

THE VIRGINIA RELIGIOUS MAGAZINE.

Vol. I.]

SEPTEMBER 1805.

[No. 5.

FROM THE ASSEMBLY'S MAGAZINE.

THE LIFE OF DOCTOR JOHN WITHERSPOON.

DOCTOR WITHERSPOON was born at Yester, a few miles from Edinburgh, on the 5th of February, 1722. His ancestry was respectable, he being lineally descended from the Rev. John Knox, "the prime instrument in spreading and establishing the reformed religion in Scotland." His father was minister of the parish of Yester, a man of exemplary piety, and eminent as a critical scholar. The education of the son was such as might be expected under the direction of such a father. He early acquired a fondness for literary pursuits, with a love for accurate investigation, and a noble simplicity, which have since characterised him in the various scenes of his life.

When very young he was sent to the public school at Haddington. Here he was distinguished for assiduity in his studies, and for possessing a quickness of perception, and correctness of judgment.

At the age of fourteen, he was removed to the university of Edinburgh, where he continued till the age of twenty-one. During this time, while attending the different professors with his companions, some of whom have since appeared in the highest stations in the literary world, his talents and judgment were always noticed, and in the Theological-Hall they were much admired. His correct taste for sacred criticism, added to an uncommon quickness and perspicuity in forming

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and expressing his ideas, always enforced conviction or incurred pointed opposition.

After leaving the university he was invited to be an assistant minister with his father. But he preferred accepting an invitation from the parish of Beirth. Here he was ordained to the ministry and continued several years. From Beirth he was translated to Paisly. In both these charges he performed his parochial and ministerial duties with a fidelity, which gave general satisfaction. In the last, particularly, his reputation became extensive, and a large party of friends, besides his own people, became warmly attached to him. In the ecclesiastical politics of his country, he was the head of the *orthodox* party. He first gave unity and harmony to their proceedings, and convinced them of the necessity of systematising their operations. Shortly after, he had the satisfaction to witness their respectability in the General Assembly. As his popularity extended, a growing, mutual, and affectionate regard was formed between him and his people. They admired him as a preacher, and loved him as a friend and a father. Soon after this he received invitations severally from Dublin, Rotterdam, and Dundee, to assume the ministerial charge in those places: and also, one from the Trustees of the College of Princeton, in New-Jersey, to preside over their institution. At first he rejected all those solicitations, thinking it impossible to overcome the feelings of tenderness which mutual fondness had nourished *in his own heart and the hearts of his family and people.* Being, however, strongly urged to come to America by some of his most confidential friends, and flattered by the goodly prospect of extensive usefulness to science and religion, he determined to sacrifice those feelings. He therefore yielded to a second application, and soon after embarked for this country where he arrived in August 1768.

During his presidency at the College he introduced many improvements into the classical course of studies. He adopted a system of education more extensive, scientific, and more particularly *useful* than that previously established. Himself a

happy model, as a good writer, and of improved taste on subjects of literature, he taught by his own example. Under his direction the patronage of the College became every year more extensive, and the institution more flourishing, till the event of the revolutionary war.

In 1776, he was chosen to represent the people of New Jersey in the Congress of the United States. He continued a member of that illustrious body for seven years, during which, his name, as President of the College, continued to give celebrity to the character of the institution. As a politician he is well known and his judgment highly commended. The decision, simplicity, and systematic manner, which characterised him in his accustomed walk of life, accompanied him to the councils of the nation. Here his political knowledge and extensive acquaintance with men and things, gave a high value to his opinions. His ready and powerful talents as a writer, enabled him to correct the biased judgment of opposing party, and to excite the exertions of many, who, through interest or discouragement, had abandoned the common cause. Neither during this anxious period, did he suffer himself to forget the great object of his profession. He omitted no opportunity of preaching the word of God, and of discharging other ministerial offices.

At the close of the national struggle, the Doctor had a wish to retire from Congress and the public duties of the College, and to spend the few remaining years of his life in domestic retirement. He was afterwards, however, induced to make a voyage to Europe to promote the interest of his favorite institution: but on his return, finding his attention less necessary than formerly, and his years and health not enabling him to support the burden of College duties, he visited it but occasionally.

Doctor WITHERSPOON had now educated five hundred and twenty-three young men, one hundred and fifteen of whom were afterwards ministers of the Gospel. He had the satisfaction to see many of his former pupils filling the first offices of

trust under the Government. And on returning one day from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, then sitting in Philadelphia, he remarked to his particular friend, "I cannot, my dear sir, express the satisfaction I feel, when I observe that a majority of our General Assembly were once my own pupils."

For more than two years before his death he was afflicted with blindness. But while blind he was often led to the pulpit and always displayed his usual strength of mind, and sometimes an uncommon fervor. This bodily affliction, however, weakened his system, and hurried on other complaints. But under his sufferings he seemed never impatient, and was even sometimes cheerful. He continued in this state till overcome with accumulated infirmities, he died on the 15th day of November 1794, in the seventy-third year of his age.

He was buried in the public burying ground in Princeton, where a handsome monument is erected to his memory, with a latin inscription detailing many of the leading events in his life.

FROM THE LONDON EVANGELICAL MAGAZINE.

MEMOIR OF THE LATE REV. JOHN BROWN, OF
HADDINGTON.

(Concluded from our last.)

Mr. Brown's remarkable Expressions during his last illness.

IF Christ be magnified in my life, that is the great matter I wish for. Often we read history as Atheists or Deists, rather than as Christians. To read of events without observing the hand of God in them, is to read as Atheists; and, to read and not observe how all events conduce to carry on the work of redemption, is to read as Deists. A piece of history hath often amused me when my natural spirits were low; but now I find no pleasure, except in meditating on the promises of God.

The doctrine of grace reigning through righteousness, is

good to live with, and good to die with. O! what a happy life a Christian might have, if he were always persuaded of the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord! If there were any such thing as exchange of learning, I would willingly quit with all my knowledge of languages and other things, were it a thousand times more extensive, experimentally to know what that meaneth—*I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.* I think that, this evening, I am no worse; but do not wish to have a will in the matter: only I would not desire to live, and not be able for Christ's work; though perhaps, were God so ordering it, he would enable me to bear that too. No doubt I have met with trials as well as others; yet the Lord hath always been so kind to me, that I think if he were to give me as many years as I have lived in this world, I would not desire one single circumstance in my lot to be changed, but that I had less sin. I have often wondered at the favor which men have shewn to me; but much more at the favor of God to such a great transgressor. O! to be with God! to see him as he is! to know him even as we are known! It is worth not merely *doing* for, but *dying* for, to see a gracious God.

About the year —, God said to my soul, *I have loved thee with an everlasting love*; and O! how faithful he hath been to me ever since. There would not have been more grace shewn in the redemption of the chief of devils, than in saving me. The same price would have ransomed them; the same strivings would have overcome them. Men may talk against the sovereignty of redeeming love as they will; but had it not been sovereign, infinitely sovereign, I should as certainly have been damned as if I were in hell already. Were it not that God foresaw our provocations from eternity, he never could have continued his love towards me, the great transgressor, the arrant rebel. Yet, I hope, he is now preparing me for being ever with himself.

O! how these words—*He loved me, and gave himself for me,* once penetrated my heart, and made me cry, *Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name.* Notwithstanding all my wickedness, God hath put a bridle in my mouth; and though I have been a most perverse sinner, yet he hath strangely restrained me. This he hath done chiefly by his loving kindness and tender mercy.

I desire to depart, and be with Christ, which is far better than life. Though I have lived sixty years very comfortably, yet I would gladly turn my back on you all, to be with Christ. O! how pleasant to enjoy fellowship with Christ! Any little acquaintance I have had with him, deeply convinceth me of this. And, Oh! how much more pleasure might I have had, but for my own folly and wickedness! I now think that I could willingly die to see him, who is *white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.*

Addressing himself to his two sons in the ministry, he said, with peculiar earnestness, O! labour, labour for Christ, while you have strength. I now repent that I have been so lazy and slothful in his service. O! commend Jesus. I have been looking at him for these many years, and yet never could find a flaw in him, but what was of my own making; but he has seen ten thousand faults in me. Justly may he say of me—*Sixty years long have I been grieved with this rebel?* and as justly may I add, *where my sin hath abounded, God's grace hath much more abounded.* O! how comely and gracious a personage hath Jesus been in my sight! Many a kind friend I have had but none like Christ, in loving-kindness and tender mercies. I know not if I shall ever see you together again; but O labour to win souls to Christ. There is none like Christ. I am sure a poor worthless wretch he has had of me; but a precious, superlatively precious Christ I have had of him. Never grudge either purse or person for him. I can say I was never a loser by any time spent, or by money given for him.

At another time—O! the pains, said he, God has been at to save me, and the pains I have been at to destroy myself! But

he hath partly gained, and, I hope, he will completely gain the victory. I find reading tires me, walking tires me, riding tires me; but were I once with Jesus above, fellowship with him will never tire. *So shall we be for ever with the Lord.* If doubting, disputing, and trampling on his kindness, could have made him change his love, it would never have been continued to me. Though I have never been left to commit gross crimes, yet he knows the wickedness of my heart; such wickedness as would have provoked any but a God of infinite love, to cast me into hell. Yet lo! instead of casting me thither, he takes me to his bosom, and says, *I have loved thee with an everlasting love.* How hath the Lord borne and carried me! He hath indeed visited me with stripes; but never except when I richly deserved them.

I was young when left by my parents; yet their instructions accompanied with God's dealings, made such an impression on my heart, as, I hope, will continue with me to all eternity. I have served several masters; but none so kind as Christ. I have dealt with many honest men; but no creditor like Christ. Had I ten thousand hearts, they should all be given to Christ; and had I ten thousand bodies, they should all be employed in labouring for his honor.—Repeating these words, *Thou art my God, I will prepare thee an habitation; my father's God and I will exalt thee*—he added, we should reckon him a madman who would throw away a father's estate; but he is infinitely more foolish who would cast off a father's God. O! what kindness God has heaped upon me since the year — ! O what kind strugglings! what kind smilings! what kind overlookings of my outrageous wickedness! Of a truth he hath shewed himself to be God, and not man, in his dealings with me. In my mad attempts, he hath often stopped me; my mad wishes he hath often refused to grant; and my mad words he hath often seemed to overlook.—Under the pressure of bodily pain, he would repeat these lines of Watts with much feeling:—

" Soon may the storms of trouble beat

" The house of bondage down,

" And let the prisoner fly !"

And add, I wonder I have so much health as I have. Many of my fellow-sinners, and many who have never sinned to my extent, are now in the place of torment, without any hope of deliverance, while my heart is in a measure filled with God's praise.

Hearing of the more enlarged spread of the Gospel—Well, said he, may it spread ! It is the alone source of my comfort, and every sinner is as welcome as I. How pleasant, that neither great sins, nor great troubles, can alter these consolations ! These words were once sweetly impressed on my heart—*Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.* How it delighted me to see God taking advantage of my great sinfulness, to make manifest his greater grace. O ! the sovereignty of God ! I think he hath used more means to subdue the enmity of my heart, and its rebellion, than he hath used for an hundred besides. How astonishing, said he, as he was taking a little wine, that God's Son should be obliged to take gall and vinegar to drink, when his thirst was great, and I have wine, when my thirst is by no means excessive ! How I long to drink of the new wine of my Father's kingdom, which will hurt neither head nor heart ! O ! that I had all the world around me, that I might tell them of Christ ! Had I ten thousand tongues, and ten thousand hearts, and were employing them all in the commendation of Christ, I could not do for his honor what he hath deserved, considering his kindness to me.

He hateth putting away. I am sure I have found that to be true : for O ! the provocations I have given to God to cast me off ; and yet, to this day, he crowneth me with loving kindness and tender mercies ! How astonishing the *necessity* of the love of the Son of God ! once, I thought I got a ravishing sight of the necessity of his loving me, the sinner. He said, *Other sheep I have ; these also must I bring.* O ! his kindness ! his kindness ! I have shared of his frowns as well as his smiles—little frowns in comparison with what I deserved. Yet, whenever I abused

those frowns, as well as his smiles, he hath ever overcome me with tender mercies. I am weak, but I am well, considering I am such a sinner. Truly I may say, *Goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life*; and I hope to dwell in the house of the Lord forever. O! to be where they hunger no more; neither thirst any more; but are filled with the fatness of God's house!

