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ILLUSTRATIONS OF SCRIPTURE.

No. VIII.

*On the promises which God made to Abraham.*

According to the order which has been proposed, we shall proceed to consider the promises which the divine Being made to Abraham, the father of the faithful.

These may be divided into two classes. 1. Promises which have respect to temporal blessings. 2. Promises which insure spiritual favors: and these last may be divided into particular, and general promises.

The first class of promises need not occupy our attention long. They are principally these three. 1. The multiplication of his seed by Isaac. Gen. xiii. 16. xv. 5. xvii. 2. and xxii. 16. 2. The land of Canaan as an inheritance. Genesis xii. 7. xiii. 15. xv. 17. and xvii. 7. 3. The deliverance from Egyptian bondage. Gen. xv. 13—14. The history of the family of Abraham furnishes sufficient proof of the fulfilment of these promises.

It may be well, however, to observe here, that a particular word is used in many parts of scripture, when the possession of Canaan is the subject, which requires some explanation. The word is frequently rendered, *forever*; but is often used where the idea of eternity is certainly not intended. Sometimes it means an indefinite period; at other times, the whole continuance of any particular state or dispensation. For instance, the period from one Jubilee to another, is designated by this word. From this usage of the term, we may learn that the promise made to Abraham, for instance in Gen. xvii. 7.

did not insure to his descendants the everlasting possession of Canaan; but the possession, until the intention of the Jewish dispensation should be answered. It may farther be observed, that the temporal blessings promised to Abraham, have been regarded as types of the richer blessings afforded to Abraham and his spiritual children; v. c. The increase of his posterity, signifies the increase of the church.—Deliverance from servitude in Egypt, emancipation from sin—The possession of Canaan, the rich inheritance of the saints.

On this subject we shall not dwell at present, it being our purpose hereafter to explain the types of scripture at some length. We will only remark here that the New Testament ought to be our guide in the whole of this subject—So that we are only to regard that as a type, which is acknowledged as such in the New Testament. The old prophets understood these things, and no doubt explained them to Jewish believers; but we have no inspired teachers, and therefore must *not* give loose to our imaginations on a subject particularly requiring caution and prudence.

We shall now proceed to notice that class of promises which is distinguished by the term spiritual. These were divided into general and particular. The term *general*, is used to express the promises which, although made to Abraham, belong to all the people of God; and thus to distinguish them from those which appertain particularly, and we may say exclusively to Abraham as the father of the faithful. Of the first class we may notice the following, Gen. xv. 1. “I am your shield, and your exceeding great reward.” Gen. xvii. 1, 7. “I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee.” These, we say, are promises common to all the spiritual seed of Abraham. To ascertain this, let us inquire into their import, and compare them with other passages of scripture. “I am thy shield,” says God to Abraham—This manifestly means, I will be thy defence, thy protection: as we find in Psalm iii. 5. “I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the Lord sustained me.” Psalm lxxxiv. 9 & 11. “Behold, O God, our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed—For the Lord God is a sun and shield—The Lord will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.” Psalm cxix. 14. “Thou art my hiding place and my shield—I hope in thy word.” Prov. xxx. 5. “Every word of God is pure, he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.” But God here engages to be “the exceeding great reward” of Abraham. The primary meaning of the term rendered *reward*, is satisfaction. It may signify then a satisfying, a sufficient portion. Let us compar

with this, some other parts of scripture. Psalm xvi. 5—6. "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup; thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea I have a goodly heritage." Psalm cxlii. 5. "I cried unto thee O Lord; I said thou art my refuge, and my portion in the land of the living." 1 Cor. iii. 22. "All things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." Heb. xiii. 5. 6. "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have, for he hath promised saying I will never leave thee nor forsake thee—So that we may boldly say, the Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man can do unto me." These citations might be multiplied to great extent. But it is needless.

Let us consider the next promise, Gen. xvii. 1--7. "I will be a God to thee, and thy seed after thee" &c. In the first seven verses of this chapter, God is stated to have made a covenant with Abraham, and engaged to bestow on him various blessings. 1. To make him exceeding fruitful, and make nations of him, &c. 2. To be a God to him, and his seed. 3. To give the land of Canaan to him and his seed, and to be their God. It is the second class of blessings which we now are called to consider. What is the import then of the phrase, "I will be a God unto thee?" It is, beyond doubt, a favor of great importance. It is bestowed too in the way of covenant. Abraham is required to walk before God, and to be perfect; and God promises to bless him. And to this promise he annexes a seal, the nature of which is hereafter to be considered. This subject deserves the more careful consideration, because at this time the visible church of God was instituted, and a separation made between it and the world. Here we have the first account of the appointment of any rite, as a seal of the divine covenant; and as a separation between the people of God, and the rest of mankind.

The distinction, before remarked, in the divine promises, is obvious here. A posterity, and the possession of Canaan are engaged to Abraham. But besides this, God promises to be his God. In this, spiritual blessings are certainly included. 1. God herein engages to reveal himself to those to whom it is made in the perfections of his character; that he may be known to be an object of love and worship, infinitely worthy. Accordingly, when he appears to Abraham, he says, "I am the Almighty God, walk before me," &c. Farther, the promise includes all the means necessary to make

the subjects of it savingly acquainted with God—This follows from what has been before stated. 2. The promise embraces the strength necessary to walk before God. 3. It contains the assurance of eternal life, as procured by the intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are to consider this as a promise made to Abraham, when the visible church of Christ was established in his family; and of course, it belongs to every believer. It was made indeed personally to Abraham, the head of the household of faith; but it is obvious that every child of God is authorised to look up to God as his God, in the very same way in which Abraham was. The language of the pious in every age of scripture history confirms this. “This God is our God forever and ever,” said the Psalmist, in rapture, “he will be our guide even unto death.” “Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city,” saith the apostle Paul, Heb. xi. 16. But it seems scarcely necessary to employ time in proof of what is so obvious—When God engaged to be the God of Abraham, he engaged to bestow on him spiritual blessings; to be his covenant God. But it is added, “and to thy seed after thee.” How are we to interpret this? Most naturally, in the same sense in which the preceding clause was interpreted. But let us look to scripture here; this is making God his own interpreter. In Gen. xxvi. 24. “The Lord appeared to Isaac and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father, fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, &c. for my servant Abraham’s sake.” Gen. xxviii. 13. “God appeared to Jacob and said, “I am the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac,” &c. and then confirms to him the blessing promised to Abraham. In Exod. iii. 6—15, a similar address is made to the children of Israel.

In the various parts of the books of Moses, the men with their wives and children are assembled to enter into covenant with God. Instances of this are too numerous to be quoted. In 1. Chron. xvi. 13. David is said to have sung a Psalm in which we find these words, “O ye seed of Israel his servant, ye children of Jacob, his chosen ones. He is the Lord our God.”

In the book of Psalms we find the pious singer of Israel frequently addressing God in such language as this. Psalm xxii. 9. 10. “But thou art he who took me out of the womb, thou didst make me to hope when I was on my mother’s breasts—I was cast upon thee from the womb, thou art my God, from my birth.” Psalm, lxxxvi. 16. “O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me: give thy strength to thy servant, and save the son of thy hand-maid.” Psalm. cii. 28,

“The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee.” Psalm, cxvi. 16. “O Lord truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine hand-maid.” The prophet Isaiah speaking of those who should be included in the covenant says, “For they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them.” lxxv. 23. In Acts ii. 39. It is said, “For the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off.” Acts iii. 25. Peter says, “Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our Fathers,” saying, unto Abraham, “And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.” All these passages of Scripture, and many more might be cited, are surely sufficient to show, that God did include the seed of believers in the covenant which he made with Abraham—Accordingly we find the pious making a most delightful application of the promise, and pleading with God, on account of it, for needed blessings. This promise has descended to the spiritual children of Abraham, so that the head of each christian household may go to God, and plead with him to be a God to him and his seed. “For if ye are Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” See Gal. iii. 15—17.

We shall now proceed to consider the special promises which God made to Abraham. These promises are contained in the following passages of scripture. Gen. xii. 2—3. “Thou shalt be a blessing—And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.” Gen. xviii. 18. “Seeing that Abraham shall become a great and mighty nation; and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him.” The same promise occurs Gen. xxii. 18. It may be added, that this promise is repeated to Isaac, and to Jacob, direct descendants of Abraham. Afterwards it was limited to the tribe of Judah, and finally to the family of David, of whom, says the apostle, “Christ came, who is God over all blessed forever.”

Again, the same promise seems to be intimated to Abraham, when the change took place in his name; and the reason of the change, that he should be the father of many nations, is assigned. Gen. xvii. 5. “For a father of many nations have I made thee.” But this we shall consider hereafter.

The promise that in Abraham all nations of the world should be blessed, has respect unto the Messiah, before promised as the seed of the woman, who should bruise the head of the serpent. Of this we shall furnish such evidence as must be satisfactory to the impartial inquirer.

1. It may be observed that the ancient Jews fully expected that the Messiah should be a descendant of Abraham, and, if we mistake not, interpreted this passage in reference to him.

2. Accordingly, we find that when the genealogy of Christ is given by the Evangelist, he commences with "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, son of David, *son of Abraham.*" Let this be compared with what the apostle teaches in the epistle to Gal. iii. 8—9. "And the scripture foreseeing that God would justify the nations through faith, preached the gospel before unto Abraham, saying, in thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." Again, ver. 16, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds, as of many: but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ." This declaration of scripture is decisive on the subject.

But here a difficulty occurs. In comparing this passage with Rom. ix. 8. "They which are children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed;" it would seem, at first view, that in one place the promise is applied to many, and in the other to an individual, "which is Christ." Farther, it has been said that the Hebrew word rendered *seed*, in the promise to Abraham, denotes a multitude; and would most naturally be so interpreted in connection with the promise, that Abraham's posterity should be as the dust of the earth, or the stars for number. And still farther, it has been proved that in the promise, the spiritual children of Abraham are included; how then can the apostle properly restrict the words of it to an individual.

To this it is replied. 1. The word rendered seed in the Old Testament, is sometimes applied to an individual, and sometimes to a number. It is therefore ambiguous, and may mean either one or the other. 2. But when it does signify a multitude, it is collectively, and in reference to a particular head, or stock from which this multitude has descended. When, then, the discourse has respect to the seed of Abraham, *as the seed of promise*, it is proper that *that* seed should be considered as one body. When the apostle says that "the promises were made to Abraham and his seed," he has reference to the form of a covenant recorded in Gen. xvii. 7. "I will be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee." On this occasion, the apostle declares, since all the families of the earth, in their time, are to be made partakers of this future blessing, that they must be reckoned among the seed of Abraham, and be united to him in one body: and, as he says in Eph. i. 10, be gathered together in one in Christ. But that could not be done by any Jewish ceremonies; because those ceremonies were a partition wall, separating Israelites from

Gentiles. But it is accomplished by the spirit of faith, which indissolubly unites the faithful with Christ their head, who is the seed primarily intended, and with one another. And thus they all together constitute one spiritual seed of Abraham; one whole Christ, together with his mystical body. For thus we understand the word *Christ*; as also in 1 Cor. xii. 12. "For as the body is one, and hath many members; and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ." Here Christ is evidently put for the Saviour, the promised seed, and the church, which collectively is signified by his body. Since therefore, as is manifest, the promise is made to the spiritual seed of Abraham alone, to the exclusion of all others, and that spiritual seed must have the same stock and origin, it is necessary that it should constitute one mystical body, whose head is undoubtedly Christ; from whom the various members of the body are denominated. The apostle then has well urged that under the term *seed* unity is intended, not indeed of a person, but of a mystical body, united by faith under Christ its head—This reasoning, (borrowed from the learned Witsius) derives force from 1 Cor. xii. 27. "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular:" Also from Eph. v. 30. "For we are members of his body, his flesh, and his bones:" And from Rom. xii. 5. "So we being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." Indeed it is quite common with the apostle to consider the members of the church of Christ, in union with him as forming one mystical body. The result then of the whole is, that when the promises are considered in respect to the spiritual seed of Abraham as individuals, the term *seed* implies a multitude, but when they have respect to Christ himself primarily, and to the seed as united to him, and deriving every blessing through him, the language of the apostle is applicable; "and he saith not unto *seeds*, as of many; but as of one unto thy seed which is Christ."

But there is one more particular to which we have alluded and which requires consideration. In Gen. xvii. 5. We have an account of the change made in the name of Abraham, and, as heretofore observed, of the reason of that name. "For a father of many nations have I made thee." Now this means much more than that Abraham should have many descendants. That Abraham should have a spiritual seed, seems to be intimated by John the baptiser in Matt. iii. 9. "And think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father, for I say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham." Where the affirmation would be without reason, if something more than mere natural descent were

not signified. But this subject is much more fully explained by the Apostle Paul in the Ep. to Rom. iv. 11-17. [Read the passage.] See also Gal. iii. 6. 7. 8. 9. Allowing that the Apostle was a just interpreter of Scripture, it follows that much more was intended by the declaration than a numerous race; and that spiritual blessings were comprehended in the promise. And this is more apparent still when it is recollected that in the Ep. to Rom. ix. 6. 7. 8. it is stated that—"They are not all Israel which are of Israel, neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children; but in Isaac shall thy seed be called; that is, they that are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of promise are counted for the seed." And here it may be remarked that there is something peculiar in this promise, so that it cannot justly be applied to any other person. For no one, we presume, would venture to say that if we are Christ's, we are the seed of David or Isaiah, of Peter or Paul, and heirs according to the promise. And as these words cannot properly be applied to any who have succeeded Abraham; so neither to any who went before him; as for instance, Seth, Enos, or Noah. And indeed there is not, and never has been that human being, to whom we should be authorised to apply this language, except Abraham. The reason seems to be this. Before the days of this patriarch, according to a remark heretofore made, there was no instituted visible church of God upon earth; and, of course, the people of God were not called out and visibly separated from the rest of the world. But when God, through the mediation of Christ, entered into covenant with Abraham, and appointed the seal of the covenant; then the church was organized, and Abraham's household were admitted as visible members. He gave a most remarkable exhibition of faith in the divine promises, and was appointed the father of all who should afterward believe. So that Abraham's faith was to be a pattern for all believers; the covenant was to be the ground of all future confidence in God; and the church then instituted in the family of the patriarch, and of which he was the first visible member, was to continue through all ages the depository of God's communications to men, the pillar and ground of the truth, and ordinarily the means of salvation. And now, if we believe, we have the same faith with Abraham; if we are justified, it is by the same righteousness; if we are renewed and sanctified, it is by the same Spirit; if we are in the church, it is the same church; and if comforted, it is by the same precious promises. If this should be denied; it seems to us that we do, in effect, deny the scripture; or at least render it impossible to give a

consistent interpretation to many parts on which the sacred writers seem to lay great stress. But if these things be so, the blessings in general, according to the apostle's own showing, which have been assured to Abraham, belong to his spiritual seed, and in the most important sense of the phrase, the *pious* parent may rejoice in the covenant promise of the Lord, "I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee."

