endeavoured, by friendly and affectionate conversation, to point out the importance of an habitual attention to public and private means of grace; and the person is supposed after this habitually to neglect the public worship of God. Would it not then be proper for the church to appoint a person or two to wait on the absentee, and to endeavour, by earnest and affectionate admonition, to make him sensible of the impropriety and danger of his conduct? By this means, if there were any misunderstanding,

it might be removed, and a better mind imparted to the offender. If his neglect spring from a declension in religious enjoyment, he might, by this means, be quickened and induced to do his first works again. But, if after repeated admonitions of this kind, conducted with seriousness and an evident desire for the spiritual and eternal welfare of the individual, no permanent alteration should be made, then, as there cannot in *fact* be any communion between the church and such a person, it would afford no advantage to either party to maintain a mere nominal communion. There seems to be no alternative, but to cut off the lifeless professor as a withered branch, unprofitable in every view, and unseemly among branches that are flourishing and fruitful.

IOTA.

In reply to J. B. who wishes to be informed what is the import of the text, Isa. xii. 3, it may be observed, that, the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit are often in scripture represented by water; see John vii. 37—39; that these graces are imparted and nonrished by the attendance on gospel ordinances and the means of grace. The prophet, therefore, anticipating the general diffusion of the blessings and privileges which should take place under the gospel dispensation, says that, in those happy days, christians shall enjoy the consolations and heavenly influences of the Holy Spirit in rich abundance, from their participation in those ordinances and means of grace which shall then abound. This he elegantly expresses, in the style of eastern metaphor, by “drawing water with joy out of the wells of salvation.”

C. X.

The meaning of the Psalmist, in the passage referred to by *Ignotus*, Psal. xlix. 5, is confessedly obscure. Some suppose that the term *heels* is here designed to express the general conduct of the person, and is equivalent to footsteps or path; and that the iniquity of the heels intends the malicious endeavours of his enemies to catch at his conduct, and lay a snare for his falling: or, as some commentators have expressed it, their attempts to trip up his heels, and “overthrow his goings,” as the Psalmist himself speaks, Psalm cxl. 4. Dr. Patrick therefore paraphrases the passage mentioned by your correspondent, thus, “What cause is there that I should be troubled with fears and cares and anxiety of mind in cala-

mitous times, when the iniquity of those that endeavour to supplant me hath surrounded me on all sides, and left me no way to escape them. Some suppose that the word translated *heels*, in our version, ought to be rendered *supplanters*: and the phrase then would be "the iniquity of my supplanters," This rendering they justify from the etymology of the Hebrew term used in the original. The sense however would still be the same.

D. W.

Permit me, Sir, to say a word or two on the very important query respecting Sunday Schools, proposed by J. B.

It is natural for human productions to tend towards imperfection. The progress of the best institutions and the most benevolent designs is frequently retrograde. This, it is feared is the case in reference to the Sunday School system. What design could be more godlike than that of Mr. Raikes, the immortal founder of Sunday Schools; which was to take children, who would otherwise, on the sabbath, be the prey of every juvenile vice, and teach them to read the scriptures and to revere the sacred day and Him that has appointed it? The man that devised this plan ought to be enrolled among the greatest benefactors of our species. But when, instead of pursuing the simple and heavenly design of Raikes, the sabbath is mostly employed, as in some schools, in communicating mere secular instruction; when, instead of pursuing the first unostentatious plan, great display is made in public examinations, &c. and when, instead of engaging the serious attention of the children by affection and interesting instruction, they are bought by costly presents of books and an annual feast, then the design is evidently degenerated and needs reformation. The feasts referred to are not only unnecessary and unprofitable, but hurtful. They, in some instances, beget an injurious familiarity in the minds of the children towards their teachers—and, if the children in other Sunday Schools in the neighbourhood are not treated in the same imprudent manner, they are dissatisfied, and sometimes leave their poor school for that in which they may enjoy this christmas fare. But, when the expences of these feasts are defrayed out of the school funds, an objection, yet more serious, lies against them. If, as is supposed, the funds of the school were obtained for the purpose of affording instruction to poor

children, to diminish these funds by feasts is a breach of trust in the managers of the school, and a species of dishonesty towards the benefactors of the institution. If the funds be more than sufficient to defray the just expences of the school, it would be no misapplication of them, to contribute a little to some indigent school; or, it would perhaps be better to appropriate an annual sum for the establishment and support of a library of judicious and serious books, for the use of such scholars as a committee of management might judge proper.

A FRIEND TO SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

Perceiving by the remarks of Z. inserted in page 162, of your last Repository, that I have been so unfortunate as to perplex some of your readers, I beg to offer a few words in explanation.

Z. wishes to know *what* means and offices are intended. I reply every means and every office that is not sanctioned by the scriptures. It cannot be expected that any one should specify all the unscriptural means and offices that the inventive imagination of man may create. For, as Dr. Owen remarks, "When men once overstep the bounds of scripture, there is no knowing where they may stop." As a specimen of the eccentric and impious movements that they then make, we may refer to numerous offices and means in the Roman ecclesiastical hierarchy, or in its descendant, the ecclesiastical establishment of England. There are Arch-Bishops, Diocesan-Bishops, Arch-Deacons, Prebendaries, Canons, Minor Canons, Chancellors, &c. &c. To these may be added, in the class of means, the Cross in Baptism and the ceremony of Confirmation. All very edifying, no doubt, in the estimation of their inventors; but, for which, we may in vain search the New Testament. Surely if the simplicity of the gospel had been preserved and revered, these would never have been heard of, as forming a part of any christian church. But, as these things are in existence, and as the spirit that produced them is not yet annihilated, it may well be supposed that we are not fighting with a shadow.

But, it is hoped these corruptions are not creeping into our Connection. Is this then a reason that they must never be referred to? That which has been, may be; and, to be guarded against them, if ever they should appear, will not be altogether

unimportant. The progress of corruptions is admirably described by Z. by the epithet *creeping*: and, it should be remembered that creeping things proceed slowly, silently, and almost imperceptibly. It would be no great wonder therefore, if, in their first movements, they should not be observed by every one.

I trust, Sir, that these remarks will remove all perplexity and difficulty, occasioned by my former communication.

I remain,

J. J. L.

ON CONTENTION.

By the late Mr. John Taylor, of Queenshead.

“If a wise man contend with a foolish man, whether he rage or laugh there is no rest.” Prov. xxix. 9.

In the scriptures, a wise man sometimes signifies a good, pious, holy man: one that is turned to God and trusts in the Lord Jesus Christ, is converted and made an heir of God, according to the language of the New Testament; or, in the phraseology of the Old Testament, one who fears and loves and serves God. Thus Prov. ix. 10. “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.” And, Dan. xii. 3. “They that be wise shall shine as the firmament.” On the contrary, the word *fool* sometimes applies to a wicked man, one that is going in the broad way to destruction; as in Luke xii. 20. “Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee.” Prov. xiv. 9. “Fools make a mock of sin:” and many other passages.—But it is well known that the term *fool* is also frequently applied to ignorant men, of a disorderly and imprudent behaviour. This is not uncommon in the scriptures, and the book of Proverbs furnishes many instances of it. On the other hand, a wise man intends one who manages his affairs with prudence and behaves in a decent regular manner. Thus Solomon says: “Every wise woman buildeth her house, but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands.” “The fool uttereth all his mind; but the wise keep it in till afterwards.” “The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright; but the mouth of the fool poureth out foolishness,” &c. &c. In this

sense, I suppose the words are to be understood in the text, placed at the head of these remarks. The wise man is he who is qualified to behave decently and prudently, and who does so behave in the general course of his conduct: the foolish man is the disorderly, ungentle and clownish fellow. It however often happens that these disorderly persons are also really wicked: they are generally ignorant of the word of God, or uninfluenced by its precepts.

Contending means striving with the tongue, or disputing, as it is frequently called; though it often is no better than wrangling. I need not refer to the scriptures for instances: every body will recollect them. I am affected to find so many: as servants with their masters—men with their God—christians with Peter,—one part of a church with another—apostles with apostles—and some men even preaching Christ of contention, &c. &c. Contention then is that sharp disputing which is so common in this ignorant passionate world: and Solomon does not directly forbid such contention, but speaks of it as not very comfortable or very honourable. Sometimes good men are spoken of as contending, when it seems to be designed for their honour. Thus Prov. xxviii. 4. "They that forsake the law, praise the wicked; but such as keep the law contend with them." But perhaps the contention designed by the wise man is not in words, but in conduct. They judge the wicked by their piety, truth, righteousness, honesty, sobriety, and all their good works. Sometimes christians are exhorted to contend. So Jude 3. "Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." Here it is evident that contending by words is included, whatever be the whole meaning of the exhortation. Again we read of Michael the archangel contending with the devil about the body of Moses; when words were certainly employed, for Michael said "The Lord rebuke thee." Jude 9. Indeed while the wise and the foolish are mingled together as they now are, wise men perhaps cannot, and perhaps they ought not, always to avoid contending with the foolish. Sometimes it happens that foolish men meddle with affairs of great moment, and their folly might do considerable mischief. To prevent this, a wise man may interfere, and attempt to instruct, were it possible, the foolish man; or, if this cannot be done, to stop the mouths of gain-sayers.

It may perhaps be inquired, "How often? and on what occasion? and how long may a wise man make such an attempt?" This is a great question, but I can only say in general, that circumstances must determine the whole. The circumstances I mean are:—the weight and importance of the subject—the credit or influence of the foolish man—the qualifications and ability of the wise man—the influence that he may have on the parties concerned—the opportunity that he may have for what ought to be done, the place where and the persons among whom he is, &c. Because sometimes the subject is trifling, or perhaps neither the wise nor the foolish man has much authority. In such cases, it will not be prudent to begin hastily, to continue long, or to be very vehement. Thus the rest of the circumstances may be applied. This is all that I dare say in answer; except what the wise man hath hinted at. "Leave off contention, before it be ineddled with." Prov. xvii. 14. This cannot, from what has been already said, be understood as an invariable rule; but the writer must intend, at least, that it is often the best not to enter on it at all. If you be compelled to contend, he informs you, Prov. xiv. 7, when to leave off: "Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the words of knowledge."

I come now to consider the mode in which a foolish man manages his contentions: he rages and laughs. Raging is a violent degree of passion rising to what is usually called madness. Laughing is the effect of a heated passion, of a great degree of joy, of contempt, of pride, or of triumph. There are the joyful laughers, the sneering laughers, the boasting laughers, the spiteful laughers, and those who laugh through habit, for no other reason that any one can discover, except that they are accustomed to laugh. I am persuaded that the sacred peuman intends to impute this raging and laughing to the foolish man: because I hope, it is very seldom that wise men do rage. I do not find any instance in scripture, that I recollect, of a wise and good man being in a rage at all; nor do I find one wise man laughing in contention with a fellow mortal. One would also hope that a wise man can manage both himself and his business without falling into a rage: or, if he cannot, his wisdom will teach him to yield. For it is a poor, mean point indeed that can be proved or gained by rage or laughter; and he is a poor dastardly antagonist who will yield

his point to such arguments. Besides, though a wise man might drop it to prevent indecency; yet surely a wise man has but little reason to expect that a fool would desist for fear of such consequences. Michael desisted and referred it to his Maker, rather than indulge in improper language or temper; but there is not much reason to suppose that the devil would have declined the debate, for the same reason. Did not Michael know that he would have done a service to his opponent if he had begun to rage or play the mountebank? And may not any wise man know the same, when he is contending with a fool? Not the wise man but "the fool rages and is confident." Prov. xiv. 16.

Perhaps it may be instructive to glance at the ragers and laughers mentioned in the holy book. The ragers are Naaman, Sennacherib, Asa, Job's horse, the jealous man, Nebuchadnezzar, the heathen, chariots, the sea, strong drink, and the fool. The human beings among them, so far as I see, had not sufficient reason to unman themselves to that degree, in being so mad; and their dreadful rage seems to have been equally useless and unnecessary. How observable it is, that by such indulgence of passion, man and brute, rational and irrational creatures, animate and inanimate are reduced to one species, and seem all to act in the same senseless manner. The jeering and boasting laughers of whom scripture speaks are few. I recollect only Job's horse and the fool. The former, out of pride and disdain, laughed at the shaking of the spear; of the latter, Solomon says, "As the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool. This also is vanity."

Some persons, I think Solomon calls them fools, begin a dispute or contention with boasting, and carry it on with laughing; except that, at times, their laughing gives way to triumph and boasting. All the while, they are as confident as if they were privileged with infallibility. You may propose your own views in the fairest, calmest manner. They are heard, if heard at all, with sovereign contempt; and answered, if noticed at all, with empty ridicule. You may desire proofs or some evidence of the truth of what such an opponent asserts; and his reasons will be, "It is sure to be so." "It must be so." "I am certain it is so." "It cannot but be so." "It's ridiculous to think otherwise." "It's too self

evident to need proof." These will be his arguments, with perhaps a sneer or a laugh to support the whole. If a sneer or a laugh be not strong enough to silence your opposition, he has recourse to rage, as the final confirmation. Propose to him as modestly and plainly as you can—to think it over again—to examine authors who have written on the subject—to call in the assistance of a few sensible friends; and most probably his reply will be—"It needs no thinking about at all. Every body but blockheads will see it plainly at first, and understand it as I do." "What signifies calling in help; *I* want no help." "As for those who have written on the subject, they know no more of it than *I* do; probably not so much." "It signifies nothing: if all the world should think otherwise, *I* shall both think and say just as *I* do." "You need say no more; *I* am sure *I* shall never alter while *I* live." Thus he settles it: and perhaps mingles with all, fits of rage and madness, and plenty of contemptuous proud laughter. But do what he will, whether he rage or laugh, he has no rest. Take what method you can, you have no satisfaction.

Such a disposition and method as the above will not, *I* think, be often found in a wise man. It certainly is very indecent and unwise. But the indecency and folly of it are proportioned to the nature and importance of the subject of contention. If the subject be trifling in its own nature and unimportant in its effects, it matters little how it is treated. If, on the other hand, it be of a moral or religious nature; if the tendency and consequences of it may affect the happiness or holiness of any one; if the truth of God in the Bible stand any way connected with it; if the interests of religion or the experience of christians be likely to receive benefit or injury from the decision, then it surely demands serious and rational examination. Steadiness, resolution, moderation, patience, diligence and faithfulness should be employed as its ready and obedient servants.

The impropriety and unusefulness of such contention is obvious. In general, it will be prudent to shun such familiarity with the foolish and the scornful. Solomon often gives this advice directly; and the text seems designed as a tacit admonition to the wise to beware of such persons. If however their company cannot always be avoided, stand on your guard. Do not be injured by them; but do them good if you can.

Though, while they are so much like the whirlwind and the raging sea, there is little prospect of doing them any good ; and they are not qualified to benefit you. Mutual reciprocal instruction is hardly to be expected. For, if the poor man appear in his less terrible and more ludicrous dress ; if he do not rage but laugh, what benefit can be derived from his laughing ? If he laugh at your ignorance, whether real or only fancied, if he laugh at your unqualifiedness for disputing, if he banter and jeer you, what do you gain by all this ? If he taunt your sentiments as wild or enthusiastic, rather than examine them by some proper standard, will that yield you any satisfaction ? No. The effects will most commonly be—loss of your precious time, which might have, and should have been better employed :—loss of your comfort and peace of mind ; for very often when you meet with such a man, you can scarcely avoid speaking ; and one word produces another, till your mind, which was easy and cheerful at the beginning, grows dark and cold and restless before the end :—loss of your credit among men of wisdom ; for, though perhaps it be too severe, yet they will have less respect for you ; if they hear you often contending with fools—injury to the subject of debate, the doctrine or truth that you wish to maintain ; for while it is laughed at with so much derision and spite, while blown away with such tempestuous whirlwinds, or swept away with such torrents of rage, it may discourage and unsettle some and provoke others. It will also be no wonder, if the disposition of your raging or laughing antagonist should create a similar disposition in you. This would at once detract from your peace of mind and your credit ; for, let it be known and remembered, that there is no honour but real disgrace connected with such a disposition and behaviour, as Solomon, here attributes to the foolish man.

Who can help reflecting on considering this subject, what dreadful evidence we have of our degenerate and depraved state, as fallen from God ! What incontestible proof of this have we in these ragers and laughers ! and how many such persons as these may be found in our poor world ! How awful and affecting it is, when such a disposition is shewn and such methods taken by any who dispute about subjects which are divine, spiritual and eternal ! In proportion to the nature of

the subject is the dishonour, shame and scandal. Let this be remembered.

Let every one then, who wishes to be happy, useful, or respectable, avoid making the foolish, the contentious and the scornful his familiar companions. "Make no friendship with an angry man, and with a furious man thou shalt not go; lest thou learn his ways and get a snare to thy soul." Prov. xxii. 24, Let us also scrupulously avoid being like him, and imitating his conduct. We may have good evidence that we have truth and right on our side; but if, in conversation with others, we cannot bring them to see and own the truth without falling into fits of madness, or indulging in scornful sneers, it is not probable that these methods will carry conviction to their minds. Reason and evidence if they can be given and received will be useful; but rage and laughter are not reason and evidence. Let us study a good behaviour and determine to exercise it towards all whom we wish to convince. This is strongly recommended in the Bible; and it would be much to our honour and to the advantage of our cause, if we could learn "in meekness to instruct those that oppose themselves." Especially let us all take care, never to be shaken in mind, or brought to hesitate or doubt the divine truth, because a poor, unhappy fellow mortal may treat it and us with contempt. If it be plainly taught in the Bible, let us hold it fast; and recollect that God is true, and every one that opposes him is a liar.

**DEFENCE OF MONITOR'S ADVICE TO
REBECCA.**

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

SIR,

The Quarterly Paper, No. 11, had been on my table some time, before I discovered, that Mr. Ward's well known Letter to the Ladies of Liverpool had been made the introduction to some strictures on Monitor's advice to Rebecca, published in your Repository for November last. I read them carefully; but, though they excited both my surprize and regret, they did not appear to require any notice from me. I was persuaded that every honest mind, which compared the observations in

the Quarterly Paper, with my communication, must perceive that the writer had entirely misunderstood my intentions. It is, therefore, with extreme reluctance, that I yield to the solicitations of several judicious friends, who think that justice to the cause of truth demands some reply to an attack so unmerited; and send you the following lines for insertion in your next number.

The obvious intention of the writer in the Quarterly Paper, is to represent Monitor as an enemy to the cause of Missions. Certainly the contrary is evident on the very face of my advice to Rebecca. I approve, I encourage, to the utmost of my ability, missionary exertions. I should rejoice sincerely to see G. B. missionaries actively and successfully engaged in the blessed work of evangelizing the heathen. My object was, by regulating the zeal and directing the efforts of individuals, to guard against that re-action which will certainly take place, sooner or later, when any object is imprudently pushed out of its proper place. Whatever methods be taken to prevent it, men will discover, that they must support their own churches and their own Connection or both Missions and every other good design must sink.

The writer in the Q. P. represents Monitor as advising his correspondents, to "yield *no aid* to the missionary cause till they have done *all that is needed* at home,"—as wishing them to infer "that, if they help missions, *while one of the four-score churches*" which compose the New Connection "*needs help*, they will neglect their own house and be worse than infidels." But this, Sir, is a palpable mistake. I said that—it is the duty of every member of a church, not to do all that was needed, but "to bear *his proportion*,"—to contribute "*his part*" towards the necessary expence and labour of supporting the interest to which he belongs,—not to supply *all the wants* of every church, but to take "*his share*" in any claims that might be made on the Connection, and that these are his *first duties*. I did say; and, with all his flaming periods full in my view, I boldly repeat it, "that the support of our own church and our own Connection are imperative duties, that result from our solemn engagements with God and his people; and that he who does not, for whatever reason, discharge the claims which these have upon him, violates the laws of scripture and the dictates of reason." And will the

writer in the Q. P. venture to deny the truth of this assertion? I can hardly suppose that he will. If he should deny it, I leave him: and only repeat the rational admonitions of the apostle. "Render to all their dues:" "Let all things be done in order:" and, "As we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, *especially* unto them who are of the household of faith."

Again, this writer represents me as telling your readers, that when they have done all that is needed at home, "then, if they have a *few halfpence* to spare, they may, if *they please*, give them to the mission." But, Sir, what is the fact? I told them that, when they had borne *their proportion* of the expences of their own church and Connection—not when they had done all that was needed—then they might *indulge the generous impulses* of their own breasts, and enrol themselves among the friends of the heathen. I said, that "missionary institutions would *certainly* arrest the attention and obtain the support of *every* sincere christian whom Providence had blest with the ability to assist them." I asserted, that "the man who can be indifferent to missions betrays a lamentable apathy in his views of the value of immortal souls, and exhibits unhappy symptoms of his want of love to his fellow sinners and of zeal for the glory of his Saviour?" Such, Sir, were *my* assertions. I leave your readers to compare them with the Q. P. and make their own reflections.

This writer proceeds to quote the parable of the good Samaritan, as intended to teach the bigotted Jews that a Samaritan was his brother; "and a brother whom it was his duty to help, instead of confining all his benevolence to his Jewish kindred." Granted. But do I confine *all* my benevolence to my own kindred or nation? or, do I endeavour to persuade others not to extend their benevolence beyond their own connections? Let my reply to Rebecca speak for me. I request any one who feels a doubt on the subject to peruse that short piece; and cheerfully rest my character on the result. All his eloquence on this subject is, therefore, misapplied.

It were easy to enlarge; but as this writer has evidently mistaken his object, and employed his zeal against a man of straw of his own formation, it is unnecessary. Had he adduced any scripture authority against my advice, it might have been proper to have examined it. Had he attempted to

shew, by any thing like argument, that I had misapplied the texts which I have quoted, it might have been necessary to have defended my application of them. But, as he has done neither, I have no wish to extend these remarks. I know it would be improper to fill many of your pages with a vindication of an anonymous individual. Nor shall I attempt to notice the unwarrantable language adopted by this writer. It is too extravagant for sober observation, and I heartily pity the man that can adopt it.

But, before I lay down my pen, I beg leave to add that, though I think justice required these free animadversions on the writer in the Q. P. I by no means wish to judge his motives. I am well aware how much zeal for one object, and a continued, intense application of the mind to it, magnify that object in the person's estimation and diminish all others. I know too that, in such circumstances, there is naturally an excessive jealousy of any thing that seems to interfere with the schemes upon the accomplishment of which the heart is set. To such causes as these, not to any wilful design to pervert my meaning, I would willingly ascribe the unaccountable mistakes of this gentleman. The misrepresentation of which he has been guilty is indeed great; but "peradventure it was an oversight." Nor do I believe that the irregularities against which I cautioned Rebecca are likely to be very prevalent in our Connection. I indulge a pleasing confidence, strengthened by recent occurrences, that a large majority of both churches and ministers, while they give liberally, not halfpence but pounds, to the mission, will shew by their actions, when called upon, that, like the primitive christians, they are ready to exert themselves to the utmost of their power, yea, and beyond their power, in ministering to the necessities of the saints.

That we may all be more active and faithful in our endeavours to glorify our Saviour and promote his interest on earth—that we may all, through divine grace, meet in that happy state, where misunderstandings shall no more be known—and that we may be preserved from "falling out by the way"—is, Sir, the earnest prayer of,

Your's cordially,

MONITOR.

A LETTER TO THE GENERAL BAPTIST CHURCH AT NORWICH.

The following Letter, from a young man who has lately renounced the Unitarian sentiments, is inserted, at the special request of the church to which it was addressed; with the hope that it may promote the honour of the Saviour, and afford direction and encouragement to those who may be in circumstances similar to the writer's.

Norwich, Jan. 1st, 1821.

It is now about six years since, I had the happiness of meeting this church in the public services of Almighty God, and in the participation of the ordinances of religion. During which time I have experienced a variety of changes, but in all these changes of circumstances, I have found the same kind and gracious Providence invariably attending me. The experience of six years convinces me, that the Lord is nigh to them that fear him, and though, by an unhappy attachment to a man, long since gone to his account, I was drawn aside from the truth as it is in Jesus; yet blessed be God, I never lost the fear of his name, and the love of his ordinances. The fact is, my dear friends, if you will allow one so unworthy to use that title, for three years I have contemplated a return.

As it was amongst you that I first embraced these sentiments, which have produced so much misery to my mind, it is to you that I owe it in particular to make this declaration; assuring you of my return to those principles which I held during the first and happiest part of my religious life; and without which I have experienced no hope, no joy in believing. I have wandered comfortless and alone, amongst a strange people who have made a shipwreck of faith; whilst I have sighed in secret for the tabernacles of the God of Jacob, because I had none to whom I could complain.

I am aware of the inconveniences to which I expose myself in thus coming forward to make this declaration of my renunciation of unitarianism. I am aware that I shall be the subject of ridicule, amongst my old friends, and I am in danger of losing all future usefulness and comfort in a profession of all others the most honourable as it is divine. Nevertheless

I communicated my intention, to Dr. Evans, of leaving the unitarian connection before I hinted it to any one else. This was done to shew I did not intend to play with two parties. I have considered the danger of being suspected and of being refused by those to whom I might wish to join myself. All these things I have duly, and with prayer for divine assistance, considered. I have counted the cost.

Though so dissatisfied with unitarian sentiments as to prefer obscurity to preaching them, when I left the academy; yet I have taken ten months to ponder the steps I ought to take. During this time, I have had no intercourse with any denomination. Thus having had much time and leisure for reflection, I have considered this step which was to involve so deeply my present and everlasting welfare.

After many struggles against false shame, interest and old personal attachments, I come forward, without any inducement but my own deliberate determination, and I humbly hope the dictates of that Spirit which guides into all truth.

Thus I come forward publicly to declare my determination to separate from the unitarian connection; and I now, in the most solemn manner, God being the witness of my sincerity, before the searcher of all hearts, before the church of Christ wheresoever this declaration may come in any form, and in the presence of this church in particular, I renounce for ever the sentiments known by the name unitarianism, as unscriptural and insufficient for salvation.

My present views of the doctrines of the scriptures may be seen in the following articles.—1. I believe most unfeignedly in the existence of one God, the Creator of all things, the Supporter and Governor of all worlds, and that in this unity there are three distinct beings to whom the attributes of the Deity are ascribed.—2. I believe in the Deity and natural equality of Christ with the Father.—3. In the particular and general influence of the Holy Spirit: particular, as in the case of prophets and apostles; general, as in the work of regeneration.—4. In the hereditary depravity of man.—5. In the doctrine of atonement.—6. In the efficacy and absolute necessity of faith to salvation, amongst the hearers of the gospel.—7. That true faith is evidenced by moral obedience.—8. In believers' baptism by immersion.—9. In the resurrection of the just and unjust.—10. In a future judgment.—11. In the

everlasting happiness of the righteous and everlasting punishment of the wicked.

I have thus laid before you a brief statement of my views of the gospel, in the plainest manner; and whenever God shall call me to act in his vineyard, these principles shall be the foundation of my public instructions and private admonitions.