To one of his younger children he said with great earnestness, Now cry to God, *Thou art my Father*. I do not think I was older than you when God caused me to claim him; and Oh! God has been a good Father to me! It is long since God said to me, "Leave thy fatherless children with me, I will preserve them alive; and let thy widow trust in me." As I know not but I am dying of this illness, I have endeavored to cast you on the Lord, But see also that you cast yourself upon him. At another time, were it not that the blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin, damnation would be my lot; but *in him I have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sin, according to the riches of his grace*: and if Christ be glorified to the highest, and I ashamed to the lowest, I am content.

I think the early death of my father and mother, the death of a beloved wife and children, wrought, in a remarkable way, for my good. I could not but notice when God took away these, he always supplied their room with himself. May he deal thus with you of my family when I die! As to my recovery, I wish God may do what is best for his glory, and for the good of my soul. Were it left to me, whether I would choose life or death, I would refer it wholly to God himself. All my days I have been rebelling against and vexing his Holy Spirit; yet I may say this hath been the sum of his conduct to me—*He hath wrought for his name's sake, that it should not be polluted*. O! how God hath exemplified that scripture in his conduct to me—*If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink*; and in so doing, I hope he hath heaped heart-melting coals of fire upon my head. Any thing I know about religion is this, that I have found great weakness

and wickedness about myself, and grace, mercy, and loveliness about Jesus.

To his sons in the ministry, he repeated the exhortation which he had given before: O labour, labour to win souls to Christ. I will say this for your encouragement, that when the Lord led me out to be most diligent this way, he poured in most comfort into my heart, so that he gave me my reward in my bosom; and when I have tried to help vacancies, the Lord has ever repaid me well with glimpses of his glory. Were the Lord to make me young again, I think I should study to devise other means for the gaining of souls than those which I have used, to prosecute them with more vigour than ever I did. I am weak; but it is delightful to find one's self weak in everlasting arms.—My memory is much failed; but, were death once over, I shall remember God's keeping of mercies, and my multiplied provocations, and sing thanksgivings to God for ever.

So far as ever I observed God's dealings with my heart, the flights of preachers sometimes entertained me; but it was scriptural expressions which penetrated my heart, and that in a way peculiar to themselves. O! what must Christ be in himself, when he sweetens Heaven, sweetens Scripture, sweetens Ordinances, sweetens Earth, and even sweetens Trials! —Oh! what a rebellious child I have been to God, and what a kind Father he hath been to me! I need not go farther than myself, to see that God is love; for, even in my trouble, he treats me as a mother does her sucking child! The finished righteousness of Christ is the only foundation of my hope. I have no more dependence on my labours than on my sins. I reckon it a wonder of mercy that God took any of my labours at my hand. Righteousness belongeth unto him; but unto me, shame and confusion of face. Were the Lord to render to me according to my works, the hottest place in Hell would be my reward: yet by Christ's works, eternal life to the most worthless wretch is but a suitable recompence. I remember that, about the year —, I was breathing out slaughter against the Lord, but I obtained mercy; and had I been ef-

ferred the crown of Britain, instead of the fellowship with Christ, which I soon after enjoyed, I should not have hesitated a moment about choosing the latter. How strange a kind of debt is the debt of grace ! Were I even now two or three hundred pounds in debt to any man, it would considerably distress me ; but my views of my debt to free grace, greatly refresh my heart. God hath been heaping favours on me these forty years past ; and I will say, to his honour, that he hath made days of affliction always the happiest. Indeed, I think, I have seldom had very sweet days, except when I met with affliction, one way or another. I do not expect to see it ; yes it is the joy of my heart, that the time is coming when *the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ*. Dead churches shall yet be quickened ; apostate churches shall yet be recovered ; and churches be planted where there were none before. I could wish to die a deep, deep debtor to mercy ; and that none of my works should ever be mentioned but as manifestations of mercy, and as means of promoting the work of mercy in the welfare of others. Though pride prevail much in my heart, yet I think I would trample it thus far under my feet, as that I should be glad to see my students, and not only they, but all the faithful Ministers of Jesus, bringing hundreds or thousands of souls with them into Heaven, though I should have but five or six. O ! how happy should I be, when I depart to Heaven, were I able to tell this news to the redeemed millions, that the Holy Ghost had been remarkably poured down on East Lothian, and that there was not now a family in which the worship of God was not observed ! It must greatly delight the redeemed above, to hear of Christ's glory being displayed, and of souls being saved on earth. Ever since God dealt favourably with my heart, I have never had any comfort in the thought that my sins were small, but in the belief that *the blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin* ; and in the consideration that God's mercy being higher than the Heavens. It might be written on my coffin, " Here lies one of the cares of Providence, who early lost both father and mother, and yet never

missed them." I should not wish there should ever be the least appearance of avarice of the world in me. I can trust my family to Providence; and if, when I am in Heaven, it shall appear that one has been converted by means of any thing I ever wrote, I shall mark down one hundred pounds; if their should be two, I will say, there is two hundred pounds; and if twenty, there is something of more value than two thousand pounds. That is the reward I wish for of my writings. God deals so tenderly with me in my afflictions, as if every stroke went nearer to his own heart than to mine. The command is, Owe no man any thing:—what a mercy it is that there is no such precept as this, Owe a Saviour nothing—or even this, Study to owe him as little as possible.—I confess that I should not like to stand at the market-cross with a paper on my breast, declaring I was a bankrupt to men: but O! I think I should love to stand in the most public place in all Heaven, having all the redeemed pointing to me, as the greatest sinner that ever was saved.—On hearing the usual demonstrations of joy on the King's birth-day, he said, Blessed be God that *unto us was born, in the city of David, a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord*: on account of that event, the gospel-bells have been sounding for ages past, and they will ring louder and louder still.

On being carried out of his chaise,—How strange said he, that I, a poor cottager's son, should have a chaise to ride in! but what is unspeakably more strange, that God should provide the Chariot of the New Covenant for my soul! In the former case, he hath raised me from the dunghill, and set me with men of name and family on the earth; but in the latter, he hath exalted the sinner, and made him to sit with the Prince of the kings of the earth. No doubt, I should love to be at my public work again; and had it been any other than God who has restrained me, I should not have taken it well; but as it is the Lord, I desire to submit. No doubt, but I feel a deep concern for my wife and children; but when my heart enters properly into these words, *be for ever with the Lord*, the leaving of them diminishes into a very small point; and although my natural affection for them be as strong as ever, I

hope that when I am away, Christ will far more than supply my room to them ; and then we shall be better on all hands. I wonder at the kindness of men to me ; but am especially amazed while I reflect, that it is all the kindness of my God to me, through them.

June 17. He was now become exceedingly weak, and spake little ; but the solid joy of God's salvation, and the peace that passeth all understanding, continued with him to the end. On one occasion at this time, he said to a Brother in the Ministry, — O ! Mr. —, the Lord is my strength and my song, and he is become my salvation. God is an everlasting Rock. — The last words he was heard to utter were, " My Christ ! " About four hours after, he fell asleep in Jesus, June 19, 1787.

N. B. These sayings of his, grave and heavenly as they are (and many more such he uttered) lose much of their energy by the occasions not being mentioned which gave rise to them. This would have swelled the article beyond our usual limits. The reader will find several of the occasions set down at the close of his *Select Remains*.

FROM THE FREDERICK-TOWN HERALD.

" *Detested sport,*
 " *That owes its pleasure to another's pain.*

COWPER.

AMONGST the many vices which prevail with unbridled sway, in this land of light and liberty, none, perhaps is more destructive than horse-racing. I was just now an eye-witness to a dreadful accident, that happened to a little orphan boy, a stranger, who was prevailed on to ride one of the horses that ran over the course to day, near this town. The boy after having successfully gone one round, fell ; his foot stuck in the stirrup, he was dragged near forty yards, before he got clear of it, and was taken up for dead. He now languishes in a deplorable state of insensibility, without any person, but strangers

to pity his fate, or shed a tear upon the untimely grave to which, in all probability, he must be consigned.—How distressing the thought, that a youth, so amiable, ingenious, and promising, should be sacrificed at the shrine of pagan folly !

Many of the spectators, after gazing a while upon, and expressing their sympathy for this unhappy child (who is lately arrived in this country from a foreign land) retired from the horrid scene with apparent sorrow and disgust : but, alas ! a great number of those unfeeling wretches who disgrace the human shape, after satisfying their curiosity in viewing the poor little unfortunate sufferer, who lay mangled, bleeding, and almost lifeless at their feet, left him and returned undismayed to the booths, like swine to the trough, guzzled down the liquor as plentifully as ever, pranced their horses about the field, and belched out their accustomed hellish oaths, in the same manner as they would have done, if no accident had occurred !!—Can any thing but the flames of Tophet, intimidate such hardy monsters of iniquity, when so awful a warning could not affect them ?

Since the present races commenced here, which is now about three days ago, this village has been kept in a constant uproar :—fighting, gaming, revelling and every kind of lewdness, have been practised in the most shameful manner ; whilst the streets have resounded day and night, almost without intermission, with hideous blasphemies, oaths and imprecations.—Is it possible that the sober and religiously disposed part of the inhabitants of Liberty town, can, any longer, permit the place of their abode to be turned regularly once a year, into an emblem of sodom, and the language of the infernal regions to be vomited, almost continually, into the ears of themselves and families, for three or four days together, when

—“ The rabble all alive,
 “ From tipping-benches, cellars, stalls and styes,
 “ Swarm in the streets ?”

Must the friends of christianity be openly insulted, and have their peace and tranquility destroyed, to gratify the pecuniary views of a few individuals ?—It cannot be.—Such cruel, pagan

Bacchanals and diversions, may, and certainly will be suppressed.—God will surely punish those persons, who abuse his creatures, and prostitute his services to vile unlawful amusements.

If the well inclined part of the community, in this state, would but unite, and set about it in earnest, they might easily procure a law to abolish, in Maryland, horse-racing and several other sinful pastimes, which are so inimical to the happiness and morals of a great portion of mankind, and in particular to youth.—To have such a law enacted should be one of the principal views of every good man, at our next election of members for the assembly.

The above melancholy casualty, is not the only one of the kind which has happened here, since these baleful races began; yesterday a boy was almost killed in the same manner.

Fellow-citizens, if there be any praise, if there be any virtue among us, let us think on these things, and use all our influence and endeavours to produce a reformation. Without a radical change of manners take place will not the LORD punish such a people as this? He is already frowning upon us!—Do not we see the earth under our feet turned into iron, and the heavens over our heads into brass! Nature is putting on sackcloth, how then can we be gay!

The writer of these few incoherent hints, has neither time nor abilities to do justice to the subject; but it is hoped that what is here said, will excite some abler hand to expose the detestable vice of horse-racing, in its proper colours.

A SPECTATOR.

Liberty Town, August 23d, 1805.

AN ENQUIRY INTO THE NATURE OF CONSCIENCE.

I SHALL offer my thoughts on this important subject, in answer to the following queries : viz.

1. What is conscience ?
2. Does it exist in all men ?
3. What is its use ?
4. What is a defiled conscience ? and,
5. What is a good conscience ?

1, Query : What is Conscience ?—Some have called this principle of our nature, *The Moral Sense* ; Moral, because it has respect to a law ; and Sense, because a sensation or feeling is excited in the mind. It has been distinguished by various names ; but none of them so expressive of its nature, as the term *conscience*, which is in common use. Were I to define conscience, I would say, *It is the mind approving or condemning our intentions or actions, upon its own judgment of them.*

This term, as its derivation shews, signifies a concomitant of knowledge. And this is that knowledge necessary to form the judgment, which precedes conscience. Before the mind can either approve or condemn, it must first form a judgment of the thing approved or condemned. To suppose that the mind approves or condemns, without having previously determined the thing to be right or wrong, is to suppose it acts without a cause or reason. The mind first determines an intention or action to be good or bad, and then feels pleasure or pain, upon the performance, or intended performance of that action. Sometimes the judgment, which precedes conscience, is formed at the time, when first the thought of that particular action arises in the mind. If an heathen accustomed to worship the Sun, should be convinced, that he ought to worship Jesus Christ ; his conscience would immediately approve the latter, and condemn the former. At other times conscience is exercised upon a judgment long ago formed, and the grounds of which may be now forgotten. A man may consider it crimi-

nal to refuse to praise God in a congregation, singing a gospel hymn, and his conscience would condemn him for it; altho' this judgment, approving gospel hymns may have been formed twenty years ago; and the grounds of it now forgotten. So that whether the judgment be recently formed, or be of long standing in the mind, it differs not; for conscience still has a reference to it. And, I am persuaded, that no case can be supposed, where conscience is exercised, which will not be found to include a pre-existing judgment also. However sudden or novel the case may be, the mind quickly forms its judgment, either by comparing it with some rule, or preceding case; and then conscience is exercised.