It may be expected, here perhaps, that something will be said of the faith of Abraham in the promises of God, and of the manner of his justification. But as this discourse has been sufficiently prolonged, and as any remarks of this kind may as well be connected with the next lecture as with this, we shall reserve the subject until we treat of the seal of the covenant of grace established with Abraham, that is *circumcision*. And now we shall conclude with simply noticing,

1. The faithfulness of God in his promises, as exemplified in the fulfilment of those made to Abraham.
2. The warrant thus afforded to us, to place a firm reliance on these promises.
3. And consequently the happiness of those who trust in the God of Abraham.

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#### WILSON'S HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES OF DISSENTING CHURCHES.

It is not our purpose to attempt a review of this work; but merely to extract from it some historical facts, which appear to us deserving of attention.

It is well known that shortly after the reformation, numbers of persons *dissented* from the church established by law in England. This dissent however, was not grounded on difference in doctrine, but in external form and order. For many years the leading members of the establishment, and of the non-conforming churches, preached substantially the same doctrines. This, it may be remarked, is true respecting evangelical churchmen and dissenters in the present day. But it deserves particular notice, that although the number of dissenters has very much increased within the last fifty years, many of the old societies founded one hundred and fifty or two hundred years ago, have, during the period of increase just mentioned, either declined exceedingly, or become wholly extinct.

It may be well to mention here, that the author, whose name stands at the head of this article, appears to be a man of diligent research, and great impartiality. He states historical facts, and leaves them to exert their proper influences.

We have before us a list of a considerable number of these societies, concerning which we learn that they are either going rapidly to dissolution, or are *gone*. The following extracts will show what we wish should appear, in a very striking manner.

*A dissenting church worshipped in poor Jewry Lane.* This church was erected in the reign of Charles II. It was once very flourishing; and numbered among its pastors very distinguished men. Among them are to be found Dr. Harris, Dr. Benson, and Dr. Lardner. This last died in 1768; and in 1774 the church was dissolved. *Dr. Lardner was a Socinian.*

*Church in new Broad-street.* This was founded about the year 1662, by the Rev. Thomas Vincent. It flourished for years under such men as its first pastor, Dr. Williams, Dr. Calamy, and Dr. Evans. Its last pastor was John Palmer. He was chosen in 1759, and before his death the church was dissolved in the year 1780.—*Palmer was a Socinian.*

*Old Church, Pinner's Hall.* This church was founded in the reign of Charles II, and was supported until the year 1778, when it was dissolved. Its two last pastors were James Foster, D. D. and Caleb Flemming, D. D. *both decided Socinians.*

*Church in Maid Lane.* This society was gathered about 1672. It subsisted for nearly a century, under a succession of ministers, many of whom, for talents and respectability, ranked high among the churches of their day. In its earlier days, the congregation was large and respectable, and the meeting house well filled; but under the ministry of Mr. Ward it declined so rapidly, that its dissolution became easy and natural, and took place about the year 1752.—Ward was then an *Arian*, and afterwards a *Socinian*.

*King John's Court.* Meeting house erected in the reign of William III. This society was for many years in a very flourishing state; but about 1730 it began to decline, and in 1760 became extinct. During this period it had three pastors, Benson, Pickard, and Blackburn, all *Arians*.

We might easily swell this catalogue to great extent, making very little change in our statements, except in names of places, and pastors. For instance,

*Jamaica Row.* Once flourishing—now extinct—last pastors *Socinian*.

*Leather Lane.* Once a numerous society—now dissolved—last pastors *Arian*.

*Lower Rotherhithe.* Extinct—last pastor *Socinian*.

*Westminster.* Once, one of the largest dissenting churches in London. Now very low; declining since the election of Dr Kippis—*An Arian*.

*Salter's Hall.* Once the glory of dissenters; now almost deserted. *Arians admitted there.*

The fact is, that not one of the old dissenting churches has introduced the *Arian* or *Socinian* doctrines, and prospered. Those which have maintained the orthodox faith, however, still flourish, and are the glory of the dissenting interest.

Those statements afford a striking comment on the acknowledgment of Dr. Priestley that, “the Unitarian churches do not flourish; that their members have but a slight attachment to them, and easily desert them.” He also says that, “many Unitarians have become more indifferent to religion in general, than they were before; and to all the modes and doctrines of religion—that he was once a Calvinist, and that of the straightest sect; then a high Arian; next a low Arian; then a Socinian; and in a little time a Socinian of the lowest kind; in which Jesus is considered as a mere man, the son of Joseph and Mary, and naturally as fallible and peccable as Moses, or any other prophet”—and in fine that “he does not know when his creed will be fixed.”

The foregoing statements will also show why unbelievers should be so kindly disposed to Arians, and Socinians. Their *misbelief* is as disastrous it seems to the interests of religion, as the *unbelief* of infidels. No more is necessary for the extinction of the religion of the gospel, than that christians should become Socinians. Then the name of Jesus Christ, might perhaps be enrolled with those of Socrates, Plato, and Seneca, and he might be celebrated as a distinguished philosopher—But as for the hopes which an awakened sinner conceives on hearing of the dying love of a Redeemer—As for the consolations of the Holy Spirit—As for the anticipated joys of a place at the feet of the Saviour, where his glory should be contemplated, and his love enjoyed forever—As for all the lofty feelings, and delightful prospects of the christian, they would be extinguished; and we should by a few rapid steps plunge into the dark and dreary abysses of infidelity: To which we may well enough apply the words of the poet,

Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace  
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes  
That comes to all.

*The scriptural account of the nature of Jesus Christ.*

In our first number we attempted to show, that the Bible requires precisely that sort of submission of the understanding that is required by the true philosophy. The religion of the Bible, it was remarked, is a religion of facts announced to us by God our maker; and our business is to inquire what is the proper import of the terms in which this communication has been made. On ascertaining this, doubt and inquiry are at an end: faith and obedience are natural and indispensable duties.

In conformity to this remark, we shall proceed to inquire what account the scriptures give us of the nature of Jesus Christ. And it may be observed that the inquiry is of no small importance. If Christ is God, then christians are bound to worship him; if he is not, the worship rendered to him is no better than idolatry. Mistake here involves guilt; and this ought never to be regarded as a small matter. If Christ is God, he may, and he ought to be relied on as a Saviour; if he is not, it is vain and foolish to put our trust in him.

As we have no intention, for a moment, to conceal our sentiments, we lay down the subject of inquiry in the form of a direct proposition, as follows:

The scriptures do ascribe a true and proper divinity to Jesus Christ.

In the investigation of this proposition we shall commence with the scriptural account of one of the last acts of Christ in conducting the affairs of his mediatorial kingdom; we mean the general judgment. And here we state it to be the doctrine of the New Testament, *that Jesus Christ will judge the world*. The following passages of scripture are cited in proof.

Matt. xxv. 31—46. When the son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats, &c.

John v. 28--29. Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

Acts xxvii. 31. Because he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom

he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance to all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

2 Cor. v. 10. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

These passages are so express and peremptory as to put the doctrine beyond all doubt. In the day of final retribution Jesus Christ will be judge. But the conclusion that, it seems to us, may be legitimately derived from this truth, will not appear in all its force, unless we extend our views a little farther.

1. It is almost superfluous to remark that the judge possesses every qualification for the infinitely important and awful station. This remark however implies much that is worthy of serious consideration. For in the first place it implies that he fully understands the law according to which the process is to be conducted, and the sentence to be pronounced. The mere enactments of the law, however, are not all that must be known. The reason of the precept and of the penalty in every case must be understood; the various relations of the divine government be perceived; and the bearing and influence of the rebellion of this world on other parts of Jehovah's dominion ascertained: otherwise, the real demerit of sin cannot be discerned, nor can all the reasons for punishment appear; and of course the sentence of the judge must be arbitrary. But farther, the judge must know the precise degree of criminality in every particular case of guilt, and the precise degree of worthiness in every sentence of acquittal. But to know the precise quality of an action, all the circumstances under which it was committed must be ascertained; all the passions, habits, temptations, and the motives of every sort that influenced it, must be detected. This is often, to say the least, very difficult among men in relation to a single action. And in relation to the actions of a whole life, it is absolutely impossible. For who can discern the thoughts and purposes of a fellow creature. But it is not merely the thoughts, passions, and circumstances of one man, or one nation, but of the individuals of all nations, and all ages, from Adam through each succeeding age until the final judgment. For the sake of giving precision to the argument, we will *suppose* that this event shall take place at the end of six thousand years from the creation, and that the ordinary calculations of the numbers of the human race are correct. Then the judge will at the day of reckoning have to ascertain the precise merit or demerit of myriads of myriads of millions of the human race, who had lived through that long tract of ages.

Again, the judge of quick and dead must not only know all that has been stated respecting the government of God, and the race of man, but be endowed with perfect justice to decide according to truth and righteousness; and with full power to execute the sentence pronounced by him. He must have access to the mind of every one to communicate the happiness awarded to the righteous, and inflict the punishment due to the wicked.

2. In the account which is given in scripture of the coming of the judge, and of the events of the day of decision, the powers of language are exhausted in portraying the grandeur, and glory, and terror of the scene. The angels are *his* angels, and move in prompt obedience to his command. The judge will be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel. The heavens will flee away before him; the elements will melt with fervent heat; they who sleep in their graves shall hear his voice and come forth: Every eye shall see him, and all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him: Heaven, earth, and hell, shall be moved at his presence. And here we may ask, is this being, who knows all God's purposes and counsels; who searches all hearts; who judges all creatures; who receives them to the joys of heaven, or casts them into outer darkness; this being who thus comes in power and great glory, with all the holy angels; is he a frail, erring, peccable mortal? If is he a man, who and what is God? Either Jesus Christ, the judge of quick and dead, is truly and properly a divine person; or a mere human being, at any rate a mere creature, possesses all these attributes of wisdom, power, and justice, and will perform all these wonders of terror and glory, of justice and mercy! We find it much easier to believe that he is God, than to believe that as man, or as the most exalted creature, he will sit in judgment, and exercise the functions, and be clothed with the attributes of Deity. And really the structure of that mind seems strange to us, that cannot believe on the authority of scripture the Deity of Christ, and yet can believe that he will judge all kindreds and tribes of the earth in righteousness. To search the heart is the prerogative of Jehovah; to search all hearts, and with unerring precision determine all characters, is the office of the judge of the universe. If that Judge is not then Jehovah, then Christ a mere creature is invested with Jehovah's attributes, and exercises the highest rights and performs the most peculiar and characteristic acts of the sovereignty of the universe. If Christ is not God, then Jehovah will give his glory to another, contrary to his own express

declaration. Indeed it seems that we must on the Socinian plan, reject the most explicit and positive declarations of scripture; or believe that Christ is mere man and yet God; that is, that he is God and not God. For we can make no distinction between a being, that can know and do all that the judge of the universe knows and does, and God.

We leave these thoughts proposed in our humble way to the consideration of our readers; and shall close this number with one or two practical remarks.

1. The doctrine that Christ is to be the judge of all, is consolatory to those who believe in him. The idea of the final account, of the last judgment, of the decisive sentence, of eternal retributions, is awful and overwhelming. But let the believer remember that the same person is both judge and Saviour; and that he will pronounce the sentence of acquittal and of blessing, "Come ye blessed of my father, enter the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

2. Let the impenitent and unbelieving remember, that he, whose great salvation they now neglect; whose offers of mercy they despise; whose spirit they grieve; whose blessings they undervalue; will set in judgment on their souls. Let them consider how they will bear to meet him, before whom all nature will be dissolved; and, in this the day of their merciful visitation, let them attend to the things that belong to their peace, before they are forever hidden from their eyes. And let all believe with that faith which purifieth the heart, worketh by love, and overcometh the world.

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#### DOCTRINE CONCERNING BAPTISM HELD BY THE WALDENSES.

(*Extract from Leger's Histoire Generale Des Eglises Vaudoises.*)

"There are two sacraments: one of water, and the other of aliment, that is of bread and wine.

The first is called Baptism, that is to say in our language, *washing* with water, whether of a river or a fountain; and it must be administered in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, principally to the end that, by the grace of God the Father, for the sake of his Son, by the participation of Jesus Christ who has redeemed us, and by the renewing of the Holy Spirit who impresses a living faith on

our hearts, the sins of those who are baptized may be pardoned, and that they may be received into favor; and after having persevered therein, may be saved by Jesus Christ.

The Baptism with which we are baptized, is that with which our Saviour was baptized that he might fulfil all righteousness, (in like manner as he was circumcised) and with which he commanded that his apostles should baptize.

*Visible and material baptism* of itself makes a person neither good nor bad, as we learn from scripture in the case of Simon Magus and St. Paul. And this is the baptism which is administered in the full congregation of the faithful, to the end that he who is received, may be reputed and acknowledged as a brother and a christian; and that all may pray for him, that he may be a good christian in heart, as he is outwardly esteemed to be a christian. And it is for this that children are presented for baptism, which they ought to do, to whom infants are most nearly related, such as parents, and those to whom God has given this office of love."