In expressing the deepest regret for having suffered an undue bias to lead astray my mind from truth, I express the genuine feelings of my heart. If the sufferings of a mind perplexed by doubts can raise compassion amongst the disciples of that Saviour who pitied the wanderings of his disciples, I shall be an object of pity. If however they pass me by as unworthy, I shall still rejoice that I have thus publicly owned that Saviour whom I once denied.

I intended to have said much more, but want of room forbids me. Hoping that we shall all, one day, meet to sing the praises of that Redeemer who has bought us with his blood,

I remain, your friend in the gospel,

W. BROWN.

QUERY ANSWERED.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

Your correspondent A. F. S. W. at page 173, of the last number, having requested a few thoughts on John vi. 37, the following are submitted for insertion, should you think them worth a place in your valuable Repository.

In order to a proper understanding of the passage, it is necessary to enter into the circumstances connected with the declaration of our Lord—He, having performed a miracle near the sea of Tiberias, took shipping and came to Capernaum; whither the multitude, who had witnessed the miracle and participated in its beneficial effects, came, “seeking Jesus.” They having found him, he entered into conversation with them; in the course of which he declared himself to be “sent of God.” Though these persons had been so far convinced, by the miracles he wrought, and the doctrines he promulgated, as to exclaim, but the day preceding, “This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world;” yet now, they re-

quire a sign that they may see and believe: stating, that Moses, as a sign of his mission, had procured them bread from Heaven. Our Lord replied, "*I am the bread of life.*" This reply not having produced a proper effect on their minds, he added, "ye also have *seen* me and *believe* not," nevertheless, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." These two statements, taken in conjunction, are equivalent to a declaration, that the kingdom of Christ should prevail, notwithstanding the prejudices and opposition of the Jews. They were privileged by seeing the miracles he wrought, and hearing the doctrines he preached; yet they refused to acknowledge and receive him as the Messiah; but this their hardness and unbelief, could not possibly prevent the accomplishment of the Father's promise respecting the establishment and extension of the kingdom of Jesus Christ in the world; for all that had been predicted relative thereto, must of necessity be accomplished, in an accession of subjects from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south. His gospel, though powerfully opposed, must be made known, his doctrines must be promulgated; and "all that the Father hath given him shall come to him."

A reference to the Old Testament scriptures will furnish us with many predictions respecting the establishment of the kingdom of Christ in the world: and perhaps there is not one to which the passage before us has a more direct allusion, than to Psalm ii. 8. "Ask of me, and I shall *give thee*, the Heavens for *thine* inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for *thy* possession." The terms in the passage under consideration, evidently imply possession, and here that possession is set forth with its nature and extent. And the apostle Paul, 1 Cor. iii. 23, entertaining the same idea, says of them "Ye are Christ's," so that Christ has a peculiar property in all who believe and obey the gospel. And it is evident from John vi. 36, 37, that our Lord would not acknowledge those persons as belonging to him *because* having seen him they *believed* not. Here then, we have fully stated the deed of gift; if you will allow the term, to which Jesus Christ refers; here is the "*all*," the Gentile world, to which he alludes. Indeed common observation confirms the fact: for from the day of Pentecost down to the present period, the Gentiles have been *coming* to the standard of the cross, and to a certain extent,

“the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.” The gospel has been preached; and the means, though simple in themselves, have been blessed to the conversion of millions of souls, now composing “the general assembly and church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven.”

These ideas of the passage are coincident with the illustration of it, given by our Lord in the 45th verse of the same chapter, when he, in the first place, refers to the prophetic writings, respecting the general diffusion of divine knowledge, “and they shall be all taught of God,” and then adds, “every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, *cometh* unto me.” It was for the accomplishment of the same glorious object that Jesus Christ gave his apostles that extensive commission, to “Preach the gospel to *every* creature.” This important work commenced under the ministry of our Lord, and it is remarkable that when he acknowledges the faithfulness of the Father, in having *given* him some out of the world; he at the same time acknowledges, that even *of those who had been so given one was lost*. This fact, though lamentable in itself, furnishes a strong proof that the terms “giveth,” and “shall come,” in the text are not of personal application; or in other words, are not to be understood, as in the least degree restricting the operations of divine grace, but on the contrary, the passage sets forth in unequivocal terms, the boundless goodness of God in having determined the universal spread of that gospel, which is “the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth.” That no opposition however powerful, no principles however malignant, no worldly policy however subtle, can possibly prevent its accomplishment; but, that this glorious system shall finally prevail over the passions and prejudices of man, till the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea.

WILLIAM.

ON CHRISTMAS SINGING.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

SIR,

In your last number, page 162, “a Constant Reader,” has proposed a number of queries respecting *Christmas singing*;

and requests to be favoured with the opinion of some of his friends in answer to them. Will you permit the following remarks to occupy a page in your next publication?

The first enquiry is, "From whence and with whom did this practice originate?" I think it may be fairly said to be from heaven. The first news of that glorious event, the birth of our great Emmanuel, was accompanied with songs of joy and gratulation. "And suddenly there was with the angel, a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, and good will to men." It perhaps cannot be positively maintained that this was intended as an example for us; but if the contemplation of human redemption was sufficient to cause the angels to sing, who were not the subjects of it, for "he took not upon him the nature of angels;" how much greater cause have we to sing for whom Christ died. With respect to the exact time when this practice was first observed by christians, I confess I am at a loss to determine; neither do I know who the persons were that instituted it. This is not material, since the long establishment of the custom or the authority of those who instituted it, is not pleaded in its defence. For, suppose it took its rise in an age of ignorance and innovation, the same rules of judgment, with respect to its propriety, must still be applied to it. If the motives of the institutors were to advance the piety, or assist the devotion of those concerned in it, or to promote the cause of Christ in the world, it would undoubtedly meet the approbation of the divine Being; but if otherwise, his disapprobation. Possibly the manner in which it was conducted could not justify the imputation of good motives. It might be attended with all the ostentation of pride and foolery of superstition; and under such circumstances, it must be condemned. But the abuse of a thing is no argument against the proper use of it. What is there relating to religion, either of faith or practice, that has not been corrupted or perverted at one time or other? Were we to reject all of this description, we might reject every article of faith, every act of devotion, and every form of worship. Whatever may have been the circumstances which have attended this practice, at different times, the question cannot at present be at all affected by it.

2nd. "Does the New Testament encourage this practice either directly or by fair inference?" It must be confessed, the New Testament is silent upon this subject. Consequently this, like many other matters, must be left to the consciences and judgments of men for decision. And here the old and self-evident maxim is applicable, that is, "Where there is no law there is no transgression." The New Testament is silent upon many other points, which are notwithstanding become matters of regular observance among us: such as the modes and times of public worship, &c. But perhaps an objection may arise here, that if, when scripture is silent, the opinions of men should be set up for a rule, those opinions being so very various, a door would be opened for the institution of numberless observances and innovations. But no man has any right or power to compel another to join him in such observances. Therefore it is reasonable to conclude that, at the present day, matters of this kind would be attended to from personal motives: either with a view to benefit ourselves or others. If men had never legislated upon these subjects, no bad consequences could have ensued from the enjoyment of this liberty.

3rd. "Have we any grounds to believe that the first christians practised it?" It does not appear at all probable, that the first christians did observe this practice. We cannot, indeed, suppose it possible that they could, but with the risque of their lives. It is well known, that the circumstances of christianity were such, that they would not be permitted to offend the ears of their persecutors, with songs of praise to that Jesus whom they hated and denied. This consideration alone, is of sufficient weight to set aside the force of this enquiry. The first christians, we may reasonably suppose, differed in many respects from us: and according to the writings of the apostles, there are proofs plenty of their fallibility, to warn us against an implicit imitation of the practices or reliance upon the principles of any class of men, in any age of the church. Their example could not have laid us under any obligation; nor their non-observance, under any prohibition.

4th. "What good object is designed to be answered by it." It is intended to awaken the feelings of christians in general to a lively consideration of the grace and goodness of God, in sending his own son Jesus Christ into the world to redeem.

mankind ; to kindle in the heart those sublime and exalted emotions of love, joy, and praise, which sacred and solemn sounds, and pious and devotional sentiments are so well calculated to inspire. It is designed to be a public celebration and commemoration of the nativity of our Saviour. It might not improperly be termed the "christian jubilee."

5th "What is its tendency on society at large; and on those actually engaged in it." I think it would not be easily proved that any bad tendency results from it to society at large. People in general seem much gratified with it, though their sentiments may differ with respect to its necessity or propriety. It is not calculated in its own nature, to produce any bad effect upon the public mind; when it is well understood that the object is to please and profit their friends, not to obtain money. It meets the public approbation, not the public censure.

Its tendency upon those engaged in it, depends entirely upon the motives by which they are actuated, and the manner in which they conduct themselves. In the latter particular they lie open for the public inspection and animadversion.

It does not appear to me that the opinion of any man in a case of this nature can be made a rule for another; this practice may be observed or omitted without sin, as the judgment and conscience shall dictate. But however trifling or non-essential the practice of singing may seem to some, it is evident from scripture, that when prayer and preaching shall cease, when all ordinances and means shall be set aside, singing shall continue, and that to all eternity. The dispensation of the gospel was ushered in with songs of praise: and when the work of redemption is completed, and saints and angels are gathered round the throne, they will be employed in singing the song of Moses and the Lamb, of glory and triumph for ever and ever.

A. J. A. M.

THE JUDGMENT OF DAVID.

Translated from a Mahometan Life of David in the Malay language, by Mr. Robinson, Missionary in Batavia.

One day the children of Israel came to David to request him to shew them how the judgment will be conducted on the

day of resurrection. David said, "Very good! come to me at some festival, and I will shew you." About this time a very difficult case was brought to David. A woman was accused of stealing an ox and killing it for food. The woman pleaded that she was ready to die with hunger, and the ox came to her of his own accord, and said, "Kill me and eat me, for I shall make excellent food for you." David seemed satisfied with this apology; but the owner of the ox was not, and strenuously demanded justice. At this time Gabriel appeared to David and said, "Command all the children of Israel to assemble to-morrow on the plain, that they may see a specimen of the judgment that will take place at the resurrection." Accordingly next day the people assembled, when David ascended a pulpit; and the woman with the owner of the ox were brought before him. In the first place, David read a verse from one of his psalms, which produced universal silence; all listening to his voice. He then addressed the owner of the ox saying, "Do you remember, that on the day you left Syria for Egypt, you entered into the service of a chief, who was travelling with five hundred loaded camels: that you drove the camels into a plain, where you murdered the owner and buried him in the sands; that you proceeded into Egypt with the camels and merchandise; and that you afterward returned to Syria, telling the children of Israel that the property which you brought with you was all your own. Thus you made yourself a great man in the earth, and your riches have continued to increase until this day. Now the man whom you murdered was the husband of this woman, and the father of her two children." When the owner of the ox heard this speech, he denied the charge, saying, "I never murdered a man in my whole life; nor did I ever take any one's property." His hands immediately cried out, "O prophet of God! on that day, we cut the man's throat;" and his feet said, "O prophet of God! we buried him in the sand." Thus his limbs bore testimony against him, and his mouth could say nothing more in his defence. In this manner, will God judge men in the day of resurrection, when their mouths will be shut, and their hands and their feet testify concerning their deeds. David then ordered the robber's head to be cut off and stuck upon a pole; and all his property to be given to the woman whose husband he had murdered.

MISSIONARY ANECDOTE.

A blind girl brought to a clergyman, thirty shillings for the missionaries. The clergyman, surprised that she should offer him so large a sum, said to her: "You are a poor blind girl; you cannot afford to give thirty shillings to the society." "I am, indeed, Sir," said she, "as you see, a blind girl; but not so poor perhaps as you may suppose me to be: and I think I can prove to you, that I can better afford to give these thirty shillings than those girls who have eyes." The clergyman was much struck with her answer; and said, "I shall be glad to hear how you make that out." "Sir," she answered, "I am a basket maker; and being blind, I can make baskets as well in the dark as in the light. Now, I am sure, sir, in the last dark winter, it must have cost the girls that have eyes, more than thirty shillings to buy candles to see to make baskets. And so I think, I have proved that I can afford this money; and now I hope you will take it all for the missionaries.

*PUBLIC SPIRIT IN RELIGION, EXEMPLIFIED
IN NEHEMIAH.*

The apostle Paul, in his epistle to the Hebrews, exhorts believers in Christ, to be "followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." But this cannot be done, as it should be, without attention to their peculiar and respective excellencies. We admire Abel for the spirituality of his religious worship; Enoch, for walking with God; Abraham, for the strength of his faith; Joseph, for his chastity; Moses, for his meekness; Phineas, for his zeal; David, for his devotion; and others, for some peculiar trait in their character. But, as it respects the detail of all those who have done good in their generation, we may exclaim, "What shall I more say? for time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthæ, of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets." Among so many who are worthy of our admiration and imitation, there is one to whom we would more particularly direct your attention. Nehemiah, in the service which he rendered the Jews in the rebuilding of the walls

of Jerusalem, and in various regulations for the benefit of the Jewish nation, shewed a spirit truly devoted to the public welfare. Many passages of Scripture shew the propriety and utility of this spirit in all the people of God. We are to be "grieved for the affliction of Joseph," Amos. vi. 6. to "prefer Jerusalem above our chief joy;" Psa. cxxxii. 6. and, in the language of the Psalmist, to say "For my brethren and companions' sake, I will now say, Peace be within thee, because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good." Psa. cxxii. 89. Public spirit in religion, may be considered in reference to its nature, object and exercise.

Public Spirit is a spirit concerned for the public welfare. In a degree it is necessarily found in the heads of families, magistrates, and sovereigns. Ministers are overseers of the family, the church of God; and the general good should always be highly esteemed and diligently promoted by them; and every man, as far as his influence extends, should be concerned to do "good unto all men, especially to the household of faith." In Nehemiah, we see a mind fraught with *intelligence, feeling, and purposes of exertion*. Though the cup-bearer of Artaxerxes, yet he learned with attention the state of Jerusalem from the lips of those who had witnessed its distress; and the prayer, which he offered upon the occasion, shews that he did not hide himself from the nakedness of his brethren. Public spirit is disposed to obtain extensive information of the state of the nation, the church, the world. The feeling which Nehemiah displayed is strikingly depicted, Neh. i. 4. "It came to pass when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted and prayed before the God of Heaven." In the presence of the king, he was not ashamed of it: for he said, "Let the king live for ever. Why should not my countenance be sad when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres lieth waste; and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?" Without tender commiseration of the state of men, little will be devised and less effected for their present and future good. We naturally infer purposes of exertion to arise in the mind of Nehemiah upon receiving with so lively an interest the account of Jerusalem's distress. God is pleased with intentions of service, where he does not afford opportunity of fulfilling those intentions. The embryo of most good works for God and his cause

are found in the man who is endued with a public spirit. "The liberal deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things shall he stand." Isa. xxxii. The grace of God, in the abundance of its gifts, gives "enlargement of heart as the sand of the sea."

In Nehemiah we see peculiar regard for the *prosperity of the Jews, and of Jerusalem in particular*. His request to the king was, "Send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it." The safety, comfort and honour of his country lay near his heart, and to promote them he made the greatest sacrifices. The object of public spirit in religion is the prosperity of the church God. This is necessarily multifarious, having regard to every thing connected with the prosperity of religion. Personal and family religion first demands attention. Its cultivation is of vital importance. It is to be feared, that, as Noah's workmen provided for the preservation of others, but were lost themselves, so many are employed for the good of others who fail of the grace of God. A pious and enlightened public spirited man is deeply concerned to "grow in grace," and to promote the knowledge and worship of God among those with whom he is more immediately connected. But this spirit ever devising good, ascertains and laments the state of mankind, promotes as much as possible every institution which tends to ameliorate the distresses of men, and to guide the ignorant in the way of salvation. So various are the means of usefulness that it is impossible here to enumerate the greater part of them. Sunday schools, bible societies, missionary societies will engage peculiar attention, as eminently adapted to build up the walls of Jerusalem. In the formation, support and recommendation of such institutions, we see the public spirited, as it were, in their element; enjoying, in a high and refined degree, the greatest and best of pleasure, the luxury of doing good. What object greater, more beneficial and more praiseworthy can be regarded? The temporal and spiritual interests of men are so connected, that the former are necessarily promoted by the latter: hence the superior wisdom and utility "of the works of faith and labour of love." Eternity stamps an inconceivable importance upon the various circumstances connected with the objects of christian philanthropy. What myriads are employed in the kingdom and patience of Jesus

Christ, exulting in hope, and exclaiming, addressing their divine Redeemer,

“Come then! and added to thy many crowns,
 Receive yet one, the crown of all the earth,
 Thou who alone art worthy! It was thine
 By ancient covenant, ere nature’s birth,
 And thou hast made it thine by purchase since;
 And overpaid its value with thy blood.”

The *exercise* of public spirit appears in many ways. In Nehemiah, we behold eminent *devotion, improvement of opportunity and personal exertions*. When first particularly informed about the present state of Jerusalem and of the Jewish people, he mourns, fasts and prays. When about to appear before the king, he prays, “Prosper I pray thee thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man.” And even in his presence, he offers ejaculatory prayer for direction and success. Devotion ensures the assistance of God. The good which is done upon the earth, he doeth it himself. By prayer, engaging heaven on our side, what may not be accomplished? The attention of Nehemiah to opportunity favorable to the accomplishment of his great object, is very observable. He expects his sorrow of heart will appear in his countenance, when he presented the cup to his sovereign; and this favoured time he chuses to speak on the behalf of the city of his fathers’ sepulchres. It has been well remarked, opportunity of time is the beauty of time. A public spirit seeks and endeavours to improve this favoured season which divine Providence affords for promoting the best interests of mankind. “A wise man discerneth time and judgment.” But the important personal exertions of this distinguished governor of Jerusalem are peculiarly worthy of regard. Ease, profit and honour were sacrificed. He requested to devote twelve years to the good of his people. This being accomplished, he returned; and then again presenting a further request, appears to have lived and died among his people; who must have esteemed him as one that had done good to Israel. In Nehemiah v. 14—18, we see what were the labours, the disinterested labours of this excellent man. Here behold an example of what a public spirit may achieve when exercised in favorable circum-

stances. The history of the church of God shews many who did good in their generation. Whatever is in the power of our hand should be improved if we would see the object of our warmest hope realized. Active exertions will flow from a spirit truly devoted to God and his glory.

But the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ is the most perfect example of public spirit in religion. Behold his regard for a lost world.

“ Our mis’ry touch’d his heav’nly mind;
And pity brought him down.”

How grand the object of his mission! the salvation of the world. In the prosecution of it, what labours do we see accomplished! “ He loved us even unto death.” Pure, disinterested and invaluable benevolence. “ Oh if ye love the Saviour’s name, let his divine example move.” “ Let the same mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.” “ Look not every man on his own things, but every man on the things of others.” All the people of God are concerned to live to some good purpose, to lay out themselves for usefulness. Then shall the saving health of God be made known among all nations. “ Arise and shine for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.” Isa. lx. 1.

N—h. March, 1821.

J. P.

THE WORKS OF THE LATE REV. D. TAYLOR.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

As the Association is approaching, I beg leave to call the attention of our churches to a subject, that I esteem of great importance to the prosperity and reputation of the New Connection of General Baptists. I mean the preservation and republication, in a uniform Edition, of the principal Works of its worthy Founder and zealous, able and successful Champion, the late Mr. *Dan Taylor*. The reasons assigned by my worthy friend, Mr. Cameron, in the G. B. R. for August last, page 67, fully evince that such a publication is highly *desirable*; would be of *lasting and extensive benefit* to our cause; and is indeed *necessary* if we wish to maintain that character

amongst our brethren of other denominations to which our principles, when properly understood, justly entitle us. The hints suggested by you, in the succeeding number, page 121, are calculated to remove all doubt, as to the *practicability* of such an object, on the easy and cheap plan which you recommend.

I hope that every well-wisher to the interests of our increasing union will come to the next Association prepared to support some plan for the early commencement of an undertaking so obviously important. I was pleased to observe the resolution of the Warwickshire Conference, at Austrey, as recorded in your last number, page 185. If a similar course were adopted by each Conference, the object would be easily effected— Hoping that the insertion of this note in your next Repository will recal the attention of the Connection to the subject, and stimulate to proper exertion, I remain,

Chesham,
April 12th, 1821.

Your's cordially,
EDWARD SEXTON.

G. B. OCCURRENCES.

OBITUARY.

Died at Quorndon, Leicestershire, Oct. 31st, 1820, in his eighty-first year, Mr. ROBERT PARKINSON, who had been upwards of fifty years a member of the G. B. church, in that neighbourhood. Mr. P. was the last of a family of five brothers, and two sisters, who were all members of G. B. churches, and steady supporters of the G. B. interest. Mr. P. was a native of Sawley, Derbyshire. His father, a zealous churchman, of an unblemished moral character, trained up his children in the fear of God. Mr. P. about the usual age, was apprenticed to a baker at Nottingham, and worked with his master one year, after his apprenticeship had expired. During this time, his elder brother William entered on a farm at Quorndon; and one Lord's-day, passing through Kegworth, on his way to his native place, he stopped to hear what those, who were turning the world upside down, had to say. Here he received an impression that terminated in a sound conversion; which powerfully inclined him to do all in his power toward the conversion of the other branches of the family

Mr. P. soon heard what a change had taken place in his brother, and, through conversation with him, became himself seriously alarmed. His brother one day being at Nottingham market, bought, from a book-stall, Bunyan's "Two Covenants," of which he made him a present; and this had a tendency to deepen convictions. The writer often heard him say how useful this book was to him: or to use his own words, "O I was rarely convinced." Mr. P. attended, at this time, at the Presbyterian Chapel; and rather excelling in the art of singing, he took an active share in that part of the worship. Till one day, when they met for practice, and had gone through a piece, the words of which were, "Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation," he threw down the book saying, "We have all expressed that of which we know nothing by experience; and I will sing no more." A teacher of singing replied, with an oath, "Go to Quorndon; go to your brother William, and turn *raven*."* In the year 1765, he removed to Quorndon, and began business for himself; and in a few years purchased the premises where he ended his days. Being now in the way of immediate intercourse with his brother, and having frequent opportunities of hearing the gospel preached, he was enabled to rely on Jesus for salvation, and on him and him alone he depended to the very last. Sometime after his removal to Quorndon, he married Mrs. Elizabeth Wild, who was truly an helpmate to him; and by whom he had a rather large family, most of whom survive him. Warm-ed with the love of Christ, Mr. P. his brother, and others, thought it desirable to introduce preaching at Quorndon; and Mr. P. having two rooms that he could spare, in the year 1767, he opened them for preaching. As they were an upper and a lower room, an aperture was made in the floor of the upper one, under which the pulpit was fixed, at a convenient height; so that the preacher could be heard to considerable advantage, both by those above and those below. Here the preaching was carried on about three years, when the present

* *Raven* was a corruption of Moravian; a nickname given to the General Baptists in those days, because some of their preachers had been connected with that denomination.

chapel was built. The upper room, together with the rest of the premises, are now occupied by Mr. P.'s eldest son, who with his partner are members of the G. B. Church, at Quorn-don; and, in that room, Mr. P. breathed his last. Mr. P. was remarkable for his regular attendance at the house of God, and for his punctuality as to the time. Never did he manifest the smallest degree of squeamishness about who was the preacher, if the sermon had enough of an all-sufficient Saviour. Whenever his interference was required in the affairs of the church, he always rendered it with the greatest possible readiness. In his occasional visits, it was his uniform practice, to introduce both doctrinal and practical religion; and he discovered a general cheerfulness of mind, enjoyed but by few. Though it was evident he was worn out, he attended preaching till the two last Lord's-days of his life; and on the first of these, it was with difficulty his daughter persuaded him to stay away. During his last affliction, he did not appear capable of much conversation; but what he did say plainly discovered, that his attachment to his Saviour was inviolable. May his survivors follow him so far as he followed Christ! The Rev. G. Stevenson, of Loughborough, preached his funeral sermon, from, Heb. iv. 9. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God."

Dec. 28th, 1820, died Mr. JAMES HARDY, in the fifty-first year of his age. He was born at Kegworth, and attended with his parents on the worship of the established church. He served his apprenticeship to a baker in Loughborough, who kept a public house. His situation here was very unfriendly to religious improvement; but he was led by divine Providence to form an acquaintance with Mrs. Hull, a worthy member of the G. B. Church, at Loughborough. This good woman frequently reminded him of the awful consequences of dying in an unconverted state. Her admonitions made a deep impression on his heart. He was enabled to see his dangerous state, and cry out with deep anxiety, "What shall I do to be saved?" In this distress of mind, his pious instructress gave him seasonable advice, and prevailed on him to attend at her place of worship. He became diligent in the use of the means; his Bible was his constant companion; but his distress continued for a considerable time. At length, as he was, at a leisure moment, looking in his Bible with some faint hope of

finding comfort, a leaf turning over, his eye caught and fixed on those words of our Saviour, "Ye have not chosen me; but I have chosen you." He stood amazed,—believed,—rejoiced in God his Saviour, and relied wholly for salvation on the atonement made by his precious blood. He was soon afterwards baptized and admitted a member of Loughborough church. This exposed him to much persecution and opposition from his worldly connections; but the grace of God enabled him to resist all attempts to draw him aside. He at last settled at Kegworth, and married Ann Sutton, who also joined the same church; and they lived together in great harmony till his death.

About six months before his death, conversing with a christian friend, he observed, "Though I was set at liberty from the burden of sin in my youth;" yet I afterwards found great encouragement to persevere in Wisdom's ways, from a discourse of the late Mr. W. Caldwell, of Long-Whatton, on Psalm xxxiv. 8. "O taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that trusteth in him;" adding with strong confidence, "I know in whom I believed; and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." At the same time, he expressed a desire that these passages should be repeated at his funeral; the former, with a view to encourage the penitent sinner; the latter, to establish the saint. Of late, when he had a leisure hour, he was employed in reading the pious Mr. Freeston's "Last Legacy," and the other valuable tracts on vital religion, by the same excellent author. He frequently said, that he thought it was impossible for a real christian to read those pieces without being much edified, and recommended them earnestly to his friends.

On the evening previous to his departure, his friend paid him a last visit, but he was then greatly exhausted, and could not talk much. He was however in a sweet composure of mind; and expressed perfect resignation to the will of God. Happy for him, the important concerns of his soul, as well as his temporal affairs, had been settled when he was in health, and he had now nothing to do but to die. The presence of the great Shepherd was with him in the gloomy valley. His sister, perceiving his dissolution rapidly approaching, observed, "The great Physician will come quickly;" to which he re-

plied, "I know that he will come:" and in a few minutes he expired without a struggle. His remains were interred, Dec. 31st, 1820; when Mr. Tyers, of Loughborough, delivered a funeral discourse, from 1 Cor. vii. 29, 30, 31, to a large and affected congregation.—Our deceased friend was earnestly concerned for the prosperity of Zion. At the social meetings, he has often been affected, even to tears, when praying for the salvation of the rising generation and the success of the gospel. His table was always open to those who were travelling in the service of the Redeemer; and when the cause of religion required pecuniary support, he was ready to yield it. May we all follow him as far as he followed Christ!