It may be proper here to enquire, how the judgment, which precedes conscience, is formed. This judgment arises from a comparison of our intentions and actions with some standard of duty. Whatever usage, authority, precedent, or law, we consider as a rule for us; by this we determine our intentions or actions to be right or wrong, accordingly as they agree or disagree with this standard. The will of God, however expressed to us, is the only certain rule of the morality of actions. Those who are blessed with the scriptures, the written revelation of God's will, have an infallible and sufficient rule of judgment. Those who have not the written law, are a law unto themselves. Their judgments of actions are formed by other standards.

When it is said that *conscience is a principle implanted in us by the Deity*, I am at a loss to know what is intended. If the idea be, that God made the mind of man capable of feeling pleasure or pain, according as his actions corresponded with his will or were contrary to it, then it is correct. But if those, who use the phrase, mean, that God has given man a principle which approves some of his actions and condemns others, without respect to a judgment formed by some standard; the doctrine is incorrect. For suppose there were in man an immediate, or intuitive knowledge of all the actions of which he is capable; yet still he must exercise a judgment in determining which are the good and which the bad. So that even in

this case conscience would follow judgment. But every one is conscious that he has no such intuitive perception of things; and therefore the supposition is absurd, because it contradicts universal fact. Moreover if by the phrase, under consideration, he meant, that God made this a principle of man's nature at first and preserved it from injury in the fall, that it might now be a faithful monitor and unerring guide to him in duty; the doctrine is erroneous. For if conscience had escaped the injuries of the fall, it would now uniformly approve the same things, and uniformly condemn the same things. But we find it does not: for example—The conscience of a Heathen, accustomed to worship the sun, at stated times, would condemn him if he neglected it; but a Christian's or a Jew's conscience would condemn him for such idolatry. It is therefore both erroneous and dangerous, I think, to say, that this principle is implanted in man by God or that it is God's vicegerent in us. God hath made us capable of feeling pleasure, when we do according to the rules laid down for us; and pain when we act contrary to them. And this is abundantly sufficient to make us answer the end of our creation.

We may, I think, safely conclude, from the preceding observations, that conscience follows judgment; and that the judgment of actions depends upon a knowledge of their standard. This doctrine is supported by the word of God, *If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things*, which plainly intimates, that if our hearts condemn us upon our scanty knowledge, God who knoweth all things will have much more reason to condemn us.

2, Query: Does Conscience exist in all men?—I know of no language ancient or modern, which has not a word to express that exercise of the mind, which we term conscience. All nations, so far as I can ascertain, acknowledge themselves possessed of this power of mind. Mankind, in every age, have had ideas of moral good and evil; and have approved what appeared good, and condemned what appeared wrong. I might also appeal to every man, and ask whether he is not conscious, that he does approve certain of his own actions as right

while at the same time, he condemns others as wrong. Every man is formed with a soul capable of the same exercises as another, differing only in degree. Some are conscious of the existence of conscience in them—but if others have not this power, there would be a characteristic difference in the human species; part could approve or condemn their own actions, by a standard of duty, and the other could not. This would constitute such a characteristic difference in the human race, that it would make two species essentially distinct and different, which is contrary to scripture and fact. We therefore conclude that conscience exists in all men; which will appear still more evident in answering,

3, Query: What is the use of conscience?—Conscience is useful to aid us to glorify God, as the highest end of our creation. God hath made all things for his own glory. And as this end of our creation can be effected only by an obedience to the divine will, it is manifest, that whatever prompts us to an observance of his will must aid us in answering this end of our creation. Now it is evident, that feeling an approbation in our own minds, when we obey this will, must stimulate to a constant observance of it.

Conscience is also useful to aid mankind to avoid misery, and secure their own happiness. God hath so constituted man, that, when he acts for the divine glory, his own happiness is the certain consequence. The mind of man is so formed, as to feel pain, when he intends to transgress a known law of God. He has then warning, in himself, of the consequences; which will tend to deter him from the violation. But if he shall have transgressed already, he feels pain and remorse for it, which will have a tendency to produce repentance for the past, and deter from the like violation in future. Were it not for the feeling of pleasure in the mind, upon performing actions according to the will of God, the many exhortations in Scripture, to holy obedience, would be lost upon us. Because if we felt no approbation in our own minds upon the intended performance of holy actions; and no pain upon the intended performance of the contrary, we would hang in dan-

gerous suspense; and then the tempter might much more easily give a preponderance to the wrong. And thus would man's happiness be in danger every moment. But suppose his happiness were secured, and he confirmed against transgression; yet this happiness would be much more incomplete than now; because, without conscience, he could not feel pleasure from his own virtuous actions. Conscience is, therefore useful to aid us to promote God's glory in our lives, to avoid misery, to secure happiness, and to make it more complete.

4. Query: What is a defiled conscience?—The conscience, which does not reprove faithfully for sin, may, with propriety, be denominated *defiled*, let the cause of this unfaithfulness be what it may.

The conscience is defiled, when it follows a judgment formed by an improper standard of duty; when the knowledge of the proper standard was attainable. This being an exercise of the mind consequent upon judgment in order to its acting rightly, reference must be made to the right rule of actions. The will, or law of God, however expressed to us, is our only certain standard. If then any shall neglect this rule; and vainly form to themselves other imaginary standards, contrary to this, their judgment of actions will be erroneous; and conscience, following this judgment, will be wrong.

This is agreeable to the holy Scriptures, which condemn for the want of that information, which might be obtained, *This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light; because their deeds were evil. For every one that doth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd.* Now therefore if the conscience of any one approve actions contrary to the laws of God, he is guilty, because the judgment was formed without that light which was attainable. And this too, perhaps, thro' fear of discovering that his deeds were wrong, and would be condemned by the law of God and reprov'd by conscience. *They are of those that rebel against the light, they knew not the*

ways thereof, nor abide in the paths thereof. Such, have the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, thro' the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart. Who being past feeling, have given themselves over to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness, with greediness. Thro' their wilful ignorance and darkness, their consciences do not reprove their evil deeds. Hence we justly conclude, that the conscience is defiled, when it approves things wrong or does not condemn them, acting upon a judgment erroneous, for want of attainable information.

The conscience is also defiled, when it acts upon a judgment unduly biased by self-interest. Mankind are so prone to selfishness, and the heart so deceitful, that we often judge too favorably of our own intentions and actions. And when great interest is added to this strong bias of the heart, it is but too easy to persuade ourselves, that whatever promotes our advancement or interest in the world, must be right. When, therefore, the judgment of an action is formed from a partial view of the case, in our own favor, conscience, acting upon it, will be wrong.

Again conscience is defiled, when it acts upon a judgment formed thro' prejudice. The appetites of the body, and passions of the mind have often undue influence in fixing the judgment. When we are already attached to a particular object, or are averse from it, it is difficult for the mind to form an impartial decision. When under the power of anger, hatred, malice and their opposite passions, the judgment is subject to an undue influence and will often be erroneous. In such case, we are unwilling to seek for proper light, in forming the judgment, lest it should be against our premature decision, which we wish to remain unshaken. Hence conscience approving or condemning according to this judgment will be wrong.

To this part of the subject, belongs the consideration of the awful influence, which unbelief of heart has, in swaying the judgment and conscience. *The carnal mind is enmity against God.* And while this is the state of men, they will not have Jesus of Nazareth to reign over them. Hence they con-

clude, that he is a hard master; commanding when he had no authority, and forbidding when he had no right. They therefore judge it not incumbent on them to obey his commands, or to abstain from what he has forbidden; and their consciences approve their deeds. Their judgment of the nature and obligations of religion, is utterly erroneous; hence conscience in them will be wrong. This is fully the case with some unbelievers, and partially so with all. Such may act under the power of prejudice, and refuse instruction so long, that they may at last be given up to their delusions, by a righteous God. Accordingly we find these alarming passages in the divine word: *Even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient, being filled with all unrighteousness* &c. Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved; God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned, who believed not the truth; but had pleasure in unrighteousness.* This is the last, and most dangerous stage of the defilement of conscience. This is its state, when in Scripture language, it is said to be *scared with a hot iron*. The humane may be so accustomed to scenes of blood, that they will at length view them with but little emotion. Likewise man may be so habituated to the works of iniquity, as not only to feel no pain of mind upon performing them; but even delight in them, and love those who have pleasure in such works. The conscience of these is diametrically wrong; for by habit, and frequent repetition of iniquities, it has learned to view them, not only without reproof; but with approbation.

5, Query: What is a good conscience?—After what has been said under the last query, little need be added here. If the judicious reader will retrace this ground, and reverse the characteristics of a defiled conscience, he will have an idea of a good conscience. Those, who, in a sincere and honest heart,

have sought for the true rule of moral actions, without prejudice ; and without partiality, have formed their judgment accordingly, will have a good conscience. The Scriptures are the only sufficient standard. So far then as we judge of actions by this rule, admitting as right what it enjoins, and acknowledging as wrong what it forbids ; the conscience approving the former and condemning the latter, will be good, or right in the sight of God.

Now, should I be asked, is conscience natural or acquired ? I answer, conscience is as natural as understanding, judgment, or any other exercise of mind, of which we are capable. For the mind is so constituted by God as to approve or condemn our actions as well as understand, judge, &c.

But this approbation or condemnation depends upon judgment ; and that judgment is formed by some standard, and will be correct or incorrect, as that standard is true or false. So that the exercise of conscience will be determined by education. The conscience of a Jew will be very different from the conscience of a Christian.

Man by nature is now incapable of forming a correct standard of morality. If not all the systems formed would have agreed. But they are widely different and contradictory.—What shall we render to God, for that correct and pure standard, his holy word ! Pure and holy doctrines ; and rejected, *because* pure and holy ! O my soul, the wisdom of man is foolishness with God ! Draw thy instructions from his word ! Judge thy thoughts and acts by this rule ! And may conscience always approve and condemn, as God, who knoweth all things, approves and condemns !

A.

ON INFIDELITY.—NO. II.

“ *They who live in a glass house ought never to throw Stones*”

IN prosecuting the design mentioned in my first number, I shall, in the first place, notice some of the objections, which are most commonly brought forward against Christianity. Not indeed with the design of returning to them a formal answer—This has already been done often enough— But with the view of retorting them upon the objectors.

The discerning reader will not fail to remark, in passing, that many of these *objections* should, in correctness of speech, be denominated *reproaches*. But least we should be thought very precise about terms, as they are urged for *objections*, we shall let them stand as such.

It is objected then, that there are so many different sects in Christianity; and so many discordant opinions, all professing to be founded on the same text, that it appears as if nothing were clearly revealed; and if nothing be clearly revealed, then this boasted revelation is of no value. This, I believe, is the objection stated in its fullest force. In reply to this, I shall for the present, forbear to urge the general agreement of Christians, in the great fundamental points of religion: I shall not insist upon the acknowledgment that all churches agree in those points which are essential to salvation, a few *nominal Christians* only excepted, who approximate very nearly to Deism.

The book of nature, exclaims the unbeliever, when he thinks himself victorious in argument, the book of nature, exclaims he triumphantly is my bible—This, we know, is no invention of impudent imposters, and designing Priests. Now the Christian says nothing against the book of nature. He knows that *The Heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth forth his handy work*; and every display of the divine attributes fills his soul with pious affections. But yet he thinks that a little more is necessary to be known than can be learned from the contemplation of the works of nature. And he must be excused if from

the magnitude, the number, the distance, and the periodical revolutions of the planets &c. he cannot discover how a holy God can pardon sin. But let us see what conclusions these objectors draw from *their Bibles*. They object differences of opinion, and various sectaries to us—One might expect to find the most perfect agreement among them—Let us examine, and we shall not stoop to little matters; In these we will consent that they should differ.