On this extract we shall offer no comments—We have produced it here for the sake of correcting what appears to us a historical error. The Waldenses were pædo-baptists. It is not from them however, or any human authority that we derive our practice; but from the word of God. It is, however, satisfactory to find the members and ministers of that respectable and ancient church agreeing with us, in a much controverted point.

It may not be amiss just to remark that the identity of the baptism of our Lord, as administered by John, and the ordinance instituted by Christ, is not admitted by many respectable persons both baptists and pædo-baptists.

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#### MEMOIR OF THE REV. SAMUEL DAVIES.

[It is our wish to present in course of our work biographical notices of distinguished persons who were either born, or acted a conspicuous part in Virginia. We have often felt deep regret on observing the indifference with which the memory of great and good men is regarded among us, and the almost total neglect of any measures for preserving their names from oblivion. If we can excite a different spirit, it will gratify us much. Every monument erected to the honor of departed excellence operates as a stimulus on the men of the present generation, and produces a good moral effect. It is this effect which we principally have in view. We wish to excite our co-temporaries to something better than *speculation*; and to hold up before the eyes of the young, examples which will rouse them to the cultivation of

the most generous affections. One lesson in particular, we wish to impress in indelible characters on their hearts; that the great and good, whose names are now held in dear remembrance, and whose virtues are regarded with deep veneration, *were actuated by a most earnest desire to be useful*—We shall gratefully receive any memoirs of distinguished men among us, calculated to afford materials for history, or to teach lessons of piety and virtue.]

During the first part of the eighteenth century religion was perhaps in a lower state of declension, throughout the British dominions, than at any other period since the reformation. The concurrent testimony of churchmen and dissenters establishes this fact. Many clergymen of various denominations had become very lukewarm, and in many instances exceedingly corrupt; and the people were ready enough to follow the steps of their spiritual guides. It was in this season of darkness that several men were born, who, afterwards, were burning and shining lights in the world. The names of Tennent, Blair, Edwards, Davies, and Whitfield, may suffice to illustrate this remark. Since their day vital piety has, we believe, gradually increased, and the spiritual condition of the church of Christ has become more prosperous. The subject of this memoir was powerfully instrumental in producing the happy change. We shall proceed to give such accounts of him as we have been able to collect; lamenting at the same time that our materials are so meagre; and that we are able to tell so little of a man who reflected so much honor on his country.

SAMUEL DAVIES was born in the county of Newcastle, Delaware, November 3, 1724. The christian names of his parents we know not. Nor can we say any thing of the origin of the family, or trace it beyond his immediate progenitors. The father is represented to have been a plain farmer in very moderate circumstances; the mother a very sensible and judicious woman; both were pious. Their son was a child of prayer; and was from the birth devoted to God by the name of Samuel. His mother is reported to have been eminently diligent and exemplary in fulfilling her baptismal vows. Young Davies remained under parental inspection and management until the age of ten; at which time he was sent to school. Of this interesting period of his life we know very little. It is recorded, and we can easily believe, that he acquired knowledge with wonderful facility. Until the age of twelve he represents himself as living carelessly, and utterly negligent of religion. Yet we are told that while he knew nothing of the power of godliness, he never could retire to sleep without prayer. One of his most frequent petitions too, was that he might be fitted for the ministry of the gospel. At the early age of twelve his conscience was awakened, and

he very seriously inquired for the way of salvation. But we have been favored with no history of his religious exercises. That they were deep and powerful is manifest from his sermons. It would be highly interesting to trace the progress of such a mind as that of Davies—but this is not in our power. All that we know is that he was principally educated under the direction of the Rev. Samuel Blair of Fog's Manor, in Chester county, Pennsylvania. This gentleman was a native of Ireland. He came to America very early in life; and was educated by the Rev. William Tennent.\* He was considered not only as one of the most learned and able, but one of the most pious and excellent men, that ever adorned the American church. We know that he inspired his pupil with strong affection for his person, and reverence for his character. In proof of this we give two short extracts from a fragment of a journal kept by Mr. Davies, when on the mission to England on behalf of the College of New Jersey.

“Thursday, [Sep. 1753.] Rode P. M. to Mrs. Blair's in company with Mr. Smith; and enjoyed much satisfaction in the free mutual communication of our christian and ministerial exercises. How happy am I in having so many valuable friends in various parts!—The sight of Mrs. Blair, and my old walks about her house in the happy days of my education, raised a variety of tender and solemn thoughts in my mind. When I passed by the meeting house, where I so often heard the *great* Mr. Blair, I could not help crying out, Oh! how dreadful is this place! this is no other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.”

“Tuesday, [October, 1753.] Rode to the Presbytery at Fog's Manor, solitary and pensive—Was refreshed in the company of my dear brethren—Lodged at Mrs. Blair's, where every thing suggested to me the image of the *incomparable* Mr. Blair, once my minister and tutor, but now in superior regions.”†

Although little is now known concerning the youth of Davies; we are assured that he was an exemplary young christian; that he was very strict and careful in keeping a record of his religious exercises; and that the knowledge of his having been in a peculiar manner devoted to God from his very birth, was a powerful motive to fidelity and zeal in the service

\* Miller's life of Dr. Rodgers, p. 17.

† The manuscript from which these extracts are made was kindly communicated by a grand daughter of Mr. Davies, now living in Petersburg, Va. There is no doubt of its genuineness; and it most clearly was intended for his own private and particular use. Extracts from it will enliven and give interest to the subsequent pages of this memoir.

of his heavenly Father. He ascribed much to the prayers, instructions, and pious example of his mother. It is not in vain that the faithful consecrate their children to God, and train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

We have every reason to believe that the circumstances of Davies' parents were not a little straitened, and that they met with considerable difficulties in supporting him through his education. We have heard an anecdote on this subject, the authenticity of which we cannot doubt, and which we think well worthy of being recorded.

It is known to some at least of our readers, that the religious declension, of which mention was made before, extended to Virginia. About the year 1740 some individuals in the county of Hanover, were awakened to a deep concern for their eternal interests in a very extraordinary manner. A few leaves of *Boston's Fourfold State*, fell into the hands of a wealthy planter, and made so deep an impresion on his mind, that he never rested until he procured a copy of the work. This book, it is believed, was instrumental in affording light to his mind, and peace to his heart. Another gentleman Mr. Samuel Morris, derived similar advantages from *Luther on the Galatians*. The books that had been so useful to these persons were read to others, and produced very great and happy effects. So deep was the sensation, that multitudes were accustomed to assemble for the purpose of hearing Morris read. His house was in a short time, too small to contain them; and a meeting house was built for the purpose, long known by the name of *Morris's reading room*.\* In this state of things, the Rev. William Robinson, a member of the Presbytery of New-Brunswick, was sent on a mission to the frontier settlements. On his tour he entered Virginia, and preached with great acceptance among the Scotch-Irish, who had made settlements in the counties of Prince Edward, Charlotte and Campbell. At Cub-Creek in the county of Charlotte, he was heard by some of the young people from Hanover, who had gone to visit their friends and who soon sent back word what manner of man was among them. On receiving this intelligence, two messengers were immediately dispatched from Hanover for Mr. Robinson. He had left the place, but they followed in his track and at length overtook him. He was prevailed on to consent to visit Hanover, and at the appointed time he came. For four days he continued among them, preaching to the crowds that had assembled at the reading room.

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\* For a full account of this interesting affair we refer to *Miller's Life of Dr. Rodgers*.

This is described as a very remarkable season. On Mr. Robinson's taking leave some of the gentlemen presented him with a considerable sum of money, as a compensation for his labours and to defray his expenses. This, Mr. Robinson refused to accept; and assigned for a reason, that his acceptance of their gratuity would, in their then circumstances, bring into suspicion the purity of his motives, and injure the cause which it was his highest wish to promote. Having withstood all their entreaties, he took his leave. But at the first house at which he stopped for refreshment, he discovered that the money, which had been tendered to him and refused by him, was in his saddle bags. Immediately he mounted his horse, and returned to Mr Morris's. They were mortified to find that he had come solely for the purpose of bringing back the money. On his repeated declarations that he could not receive it, he was told that no one could possibly know what to do with it; as the amount was made up of various small sums thrown in by individuals, to whom distribution would be impossible. In this dilemma, Mr. Robinson, with great animation, as the thought just struck his mind, observed "I will tell you what must be done with the money—There is a very promising young man, now studying divinity to the North; whose parents are very hard scuffled, and find great difficulty in supporting him at his studies. I will take this money, and it shall be given to help him through—And when he is licenced, he shall come and be your preacher." The proposition was immediately accepted, and the money faithfully appropriated to the benefit of young Davies while pursuing his Theological studies. "And that is the reason," said a pious old lady who communicated this, "that Mr. Davies came to Hanover; for he often used to say that he was inclined to settle in another place, but that he felt under obligation to the people of Hanover." As far as we can learn this is the first money that ever was contributed in Virginia, for the education of *poor and pious youth for the ministry of the gospel*. And really it turned out so well, that we wonder the people have not done much more in the same way.

This Anecdote is not only told by aged persons who were cotemporary with Davies; but is handed down by tradition, and related in terms of the same import with those used above, by the grand children of some of Mr. Davies' people.

It is delightful from the present time, to look back to an occurrence *apparently* so trivial as the discovery of a few leaves in an old book, and trace the many important events connected with it; to see the workings of providence accomplishing his purposes, and carrying on his great designs of

mercy in our favored land. It is delightful to think on the ways of the Almighty, and contemplate the dealings and dispensations of the God of our Fathers.

Aided in the manner just recited, young Davies prosecuted his studies with alacrity, and was licensed in the year 1745, by the Presbytery of New Castle, as a probationer for the ministry of the gospel. At this time he was in extreme bad health, and was supposed to be far gone in a consumption. Expecting to live but a short time, he was instant in season and out of season; preached by day, and endured a hectic fever by night. It pleased God however to restore his health, and employ him for some years in active and useful service.

In the year 1747 he first came to Virginia. He was sent by the Presbytery only on a mission of a few weeks; for as was before remarked, his inclination was to settle in some other place. The people however received him as an angel of God; and urged their request with such earnestness and zeal that he was prevailed on to settle among them.

The condition of Dissenters in Virginia at this time, was by no means comfortable. A particular form of christianity was established by law, and it is of the nature of an establishment to be exclusive and overbearing. A number of severe laws had been passed in the very spirit of the famous act of uniformity; and enforcing attendance at the parish church by various penalties. When the people flocked to Morris's reading room, they were presented and fined for absence from church. Morris himself was fined at least twenty times. The act of toleration had indeed passed long before this period; but as there had never been an occasion for its application, it seemed to have been very little understood in Virginia. Davies however seems to have studied it carefully, and had the forecast to procure the licensure of several places of worship before he commenced his operations; of these, one was in the county of Henrico, two in Hanover, and one in New Kent. At this time, he was only twenty-three years old. It was certainly an interesting sight to behold a youth of his age engaged alone in support of the cause of vital piety and religious liberty, while the talents, the learning and the power of the state were against him. At first he was regarded as a youthful adventurer, who would soon bring down his own cause. But the ardor of his zeal and the splendor of his talents soon brought him into notice, and excited great admiration. This generated opposition. And Davies was thought to be of so much importance that the general court of the colony, in the exercise of a high handed authority, reversed the order of the county court for a meeting house. This took place

about the year 1748. On this, and on several other occasions, Davies appeared before the general court for the support of his cause. On one occasion, by special permission, he spoke for himself. Capt. John Morton of Prince Edward county, accompanied him at this time to Williamsburg. The circumstances of the case were often detailed by him with great satisfaction. From his narrative it would seem that the permission accorded, proceeded rather from an inclination in the king's officers to amuse themselves with the poor Dissenters, than from any other motive. The attorney-general was Peyton Randolph. He took the position that the act of toleration did not extend to the colony of Virginia; and delivered a speech of great legal learning. When Davies rose to reply, there was a general *titter* through the court. His very first remark, however, discovered so intimate an acquaintance with the law on that subject, that marks of surprise were manifest on every countenance. In a short time, the lawyers present began to whisper, "The attorney-general has met with his match to day, at any rate!" The position taken by Davies was that if the act of toleration did not extend to the colony of Virginia, then neither did the act of uniformity. This was illustrated with a force and ingenuity, and knowledge of law perfectly astonishing, and completely victorious. The general sentiment among the members of the Bar, as expressed in the hearing of Captain Morton, was, "There is a most capital lawyer spoiled." This display of talents called forth universal admiration; and Davies was treated in Williamsburg with very great attention.\* The Lieutenant Governor Sir William Gooch, and James Blair, one of the members of the general court, were marked in their civilities.† Still however the Dissenters were occasionally harrassed until Mr. Davies returned from England. While there, he brought the case of his brethren before the court; and had the satisfaction to find that Sir Dudley Rider, the king's attorney-general in England, agreed with him against the

\* For a pleasing anecdote connected with the transaction here recorded, see Evangelical and Literary Magazine, Vol. 1. p. 272.

† James Blair of the general court, was son of the venerable commissary Blair, the founder and first president of William and Mary college. The commissary was a very distinguished man in his day; and an author of great reputation. He wrote an Exposition of Christ's Sermon on the Mount, of which Dr. Doddridge speaks in very high terms. The only copy of this work that we have ever seen, was found in the library of a Presbyterian preacher, who died many years ago. It is the second edition, published under the direction of the celebrated Dr. Waterland; who prefixed to it a recommendatory preface.—We expect to publish in this volume of our Journal, a brief memoir of this worthy man. *see p. 205 & 241.*

king's attorney-general in Virginia. A copy of his opinion on the subject brought over by Mr. Davies, put the affair at rest; and Dissenters' meeting houses were allowed to be licensed here as they are in England.

(To be continued.)

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*For the Virginia Evangelical and Literary Magazine.*

REVIEW.

THE OLD BACHELOR.