On Monday, Jan. 29th, 1821, died at Quorndon, in her thirteenth year, MISS ANN CHAPMAN, daughter of Mr. Thos. Chapman, who has for nearly twenty years served the office of deacon in the G. B. church, at Quorndon, to the general satisfaction of his brethren; and whose partner in life has long been a worthy member of the same church. Though Miss C. died at so early an age, there is good reason to hope that she knew in whom she had believed. The disease which terminated her life was said to be the water in the brain, which did not discover itself, till a few days before her death. Her affliction was extremely severe, but not a murmur escaped her lips. For every office of kindness from her parents and others, she expressed the greatest degree of thankfulness; and gave her constant blessing to her friends. From the commencement of her affliction, she never manifested the smallest desire for recovery; on the contrary, she plainly declared she had a wish to die. The warm bath was recommended by the faculty; but she said, "Mother, do not let it be done, let me die." At another time, she said, "Mother, if you could promise me, that you would not trouble at my decease, I could die easy; but you cannot do that." To an uncle who was very fond of her, she said, "Uncle you will often think of me, when I am in my grave." At another time, she said, "Now, mother, would you not rather choose, that I should die now and go to heaven; than that I should live many more years and go to hell." The writer being present one day, she said, "I had rather die than live; I have no wish to recover." He observed, "Then I conceive you suppose yourself to be prepared for death." She replied, "I hope I am prepared." He said,

“ We read that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life. O what love is this.” “ Yes it is,” she replied, “ and I love him from the bottom of my heart.” At another time, he said, “ Do you feel any fear of death ?” “ No,” she said, “ I am not afraid to die.” He said, “ Then you think you can trust your soul to Jesus to be saved by him.” She answered, “ I hope I can ; I have thought on these things before now.” He observed, “ I suppose then, when you were well, and used to attend the chapel, that you noticed what the preachers said about these things.” With seeming satisfaction, she replied, “ O yes, I did.” After this, she requested him to go to prayer ; at the conclusion of which she distinctly uttered, “ Amen.” For the salvation of her brothers and sisters, she expressed her feeling concern ; and observed often, “ I pray for all my brothers and sisters.” When she was incapable of uttering words, she put up her hand as a token of love to her parents and friends. For several hours before her release, she lay in a state of insensibility ; and, in this state, quietly breathed her last. Her natural temper was mild, and her manners obliging. Though the eldest, she would always give up her will, to that of her brothers and sisters. Her fondness for reading was great ; many hours did she spend at her book, when she might have been at play. And when invited by other children to take a walk, would frequently excuse herself in a way that shewed her unwillingness to disoblige, but which proved that she preferred improvement, to what is generally called pleasure. When at school, she was friendly to her schoolfellows, and obedient to her teachers. Her funeral sermon, by her desire, was preached, by Mr. Pywell, from Psalm lxxxix. 47. “ Remember how short my time is.” May her dear friends be prepared to follow her ; and may the young who read these lines remember their Creator in the days of their youth !

CONFERENCES.

THE LINCOLNSHIRE CONFERENCE was held at *March*, March 15th, 1821, and was pretty well attended. The business was generally of a local nature.—Mr. Ewen was requested to inquire as to the means of re-establishing the G. B.

interest at Whittlesea; and it was agreed that the case of the G. B. church at Lincoln should be recommended to the consideration of the ensuing association. The subject appointed for public discussion at the next Conference, to be held at Spalding, June 14th, 1821, is *The nature and importance of sanctification*. In the evening of Conference, Mr. Jarrom opened the public service, and Mr. Rogers preached, from I John iv. 8. On the preceding evening, Mr. Payne prayed, and Mr. Everard preached, from Heb. iv. 16.

THE LONDON CONFERENCE was held at *Church Lane*, Whitechapel, London, on Thursday, April 26th, 1821. The states of the several churches composing this Conference were read; and though, in some instances, the reports were unfavorable, yet, in general, the cause of religion appeared to be advancing and many additions had been made. In consequence of some circumstances which occurred at the last Conference, it was unanimously agreed, that this Conference possesses full power to receive, at its own discretion, any case presented by individuals as well as churches; and if it judge it expedient, to give advice on any such case: agreeing always that cases regularly proposed by churches shall be considered before cases from individuals. In consequence of a very affecting report from Chatham, Mr. Hobbs was requested to visit our few friends, in that place, and to give them all the advice and assistance in his power. From considering the Church Lane case, the meeting resolved to recommend it warmly to the ensuing association; and to suggest to that assembly the propriety of requesting each church in the connection to raise a proportionate sum, and remit it to the friends in Church Lane, to afford them present relief. On the Wednesday evening, Mr. Sexton opened public worship, and Mr. Hobbs preached, from John iii. 18—21. On Thursday evening, Mr. Henham prayed, and Mr. Sexton delivered a discourse, from Isa. xii. 2. The next Conference to be at Seven-oaks, Kent, on the second Wednesday, in October next. Preachers Messrs. Hobbs and Sexton; or in case of failure, Messrs. Wallis and Rose.

REVIEW OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

A COMPENDIOUS VIEW of the NATURE and IMPORTANCE of CHRISTIAN BAPTISM; by DAN TAYLOR. Eighth Edition, corrected, 12mo. pages 20, price 3d. stitched.

The compositions of this sensible writer and zealous champion of our cause, are well known to the readers of the G. B. R. and need no recommendation to their regard. This tract contains nearly all the arguments advanced in support of Believers' Baptism, compressed into as small a compass as an intelligible statement of them will admit. Five Questions are proposed relative to the *subjects*, the *mode*, the *perpetuity*, the *unchangeableness*, and the *importance* of the ordinance: to each of which an answer is returned, and the reasons, plainly but forcibly stated on which it is grounded. The last three points especially are placed in a striking and convincing light.

As there are, in most of our congregations, some who are in a state of hesitation respecting the subject, and seeking for satisfaction, and others who are convinced of the propriety of our practice, but do not feel their own obligation to conform to it, the members of our churches would do well to put one of these tracts into the hands of such persons. It appears hardly possible that it should be seriously perused without producing a conviction, that Baptism ought to be administered without any alteration, either in the subjects or the mode, and that it is of as much importance now, as it was in the primitive ages.

J. W.

The readers of the G. B. R. are respectfully informed that "MEMOIRS of the REV. JOHN TAYLOR, *late pastor of the General Baptist Church, at Queenshead, near Halifax, Yorkshire, chiefly compiled from a Manuscript written by himself;*" are just published, in octavo, corresponding in type, and paper, with the "*Memoirs of the Rev. Dan Taylor.*" Pages 144, Price 3s. Orders sent to the Editor of this Miscellany will be punctually executed.

POETRY.

THE RESURRECTION, Matt. xxviii. 2—4.

The silent noon of night was past,
 The moon was bright in silver sheen,
 When sudden gloom the sky o'ercast,
 And quench'd in darkness all the scene.

The centinels around the tomb,
 In which the murder'd Jesus lay,
 Look'd forward from the dreary gloom
 With anxious eyes for coming day.

But, hark! beneath, the rumbling earth
 Began with inward roars to rock,
 As if her entrails from their girth
 Were bursting with impetuous shock.

Th' affrighted soldiers rais'd their eyes
 To angry Heav'n in fear-form'd prayer;
 But, lo! new terror in the skies!
 A mighty spirit in the air!

They sunk, in terror overwhelm'd,
 Struck to the quaking ground with dread;
 The iron warriors, mail'd and helm'd,
 Lay pale and senseless as the dead.

Soon to the earth the seraph came,
 Soon was the rocky door thrown wide,
 The quick-returning vital flame
 Re-animates the Crucified!

With radiant glory compass'd round,
 Forth walks the Conqueror girt with might;
 The prostrate seraph licks the ground,
 Eclips'd in his Creator's light.

How chang'd the scene!—of late, the mirth
 And passive scorn of soldiers rude;
 But now, while *they* lie stretch'd on earth,
He walks, too glorious to be viewed.

Behold yon tyrant! stript and bare,
 In his own fetters bound, he lies;
 His sceptre broken, while the air
 Is troubled with his wailing cries.

Well may'st thou wail! the time draws nigh,
 (This Resurrection seals the doom)
 When thou, with all thy pow'r shalt die,
 And all thy captives leave the tomb.

THE
GENERAL BAPTIST REPOSITORY.

No. LX.—Vol. X. August 1st, 1821.

MEMOIRS OF *Mr. SAMUEL HARRIS*, AN
AMERICAN GENERAL BAPTIST MINISTER.

ABOUT the year 1740, the preaching of Mr. G. Whitfield and other zealous ministers, in various parts of Virginia and the adjacent states, had awakened, amongst many of the careless inhabitants, a concern about religion and a desire to flee from the wrath to come. Unacquainted, in a great measure, with divine things, zealously engaged in seeking information, and eager to practise what appeared to them the will of God, it was to be expected that, though the attention of all was excited to the scriptures, and all agreed to consider them as their only guide, yet they would differ very materially in the interpretation of them. This was the case; and societies of professors of various sentiments were established. Among these, a number of churches arose, and a respectable association was formed of christians whose opinions nearly harmonized with those of the New Connection of General Baptists. It must be confessed, that their early proceedings often exhibit proof that their zeal was tinged with enthusiasm; but the cause prospered, and many eminent ministers were raised up among this people, who devoted superior qualifications, with assiduous ardour, to the promotion of the salvation of sinners and the glory of God. Among these *Mr. Samuel Harris* was, for a long series of years, deservedly eminent. Of this worthy man, we shall now subjoin a brief account, compiled from *Benedict's History of the American Baptists*.

Mr. Harris was born in Hanover County, Virginia, Jan. 12th, 1724. His parents were persons of great respectability; and his education, considering the customs of the day, was liberal. During his youth, he removed to the county of

Pittsylvania; and as he advanced in life, he became the favourite of all ranks of his countrymen. He successively attained the offices of churchwarden, sheriff, justice of the peace, burgess for the county, colonel of the militia, captain of the fort, and commissioner for the fort and army. In short, he was "a man of great distinction in those parts," and highly esteemed by all.

For some time, this young man was content with his portion; but at length he perceived that he wanted something more solid than worldly distinction to satisfy his immortal soul. He became pensive and thoughtful. At first, he could not assign any reason for this dejection of spirits; but reading and conversation, aided by his own reflection, soon led him to discover that he was a lost and helpless sinner; and that a sense of guilt oppressed his mind. His convictions made him seek the means of grace; and he sometimes ventured to attend the preaching of the baptists. His distress continued to increase till, on one of his circuits to visit the forts in his official capacity, he called at a small house, where he understood the baptists were about to preach; but being in his military dress, he was unwilling to be conspicuous, and placed himself in a corner. The service commenced; and the word reached his heart. His convictions now sunk so deep that he was unable to conceal them; and the arrows of the Almighty stuck fast within him. He stript himself of his sword and other equipments, and retired in great anguish of mind. It pleased God however soon afterwards to grant him peace and joy in believing; and he was baptized by Mr. Daniel Marshall, a worthy and active servant of Christ, who travelled much to turn sinners from the error of their ways. This took place some time in the year 1758.

No sooner had Mr. H. obtained the comforts of the gospel, than he panted to be made the instrument of bringing others to the same happiness. He did not confer with flesh and blood, but immediately commenced his ministerial labours, which afterwards proved so successful as to acquire him the appellation of "the Apostle of Virginia." Soon after his conversion, his mind was impressed with a desire to preach to the officers and men of the fort which he commanded. An opportunity offered, and he began his harangue, urging most vehemently the necessity of the new birth. While he was speak-

ing, an officer interrupted him, saying, "Colonel, you have sucked much eloquence from the rum-cask to day: pray give us a little, that we may declaim as well, when it comes to our turn." Harris mildly replied, 'I am not drunk,' and resumed his discourse. Shortly afterwards, he was accosted by another, who, looking seriously in his face, said, "Sam, you say you are not drunk; pray are you not mad then? What ails you?" Colonel Harris calmly answered, in the words of Paul, 'I am not mad, most noble gentleman,' and continued his exertions, till one of the gentlemen received such impressions as were never obliterated; but issued in his becoming a pious christian.

The fervour of joy which this good man experienced, on his first being set at liberty, soon abated; and he sunk into a state of gloom and desertion. He prayed God to restore to him the light of his countenance, and grant him renewed communion with him; but his petition was deferred. He retired into the woods, and sought for the happiness which he had lost; hoping that God would peradventure answer his prayer there, though not in the fort, where so much wickedness abounded; but no answer came. This led him to inquire seriously into the cause of his desertion. The first thing that offered itself was his holding so many lucrative offices. These he immediately laid down; and settled his accounts with the public. He then renewed his prayer for a restoration of the joy which he had lost; but still "the vision tarried, and the prophecy brought not forth." He examined himself a second time; and suspected that his money was the cause, and that he had made gold his trust. Under this persuasion, he took all his money, and threw it into the bushes, where it was not likely ever to be found. He continued still in the same darkness, till at length God "restored unto him the joy of his salvation." "I am aware," says the historian, "that this anecdote will render the wisdom of the colonel suspected. Be it so. It nevertheless establishes the sincerity of his piety, and shews that he preferred communion with God, before riches and honours."

From this period, Mr. H. seems to have devoted himself wholly to the ministry. In 1759, he was ordained a ruling elder. For six or seven following years, his labours were chiefly confined to the adjacent counties of Virginia and North Carolina. He often travelled with Mr. Marshall, and caught

much of his spirit and manners. In 1765, a person, who had been previously baptized, set out from a distant state to seek a minister. Providence directed his way, and brought him to the residence of Mr. Harris, on a day of public worship. He went to the service, and was immediately noticed by Mr. H. who asked whence he came. He replied, that he was seeking a gospel minister; and God having guided his course to him, he was the man. Mr. H. deeming this a call from heaven, agreed to accompany him to Culpepper, the place of his abode. This visit was abundantly blessed for the enlargement of the cause of the Redeemer. Soon after his return from this excursion, three messengers arrived from Spotsylvania, to request further assistance. He went, accompanied by another minister, and their labours were highly useful. From this time, he became almost a constant traveller. He did not confine himself to narrow limits, but went wherever he could see a prospect of usefulness, and erected the standard of the cross. There was scarcely any place in Virginia, in which he did not sow the gospel seed with great success. In 1769, he was ordained to the administration of ordinances; an event which had probably been delayed by some singularity in his opinions respecting the support of ministers.

During his travels for the spread of the gospel, Mr. H. sometimes met with much opposition. On one occasion, a brutal fellow pulled him down from the place where he was preaching, and dragged him about by the hair of his head, till some of his friends rescued him from his rage. This brought on a contention between his advocates and opposers; during which, a friendly captain took him to a house in which was a loft with a ladder to ascend to it. Into this loft Mr. H. was hurried; and the ladder being removed, he was secure from the attacks of his persecutors. At another place, he was knocked down while preaching; and, in a third, having gone to speak the words of life to some prisoners, he was locked up in the jail, and detained for some time. On one of his visits to Culpepper, he was arrested and carried into court as a disturber of the peace; when a captain Williams vehemently accused him as a vagabond, an heretic, and a mover of sedition in every place. Notwithstanding Mr. H. made a satisfactory defence, the court resolved that he should not preach in that county for the space of one year, on pain of being committed

to prison. The colonel told them, that he lived two hundred miles from thence, and was not likely to trouble them again in the course of a year. He then left their jurisdiction, and made a preaching excursion into the adjacent counties; but was soon unexpectedly led again into their territories. There was a meeting at the house where he lodged; and during the sermon, he felt the word of God burn in his heart. When the preacher had concluded, Mr. Harris stood up, and addressing the congregation, observed, "I partly promised the devil, a few days past, at the court house, that I would not preach in this country again, during a year: but the devil is a perfidious wretch, and covenants made with him are not to be kept, therefore I will preach." He then proceeded and delivered a lively and animating discourse, and the court never afterwards interfered.

In these excursions, Mr. Harris was frequently accompanied by a Mr. Read, and their labours and success were extraordinary. At one place, they baptized seventy-five candidates at one time; and, in the course of a single journey, of only a few weeks, they administered the same ordinance to upwards of two hundred. Many churches were formed, and many active, useful and successful ministers were called to the sacred work, who caught the spirit of their instructors and were eminent for indefatigable diligence and perseverance in their Master's cause.

An association of baptist churches in these parts had been formed in 1758; and in 1773 had increased to thirty-four churches containing 3195 members. They professed to make the scriptures their only rule, and endeavoured to regulate their discipline according to the primitive pattern. In some instances they appear not to have paid sufficient attention to the extraordinary circumstances of the apostolic churches, nor to have distinguished between what was peculiar to the first promulgation of christianity, and what was common to after ages. This year, 1773, the association, after having debated the subject with much warmth and at considerable length, came to an almost unanimous vote, that "all the offices of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, mentioned Eph. iv. 11, ought still to be maintained in the church." In order to carry this doctrine into effect, they proceeded to choose one from among them to officiate in the dignified cha-

racter of an apostle. It had been suspected, that a Mr. Walker, who had been very strenuous in pleading for the establishment of this office, entertained a secret ambition of being elevated to it. If so, he was disappointed; for Mr. Samuel Harris, now about fifty years of age, was, by the unanimous voice of the association, elected an apostle. He accepted the appointment, and was immediately ordained to the apostolic dignity. On the day appointed, which was set apart as a fast day, public prayers were offered by three of the ministers, and the hands of every ordained minister were laid upon him; a suitable charge was delivered, and the whole association gave him the right hand of fellowship. The work assigned to this apostle was, to travel through the churches for the purpose of performing or superintending the ordination of ministers, and to set in order the things that were wanting; and he was directed to report the success of his mission to the next association. This extraordinary office, which much resembled that of messenger amongst the English General Baptists, was continued only for one year; but the choice of Mr. Harris to fill it, proves the high esteem in which this good man was held by his brethren. Indeed, at all associations and general committees at which he was present, he was almost invariably chosen chairman. This office, like every thing else, he discharged, with some degree of singularity, yet to general satisfaction.

In the following year, 1775, the association was agitated by a discussion of a momentous doctrinal query, viz. "Is salvation by Christ made possible for every individual of the human race?" "This important query," says the historian who is a Particular Baptist minister, "occupied the first attention of the association. One whole day was spent in debating it, and most of the preachers spake more or less upon it. The weight of talents and influence seems to have been on the Arminian side. Samuel Harris, Jeremiah Walker, John Waller, and many other distinguished preachers stood forward and zealously as well as ably supported the argument in favour of universal provision. Talents and ingenuity were not wanting on the other side. William Murphy, John Williams and Elijah Craig stood foremost in favour of a calvinistic solution. The preponderating weight was at last cast into the calvinistic scale; and they, after a long and animated debate, finally obtained a

small majority. This decision was on Monday afternoon, immediately before an adjournment. That evening the Arminian party holding a consultation, determined to bring on the subject again the next day, and to have a determination whether their opinions on this point should be a matter of bar to fellowship and communion. On Tuesday, when they met, the business became very distressing. The Arminian party, having Mr. Harris, the chairman, with them, withdrew out of doors. The other side also withdrew, and chose Mr. J. Williams as their chairman." Having thus formed two associations, the negotiations were carried on between them by message; and after some time, a re-union was effected, upon a kind of compromise of both parties, and a prayer for the speedy arrival of that period, when "Israel shall all be of one mind, and all speak the same things."

From this candid statement of the business, it is plain that the Arminian ministers and churches connected with this association were numerous and respectable, and stood high in the estimation of their brethren who differed from them in sentiment: so high indeed that the Calvinists declared, in one of their messages, that, "a continuation of your christian fellowship seems nearly as dear to us as our lives." And twelve years afterwards, when the same association was charged, by some of its more rigid neighbours, with keeping within their communion many who were professed Arminians, they answered that "those among them who leaned too much to the Arminian system were generally men of exemplary piety and great usefulness in the Redeemer's kingdom—men whose christian deportment rendered them amiable in the estimation of all true lovers of genuine godliness—fathers in the gospel who had borne the brunt and heat of persecution, whose labours and sufferings God had blessed, and still continued to bless, to the great advancement of his cause—and to exclude such as these from their communion would be like tearing the limbs from the body." Such an honourable testimony to the character of his American brethren must be acceptable to every sincere General Baptist.

Mr. S. Harris, who evidently took a leading part among the Arminian Baptists in America, continued to pursue his course of usefulness and activity till he had passed his seventieth year: when he rested from his labours and entered into the

joy of his Lord. Some years before his death, he had a paralytic stroke; and a short time previous to his dissolution, his faculties were considerably palsied, so that he was unable to speak much; but he died in peace, and his memory is abundantly blessed by all who knew him. The historian, from whose valuable pages the foregoing account is drawn, gives these short sketches of the character of this eminent servant of God. "In every point of view, Mr. Harris might be considered one of the most excellent of men. Being in easy circumstances when he became religious, he devoted not only himself but almost all his property to religious objects. He had begun a large new dwelling house, suitable to his former dignity, which as soon as it was inclosed, he appropriated to the use of public worship, continuing to live in the old one. After maintaining his family in a very frugal manner, he distributed the overplus to charitable purposes. During the war, when it was extremely difficult to procure salt, he kept two waggons running to Petersburg to bring up salt for his neighbours. His manners were of the most winning sort, having a singular talent at touching the feelings. He scarcely ever went into a house without exhorting and praying for those he met with there."

"His excellency, as a preacher, lay chiefly in addressing the heart; and perhaps even Whitfield did not surpass him in this. When animated himself, he seldom failed to animate his auditory. Hence he was often called Boanerges. So much indeed was he governed by his feelings, that if he began a discourse, and did not find some liberty of utterance, he would tell his audience, that he could not preach without the Lord, and then sit down."

"Mr. Harris possessed a soul incapable of being dismayed by difficulties. To obtain his own consent to undertake a laudable enterprize, it was enough for him to know that it was possible. His faith was sufficient to throw mountains into the sea, if they stood in his way. He seems never to have been appalled by the fear or shame of man; but could confront the stoutest sons of pride, and boldly urge the humble doctrines of the cross. Like the brave soldier, if beaten back at the first onset, he was still ready for a further assault, so that he often conquered opposition that to others appeared completely hopeless."

This article having already exceeded the limits intended, we shall close with one anecdote highly illustrative of Mr. H.'s character. Some readers will probably smile at his enthusiasm; but the affair took place when he was setting out in the work of the ministry, and animated with all the ardour of his first love. Perhaps no minister ever rose to eminent usefulness who did not, at the commencement of his course, exhibit some symptoms of enthusiasm.

“When Mr. Harris began to preach, his soul was so absorbed in the work, that it was difficult for him to attend to the duties of this life. Finding at length the absolute necessity of providing more grain for his family than his plantation had produced, he went to a man who owed him some money and requested payment. The man replied, “I have no money by me, and therefore cannot oblige you.” Mr. Harris said, ‘I want the money to purchase wheat for my family; and as you have raised a good crop of wheat, I will take that article of you instead of money, at a current price.’ The man answered, “I have other uses for my wheat, and cannot let you have it.” ‘How then,’ resumed Mr. H. ‘do you intend to pay me?’ “I never intend to pay you until you sue me,” returned the debtor, “and therefore you may begin your suit as soon as you please.” Mr. Harris walked away meditating, ‘What shall I do? Must I leave preaching to attend to a vexatious lawsuit? Perhaps a thousand souls will perish in the mean time for the want of hearing of Jesus!’ No, I will not. Well! what will you do for yourself? Why this will I do, I will sue him in the court of heaven!’ Having resolved what to do, he turned aside into a wood, and falling on his knees, thus began his suit, ‘O blessed Jesus! thou eternal God! thou knowest that I need the money which this man owes me to supply the wants of my family; but he will not pay me without a lawsuit. Dear Jesus! shall I quit thy cause, and leave the souls of men to perish? or wilt thou in mercy open some other way of relief?’ In this address, the colonel had such nearness to God, that, to use his own words, Jesus said unto him, “Harris, I will enter bondsman for the man—you keep on preaching, and omit the lawsuit. I will take care of you and see that you have your pay.” Mr. H. felt well satisfied with his security, but thought it would be unjust to hold the man a debtor, when Jesus had assumed payment. He

therefore wrote a receipt in full of all accounts which he had against the man; and, dating it in the woods where Jesus had entered bail, he signed it with his own name. Going, the next day, by the man's house to attend a meeting, he gave the receipt to a servant, and bid him deliver it to his master. On returning from the meeting, the man hailed him at the gate, and said, "Mr. Harris, what did you mean by the receipt which you sent me this morning?" Mr. H. replied, 'I meant just as I wrote.' "But you know, Sir," answered the other, "that I have never paid you." 'True,' said Mr. H. 'and I know also that you said you never would except I sued you. But, Sir, I sued you at the court of heaven, and Jesus entered bail for *you*, and has agreed to pay *me*. I have therefore given you a discharge.' "But I insist upon it," returned the debtor, "that matters shall not be left so." 'I am well satisfied,' Mr. H. replied, 'Jesus will not fail me. I leave you to settle the account with him another day. Farewell.' This operated so effectually on the man's conscience, that in a few days, he loaded his waggon, and sent Mr. H. wheat enough to discharge the debt.

THE PRIMITIVE SIMPLICITY OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

By the late Mr. JOHN TAYLOR, of Queenshead.

I. I understand that, as to the Christian Religion, the New Testament is our *complete* and *only* rule. This was the professed opinion of some of those eminent servants of God who began the reformation, about three hundred years ago. This was, in an honourable degree, the sentiment of those good men who began to found the dissenting interest in these kingdoms, two centuries since. This has been the intention of a few down to the present time; except perhaps that it has been blended and fettered with some ideas that the Old Testament and the Jewish religion should have some influence over us as christians. My meaning is, that the New Testament, as to our religion and the worship of Almighty God, is our only and entire rule; and that whatever was done or taught in the Old Testament, for four hundred, or for four years, before the coming of our blessed Saviour; or whatever was taught or

done by all men, or any man, one hundred years, or one year, after the Divine Book was closed, should not be regarded at all, as our rule; nor, unless it perfectly accords with the New Testament, should it have any influence over any part of our worship, or in any part of our creed as christians.

2. Preaching and praying and singing in the worship of God, it will, I suppose, be allowed, are all of them what the law of nature requires of us as the creatures of God, and as we are related to one another. There can be no doubt that all these were practised by the Antediluvians, after the flood, in the patriarchal age, and to this day among the heathens who fear God, but who are unacquainted with any revelation either real or pretended. With regard to preaching and praying, this is certain from the examples of Enoch, Noah, Abraham, &c. and, from the hints respecting the practice of both Hebrews and heathens before giving of the law, it appears evident also with regard to the singing of the praises of God. We conclude, therefore, that these constitute part of the religion of nature, and always were the duty of men as far as they were qualified for it.