I suppose that the following are the most important points in all religion—The existence and attributes of Deity—The service which he requires of man—And the state of man after death.

Now as to the first subject, there are at least, three varieties of opinion among unbelievers. Some see it written in the book of nature, as clearly as any thing can be that there is no Deity separate from the universe; that God is nothing more than the soul of the world, by whose animating influence all the processes of nature are carried on. The opinion in few words is, that the mass of mind, to speak in their own dialect, is united with the whole mass of matter, and has no separate existence.

Another opinion is, that the Deity does, indeed, exist unconnected with matter; but He is thought to be only a great first cause, which gave being, and life, and motion to all things, and then left all his works entirely to the guidance of those laws, which were originally impressed upon them; while He sits an unconcerned spectator of all events which take place, suffering every thing to go on, if I may so speak, as it pleases, without his intervention or control.

A third opinion is, that God is the creator, and governor of the world; and that all things are managed by him in infinite power, and goodness. This sect of Deists, which by the way, is by no means the most numerous, holds many very correct opinions respecting the Deity; but it is a little unfortunate for them that we know that they were originally stolen from the Bible.

As to the second point, these disciples of nature, are as far from uniformity as the christian sectaries are in any matter whatever. Those who hold that God is no more than the soul of the universe ; and those who maintain that the Deity, tho existing separately, notices nothing, and controls nothing, agree in denying that any worship is to be paid to him. Prayer, and praise, reverence, and fear, and every thing bearing the least semblance of Piety is the constant object of their ridicule: But those who admit the moral Government of God, do, indeed, acknowledge that all those services are due to him, which the laws of nature appear clearly to prescribe. This general principle, however, being admitted, there are very great differences of opinion in the interpretation of these laws. Some think that by exercising charity to our fellow men, we perform every duty which God requires of us. Others go a step farther, and acknowledge that all the duties resulting from the several relations of life, ought to be discharged, in obedience to the will of our Creator. And some few acknowledge that those duties, which have God as their immediate object, ought not to be neglected—such as prayer and praise, love, and reverence.*

As to the state of man after death, there are most violent *appugnations* of opinion. Some see “ The eternal sleep of death ” written in as legible characters, in the book of nature, as it was on the tomb stones in the church yards of Paris ; and profess to have no doubt but that “ The last puff of their nostrils will blow their souls to annihilation.” Others, if you will believe their professions, are very certain that, at death, the soul is re-united with the great soul of the universe ; from which it was originally severed to animate the human body.

* I beg that it may be recollected here, that I am speaking of Deists who live in Christian countries, and who have enjoyed, in some degree, the benefit of Christian instruction.—I hope, moreover, that it will be remembered, that I speak of their theory, not their practice.

Others, again, admit that the soul has a separate existence in a future state. But, then, among those who hold this opinion, there are very important differences. Some are persuaded that the Creator is too merciful to inflict any sort of punishment upon any of his creatures, and that the whole human race will, after death, be happy. Others admit a state of future rewards and punishments—but here again they are split into varieties of sects. There is no sort of agreement as to the conditions of our happiness, nor as to the punishment to be inflicted. Some think that all will end well if we do our duty as neighbors and citizens, if we are just and kind to all. Others maintain that we must not only do this, but that we must repent of all our evil deeds, and beg God to pardon us. Others think that the good actions, and repentance, are both entirely proper, yet it is hardly safe to rely solely upon these, but that we must also take in to account the mercy of God. Here again there is a difference—but there is no end to this business. And I have stated differences enough to answer my purpose. We see then the various sects, and dissensions among Christians objected to them by men, who, on the most important subjects, are divided and sub-divided into so many varieties, that it would fatigue the patience of a stoic to enumerate them. Why may we not retort upon these objectors, “Ah! they, who live in a glass house, ought never to throw stones.”

But I beg the patience of my reader a little longer. These points, which we have been noticing are the most interesting in the world. Is there a God? Is he the governor of the universe? Am I immortal? Then what will become of me after death? Here I find myself standing on the narrow isthmus of life. I know and feel that I am mortal—I his pain which now darts through my breast like a burning arrow warns me that death approaches. Perhaps I am now on the verge of the grave. And I to lie down in the sleep of eternal death? Dreadful thought—Ah no—This gloomy consolation is denied me. Conscience points out a hereafter, and thunders in my ear that God is just. What shall I do? Alas! All is perplexity and

darkness. Come now thou *Illuminatus!* thou *Philosopher!* thou *Illuminator!* Come forth now and dispel the darkness of my mind. Come thou boasting *Philanthropist!* relieve me from these perplexing doubts.—But do not mock me with uncertainty.—Do not harass me with conjectures—I need proof.—I need certainty to support my sinking soul. Go read your book of nature, and pronounce my fate—What! are there so many discordant opinions? Are these things shrouded in clouds and darkness? Why then you must be dismissed in the words of one of old, *Miserable comforters are ye all.*

In the midst of all this darkness and confusion and uncertainty, and perplexity, how comforting is it to the pious mind to have recourse to the Bible, and there find that knowledge which will make him wise to salvation; there to see the glory of God, and to enjoy the light of his countenance: there to receive those consolations which can bear up the soul amidst the severest trials of life, and even fill it with rapture in the agonies, and convulsive struggles of death; and there to be pointed to the regions of eternal rest and immortal glory. How different this from the frigid, uncomfortable, gloomy doctrines of infidelity!

In order to present the matters treated of in this number in a clear and striking point of view, it may not be amiss to draw up a recapitulatory table.

1. *The Existence, and Attributes of Deity.*

INFIDELITY.

1, Deist. I believe that there is a soul of the world, which animates all nature, and gives life and motion to all things.

2, Deist. I believe that God exists seperately from matter; and that he made all things; but as to the moral

CHRISTIANITY.

Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Methodist, Baptist, &c. We believe that there is only one living and true God, the king eternal, immortal, and invisible, self-existent, independent, almighty, omniscient, omnipresent, infinitely holy, just, merciful, slow to wrath, and abund-

INFIDELITY.

CHRISTIANITY.

government of the Deity, I understand nothing of it.

3, Deist. It is my opinion, that there is a great wise and good creator and governor of the universe.

2, *What duty does God require of man ?*

1, Deist. I desire to hear nothing of this matter ; it is all superstition, and delusion and nonsense.

2, Deist. This also is my opinion.

3, Deist. I believe that God is a great and powerful Being, who ought to be revered and feared ; but as for any specific acts of worship, I see nothing of this in the Book of nature.

4, Deist. I believe that acts of worship are not unsuitable, from such creatures as we are, to the great God.

3, *What will be the state of man after death ?*

1, Deist. I expect to lie down in eternal sleep.

2, Deist, I believe that my mind will, after death, be united to the great mass of mind which animates the universe.

3, Deist. I believe that God is merciful, and I hope

dant in loving kindness to the children of men.

Christians. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might, and mind, and strength : and thy neighbor as thyself. And what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God.

Christians. He that believeth on the Lord Jesus Christ, hath everlasting life ; but he that believeth not shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.

And we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a build-

INFIDELITY

CHRISTIANITY

that all men will be happy,
and I among the rest.

4, Deist. I hope that, if
I try to do my duty, and re-
pent of my sins, God will not
make me miserable.

I only ask that the above statements may be compared,
and let every candid man judge for himself.

P.

FOR THE VIRGINIA RELIGIOUS MAGAZINE.

NECESSITY OF REVELATION.

THAT Reason is not a sufficient guide for man, must ap-
pear from the condition of those nations who were not favour-
ed with Revelation.

The most enlightened nations of the heathen world, prior
to the introduction of Christianity, were the most abominable
idolators! Egypt, Greece, and Rome, were the nations, a-
mong whom, human reason did its best.

Among these, philosophy, art, and science flourished—and
their great moralists Cicero, Seneca, Socrates, and Plato,
taught them all that human reason could discover, or heathen
piety enforce. Here then, if any where, Revelation would be
unnecessary, and the direction of heaven in vain.

But what was the fate of these nations? 1. They were
grossly ignorant of the true God, as appeared by their deify-
ing animals, and departed heroes—and not only worshipping
many gods, but at the same time supposed them subject to hu-
man passions, and guilty of the most enormous vices. 2. Their
religious rites were some of them shocking to reason, and
injurious to society. Witness the offering of human sacrifices.
It is said that sixteen thousand four hundred human victims
were offered up at the dedication of one Temple, among the
Mexicans. 3. Their morality was bad, and all their philoso-
phy could make it no better,—revenge was a virtue, and su-

icide was not a crime ! Their philosophers were guilty of the greatest immoralities, and most shocking crimes ! So great was the stupidity of mankind unassisted by revelation.

But there are several things necessary to the welfare of man, which could never be discovered but by revelation ! Among these the most important are *the pardon of sin*, and *the immortality of the soul*.

Without a revelation from God we could never find out whether he would pardon sin, and exculpate the sinner. We are all conscious of guilt : the history of the world is but the history of human guilt. If there is a just God, he must exercise a just government—then the guilty must be punished ! Human reason can discover all this ! but human reason can never discover how this guilt is to be expiated.

In civil government, when a man transgresses the law of the land, his own reason is sufficient to detect him—he knows the law, and sees that by breaking it he is liable to the penalty—he can discover all this without any declarations from the judge, but he cannot possibly discover that the judge will pardon him unless the judge himself actually reveals it to him. It must be the wish of every wise sovereign, to see his laws faithfully obeyed. In order to this it is absolutely necessary that he support the dignity of his laws, and this can only be done by seeing them properly executed. Were a legislator after the promulgation of a law, to declare that he could pardon any transgression of that law, merely upon repentance, the law would lose all its force and dignity ! The subjects of this law would not be deterred by any penalty. If a governor can consent with justice, pardon any transgression of his law, without any atonement, and moreover, if the legislator, be a merciful being, we may reasonably conclude that he would rather exercise mercy in unison with justice, than rigid justice alone ; then would the law be no more than a rule of conduct without a sanction.

But it may be replied, that the design of the law must be the good of the community and of the offender, and that both

those ends may be answered by the repentance of the culprit— I answer, that legal repentance, arising from a fear of punishment answers neither of these ends—and that true radical repentance arising from an opinion of the justice and goodness of the law does not sufficiently answer the first of these ends.— For the community is secured by the law being maintained—but it cannot be maintained unless its dignity be preserved ; and this depends upon its penalty being exacted.

Guilt is a liability to punishment—now whether God will pardon whom he may justly punish must remain entirely with himself—the criminal has no power to stay the sword of justice when it is lifted against him. And if God determine to pardon sin upon certain conditions, these conditions can only be learned from himself.

If God is just and man is guilty, punishment must be expected—unless man can find out some way to satisfy the law. But natural religion finds none.—When the awful question is asked her, “ How is guilty man to find pardon for sin,” her tongue is silent, although she has much to say upon less important matters, when this subject is brought before her, her lips are closed forever.

Let the dying infidel at the bar of his conscience, boast his natural religion—all along she led him on with delusive hopes—but now when her assistance is most wanted, she leaves him forever and forever.

It must be evident from the above considerations, that natural religion can discover no way of pardon for sin.

The second thing I mentioned as not discoverable by the light of nature, is the *immortality of the soul*.

Whether the soul survives the body is an important question. It has engaged no less the concern of the ignorant than the serious attention of Philosophers — Man desires to live forever. He asks with much concern for his future destiny ; shall the bright morning of the resurrection dawn again, or shall the clouds of eternal night lower over our graves ?

If the immortality of the soul is a doctrine discoverable by the light of nature, and human reason without any aid from revelation; then those nations who carried human reason to the greatest pitch would most certainly have made the discovery. They would at least have produced arguments sufficient for human hope to rest on. Here I must object that we cannot be said to have discovered the truth of any doctrine so long as we are in doubts respecting it. I shall now consider the state of this doctrine amongst those philosophers who were not blessed with a divine revelation. Socrates the wisest of heathen Philosophers, expressed his doubts respecting the immortality of the soul just before his death—the vain speculations of Philosophers could not support the mind of a dying heathen. Cicero appeared to think that only the virtuous would be immortal Aristotle has not decided upon the subject; but from the nature of his Philosophy, some have tho't he held the mortality of the soul.—It is certain that Dicaearchus, one of his most eminent followers, denied the immortality of the soul altogether. Ocellus, an eminent Pythagorean Philosopher taught that the soul would suffer dissolution with the body; the Stoics and others who held the immortality, held it so absurdly and contrary to each other, as to amount to little better than a denial of it.—Some holding the doctrine of transmigration—Others that the soul should be finally resolved into the soul of the world.