*Published by Mr. Lucas, Baltimore, 1818.*

We are glad to see this work appear before us in a new form, rather more becoming than the old one; and we have read it again with fresh pleasure in the perusal. In some respects indeed, we regard it with a satisfaction that we do not often feel, and greater perhaps than is very nicely proportioned to its actual merit. We are, in truth, not a little anxious, we confess, to see something like a stock of Polite letters established in our state. Of course, we are always ready to be pleased with every offspring of native genius, which contributes any thing to its creation. And certainly our pleasure is not diminished by our knowledge that the author is an acquaintance and friend, a gentleman of talents and virtue, who has already obliged the public with the favors of his pen. But besides all this, the work has really great worth of its own; though not without some faults which we shall take the liberty to mention as we proceed. At present, we must explain its nature and design a little more particularly, for the sake of those at least who may not have seen it before.

The work consists of a series of essays, chiefly upon the morals, manners, and literature, of our good people of Virginia. To give them more life and interest, they are supposed to be written by a certain old bachelor, a Dr. Robert Cecil, as he calls himself, who lives on his farm, in a house built, rather strangely and fancifully indeed, upon the top of a crag, somewhere in the country, and in sight of the Blue Ridge. His household establishment consists of two nephews, Alfred a young lawyer, and Galen a young physician, both absent, pursuing their studies in different cities, and his niece Rosalie,

his house keeper, all the children of an only sister, who had died and left them to his care. The two first are brought forward, in the progress, as his literary partners; but the last is only his confidante, and the favorite member of his privy council. The old bachelor himself, is a gentleman who has seen the wars, and got wounded in the battle of Brandywine; travelled over all the countries of Europe, and bowed at their courts; commenced all the learned professions, and given them over; brought numerous love suits without success; and is now settled down in his wild and romantic retreat, where he consoles himself by directing the education of his wards, and amuses his leisure hours with the charms of reading. And here too, very luckily for us, he at last takes it in his head to write pieces for the Enquirer, a valuable newspaper published in our city of Richmond. The things please the public—are collected into volumes—and now engage our notice in this review.

The great design of the work, as the author tells us, is to improve the taste and morals of our people, and raise the standard of sentiment and virtue among us. He states indeed, in his assumed character, that he has been provoked to this engagement by the rash censures cast upon our character by the Edinburg Reviewers, and he defends us against them with great skill; though, we think, with rather too much of the art and cunning of special pleading. We think too, those gentlemen might very reasonably smile a little to see, that with all his zeal to repel their attacks, he soon draws upon us himself, and indeed shews us no great favor at least. Thus he reproaches us as sunk in ignorance and sloth, illiberal in our provisions for the education of youth, regardless of the future, and in short, as standing altogether in woeful need of an “intellectual resurrection.” And what worse, in the name of wonder and pity, could a Scotch or English critic pretend to say against us? Or who of all the band of Jeffrey or Gifford, could advance such charges without regret?

————— Quis talia fando,  
Myrmidonum, Dolopumve, aut duri miles Ulysei,  
Temperet a lachrymis?

At the same time, we certainly feel no disposition in the world to quarrel with the freedom which our author has taken. We know who it is that says, *faithful are the wounds of a friend*; and while we are not quite satisfied to bear the odious reflections of foreign critics, we shall always be ready to welcome the good advice, and honest censure of our own reformers.

With all fair allowance however, we are not very sure that our author is always entirely reasonable in his complaints. In particular, we think he is, upon the whole, a little too fond of taxing us with downright degeneracy at least. Thus he often reproaches us with the "fallen state of intellect in our country, compared with the age even of the revolutionary war." Then we are informed that "the genius of the country, civil and military, is gone." And, to take a sweeping sentence, "degeneracy political, forensic, scientific, is every where a subject of lamentation." Vol. 1. page 129. By the way, it is only justice to our author to observe, that he wrote before the late war, at a time when his charge was certainly more true than it is at present. But even taking us as we were at that period, what is the proof of our degeneracy? Why, we are often asked, where are our warriors, statesmen, lawyers, and men of science and letters, to compare with those among our fathers. But did our author really think that we could get the altitude of a whole state, by measuring the shadows of a few eminent men. Or if he did, had he forgot that some of those revolutionary worthies themselves, were still living to save us from his reproach? Some of them, it is true, had retired behind the scenes; but others were still mingling with their children on the stage of action, and certainly without any striking superiority over them.

But, where were our warriors? Where they were before our revolution. Such characters, we know, are not usually formed in times of tranquility; and it is not often, at least, that the sword which vindicates a nation's rights is entwined with the myrtle of peace. It is war who sows the dragon's teeth, that spring up in soldiers and heroes on every side. And accordingly, we may remember, that on the emergence of the late war, we were not entirely without our officers of the old continental stamp, to maintain our rights and honor in the field. As to statesmen indeed, truly such, we confess we had not many to boast in our public halls. But still we maintain that we had always men enough of the right stuff to make good legislators, if our people had chosen to use them. Why they did not indeed, is another question which we may answer some other time. Then as to lawyers, we are satisfied that our bar was as well furnished as it ever was before. Indeed if it were not both indelicate and invidious, we might easily mention some names from among the living ornaments of the profession, and the author himself in the number, who would have had no need to stoop before the proudest of his Augustan age. But where were our men of science and letters? Why really we do not know that we ever had such

gentry among us. Indeed we cannot find that, properly speaking, science and letters were ever cultivated in our state. It is true we may have had here and there a few individuals who thought of raising them; but still they were exotics, never natives of our land; not indeed for want of proper soil or climate; but simply because we were without the proper nurseries for their growth. Such at least is our impression, from all our researches upon the subject. In our judgment, it belongs to us of this age to lay the very foundation of a literary and scientific character in our state; and we rejoice to see some signs of preparation for the work.\*

We must still admit indeed, that at the period we are now speaking of, there had certainly been a great and woeful decline in our moral character, private and public, and the causes were obvious. They were, briefly, the long continuance of peace, the sudden increase of wealth among our citizens, and, above all, the prevalence of infidelity imported from abroad. Hence came a gradual relaxation of all the bonds of domestic discipline, and social duty; and the evil was felt through every nerve and sinew of our commonwealth. At present, however, as we have already intimated, the case is otherwise. In truth, it is clear to us that a spirit of improvement is actually gone forth among us, which is already beginning to renew the face of things before our eyes. We see it in the progress of agriculture, the operations of the board of public works, the establishment of a literary fund, the foundation of an university, and various other undertakings which promise the best results. Perhaps indeed, we ought to add, that our author's strictures have probably contributed to this very change, which gives us our best argument against them.

But reverting again for a moment to the period at which our author wrote, and taking his charge of degeneracy in all its extent, what are the remedies which he suggests! They are briefly, a more liberal provision for the education of youth, particularly of our ladies, whose influence on society is justly and gallantly maintained, and the excitement of a literary taste and public spirit, by means of popular writings. We are a little surprised indeed, with our knowledge of his sentiments, to find that he has not set down religion in his catalogue of ways and means. And yet we are satisfied, and are sure of his coincidence with us, that it is alone equal to all the rest. Considered indeed, only in a philosophical light, as a mere engine of policy, we are convinced that religion,

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\* See however, some valuable essays upon the subject of education in Virginia, in the second volume of the Christian Monitor.

with all its apparatus of pulpits, missionaries, and Bible and Tract societies, is the most powerful machine that was ever brought to bear upon the characters of men. It is in truth, the very lever of Archimedes, which resting on another world, easily bears up all the destinies of this. And, we think, we have experience to prove our assertion; for in point of fact, it is this instrument which has actually begun, and is still carrying on the moral renovation of our own state, and of all the world. At the same time, we readily agree with our author, that the other means which he mentions may have great weight in the scale. In particular we are quite sure that popular writings, coming home to our own *business and bosoms*, might be eminently useful. But then, they must be written with a proper spirit, and in a proper style—which reminds us that we have got a few words to say about the execution of the work before us.

And here, we certainly find a good deal to praise, with perhaps a little something to blame. The essays, in fact, are generally good, and often elegant. Those upon the subject of eloquence particularly, are written with equal judgment and taste. Indeed, take them merely as pieces of writing, they are pretty nearly all that we wish. At the same time, considered as descriptions of life and manners, they certainly fall a little below the best models of this kind. They have neither the easy humor of Addison, nor the lively gaiety of Thornton. They are besides a little deficient in colloquial ease, in those parts which require it. What is worse, with all his promises to “catch the manners living as they rise,” our author’s pictures are rather imitations from books, than copies from life. At least, they seem to us to want a little native freshness, and what we should like to call *Virginianism*, if our artists would allow the term. But the greatest fault is the stiffness of the characters. In truth, we must think that our author, with all his fine qualities, has none of that happy talent for lively and picturesque touches of nature, by which characters are set before our eyes in all the spirit, and more than the interest, of real life. Thus the old bachelor himself, has hardly any of those humorous singularities, which we expect of course from one of his cloth, and which Addison has hit off with so much pleasantry in his old Sir Roger. Indeed, the doctor formally abjures them all in the very beginning of his work. Then as to the other *dramatis personæ*, Alfred and Galen are men of buckram, not rogues indeed; they are very honest worthy gentlemen—but without any peculiar marks of character about them. And even the charming Rosalie herself, with all her airs and graces, though certainly a fine

figure for a novel, especially when the moon shines out upon her uncle's castle, is perhaps a little out of her element in a book of essays. The other characters, occasionally introduced, are generally cold and formal, and sometimes "imitate humanity," a little awkwardly at least.

We are aware indeed, that we may be thought singular in questioning our author's talent for drawing characters, after his sketches in the *British Spy*. But we understand ourselves, and wish to be understood by others. We cheerfully allow that he has sometimes great skill in *drawing* characters; but we deny that he has much art in *painting* them. He makes his outlines exactly enough; but he wants lightness of pencil to fill them up with the proper traits and touches of expression. Or, to drop the figure, he certainly describes the powers of mind, distinguishes the qualities of genius, displays the contrasts of opposite talents, and the discrimination of similar ones, with uncommon skill. But these are all a sort of anatomical preparations, in which we admire the curious nicety of art, while we still regret the absent spirit of life.

After all, however, the work has really so many redeeming beauties, that we consider it as an honor to our author, and to our state. In truth, we sincerely regret, that from the station to which he has been raised, we can hardly hope for the continuation which he partly promised in his preface. And nothing consoles us for the loss of his talents in the walk of letters, but the reflection that they are perhaps still better employed in the service of our country.

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## REVIEW.

### *Memoirs of the Agricultural Society of Virginia.*

[Continued from pa. 86.]

Mr. Garnett, in his next No. takes a general view of the difficulties to be encountered by those who aim at a general reformation in our system of agriculture. Of these, the first arises from the want of definite and general principles of practice applicable to all circumstances. A system, and practices growing out of it, perfectly adapted to one country, on account of variations in soil, climate, state of society, &c. may be inapplicable to another. Hence, the difficulty of making

a beneficial use of the knowledge of foreign agriculturists; the frequent failures of experiments among us suggested by foreign practice; and the discredit thrown on attempts to promote scientific agriculture. The writer adverts, too, to the despotism of fashion, which hitherto has exerted her authority against the application of science, to this branch of human industry. He, however, like a true republican, breaks out into open rebellion, and boldly declares that, "*no man can become a first rate agriculturist without some knowledge, at least of chemistry, if not of botany also.*" We certainly agree with him; and moreover think that an acquaintance with *mechanical philosophy*, would enable the farmer to facilitate many operations now performed in a very bungling way on many farms in this country.

In the next place, Mr. G. adverts to difficulties arising from "traits of national character." He says, "For example, we are, I fear, deplorably deficient in that kind of much enduring perseverance, which reared the dykes of Holland, and fertilized the barren rocks of some of our sister states to the east." There is much truth in this remark; and if the opinion, that this is owing to physical causes operating on our population, were established, although not much used to the despairing mood, our hopes concerning the improvement of Virginia, would give up the ghost. But we are persuaded that it is to be ascribed in a great degree to the influence of moral causes. A better system of domestic and scholastic discipline would produce a great change in the next generation. In addition to this, the author adduces another difficulty, arising from the opposite extremes of too little and too much credulity. We have no room for his humorous description of the *Good-enoughs*, and the *Hobby-horsicals*; nor for his historical sketch of the *Merino-mania*, which a few years ago, was *epidemic* among us. He thinks, however, that the *Hobby-horsicals* have, as they dashed about on their ponies, stumbled upon some good things: and as a hopeful sign of improvement, lets us know that cattle are not allowed to die in the winter and spring, for the purpose of furnishing leather to the negroes next year!

Another difficulty arises from the general impoverishment of the soil, in the old settled parts of the state, by long continued neglect of all attainable means of improvement.

Another from the ignorance and want of the best contrived implements of agriculture, and the general difficulty and expense of procuring them. This in a great measure is to be attributed to the want of good mechanics through the country—And this again, we remark, is one of the bitter fruits of slavery.

This dismaying statement is closed with the most formidable impediment of all— The whole of the evil here may be expressed by one word, *Speculation*. This is another Pandora's box, from which issues all manner of evil.

Mr. Garnett's final number is on the reasons which we have to hope for amendment in our agricultural system. These are founded on the absolute necessity of agriculture in civilized society, and the constant demand for her products; from the success of experiments lately made in the way of improvement; and from the organization of Societies for the purpose of introducing and supporting a better system. The efficiency of these institutions in other countries has been such, as to inspire the hope that they will be useful here. Only let those who are engaged in this patriotic and most laudable plan, persevere; and they will reap a rich reward.

The paper next in order is a communication from William Meriwether, who is said to be a very skilful practical farmer. It has for its running title, "On the Hessian Fly." The object is to prove that *deep sowing* is no preventive of the ravages of that scourge of the country. And this the writer seems to us to have accomplished.

Why has not more attention been paid to the natural history of that insect?