3. When a revelation was made, there were doubtless directions given how these duties should be performed. This we might conclude, if we had no acquaintance with the revelation itself; but being favoured with the writings of Moses, we know it was the case in the Jewish-revelation. It then certainly became the duty of those to whom that revelation was given, to follow these directions; to follow them, without being influenced by the methods taken by those who were guided only by the dictates of nature or their own understandings. These might differ considerably one from another, and yet be acceptable to God; but those must all follow the divine directions given to them all. Thus it was with the Jewish nation, as long as their dispensation lasted, even until the coming of the Son of God.

4. But when the Son of God came, he made a new revelation of the will of his heavenly Father to mankind. He and his apostles gave many directions about the performance of natural religion; besides laying the foundation of an entirely new system of religion, with which the world till then had been wholly unacquainted. Now all that a humble, well-disposed christian has to do, is to examine and follow the directions of the Son of

God and of those whom he qualified and authorized to instruct mankind. Have we to preach? Follow then the directions for that part of worship, as given, not to the Antediluvians nor by Moses, but by Christ and his apostles. So likewise with regard to praying and singing, and every thing else relating to the worship of God. This is, thus far, what I mean by the *christian religion in its simplicity*.

5. The things that distinguish the christian religion from all other religions, are *baptism*, the *Lord's supper* and *church fellowship*. As we depend on the New Testament solely for all that we know of these subjects, we can have nothing at all to do either with natural religion or other revelations to instruct us concerning them. The humble sincere christian, therefore, has only to understand and regularly to follow the directions and examples of the New Testament and the first christians. He may safely be ignorant of all other directories; or, if acquainted with them, totally disregard them in the concerns of religion. Let the believer in the Lord Jesus attend to the ordinance of baptism, join in fellowship with a church, partake of the Lord's supper, and pay a practical regard to the New Testament alone in all his proceedings in these and every part of religion. This is the man whom I esteem, whom I approve, to whom I could cheerfully give the right hand of fellowship, and make my companion through life.

6. When I speak of the New Testament as our *only* rule, I mean that we mingle nothing else with it; and when I call it a *complete* rule, I mean that we stop where it stops. I understand that we should believe nothing, teach nothing, practise nothing in the worship of God which is not taught, authorized or evidently supported by the New Testament. This must be applied to all that we believe or profess to believe, concerning the adorable Redeemer; his person, his state, his nature, his great undertaking on earth, the various offices in which he is now employed, the nature, design and extent of his death for sinners, &c. It must be applied to all the gospel ordinances and privileges: these are all of them what the New Testament appoints them to be, and teaches us what they are. It must apply to preaching, praying and singing; both as to the matter, manner and method. In all these parts of the worship and service of God, we must go as far as the New Testament teaches and authorizes us, and stop when it leads no farther.

It must apply to all our behaviour as christians and as men; in all civil society, in all our natural relations, and in all our moral conduct towards God and man. For, though it is a very important truth, that the moral law is unchangeable, and that the Lord Jesus Christ neither added to it, nor took from it; yet, it is certain, that he expounded it, and that his apostles expounded it and gave the signification of it in such a manner as had never been done before them. Now it is the indispensable duty of every humble sincere christian; and, as far as his mind is influenced by the love of Christ and the fear of God, it will be his anxious desire and greatest delight, to make this moral law, thus expounded by Jesus Christ and his apostles, as far as he can understand it, the rule of his life and the guide of his conduct. Otherwise the Lord Jesus must be deprived of the honour which is due to him as "the teacher sent down from God."

7. Having ventured to speak so plainly on this very important subject, it may perhaps be proper to add a few words as an apology for my freedom. I have, for many years, had the same views as I now entertain, and have frequently been tempted, when in company with professors, to speak out; but I have checked myself, on considering my youth and my ignorance. I am, I freely confess, ignorant enough yet; but I cannot always remain young. I am now approaching fast to old age, and this emboldens me to speak more frequently and more positively than I did when young and in the company of my superiors in age and knowledge. But I trust that I do not speak, in matters of importance, in a positive manner, before I have well examined them; and have full persuasion of the truth of what I assert. I am sensible also, that, if I speak at all, I must speak soon; as it is but a little while that I shall be able to speak. The subject on which I have just stated my sentiments is of great importance, and very imperfectly understood; or, if understood, it is not practically regarded by the professors of religion of the present day. So far as I know, all parties of religion are now turning to popery, or sinking lower in that dismal abyss. All parties of dissenters, as far as I knew them, fifty years ago opposed, and in most cases violently opposed, many things which they now favour. It is not, that I know of, pretended that there has been a new revelation of the divine will within these fifty years. Yet I con-

fess that the behaviour of many among them, in what they call religion and divine worship, would lead one to suspect, either that we have had a new revelation, or that our views of the old one are very confused, or that our fathers understood and acted in a very disorderly manner. The awful truth is—the simplicity of the christian religion is not well understood—the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ is too much slighted, and the maxims of the world too much revered. Professors now are more solicitous to introduce into divine worship what is popular, honourable or advantageous in the sight of man, than to keep the ordinances as they were delivered to them. Such conduct may gain the applause of fashion, but will never obtain the praise of an apostle.

ON CHRISTMAS SINGING.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

A writer in your last No. page 222, who signs himself A. J. A. M. has given us some arguments in favour of *Christmas singing*. I am unacquainted with all parties, and can have no personal feelings. I hope therefore that the few remarks I feel disposed to offer on the subject, will be read with candour, and allowed their full weight, if they possess any.

Your correspondent sets out from a commanding eminence, and boldly asserts that the practice which he advocates “may be fairly said to be from heaven.” If so, it must stand. But how does he prove this? Why thus. Because the heavenly host, who were sent expressly to impart the interesting news of the birth of the Saviour to certain pious shepherds that were watching their flocks, in a retired station, far from the abodes of man, sung “Glory to God,” &c. therefore a number of persons, many of whom are probably young and careless, ought to parade the streets of country towns, and traverse the lanes of country villages, at midnight, accompanied with musical instruments of various kinds, to sing carols of human composition. And, because the celestial messengers brought this joyful communication on the very night when the important event happened, therefore protestant dissenters ought to make nocturnal perambulations to proclaim it, on a night which

most probably owes its first distinction to the mysteries of paganism in honour of some idol made with man's hand, and which has been set apart to the commemoration of the nativity of Christ by the Man of Sin. For it is well known, that most of the feasts and holidays in the churches of Rome and England had their origin in heathenish festivals, and were adopted, by authority of the Pope, with little change in their character, into the ritual of the christian church. This indeed appears to have been peculiarly the case with respect to Christmas: and Christmas singing as well as most other Christmas gambols, has been borrowed from the processions and pageantries, practised by our idolatrous ancestors, at this season of the year, in honour of certain pagan deities. And, in fixing the celebration of the Nativity to this part of the year, his holiness appears to have been guided by convenience and circumstances, rather than by any evidence that the birth of our adorable Saviour happened on the twenty-fifth of December. Few questions have puzzled chronologers more, than that of ascertaining the date of this glorious event. Learned and able writers have found reason to claim this honor for almost every month in the year. Perhaps it was wisely ordered, by an all-wise Providence, that this uncertainty should exist, to prevent that abuse of the exact day, had it been known, to which ignorance and superstition would certainly have been too prone. This supposition accords with the probable principle of the divine proceedings, in concealing the burying place of Moses: Deut. xxxiv. 4, and of Hezekiah, in destroying the golden serpent: 2 Kings xviii 4.

Mr. A. J. A. M. seems to rest much on the apostolic maxim, "Where there is no law, there is no transgression." Rom. iv. 15. This maxim has been often woefully misapplied. The evident intention of the sacred writer is, that if a rational being could be supposed to be placed in a state in which he was subject to no law, either natural or revealed, then he would be incapable of incurring guilt, and consequently could need no justification; and he infers from this position, that because Abraham needed justification therefore he was subject to some law, though not to the Mosaic, which had not then been published. But does this apply to christians? Are they under no law? Certainly they are. They have a divine directory in things relating to reli-

gion; and this directory is the New Testament. To add to what is contained in it, is to arraign the wisdom or the goodness of the Divine Legislator; and to incur the curse denounced against those who add to the sacred canon, Rev. xxii. 18. If men allow themselves to do things in religion because they are not forbidden, they may adopt all the abominations of popery, and all the fooleries of superstition. Indeed, from this fruitful source have flowed most of the commandments of men which have, in the various ages of the church, been taught for doctrines, and all the traditions which have made void the commandments of God, and disfigured the beautiful simplicity of christianity. Establish the maxim, that every thing is lawful that is not expressly prohibited, and you may sprinkle infants, baptize bells, consecrate churches, found monasteries and fill them with monks and nuns, enjoin pilgrimages; and in short return at once to Rome.

It is indeed often necessary that we should act in circumstances for which we have no express scripture direction. But there are general rules which, if conscientiously applied, will lead us right. The apostolic canons "Let all things be done unto edifying." "Let all things be done decently and in order" appear applicable to the subject under consideration. If Christmas singing can be justified by these rules, let it be practised as a mere human ceremony; but let it not be esteemed as any part of religion. Indeed its zealous advocate has granted, that the New Testament is silent on the subject—that it does not appear probable that the first christians practised it—and that he knows not when, nor by whom, it was first introduced among christians. These concessions entirely relieve the religion of Jesus from any connection with it, and leave it to be determined by its own merits. What those are, they can best tell who witness its progress and tendency. But as its progenitors were foreigners of very suspicious characters, pagans and papists, and as its naturalization is no where to be found in the statutes of Christ, we ought to be well assured of its virtue before we adopt it into the family of christians; lest at the day of final enquiry we should be confounded with the searching interrogatory, "Who hath required this at your hands?"

Middlesex, 1st July, 1821.

CRITO.

The HISTORY and CHARACTER of the PATRIARCH JOSEPH, IMPROVED. No. vi.

(Concluded from G. B. R. vol. ix. page 172.)

When we last contemplated the actions and character of this illustrious patriarch, we left him, after having discovered himself to his brethren, dismissing them to carry the tidings of his preservation and exaltation to his venerable father. When they arrived in Canaan, and informed Jacob of the existence and prosperity of his favorite son, the old man's parental feelings were excited, and "his heart fainted, for he believed them not." It was not till they had rehearsed the whole of the transactions of their journey, and brought forward the carriages which Joseph had sent to transport him and his family to Egypt, that the spirit of Jacob revived. Then, in the afflicting simplicity of scripture, Israel said, "It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive. I will go and see him before I die."

Jacob accordingly set out with all his family and property. He had not proceeded far, before he offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac; and received encouraging assurance of the divine protection and blessing. When he approached the confines of Egypt, he sent Judah to announce his approach to Joseph; and went himself with his dependants into the land of Goshen, which had been appointed for their residence. Joseph no sooner received the intelligence, than he mounted his chariot and hastened to embrace his father. The interview which took place between these affectionate relatives, after an absence of upwards of twenty-one years, is thus described by the inspired penman, with his usual touching simplicity: "Joseph fell on his father's neck, and wept on his neck a good while; and Jacob said, Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art still alive."

Joseph used his influence with Pharaoh, to obtain a settlement for his family in the best part of the land of Egypt; and that grateful monarch seems to have experienced sincere pleasure in rendering every service to persons who were so closely connected with his favorite minister. For seventeen years, the ancient patriarch sojourned in the land of Egypt; and doubtless had many proofs of the filial piety and tenderness.

of his darling child; who appears to have treated him, notwithstanding his own elevation, with all the respect due to a parent. The time however arrived when Israel must die; and the symptoms of approaching dissolution became apparent. Joseph was informed of his indisposition, and immediately set out to visit him; accompanied by his two sons, who were now advancing towards manhood. The old man, though debilitated with old age and infirmities, strengthened himself and sat on his bed to receive them. The presence of a son, whom he had so long considered as lost, and especially of the youthful progeny of this son, recalled to the patriarch's mind, the dealings of Providence towards him, through his long pilgrimage. He took a rapid retrospect of the principal circumstances of his past life; and was filled with pious gratitude to that God, "who had fed him all his life long and delivered him from all evil." With parental affection, he bestowed his benediction on his two grandsons; and, aided by the spirit of prophecy, foretold the increase of their posterity. Soon afterwards Jacob "yielded up the Ghost and was gathered to his people." This event made a deep impression on the feelings of his affectionate son, who fell on the cold face of his father, and wept upon him, and kissed him. He ordered his body to be embalmed; and, after a long and honourable mourning in Egypt, conveyed his remains, with almost regal pomp, into the land of Canaan, to deposit them, in conformity with the desire of the deceased, in the sepulchre of his ancestors. So great was the estimation in which Joseph was still held by the people over whom he had so long ruled, that not only his own household and his brethren attended on the mournful occasion; but the servants of Pharaoh and the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt accompanied him.

On the return of the sons of Jacob, from paying this last sad duty to their departed parent, a scene occurred which appears to have been very painful to the generous soul of Joseph. His brethren, who could not forget how deeply they had injured him, and did not properly appreciate the sincerity of his affection, entertained fears lest his former kindness towards them had been caused, more by his respect to their common father, than by a hearty forgiveness of their injuries. They were therefore apprehensive that, now their father was no

more, he might take some means of requiting them for the evil which they had done to him. To prevent this, they sent a messenger to their brother, in the name of their deceased parent, to intreat his forgiveness; and soon afterwards took occasion to prostrate themselves before him, and repeat the same petition. Joseph was moved to tears at this address, and, after soothing their agitated minds by the gentlest language, promised them not only pardon for themselves, but protection and favour for all their families. This pledge he amply redeemed, during the remainder of his life.

We have no more account of this worthy man for fifty-four years after this event; except that he dwelt in Egypt, and was blest with an increasing family. There is every reason to believe that, during this long interval, he was actively employed in promoting the prosperity of the Egyptians; and in watching over the best interests of his brethren and their descendants, who became very numerous before his death. But neither the honours nor the emoluments of the court of Pharaoh made him forget his connection with the people of God, nor the promises which had been made to them. A little before his death, he called some of his brethren to him; and, sensible of his approaching dissolution, he foretold their departure from the land in which they, at that time, sojourned, and their taking possession of that which the Almighty had promised to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob: charging them to carry his bones with them. Thus died Joseph at the age of one hundred and ten years; nearly eighty years after he had been raised to the first dignity in the land of Egypt.

We shall now close this hasty sketch with a few reflections.

What an encouraging example does the history of Joseph afford of filial piety. Deprived of his mother when he was only a few years of age, this excellent youth seems to have transferred all his love and reverence to his father; and, throughout his eventful life, omitted no opportunity of shewing his attachment. The warmth and sincerity of his affection was abundantly proved by the tender eagerness with which he seized every opportunity of learning his parent's welfare—the alacrity with which he complied with all his requests—and the ample provision which he made for his support and comfort in his old age. The high honour in which he held his aged father, even after his own elevation to unexpected dignity, is

manifest, in his constant respectful carriage towards him, at every interview on record—his introducing him to the monarch of Egypt—and in the very respectful manner in which he solemnized his funeral. And that God who, afterwards, from Mount Sinai, commanded “Honour thy father and mother, that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee,” Deut. v. 16. amply rewarded Joseph. He honoured his parents, and his days were prolonged and it was well with him. Let every child remember his history, imitate his conduct, and hope for his reward.

Joseph was also exemplary for his regard to his brethren. Notwithstanding the baseness of their conduct towards him, he not only forbore revenging himself, when it was fully in his power; but he loaded them with the most substantial benefits. How different was his behaviour from some who, when advanced from a low condition to stations of honour and affluence, are ashamed of their relatives, and refuse to hold any communication with them. The Lord has recorded his disapprobation of such as “hide themselves from their own flesh;” but Joseph would not fall under this censure. His heart was too warm and his soul too elevated, to suffer external distinctions to damp those natural affections, which do honour to our nature, and are the friendly ties by which society is held together. How happy would it be for mankind, if all acted like him!

Solomon says, “It is the glory of a man to pass over a transgression.” This glory Joseph enjoyed in a high degree. Few persons were more deeply injured or more unjustly treated than this good man was by his brethren, yet he seems, not merely to have passed over the transgression, but to have laboured to make them forget it, by a series of friendship and favours, and by furnishing them with apologies for their own cruelty and wickedness. This disinterested conduct he pursued, through the whole of his life, long after the death of his father had removed every restraint and left him free to obey the feelings of his own breast. What a contrast does this amiable patriarch exhibit to those who nourish resentment for slight offences; and, on the most trivial occasions, exclaim, “I will do so to him as he hath done to me: I will render to the man according to his works.” This good man, on the contrary, though he had never read the benevolent precept of our Saviour,

“ Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, and do good to them that hate you,” yet he exemplified it, in all his dealings with those who had most despitefully used him. O! that every christian would emulate the character of this noble patriarch; and thus overcome evil with good. How lovely! how noble would the religion of Jesus then appear! how fitted to promote peace on earth and good will amongst men!

A disposition so truly lovely and conduct so laudable will always have its reward, even in this world. Depraved as human nature certainly is, kindness, integrity and diligence will at length gain esteem and confidence, though they may sometimes have to struggle long against envy, ill will, and misunderstanding. So Joseph experienced it. In whatever situation he was placed, when his excellencies became known, they invariably gained him the favour of those with whom he was connected. It is true, he suffered not a little from the machinations of his envious brethren and wanton mistress; but the trials of his youth would have a happy effect on his mind, and give additional relish to the long course of prosperity which he enjoyed in advanced life. He could doubtless join with many others of the favourites of heaven in asserting, that “ it is good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth.”

But it is death that fixes every man's character; and Joseph has left full proof that he continued steadfast to the end. He died, depending on the promises of God to his fathers; and is recorded, by the pen of inspiration itself, amongst that noble list of saints, who “ obtained a good report through faith.” May every reader have the same honour.

THE FORCE OF TRUTH.

At the revival of religion in North America, occasioned by the preaching of Mr. Whitfield and his companions, a person of the name of Eliakim Marshall was brought to a knowledge of the truth, and became an useful minister of the gospel, of the pædo-baptist persuasion, at Windsor, in Connecticut. Forty years after his conversion, he changed his sentiments respecting baptism, under circumstances rather remarkable.

One of his near relatives had gone, on a missionary excursion, among the Cherokee Indians: accompanied by his family,

and amongst others a son, Abraham Marshall, who was then about three years of age. This child grew up, and became a baptist minister; and in 1786, paid his first visit to his relatives in Connecticut. On his way, he fell in with a minister returning from those parts; and enquired respecting his friends to whom he was going. The minister informed him, that Eliakim Marshall, of Windsor, was a man of a sound judgment, a retentive memory, and a tender conscience. "Well," replied Abraham, "if this be his character, I shall expect to baptize him before I return: for if he has a sound judgment, he will understand my arguments in favour of believers' baptism, and against that of infants; if he has a strong memory, he will retain them; and if he has a tender conscience, they will have an influence on his mind." With this persuasion, he prosecuted his journey to Connecticut. He was unknown by person, to any of his relatives there; but was received among them cordially, and treated with respect; and made Eliakim's house his home. He kept in mind what the minister had told him of his cousin; but he resolved that he would not be forward to introduce the subject of baptism, nor press him too hard at first. Eliakim frequently expressed a desire to hear what his new relation, as he called him, had to say in defence of the opinions in which they differed; but Abraham waved the matter for a time. At length, from slight skirmishes, they, by mutual consent, entered with all their strength into the baptismal controversy; in which Eliakim had been a man of war from his youth, and now manifested a strong assurance of victory. He began with Abraham's Covenant; and mustered all the arguments usually brought in defence of pædo-baptism. Abraham, on the other hand, opposed his whole system, as destitute of scripture proof, and adduced his reasons for his different belief. At the first onset, this old pædo-baptist divine, as he afterwards acknowledged to a friend, had but two arguments left for the support of his system; and continuing to lose ground, while striving with himself to regain it, in the next attack he was completely defeated; and in a short time after, confessed his conscience could not be easy till he was baptized. But a trouble arose on account of his wife, who was much opposed to this change in his sentiments. He mentioned this circumstance to Abraham, and requested his advice. He replied that his youth did not qualify him to prescribe the line

of duty to a man of his years; "but," said he, I will mention two passages of scripture, which my father frequently made use of in difficult cases. They are these: "I conferred not with flesh and blood." "What thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." The tender conscience of this aged convert urged him on to duty: and, according to Abraham's expectation, he was baptized by him, the day before he left the place. A large concourse of people, supposed to be two or three thousand, collected to witness the administration of the solemn rite. The venerable candidate addressed them in a most melting manner. "I was awakened," said he, "under the preaching of Whitfield, about forty years ago; at which time my mind was solemnly impressed with this sentiment, '*God is wisdom*;' he, therefore, knows all my thoughts, and all I do. I was in the next place, impressed with this sentence, '*God is holiness*;' and must therefore hate all in me, which his wisdom sees is wrong. I was, in the third place, impressed with this solemn thought '*God is power*;' this struck me like thunder, and brought me to the ground." So saying, he burst into tears, and, in a moment, the tears were flowing from a thousand eyes. "After labouring a few days," continued he, "under these weighty impressions, the soothing declaration, '*God is love*,' relieved my distress, removed my fears, and filled me with unspeakable joy." He expatiated largely on the interesting event of his conversion; and the most solemn attention pervaded the great assembly.

Benedict's History.

MISSIONARY HOURS.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

SIR,

While following, in my meditations, our respected friends, the missionaries, who are now crossing the great deep, in order to carry the news of a Saviour to the perishing heathens, I have fancied that, through the good hand of their God upon them, they have arrived in safety and health, at the destined haven, and proceeded to the scene of their labours. The exact place is not indeed determined; but Assam, to the east of Bengal, has been mentioned as the probable situation. I have supposed them to be settled there; the little missionary church established, and the ordinances of the gospel regularly

dispensed; domestic altars erected in each family, and the morning and evening sacrifice daily offered.

In contemplating this interesting little band, thus laying the foundation of the benevolent religion of Jesus, in the dark places of the earth, which have hitherto been, in a peculiar manner, full of the habitations of cruelty, who can repress a prayer for the success of the glorious enterprize? Who would not wish to send up an ejaculation which should reach the throne of the omnipresent God, *at the same time* with the petitions of our self-devoted brethren in this barbarous clime? This led me to consider what difference the situation of the place would make in the hours of the day; and by an easy calculation, which every novice in geography can repeat, I find that *Chergong*, the capital of Assam, being rather more than ninety-three degrees and one half east of Greenwich, the difference in time will be six hours and a quarter before London. Suppose then that the brethren in Assam attend family worship at eight in the morning and nine in the evening, if we wish to unite in their devotions, we must do it at a quarter before two in the morning and three in the afternoon. Again, if the missionaries in Assam celebrated public worship, on the Lord's day, at ten in the morning, two in the afternoon, and six in the evening, the corresponding hours, in England, will be, a quarter before four, eight, and twelve, in the morning.

Whether you will judge this hint worthy of a place in your miscellany, I cannot tell. If not, you are at full liberty to throw it amongst your rejected communications.

Your's, MATHO.

GENERAL BAPTIST OCCURRENCES.

OBITUARY.

Died, March 10, 1821, Mr. JOHN DEACON, many years pastor of the General Baptist Church, Friar-lane, Leicester. His death was occasioned by a stricture in the bowels, which made its appearance fifteen months before its fatal termination. The first attack was succeeded by a considerable interval of ease; but, in June, 1820, it was renewed with many distressing symptoms. Though he had afterwards frequent respites

from pain, still those respites gradually grew shorter in duration, until he was obliged, about three weeks before his death, to take to his bed. This disease was accompanied with the most excruciating pain; and, sometime before his death, with constant sickness and vomiting. He bore the whole, however, with the utmost patience and resignation; not a murmur escaped his lips, but he was continually breathing ejaculatory prayers, for increased patience, with thanksgiving that his sufferings were not greater, that they were not the pains of hell. As the complaint was not of that nature to affect his lungs, and did not much impair his general health, he never abated in his labours in the pulpit, until a very few weeks previous to his decease. The last sabbath he was out, he preached a sermon in aid of the Frame-work knitters' fund; and though evidently suffering severely from pain, he delivered a feeling and warm address, with his accustomed animation and energy. He was well aware that the disorder would one day terminate fatally; but neither he nor his family were prepared to expect it so soon. When a mortification had taken place, and speedy dissolution was certain, he received the information with the utmost composure and cheerfulness, appearing fully prepared for the awful change. He observed, that it was a serious thing to die: and said that, he sometimes felt under a cloud; but his doubts were speedily removed, and he would express the confidence he felt in a crucified Saviour. When life was fast ebbing, and he could scarcely articulate, the welfare of the church lay near his heart, and he charged those around him to give his dying love to the members and congregation, and to assure them, that his last prayers were for their spiritual welfare. He retained his faculties till the last moment, and expired without a struggle, in the full assurance of faith. Of him it might be truly said, "The end of that man was peace." During his affliction, he was visited by Mr. Bromwich, and many of the friends of both the G. B. congregations; and frequently by the Rev. R. Hall, by whose affectionate and fervent prayers and pious conversation, he expressed himself much refreshed; and by whom, assisted by Mr. Bromwich, he was interred in the Friar-lane Chapel, in the midst of a croud of weeping spectators. On Mar. 25, his funeral sermon was preached by Mr. W. Pickering, from Heb. xiii. 1 "Jesus Christ the same, yesterday, to day, and for ever:" when the

chapel was crowded to excess, and vast numbers, it is supposed some thousands, went away disappointed: a proof of the high estimation in which he was held by his neighbours and friends.

He was the youngest son of Mr. Samuel Deacon, one of the earliest preachers of the New Connection of General Baptists: and frequently, when a boy, was the companion of his father in his laborious excursions. Placed apprentice to his brother at Barton, and early joining the church, he soon evinced a turn of mind for the ministry, joined with an ardent thirst for literature. His opportunities for learning being very few during his early youth, having never had the advantage of even a common day school for more than twelve months, as he advanced in years he eagerly seized every means for improvement, and received considerable assistance from a neighbouring clergyman. At the expiration of his apprenticeship, he was placed, by the church at Barton, under Mr. D. Taylor, where he prosecuted his studies with great diligence. On his return into his own country, he was invited to labour at the Friar-lane Chapel, Leicester, which church then consisted of very few members, and was nearly extinct.* Here his services proving acceptable, it was deemed necessary to build a more commodious chapel; to defray the expence of which he travelled some thousands of miles, in all parts of the kingdom, many of which he performed on foot; and, after incredible exertion, he had the satisfaction to see the whole debt liquidated.

He laboured with various success for several years, until a cloud unhappily overshadowed him, and he was separated from the church. After some time, he was restored, and again resumed the duties of the pastoral office, which he discharged with unremitting zeal and activity, until absolutely confined to his bed: maintaining till his death a conduct free from reproach.

Three years before his death, the congregation increasing, the Friar-lane Meeting-house was again enlarged, so as to be capable of seating a thousand persons, and continues to the present time to be well attended. Indeed the great Head of the church appears to have blessed the latter days of his servant in a peculiar manner, by making his increasing labours eminently useful; not only to his own people, but wherever

* See History of G. Baptists, Vol. II. p. 162—165.

he went, as many neighbouring churches can gratefully testify.