Plato the most famous defender of this doctrine among the antients, has shewed us what human reason unassisted by divine revelation could do—his arguments are all vague and fanciful; such as these—that “All things end in their contraries—waking in sleep, and sleep again in waking.—So he concludes that his life ends in death, death might again end in life.—The soul is a simple substance, and therefore cannot suffer dissolution; it existed in a former state and will therefore probably exist in a future.—What is a principle of motion is incable of destruction,” &c. It is well for man that his belief of this doctrine now rests on a firmer foundation than the flimsy hypothesis of Philosophers.

The correspondent decay of the mental with the corporeal faculties in the doctrine of life, and the difficulty of supposing the soul unimpaired after the organs of sensation are destroyed, are as strong presumptions against the immortality of the soul; as any arguments from the nature of the soul can be in its favour. All beings depend on God for their existence, and we can never know that we will be continued in existence, unless God himself tells us we shall. All arguments drawn from the justice or goodness of God; to wit: that he will punish the guilty and reward the virtuous, go upon the supposition that the moral character of God is known, which is only learned from revelation.

If then it were not for revelation, all would be wrapt in a night of eternal clouds—all would be mystery and uncertainty—But would it not arraign the goodness of the Deity to create a world and people it with rational beings, and yet leave them entirely in the dark, respecting two of their greatest concernments.—Is it not reasonable to suppose, that God who has provided us with so many blessings would also reveal his will to us in matters so essential to our welfare.

B.

FROM THE LONDON EVANGELICAL MAGAZINE.

MR. KITCHERER'S NARRATIVE.

The Rev. Mr. Kitcherer's Narrative of his Mission to the Hottentots.

BEING requested by the Directors of the London Missionary Society to give a written Narrative of my proceedings in South Africa, I have to regret the want of my papers, which the Captain who brought me over from Holland, advised me to leave behind, as they might possibly involve him in difficulties; on this account I cannot be exact as to the dates of particular occurrences, but my statement of facts will, I trust, be found accurate.

I embarked with my missionary brethren, Vanderkemp, Edwards, and Edmond, on the 5th of December, 1798, and arrived at Cape Town on the last day of March, 1799. Our original intention was to visit the Namaquas, but learning that they were then at war, we changed our plan, and prepared for going into Caffraria.

A few days previous to our arrival at the Cape, three Boschemen had come thither from Zak River,* with a view to solicit the Government to send Teachers into their country. They came in the capacity of public ambassadors. Providence had opened this door in the following manner. The Farmers of the back settlements, of whom Florus Fischer was the principal, had been greatly reduced by the depredations of the neighboring Boschemen. To prevent similar calamities in future, the Landdroit advised them to purchase a peace, at the expense of several thousand sheep. At the ratification of this contract, some of the settlers, being religiously disposed, offered up a prayer in the presence of the Hottentots; who, upon their inquiry into the nature and design of this action, were informed that it was done with a view of imploring the blessing of Almighty God, who is the source of every good; they were also told that their ignorance and neglect of this divine Being, was the real cause of their comparative wretchedness. On this explanation, the Boschemen expressed their earnest desire, that proper persons might come and reside among them, who would afford them those valuable instructions which would enable them to become as rich and happy as their neighbors. For this purpose they were directed to the government at the Cape, where we met with them on our arrival. We considered this peculiar concurrence of events as a providential call to visit them; and having looked up to the Lord to point out which of us should go, we appealed to the lot, which fell upon me; brother Edwards had previously de-

* Zak River is between four and five hundred miles North-East of the Cape.

terminated to go there ; and brother Kramer, a native of the Cape, followed us afterwards.

On the 22d of May, we left Cape Town, accompanied by the brethren, Vanderkemp, and Edmond, who travelled with us as far as Rodezand, in their way to Caffraria. Here we met with the most welcome reception, by the Rev. Mr Vos, who presided over a flourishing congregation, and whose successful zeal in the cause of Christ is well known to the society. Mrs. Smith also, an eminently pious lady, treated us with great hospitality. We were detained here for some time by our want of a waggon and the necessary cattle ; but our time was agreeably spent among our Christian friends, and we enjoyed frequent opportunities of preaching the word in the neighborhood. From hence we made an excursion to Bavian's Kloof, where the Moravian brethren had a numerous and well regulated congregation of *tame Hottentots*, for by this name they are distinguished, who do not run away at the sight of the white people, and who are somewhat more civilized than the wild Hottentots or Boschemen. These latter, when approaching a white man for the first time, for some urgent motive, such as their ardent desire of obtaining a little tobacco, appear in an agony of fear which discovers itself by the trembling of every limb ; yet so vehement is their love of this narcotic, that they will venture any thing to procure it ; and had it not been for the powerful attraction of this favorite herb, which we liberally distributed among them, I am persuaded we could not have prevailed upon them to venture near us.

On our way to Bavian's Kloof, near Broad River, the Lord was pleased to bless my poor labours among the people in an abundant degree. Some of the hearers expressed their gratitude with tears of joy, and by a very welcome present of eleven draught-oxen for our intended journey northwards. Upon our return to Rodezand, brothers Edmond and Edwards were solemnly set apart to the work of the Ministry, in Mr. Vos' Church ! and the next day Dr. Vanderkemp, and Mr. Edmond, proceeded towards Caffraria.

On the 25th of June* we took leave of our kind friends at Rodezand. Mrs. Meyer, a widow, having lent us her waggon, and some of the neighboring farmers their servants to drive the oxen. Our object was now to proceed as far as Florus Fischer's, who possesses the last farm in the Karroo. This is a vast tract of land, of many days journey, so dry in the summer as not to produce a blade of grass; but, happily for us, it afforded, when we passed it, sufficient pasture for our cattle, and for those of the surrounding inhabitants, who hearing of our journey, came from all parts to hear the Gospel. We travelled but slowly, our waggon being overloaded with the many presents of these open-hearted colonists. We had, however, frequent opportunities of preaching to small congregations of the farmers, from the adjacent countries.

After a fortnights journey through the mountaneous Buckfield, and the level Karroo, we arrived safely at Florus Fischer's, where we received a cordial welcome. Mr. Fischer is the person already mentioned, who was employed by government, (under whom he was Field-Cornet) to negotiate a peace with the Boschemen, and in which he happily succeeded; and to his family devotions it seems chiefly owing, that his heathen neighbours conceived the desire of receiving religious instruction. This desire Mr. Fischer was sincerely desirous of gratifying but by what means, he was utterly at a loss to conceive, especially as a dread of these savage people universally prevailed, and it seemed improbable that any teacher would venture into such a wilderness, separated from all Christian

* Some of these dates are supplied from a former journal sent to the society, by Mr. Kitcherer, when in Africa; an extract of which appears in Vol. I. of the transactions of the Missionary Society, No. VIII. The readers of that Volume will excuse the repetition of some particulars which appear therein, as it is the wish of the Society, to present to the public in this Narrative a complete account of Mr. Kitcherer's mission, and settlement at Zak River.

Society. But, how marvellous are the ways of God ! for at this very time we were influenced to come from a far country to comply with their unknown desire.

Here we continued three weeks, in order to prepare for our further journey, during which we enjoyed many a crowded and happy meeting with the neighboring cultivators, particularly on the Sabbath-days, when we have had twenty-two waggons full of people, besides many on horseback, some of whom came four days journey to hear the word of God, and to partake of the Lord's Supper ; for many of these people have no church that they can attend nearer than Rodezand, which, though eight days journey distant, they sometimes attend.* I feel myself unable to express our own happiness in those days, or to speak properly of the wonderful blessing the Lord gave to his word at that time, both among Christians and Heathens.

Here we were strongly solicited to prolong our stay, but being eager to commence our labours among the Boschemen, we fixed the time of our departure for the 22d of July, on which day we left the Karroo, accompanied by our generous host Mr. Fischer, with several other farmers, and their servants, to the number of about fifty, having in our train six waggons full of provisions sixty oxen, and near two hundred sheep, the kind presents of the Dutch settlers. The first night we slept at the foot of the Rockfield mountain, and our sheep fold was threatened by a Tiger. About that time we were often beset in the night by Lions and Panthers, but I cannot say I felt so much alarm then as I should probably now ; my mind was stayed on the Lord, who kept me in perfect peace. On the 29th we passed the last inhabited house in Rockfield, and found the country a perfect desert, without a blade of grass. Wild Horses, Lions, and Ostriches abound in it. The eggs of the latter afforded us an agreeable repast.

* *What reason have British Christians to rejoice in their superior priviledges, and to take care that they improve them.*

Here we halted one day to refresh the cattle and bake some bread. Two of our company who went to shoot Antelopes, saw two Lions, and another Lion at night approached our encampment, but was kept off by the fires which we kindled for that purpose. After travelling seven days without meeting a human being, on the 3d of August we arrived at a spot where a few Boschemen resided, three of whom came to us. When crossing the Zak River on the next day, one of our wagons overturned, but without much damage. Some of our people shot five Antelopes, two wild Horses and a Steinbock. The next day we halted, and were visited by about 20 Boschemen. On the 6th we fixed on a spot where we agreed to settle, and called it Happy Prospect Fountain. It is near two fine springs of water, with a good piece of ground for cultivation, but the surrounding country is barren, and the inhabitants few. Here we fell on our knees, devoting this place, as well as ourselves, to the service of the Lord, requesting his continual presence with us while we dwell in the wilderness, and imploring his blessing on our future labours. We also began immediately to prepare a plot for a garden, and to build a hut of reeds, no other materials offering themselves for that purpose, not a tree growing in that country. In these necessary labors we were assisted by our kind friends the farmers. Our people shot two Antelopes, but when our Hottentots went to fetch them, they found that one had been claimed by the Lions, the sovereigns of this region. In the evening we distinctly heard their dreadful roar.

On the 12th of August, Mr. Fischer and our other kind friends were obliged to leave us and return home. This was a time of severe trial. I felt inexpressibly dejected at first, but the Lord comforted me. We soon began to have more company, a party of about thirty Boschemen ariving to enquire into the reason of our coming. They were at first exceedingly shy, but small presents of the irresistible herb presently rendered them more familiar. Soon after this our Reed-Hut tumbled down, in consequence of our attempt to make it tighter by

a covering of clay which it could not support, and we set about building a more suitable dwelling.

I well remember how deeply my spirits were depressed about this time, and how insupportable my situation would have proved, separated, as I found myself, from all I loved in this world, had not urgent business dispersed my gloomy reflections, and had not the Lord, whom I served, condescended to pacify my troubled heart, when I spread my complaint before him. This was especially the case one evening, when sitting on a stone, in a circle of Boschemen, I attempted to convey the first instructions to their untutored minds.

It may not be improper here to introduce some account of these wild people. They have no idea whatever of the Supreme Being, consequently they practice no kind of worship. They have however a superstitious reverence for a little insect known by the name of the Creeping leaf, a sight of which, they conceive, indicates something fortunate, and to kill it, they suppose, will bring a curse upon the perpetrator. They have some notion of an evil spirit which they imagine produces mischief, particularly the diseases which they endure, and to counteract his evil purposes, a sort of men are employed to blow, and make a humming noise over the sick, which they sometimes continue for many hours together.

Their manner of life is extremely wretched and disgusting. They delight to smear their bodies with the fat of animals, mingled with a powder which makes it shine. They are utter strangers to cleanliness, as they never wash their bodies, but suffer the dirt to accumulate, so that it will hang a considerable length from their elbows. Their huts are formed by digging a hole in the earth about three feet deep, and then making a roof of reeds, which is however insufficient to keep off the rains. Here they lie close together like pigs in a sty. They are extremely lazy, so that nothing will rouse them to action, but excessive hunger. They will continue several days together without food, rather than be at the pains to procure it. When constrained to sally forth for prey, they are dextrous in

destroying the various beasts which abound in the country ; but when they cannot procure these, they make shift to live upon Snakes, Mice, and the most detestable creatures they can find. There are some spontaneous productions of the earth of the bulbous kind which they also eat, particularly the Cameron, which is as large as a Child's head, and the Baroo, about the size of an apple ; there are also some little berries which are eatable, and which the women go out to gather, but the men are too idle to do this.