We refer to the work which we are reviewing for a description of an improved harrow, by Mr. Garnett; and pass on to a paper by Colonel John Taylor, headed "*The necessities, competency and profit of agriculture.*" This writer, in a quaint style indeed, almost always presents some practical truths of great importance to the Virginia farmer. We extract the first paragraph that follows his introduction.

#### "THE NECESSITIES OF AGRICULTURE.

"These are fertility, tools, industry and houses. Without fertility, tools are useless; without tools, industry must fail; without industry, fertility and tools are unproductive; and without houses, crops are lost and stocks perish. A capacity in land to produce something, does not satisfy an indispensable necessity of agriculture. It must produce enough to defray all the expenses of cultivation, to supply the inevitable wants of the labour employed on it, and to pay the taxes. If it produces less, the farmer must perish, or resort to some other mode of subsistence. Hunger, the loosest professor of moral rectitude, must become his preceptor; and the poverty arising from heartless attempts to gain subsistence, is his last comforter.— No refuge exists from a calamity, produced with inflexible certainty by an insufficiency in the soil to supply him with necessaries, but to desert his home, to enlist under the banner of vice, or to improve his land. The insufficiency of a great number of farms in Virginia, to yield the bare necessaries recited, must drive many farmers to one of these remedies. The first is a voluntary banishment from our country and our friends; the second, a banishment from Heaven; and the third, an exertion of a strong, virtuous and patriotic mind. The success of the last is certain, if we use the means placed by Providence within our reach. Land, in proportion to our numbers, abounds, nor are

we less bountifully endowed with simple means for its improvement, which carefully husbanded and skilfully applied, will save us from exile or guilt, and bestow upon us subsistence and wealth."—*pa.* 80, 81.

We are then informed that the means to which reference has just been made, are "*manuring, good ploughing, grass-seeds, sown with or upon small grain, and inclosing.*" The detail under each of these heads cannot be expected from us. We recommend the writer's remarks to every reader of ours engaged in the noble calling of agriculture. In which recommendation we would include what is said on the necessity of *good tools* for the improvement of the art. The following extract on what is termed the third necessity of agriculture, is of so general application to the state of society among us, that we cannot withhold it from our readers.

"Industry is a third necessity of a prosperous state of agriculture. The high authority which has declared, "that idleness is the root of evil," decides that industry is the root of good. Yet it unfortunately happens, that wealth is too often considered, as discharging us from an obligation, a compliance with which is necessary, to render us happy ourselves and useful to society. The mischiefs of this opinion are vastly aggravated by the consideration, that wealth bestows an ability to exert industry with discretion, and to extend its benefits with most effect. A consciousness of charity or generosity, sometimes founded in vanity, and often productive of evil, is the solace resorted to for the neglect of a virtue always productive of good. The rich who bestow money, may possibly nurture idleness, and never add to the general stock of subsistence. A monkey, possessed of a heap of guineas, might scatter the shining baubles among his species; but one which by his labor should augment their food, would render them more essential services. Where is the mighty merit of giving money which we never earned; whether derived from our ancestors, or obtained by the dice; as an oblation to vanity or to fortune? Whether it shall excite the industry or feed the dissipation of the receiver, is matter of indifference to the giver, when his object is either to gain popularity on earth, or to compound with Heaven, by purchasing for himself an impunity for idleness, with the donations of casualty, or the virtuous labors of another. Whatever may be the motive for industry, its fruit is individual and general good. A mere exchange of money from hand to hand, creates nothing, and does not augment the national prosperity. Comfort, plenty, freedom and virtue, all spring from industry. The surplus of its labors bestows power, knowledge and morals upon a nation. Its loss would beget debility, cause the vices resulting from want, and lead to barbarism. The industrious man alone can exercise charity and liberality, from a principle radically founded in virtue and unalloyed by vanity."—*pa.* 86, 87.

Any person acquainted with old Virginia, may appreciate the value, and perceive the justness of what is said respecting the want of suitable houses. Hay and fodder exposed in stacks to sun, rain, and wind; *stock* of almost all kinds exposed to all the inclemencies of the seasons; and tools rusting away in the open air, furnish comments enough on the improvidence of farmers, and the importance of attending to the writer on this subject.

The last extract from this paper, will afford a striking illustration of our remark on the style and manner of this author.

“One intension of this essay is, to impress the error of beginning at the wrong end to improve our agriculture. It would be premature to wander away from its primary necessities after some brilliant discovery, before we have established a sound foundation for beautiful superstructures; and would be probably nearly as useless as the compass to the hull of a ship without rigging. Fertility, tools, industry and houses, cited to illustrate this intension, are indispensable portions of the tackle, by which agriculture must prepare for being steered by the rudder of chemistry, into the harbor of opulence. I mean not to decry the labors of the learned in discovering new sails for accelerating the voyage, but only to insist upon the necessity of fitting the ship for withstanding storms, before she is launched into an ocean of theory, after new discoveries. A beautiful feather may be pleasing, and the entire plumage of a beautiful bird may be admirable; but a fine feather stuck into the young bird, just as its down begins to spring, might retard its growth to maturity, and become a deterring example”—*pa. 92.*

The communication which follows in order, is from W. C. Nicholas, esq. This appears to us to be one of the most valuable papers in the whole collection. It is on *The Rotation of Crops*; a subject, confessedly of considerable difficulty, and of great importance. The practice designated by the phrase, is founded on the established facts, that land in a short time becomes *tired* of a particular crop; and that every crop taken off exhausts the fertility of the soil. These facts have given rise to the important inquiries, what changes in crops are best suited to the *inclinations* (if the word may be so used) of mother earth; and by what processes in cultivation the exhaustion may best be restored. The matter in this paper is so condensed that we find abridgment difficult; and we have not room to make large extracts—We recommend the whole to diligent perusal.

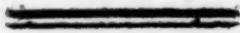
Of the remaining papers we can only give the titles, which are as follows.

*On artificial grasses*, by Philip Tabb. *On Plaister of Paris*, by Randolph Harrison. *Agricultural Notices*, by James M. Garnett.

To this work we wish a wide circulation; because it contains many practical precepts of much value, and is calculated to set the reader to thinking and feeling on the subject of agricultural improvement. The profits of the publication, too, are to be applied to the promotion of the great objects of the society.

To the institution we do most heartily wish success; believing, as we do, that the best interests of our country are connected with the improvements proposed to be effected. Patriotism is not an *instinct* as some imagine; but the result of

the association of the best affections of the human heart, with certain local situations and objects. This is the land of my birth; here I was baptised; here educated; here rest the ashes of my ancestors; here I formed my friendships, and attachments of a dearer and holier name! It is ideas and feelings such as these that operate like a spell on the soul, and unite the affections to the soil. There is much truth in the saying *ubi amor, ibi patria*. The circumstances which we have mentioned, and many others of a similar kind call forth and fix this love. The employment of industry and skill in fertilizing and beautifying the land, is not the least efficient in the catalogue. And this especially, because the farmer knows that while thus improving the soil of which he is lord, he at once increases his own wealth and that of his country. Gratification of the desire of gain is associated with something better than mere selfish feelings; and instead of making a man a miser, elevates his views, and prepares him to put forth the best efforts of his nature. He who drives the soil hard, and extracts from it every year the most that it can afford without regard to any thing but the nett proceeds of his crop, is in a fair way of being converted, if he is not so already, into a contracted and hard-fisted mortal, who parts with his money as with his soul. And the *mere speculator* is still worse. His strong-box is his country. It contains all that is dear and valuable to himself; and that place is preferred by him, where he can pursue his calling with most success. He knows that he lives without benefitting the community—that he grows rich on the spoils of others; that he prospers in the midst of misfortune; that he is the vampire of the society that protects him, and fattens on her vital fluids. The clouded and anxious countenance of the unfortunate trader is sunshine to his soul; the tears of the widow are to him as wine that makes glad the heart; and the cries of the orphan are his sweetest music. Ought not the air, fire, and water of the republic to be taken from him?



#### TESTIMONIES OF ANCIENT HEATHENS CONCERNING CHRISTIANITY.

It has been thought by some an objection to the truth of the gospel, that so little notice has been taken of Christ and his religion by the distinguished heathen writers of the day in

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which he lived, and of the immediately following age. Learned men however have shown that there is no force in the objection; and that the progress of christianity must have been such as ecclesiastical historians have related, to account for the notice which it actually received. We think that too much stress has been generally laid on heathen testimonies, and too little weight allowed to the evidence of christians. At the same time, however, we allow due credit to the labors of learned men, who have expended their strength on the outworks of christianity; and with much learning and ingenuity have fortified the walls and towers of the church. In this department the industry of Lardner is unrivalled. Making use principally of what he has furnished to our hands, we shall occasionally afford to our readers opportunities of hearing the testimonies of heathens respecting the early christians, and their religion.

In this number we shall give a place to the celebrated letter of *Pliny to Trajan*. Pliny the younger, was nephew to the celebrated natural historian of that name, by whom he was adopted and educated. He was born about the year of Christ 61; and after growing up to man's estate sustained several important offices. He was consul in the third year of the emperor Trajan, A. C. 100. He was also for a while governor of Pontus and Bithynia. It was while he held this office that he wrote the *celebrated letter*, of which a translation follows. It was written about the year 107.

“Pliny to the emperor Trajan wisheth health and happiness.

It is my constant custom, Sir, to refer myself to you in all matters concerning which I have any doubt. For who can better direct me where I hesitate, or instruct me where I am ignorant? I have never been present at any trials of christians: so that I know not well what is the subject matter of punishment, or of inquiry, or what strictness ought to be used in either. Nor have I been a little perplexed to determine whether any difference ought to be made upon account of age, or whether the young and tender, and the full grown and robust, ought to be treated all alike: whether repentance should entitle to pardon, or whether all who have once been christians ought to be punished, though they are now no longer so: whether the name itself, although no crimes be detected, or crimes only belonging to the name, ought to be punished. Concerning all these things I am in doubt.

In the mean time, I have taken this course with all who have been brought before me, and have been accused as christians. I have put the question to them, whether they were

christians. Upon their confessing to me that they were, I repeated the question a second and a third time, threatening to punish them with death. Such as still persisted, I ordered away to be punished; for it was no doubt with me, whatever might be their opinion, that contumacy, and inflexible obstinacy, ought to be punished. There were others of the same infatuation, whom, because they are Roman citizens, I have noted down to be sent to the city.

In a short time, the crime spreading itself, even whilst under persecution, as is usual in such cases, divers sorts of people came in my way. An information was presented to me, without mentioning the author, containing the names of many persons, who upon examination denied that they were christians, or had ever been so: who repeated after me an invocation of the gods, and with wine and frankincense made supplication to your image, which for that purpose I had caused to be brought and set before them, together with the statues of the deities. Moreover, they reviled the name of Christ. None of which things, as is said, they who are really christians, can by any means be compelled to do. These, therefore, I thought proper to discharge.

Others were named by an informer, who at first confessed themselves christians, and afterwards denied it. The rest said they had been christians, but left them; some three years ago, some longer, and one or more, above twenty years. They all worshipped your image, and the statues of the gods: these also reviled Christ. They affirmed that the whole of their fault or error, lay in this, that they were wont to meet together on a stated day before it was light, and sing among themselves alternately a hymn to Christ, as a God, (*quasi Deo*) and bind themselves together by an oath, not to the commission of any wickedness, but to be guilty of no theft, nor robbery, nor adultery, never to falsify their word, nor to deny a pledge committed to them, when called upon to return it. When these things were performed, it was their custom to separate, and then come together to a meal, which they ate in common, without any disorder: but this they had forborne, since the publication of my edict, by which, according to your commands, I prohibited assemblies.

After receiving this account, I judged it the more necessary to examine, and that by torture, two maid servants, who were called ministers. But I have discovered nothing, beside a bad and excessive superstition.

Suspending therefore all judicial proceedings, I have recourse to you for advice! for it has appeared to me a matter

highly deserving consideration, especially on account of the great number of persons who are in danger of suffering. For many of all ages, and every rank, of both sexes likewise, are accused, and will be accused. Nor has the contagion of this superstition seized cities only, but the lesser towns also, and the open country. Nevertheless it seems to me that it may be restrained and corrected. It is certain that the temples, which were almost forsaken, begin to be more frequented. And the sacred solemnities, after a long intermission, begin to be revived. Victims likewise are every where bought up, whereas for some time there were few purchasers. Whence it is easy to imagine what number of men might be reclaimed, if pardon were granted to those who shall repent."

Our readers may perhaps like to see the emperor's Rescript. "Trajan to Pliny wisheth health and happiness.

You have taken the right method, my Pliny, in your proceedings with those who have been brought before you as christians; for it is impossible to establish any one rule that shall hold universally. They are not to be sought for. If any are brought before you, and are convicted they ought to be punished. However, he that denies his being a christian, and makes it evident in fact, that is by supplicating our gods, though he be suspected to have been so formerly, let him be pardoned on repentance. But in no case, may a bill of information of any crime whatsoever be received without being signed by him who presents it: for that would be a dangerous precedent, and unworthy of my government."

On these remnants of antiquity, we shall offer one or two remarks.

1. The account given of this matter by Eusebius in the third book of his ecclesiastical history agrees, in every important particular, with that contained in the letters above. Thus do they sustain the credit of this distinguished historian.

2. The letter of Pliny may be regarded as a strong testimony to the high moral character of the primitive christians. They could be charged with nothing but a renunciation of idolatry, and a refusal to worship the image of Cæsar.

3. We may observe the bitterness of the persecution to which christians were exposed. The name alone insured condemnation. Trajan is celebrated for the mildness of his government; and we give him credit for discountenancing, as we see he did, the infamous race of informers. But yet, said he, "If they are convicted, (that is of being christians) they ought to be punished." Their name was their crime.

4. We admire the courage and fortitude of primitive believers. It was no light thing to be a christian in those days,

when evidence that one had given his name to Christ ensured his condemnation. How changed is the state of the church! We sit under our own vine and fig-tree, and there are none to make us afraid. But primitive christians pursued their way to heaven through much tribulation. We think every little sacrifice of ease or worldly interest on behalf of the church a great matter; but the first disciples sacrificed ease, honor, estate, and life, in the cause of Christ.