With declining years, his piety and zeal for Christ seemed to encrease; shewing themselves by his anxiety for the salvation of sinners, which drew from him such animated and pathetic addresses; and by his solicitude for the welfare and prosperity of the church, which occasioned his unremitting attention to her interests, in every department. In his religious sentiments, he rose very much previous to his decease; and when he spoke of them, he has frequently said that they approached the nearest to those of Baxter of any. Though truly liberal towards those of every denomination of christians, he was devotedly attached to the principles of that body of professors with which he stood connected: than he, the connection did not possess a more warm advocate or more steady friend.

Of his character but little need be said. Few were unacquainted with the cheerfulness of his disposition, with his urbanity, and with his unbounded hospitality. To him the distressed never applied in vain; and many can bear witness to the readiness with which he ever gave his advice and assistance, in cases of difficulty and emergency. In his friendships, he was warm and sincere, thinking scarcely any sacrifice too great in order to serve those who possessed his esteem. In the discharge of the various social and domestic duties incumbent on him, he was exemplary. As a father, he might have his equal, but none ever exceeded him, in the most tender concern for the best interests of his children. His loss will long be deplored, and his memory ever revered by his inconsolable widow, by his affectionate children, and by his sincerely and justly attached church and congregation.

F. D.

Feb. 5th, 1821, died MRS. MARY BORE, the wife of *Mr. Thomas Bore*, of the Commercial Road, London, aged sixty-four years. She was brought to the knowledge of the truth, under the ministry of the late Mr. J. Brittain, pastor of the G. B. church, Church-lane, Whitechapel, with whom she lived as a servant. When young, she was admitted a member of his church by baptism; and continued to adorn her profession by a steady and honourable conversation, till she was removed to the church above. She was highly esteemed for her piety

and integrity in the family in which she lived; and by many respectable members of the church. After she had settled in the world, she walked before her family with great circumspection, and was exemplary for diligently instructing her children and servants in the ways of the Lord, and guarding them against the snares of the world. Indeed her fidelity in admonishing and reproving her friends was a peculiar trait in her character. She was ready for every good work, and diligent in devising and executing liberal things for those who were in need; especially for the poor of the church to which she belonged. In her, many have lost an honest monitor and a kind benefactress.

For many years previous to her death, she was the subject of much bodily indisposition, which had a natural tendency to depress and weaken her spirits. This caused her sometimes to indulge in despondency respecting her state, for which those who best knew her, had good evidence there was no foundation. But she could often rejoice in God her Saviour, and look forward to an happy eternity through his blood, on which alone she rested for salvation. Notwithstanding her frequent illness, her death was unexpected both to herself and friends. Little therefore can be said of her dying experience. Her end was peace: and there can be no doubt of her present happiness in that state where fears and doubts have no place. May her mourning family be enabled to follow her as far as she followed Christ, and all join her at the right hand of the Judge. Her funeral sermon was preached, by Mr. Wallis, her pastor, from Isa. xxxviii. 1. "Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die and not live."

March 30th, 1821, died at Wykeham, Lincolnshire, Mr. RICHARD LAWSON, in the seventy-sixth year of his age; and his remains were interred in the G. B. burying ground at Spalding, April 2nd: when a funeral discourse was delivered by Mr. H. Everard, from Phil. i. 21. "To die is gain."

Mr. Lawson was awakened to a sense of divine realities about 1776, when he began to attend the worship of the General Baptists. In April, 1779, he was baptized by Mr. Anderson, at Gosberton, which was then a branch of Spalding church, and admitted into its fellowship. Soon afterwards he removed to Fleet, and joined the church in that place. In 1787, he again changed his place of abode, when he and his

wife were dismissed to the church at Spalding, in which he continued a steady, humble and sincere follower of the Lord Jesus to the end of his pilgrimage. About 1791, he was chosen by his brethren to the office of deacon; and for the space of thirty years, he used that office well, and purchased to himself a good degree.

Mr. L. was steady in his principles. From his first setting out in religion to his happy death, he was firmly attached to the doctrines and discipline of the New Connection. The fall of man, the divinity and atonement of Christ, the nature and necessity of regeneration, &c. were doctrines always grateful to his ear and his heart. As a christian, he was humble, grave, pious and sincere, a lover of good men, given to hospitality, and, for upwards of forty years, regular and conscientious in attending the means of grace, though he lived four miles from the place of worship. His religion appeared in his whole department: in his family, in the market, and in the discharge of every relative and social duty. The word of God was his constant counsellor, and the glory of God his principal aim. The church of which he was a useful and valued member for forty years, have just cause to mourn the loss of so respected an officer. His surviving widow, with whom he had been happily united upwards of forty years, feels deeply the loss of the best of husbands; and his children lament the loss of an affectionate father, who was the guide of their youth, and their friend and helper in more advanced life. But the chief comfort of all the mourning survivors is the full evidence, that to their departed friend "to die was gain."

Few men have maintained a fairer character through so long a life than our honoured friend. But he was of like passions with other men; and therefore had his imperfections. His dependance was upon Christ alone for pardon and acceptance. His last illness was extremely painful, and continued about a week. He endured his severe affliction with christian fortitude. Death to him had lost its sting; and he was enabled to look forward, with calm composure, to the hour of dissolution, and say, "I know in whom I have believed; and am persuaded, that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, until that day." Such was the state of his mind, till within twenty-four hours of his death, when his reason forsook him. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

CONFERENCES.

The MIDLAND CONFERENCE was held at *Archdeacon-lane, Leicester*, April 24th, 1821: when Mr. Stevenson opened public worship by prayer, and Mr. Hoe preached, from I Tim. i. 11. "The glorious gospel of the blessed God." At this Conference, a committee was appointed to visit Hinckley; inquire into the state of the interest there; and take such methods as appeared most likely to benefit that depressed church. Cases from Lineholm and Staley Bridge, requesting pecuniary assistance, were referred to the September Conference. Mr. Green was requested to supply four Lord's days at Lincoln, previous to the Association, and report the state of the cause in that city to that meeting.

This Conference assembled again, at *Broad Street, Nottingham*, June 12th, 1821, when Mr. Hoe opened the morning service, and Mr. Stevenson preached, from Psa. cxxii. 6. "They shall prosper that love thee." This Conference recommended, that the Works of the late Mr. Dan Taylor should be published, in an uniform Edition, if a sufficient number of subscribers could be obtained: and gave advice to the church at Hinckley. Mr. Pike gave an affecting account of the departure of our Missionaries for India, and read a letter from Mr. Bampton, which was succeeded by earnest prayer to the Lord on their behalf. In the evening, Mr. Wigg preached. The next Conference to be held at *Ticknall*, September 18th. Messrs. Stevenson, Pickering and Orton are appointed to preach. Inn; the sign of the *Wheel*.

The LINCOLNSHIRE CONFERENCE was held at *Spalding*, June 14th, 1821, when Mr. Everard was chosen chairman, and Mr. Jarrom, scribe. In the morning, a prayer meeting was held, at which Messrs. Birch, Ewen and Bissill engaged. This meeting agreed to recommend it to the Association to take into consideration whether an alteration in the G. B. Repository could not be advantageously made, either by enlarging it, or publishing it monthly. In answer to a letter from Mr. Cameron of Louth, recommending the printing of an uniform Edition of the late Mr. Dan Taylor's Works, it was concluded that in the present distressed state of the times, and considering that some of his principal Works are by no means scarce, it was doubtful whether it would be advisable to encourage this mea-

sure. In the opinion of this meeting, it is desirable that Annual Missionary Meetings should be held in some of the principal churches in this district, Mr. Ewen having informed the Conference that he had hired a place for public worship at Whittlesea, it was agreed that it should be opened, July 17th, by Messrs. Everard, Bissill and Jarrom; and supplies for it, till next Conference, were arranged. In the evening, Mr. Bissill preached, from Acts xxvi. 18, 19. The next Conference to be at *Peterborough*, Sept. 19th. Mr. Everard to preach.

The **WARWICKSHIRE CONFERENCE** met at *Sutton Coldfield*, June 15th, 1821: when Mr. Cheatle preached, in the morning, from John iii. 2; and Mr. Hall, of *Wolvey*, in the evening, from Heb. vii. 25. The low state of the cause at *Sutton* was considered, and it appeared that they have no minister, that their number is much reduced by removals, and that their pecuniary resources are very insufficient. They were advised to apply for some help from the Itinerant Fund, and some ministerial supplies were promised. The Rules of the Conference were revised, and it was agreed to discuss some given subject, at each of these meetings, which should be proposed at the preceding Conference. The next meeting to be at *Wolvey*, on the last Thursday in September. Messrs. Barnes and Cheatle to preach.

OPENING of a NEW MEETING HOUSE.

Our friends at *Queenshead*, finding their old place of worship too small for their increased congregation, have taken it down and built another, on nearly the same site, but of larger dimensions and in a superior style. This was opened, on Easter Tuesday, April 24, 1821. In the morning, Mr. Poole, independent minister at *Kipping*, opened the service; and Dr. Steadman, tutor of the Particular Baptist Academy at *Bradford*, preached, from Phil. i. 12. "The things which have happened unto me, have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel." In the afternoon, Mr. Allison, particular baptist minister at *Idle*, prayed; and Mr. Pickering, G. B. minister, at *Nottingham*, preached, from Isa. liii. 10. "The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." In

the evening, Mr. Gibson, independent minister at Mixenden, engaged in prayer; and Mr. Parsons, Jun. independent minister at Halifax, delivered a discourse, from Psa. cxlix. 2. "Let the children of Zion be joyful in their king." Three collections were made, amounting in the whole to forty-four pounds; which, considering the unfavourable state of the weather during part of the day, was esteemed very liberal. The cause of the Redeemer at Queenshead has assumed a very promising aspect; but the supporters of it are very far from affluent, and unable of themselves to defray the expences of this undertaking, which, as they thought, had become necessary to the prosperity of the G. B. interest. We hope the Connection will lend them liberal and timely assistance: and that the house now built will be highly instrumental in promoting the conversion of sinners and the edification of saints.

ORDINATION.

May 29th, 1821, MR. WM. BRAND, late of Castle Donington, was ordained to the pastoral office over the G. B. church at *Portsea*, Hants. On this occasion, Mr. J. Neave, a particular Baptist minister, opened the service with reading suitable portions of scripture and prayer. Mr. T. Tilley, another minister of the same denomination, delivered an introductory discourse, descriptive of the nature and constitution of a christian church. Mr. E. Sexton, of Chesham, asked the usual questions, offered the ordination prayer, and delivered an impressive charge, from 2 Tim. iv. 5. "Watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." Mr. Griffin, an independent minister, concluded the afternoon service with prayer. In the evening, Mr. T. Arnott, a particular baptist minister opened public worship, and Mr. D. Miall, another minister of the same persuasion, addressed the church from Heb. xiii. 22. "Suffer the word of exhortation." Mr. Mead, of Downton, concluded the solemnities of the day with earnest prayer. The ministers and friends, to the number of upwards of two hundred, took tea together. The most perfect harmony prevailed; and every countenance seemed to say, "It is good to be here." May this solemn union be ratified by the great

Shepherd of Israel; and, crowned by his smiles, be highly conducive to the promotion of his glory and the extension of his kingdom.

GENERAL BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

On June 27th, 1821, the *Annual General Meeting* of this society was held, at Loughborough; Mr. J. Butters, of Spalding, in the chair. An interesting Report was read by the secretary; the following abstract of which will, we are well persuaded, be acceptable to our readers.

Messrs. W. Bampton and J. Peggs, who have been for some time engaged as missionaries by this society, have employed the leisure afforded them by waiting for Mr. Ward's return to India, in preparing for their great work. Mr. Bampton, by direction of the committee, spent the winter at London, in studying several branches of medicine and surgery; which, it was judged, would be very useful to himself and his associates, while pursuing their principal object, the evangelizing of the heathen. Mr. Peggs has continued his preparatory studies, at his own expence, under the tuition of Mr. Jarrom, at Wisbeach. Both he and Mrs. Bampton have, at the desire of the committee, made themselves acquainted with the British system of education; to enable them to avail themselves of that important instrument in enlightening the untutored inhabitants of the East. The diligence and success with which our friends applied themselves to these pursuits reflect great credit on their characters, and furnish a strong presumption in favour of their future conduct.

The approach of spring rendering it probable that their departure from England would soon take place, preparations were commenced for that important event. May 5th, 1821, Mr. Bampton was set apart to the high office of a Missionary, at Loughborough. The meeting was solemnly interesting. The place was crowded to excess, and numbers were disappointed of gaining admittance. Mr. R. Smith offered an affectionate and ardent prayer; and Mr. Bampton was ordained to the work, by the imposition of the hands of the ministers present. Mr. Pickering then delivered a charge full of important advice. In the afternoon, Mr. Ward, of Serampore, addressed the congregation from the apostolic request, "Brethren pray for

us, that the word of the Lord may have due course and be glorified." In the evening, a Missionary prayer meeting was held. Collections were made, at all the services, in aid of the Mission; and upwards of seventy pounds were obtained. The day was peculiarly happy, distinguished for affection and zeal, and will probably form a new era in the history of the New Connection.

On Thursday following, May 9th, Mr. Peggs was set apart at Wisbeach; when Mr. Bissill delivered the introductory discourse; Mr. Thomas Ewen offered the ordination prayer, accompanied by the imposition of hands; and Mr. Jarrom delivered an appropriate charge, from Nehemiah's words, "I am doing a great work, and I cannot come down." The meeting was well attended, the services were pleasing and solemn, and much tender solicitude for the comfort of the Missionaries and the success of the Mission was apparent.

At the close of these solemnities, the Missionaries set out for London, whence it was expected that they would immediately embark for India. Several delays took place, till Monday, the 28th of May, when they were summoned to the ship. They were accompanied, in the steam packet, from London to Gravesend, by nearly thirty of their friends and the friends of the cause, and appeared in good spirits. A little after three, the whole party went on board the Aberton, Capt. Gilpin, who takes the charge of the vessel, on account of the indisposition of Captain Percival, the regular commander. Mr. Ward and several of his friends had arrived just before them. After viewing the ship and the cabins of our friends, the whole company retired to the dining cabin. There prayer was offered by Mr. Ward and Mr. Pike; and an affecting parting took place, which will long be remembered by all who shared it. The Missionaries, when their friends had left the ship, stood looking over its sides after them, and waving their handkerchiefs, as the packet bore them away. At length, a point of land intervened, and they were seen no more. The ship dropt down the river the next day, and proceeded on her voyage. Letters have been received from our friends, dated two or three days afterwards, giving an account of their arrangements for devotion, study, &c. during the voyage, which afford pleasing indications of prudence, zeal and resignation.

Nothing has been determined respecting their ultimate sta-

tion. That is left to be fixed by themselves, with the advice of the worthy and experienced Baptist Missionaries, at Serampore; with whom it is probable they will reside some time on their arrival in India. Their attention however has been particularly directed to *Assam*, a large country on the east of Bengal; which is supposed to contain a population of several millions, without a single Missionary of any denomination. It has a ready communication by water with Serampore; and its language bears a near affinity to the Bengalee, in which Mr. Ward has kindly engaged to instruct our Missionaries during their passage, and hopes they may be able to read the New Testament in it, on their arrival.

Our brethren and sisters are highly favoured in the companions of their voyage. In the same ship with Mr. and Mrs. Bampton, and Mr. and Mrs. Peggs, our esteemed friends, Mr. Ward and Mrs. Marshman, two particular Baptist Missionaries, returned to their station at Serampore, the latter attended by her daughter and niece. Mr. Mack and his partner also sailed with them, with a prospect of Mr. M. filling the office of professor in the projected college at Serampore, for the education of native Missionaries. Miss Cook likewise, who is going out as a schoolmistress, under the patronage of the Church Missionary Society, availed herself of the opportunity of accompanying them. Eleven passengers, all bound on errands of love to the heathen!

The financial concerns of the G. B. Missionary Society present a most encouraging prospect. The income of the past year is stated at £960. and there is reason to expect a considerable advance. The expenditure has been upwards of £1500: but this has been a year of extraordinary expence.

We cannot dismiss this subject, without calling the particular attention of our readers to it. The G. B. Mission has, at length, assumed a new and important character. Hitherto it existed only in prospect, and very different opinions were entertained as to the probability of its ever being carried into effect. The views which individuals had on this point, would necessarily modify the obligations under which they felt themselves laid to support it. Those who viewed it as an object unattainable, however they might approve of Missions in general, could not conscientiously support this institution. Others, who viewed the ultimate success as exceedingly doubt-

ful, would find in that uncertainty a very plausible apology for delaying their help. But, thanks to the blessing of God on the zeal and perseverance of its friends, all uncertainty is now at an end. General Baptist Missionaries are crossing the mighty ocean, on their way to the scene of their labours. The die is now cast, we cannot recede. Every honest member of the New Connection will feel himself pledged to support those disinterested persons, who have, in dependance on this support, left their native land, and gone to foreign climes for so noble a purpose. The Mission is commenced: we have put our hands to the plough; and we cannot look back.

But why should we? The experience of the last three years has abundantly shewn, that nothing is wanting to ensure the continual progress of the Mission, except union and perseverance. Funds, it is evident, may be raised among us, far surpassing the expectations of the most sanguine. Who would have dared, three years ago, to have asserted the possibility of raising nine hundred and sixty pounds in one year in our Connection? Such an assertion would have stamped the asserter a visionary and an enthusiast. In the past year, however, this has been effected, though some of our churches have not joined in the exertions at all, and others but in a very partial manner. This has been effected too, when we had no Missionaries set out on their benevolent expedition. Is it then too much to suppose, if all our churches and all our members heartily co-operate, with the additional motives and arguments furnished by the new circumstances of the Mission, that double the sum may be raised?

Perhaps some may exclaim, "What need is there that we should make these efforts to increase our income? If we can keep up the present sum, it will be amply sufficient to support our present engagements." This is the language of inattention. Missionary undertakings, if successful, are necessarily of an expanding nature, and call for progressively increasing exertions. Let us for a moment forget, if it be possible for the benevolent christian to forget, the countless multitudes of heathens, perishing for lack of knowledge in other parts of the earth, and confine ourselves to Assam, the probable station of Missionaries. Suppose our friends be enabled, by the divine blessing, to make a successful attack on the kingdom of Satan in that region, and to open the way for the preaching of the

gospel to its wretched inhabitants: the express purpose for which we have sent them, and the great object of our warmest prayers. Suppose this done; what would be the certain result? Other Missionaries must be sent to strengthen their hands and assist in their labours. For what could two christian ministers attempt, in a country six hundred miles in length, and two hundred in breadth, inhabited by millions of uncivilized heathens? New stations must be established; new Missionaries sent out to occupy them; and consequently new expences incurred. Shall we therefore recall our friends, and restrain our prayers? No. Religion, humanity and justice say, NO! Rather let us be determined, by steady, judicious and active exertions, to be prepared with funds to answer these increasing calls; and earnest in our prayers that the success of our efforts may soon make new expences necessary.

We have no fear that, by thus strenuously recommending missionary exertions, we shall injure other institutions of a kindred nature, or interfere with the claims which justice has on the assistance of individuals. This can never happen when the understanding is properly enlightened and the heart rightly affected. The well-informed and pious friend of Missions would shrink at the idea of supporting them by withholding the demands of generosity or equity; lest he should involve them in the frown of Him who hath declared, "I the Lord love judgment: I hate robbery for burnt-offering." He will derive his means of doing good, from the curtailing of needless expences, the exercise of increased diligence in his calling, the sacrifice of personal indulgences, the assistance of the affluent, and the instruction of the indigent in habits of industry and economy. These are the legitimate sources of pecuniary supplies for carrying on Missions and every other good work: and these sources, if judiciously managed, will be found amply sufficient. In such exertions as these the generous christian may expect the blessing of God which alone maketh rich, on his undertakings and himself. "The liberal deviseth liberal things and by liberal things shall he stand." "The liberal soul shall be made fat; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself."

We trust another hint on this interesting subject will be excused. Most of the leading men in many of our churches have full employment for all the time which they can devote

to the concerns of religion, in conducting meetings and carrying into effect plans for the promotion and support of the cause of Christ in their own churches and districts. But there is another class of members who are not so closely engaged, and who have shewn themselves the most efficient assistants in Missionary exertions. We allude to the females in our respective churches and congregations. These might be employed as collectors for the Mission, and leave their brethren to attend to those concerns which more imperiously demand their attention. It appears from the details of the Missionary collections, that much of the last year's income has been obtained by the exertions of Ladies: and were their agency more generally resorted to, the next year's Report would be still more encouraging.

We conclude these desultory observations by copying a resolution, unanimously adopted at the last General Meeting of the G. B. Mission: a resolution with which we most heartily concur, and the purport of which has, in a very lively manner, impressed our mind, ever since we bade adieu to our esteemed friends on board the Aberton.

“ Resolved—That as Divine Providence has graciously enabled us to send our Missionaries forth, who are now crossing the ocean to the scene of their great work, we feel ourselves bound by every tie of gratitude to God, and of justice to our absent friends, and of love to the souls of the benighted heathen, to increased exertion in this holy cause; and devoutly wish that every member of the Connection may consider himself under the same obligations, and act accordingly.”

THE GENERAL BAPTIST REPOSITORY AND MISSIONARY OBSERVER.

In the Advertisement, prefixed to the Ninth Volume of the G. B. R. the Editor expressed his hopes that, before the conclusion of another volume, something would be attempted to render that publication more effectually serviceable to the Connection. This hope has been realized. In consequence of a case from the Lincolnshire Conference, a committee was appointed by the Association, at Loughborough, to consider the subject, and report the result. This committee spent several hours in deliberation; and agreed—that it is desirable

that the G. B. R. and another Work, which has lately been published under the title of the *Missionary Observer*, should be united in one, under the joint management of the present Editors: and published monthly, in forty pages, *octavo*, price *sixpence*—that it be considered as the property of the Connection; and, after reasonable remuneration to the Editors, the profits or loss divided among the public funds sanctioned by the Association—that the subjects to be included in the two departments of the proposed work be specified, previous to the commencement of the undertaking, and a certain number of pages assigned to each. The Editors of the two publications being on the Committee, cordially joined in these arrangements: which being reported to the Association, were approved, and ordered to be carried into effect.

In compliance with this determination, the *Editors* respectfully inform their friends, that, on January 1st, 1822, God willing, the *First Number* of the proposed Miscellany will be published, under the Title of THE GENERAL BAPTIST REPOSITORY AND MISSIONARY OBSERVER: and they feel it their duty to submit to the churches the following statement of the contents of the work which will then solicit their patronage.

In the first volume, it is intended to introduce a series of papers, *illustrative of Scripture*, from *ancient Geography* and *local circumstances*; founded on a course of Lectures on *Bible Geography* delivered by the late Mr. Dan Taylor to his pupils. Essays on religious and moral subjects will also be inserted; and the distinguishing doctrines of the Connection stated and defended. Queries and their Solutions, Biographies and Obituaries of eminent and useful christians, whether of our own denomination or of other persuasions, will, it is hoped, form an interesting and instructive department. The important occurrences in our own churches, public meetings, the transactions of the G. B. Academy and Home Missionary Society, and every thing that concerns our own body will be carefully collected and faithfully recorded; in order that the reader may have a just view of the progress of the cause of the Redeemer, in the various branches of our extending union. In addition to this, it is hoped, that the increased extent of the work will afford room to notice the progress of religion amongst other denominations, and to insert occasional accounts of their proceedings.—A review of new publications

will form a part of each number. And while particular attention is paid to those of our friends, due notice will, from time to time, be taken of important or useful works published by others; that the reader may be furnished with a general idea of religious literature and assisted in his choice of books.

A principal department of the proposed Miscellany will be allotted to information respecting the *progress of the Gospel in foreign countries*. Sixteen pages, in each number, will be devoted to subjects of this nature: subjects which must peculiarly interest every sincere christian. Here the principal proceedings of the noble Institutions for spreading the scriptures, and diffusing the blessings of education to the remotest and most uncultivated parts of the globe, the British and Foreign Bible Society and the British and Foreign School Society, will be distinctly and regularly recorded. Here also it is intended to introduce, the most interesting information of the transactions of the flourishing Institutions, which are now so actively and honourably engaged in endeavouring to evangelize the world. The proceedings of the various *Missionary Societies* will occupy a considerable portion of this department; but particular attention will be paid to our own. Its progress and transactions will always form a prominent subject; and, it is designed, that this work shall be a principal vehicle for communicating intelligence respecting the *General Baptist Mission*: nor, will its pages be considered as misapplied, in pleading its cause and urging its claims.

Such are the subjects which the Editors propose to include in their numbers: and, as the frequency of publication will allow more room for communications, it will be in their power to avail themselves of the assistance of correspondents, in a more liberal manner than the confined limits of the present Miscellany would permit. They therefore earnestly solicit their kind friends to favour them with their valuable aid in furnishing information and materials. It is only by the co-operation of all the talents possessed by the Connection, that a monthly publication can be rendered useful and respectable. This co-operation the Editors most sincerely invite; and, sensible of its importance, they will receive it with gratitude, and treat it with deference and respect.

In the distribution of this Miscellany, and in every prudent endeavour to promote its circulation, the strenuous and effec-

tual assistance of every one who wishes well to the New Connection of G. B.'s is confidently anticipated. As the object of the proposed Work will be, to inform the understanding, direct the judgments, and warm the hearts of the members of that union—to defend and illustrate its principles—to record its proceedings—to support its Institutions—to rouse its energies and direct its operations; and as the profits will be devoted to the increase of its funds: every subscriber will have the pleasure to reflect, that he is contributing his part to the accomplishment of these great designs. But these designs demand the cordial support of the whole Connection; and to this support the Editors look with confidence. They respectfully, but most earnestly entreat, that every minister would recommend the the work to his friends; and endeavour to ascertain, with as much precision as possible, how many copies will be wanted among his connections. This information, he is requested to forward, to the *Editor of the G. B. R.* before the 1st of Oct. next; that proper arrangements may be made for the publication. It will be highly desirable to obtain accurate information of the probable demand, as it would materially injure the funds were either too many or too few of the leading numbers printed.

These observations are respectfully submitted to the churches, in a cheerful hope that due and timely attention will be given to them. And if, under their patronage, the proposed work should be commenced, the Editors will esteem it a duty and feel it a pleasure, to use every exertion in their power to make it answer the important and desirable ends proposed by the Association.

ADAM TAYLOR, *London*;
J. G. PIKE, *Derby*.

GENERAL BAPTIST HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

At the last Association, the plan for improving the *Itinerant Fund*, insterted in the G. B. R. No. 58, page 163, was taken into serious consideration: when it was resolved that its name in future should be, the *G. B. Home Missionary Society*. The others regulation suggested in the proposals were adopted with various corrections; and the plan warmly recommended to the patronage of the churches. Mr. Heard was chosen

General Treasurer, and Mr. Frederic Deacon, General Secretary. The Secretary was requested to write to each Conference to request them to proceed immediately to the appointment of District Committees, District Treasurers and District Secretaries. We hope the churches will exert themselves in supporting this Institution: as we are persuaded much of the future prosperity of the Connection depends on its operations.