They are total strangers to domestic happiness. The men have several wives, but conjugal affection is little known. They take no great care of their children, and never correct them except in a fit of rage, when they almost kill them by severe usage. In a quarrel between father and mother, or the several wives of a husband, the defeated party wreaks his or her revenge on the child of the conquerer, which in general loses its life. Tame Hottentots seldom destroy their offspring, except in a fit of passion, but the Boschemen will kill their children without remorse on various occasions, as when they are ill-shaped, when they are in want of food, when the father of a child has forsaken its mother, or when obliged to flee from the farmers or others ; in which case they will strangle them, smother them, cast them away in the desert, or bury them alive. There are instances of parents throwing their tender offspring

* *The wild beasts are always shot with poisoned darts. They take the poison out of the jaw bone of the serpent, and put it on the point of the dart or harping iron. They then creep behind the small bushes, where they conceal themselves, and attack the beast when about the distance of an hundred steps. If the dart wounds him in the slightest degree, the Hottentot is sure of his prey ; sometimes the wounded beast falls down dead immediately, in other cases he pursues it for a time, and at length succeeds. They then take out the wounded part, and eat the rest without injury. They can run almost as well as a horse. See Vol. 1. p. 332.*

to the hungry Lion, who stands roaring before their cavern, refusing to depart till some peace-offering be made to him. In general, their children cease to be the objects of a mother's care, as soon as they are able to crawl about in the field. They go out every morning and when they return in the evening, an old sheeps skin to lie upon, and a little milk, or piece of meat, if they have it, is all they have to expect. In some few instances, however, you meet with a spark of natural affection, which places them on a level with the brute creation.

The Boschemen frequently forsake their aged relations, when removing from place to place for the sake of hunting. In this case they leave the old person with a piece of meat and an ostrich egg-shell full of water; as soon as this little stock is exhausted, the poor deserted creature must perish by hunger, or become the prey of the wild beasts. Many of these wild Hottentots live by plunder and murder, and are guilty of the most horrid and atrocious actions.

Such are the people to whom the Providence of God has directed our course; and among them, blessed be his name, he has been pleased to call many to the fellowship of the Gospel, and to render them the distinguished trophies of his almighty grace. But to return to our narrative.

Our days are spent in the following manner. About the time of Sun-rising we collect together for prayer, when we read the Scriptures and sing a hymn; then the elderly people depart, and the business of the school commences. We teach the young people to read and spell Dutch. In the mean time our provision is prepared by a Boschewan girl. School being over we proceed to our manual labor, such as gardening, building, &c. About noon we dine; and the afternoon passes away in the same occupation as the forenoon. Evening arriving, we conclude our day by prayer, singing hymns, and communicating in the plainest manner we can, the knowledge of divine things.

At this time I deeply felt the great need and importance of prayer. I was enabled often to bend my knees, jointly with

my little flock, before Him, who had promised that he would take the Heathen for his inheritance. Prostrate at his feet, I was peculiarly assisted in wrestling earnestly for the blessing; and felt a happy freedom in pleading Christ's own words in this case, and in relying upon his faithfulness to fulfil them. I shall never forget this remarkable season. It was admirable to me to observe that frequently the more dark and gloomy my prospect was, the more abundantly the spirit of prayer was given to me, so that I was enabled to shelter myself in Jesus, to lay fast hold on him by faith, and to commend these savages to his free love and grace.

From this time the number of our Boschemen considerably increased, and I began to find some encouragement in my work. Often did I feel inexpressibly happy when setting forth to these poor perishing creatures the infinite grace of our Redeemer. Frequently have I began my work sighing, and concluded it exulting with joy and gladness of heart. It was very affecting to observe how amazed they were, when I told them of a God, and of the resurrection of the dead. They knew not how to express their astonishment in terms sufficiently strong, that they should have lived so long without ever having thought of the Divine Being. Ever after this, they would call me their Ebo, or Father. Sometimes the impression which the word made upon the people was so great, that it appeared as if we had got above all disappointment; but at other times, the natural inconstancy of the Boschemen, seemed to reverse every promising sign. It is impossible to express what extraordinary supplies of patience, prudence and fortitude, we needed at the beginning of this work. However, some of the people now began to pray. "O Lord Jesus Christ," they would say, "Thou hast made the sun, the moon, the hills, the rivers, the bushes; therefore thou hast power also to change my heart. Oh, be pleased to make it entirely new." Some told us that they had not been able to sleep all night for sorrow on account of their sins, and that they had been forced to rise to pray. Others said that on their hunting parties they had felt a sudden impulse to prostrate them-

selves before the Lord, and to pray for a renewed heart. We were glad to hear this ; yet we thought it our duty to be cautious, and not to take it for granted that all this was true and sincere.

Among the difficulties with which we had to struggle, the want of a good Interpreter was one of the chief. We longed and prayed for one who was perfectly acquainted with the language, and who was not a stranger to the influences of divine grace. At length the Lord granted our request, by the unexpected arrival of William Fortuin and his wife, who came to live with us. He was a Hottentot, and she a Boscherman ; but both were well acquainted with the Dutch language, and were rather more civilized than the people in general. In this event I clearly saw and thankfully acknowledged the good Providence of my great Master, who had heard and answered my prayer ; and I recollect, as if it had happened but yesterday, how greatly this occurrence strengthened my heart and my hands ; and how it inspired my soul with love and gratitude ; for my whole success seemed, under God, to depend on this. I was constrained to say, “ I love the Lord, for he hath heard the voice of my supplication ! What shall I render to the Lord for all his goodness ! ” Who is a God like unto him, who giveth us all good things, if we ask them in the name of Jesus !

From this memorable season every thing prospered more than before, both in spiritual and temporal concerns. William was well acquainted with gardening, and his wife, who was the principal Interpreter, managed the business of the house ; so that I found myself greatly relieved. About this time brother Edwards, wishing to teach the Hottentots his native English, left us to go a little further into the country.

Business increasing every day, and the Boschemen flocking to us in considerable numbers, we were obliged, for the sake of distinguishing one from another, to give them names, which I wrote with chalk on their backs : accordingly when any one of them approached me, the first thing he did was to shew me

his shoulders. We made it our study to excite a spirit of industry in them, for which purpose we gave them little presents, to the men tobacco; to the women handkerchiefs; and dried fruit to the children; for we had a stock of these articles, which had been given us by the farmers when we left Rodezand. Several persons now seemed to discover some tokens of a work of grace on their hearts: yet I was afraid to conclude positively about their state. Among these was a man named Abraham O'Baas, and his wife Antjee, who expressed themselves in some measure experimentally, discovering at the same time a change of heart, by a visible change in their conduct. There were indeed many people among us who seemed to pray to God; but we had reason to doubt the sincerity of some of them, as there was no suitable alteration in their lives, but much pharisaical ostentation, mechanical profession, and, we feared, interested views for some of them seemed to pray, with no other design than to obtain a piece of tobacco from us.

In the month of October, we found our stock of provisions almost exhausted, and had recourse to our gracious Lord in prayer, who was pleased to answer us, by inclining the heart of Francis Moritz, a farmer, to send us a handsome present, consisting of a large Bullock, thirty sheep, a quantity of flour, salt, &c. The Hottentot servants, who brought these valuable articles, cheerfully added to them several sheep of their own, as an expression of their joy in the blessing of the Gospel being brought to their countrymen.

About the same time we received repeated warnings of our great danger from the Great-Kraal, the most numerous horde of Boschemen, and who were all robbers. These people who had not been included in the peace before mentioned, were approaching us, as we were informed, with a design to surprise and destroy us; but we committed ourselves to the Lord, who enabled us to confide in his protecting care, feeling little anxiety as to the event, and resolving to pursue our great object, which was to preach Jesus.

(To be continued)

GENERAL STATE OF RELIGION.

FROM THE MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

THE information which has been received respecting the state of religion, within the bounds of the General Assembly during the last year, exhibits a variegated scene. Whilst on the one hand, it presents many things which are just cause of gratitude and rejoicing; on the other, it brings into view *some*, calculated to produce humiliation and regret. In several congregations, particularly on Long Island, in the bounds of the Synod of Albany, and in the western parts of the Presbytery of New Brunswick, there have been considerable revivals of religion. The number of adults who have been received into the church in different parts, by baptism; as well as those who have been admitted to the sacrament of the Lords Supper, has been considerable. Such as have been added to the church, during the revivals which have taken place in times past, have generally, and indeed almost universally, proved stedfast in the faith, been progressive in their Christian course, and evidenced the sincerity of their profession by the holiness of their lives and conversation; whilst instances of apostacy have been very rare. Praying societies have been established in many places and generally well attended. In those congregations which enjoy the preaching of the gospel, and the administration of its ordinances in a stated manner; there is generally manifested a growing attention to the things of religion. A more than usual anxiety, and more vigorous exertions have also been manifested by vacant congregations, to have the institutions, of religion steadily among them. In several places the highly important, duty of catechising has been those attended to than formerly, and has produced more salutary effects, which, we have reason to expect, will always flow from it,

The prospects with respect to the Indians are highly encouraging. A school has been established among the Cherokees, in the state of Tennessee, under the care of the Rev. Mr. Blackburn, with flattering prospects. Some of the Indian tribes to the westward, seem also favorably disposed to receive the gospel, and have expressed an earnest desire to have schools established among them. The school among the Catabaws, established by the Synod of the Carolinas, is also continued. And several young men of different tribes have received, and are now receiving, their education under the care of the Synod of Pittsburg.

Whilst there is very satisfactory evidence to believe, that there has been a great and glorious work of God carried on throughout a widely extended portion of our country to the south and west, within the bounds of the General Assembly; and that many souls have been savingly brought home to God; it is proper to observe, that in general, this has been accompanied with very uncommon and extraordinary effects on the body. There appears also reason to believe, that in certain places, some instances of these bodily affections have been of such a nature, and proceeded to such lengths, as greatly tended to impede the progress, and to tarnish the glory of what, in its first stages, was so highly promising. That God has all the powers both of our mortal and immortal part, absolutely under his direction and subject to his control; and can influence and affect them according to his sovereign pleasure, will not be doubted by any who acknowledge him as the framer of our bodies, and the father of our spirits; and that in him, we live, and move, and have our being.

Experience and the very reason and nature of things also manifest, that human nature may be deeply affected, and even overpowered by particular views and impressions of spiritual and divine things. But it is equally manifest that these effects may be, in a considerable degree, produced by natural causes, or by the agency of spiritual and subordinate beings. Satan may transform himself now, as well as formerly, into an angel of light. It is enjoined upon us not to believe every spirit;

but to try the spirits whether they be of God, As the magicians endeavored by their enchantments to imitate and discredit the miracles performed by Moses ; so has it been an artifice of satan in every period of the church, to endeavor to obstruct and bring a reproach upon a revival of religion, by counterfeiting the operations of the spirit of God, and exciting those who were concerned in such revival, to extravagant and disorderly proceedings. True religion is a most rational and scriptural thing. One of the unhappy circumstances usually attending a revival of religion is, that some who are engaged in it, are prone to consider all its concomitants, and every thing connected with it, as sacred. This affords the adversary an opportunity, unsuspected, of sowing tares among the wheat, to the great prejudice of the approaching harvest. In times of the revival of religion, it highly concerns us carefully to guard against grieving the Holy Spirit of God, and provoking him to suspend or withdraw his gracious influences, either by resisting, or not duly improving his operations ; or by yielding to the suggestions and influences of satan. All religious experience is to be brought to the test of divine truth.— To the law and to the testimony, if it be not conformable to these, it is because it is spurious. God is a God of order, and not of confusion : and whatever tends to destroy the comely order of his worship is not from him, for he is consistent with himself. Whilst then the General Assembly mourn over and lament those irregular and disorderly proceedings which have tended to obscure and tarnish the glory of this good work of God : they rejoice that, in general, they appear to subside : that the minds of the people are reverting to more rational and scriptural views and exercises : that but few of the ministers in their connection have countenanced or encouraged these wild extravagancies ; or considered any bodily exercises as a criterion, by which to form a judgment of a persons character or state ; but have formed their opinion, in this case, from the conformity of their views and exercises to the word of God.