Among us, every one is ready to cry out. "I am expected to do every thing, while others will make no exertions." And thus all hold back from the support of that interest which was maintained by the blood of the martyrs. Let Virginia christians consider well their responsibility: and look carefully to the example of those churches which once said they were rich and encreased in goods.

5. The words of Pliny seem to us to afford strong evidence, that the faith of primitive christians respecting the nature of Christ, was the same with that of the *orthodox* in the present day. "They sung a hymn to Christ as a God," are the words of this heathen witness. The phraseology is just what we might expect from a polytheist on the supposition that the first believers regarded Christ as God, and offered divine honors to him; but seems in no way reconcilable to the opinion that they considered him as a mere man, fallible and peccable like themselves.

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REMARKABLE CONVERSION.

*The Conversion of M. de la Harpe, a French Infidel Philosopher.*

The circumstances attendant on conversion are extremely various. In those who have happily been favored with the unspeakable advantage of religious education, they are seldom very sudden or very observable. It may even be doubted, whether the subject of this important change is always aware of the time or manner in which the fact took place, since the external manifestations of it are but little distinguishable from the habits of previous life and manners. Internal evidence may be perfectly satisfactory after this change, and may gather strength by time and experience, yet may be so indecisive at the moment, as hardly to admit of direct inferences

or deductions. Regeneration is most evident in those who have passed their early life in opposition to all religion. In proportion to the vehemence of their opposition, to the opportunities they have had of displaying their enmity, and to the numbers of persons who may have been injured, perhaps ruined, by the public propagation of their erroneous principles and iniquitous practices, is the attention which is attracted by a moral revolution in their sentiments and conduct.

It is well known that Voltaire, for instance, had done all that was possible for wit, and sneer, and malevolent misrepresentation to do, towards the entire eradication of christianity: nothing less would content him. It was the joy of his heart, the business of his life, the study of his whole mind, to defame the sacred Scriptures, the gospels especially; and so great was his antipathy to the Divine author and finisher of our faith, that (charity would hope, even of Voltaire, that those are mistaken who thus interpret it) the private mark placed at the corner of his letters, to remind his confidential friends of their *duty*, was *E. l' I.—Erasez l' Infame*, “Crush the wretch;” meaning, by the *wretch*, the Saviour of the world! What was the state of mind of the *dying* Voltaire, his disciples have diligently concealed from the public. But if he had been so changed some years before his death, as to vindicate that faith which he formerly vilified, what a striking instance of all-vanquishing grace would he have been!

The divine sovereignty did not see fit to manifest itself in that particular instance. Nevertheless, a chief disciple of that atheist, no less bitter than his master against the truth—no less hardened in his guilt—no less sarcastic in his manner—no less determined as an enemy to Christ and his cross, and as a worshipper of the goddess Reason, almighty Reason! lately stood forth as “a brand plucked from the burning;” and, after having proclaimed the gospel to numerous auditories, has died a penitent and a believer.

Such of your readers as have paid attention to French literature, know that there was a society of eminent men of letters who held regular meetings, in order to canvass the best mode of directing their attacks against christianity. Diderot was the patriarch of these atheists.—D'Alembert, Duclos, Condorcet, and many others, were members of this society. But none was more conspicuous than M. de la Harpe. He was the favorite of Voltaire; repeatedly visited him, and resided with him at Ferney; acted on his theatre; dedicated his first play to him; and, in return, Voltaire revised his productions—recommended him to official patronage—secured a party in his favor—and, in short, exerted all his interest to

render him popular. De la Harpe, treading in the footsteps of his master, promoted the French Revolution to his utmost. The ever shifting governors of France, during many a turbulent scene, were sometimes friendly, sometimes inimical, to literature and *literati*. By one of these temporary presidencies M. de la Harpe was arrested, and shut up in the Luxembourg. The greater number of those with whom he had been particularly connected, had already suffered on the scaffold; and the same fate appeared to be reserved for him. At the moment when he was consigned to a prison, the opinions of these modern philosophers with whom he had associated, were not effaced from his mind; and, though he abominated their effects, the principles themselves had not altogether lost their influence.

In this comfortless situation M. de la Harpe had the happiness of finding a fellow-prisoner, whose piety afforded him the means of consolation, and by whom it was recommended to employ himself in studying the Psalms of David, which M. de la Harpe had never looked into but as containing some poetical beauties; and even of these he did not retain the least remembrance. His new friend, however, fearing lest he might alarm the philosopher by such a proposition, urged this employment rather as the means of amusing his anxious mind; and, therefore, requested him to write a mere literary commentary on these sublime productions.

M. de la Harpe, charmed with an occupation, which was so conformable to his taste and inclinations, entered at once upon the work. At the very commencement of it, he was convinced that the Psalms contained poetical beauties of a superior character; and, as he proceeded, this opinion was proportionably heightened. The perusal of other pious works strengthened the growing disposition; and he, at length, discovered the real source of those consolations, and that help to which the wretched never apply in vain. This commentary, which was at first undertaken with the warmth of gratitude, and continued with the zeal of piety, became the preliminary discourse of the translation of the Psalter, the first work in which the author announced his conversion.

This conversion was attended with all the marks of a sincere conviction. The manuscript notes of M. de la Harpe afford an additional proof of it. "I was in prison," says he, "all alone, in a small chamber, and in a state of profound sorrow; but many days did not pass before I found that the study of the Psalms and the Gospels, had produced a strong, though gradual, effect in my mind. I was already numbered among the faithful. I beheld a new light, but it alarmed and

terrified me, by discovering the abyss—an abyss of forty years of error. I beheld all the evil, but could not discern the remedy. There was no one to afford me aid. On one hand, my life appeared before me, represented to me by a light which beamed from the torch of celestial truth. On the other, I looked on death, that death which I daily expected, and as it was then inflicted. The priest no longer appeared on the scaffold to console the dying victim; he ascended it rather to die himself there. Oppressed by these desolating ideas, my heart sunk within me; and addressing myself in a smothered voice to the God whom I had scarcely known, What ought I to do? said I—what will be my lot? Upon the table lay Thomas A. Kempis. I had been already assured of the excellence of this work, of the comfort I should derive from it, and of the power it possessed to soothe my desponding thoughts. I, therefore, opened the book, as accident directed, and my eyes fell at once upon these words, *Behold, I am here, my son: I come to you because you have called upon me.* I read no more. The instantaneous impression which I experienced is beyond all expression; and I am as unable to describe as to forget it. I fell with my face on the earth, and bathed in tears; while my words and my cries were but half uttered from the violence of my sobbings. At the same time, I found my heart expanding and relieved; but, at the very same moment, as if it were ready to split. Indeed, I remember very little of this situation, but that I wept long, and that beyond all comparison: my heart never experienced such violent and delicious emotions, and that these words, *Behold I am here, my son,* did not cease to resound, as it were, through my soul, and to arouse all the faculties of it.”

When M. de la Harpe was liberated from prison, his sole occupation was to support the cause which he had so fervently embraced. His *Lecons de Literature*, had been long expected. The author, however, resolved to make this work subservient to the interests of religion and the social principle: a work which originally had no other object than to teach the rudiments of literature and of taste. Great as the difficulties were which opposed themselves to such a design, M. de la Harpe was determined to pursue it; and, in spite of the various obstacles he encountered, and the persecutions he suffered, he finally succeeded in the execution of it.

M. de la Harpe considered it as a duty to proclaim in public those truths which he had formerly been so unfortunate as to oppose; and it was with this view that he resumed the chair of the Lyceum. The effect produced by him at the first sitting will never be forgotten. The orator, in a full speech of energy

and pathos, gave a picture of the national manners, pointed out their causes, and inspired the crowded audience with those sentiments of indignation and regret which he himself felt.

The noble and pathetic delivery of M. de la Harpe gave great weight to the principles which he maintained; and it was remarked with truth, that his eloquence became more perfect when it was altogether consecrated to the support of such a cause. It was to be expected that his zeal would attract, as in effect it afterward did, the spirit of persecution; and he was twice perscribed. An order was issued to get possession of him alive or dead; but he continued to pursue his labours with undisturbed tranquility. His "Defence of Religion" then occupied his mind. Without consulting the authors who had treated the same subject, he confined himself to the meditation of the sacred writings, and drew from that only source the arguments which he opposed to the philosophers. He possessed an advantage unknown to his predecessors. Connected as he had long been with the infidel writers, he was well acquainted with the strong and the weak parts of their doctrine; and, to use his own expression, he had passed almost the whole of his life in *the camp of the enemy*.

All the activity of his mind was exerted in the sacred cause to which he had devoted himself; nor did the continual dangers to which he was exposed interrupt the tranquility of his mind. He has often said that this period of proscription was the happiest of his life. His intimate friends had frequently seen him, when he thought himself unobserved by them, prostrate on the earth, as it were, before God, and displaying signs of the most lively and sincere repentance. His health, however, was materially affected by his confinement; and, after his return to public notice, he gradually sunk under a complication of disorders. He preserved his presence of mind to the last; and when his enfeebled eyes could not bear the light from amidst the curtains which were drawn around him from the gloom of this anticipated tomb, he continued to converse with his friends on the comforts he experienced from religion, on the errors of his life, and on the mercy of his God. He died Feb. 11, 1803, aged 64.\*

In contemplating a character like that of De la Harpe, we must make considerable allowances for the circumstances in which it is placed. The darkness of popery, as to spiritual things, is surely very unfavorable to a searcher after truth; and, when no other helps are within reach but such as that

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\* The above particulars are taken from No. IX. of the *Literary Panorama*: a work of great merit.

communion affords, Providence *may* vouchsafe to make use of such, however inferior they may be in their nature. But it will not escape the observation, that M. de la Harpe had recourse to the Scriptures as soon as possible, and confined himself to the meditation of these; which is certainly one favorable token of change of heart and mind. Another proof that his conversion was genuine, is to be inferred from his endeavors to recover those who were lost. The man who, notwithstanding two proscriptions, dares to profess his belief in God, and in Christ, full in the face of an execrable kind of death, deserves credit for his professions, and applause for his zeal. The rapidity of the change in him is remarkable. It bears some analogy to that of the well known Col. Gardiner. Both of these converts describe the first effect of their new view of things as a beam of heavenly light bursting on their astonished sight; and in the case of M. de la Harpe, the instantaneous impression derived from "a word in season," may fairly be produced as parallel to those arrows of conviction derived from the sacred word, which sometimes it pleases God to fasten in the consciences of sinners in a moment. That prostration and tears should accompany such an incident, will be thought extremely natural by all who have experienced that deep self abasement which is one part of real conversion. Sobblings, cries, "groanings that cannot be uttered," may well be supposed to attend the renovation of a heart so uncommonly depraved as this; the enormity of past guilt displayed in full view, cannot be otherwise than terrific to one who beholds the severity of the divine justice, but is not yet acquainted with the placidity of the divine mercy.

Lastly; Let the conversion of the most obdurate sinner never be despaired of;—if ordinary means are ineffectual, divine grace can employ extraordinary occurrences. He who will not hear in a chapel, shall be obliged to hear in a prison;—he who has treated salvation as despicable when at liberty, shall be taught the value of it under bonds, as Menasseh was; and be induced to long for spiritual deliverance much more ardently than even for temporal. As no set of men can do (and have done) so much harm to the unwary as men of letters, so those among them, who feel the importance of the Gospel, ought to promote it with all their might, that they may counteract, as far as possible, the miseries which "philosophy and literature, falsely so called," have brought on mankind, even to the ruin of thousands. Such was the conviction of M. de la Harpe; and on this conviction he acted, till Providence put a period to his life and labours. [*Evang. Mag.*

## RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

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The editor of this Magazine is desirous to give a fuller and more accurate account than has yet been given of the various associations in Virginia, and the states southward and westward of Virginia, formed for the purpose of promoting christian knowledge and vital piety. He therefore asks for information concerning all Bible, Missionary, Tract, and Sabbath School Societies now in operation in the part of our country just mentioned. It is known to him that a number of pious and benevolent persons, scattered over this extensive region, are engaged in most laudable efforts of christian charity; and there is every reason to believe that their attempts are productive of good. Yet all these are desultory exertions, and in a considerable degree feeble because they are desultory. Individuals, or small societies have the feeling that they labor alone, surrounded by the indifferent or the hostile; while friends are afar off. But if there could be a regular monthly communication established between them through the medium of this Magazine, it might rouse the hopes of the desponding, and clothe the efforts of christian charity with new vigor. One of the plagues of Virginia in particular is a local prejudice, which looks only to one's own neighborhood or county. This throws great impediments in the way of any system of general improvement. It has served to retard the progress of the state in all that an enlightened patriot could wish to foster; and it is particularly not a little injurious to the interests of true religion. Little societies acting for themselves, without any system of general co-operation, will never produce an effect corresponding to the enlarged desires of evangelical benevolence, nor assert the christian honors of the state. But if all that is done in the present mode of procedure, were brought into one view, it would ani-

mate hope, and excite to more vigorous exertion.

We know that there are Bible societies in Norfolk, Petersburg, Richmond, Lynchburg, Liberty, Lexington, Staunton, Winchester, Fredericksburg, and various other places; that in most if not all of these towns there are sabbath schools; that there are several Missionary societies in the state; but we do not know much of what is doing by most of them; and there may be associations of this kind of which we havenot even heard. We are convinced that this is unfavorable. We therefore earnestly entreat those who are engaged in these labors of love, to enable us to give accurate information to the christian public respecting their attempts, and the success with which they are crowned. Any information from any society of christians on the subjects referred to above, will meet with prompt attention. While we cannot but feel a decided preference to the peculiar doctrine and discipline of the church of which we are members, we have hearts to rejoice in the success of all who labor for the conversion of souls to the Lord Jesus, and for the honor of his kingdom.