REVIEW OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

A SERIES OF ADDRESSES TO YOUNG PEOPLE, by J. HOOPER, A. M. 12mo. pp. xii. 318. Price, boards, 5s. 6d.

The Author of these useful Addresses is the pastor of the Independent Church, in Old Gravel Lane, Wapping. From time immemorial, it has been the custom of the pastors of this society to address a discourse to Young Persons, on New Year's Day; and the sermons before us were delivered on these occasions. They were well received from the pulpit; and are now committed to the press, in compliance with the earnest wish of many that heard them. The *contents* of this little volume will give the best idea of its nature and tendency: They are—"Sermon I. The Youthful Jesus, proposed as a model for imitation. *Luke* ii. 52.—II. The gain of Wisdom, recommended as the best acquisition. *Prov.* iv. 7—9.—III. Parental affection and concern, a motive to filial excellence. *Prov.* xxxi. 2.—IV. Parental dedication by baptism, a motive to personal dedication. *1 Sam.* i. 27, 28.—V. A persuasive to church communion in early life. *Isa.* xlv. 3—5.—VI. The honour attached to early piety.—*1 Kings* xiv. 13.—VII. Portrait of an excellent young female. *Prov.* xxxi. 29.—VIII. Young men cautioned against the prevailing dangers of the present day. *Titus* ii. 6.—IX. Seasonable admonitions in reference to conjugal life. *Gen.* xxvii. 46.—X. The value of the soul. *Gen.* ii. 7.—XI. The divine claims. *Prov.* xxiii. 26.—XII. On numbering our days. *Psalms* xc. 12."

Such are the important topics of these Addresses, and we have no hesitation in recommending them to all young persons who may wish for useful and intelligible advice, on subjects closely connected with their present comfort and future felicity. The practice on which the Author founds his fourth discourse,

certainly does not accord with our sentiments; but, on his own principles, the Author has dropt some important hints which well deserve serious attention from both the parents and children to whom they apply.

From the many pieces of salutary advice, with which this volume abounds, we find a difficulty in selecting a proper specimen. We shall however transcribe the recommendation of "*genuine piety*," as one of the qualities which must form the basis of happiness in the conjugal state.

"1. *Genuine Piety*.—This quality I mention first, because it lies at the foundation of all real excellence. Human nature is totally depraved by sin; that which originally was comparable to fine gold, has been converted into dross, and, at best, only exhibits some tinsel ornament; but real religion is the gold tried in the fire, which alone gives true worth to character. This is essential to individual happiness; and that which is necessary to individual happiness, must be requisite to form the basis of solid felicity, when two human beings consent to form a union, of all others the most sacred, and agree to travel forward together, through the remaining journey of life, towards an eternal world. Without religion as their guide, they will go astray; without religion as their support, they will be but ill adapted to meet and encounter the various difficulties and trials of the way: but possessed of this heavenly gift, it will be the polar star, to guide in the darkest night of affliction; it will prove a sweet ingredient, which, when infused into the bitterest cup, will render it not only palatable, but even salutary."

"Of what importance then is true piety, which consists in the knowledge, the fear, and the love of God, to all, but especially to those about to enter into the more complicated relations of life; to place themselves in stations of great responsibility; to bring themselves under the most sacred obligations to the discharge of various duties, the neglect of which will involve a wide spreading calamity! If there be a want of individual piety, no family altar will be erected; no family devotions presented to God; the Bible will be neglected; domestic instruction overlooked; in a word, the family will be altogether a family of practical heathens, where God is neither acknowledged nor regarded; and it will stand exposed to the alarming imprecation, "Pour out thy fury upon the heathen

that have not known thee, and upon the families that call not upon thy name."

"In the absence of this primary and essential ingredient in the cup of conjugal felicity, there may be temporal prosperity, wealth, splendour, elegance, luxury; but all these cannot constitute real happiness: and, without genuine piety, there can be no hope of true, solid, and lasting bliss; but where this is found, there is contentment, and peace, and true enjoyment, whatever may be the outward condition."

*The PROGRESS of RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS,
As stated in their last Reports.*

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

From the Report, read at the late Anniversary of this Institution, it appears, that 104,828 Bibles and 142,129 New Testaments had been issued by that Society within the last year: making the whole number, *three millions, two hundred and one thousand, nine hundred and seventy-eight* Bibles and Testaments. The whole of the Receipts, last year, was £89,154. 16s. and the Disbursements £79,560. 13s. 6d. But the Society are under engagements which will become due in the current year, amounting to £40,000.

LONDON HIBERNIAN SOCIETY.

This Society has been enabled to increase its schools, from 229 to 534, in which are 54,520 scholars. The British and Foreign Bible Society has presented it with ten thousand Testaments and one thousand Bibles. Upwards of six thousand Bibles and sixty thousand Testaments have been put into circulation by this Institution since 1812 among the Catholic poor in Ireland.

IRISH SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

At the commencement of the past year, the number of schools, assisted by this society was 1,091; the number of scholars reported in attendance, 113,525; the number of schools which have now been assisted is 1,353; containing, by the last returns 135,600 scholars: the increase during the past year, taken in this point of view, amounts to 262 schools and 22,075 scholars. Of these 1,353 schools, 106 schools, con-

taining 7,703 scholars, are considered as having either failed from untoward circumstances, or as having merged into other schools. During the last year, gratuitous assistance has been afforded to 610 schools, of which 348 had received similar assistance in former years. This number exceeds that of the preceding year by 45 schools.

The following statement will enable our readers to form a just idea of the increase of the number of schools connected with this society, in each year since its commencement. The number of schools and scholars, on its list at the Annual Meetings, was as follows ;

	Schools.	Scholars.
1810, November,.....	2.....	87
1811, Ditto,.....	44.....	5,172
1813, April,.....	117.....	15,800
1814, Ditto,.....	175.....	23,529
1815, Ditto,.....	252.....	28,598
1816, Ditto,.....	350.....	38,598
1817, Ditto,.....	439.....	51,410
1818, Ditto,.....	554.....	59,888
1819, Ditto,.....	806.....	84,174
1820, Ditto,.....	1,091.....	113,525
1821, Ditto,.....	1,353.....	135,600

WESLEYAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

Our Wesleyan brethren have one hundred and forty-seven Missionaries, engaged in Africa, America and different parts of Europe. In Ceylon they have taught more than two thousand children to read the scriptures ; and many of the natives have been converted. In the West Indies, many planters have applied for Missionaries to instruct their Negroes, from a conviction that christianity improves their value. During the last year, they have printed an edition of the Cingalese New Testament in octavo ; having before published it in quarto. Two thousand copies of the Psalms, a large number of the book of Job, and a vast quantity of inferior publications, have issued from their press. In one instance a planter, who had by his cruelty exposed himself to the hatred of his slaves, was advised to prohibit their religious assemblies lest they should conspire against his life. He went with that design, by night, to their place of meeting ; but over hearing them pray earnestly and affectionately that God would bless their wicked

master, he was humbled and converted, and instead of persecuting them became their minister, and now preaches among them with great success.

RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY.

The number of Tracts issued by this Society, during the last year, is *four millions, eight hundred and thirty-three thousand, seven hundred and seventy*. Numerous New Auxiliary Societies have risen in Britain, since the last Report; and extensive Foreign Institutions are pursuing the same line of benevolence. Much success appears to have attended the distribution of the little silent Monitors: and we are sorry to learn that the finances of this laudable Society are in a discouraging state.

ANECDOTE.

The late Dr. Williams, of Rotherham, once preached for a people who were high Calvinists. They were not wholly satisfied with the applications and addresses at the close of his sermons. They considered him as more than half an Arminian, and deputed one of their number to expostulate with him. The delegate waited on the Doctor, and after suitable apologies, informed him, that some of his friends were grieved to hear him make use of certain expressions that appeared contrary to sound doctrine. He very mildly requested that those expressions might be mentioned. "Why, Sir," it was observed, "you frequently say, You *must* believe,—you *must* repent." After pausing a time, the Doctor replied, by quoting the words of our Lord to Nicodemus. "Marvel not that I say unto you, ye *must* be born again." This was done in so grave and serious a manner, as to render any further defence unnecessary.

Congregation Mag. June, 1821.

POETRY.

ON AFFLICTION.

When pain and langour shake these prison walls,
 And bid the heav'n-born inmate fly away,
 Fain would she soar, but, ah! too soon she falls,
 Attracted downwards by this cumb'rous clay.

My Father, to fulfil his kind designs,
 Sees fit my darling treasures to remove;
 And oft, too oft, this murm'ring heart repines,
 Nor owns his chastisements proceed from love.

But hark ; my Saviour's gracious voice I hear :
 " Hush, ye rebellious murmurs ; peace, be still ;
 " O, thou of little faith, why dost thou fear ?
 " The souls I love, my chast'ning love must feel."

" I am thy promise-making, keeping Lord,
 " Firm and unmov'd my love, my truth abide.
 " Is there a promise in my holy word,
 " That, while on earth, no sorrow shall betide ?"

" This lesson, oft I bid my saints to know,
 " That tribulation marks the heav'nly road :
 " That many a trial sore they must pass thro',
 " In pressing to the kingdom of their God."

" When I, thy Lord, sojourn'd awhile below,
 " My practice and example taught the same,
 " Those who would follow wheresoe'er I go,
 " Must pass thro' suff'ring, sorrow, pain and shame."

" When I afflict thee, I design thy good ;
 " Trust me, thou know'st I'am gracious, kind and wise.
 " Each med'cine sanctify'd by me is food,
 " And every cross, a blessing in disguise."

" I bid thee languish in the bed of pain,
 " To wean thy heart from sublunary joys ;
 " To teach thee, that terrestrial things are vain,
 " Mere painted baubles and delusive toys."

" Affliction wafts thy thoughts o'er swelling seas,
 " To thy inheritance on Canaan's shore :
 " And wings thy longings for that land of bliss,
 " Where the inhabitant is sick no more."

" Faithless, unkind thy dearest earthly love,
 " Has caus'd thee many a bitter sigh and tear.
 " Each Idol that my people trust shall prove,
 " A broken reed, perhaps a pointed spear."

“ Tho’ earthly friends prove fickle, and forsake,
 “ I am thy faithful, thy unchanging Friend ;
 “ No varying scenes have power my love to shake ;
 “ It shall abide unalter’d to the end.”

“ Come, rest thyself, thy cares upon my arm :
 “ I’ll help thee, when all other helpers fail.
 “ Death of his dreaded sting I will disarm ;
 “ And bear thee safely thro’ the dreary vale.”

“ Strength shall be equal to each day of need,
 “ I will support thee, and thou shalt not fall.
 “ To all thy sorrow, glory shall succeed ;
 “ And glory sure will counterbalance all.”

“ Then shalt thou know, in that diviner light,
 “ What here thou canst but faintly, feebly see ;
 “ That all the way I led thee, has been right ;
 “ And e’en the roughest was the best for thee.”

Dear Lord, I hear thy kind, thy gracious voice,
 It cheers and animates my fainting heart ;
 Now, in thy faithfulness I can rejoice,
 Thy gracious words new life and strength impart,

Now, I can triumph in my portion, God,
 And be resign’d, submissive to his will ;
 Now I can kiss his kind correcting rod,
 And bless his name for every stroke I feel,

His love, his grace shall strengthen me to bear,
 Whate’er his providence shall lead me to ;
 If ’tis his will that I should tarry here
 Awhile, a few more trials to pass through.

Or, if his voice shall bid me rise and come,
 To seats prepar’d for me ere time was known ;
 My Saviour’s arm shall bear me safely home,
 And my unworthy head with glory crown.

May my last thought be fixed on Jesus’ love,
 His praise employ my last, low, lab’ring breath ;
 Oh ! may I singing to my crown remove ;
 And sink with smiles serene into the arms of death.

THE
GENERAL BAPTIST REPOSITORY.

No. LXI.—Vol. X. Nov. 1st, 1821.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PUNCTUALITY.

“ Yea, they shall vow a vow unto the Lord, and perform it.”
Isaiah. xix. 21.

PUNCTUALITY is that habit of acting by which a person performs what he engages to perform, at the time and in the manner which his engagements require. This is a habit of the highest importance, in every station in which a man can be placed, and to the due performance of every duty to which he can be called. It increases his ability of promoting his own interest, the good of his fellow creatures, and the glory of his Creator: it gains him the confidence, esteem, and respect of his associates; and enables him to respect himself, by securing to him the approbation of his own conscience.

In the discharge of every relative and social duty, in the concerns of business, and in all our transactions with mankind, punctuality is highly advantageous and essentially necessary. But, as this general view of the subject would exceed our limits, we shall confine ourselves, in these observations, to one class of duties; only hinting, as we pass on, that, in a professor of religion, a want of punctuality in the common concerns of society subjects him to the contempt and mistrust of his connections, brings a reproach on his profession, gives occasion to the enemies of the truth to reproach the cause to which he is attached, and is, in fact, a species of dishonesty, wholly inconsistent with the character of the inhabitant of Zion, “ who swears to his own hurt and changeth not.”

In carrying forward the extension of the Redeemer’s kingdom on earth, in conducting the affairs of a church of Christ, or in executing plans for the promotion of the temporal or spiritual good of our fellow creatures, individuals are necessarily called upon to undertake certain duties, perform specified

services, or make stipulated sacrifices of time, influence, or property, in order to advance the efforts of the society with which they are connected. It is thought that the proposers * had a peculiar reference to engagements of this nature, when they suggested the propriety of an "Essay on Punctuality" To this view of the subject we shall, therefore, confine our remarks.

Let us view a society of persons, engaged in conducting a christian or benevolent society. The concerns of it are well known to each, because he punctually fills up his place and is attentive to them. His abilities and opportunities are also well known to his associates; and they assign him his part of the efforts to be made. He considers his capacity for undertaking the proposed service, and deliberately engages to perform it. Conceiving this engagement to be binding on his conscience, he seizes the first opportunity for its execution. When his friends call on him for a report of the result, he is prepared to give it. His part of the work is done: and, if his associates have been equally punctual, there is no necessity for adjournment, for appointing other persons to attend to the parts neglected by those who undertook them, nor for desiring the same persons to fulfil engagements which ought to have been already fulfilled. All things are ready for proceeding; new efforts are projected, and punctually made; and the design advances quickly to perfection. The parties concerned acquire a confidence in each other, mutual affection and esteem are cherished. They feel that they are labouring together in the best of causes, and fellow-heirs of the promised reward. They become more closely united, carry on the work with increasing energy, and the pleasure of the Lord prospers in their hands.

Well would it be for religion and humanity, if the picture which we have just sketched were more frequently exhibited; but, alas! the reverse is by far too common. Too often, when a scheme is proposed for the advancement of the Redeemer's interest or the good of mankind, and an individual is requested to undertake a share in it, he will, like the smooth-spoken son in the gospel, consent with alacrity, and say, "I go, sir": but, when the period arrives when he is to give

* These remarks were written at the request of the London Conference.

an account of his success, it appears that, like him, "He went not." Some trifling excuse is made. Possibly, "I could not find time or opportunity:" or perhaps "I totally forgot the engagement." For some reason or other, the business is neglected, and the progress of the design is impeded, if not entirely stopt. His friends, who probably have put themselves to considerable inconvenience and made great sacrifices to perform what they had undertaken, feel discouraged, if not offended. Dissension and discontent naturally follow: and it is well, if the good sense and perseverance of a few, prevent the scheme, though of vital importance, from being abandoned. The more usual result is, that undertakings, which require nothing but punctuality and perseverance to carry them into complete execution, are relinquished in disgust or despair. Those who were both able and willing to have rendered essential service in carrying them forward, retarded at every step by these unperforming promisers, retire from the scene of action. The concerns of the society, left in insufficient or unskillful hands, are managed in such a manner as to produce confusion and every evil work. The cause declines, sinks, and expires.

"It must be that offences will come; but woe to that man by whom they come." Little do these unhappy persons, who thus defeat schemes of piety and utility, which might benefit thousands in this world, and extend their happy effects through eternity, consider the evils they occasion. They may make light of the guilt which attaches to unfulfilled promises; but the day is approaching, when their mistake will be made awfully manifest. They may now wipe their mouths, and say "I have done no wickedness;" but, at the day of impartial retribution, they will find that they must answer for *not* doing good, as well as for doing evil.

For, these thoughtless triflers should recollect, that an engagement with the friends of religion or humanity to attend to any concern, which is designed to promote the glory of God or the good of man, approaches very nearly the nature of a vow—and the scripture abounds with explicit declarations of the obligation of vows and the guilt of breaking them. "When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God," says the Hebrew Legislator, "thou shalt not slack to pay

it, for the Lord thy God will surely require it of thee, and it would be sin in thee" Dent. xxiii. 21. "When thou vowest a vow unto God," observes the royal preacher, "defer not to pay it: for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Wherefore should God be angry at thy voice and destroy the work of thy hands?" Eccl. v. 4, 6. From these and many other texts, it is evident that the Governor of the universe ranks the non-performance of vows amongst those sins which incur his high displeasure. And what is a vow? It is a solemn and voluntary engagement of an individual, to do some service, perform some duty, or present some offering to the Lord, as a token of gratitude for blessings, either already received or earnestly desired. And are not the promises of which we are speaking, solemn engagements with the Lord and his people, voluntarily entered into, under a grateful sense of infinite mercies received and eternal mercies hoped for, which cannot be broken without sin? Certainly they are: and when the Lord shall judge the world in righteousness, they will be treated as such.

There is indeed one consideration which renders the guilt of these unperforming promisers more aggravated, than that which is incurred by the non-performance of a common vow, however solemn. Moses says, "If thou forbear to vow, it shall be no sin to thee," and Solomon observes, "Better is it that thou shouldest not vow; than that thou shouldest vow, and not pay." Both these inspired writers evidently refer to vows which bind us to things which are not otherwise our duty. In such cases, the promise of the party constitutes the only obligation; and yet that obligation is so sacred, that a breach of it is highly criminal. But the promises under our consideration, are of a very different class. The man who has joined himself to a church of Christ, is bound by every obligation of honour, justice and gratitude to employ all his energies and all his influence to promote the prosperity of that society with which he is personally united. There needs no vows, no particular engagements, to make this his duty; and to neglect it is sin, when no special contract has been made. But that sin is greatly augmented, when a person has engaged himself to some particular service by a direct promise. As far as extenuation of guilt is concerned, it would be better for him not to vow, than to vow and not to pay. The guilt,

though still great, would doubtless be much less. It would also be much better for his associates, and the cause in which they are engaged, if he decline undertaking any thing, than if he undertake and neglect to perform it. This unfaithful conduct involves the aggressor in aggravated guilt, and produces all the baneful effects which have already been described.

The Sources of this want of punctuality are various. In one, it arises from mere thoughtlessness. He makes promises without considering whether he can perform them or not; and neglects them without adverting to any of the mischiefs which may follow. In another, it springs from over-rating his own abilities or influence, and supposing himself capable of performing what he really cannot. Many, who sincerely intend to be punctual to their engagements, through a want of perseverance or inconstancy of disposition, suffer new objects to attract their attention, and cause them to slight their former engagements. Others, equally sincere at the time of making the engagement, through a habit of procrastination and indolence, put off their duty from day to day till the opportunity for performing it is irrecoverably lost. One fruitful source of disappointments of this nature is a false idea of politeness, or a natural easiness of temper, which renders a man unwilling to deny any request, and induces him to comply with all the wishes of his friends. But the same temper will incline him to yield to the next proposal; and thus increase his engagements, till many must be partially attended to, and not a few totally neglected. The man who cannot, on proper occasions, decidedly say "No," is not much to be relied on when he says "Yes."

The Remedies against this mischievous want of punctuality may be inferred from the causes to which it has been ascribed. A little consideration and caution before we venture to make promises would often prevent it. The simple enquiry, "Can I perform this service if I undertake it?" "Have I the necessary leisure, ability, or influence?" "Will it interfere with the other engagements, under which I am already placed?" &c. would have a happy tendency to promote punctuality. Self-knowledge also here, as in most other cases, is highly useful; for, without duly appreciating his own capacity, a man may often undertake what he cannot execute, and must there-

fore disappoint his friends. A deep sense of the importance of punctually discharging whatever we undertake, and of the mischief arising from a contrary conduct, would not only prevent improper compliances, but excite to a more conscientious performance of what is undertaken. Nor need we fear that, by this cautious procedure, the success of good designs would be retarded. A little attention to what is passing around us will convince the intelligent observer, that it is not through a lack of promisers but of performers that good designs languish, and schemes of usefulness fail. One man, who deliberately considers before he engages, will be of more service in forwarding any enterprize, than ten who promise incautiously and perform negligently.

When engagements are once made let them be held sacred. Let us watch against every thing that might tempt us to trifle with our promises. Let us guard especially against procrastination. Much of the want of punctuality, which paralyzes almost every important undertaking, arises, not from designed neglect, but from an indolent method of putting off the execution of what is undertaken to a future time. If we took the earliest opportunity of performing what we have engaged to perform, we should seldom be unpunctual. When the day arrives to give an account of the result, we should not often have occasion to say, "I intended to have done it to day; but unexpected business prevented me." "But why was it deferred till the last day?" "Has no opportunity occurred since you made the engagement when it might have been executed?" In nine cases out of ten, an honest conscience would reply, "Yes, several." "Why then was not the opportunity seized?" "Why? Because I thought I had plenty of time in store, and might therefore indulge in sloth." Few persons are aware of the power of indolence. If conscience, interest, or some other powerful motive, does not excite us to action, we are all the slaves of idleness, and seek present repose. Let us first dispatch all our engagements, and then we may indulge ourselves in laziness, untormented by the admonitions of a reproaching conscience, constantly reminding us that we are doing wrong.

But the strongest motive to the punctual discharge of every engagement, is to recollect that the vows of God are upon us; —that we are acting under his observation, and shall have

have to give an account to him; that, at that awful day, he will cast the wicked and slothful servant into outer darkness; where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth; but will say to him, who has faithfully improved the talents committed to his trust, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

THE HOPEFUL NATURE OF MISSIONARY LABOURS.

Though now between one and two thousand miles removed from the dear christian friends, who have often, with myself, been edified by reading the Repository, I still feel a desire, through the medium of our periodical work, to promote, as far as I am able, the cause of Christ among them. The subject to which my mind is now directed is that of—the hopeful nature of missionary labours; and in reference to them, the language of Schechaniah to Ezra appears applicable. "Now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing," Ezra. x. 2. These sentiments were spoken to encourage that faithful and zealous priest of the Lord in his projected reformation of the people of Israel. They had corrupted themselves by intermarrying with the heathen, and the holy seed was in danger of being lost; but considering the promises which God had made concerning the perpetuity and utility of Israel among the nations of the earth, great encouragement was to be obtained, in every thing connected with its welfare. The church of Jesus Christ is composed of the spiritual seed of Abraham, and is now "the Israel of God," upon whom be peace for ever and ever. The Lord dwelleth in Zion, and thence shall go forth salvation unto the ends of the earth. To Israel belong "exceeding great and precious promises;" and in it are the hopes of mankind. The interests of the church of God are evidently promoted, in an extensive degree, by the success of missionary exertions, and their hopeful nature appears from various considerations.

The nature of the work may induce all who are or should be connected with it to say—"There is hope in Israel concerning this thing." What is this thing concerning which we speak? *That which is productive of the greatest good to men* of every nation, and kindred, and tongue. It consists

in the bodily, intellectual, civil, and religious welfare of all who come under its salutary influence. The mind is informed and enlarged by the communication of education. The knowledge of letters is of the first importance. True religion is founded and consummated in knowledge. Through education the sacred scriptures become accessible, are esteemed for their inestimable value, and often become the means of making wise to salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. The ministry of the cross of Christ is "the power of God unto salvation." True religion, like an angel descending to bless the earth, diffuses civilization, morality, and obedience to the divine will, and solid happiness, wherever she goes.—"O Israel, who is like unto thee, a people saved of the Lord." Contrasting the state of those whose sorrows are multiplied while following after other gods, with that of those who walk, like the people of God, "high in salvation and the climes of bliss," the good work before us appears *consonant to the dictates of humanity*. Behold christianity illuminating the benighted mind; breaking in pieces the iron chains of superstition; quenching the horrid, the murderous piles of sanguinary idolaters; and teaching men "to beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks;" and surely every intelligent, pious and feeling mind must exclaim, with a degree of holy exultation, concerning the ultimate success of missionary labours—"there is hope in Israel."

How agreeable to the general design and tenor of divine revelation. God revealed himself to man by the ministry of the prophets, and by their divinely inspired writings to promote the present and future happiness of his creatures. "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." I John iii. 8. All the manifestations of God in creation, providence and redemption, are evidently designed to promote man's best interest. Is there not hope concerning that which consummates all the purposes of God; and which accords with every precept, promise and prophecy of the bible? God is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works; and surely our hands, and the hands of all who "work the work of the Lord," should be strengthened for this good work." Let its true nature be considered, and we shall exclaim, "Now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing."

This will further appear by considering *the efficiency of the means used* to effect this good work. However important any thing may be, and however great the utility resulting from it, yet no rational man will exult in the hope of its accomplishment without the prospect of means appropriate to the end. But surely we may say—"In *Israel* there is hope concerning this thing." The church of God possesses the means of evangelizing the world. There are the sacred scriptures, the ministry of the gospel, the establishment of schools, and that which renders the whole beneficial, the powerful influences of the holy Spirit of God. *How invaluable the SACRED SCRIPTURES of truth.*

"Bright like a lamp its doctrines shine—
To guide our souls to heaven."

No writings of antiquity among the Greeks and Romans, Mahomedans, Hindoos, or Chinese are worthy to be compared with them. Here we have the most rational account of the source, the design and the improvement of the works of creation and providence; and above all, here the glorious subject of human redemption is revealed to all nations for "the obedience of faith." This inestimable book has been translated into many languages, and been the means of diffusing light to millions of the human race: may its light, like that of the sun, illumine the whole earth! *The ministry of the gospel is a most effectual instrument* to promote the salvation of mankind. "It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Through it, the minister of God may say "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ," 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. To what must the great difference in the moral state of different nations of the world be attributed, but to the knowledge of the glorious gospel of God. *The importance of education, for the general diffusion of knowledge* is most apparent. What is christianity without it? Let popish countries answer. By the encouragement and establishment of schools, to a considerable degree, the way of the Lord is prepared. Access may be obtained to the understanding more effectually. Surely Great Britain fur-

nishes the most indubitable evidence of the efficiency of education connected with the diffusion of divine knowledge. But *it is the influence of the Spirit of God* that renders all the above means effectual. Concerning the evangelization of mankind we must say, in the language of the prophet; "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit saith the Lord." Oh when shall "the Spirit be poured out from on high," that "the wilderness and the solitary place may be glad; and the desert blossom as the rose." The powerful efficacy of the Spirit was seen on the day of Pentecost; and God has promised to "pour out his Spirit upon all flesh." Joel, ii. 28. With these various and efficient means, the people of God may labour to promote the welfare of mankind and rejoice in their exertions that, "There is hope in Israel."