The Assembly are happy to find that the pernicious and destructive principles of infidelity, and “ philosophy falsely so cal-

led" continue to loose their influence, or are less avowed; whilst at the same time they have cause to lament that formality and lukewarmness in religion, seem to prevail in some of our churches, and that the sacred institutions of the gospel are attended with so little power. Multitudes continue careless and secure perishing in ignorance and in sin, whilst "the love of many waxes cold." A respectful and serious attention however to the institutions of religion seem pretty generally to have prevailed; and an increasing union and harmony in societies which are composed of Presbyterians and Congregationalists. We are also happy to learn by the delegates from our sister churches of Connecticut, that the highly useful practice of catechising has been more than commonly attended to among them: that their churches are in peace, and there is a generally increased attention to the things of religion among them.

Upon the whole, the Assembly find no inconsiderable cause to bless and praise God for the tokens of his goodness; they find also many things which are cause of humiliation before him. They feel themselves called upon from the circumstances in which they are placed, to renewed and vigorous exertions in the cause of their God and Redeemer, in hope that "their labours shall not be in vain in the Lord." And they do earnestly exhort all the people under their care, to activity and perseverance in the Christian course, looking to the mercy of God unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord to whom be glory in the churches world without end. Amen.

 DEATH OF VOLTAIRE.

IT was during Voltaire's last visit to Paris, when his triumph was complete, and he had even feared that he should die with glory, amidst the acclamations of an infatuated theatre, that he was struck by the hand of Providence, and fated to make a very different termination of his career.

In the midst of his triumphs a violent hemorrhage raised apprehensions for his life. D'Alembert, Diderot, and Marmontel, hastened to support his resolution in his last moments, but were only witnesses to their mutual ignominy, as well as to his own.

Here let not the historian fear exaggeration. Rage, remorse, reproach, and blasphemy, all accompany and characterize the long agony of the dying atheist.

His death, the most terrible that is ever recorded to have stricken the impious man, will not be denied by his companions in impiety. Their silence, however much they may wish to deny it, is the least of those corroborative proofs which could be adduced. Not one of the sophisters has ever dared to mention any sign given of resolution or tranquility by the premier chief, during the space of three months, which elapsed from the time he was crowned in the theatre, until his decease. Such a silence expresses, how great their humiliation was in his death!

It was in his return from the theatre, and in the midst of the toils he was resuming, in order to acquire fresh applause, that Voltaire was warned, that the long career of his impiety was drawing to an end.

In spite of all the sophisters flocking around him in the first days of illness, he gave signs of wishing to return to the God whom he had so often blasphemed. He called for the priests

who ministered to *him*, whom he had sworn to crush, under the appellation of the wretch*.

His danger increasing, he wrote the following note to the Abbe Gaultier:

“ You had promised me, Sir, to come and hear me, I treat you would take the trouble of calling as soon as possible.

(Signed)

VOLTAIRE.”

Paris, Feb. 26, 1778.

A few days after, he wrote the following declaration, in presence of the same Abbe Gaultier, the Abbe Mignot, and the Marquis de Villevieille, copied from the minutes deposited with M. Momet, Notary, at Paris.

“ I, the underwritten, declare, that for these four days past, having been afflicted with a vomiting of blood, at the age of eighty-four, and not having been able to drag myself to the church, the Reverend the Rector of St. Sulpice having been pleased to add to his good works that of sending to me the Abbe Gaultier, a priest, I confessed to him; and, if it pleases God to dispose of me, I die in the Holy Catholic Church, in which I was born; hoping that the divine mercy will deign to pardon all my faults. If ever I have scandalized the church, I ask pardon of God and of the church.

(Signed)

VOLTAIRE.

March 2, 1778.

In presence of the Abbe Mignot, my nephew; and the Marquis de Villevieille, my friend.”

After the two witnesses had signed this declaration, Voltaire added these words, copied from the same minutes.

“ The Abbe Gaultier, my confessor, having apprized me that it was said among a certain set of people, ‘ I should protest against every thing that I did at my death;’ I declare that

* It is well known that Voltaire had been accustomed, for many years, to call our blessed Saviour The Wretch, P'nfame, whom he vowed to crush. The conclusion of many of his letters is in these words—Ecrasez P'nfame—Crush the Wretch.

I never made such a speech, and that it is an old jest, attributed long since to many of the learned, more enlightened than I am."

Was this declaration a fresh instance of his former hypocrisy? for he had the mean hypocrisy, even in the midst of his efforts against Christianity, to receive the sacrament regularly, and to do other acts of religion, merely to be able to deny his infidelity, if accused of it. After the explanations we have uniformly seen him give of his exterior acts of religion, might there not be room for doubt? Be that as it may, there is a public homage paid to that religion in which he declared he meant to die, notwithstanding his having perpetually conspired against it during his life. This declaration is also signed by that same friend and adept, the Marquis de Vilieville, to whom, eleven years ago, Voltaire was wont to write, "Conceal your march from the enemy, in your endeavors to crush the Wretch!"

Voltaire had permitted this declaration to be carried to the Rector of St. Sulpice, and to the Archbishop of Paris, to know whether it would be sufficient. When the Abbe Gaultier returned with the answer, it was impossible for him to gain admittance to the patient. The conspirators had strained every nerve to hinder the chief from consummating his recantation, and every avenue was shut to the priest, whom Voltaire himself had sent for. The demons haunted every access; rage succeeded to fury, and fury to rage again, during the remainder of his life.

Then it was that D'Alembert, Diderot, and about twenty others of the conspirators, who had beset his apartment, never approached him but to witness their own ignominy. He would often curse them and exclaim, "Retire! It is you that have brought me to my present state! Begone! I could have done without you all; but you could not exist without me. And what a wretched glory have you produced me?"

Then would succeed the horrid remembrance of his conspiracy. They could hear him, the prey of anguish and dread,

alternately supplicating or blaspheming that God whom he had conspired against and in plaintive accents would he cry out, "Oh Christ! O Jesus Christ!" and then complain that he was abandoned by God and man. The hand which had traced in ancient writ the sentence of an impious and reviling king, seemed to trace before his eyes, *Crush then, do crush the Wretch.* In vain he turned his head away; the time was coming apace when he was to appear before the tribunal of him whom he had blasphemed: and his physicians, particularly M. Tronchin, calling in to administer relief, thunder-struck, retired, *declaring the death of the impious man to be terrible indeed.*

The pride of the conspirators would willingly have suppressed these declarations, but it was in vain. The Marechal of Richelieu flies from the bed-side, declaring it to be a fight too terrible to be sustained; and M. Tronchin, that *the furies of Orestes could give but a faint idea of those of Voltaire.*

Letter from M. De Luc on the Death of Voltaire.

" SIR,

" YOUR *Memoirs illustrating the History of Jacobinism*, having been the other day the subject of conversation, it was objected, that the description of Voltaire, so prominent a feature in your work, was so very dissimilar to that given by the other historians of his life, that persons at a distance from the source of information were at a loss what judgment to form. The difference between your account of his death, and that which appeared in a *Life of Voltaire* translated from the French by Mr. Monke, and published in London 1787, was particularly noticed, and incited me to consult that work. The translator describes himself as a *young naval officer, who, while at Paris, wished to employ his recesses from professional duty both to his improvement and advantage.* Nothing but the youth of Mr. Monke, and his want of experience, can excuse his undertaking; for, to let his countrymen benefit by the proficiency he was making at Paris, he diffused among them, through the medium of this translation, all that poison which was then so

industriously emitted, to produce an effect now but too well known, and which I hope he does not at this day contemplate without horror.

“ I will make no observations on this *Life of Voltaire*; you know from what source it came,* and how little capable it was of seducing any but heedless youths who, without any knowledge of the age they lived in, were still susceptible of a sort of admiration for every thing that was great, though in vice and villany. As one of the artifices of impiety is to represent its champions *calmly* breathing their last in the bed of honor, I feel it incumbent on me to confirm what you have said on one of those circumstances of the death of Voltaire which is so closely connected with all the rest.

“ Being at Paris in 1781, I was often in company with one of those persons whose testimony you invoke on public reports, I mean Mr. Tronchin. He was an old acquaintance of Voltaire's at Geneva, whence he came to Paris in quality of first physician to the father of the late Duke of Orleans. He was called in during Voltaire's last sickness; and I have heard him repeat all those circumstances on which Paris and the whole world were at that time full of conversation, respecting the horrid state of this impious man's soul at the approach of death. M. Tronchin (even as physician) did every thing in his power to calm him; for the agitation he was in was so violent, that no remedy could take effect. But he could not succeed; and, unable to endure the horror he felt at the peculiar nature of his frantic rage, he abandoned him.

“ So violent a state in an exhausted frame could not be of long duration. Stupor, the forerunner of dissolution, must naturally succeed, as it generally does after any violent agitations generated by pain; and it is this latter state in which Voltaire has been decorated by the appellation of *calm*. M. Tronchin

* I have seen this *Life of Voltaire*. Mr. de Villeto was the author of it; and Mr. Monke might just as well have exercised his talents in translating *Condorcet*.

wished to discredit this error; and with that laudable view, as an eyewitness, he immediately published in all companies the real facts, and precisely as you have stated them. This he did to furnish a dreadful lesson to those who calculate on being able in a death bed to investigate the dispositions most proper to appear in before the judgment seat of the Almighty. At that period, not only the state of the body, but the condition of the soul, may frustrate thier hopes of making so awful an investigation; for *justice* and sanctity as well as goodness are attributes of God; and he sometimes, as a wholesome admonition to mankind, permits the punishment denounced against the impious man to begin even in this life by the tortures of remorse.

“ But this inaccuracy respecting the death of Voltaire is not the only one with which the aforementioned author might be upbraided. He has suppressed many well known circumstances relating to his first disposition to return to the church, and his consequent declarations, which you have given on well authenticated records, all anterior to that anguish of mind which his co-operators have wished to suppress, and of which they themselves were too probably the cause. They surrounded him, and thus cut him off from that which alone could restore tranquility to his soul, by employing the few moments he still had to live in making what reparation he could for the evil he had done. But this artifice could not deceive those who were better acquainted with Voltaires character; for, not to notice the acts of hypocrisy which earthly considerations frequently made him commit, those of which the sudden fear of a future state have made him guilty are also known. I will give you an example of one, which was related to me at Gottinguen in December 1776 by Mr. Dieze, second librarian of that University; and you may, Sir, make what use of it you please.

“ During Voltaire's residence in Saxony, where Mr. Dieze served him as secretary, he fell dangerously ill. As soon as he was apprized of his situation he sent for a priest, confessed to him, and begged to receive the sacrament, which he actually did receive, showing all the exterior signs of repentance, which lasted as long as his danger; but as soon as that was over, he

affected to laugh at what he called his *littleness*, and, turning to Mr. Dieze, " My friend, [said he] you have seen the *weakness of the man.*"

" It is also to *human weakness* that the sectaries of his impiety have attributed the paroxysms of fear in him and some others of his accomplices. Sickness, say they, weakens the mind as well as the body, and often produces pusillanimity.— These symptoms of conversion in the wicked at the approach of death, are, undoubtedly, signs of a great *weakness*; but to what is it to be attributed? is it to their understanding? certainly not; for it is in that awful moment that every thing vanishes which had clouded it during their life. That *weakness*, therefore, is to be wholly attributed to their internal *conviction* that they have sinned.