To this call on christian brethren for information we would add an earnest request to those who are concerned for the cause of literature in Virginia. We believe, as has before been said, that sound learning is a hand-maid of true religion. It may then subserve the interests of both, to collect as much statistical knowledge respecting both these subjects as possible. In conducting the important literary enterprize undertaken by our state, the more that is known of the real condition of the country, the better. We beg leave then to propose in the definite form of questions, the enquiries which we wish to have answered. And first in relation to religion, we could wish to procure answers to the following

questions in relation to every county in Virginia.

1. How many ministers of the gospel are there in the county in which you live, and to what denomination do they belong?

2. How many places of worship are there; and what is the number of church members?

3. Is there a Bible society in the county; and if so, what are its resources, what has it accomplished, and what are its present hopes?

4. Are there Missionary societies; and if so, what is their specific object, and how have they succeeded?

5. Are there Sabbath schools?—What are their numbers, and hopes of ultimate success?

6. Is there a Tract society?—What are its resources, and as far as known, its results?

In relation to the institutions of learning, we would in the first place ask for a brief history of the colleges in Virginia, including a view of their present condition—This is a subject which we have much at heart, and we should expect that it might excite the attention of the friends of these several establishments. It seems to be the laudable intention of the Legislature to communicate the blessings of education to all our citizens. The support of Colleges and Academies in different parts of the state is well calculated to promote this object. And surely, the institutions which, under many embarrassments, have served the country and nurtured up her sons, will not fail to participate in the public liberality. We wish to collect on this subject information so authenticated that it may confidently be referred to hereafter, in making any application for legislative patronage. These remarks have a particular reference to the colleges of William and Mary, Hampden Sidney, and Washington.

2. In the next place we want information respecting the past and present condition of the incorporated Academies in the several counties in Virginia.

3. We should gladly learn what private schools of any thing like permanent character are in operation in the several counties in the state.

4. We ask for particular information respecting the steps taken under the act of the Legislature, for establishing primary schools. And in cases where any thing has been done, we wish to be informed whether the *Lancastrian* or the *old method* of instruction has been pursued. All information respecting Lancastrian schools will be thankfully received.

There is one other matter to which the editor begs leave to turn the attention of his fellow citizens. He can hardly hope that it will be regarded generally, as it is regarded by him. But he conceives it to be his duty to present it for consideration. In many countries it is a subject of important and anxious inquiry, What are the effects of making a *permanent* provision for the poor? In England, the *poor-rates* constitute one of the heaviest burdens that oppress the people. It is believed that the English system has been adopted in this country without any essential variation. The general abundance which the bounty of Providence pours down among us, has hitherto prevented the system from being oppressive. But we do not know what is to happen. A system that in another country bears with an almost overwhelming weight, ought to be narrowly watched in its progress here. A subject that perplexes the wisest, and appals the boldest in the land from which we have derived most of our civil institutions, ought not to be unnoticed in its effects on us. We really think that carefully constructed reports on this subject, while yet it can easily be grasped and viewed in all its parts, ought to be drawn up and published by authority. And this seems to be the more necessary, as the Legislature is making considerable extension of the provisions for the poor. Sixty-five thousand dollars per annum added to the parish levy makes a sum of no small amount in our republic; and it becomes the wisdom of the Legislature to take measures for ascertaining the effects of these disbursements. Ought not the Overseers of the poor to be required to report in a given time, annually, or once in a period of years, all that falls within their province,

in such a way that a condensed view of the whole subject may be laid before the public? The *statistics of pauperism* constitute a branch of political economy, which we think ought to be studied with great diligence. But these remarks are only incidental. We have given them place because of the importance of the subject; at least in our apprehension.

To return, we are very desirous of making our Magazine a Repository of information respecting the religious and literary institutions of the southern country in general, and Virginia in particular. And we earnestly request the friends of religion and learning to afford us all the aid in their power. We shall readily publish any information respecting Jews, Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, Lutherans, and Quakers, that may be sent. This information, however, must be condensed as far as may be consistent with perspicuity,

We shall endeavor in future, as far as we can in conformity to our own views, to gratify those readers of the Magazine who wish for more religious intelligence. And from present prospects we are in hopes that we shall be able to afford at least four additional pages to our Journal, without any additional charge to our subscribers. To this we cannot pledge ourselves. But we are entirely willing to incur this increase of trouble and of expense, should our present encouraging prospects be realized.

#### RELIGIOUS TRACTS.

In our last number, (p. 86) we published "Hints for the establishment of a Religious Tract Society." And we hope that the public attention will be turned to this subject. We should rejoice to be instrumental in promoting the establishment of a *Religious Tract Society for Virginia*, in which the talents and resources of the pious in our state may be combined. Any person, or association of persons wishing to procure religious Tracts for distribution may do so now by sending on money to Mr Henry Raymond, of Richmond, who will either deliver them at once, at the rate

of ten cents the hundred pages; or will procure them, in case a supply should not be on hand, from the depositories in our northern cities. But it would be well if we could so unite in this state as to be able to furnish *original Tracts*, particularly adapted to the condition of things among ourselves. For the purpose of promoting this good design we publish the following recorded

#### INSTANCES OF THE HAPPY EFFECTS OF TRACTS.

*From the London Missionary Register.*

The Report of the Evangelical Society of Stockholm, contains the following affecting narrative, given in a letter of a Student at the University of Abo:

The Tract concerning the "Love of some Jewish children to the crucified Lord Jesus," has been eminently blessed in this place. A young lady, attended by her female servant, called on an old pious widow, who keeps a prayer meeting in her house, attended by a number of young people of her own sex. When the widow had ended her first prayer, and before she gave out a hymn, the strangers asked whether they might be permitted to remain. The widow said, "By all means"—for she had discovered, in their faces and manner, the greatest distress of mind—Having asked whether they could join in the Hymn they were going to sing, (which was in the Finnish language,) they both burst into tears and said, "No!"—for, being Swedes, neither of them understood it sufficiently.—During the singing, both were still in tears. When the hymn was ended, the good widow asked what was the cause of their distress, and what they wanted: both answered, "We want every thing, for we want Jesus! We read, last week, some Tracts published by the Evangelical Society, which almost broke our hearts; but especially one about three Jewish Girls at Berlin. We have been in tears ever since, and know not what to do, for we have always counted the Lord Jesus and his grace a thing not worth attending to. It is, therefore, just that he now rejects us."—Much was said to them for their encouragement; but they could not find

any rest to their souls, although conversed with upon that subject as often as they attended, for tears seemed to be their meat and drink. Their situation made us all feel for them; and our hearts were stirred up to pray much and ardently for these mourners after salvation; one of whom having received the Lord's supper just before, was since tempted to believe she had received it unworthily, and to her final condemnation: at length the compassionate Jesus gave them *peace in believing, even that peace which passeth all understanding; so that they now go on their way rejoicing, walking in all his commandments blameless.*

The same report gives an instance of the triumph of divine truth over an infidel mind:

A gentleman, belonging to the higher establishments for education, well known for his great learning, related the following concerning himself:—"In my youth I was led into perfect infidelity, by a friend in whom I had the greatest confidence; and so continued until last spring. In the preceding autumn, however, a parcel had been sent me, containing a copy of each of the Tracts then published by the Evangelical Society, which I put aside at once, without so much as opening it; but, in the spring of the last year, while in a low and sorrowing state, I happened to look into the place where that parcel lay. I took it out, broke the seal, and turned over the Tracts, one by one, and felt inclined to select those that were historical. Among these, 'Poor Joseph' and the 'Cottage Girl,' came first to hand. I read both; and they made an impression on my mind, that shook, as by an earthquake, the very foundation of my whole false system; and a conviction arose in my soul, that *this is the true and simple way to salvation.*"—Here the learned relater was obliged to stop for a while, to give vent to his feelings; but soon after added, "From that moment I read all of them with delight; and I did not fail to shew to my learned friends, at every proper opportunity that I could get, the folly of their religious system, contrived by the false wisdom of man; and that a religion which does

not begin in the heart, nor works a change of heart, and of the whole of our moral conduct too, can be no religion from God: and when, at times, all my reasoning with them did neither take effect nor convince them, I broke off, and left them with this memento from the Bible—*I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*"—Rom. i. 16.

We will add two instances, out of many, of the happy influence of Tracts at home.

The first is furnished by a correspondent at Bristol.

As I was returning home, one evening last summer, I passed a man in West street, who was delivering a load of coal: several women of a loose appearance, were standing near his cart. He attracted my attention by the horrid oaths he uttered: having a Tract in my pocket, called "The Swearer's Prayer," I presented it to him. He asked "What is it?"—I answered, "Something to do your soul good."—He said, "I don't want it." When one of the women said, "Take it, Jack: it may do thee good." He attended to the advice of the woman, and took it. It was followed with many prayers to God, which, I trust, were answered.

About three weeks since, a woman stopped me in the street, and said, "Do you recollect, sir, giving a man, some time ago, a little book, who was delivering coal in West street?" At first I did not recollect it; but after she had mentioned some circumstances, it was brought to my remembrance. "Oh! sir," said she, "I have reason to be thankful to God, and you, for that little book: he has never sworn an oath since. He never gets drunk now: he never beats me now; but he daily reads the Bible, and is become quite a sober, religious man. He takes his family to chapel every Sunday; and he is not only thus altered, but we are all benefitted by that little book."

The second narrative respects another part of the kingdom.

In the month of September last, (the writer says) I had occasion to travel about sixty miles in a steam

packet. In our course, we overtook a small vessel from Lynn, laden with grain. The captain made signal for coming aboard the packet. While rowing to us, the little cabin-boy somehow slipped the rope, by which the boat was nearly upset. The captain was enraged, swore in the most shocking manner, and dreadfully beat the poor boy.—When he got on board the packet, our captain reproved him; at which he poured forth such a volley of oaths, as shocked every passenger on board. I said nothing; but determined that, when his fury ceased, the opportunity should not pass. Presently after, I went up to him, and, presenting him with “The Swearer’s Prayer,” I asked him if he would do me the favor to read it. He ingenuously confessed that he could not read: “but,” said he, pointing to another sailor, “here is a man who will read for me.” He took it and began to read, and the poor fellow stood more like a criminal at the bar, receiving sentence from his judge, than any thing else: every now and then he cast his eyes, with a look of regret and self-reproach at me, his reprover. I at length left them, busily, and I believe, on the part of the swearer, very painfully engaged.

I went down to the cabin, where was a large party, a select group of which was playing at cards.—With the design of diverting their attention, and furnishing a subject of useful conversation, I told them what had been done to the man whom they all seemed to have execrated for his cruelty and profaneness. I showed them the Tract which had been given to him; on which they appeared astonished at its suitability to his character; one of the party begged it of me, and read the title aloud, with mingled feelings of interest and astonishment. To a lady, who appeared to be mistress of the card party, and who was gay, accomplished, and intelligent, I presented No. 55, “Five Minutes Consideration;” to a gentleman, No. 66, “Sin no Trifle;” to another, No. 45, “The Warning Voice;” and to another lady, No. 63, “Serious Thoughts on Eternity.” Each of the party received one, which they held

in their hand; and, at every interval, they read, holding the Tract in one hand and the cards in the other! In the minds of some, there evidently appeared a great conflict and embarrassment; till, at length, the Tracts proved victorious. They gave up their amusement, some of them whispering, “The Tracts have spoiled the game!”

I went on deck, and was instantly met by the poor condemned captain. His guilt had been proved, and sentence pronounced. He came to me, with a slow pace, downcast look; and his hat off, and begged me to pardon him. I replied, “Yes, I forgive you; but do you think that God will forgive you? It is His name which you have blasphemed, His laws which you have violated, and His anger which you have incurred.” He said, he hoped he should never swear again as long as he lived. He begged the Tract, saying, “I have several sons at home, who can read, and I hope it will be a warning to them.” The man who read the Tract to him then came, and said that he never read such a book in his life; would I give him one? The captain of the steamboat came to me, and said, “I never saw a poor fellow so cut up in all my life—What have you done to him?—Have you any more of those books?” I had no more of “The Swearer’s Prayer,” but presented him with No. 134, “Conversation in a Boat between Two Seamen;” with which he seemed greatly pleased. I left a few in the cabin, for the passengers, and took my leave, hoping the day had not been spent in vain.

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FRANCE.

In our first volume we published an address delivered to the students of Montauban, by Dr. Encontre, which many readers, we know, perused with great pleasure. It is with deep regret that we have heard of the death of that eminent man. He terminated his laborious and useful course of life at Montauban, on the sixteenth of last September. This is a great loss to the Protestant church of France. “His last end was peace;” the consolations of the gos-

pels were richly afforded to him; and he rejoiced while all around him mourned. M. Lissignol, one of the pastors of Montpellier, delivered an impressive discourse over his grave.

Dr. Encontre has left a son, who is said to be in every respect worthy of such a father. He is professor of Greek, in the Faculty of which his father was president.

It is highly gratifying to learn that a Bible Society has been formed by the Protestants at Paris. It is composed of the principal clerical and lay members of the Calvinistic and Lutheran churches; and promises to become an important institution.

But while we rejoice in this event, we are indignant at the persecution which is still allowed to be carried on in some departments in France. During the late elections in the department of Gard, three persons were objected to, and their names struck from the list of voters, because their names were *Luther, Calvin, and Jansen!* A fine reason truly!

#### GENEVA.

The Socinians in this place still carry on a high handed opposition to the *orthodox* ministers. They depose them from their ministry, and asperse their characters. For instance, M. Malan, who is said to be a very able and faithful preacher, delivered a sermon on the text, "Know, O vain man that faith without works is dead." On the following day, he was suspended from his ministerial functions, without any examination of his sermon: He begged the company of pastors to peruse it, and point out the error alleged to be contained in it: this they refused to do. A petition presented some days afterwards for the restoration of M. Malan was utterly disregarded; and M. Gaussin, an able pastor of a neighboring parish, who presented it, and M. Moulinie, another clergyman, who supported it, were treated with great indecency. M. Malan was afterwards deprived of his place as one of the masters of the college, because he refused to teach the Socinian catechism, which has been substituted for that framed at the reformation.