The hopeful nature of missionary labours, appears also from the consideration of *the experience of the people of God, in all ages*. In the ministry of the ancient prophets, what important good frequently attended their labours! How evidently was God with Moses, Samuel, Elijah, Isaiah and the other seers and prophets, spoken of in the holy scriptures! Who that has read of them, but must have been astonished at the divine power, which attended their efforts for the welfare of mankind! "He confirmeth the word of his servants." From the nature and success of their ministry, the servants of God may be encouraged in labouring to "turn many to righteousness." The same cause of encouragement is increased by reviewing *the labours and success of the apostles of Christ and their successors*. Humanly speaking, they appear incompetent to the work which they undertook; but God, used such means that the excellency of the power might be manifestly of himself. How great the work that they accomplished! "Their sound went forth into all the world, and their words to the end of the earth." Myriads "were turned to God from idols, and to wait for his Son from heaven, even Jesus, who delivereth us from the wrath to come." The gospel is still the same, and the hand of the Lord being with his ministering servants, men in all nations may "be brought out of darkness into marvellous light." The *success of missionary institutions* is also very encouraging. The papists have brought millions of heathens under the profession of christianity: and surely from their zeal and the accomplishment of their object, however far from that of enlightened christian exertions, some-

thing may be drawn to strengthen our hands in the Lord our God. The efforts of all protestant institutions for the propagation of christianity, have been attended, upon the whole, with encouraging success. This will appear, if we refer to the labours of the Moravian, Danish, English, or Scotch missionaries. The reports of the Baptist, Methodist, London and Church of England Missionary Societies shew, that concerning the universal diffusion of the light of the gospel, "there is hope in Israel."

But the *prophecies of God's word* afford the most abundant encouragement in the work of the Lord. "Glorious things are spoken of thee, thou city of our God." It is impossible here to refer to the various prophecies which relate to the prosperity of the church. To Abraham it was said, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Gen. xxii 18. Moses says, "Rejoice, ye nations, with his people." Deut. xxxii. 43. In the Psalms it is written, "Ask of me, and I shall give thee, the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." *Psa. ii. 8.* "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord: and all the kindred of the nations shall worship before thee. For the kingdom is the Lord's, and he is the Governor among the nations," xxii. 27, 28. Isaiah is full of prophetic representations of the future prosperity of the church. "It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow into it." *Isaiah, ii.* see also the xi. xlii. liv. lx. lxxv. and lxxvi. chapters of the same prophecy. In Daniel, we read: "In the days of these kings, shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all those kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." *Dan. ii 44.* Amos is quoted by the apostle James: "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathens which are called by my name, saith the Lord, that doeth this." *Amos, ix. 11, 12.* *Acts, xv. 16.* Micah says of the Messiah: "He shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord, and the majesty of the name of the

Lord his God; and they shall abide; for now shall he be great unto the ends of earth, and the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as the dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men." Mic. v. 4, 7. Malachi says: "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall." Mal. iv. 2. Paul, says: "Blindness in part is happened unto Israel, until the *fulness of the Gentiles come in*, and all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." Róm. xi. 25, 26. Concerning the destruction of popery, that abomination that maketh desolate, he also says: "Then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." 2 Thes. ii. 8. "God is not a man that should lie, nor the son of man, that he should repent. Hath he said and shall he not do it? Hath he spoken and shall he not make it good?" Not one good thing of all that the Lord our God has spoken shall fall to the ground. Contemplating what yet remains to be fulfilled on behalf of the church of God, how ought the hearts of all to be enlarged.

Are any among our churches inactive in the cause of God? Let such consider what encouragement there is to abound in it "forasmuch as we know that our labour is not in vain in the Lord." Indifference to its welfare is criminal. How awful the language of Deborah! "Curse ye, Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, against the mighty." Jud. v. 24.

To the diligent in every good work, this subject may afford encouragement. Ye work the work of the Lord; and God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love. "The people that know their God shall be strong, and do exploits. They that understand among the people shall instruct many, And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever." Dan. xi. 32, 33.—xii. 3.

Madira, June, 21, 1821.

J. PEGGS.

QUERY.

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

Having, with feelings peculiarly painful, witnessed the rapid decrease of some of the G. B. congregations; and being anxious that something should be done, not only to prevent this, but to increase the number of attentive hearers, if any of your judicious correspondents will furnish an answer to the following *Query*, in an early number of the G. B. Repository, you will greatly oblige,

Your's respectfully,

Sept. 18, 1821.

A. B. H.

Query. What are the best means to prevent further declensions in the G. B. churches; and to increase the number of attentive hearers in our respective congregations?

As this subject is of great importance to the prosperity of the Connection, our experienced friends are earnestly entreated to furnish some plain, useful and practical remarks on it, in time for the first number of the New Series. EDITOR.

**EXTRAORDINARY LITERARY ACQUISITIONS,
in UNFAVOURABLE CIRCUMSTANCES.**

As an instance of the power of human genius, and an incitement to young persons to struggle against difficulties, and make efforts to render themselves a benefit to society, we insert a few particulars of the progress of a man who has, by his own exertions, under every disadvantage, emerged from obscurity, and qualified himself for great usefulness in the church and in the world.

SAMUEL LEE was born at Longnor, a village near Shrewsbury. He enjoyed in infancy no other means of instruction, than those afforded by a common village school, where nothing more was taught than reading, writing and arithmetic. This school he left at twelve years of age, and was bound apprentice to a carpenter. Being fond of reading, he employed the few leisure moments which he could command, in perusing such books as fell in his way. Some of these contained untranslated quotations from latin authors. A wish to understand these quotations, inspired him with the idea of learning Latin,

when he was about seventeen years old. His ardour was great; but his means small. After much perseverance, he amassed as much money as enabled him to purchase an old grammar, at a book stall. To this he applied himself with assiduity; and when he had acquainted himself with its contents, exchanged it for some other book in the same language. By pursuing this method, he first acquired a tolerable knowledge of the Latin: and afterwards, as his wages increased and he was able to purchase more books, he taught himself, in the same manner, the Greek, the Hebrew, the Chaldee and the Syriac languages. All this he accomplished, in the space of six years, unaided by any instructor, uncheered by any literary companion, and uninfluenced by the hope of either profit or praise. For he seems to have had no other end in view than self gratification; as he continued to work diligently at his trade, and communicated his acquirements to none of his acquaintance.

About this time, he married; and soon afterwards his property and tools were destroyed by fire. This led him to consider how far his literary talents could be employed to obtain the means of support. His situation and abilities were made known to a liberal and enlightened clergyman in the neighbourhood, who lent him immediate aid, and took him under his protection. He obtained for him the situation of superintendent in a charity school; and afforded him every facility, in the pursuit of his favourite studies. While in this situation, he was introduced to Dr. Scott, Persian-secretary to Mr. Hastings, in India, who furnished him with an Arabic grammar. To this he applied himself; and in a few months was able to read, write and compose both in Arabic and Persian. Dr. Scott interested himself much in Mr. Lee's favour; introduced him to the Church Missionary Society, as a proper person to superintend some translations of the scriptures into the oriental languages. Under the patronage of this society, he was sent to pursue his studies at Queen's College, Cambridge; and, after a time, ordained a minister of the established church. And about two years ago, he was elected professor of Arabic in the University of Cambridge, in the most honourable manner.

Mr. Lee has since continued his studies with increased zeal and success. He has now taught himself seventeen different languages. Nor has this extraordinary character confined

himself merely to the acquisition of languages; but is basily and successfully applying his philological attainments to the best purposes. He has already edited several important versions of the scripture and other religious publications; and devotes all his energies to the great object of rendering the word of God and the truths of christianity accessible to the inhabitants of those parts of the globe, which have long been involved in pagan or mahometan darkness.—May his success be great! and his example rouse many to emulate his industry, perseveraunce and piety!

THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN'S DYING FAREWELL to her *EARTHLY CONNECTONS.*

Mary Ann Musson was a native of the State of New York, in North America; but had several relatives in England. By a very painful dispensation of divine Providence, she and a younger brother were deprived of both their parents in early life; but they found the promise of the Lord verified, who shewed himself towards them, "a father of the fatherless." They enjoyed the advantages of a pious education; and, in Sept. 1816, Mary was brought to the enjoyment of the truth; and joined herself to the people of God, when she was in her twenty-first year. From that time, she appears to have adorned her profession by a conversation becoming godliness. Active in every scheme for promoting the glory of her Saviour and the good of her fellow creatures, she was very useful in the circle in which she moved, and highly esteemed by her friends. But her course was short. In March, 1818, she was seized with a severe cold, which brought on a consumption. It soon appeared, that her complaint was dangerous; and all attempts to arrest its progress were ineffectual. Contrary to the expectation of her friends and herself, she lingered till August 11, 1819; when, after a long period of great bodily pain, supported with exemplary composure of mind, she fell asleep in Jesus.

For many months previous to her decease, she considered herself, and was considered by her friends, as on the brink of eternity. In one of these seasons, when she was persuaded that she was shortly to enter into the presence of her Saviour and Judge, she wrote the following "Farewell to her earthly Connections." It has been handed to us by a relative; and as

we conceive that, under a divine blessing, it may be very useful, especially to the young, to whose attentive perusal we earnestly recommend it, we cheerfully comply with his request and publish it.

“ On this 31st day of January, 1819, I have seated myself, with a heart swallowed up in eternity, with a view to bid farewell to the world. I write in a style as if these were to be my last words; feeling it to be my duty to prepare for that event, I have been engaged in such meditations; and now proceed to write the genuine feelings of my heart, upon bringing that day near to view.”

“ *My dear Brother*, behold your sister placed upon a bed of languishing, scarcely able to address you. I bid you farewell, until we meet at the bar of God. In a few days, you will close my eyes, and convey my body to the friendly tomb. Then you will be the only branch of our father's family: you will be solitary and alone. O! may you learn to practice our parents' virtues, and shun their imperfections, as well as those of your dying sister, who now addresses you. I beseech you not to adopt any thing that you have seen in me, which is not expedient. I much lament that my example has not been better; but you must read the word of God, make it the man of your counsel: and may you ere long become an ornament in the church of Christ. I can cheerfully resign you into the hands of God: trusting that he will glory himself in you, and without a murmur bid you, Adieu.”

“ *My senior Relatives*, you who have been the protectors of my younger years: I trust the majority of you have an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, to support you under all your trials. Let nothing discourage you: persevere to the end in all things. I thank you for your kindness to me, through my life; and, in particular, for your attention through my last illness. Heaven will reward you for your succour to an orphan.—Mourn not for me; but take warning by this event; and remember, that time is short. Do all diligence to prepare to meet death. With a smile, do I bid you adieu: hoping shortly to meet you all on the shores of bliss, there to spend an eternity together in serving God.”

“ *My dear Cousins*, who are arrived at the state of manhood, you see me in the struggles of death. Look back, for a mo-

ment, and behold us all engaged in social chat; and remember that I am the youngest. This is a plain proof that none are exempt from the jaws of the monster. Then, weep not for me; but take warning from our early separation, and prepare for the great event. My affection for you is great; and was it the will of heaven to spare me yet longer, I should anticipate comfort from your friendship. But since the loan of my life is denied me, I trust I am enabled to bid you farewell, with resignation and composure. I hope the Lord will not suffer you to stumble at my failings; but enable you to take warning by them, and to live to his glory here on earth, that we may meet in a happy eternity, to praise him for evermore."

"*My younger Relatives*, hear the admonitions of a dying and affectionate cousin. This cold hand which is now stretched out to bid you a final farewell, will soon be lifeless and immoveable. Soon I shall be unable to address you. You have had the advantage of a pious education as well as I. O be grateful to God for this blessing! Consider it to be a pearl of great price. Treasure up the instructions which you daily receive; and may the Lord grant you his grace to improve them to his glory! Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, that you may be prepared to meet death with a smile. My dear children, I bid you farewell; never more to speak to you with mortal breath."

"*My dear christian Friends*, you who are nearer allied to me than by the ordinary ties of nature, I now come to address you. You, who prayed for and admonished me, whilst I was engaged in the mad career of worldly pleasure, were ready to rejoice with me at the moment, when, I trust, the Lord was pleased to set my soul at liberty in the gospel. And since I have professed to walk with God, you have gently chid my backslidings and with endearing words have encouraged me to persevere to the end. I bid you an affectionate farewell. Lament not that we are called to part; for soon we shall meet again. Yes, my friends, I now see you, by the eye of faith, borne on the chariot wheels of God's eternal love, to those peaceful realms where there is celestial joy. Then let not a sigh escape your breasts; but follow on to serve the Lord, until you are set free from sin and death. Use every exertion for the spread of the gospel, that the knowledge of the Lord may cover the earth as the waters do the sea. I bless God,

that he has permitted me to be numbered with you here upon earth; and that he doth now enable me to view my end with so much delight. By grace alone, I am thus enabled to contemplate death without horror. Pray much for the conversion of sinners. I am the fruit of your prayers with many others; and God is yet a prayer-answering God. Then take encouragement and persevere. Although I am taken from your number, yet remember my name is not extinct. The Almighty enrols the names of all his children in immortality; never to be erased. Then, adieu, my friends, I am shortly to experience the untried scenes of eternity."

"*My youthful Friends*, you who have been partakers with me in vanity; and who still remain without the knowledge of God, hear the dying words of your friend. Behold me a victim to disease and death. The tyrant has now close confined me in his icy fetters. Here you see the shortness of time and the certainty of death, in a lively picture before your eyes. Look and contemplate. These limbs, which were once engaged in the exercises of the world, are almost cold in the embrace of death. This voice, which now with trembling accents addresses you, as from the grave, was once ready to exclaim, "I shall live to a good old age." But you see the uncertainty of all worldly prosperity. O! then, take warning; and lay not up treasure for this world, but prepare for the situation in which you now see me placed. May God, of his infinite grace, grant that you may be all prepared to meet this trying scene. In his hands I leave you—to his mercy I recommend you: hoping to see you all at the bar of God, with uplifted eyes as the servants of Christ. In hopes of this, I give you the parting hand which is almost closed in death."

"And now, vain world, adieu. No longer will earthly vanities allure me from my God. No longer will thy transitory joys corrode my happiness. Death is about to close my wandering eyes, and set my weary soul free from this clog of day. O, happy moment, when my spirit, struggling to be set free, soars to behold those scenes which are inconceivable to mortals.

MARY ANN MUSSON."

*The DISPOSITIONS and TEMPERs BECOMING
CHURCH MEMBERS.*

To the EDITOR of the G. B. R.

DEAR SIR,

Some painful occurrences have recently led me to reflect on the dispositions and principles, which are necessary to qualify the members of a church of Christ honourably and usefully to assist in conducting its affairs. I send you a few thoughts on this important subject, just as they arose in my mind: and, if you think they may be useful to your readers, I should be happy to see them in the next number of your Miscellany.

1. *A steady eye should be kept to the great object for which churches are formed.* In every discussion, let the glory of God, the promotion of the kingdom of Christ, and the edification of the brethren, be our single aim. Let the apostolic precepts, "Do all to the glory of God," and "Let all things be done to edifying," guide all our actions. Let us watch, with a jealous vigilance, over our hearts, lest some base or improper motive should, unnoticed perhaps by us, gain an influence over our minds. "The heart of man is deceitful above all things; who can know it?" Few, even among sincere christians, can fathom its depths. Often, when a man flatters himself that he is actuated solely by love to God and zeal for his honour, a strict self-examination will discover some inferior passion mixing itself with these nobler motives, and debasing them with its impure alloy. In his ardour to carry his point, he may indulge some spark of pride—some secret ambition of shewing his superior influence and address—some half cherished and half repressed wish to mortify an opponent, or crush an antagonist—some unwillingness to give up his proposal, arising more from a fear of the disgrace of a defeat than an honest wish to promote the interest of religion. These motives, so directly contrary to the principles of christianity, may operate powerfully on the mind, before the party himself is aware of their existence, or prepared to guard against their effects. It is therefore the part of christian prudence, whenever a member of a church feels himself peculiarly anxious to carry his own proposals into effect, and to have his own will, to institute a rigorous inquiry, as in the presence of a heart-searching God, into

the purity of the motives by which he is governed; and to pray for grace to be faithful.

2. Another disposition, highly important in the management of church affairs, is, *a reverential regard to the will of God as revealed in the scriptures, and a resolute determination to subject my own will to his.* When therefore any measure is proposed, which appears, on cool examination, consistent with his will, I ought instantly to acquiesce in it; although it may overthrow some darling scheme of my proposing. I should take special care not to suffer personal feeling to induce me to stifle conviction or wink at evidence. Happy would it be for churches, if each member recollected that "ONE IS THEIR MASTER, *even CHRIST,*" and stood ready, at all times, with simplicity of heart, to hear his will, and bow to his authority: Too often, alas! such is the imperfection of the best of men, we are more disposed to endeavour to find excuses for disobedience, than with child-like submission to say, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."

3. *A sincere and ardent love to the children of God with whom we are united,* would admirably assist us in conducting the perplexing and irritating concerns which too often occur in a society of sincere, but frequently very imperfect and uninformed, christians, "This is my commandment," said the adorable Saviour to his followers, "that ye love one another, as I have loved you." "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." This holy disposition would make us cautious how we opposed or grieved our fellow members. We should be well convinced that the cause of truth required it, before we either pressed any plan of our own, which we had reason to believe would be disagreeable to the meanest brother; or opposed any proposal of his on which he had set his heart. Love, true christian love, would teach us "to suffer long and be kind"—"to bear all things, to believe all things, to hope all things, and to endure all things," rather than to hurt the minds of our brethren; or disturb the peace of the church. Did this heavenly temper animate our breasts, it would effectually restrain all that spite and rancour, that rage and evil speaking, which are, alas! sometimes manifested by members of the same christian society one towards another. It is melancholy to reflect that such hateful passions should disgrace the intercourse of the

disciples of the meek and lowly Jesus, "who, when he was reviled, reviled not again: when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." But it is a painful fact, that there are many modern churches to whom the admonition of the apostle is as needful as it was to the Galatians: "If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." When will the happy time arrive, when all the followers of the Lamb shall "put away from among them all bitterness and wrath, and anger and clamour, and evil speaking with all malice: and be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven them."

4. *A sincerely humble disposition and a proper sense of our own claims as church members*, would prevent many of those unhappy disputes which too often check the prosperity of Zion. Pride or self-love, or the adulations of imprudent or designing friends may prompt me to imagine that, on account of my abilities, influence or property, I am a person of importance to the cause. This is often a delusion; and when a person assumes it of himself, and on that assumption, expects that all his suggestions shall be respectfully received, and all his plans adopted, there is good reason to conclude that it is a delusion. But allowing it to be true, yet that does not set me above my brethren. Every member of a church has a right, as such, to give his advice or propose his opinion; and to be heard with attention and respect. A society always suffers when the suggestions of none but leading men are regarded. There are many poor wise men, who by their wisdom might deliver a city from imminent danger; and it is often injurious when the counsels of wise men are slighted because they are poor. A truly humble christian lays aside all wish for superiority,—is disposed to listen to the hints of every brother—is always ready to esteem others better than himself—is not desirous of pleasing himself, but labours to please his neighbour for his good to edification. He keeps constantly in mind, and endeavours always to exemplify in his conduct, the advice of the venerable Peter, "Yea all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble."

Did these dispositions prevail, many deplorable scenes, which now fill the hearts of real christians and faithful minis-

ters with bitter anguish, would be avoided. We should hear no more of officers in churches threatening to resign their situations, or members to withdraw from fellowship, if certain measures were not adopted. Every proposition would then be considered, coolly and affectionately, and its tendency to promote the progress of the cause of the Redeemer candidly examined. Decisions, formed on impartial investigation, would be acquiesced in by all; and all would co-operate in carrying them into effect. Instead of indulging in irritating reflections or ill-natured insinuations, we should "consider one another, to provoke to love and good works." A church of Christ would thus become what it ought to be, a family of love: and strangers have again occasion to exclaim, as they had in primitive times, "Behold! how these christians love one another!"

Should these desultory remarks have any effect in producing this desirable result, it would afford heart-felt consolation to one, who has long been

A MOURNER IN ZION.

PROPOSALS for RE-PRINTING the WORKS of the late REV. DAN TAYLOR:

It will appear by the minutes of the last Association, that the Editor of the G. B. R. "was advised to issue proposals for publishing the Works of the late Rev. Dan Taylor." The Association considered it highly desirable, that those luminous expositions and powerful defences of the distinguishing principles of the New Connection of General Baptists should be preserved from that oblivion into which they are daily hastening, while scattered abroad in separate pamphlets. It was thought, that the members of our own churches, especially the young and uninformed, would be greatly assisted in obtaining clear and scriptural ideas of divine truth, and applying those ideas to practical purposes, by reading the works of an author, of acknowledged ability, who derived his opinions, in an especial manner, from the stores of Revelation. And as, under the blessing of God, the New Connection is daily extending its limits, and becoming more known to other professors of christianity, it was judged that it would tend greatly to its respectability, and secure it from misapprehension, if it could refer inquirers to the writings of one of its leading ministers,

for a perspicuous statement and able vindication of those doctrines, for the promotion of which the union is founded. For these and similar reasons, the representatives of the churches united in the above advice; and recommended it to their constituents to afford the undertaking all the support that their circumstances permitted.

In compliance with this advice, seconded by similar requests from two respectable Conferences, the Editor proposes—

1.—To re-publish all the *Works* of the late *Mr. D. Taylor*, except one or two small Tracts which are superceded by others, of a later date, on the same subject, in three uniform volumes, octavo, of about five hundred pages each, on good paper, and corresponding as to type and page with the *Memoirs* of the Author lately published.

2.—That the first volume shall contain the *Practical Works* of the Author, the second, his *Controversial Pieces*; and the third, his *Miscellaneous Publications*.

3.—That the price of each volume to subscribers shall be *ten shillings*; and that subscriptions be received either for one volume or for the whole work. Subscriptions to be paid on the delivery of each volume.

4.—That for the convenience of those who would prefer it, these works shall be delivered in *thirty monthly numbers*, price, one shilling each.

5.—That the publication shall commence as soon as a number of Subscribers are obtained, sufficient to justify the attempt.

These proposals are respectfully submitted to the friendly consideration of the friends of christianity, but especially of the members of the churches which compose the New Connection. The Editor hopes that those who wish to encourage the undertaking, will immediately institute inquiries in their respective circles, how many subscribers can be obtained, and inform him of the result, with as little delay as possible; as it would be agreeable to commence the work with the New Year.

DIRECTIONS for a **PROFITABLE STUDY** of the **SCRIPTURES**; addressed to the students for the ministry.

By the late *Rev. D. TAYLOR*.

The Scriptures are an invaluable treasure of knowledge, even considered as a common book; and would appear so to

all, and be universally acknowledged as such, were they not the book of God, given to teach the way of holiness, by Christ, to heaven. Consider them merely as a history—the authenticity of the whole—their great importance—the antiquity of the former parts of them—and, in these properties, no book can be compared with them. They are curious and entertaining; concise, yet copious, clear and easy to be understood. There is something in them on almost every branch of science. They contain the best morals, the soundest maxims of prudence adapted to every state, which, if acted upon, would lead us safely and honourably through life.

But, considered as the book of God, of which we have the most abundant evidence, the scriptures demand the most serious attention from every immortal creature, but especially from every minister. The bible is, in this view, a repository of all the instructions that mortals can have, or can need, in order to their present comfort and everlasting felicity. It gives the only rules and directions how to obtain eternal happiness; and no one can be happy, where the scriptures are read and known, but in a practical regard to them: No minister can expect to be happy himself or successful in bringing others to happiness, without a conscientious attention to them. These are the spiritual weapons, by which alone he can do execution for Christ in the world.—My dear young friends, consider this well.

It is too common however, and very easy, to read the scriptures, like the Eunuch, without understanding them. But reading without endeavouring to understand is foolish, wicked and pernicious—a loss of time—an affront to their Author—an injury to our own soul.—And a minister, in doing so, robs his own soul, loses his best furniture, and must continue a blind guide. Let duty, honour and interest, then, excite us to an endeavour, whatever is pursued or neglected, to understand the scriptures. Read them carefully, think closely, and use all proper methods to comprehend their full import. For this important purpose, the following directions may be useful.

1. Often read the scriptures entirely through, that you may know their *general contents*; and thus be able, with more ease and safety, to refer to, compare, and reconcile their different parts, and make the whole familiar to your minds.

2. Note well the occasion, scope and design of the part which you are reading : the circumstances and characters of the persons who speak or write, and of the persons addressed.

3. Labour to acquire clear ideas of the precise signification of words and phrases; especially of those used in scripture. Make them not mean too much nor too little. Form a table of synonymous words and of words nearly synonymous. Be exact in discriminating the difference, if any, lest you be imposed upon yourself and impose upon others, by attending to sound rather than sense. For instance : faith and confidence, justify and pardon, comfort and consolation, righteousness, holiness and godliness, &c.

4. If difficulties respecting either words or things occur in reading the word of God, or meditating on it, note them down, in a little book kept for the purpose; and, at the first convenient opportunity, introduce them into conversation or correspondence with those whom you esteem able to assist you, and request their thoughts upon them.

5. Observe and learn, to the best of your power, the customs of the ancient nations, especially the Jewish, Grecian and Romau. This will enable you to illustrate many passages which would otherwise be obscure. Much information, on this subject, may be collected from the scriptures themselves; and much more from Josephus, and more modern writers.

6. Read, as soon as may be, some good "Key" or "Introduction to scripture" and a good "History of the Bible," and connect with these, "Rollin's Ancient History."

7. Especially labour to be familiarly acquainted both with the letter, spirit and meaning of the *New Testament*. This is the last, clearest and fullest dispensation given to man. It greatly assists in reading and explaining the Old Testament; and unfolds to us the mysteries of heaven, so as no other book does.

8. Settle some plain truths in your minds, that are expressly and repeatedly asserted in the sacred volume. This will greatly assist in examining the dark or more obscure passages; prevent your imbibing errors by mere inference from these obscure passages; and keep your mind steady amidst the controversies of the times, that you be not tossed about with every wind of doctrine. We may instance the express declarations concerning the nature and perfections of

God—the person, character, and work of Christ—the intent and extent of his death—the necessity and nature of justification—the way of salvation—the day of judgment—a future state, &c.

9. Always preserve a humble teachable temper. Beware of a dogmatical spirit—suspect yourself—remember human weakness. Often review your thoughts, and compare them afresh with the word of God. Be ever willing to hear all that can be said against your scheme; yet give not up any thing hastily. Be steady and resolute in adhering to a “Thus saith the Lord:” from this, let nothing, on any account, divert you.