" Led away by vanity, or some other vicious passion, those men aspire at creating a Sect: ignorance and the passions of other men second their undertaking. Inebriated with their triumph, they persuade themselves that they are capable of giving laws to the whole world: they boldly make the attempt, and the hood-winked crowd become their followers. Having attained the zenith of happiness for the proud and vainglorious soul, they abandon themselves to all the wantonness of imagination and desire. The world then, in their eyes, becomes a vast field of new enjoyments, the legitimacy of which has no other standard but their own inclinations; and the fumes of an incense lavished on them by those whom they have taught to scoff like themselves at every law, perpetuates their delirium. But when sickness has dispersed the flattering cohort, has blasted their pleasures, and all hopes of new triumphs, when they feel themselves advancing, abandoned and naked, towards that awful *eternity* on which they have taken upon themselves to decide, not only for themselves but for all those who have been led away in the whirlwind of their fictions.— If in this terrible moment, when pride has lost its support, they come to reflect on the arguments on which they grounded their attack against the universal belief of a *Revelation* which

was to serve man as a positive and universal rule in matters of faith—the *weakness* then of their arguments, which they dare no longer attire in the garb of sophistry, stares them in the face ; and nothing but the total extinction of their feelings can quell the terrors of a conscience which tells them that they are about to appear before the tribunal of the Author of that same Revelation.

“ It is to point out this real *weakness* of the anti-christian chiefs that we must labour throughout their whole history, for the benefit of those who, without any further examination (and persuaded that these opinions are grounded on deep research) become their dupes and disciples : It is, I say incumbent on us to show that those men had not, any more than their sectaries, any real *conviction*, and that their obstinacy in their opinions solely proceeded from the narcotic fumes of the incense of their admirers. For this purpose it is my intention shortly to give to the public, in confirmation of what you have said of Voltaire, all that my former acquaintance with him has brought to my knowledge. The times in which we live make it the duty of every man who has had a nearer view of the plots laid by the Sect against Revelation to unfold all the circumstances of them, which are as shameful from their voluntary ignorance, as from their atrocity ; and it is this sentiment, Sir, which makes me partake in common with all true friends to humanity, of that admiration and gratitude which are due to you for your generous exertions in this charitable career.

“ I remain, SIR, Your's, &c. &c.

“ DE LUC.”

Windsor the 23d October, 1797.

After such a testimony, let people talk of Voltaire dying with the calmness of a hero.

Errata.—Page 284, fourth line from the bottom, for sixteen thousand four hundred, read one hundred and sixty four thousand—Page 286, bottom line, for lower, read rest—Page 287, seventh line from the bottom, for his, read as—Page 288 second line from the top, for doctrine read decline.

O B I T U A R Y.

*The following is an account of the last illness and death of Mrs.
ANNE LEECH, who died June 13th 1805.*

A VIOLENT fever had prevailed in the family, from which her husband had not long recovered before she was seized with the same.—Sitting at table in company with her mother, she expressed her suspicions that she was about to take the fever, and observed that if she did in her present condition she had no expectations of a recovery, and added, that if it was the will of God, she was willing to die—Her mother mentioned such considerations as were calculated to make life desirable, such as the loss her husband and child would sustain by her death.—She persisted in saying that if it was the will of God that she should die, she was not only weined from the world, but willing to die.

Her suspicions of the approach of the disorder were well founded—It seized her and increased with great violence.—On the 6th of June I visited her—she appeared to suffer much—I enquired whether she expected that God was about to remove her to eternity by the present dispensation—She replied, that she thought she could not live much longer, and if it was the will of God to remove her, she would not wish to stay one moment, and added, what is it that keeps me here; O I long to be gone, to be free from this body of sin and death, this clog of clay—Surely there is nothing in this vain world so inviting, there is nothing here deserves my joys, there is nothing like my God: but I must be resigned, I must wait God's time—I asked if she was willing to part with all her friends, O yes, she replied, (looking round on a number of her friends that were collected) I can cheerfully leave you all, I can resign you all to God—should I not be willing to leave you all to go to heaven? O I long to be there. Being asked why she so earnestly desired to go to heaven, she answered, because God my maker and my blessed favour is there—I shall be like him, for I shall see him as he is, and

spend an eternity in his praise.—O that the happy moment was come when I shall go to this region of peace and holiness, when I shall be free from this woful burden, this body of sin and death and this vain world ; it is vanity, it is less than vanity.—What is all the world to me now ?—Her mother asked her if she was *entirely* willing to leave *all* her friends, she replied as she had done before—Seeing her mother in tears, she said dear mother I wish you would not grieve—If you were as glad as I am you *could* not—I must leave my dear innocent babe (here for a moment she melted into tears, her lips trembled ; but resuming a chearful countenance she said) I can resign him to God—He will take care of him.—I asked what was the foundation of her hopes, she answered, she hoped to go to heaven, because Jesus had suffered and obeyed in the room and stead of sinners, and that she saw that he was able and willing to save, and just suited to save such a helpless sinner as she was.—Being told that she was greatly favored, that many of God's people did not experience sensible comfort at death, and many poor sinners died unprepared, with the horrors of an eternal hell in prospect, and that to have the light of God's countenance in death was an unspeakable blessing. O, she replied, is it not an unspeakable blessing that ever I was brought to see that I was a lost sinner, and stood in need of salvation through the merits of Christ.

She was told that if she should go to heaven she would have better company than her friends here, that where the Saviour was all his followers should be, and her companions would be angels and holy beings.—She again expressed ardent desires to depart—O, said she, I hope to meet some of my dear friends there, I hope to meet my dear father there, O how I long to see him.* My dear friends do not grieve to see me die, you ought rather to rejoice—do not wish to keep me, I long to go—Has the blessed Saviour died to purchase heaven for sinners, and should I not be willing to die to go to heaven ?

* Her father had died some years before.

—She was then asked, whether death had no terrors, No she replied, O that death would cut the brittle thread and release me from this wearisome burden, this body of sin and death.—*O death, where is thy sting; O grave, where is thy victory.* Being told that the exercise of her mind appeared similar to that of the Psalmist, when he said, *Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no ill, for thou wilt be with me, and thy rod and staff shall comfort me.*—She then repeated the four first verses of the 23d Psalm, and said, O how true do I find this to be.—She also repeated the 3d verse of 51st Psalm, 2d part, Doctor Watts' version,

No blood of goats nor heifers slain,

For sin could e'er atone ;

'The death of Christ shall still remain,

Sufficient and alone.

She was delirious in the evening—The next day she had the exercise of reason, but was too weak to talk much.—She requested that her child might be brought home, which had for some time been at the house of a friend.—When brought, she fixed her eyes on it with the most expressive tenderness, as well as uttering words the most expressive of maternal affection—She parted with it by saying, farewell my dear, I am going away.—One of her sisters about to return home, came to take leave of her, she seeing her in tears, said with a cheerful countenance, dear sister do not grieve, I may recover ; or if not, you know we will meet again.—The next day she requested to be raised up, as she had something to say—when raised and supported by her husband, she said she had come through a long season of darkness and distress but had now obtained deliverance by a strong belief of her interest in the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ.—Being asked if she felt resigned to live if it was the divine will ; she replied, the ordinances of Christ's church have been delightful to me—if it is his will I would love to enjoy another sweet communion season on earth.—Being told, that if she went to heaven she would sit down at a table that would never be drawn—she replied I

am resigned either to live or die ; she again seemed desirous of going to eternity.—I will wait and suffer if it is his will, but O that it was his will to remove me.—What am I doing here in this vain world ! but I must wait God's time.—I asked her if she had any commands to leave respecting her child, she replied no, I have wholly devoted him to God ; I did that when he was baptized.—I have nothing to command or request concerning him, I leave him in the hands of a faithful God—He has promised to be a God to his people and a God to their seed, I can now trust in his faithfulness ; I now experience that God is a faithful God.—After this she was frequently delirious and too weak to converse. Perceiving that she enjoyed a lucid interval, I asked her if she still retained a comfortable assurance of future happiness ; with a low voice and a motion of her head, she answered in the affirmative.

She appeared to be dying for twenty-four hours before her final departure, at length was taken off without a struggle or groan.

A PERSON PRESENT.

How different the last hours of the Christian from that of the unbeliever or the infidel—animated by firm hopes of shortly realizing the glorious prospects held up by the Gospel, the Christian can be calm, and sometimes even exult in death.—While to the unbeliever death is but the beginning of sorrows—darkness, distress, remorse and anguish, are often his companions in death.—How rational then to pursue the steps which promise us such real comforts at so trying a time.—Great indeed must be the comforts of religion when they can disarm the king of terrors of all his frightful forms and make the bed of death the bed of peace.

- “ Religion bears our spirits up,
- “ While we expect that blessed hope ;
- “ The bright appearance of the Lord,
- “ And faith stands leaning on his word.”

 RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

Extract of a letter from the Rev. Gideon Blackburn, Missionary to the Cherokees, to the Chairman of the Committee of Missions, dated April 24, 1805.

I HAVE just returned from my Highwassee Indian School. All things go on well. We have now twenty-two scholars ; all neatly clothed, very subject to discipline, and learning as well as can be expected. The Indians are getting more and more in love with the design, and as many as possibly can, still come to see me when I go down. The time is carefully improved to give them useful ideas of a civil or religious nature. They are remarkably fond of singing : this is practised in the intervals of conversation, and has great effect. The little scholars are able to sing several hymns by memory, especially the 509th, of Rippon's Selection. Oh ! Sir, to hear the little savages singing the praises of Jesus would seem to place you in the border of the assembly of songsters collected from every kindred, language, and nation, and afford a delightful preface of the accomplishment of the promise of the gentiles becoming the inheritance of the Redeemer.

The prospects of a future day opening the gospel fully on this nation are apparent. The attention of the Indians to the exhortations frequently given, their beginning to move out into farms, their adopting civilized customs and habits, &c. but especially the ground to hope that before long their own children will be able (and I hope willing) to preach Jesus, lead to this expectation. This hope is founded on this circumstance, on the morning I last left the school, the two most forward boys, whom I use as interpreters, were bathed in tears under a sense of their sin ; the same emotion has been observed at other times, during morning and evening service. Should they get religion they will be qualified to have easy access to the consciences of their friends. May propitious Heaven speedily hasten the joyful event !

FOR THE VIRGINIA RELIGIOUS MAGAZINE.

Elegy.—composed by a youth in memory of his Mother.

KIND was thy soul, with ev'ry virtue blest,
 My earliest friend, to mem'ry ever dear ;
 Still is thy goodness on my mind imprest,
 And oft remembered with a falling tear.

Thy arms my helpless infancy sustain'd,
 Thy pity listen'd to my plaintive cries ;
 And when of thirst or hunger I complain'd
 I always found thy hand had rich supplies.

Oft did my head upon thy bosom rest,
 Quiet, content, and free from ev'ry care :
 Oft did I fly to thy maternal breast,
 To tell my joys or pour my sorrows there.

Still anxious to improve my rising youth,
 Thy pious care and never-ceasing love
 Taught me the ways of equity and truth,
 And often rais'd my thoughts to things above.

Alas the scene is changed, those days are o'er
 Those happy days of innocence and peace :
 Thy friendly cheering voice is heard no more
 To share my joys or bid my sorrows cease.

Still can I see thee as thou wast in death,
 Thy soul with heav'n and happiness in view :
 Smiling look'd up, and to thy friends beneath
 In feeble accents bade thy last adieu.

May I prepare for that approaching day
 When I must all my worldly joys resign ;
 When death shall call my trembling soul away,
 O may my latest moments be like thine.

LIFE IS BUT A DAY.—ORIGINAL.

Now ushers in the infant day,
 Like lovely youth, with looks serene,
 But oft the sun's beclouded ray,
 Obscures the hopeful morning scene.
 Oh! could each blooming youth be seen
 To Christ the only covert fly!
 His kind protecting arm would screen,
 Till trouble's sweeping storms were by.

Now in meridian glory shine,
 Fair manhoods strongest, warmest beams;
 But storms and tempests oft combine,
 And sweep away their golden dreams.
 O would these earthly busy schemes,
 Subside till we for heaven prepare;
 Nor drive us down those rapid streams,
 That lead to death and black despair.

Now far beyond the dusky west,
 The sun conceals his splendid light;
 Thus soon the eve of life is past,
 And age must set in silent night.
 Then oh! to have in prospect bright,
 Beyond that dreary dark abode,
 A feast of ever new delight,
 With thee our Saviour and our God.

Again the cheerful morn is come,
 Our night of death must flee away;
 We'll burst the prison of the tomb,
 And rise to an eternal day.
 Then use the time nor dare delay—
 Life's but a fleeting day at most;
 And oh! the dreadful dark dismay,
 If that eternal day be lost.

X. Y. Z.