The reason of this refusal may appear from a single question in the new catechism respecting Jesus Christ.

Q. What do we owe him, (Jesus Christ)

A. We owe him much *respect*.— (Nous lui devons beaucoup de respect.)

This is not at all surprising, however, when we consider the declaration of the Professor of the University of Geneva, addressed to students of divinity: "*Faites de Jesus Christ tout ce que vous voulez, mais ne l'en faites pas Dieu.*" [Make of Jesus Christ what you will, but do not make a God of him.]

The result of this defection from the faith in the national church of Geneva has been dissent from it, and the formation of a society on the *independent* plan. This recently organized church has lately opened a place of public worship. The house, however, has frequently been surrounded by mobs, composed chiefly of young men, who filled the air with cries of, "*A bas Jesus Christ; a bas les Moraves; a mort, a la lanterne,*" and who insulted the worshippers, on their coming out of the house, with curses, with stones, and other missile weapons, and even pursued them into their own houses in the most violent and brutal manner!

These are the people who constantly cry out against the cruelty of the great Reformer of Geneva in the case of Servetus; although it has been often proved that he exerted his influence with the magistrates to have the punishment of the unhappy man mitigated. Persecution is at all times odious; but more so in this enlightened age, when the rights of conscience are so well understood, than it was in former times.

#### *Irish Evangelical Society.*

In our June Magazine we gave a very brief account of the annual meeting of this Society, at which was delivered the fourth report of the committee, which is now printed, with an appendix of correspondence.— From this appendix, we give the following extracts, as some of the most recent and most interesting:

FROM THE REV. J. PETHERICK.

*Limerick, Jan. 11, 1818.*

"A little while ago a Roman Catholic young lady came to Henry street to hear the word. She heard with astonishment, was deeply affected by what she heard, and determined, notwithstanding all calumny, to come again. She accomplished her resolution. The word appears to have been received by her 'not in word only but in power;' her understanding seems to have been illuminated clearly to discern the way of salvation, and her affection to cleave to it.

"She has renounced her Roman Catholic errors in the face of great opposition. Persecution opened its tremendous fire from the people and the priest, who all united their threatenings and menaces in vain.

"Amid this persecution our young friend stood firm beneath the standard of the cross, declaring her determination to hold fast the profession of her faith, whatever it might cost her. 'Out of weakness she was made strong.' She has left her friends, and is now gone to reside with a respectable family (Protestant) in the country, where I have every reason to hope she continues steadfast in the faith, and is not moved away from the hope of the gospel."

*February 24, 1818.*

"Prejudices are gradually decreasing. One very zealous Roman Catholic happened to drop into Henry street meeting a few Sabbath evenings ago, and he came out, declaring, 'that if ever the gospel was preached, it was preached in this place; nor, said he, (referring to a priest) shall all the Father \_\_\_\_\_'s in the world keep me from hearing such doctrines.' I believe I have persons of the Romish communion every Lord's day to hear me, either more or less. The proposed new building excites much attention at present;—many declare their intention to come and hear the word when it is finished. The character I lately described has become one of our members; is remarkable for simplicity, and becomes more and more attached to our principles and mode of worship."

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HIBERNIAN SOCIETY.

The progress of this valuable society may be judged by the following statement, from their last annual report:

In the last year there were 347 schools, and 27,776 scholars.

In the present year there are 392 schools, and 32,516 scholars.

Increase since last year, 45 schools, and 4,740 scholars.

The exertions of benevolence continue also to be directed toward adults, as well as children. There are now about 1250 adults, who are taught to read the Holy scriptures, by the agency of the society.

SABBATH BREAKING.

The Grand Jury of the city of London, much to their honor, presented to the court, at the last Old Bailey Sessions, the following complaint, which we hope will obtain due attention from the magistracy:

"The grand jury beg to call the attention of the honorable court to the suppression, as much as possible, of the opening of houses for the sale of newspapers and other publications on the Lord's day; also of liquor, victualling, and oyster-shops, and various others of an evil tendency, which alarmingly increase in the metropolis, to the great scandal of the owners, and the injury of the morals of the people, bringing into almost total disregard the Sabbath."

SUMATRA.

A Bible Society has been organized in this remote region, under the auspices of Sir T. Raffles, their governor.

BELLARY.

Mr. Reeve, the Missionary, writes that the Lord has not left himself without witness in that place. The church there has received considerable accessions; and they have established a Missionary, a Tract, and a Bible society; the funds of which are aided by Africans and Hindoos, as well as Europeans.

PERSIA.

The Prince Royal of Persia, with a design to protect the christians in that country, has lately assembled a Divan at the populous city of Tauris, and proposed to them the following questions:—1. Was Jesus Christ a true prophet sent from God? 2. Are

the laws contained in the gospel just? 3. Is it lawful to blaspheme these laws? The first two questions were answered in the affirmative; the last in the negative. These decisions have received a legal form; in consequence of which the Prince punished one of his domestics for insulting a christian. We may therefore hope that christianity will be fully tolerated in Persia.

## RUSSIA.

*Use of the Scriptures in the Russian Army.*

The Rev. Robert Pinkerton writes from Mogileff, dated June 10, 1818, that the White Russian Bible society had distributed 1800 Bibles and Testaments in the army.

According to the regulations (he writes) of the late much lamented Field-Marshal Prince Barclay de Tolly, each regiment was at first furnished with one bible and twelve testaments. The bible was given to the chaplain of the regiment; and each of the twelve companies, of which it is composed, received a testament; and the chief priest of the army informs me, that, at stated times, each company is assembled to hear the testament read. Those also among the soldiers, who are capable of reading, have opportunities of obtaining copies for themselves; but, as the number of these is but small, the above regulations were thought to be the most proper, in the first instance, for making the soldiers acquainted with the saving truths of the gospel. Many of the officers have purchased bibles for themselves, particularly in the French, German, and Slavonian languages. The amount of subscriptions and donations already received from different regiments, is about 10,000 rubles.

*Jews eager for the New Testament.*

On this subject, Mr. Pinkerton says:

In the town of Skloff, which is mostly inhabited by Jews, I found them exceedingly desirous of obtaining Testaments. They told me that they had seen one in the possession of a young man, belonging to a village, but that he would not consent to let them have it. This roused their desire to obtain copies for themselves.

I distributed ten testaments among such of them as I found capable of understanding them; and was sorry that I had no more with me, as many came afterwards, earnestly begging for them. The number among the Jews in this country, who understand the Hebrew, is much greater, than I formerly supposed.

Of the Jews in Witepsk, he writes: The number of Jews in this city is great; they compose upwards of one half of the inhabitants, who are reckoned at 12,000. One of the directors of the committee, general Tschorba, is very zealous in circulating the Hebrew Testament among them.

*Edinburg Missionary Society.*

The following account is given in their last report of a Mahomedan named Achmet. He is a native of the Cabardian country, and speaks its language; though his father was a Trukman, and his mother a Kirghisian. For three months he had been visiting the Missionaries, almost every second night; and the result, according to Mr. Fraser, has been, that he is almost, if not altogether, a believer in the New Testament. At the age of twenty-four, Achmet accompanied his father on a pilgrimage to Mecca, from the neighborhood of Troitzka, where he had settled; having accomplished which, on their return thither, by the way of Egypt, his father died there, at the great age of 104. Among his last words, the dying parent enjoined him to read the New Testament: telling him, that he would never learn the True Religion unless he did so. After various hardships, Achmet reached Orenburgh last summer, in his way toward Troitzka, where he supposed he has still a sister living; but has been detained there ever since. At his first interview with the Missionaries, he earnestly solicited a copy of the New Testament, declaring his anxiety to fulfil his dying father's injunction. He soon began to entertain doubts of the Koran. He has often since been heard crying out, with seeming earnestness: "*Ai Chodai mene Anjeel-dan aer masin,*" i. e. "O God, never separate me from the New Testament!" Of Mahomed and his Religion he now speaks with disdain; and has even threatened to burn all his Mahomedan books.

The Bible, they believe, contains the whole will of God; and that He alone is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth. The most learned among them read and explain the Word; and are consequently, called Elders or Presbyters. They call themselves in contradistinction to those of the Greek Church, SPIRITUAL Christians. Crossing they look upon, as the real mark of the beast mentioned in the revelation. They believe most firmly, that worshipping images or saints is idolatry; and consequently pray, that they may be preserved from the influence of the Beast and of the Dragon. They believe, that Christians ought rigorously to observe the laws of Moses respecting meats. Tobacco and Onions are condemned by them. The command of our Saviour about observing his Supper they look upon, as encouraging them to suffer death rather than worship the Beast. Baptism, by them, is considered as meaning the instruction of the word of God, and putting all evil away from them, desiring the sincere milk of the Word, &c. On this account they have given themselves the name of Malakani; for the word *malaka* signifies milk. They consider all wars unlawful. On this principle, they think it no evil for any of them, should he be taken for a recruit, to desert; alledging, that Christians are called to peace, and see no right any one has of forcing them to fight, and that too, it may be against Christians. The Malakani of the present day are turned very careless, and are also divided among themselves.

#### AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY.

The managers appear by their quarterly reports to be discharging their trust with great fidelity and zeal. May heaven prosper this national institution! We observe, in perusing publications from abroad, that the eyes of many foreign people are directed towards it; and that the expectation is that all its operations will be marked with the energy and enterprize which characterize the people of the United States. Our national honor is concerned here; as well as the best interests of many souls.

#### Auxiliary Bible Society of Fayetteville.

Within the limits of this society there are many families of Highlanders, who speak the Gælic language, and who of course need Gælic Bibles. These they had no means of procuring. The society laudably attentive to the wants of this people, imported four hundred bibles, such as they needed, and thus afforded an ample supply, which we have reason to believe would not otherwise have been obtained. Besides, the managers have procured and distributed a considerable number of English Bibles.

#### SCIENTIFIC INTELLIGENCE.

*Cow Tree.*—M. Humboldt and his companions, in the course of their travels, heard an account of a tree which grows in the valleys of Aragua, the juice of which is a nourishing milk, and which, from that circumstance, has received the name of *the cow tree*. The tree in its general aspect resembles the *chrysophyllum cainito*; its leaves are oblong, pointed, leathery, and alternate, marked with lateral veins, projecting downwards; they are parallel, and ten inches long. When incisions are made into the trunk, it discharges abundantly a glutinous milk, moderately thick, without any acridness, and exhaling an agreeable balsamic odour. The travellers drank considerable quantities of it without experiencing any injurious effects; its viscosity only rendering it rather unpleasant. The superintendant of the plantation assured them that the negroes acquire flesh during the season in which the cow tree yields the greatest quantity of milk. When this fluid is exposed to the air, perhaps, in consequence of the absorption of the oxygen of the atmosphere, its surface becomes covered with membranes of a substance that appears to be of a decided animal nature, yellowish, thready, and of a cheesy consistence. These membranes, when separated, from the more aqueous part of the fluid, are almost as elastic as caoutchouc; but at the same time they are as much disposed to become putrid as gelatine. The natives give the name of cheese to the coagulum, which is separated by the contact of the air; in

the course of five or six days it becomes sour. The milk, kept for some time in a corked phial, had deposited a little coagulum, and still exhaled its balsamic odour. If the recent juice be mixed with cold water, the coagulum is formed in small quantity only; but the separation of the viscid membranes occurs when it is placed in contact with nitric acid. This remarkable tree seems to be peculiar to the Cordilliere du Littoral, espe-

cially from Barbula to the lake of Maracaybo. There are likewise some traces of it near the village of San Mateo; and, according to the account of M. Bredmeyer, in the valley of Caucagua, three days journey to the east of the Caraccas. This naturalist has likewise described the vegetable milk of the cow tree as possessing an agreeable flavor and an aromatic odour; the natives of Caucagua call it the milk tree.

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### LITERARY NOTICES.

A volume of sermons, as we learn from a correspondent, preached by the celebrated *Dr. Chalmers*, in the Tron Church in Glasgow, is expected very shortly to issue from the press. As these were delivered to the people of the author's parish, they will present a fair view of the manner in which this great preacher affords parochial instruction. We expect to receive a copy very shortly, and shall then notice the work in another manner.

The venerable David Bogue has published *Discourses on the Millennium*. This is represented as a most interesting volume.

An improved edition of Schmidius's Concordance to the Greek Testament has lately been published in Glasgow. This is an invaluable work to a student of the Greek Testament.

Memoirs of the life of Miss Caro-

line Elizabeth Smelt, who died on the 21st September, 1817, in the city of Augusta, Georgia, in the 17th year of her age. By Moses Waddell, D. D. New York, 1818.

This little volume is highly recommended by ministers of the gospel of various denominations. One says, "Expressions of mercy, so distinguished as that exhibited in the Memoirs of Miss Smelt, ought not to be withheld from the world. They appear to honor God, and to be adapted to do good to the souls of men. The impression has delightfully rested on my mind, while perusing the manuscript, that mothers who love their daughters, and daughters who love their mothers, and all who love our Lord Jesus Christ, will find much in this brief narrative, which they will wish to cherish and wish to remember."

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### ERRATA in Numbers I. & II.

No. I. pa.	7	line 5 from bottom, for <i>inflnence</i> read influence
	10	29 for <i>submitted</i> r. submitted
	11	9 after <i>gospel</i> insert, instead of;
	16	3 for <i>corroboroted</i> r. corroborated
	38	6 for <i>t</i> r. It
	41	13 between <i>it</i> and <i>my</i> insert in
No. II. pa.	49	7 from bottom, for <i>or</i> r. for
	51	2 in the quotation from Milton, for <i>rough</i> r. through
	55	2 for <i>si</i> r. is
	57	14 from bottom, for <i>Shecham</i> r. Shechem
	73,74,75,	running title for <i>Wildenses</i> r. Waldenses
	85	for <i>Garnet</i> r. Garnett