10. Beware of undue bias or prejudice. Indulge not in a fondness for applause. Wish not to follow a multitude; yet affect not singularity. Reject not an opinion, because it is held by bad men; nor embrace it, because it is espoused by good men. Reject nothing because difficulties attend the explication of it, or because you do not, at first, see how to reconcile it with reason or even with other parts of revelation. Some things will always be inexplicable till you arrive in heaven: others you may perhaps see through on earth.

11. Go not to your bible with a scheme of doctrines already formed, to which you are determined to adhere; and to which you are resolved to make all scripture agree. This has been the means of promoting many errors: it often ensnares the mind and leads it to wrest the scriptures to its own injury.

12. Be impartial in the study of the scripture. Often query on what appears doubtful or disputed, in this manner. “Does this sense agree with the tenor of scripture, with the context, the scope or design of the passage?” “If I were of another party or of *no* party, should I adopt this interpretation?” “Are the inferences naturally deduced from it, scriptural?” “Are these inferences confirmed by other scriptures?” “Can I defend the sense I give of it, and the arguments I build upon it, better than any other?” &c.

13. Beware of grounding doctrines on figurative expressions, parables, &c. They were never designed for the *foundation*, but the *illustration*, of truth. Rather explain figurative texts by plain scripture. A neglect of this has done much harm. Never spiritualize scripture history, unless the New Testament authorise and direct in it.

14. Diligently compare scripture with scripture. Especially compare the different passages of the same divine author, which treat of the same or similar subjects or where the same or similar terms and phrases are used on different subjects.

15. Never forget that God is the source of light and wisdom. He has a sovereign power over the mind and can direct it right.—Pray then earnestly to him. “In all thy ways acknowledge Him; and He shall direct thy paths.”

GENERAL BAPTIST OCCURRENCES.

U

CONFERENCES.

Oct. 3, 1821, the LONDON CONFERENCE was held at *Sevenoaks*, Kent. Mr. Rose, of Smarden, preached on the preceding evening, from Col. i. 25—28; and Mr. Wallis, on the evening of conference, from 1 Pet. i. 8.—The state of religion in the several churches connected with this meeting, appears from the reports to be encouraging; though in a few instances, there is a complaint of want of life and zeal.—Advice was given to the friends at Sevenoaks, respecting the best mode of proceeding, in order to secure the property of the meeting-house to the Connection. In conformity with the request of the last association, suitable persons were nominated, in the several churches composing the London conference, to form *district committees* to promote the objects of the *G. B. Foreign and Home Missions*; and arrangements made to bring them into efficient operation, previous to the next Conference.

The NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE CONFERENCE was held at *Misterton*, Dec. 26, 1820. The low state of religion at Misterton being taken into consideration, Mr. W. Smedley was requested to present a statement of the circumstances, to the Midland Conference and to the Association, and ask their advice and assistance in stationing an active minister in the neighbourhood of Misterton. In the afternoon, Mr. S. Watson prayed, and Mr. W. Smedley preached from Phil. i. 27.

This Conference assembled again at *Crowle*, Apr. 23; when the friends at Crowle were advised to present their case to the ensuing association, and ask their assistance in obtaining a minister. Mr. Stocks was also desired to visit Killingholm as

soon as possible, to encourage the drooping cause there. Mr. Stocks preached, in the evening, from Act. xvii. 11. 12.

The next meeting of this conference was at *Epworth*, Sept. 4, 1821. On the preceding day, Mr. W. Smedley delivered two discourses; one, from Num. xxi. 19. and another, from Job. xix. 25. The state of the interest at *Misterton* still continued low; but Mr. Skidmore was earnestly requested to endeavour to keep the place of worship open, on the Lord's days, till a minister could be settled in that neighbourhood. This meeting, feeling the importance of having a minister stationed at *Crowle*, solicited Mr. W. Smedley to exert himself to obtain one: the friends at *Epworth* joining in this request, and promising to assist the brethren at *Crowle* in providing for his support.—The brethren at *Killingholm*, were advised to exchange as often as possible, with neighbouring ministers, but particularly with Mr. Stocks, of *Kirton*: and Mr. Tutty was encouraged to continue to exercise his abilities as a preacher.—This meeting was harmonious; and a sense of the divine presence appeared to impress every heart. In the evening, Mr. Stocks preached, from Eph. iii. 8. The next conference to be at *Killingholm*: Messrs. Cameron and W. Smedley to preach; or, in case of failure, Messrs. Chesman and Watson.

The **WARRICKSHIRE CONFERENCE** met, at *Wolvey*, Sept. 2, 1821: when Mr. Barnes preached, in the morning, from Mark xvi. 15. 16; and Mr. Cheatle, in the evening, from Neh. ii. 18. At this conference, it being considered to be very desirable to introduce preaching into *Coventry*, Mr. Jarvis was requested to look out for an eligible place in which to commence it. It was agreed, that the sermon, on the evening before the conference, should have relation to the *Foreign Mission*. The *Home Missionary Society* was also taken in consideration; and it was strongly recommended to every church to do its utmost in aid of the *Home Mission*, and send an account of the result to the next conference.—It was arranged, that this conference should be held, at the various churches, in the following order: viz.

At Birmingham,	1st Tuesday in January,	1822,
Longford,	1st Ditto in May,	1822,
Caldwell,	3rd Ditto in October,	1822,
Austrey,	1st Ditto in January,	1823,
Sutton,	1st Ditto in May,	1823,

Netherton, 1st Ditto in September, 1823,
 Wolvey 1st Ditto in January, 1824.

The next meeting therefore, will be at Birmiugham, on the first Tuesday in January, 1822; when Messrs. Hall and Barnes will preach.

ANNUAL ASSOCIATION.

The ANNUAL ASSOCIATION of the representatives of the churches composing the New Connection, was held, at *Loughborough*, June 26th, 27th, 28th, and 29th, 1821. Mr. J. Bissill was chosen Chairman; Mr. J. Taylor, Deputy Chairman; and Messrs. R. Smith and E. Sexton, Moderators. On the Wednesday morning, Mr. Farrent preached from John xii. 31, 32; and in the evening, Mr. Bissill, from Psa. ii. 8. The afternoon was occupied by a numerous and interesting missionary meeting.—The state of religion in most of the churches appears to be very encouraging. Preaching has, in the course of last year, been introduced into several places; and new meeting-houses have been opened. A spirit of harmony is very agreeably prevalent in the churches: and the clear increase of members, since last Association, has been *two hundred and seventy one*. The total number of members in the Connection, amounts to *seven thousand, nine hundred and forty four*. Various important arrangements were made, at this Association, for the more effectually promoting of the spread of the gospel both at home and abroad. The meeting was numerously attended: there being upwards of one hundred representatives present. A pleasing degree of unanimity and affection prevailed; and the season was both interesting and instructive.—The next association to be at Heptonstall-Slack; Messrs. Bissill and R. Smith to preach: or, in case of failure, Messrs. Pike and Stevenson. Inn; the Swan, Heptonstall.

OPENING NEW MEETING-HOUSES.

Wednesday, Oct. 10, 1821, the G. B. church, *London*, under the pastoral care of Mr. J. Wallis, opened a new meeting-house, in the *Commercial Road*, about a quarter of a mile east of its former place of worship in *Church Lane, Whitechapel*. Mr. Wallis, the pastor, delivered the first discourse, in the morning, from John i. 29. "Behold the Lamb of God which

take away the sins of the world." In the afternoon, the Rev. F. A. Cox, M. A. particular baptist minister at Hackney, preached, from Eph. ii. 20—22. "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone," &c. In the evening, the Rev. W. Harris, L. L. D. Theological Tutor at Hoxton Academy, delivered a discourse, from John ix. 4. "I must work the work of him that sent me while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work." In the course of the day, Messrs. C. Hyatt, G. Evans, and J. Vautin, neighbouring independent ministers, and Messrs. J. B. Shenston, and J. Kingsford, particular baptists, engaged in the devotional parts of the service: The solemnities of the day were impressive and highly interesting; the congregations were respectable, and in the evening very numerous; and about forty pounds were collected towards the expence of the building.

This church, which has existed nearly two centuries, has suffered much from the expiration of leases upon which it held the buildings, in which it has, from time to time, assembled; and an occurrence of this nature has driven it from its last sanctuary. The new building, however, is on *freehold* ground, vested in Trustees, and secured to the New Connection of General Baptists for ever. It is allowed by all who have seen it, to be a neat, substantial and well finished edifice; capable of seating upwards of six hundred persons, and most eligibly situated. The expence for ground and erections has exceeded £2500: a sum far beyond the ability of the members of the church to raise from themselves. They have done much, considering their circumstances: and their friends, both in town and country, have, in many instances, liberally assisted them; for which they return most sincere thanks. But a heavy debt still remains, which will crush them to the ground, if they do not receive effectual aid from their sister churches. To this aid, they confidently look; and hope that the opening of this place will, under the smiles of the great Head of the church, greatly promote the success of His kingdom in that populous and increasing neighbourhood.—May "the Lord count, when he writeth up the people, that many an inhabitant of the new Jerusalem was born again in this earthly temple!" and "may the Highest establish it!"

On Easter Sunday, 1821, a new G. B. meeting-house was opened at *Crowle*, a considerable town, containing almost two thousand inhabitants, about seven miles from *Butterwick*, in the Isle of *Axholm*, Lincolnshire. On this occasion, Mr. W. Smedley delivered three discourses: the first, in the morning, from *Math. xii. 21*; the second, in the afternoon, from *Gal. vi. 14*; and the third, in the evening, from *Mark xvi. 15, 16*. Messrs. *Watson*, *G. Smedley*, and *Purkiss* took part in the devotional exercises of the day. It was a solemn and delightful season; and will long be remembered by many who were present. May this little edifice be owned and blessed by Him who fills immensity; and made very instrumental to the conversion of sinners and the glorifying of His holy name!

REVIEW of NEW PUBLICATIONS.

DISSENT FROM THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND VINDICATED FROM THE CHARGE OF SCHISM: a LETTER to the Rev. J. JACKSON, M. A. Vicar of *Swaffham Bulbeck*; occasioned by his SERMON, preached, at *Wisbeck*, July 31, 1821, at the third quadrennial visitation of *Bowyer Edward*, Lord Bishop of *Ely*. By J. JARROM.

Octavo pp. 58, price, 1s. 6d. stitched. Mann, London; Noble, Boston; Wilkins, Derby.

We frankly confess that we are not so much alarmed at the appearance of a polemical pamphlet; as some of our more timid or more prudent brethren seem to be. Controversy, if properly managed, leads a man to examine the ground of his opinions, corrects his mistakes, renders him more accurately acquainted with the subjects of discussion in all their bearings and connections, gives him more enlightened views both of his own system and that of his antagonist, leaves him better satisfied with his own principles, and frequently excites a higher esteem for his opponent. We have no doubt, but the worthy author of the Letter before us, rose, from the composition of it, a more contented and confirmed dissenter, than he was when he sat down to the task. Though we should deeply lament to observe, that our ministers cherished a contentious or captious temper; and took fire at every petty reflection which ignorance or ill-will may cast on them, most of which are best answered with a

smile of contempt and pity ; yet we are always pleased to see them ready, on all proper occasions, to defend their principles and conduct. Such an occasion, we think, gave rise to the present publication, and we are glad that it was so promptly embraced.

The Vicar of Swaffham, it appears, took the liberty, in the presence of his diocesan, of representing the dissenters as *schismatics* and loading them with many reproaches ; and afterwards made these reproaches public, by printing his Sermon. Mr. Jarrom has, in a manly but respectful manner, met the charges of the reverend preacher ; and we are persuaded that every competent and impartial judge will say with us, that he has fairly refuted them. Our limits will not permit us to follow the author through all the arguments of this well-written defence ; but he has himself given us a summary of its contents, with which we present the reader, as furnishing a very adequate and just view of the work. " Thus, sir, it appears that in numerous respects, and those of the highest consequence, the church of England has departed from the plan laid down in the sacred pages. We have instanced in her forms as national ; in various distinctions which she has admitted in the ministry ; in her plan of government, allowing another head than Christ, the only legitimate sovereign in his kingdom, and submitting to another rule than his ; in deriving her support, not from the voluntary contributions of her members, but imposts exacted from the people by the arm of the civil power ; in numerous ceremonies, rites, and services, which she has decreed and imposed, and which are unscriptural, superstitious and absurd ; in additions made to the sacraments, and alterations in the manner of administering them ; in certain mistakes relating to doctrine, particularly a dangerous one concerning regeneration ; and in the corrupt state of discipline, which is almost entirely neglected."

The author has shewn himself well acquainted with the subject ; and has, in most instances, pressed his arguments with a force and point that must, we think, teach his antagonist to feel. When treating on the *Nature of the Government* of the Church of England, after reprobating her claim to the power of decreeing rites and ceremonies, and to authority in matters of faith, he proceeds—" But the church's claiming this legislative power is not the worst part

of it. If it is inquired who the church is, in whom this prerogative is lodged, and by whom it is exercised, we shall find it is not the church as defined in the article,—“a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure word of God is preached, &c.” It is the secular power; the power which rules in the state; the king as its head; with the two houses of parliament. It is here that the legislative authority, arrogated to itself by the church of England, is deposited. She herself has not power to alter authoritatively one rite in all her numerous ceremonies, or to determine in the smallest matter of faith. But the king and parliament are almighty in this respect. They can set up, and pull down, and alter and modify, at their pleasure; and the wish, and opinion, and power of all the bishops and clergy in the land, are only “as the small dust of the balance.” The king and parliament have settled the form and constitution of your church, decided on the quality and number of the articles which are to be subscribed, decreed all its ceremonies, determined its forms, fixed the number of its bishops, specified the nature and extent of their office, prescribed to its ministers what they shall read, what prayers they shall offer, in what manner administer the ordinances, and in short authoritatively directed them in the exercise of every part of their ministry. The church of England is, indeed, in the fullest sense of the word, a parliamentary church. From the parliament it derived its origin, not only without the concurrence, but against the strenuous opposition, of all the bishops in the land. This, sir, is not the nature of the Christian church. In it the temporal magistrate, as such, has no authority. We are not allowed, in matters relating to this kingdom, to acknowledge any head besides Christ; to do so, is treason against him. My allegiance to him requires me, therefore, to separate from a communion which owns another head, and submits to another legislature.”

We shall transcribe only one short passage more, which refers to the *doctrines* of the established church. Having reprobated her opinion as to the efficacy of baptismal regeneration, by which she declares that infants are made, by baptism, “members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven,” he observes: “This mistake in the church of England, concerning regeneration, lying as this doctrine does at the foundation of the spiritual edifice, is, in its

operation, of pernicious consequence. To begin wrong, occasions all that follows to be wrong. Thus it is, apparently, in the church of England, with regard to this doctrine. In supposing that infants are regenerated and made the children of God, when nothing of the kind has taken place, you begin wrong; in confirmation, you ratify the mistake; and, to appearance, continue in it to the end, declaring at death, concerning them, who in their infancy were thus made Christians, your firm belief that God has taken them to himself. There is, indeed, a consistency on this point in the established church, in its conduct; but it is a consistency in an error. As it begins, so it proceeds; but it begins wrong, it therefore proceeds wrong, and it is well if the end is not the same."

We have read this Letter with considerable satisfaction and can very cordially recommend it to our readers. The Author does not pretend to have exhausted the subject; but as far as he has gone, his arguments are conclusive: and we think that he has said sufficient fully to justify Dissenters in separating from the national establishment.

ADULT BAPTISM: or the SALVATION of all who die in INFANCY maintained; In STRICTURES on a SERMON, entitled "*The Right of Infants to Baptism, by the Rev. H. F. Burder, M. A.*" By ISAIAH BIRT.

Octavo pp. 34, price, stitched 1s.

Westley, London.

It has long appeared to us, that the churches of Rome and England have a decided advantage over dissenters in pleading the cause of Infant Baptism. The former assign a sufficient reason for their practice: their children, in baptism, are made members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven. Allow the truth of this, and their conduct is rational. But many dissenters seem at a loss to assign any specific object which they propose to themselves in administering the rite to infants. We have often inquired of learned and sensible pædo-baptists; but could never obtain any explicit information. Mr. Burder, however, on a late occasion, asserted that children of believers have an interest with their parents in the "covenant of grace, the covenant of redemption,

the everlasting covenant, embracing all that man can desire or Jehovah impart:" and on this glorious privilege he founds their right to baptism. Now all parties of pædo-baptists agree in confining whatever benefits they suppose flow from baptism to a state of infancy: for they all declare, that, when a child is grown to years of discretion, he must then embrace the covenant of grace for himself, and be made personally partaker of the mercies of the gospel, or his baptism will avail him nothing. Hence therefore the great privilege of having an interest in the covenant of grace and all the effects of such an interest, are confined to believers' children who die in infancy. These have an interest in the covenant of grace: but all other babes, dying at the same age, have none. Against this affecting distinction, the venerable minister, in the strictures before us, decidedly protests. "The Baptists," he observes, "with grateful confidence esteem all children who die in infancy, to be equally and certainly saved without distinction: whilst pædo-baptism, with a *partial*, gloomy and awful aspect, makes a privileged order amongst dying babes—placing a comparatively small number in a state of regeneration, and a very few others in the covenant of grace: leaving the vast and incalculable majority destitute of those blessings, which are essentially necessary to their future and eternal felicity. Who that impartially considers this subject can avoid being thankful, that the *Bible* does not lead him to so awful a conclusion and that he is not, by divine authority, connected with a practice the implications of which are so truly appalling?"

Mr. Birt proceeds to examine Mr. Burder's reasonings in defence of the exclusive interest of the children of believers in the covenant, at considerable length, and with, what appears to us, unanswerable force of argument. The latter rests his scheme on the covenant of circumcision made with Abraham. This leads our author to examine the covenants of grace, and of circumcision; and to shew, in a very pointed manner, the distinguishing characters of each. The covenant of grace, he remarks, was in operation two thousand years before circumcision had any existence, and all the people of God of every nation were interested in it; but circumcision was enjoined in after ages, on the descendants of Abraham, and was connected with the promises made to him respecting the civil and political circumstances of his descendants. The blessings of

the covenant of grace without circumcision, have been enjoyed by persons apart from the Jewish people, in all generations; but the blessings peculiar to the covenant made with Abraham, have in all ages belonged only to the circumcised. The covenant of grace makes no distinction of sex; but circumcision was confined to males. Circumcision made no difference between the godly and the ungodly; but the blessings of the covenant of grace belong only to the godly. Piety is the only evidence of an interest in the covenant of grace; but carnal descent from Abraham established a right to circumcision and all the privileges connected with it. Circumcision was incorporated into the Mosaic ritual, and the omission of it was punished by an exclusion from the privileges of that dispensation; but God has made no external rite essential to an interest in the covenant of grace. Circumcision and the whole Jewish ritual became obsolete when the Messiah appeared; but the covenant of grace remains unchanged and unchangeable. From these and similar topics, which are treated concisely, with great perspicuity and strength, the writer concludes that circumcision was a mere Jewish rite, no ways connected with the covenant of grace; but confined to political and civil purposes; and therefore the argument, that because Jewish children were admitted to it, therefore believers' children have an interest in the covenant of grace, totally fails. This failure of course drags along with it, the inference that believers' children have a right to baptism; and the whole goodly fabric, which Mr. B. had reared, with so much dexterity, falls to the ground. Having thus cleared his way, Mr. Birt states his views of the ordinance of baptism; and in conclusion, presses closely on the pædo-baptists, the inconsistency, since they make religion a *personal* concern on every other occasion, of introducing a *relative* religion at the font, and teaching their disciples "to say within themselves, we have Abraham to our father."

This pamphlet has afforded us unfeigned pleasure. It is cool, argumentative and satisfactory. We think the preacher will not find it easy to reply to it; though we know he possesses considerable abilities. We should be glad, if the controversy must be continued, to see it conducted by disputants; who mingle so little of the ill-nature and rudeness of polemics with their reasonings, as these gentlemen do.

We must confess the *title* rather mis-led us. "The Salvation of all who die in Infancy maintained;" caused us to expect something more decisive on a subject that interests the feelings of all parents, who have been called to resign their offspring to an early grave. All that is said, is in a single paragraph, which contains little more than an intimation that Revelation is silent on the subject. The author has, indeed, in our opinion, sufficiently refuted the notion of any class of dying infants possessing privileges superior to others: and thus they are all left in the hands of One who will judge righteously: or, as our pædo-baptist brethren would say, "to the uncovenanted mercies of God."

PIOUS PIECES, IN VERSE.

12mo. pp. 36, price, stitched, 6d. *Mann*, London.

This is a small collection of religious poems, comprising *Brooke's Redemption*, *Byrom's Beggar and Divine*, and *Armelle Nicholas*, and *Cayley's Echo*. The publisher has introduced them with some original recommendatory lines; and if they answer all the good purposes to the reader which this poetical preface assures us they will, his money will be well spent. The first poem displays most both of genius and judgment; but the others will be very acceptable to a certain class of professors. We believe none of the pieces are very commonly found in collections of this nature.

GENERAL BAPTIST MISSIONARIES.

In our last number, we gave an account of the missionaries, Messrs. Bampton and Peggs, with their partners, leaving England for India. Advices were received from them, as they ran down the channel, expressive of the harmony that reigned amongst them and their fellow travellers, their social meetings for prayer and praise, the kindness of the captain, officers and crew of the *Abberton*, and the promising commencement which they had made in the study of the language of Bengal. June 8, they left the shores of their native country, and steered direct for *Madeira*. This island they reached in about ten days; and took the opportunity afforded them, by landing there a few days, of sending letters to their friends. From one

of these, written by Mr. Bampton to a friend in London, dated "*Funchal, Madcira, June 20, 1821,*" we insert the following extracts :

" We reached Funchal-bay, on Monday morning, just three weeks after leaving London. During part of our voyage, the winds were contrary, and we were most of us ill: Mr. Peggs was the worst, and I felt the least. We sailed very pleasantly by the side of this island, last Saturday: and hoped to anchor in the evening, but the laws of the place forbade our anchoring after sun-set. We were, therefore, obliged to bear off to sea again; and were considerably tossed about, most of the Lord's day. On Monday morning, we got in: and after the necessary inquiries and formalities, brethren Ward, Mack and myself went on shore to seek accommodations for ourselves and friends; for we found that passengers were expected to live on shore during our stay. We soon landed in a catholic country; but providentially went, with our captain, to an English merchant's. It was understood by a gentleman, who was either a clerk or a partner in the concern, that we were missionaries: and hence we were taken into a room, in which we found the Evangelical Magazine, Missionary Register, Martin's Life, Bible Society's Report, &c. Our friend soon came to talk with us. He asked what societies we were connected with; and whether Mr. Ward was coming out soon. Our good friend replied, " My name is Ward ;" and the information was received with marked satisfaction. He soon after went with us to look at lodgings; and we engaged lodgings with board, at an English lady's, for two dollars per day, each person. We returned home with our kind friend; who regaled us with ham, bread, cheese, wine, &c. There we met another Englishman, Mr. B. the employer of our former friend, whose name is L. He treated us with equal kindness. Mr. L. seems truly pious: he is a Scotchman and well knew Mr. Fuller. You need not be told that our hearts were cheered; and I hope we felt thankful to him whose goodness and mercy followed us so remarkably."

" Madeira is a most romantic place. The land is so high, that when we were sailing, at a distance of eight or nine miles, I thought we were only about half a mile off. Yesterday we walked about three miles up a mountain; and found it cultivated in shelves like stairs. A large proportion of the ground

is planted with vines; and the walk up was very laborious. Sometimes we could look down a precipice, I suppose some hundreds of feet deep. The cottages were mere huts, built with stone, without mortar, and thatched. We called on two or three of the cottagers, in order to see all we could of them; and were received in a very friendly manner. The huts were wretchedly furnished; and we thought that the people lived very hardly. We made signs for food, and one man gave us nothing; but when we called on another, he went into his garden, and sent us up each a bunch of peas, which he gave us, leaves and straw altogether. We made signs for drink, and his daughter went with a vessel, and fetched us some water. After walking, I suppose, two or three hours, we returned to our breakfast; but we did not suffer through heat, hunger or fatigue materially. Mrs. Bampton and Mrs. Peggs went with us; and we felt gratified with our perambulation. A third peasant gave us some apricots; but they were green; he, poor man! however could not help that."

"The island is in a state of deplorable darkness. Its population, we have been told, is about one hundred thousand; and not one protestant minister. Funchal is said to contain fifteen thousand souls; and of them two hundred are protestants; most of them English and Scotch. They have built an Episcopal chapel, but have no minister. A gentleman, who is a missionary in Bombay, preached a few times, I think, in the consul's house, and the people were anxious to keep him; but he is gone to his station, from which he was to return if the climate did not suit him. All hope however seems given up; and though there are, at least, a few who fear God, they are as sheep without a shepherd."

"This morning we breakfasted with Mr. B. about a mile or two from Funchal. His residence is a most delightful place; the lowest walk of his garden is perhaps two hundred feet lower than the foundation of his house. His house is quite genteel; and his garden unites to the profusion of Madeira the taste of England. His various shelves contain vines enough to produce annually ten or fifteen pipes of wine. There was a profusion of apricots, oranges, lemons and trees with fruit and blossoms upon them; whole hedges of geraniums, &c. &c. &c. All this and a great deal more, with the stupendous rocks around us, presented such a scene, as your young travellers had never seen before; and we seemed to think that we almost

realized all that poets imagined, when they tried to paint an earthly paradise. There is reason to think that, at least, part of this hospitable family is pious; and they have all the best wishes and prayers of your missionaries. The town of Funchal looks as if it were in a state of decay. It has various churches, some convents, and many priests. We had to-night a prayer meeting for the evangelization of Madeira. May our prayers be heard!"

TO-MORROW.

How sweet to the heart is the thought of to-morrow
 When Hope's fairy pictures bright colours display;
 How sweet, when we can from futurity borrow,
 A balm for the griefs that afflict us to-day.
 When wearisome sickness has taught one to languish,
 For health and the comforts it bears on its wing;
 Let me hope, oh! how soon it would lessen my anguish!
 That to-morrow will ease and serenity bring.
 When travelling alone quite forlorn, unbefriended,
 Sweet the hope that to-morrow my wand'rings will cease;
 That at home then, with care sympathetic attended,
 I shall rest unmolested and slumber in peace.
 Or, when from the friends of my heart long divided,
 The fond expectation with joy how replete
 That, from far distant regions by Providence guided,
 To-morrow will see us most happily meet.
 When six days of labour each other succeeding,
 With hurry and toil have my spirits oppress;
 What pleasure to think, as the last is receding,
 To-morrow will be a sweet sabbath of rest.
 And, when the vain shadows of time are retiring,
 When life is fast fleeting and death is in sight,
 The Christian believing, exulting, aspiring,
 Beholds a to-morrow of endless delight.
 But the infidel then surely sees no to-morrow;
 Yet he knows that his moments are hasting away,
 Poor wretch! can he feel, without heart rending sorrow,
 That his joys and his life will expire with to-day.

FINIS.

M. P.