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DISCUSSIONS OF SOME IMPORTANT QUESTIONS IN THEOLOGY.

No. III.

The Scriptural account of the nature of Jesus Christ.—Continued.

IN our former essay on this subject, the reader's attention was directed to the office of Jesus Christ as judge of the world. In the present number we shall briefly consider the question, what, according to the scriptures, is he *now* doing for his people? This retrograde statement of the argument may seem odd and unusual; but it appears well calculated to prepare the way for the direct and positive declarations of scripture respecting the true deity of Jesus Christ. And as we cannot construct a regular treatise on this subject, but only throw out occasional essays as times and circumstances will permit, we hope that our readers will allow us to pursue our own course, and consult our own convenience.

We then present this proposition for serious investigation—*Jesus Christ is head of the Church, and through successive ages performs the most important offices in behalf of his people.* Here we can only know as we are taught. The enquiry then is, 'How readest thou?' What is written in the book of God's testimony? We know that the fact must be as He states; for God can neither be deceived nor deceive. Let the following passages of scripture then be duly regarded.

1. Matt. xviii. 20. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.
2. Matt. xxviii. 20. And lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.
3. Acts v. 31. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a prince and a Saviour for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

4. John xiv. 2, 3, 16. In my Father's house are many mansions, if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go, and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also—And I will pray the father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you forever.
5. John xvi. 7. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send him unto you.
6. Rom. viii. 34. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.
7. Heb. vii. 35. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us.
8. 1 John ii. 1. My little children, these things I write unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

On these passages of scripture we offer the following remarks.

1. Jesus Christ, in the character of our mediator, is exalted to glory and honour. In one of his discourses, he speaks of the glory which he had with the father before the world was. (John xvii. 5.) The inspired apostles tell us, that angels, and authorities, and powers, are made subject unto him, (1 Pet. iii. 22;) that he is seated at the right hand of the Father, far above all principality and power and might, and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this world, but also in that which is to come (Eph. i. 21;) and that christians are complete in him, who is the head of all principality and power. (Col. ii. 10.) So that concerning the exaltation of Christ, there can be no doubt. It is equally clear that in this state of exaltation, the most important benefits are procured for believers by him. For,

2. The Saviour himself assures us that wherever even two or three of his disciples are assembled, there he is in the midst of them; and that he is, and will be with his ministers always even to the end of the world. Now the pluripresence of the body, is an absurdity: it is therefore clear that our Saviour in these promises means, that he so exists as to exert his saving power, and afford the comforts and hopes of his grace to any or all of his followers, whenever or wherever assembled in his name; and to his ministers into whatever lands they may travel to deliver the messages of his mercy and truth.

The Briton, the Hottentot, the Hindoo, the Taheitan, the American, may all at once enjoy the presence and rejoice in the saving power of their redeemer.

3. Jesus Christ, in his state of exaltation, performs the office of intercessor for his people. Let the reader look back on the passages of scripture above quoted from number 4 to 8, and he will see that this doctrine is unequivocally taught in the scriptures. The literal meaning of intercession is *going between*; in the figurative and most common use, it means, making requests or offering supplications on behalf of another. The idea is so familiar as to render illustration needless. It is in the figurative use of the term that it is employed in the passages above recited. We do not affirm that Jesus Christ presents himself before the throne of the Father, and pleads and entreats in the manner in which man intercedes for his friends on earth. The manner in which things are done in heaven is not revealed to us. We are to understand however that Christ does for us in heaven that which is truly and properly expressed by the word intercession; because the effect of what he does is similar to that which follows, when, for instance a dutiful and affectionate son employs prevalent intercession with his father in behalf of a disobedient servant. It is however not extravagant, we think not antisciptural to suppose that what is called the intercession of Christ is so open and public (if such terms may be thus applied) that angels, who we are told desire to look into the mysteries of redemption, discern the reason of showing favour to man; and are thus rendered more happy by larger and more distinct views of the glory and grace of God revealed through Christ Jesus. The holy intelligences who enjoy complete felicity in the supreme love and perfect service of God as a being of infinite holiness and purity, see the brightest displays of the divine perfections in the unfolding mysteries of man's redemption— But not here to insist on these subjects, it is certain that the apostle Paul, in the epistle to the Hebrews, illustrates the intercession of Jesus Christ by the observances of the Jewish high priest on the day of atonement. This subject is treated at large in the ninth and tenth chapters, to which we would beg leave to refer the reader, with the request that he will peruse them diligently and repeatedly. Reference is particularly made to ch. ix. 11, 14, 22, 26; and to x. 19, 21.

It has been remarked by several divines of great distinction that the prayer of our Lord, recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John, is an instance of his intercession when in his state of humiliation; and that considered in this light it may be regarded as in some respects illustrative of the nature of his in-

tercessorial office as sustained in the heavens. Admitting this, the intercession of Christ may be regarded as prevalent; for he says, ver. 24. "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me. We may add too, that it must be *wise*; our advocate understands the nature of his work and the wants of his people—it is *compassionate*; for we have not a high priest who cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities—it is *perpetual*; for he ever liveth to make intercession for his people—it is *efficacious*; for if any man sin we have an advocate with the Father; and if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

4. We observe that Jesus Christ is represented in scripture as bestowing blessings of the highest value. He sends the Comforter [see number 5] to abide with his people. He is exalted as a prince and a Saviour, to grant repentance and pardon. [See number 3.] He prepares mansions of rest for the righteous, and admits them to a participation of heavenly glory. In a word, the blessings which christians value most highly, for which they pray most fervently, and in prospect of which they rejoice with the holiest and highest transports, are procured for them and given to them by Jesus Christ. Here then is a being, of whose true nature and character we know nothing except from the scriptures, presented as our future judge, but now as the head of the church, exalted above all principality and power; quickening with spiritual life those who were dead in trespasses and sins; leading sinners to repentance; dispensing pardons; affording consolations; present at all times and in all places with his people; acting as their advocate and intercessor in heaven, and with consummate wisdom, with boundless compassion, and with complete efficacy pleading their cause. And yet some would persuade us that these very scriptures teach that Christ was a mere mortal, as fallible and peccable as any other man! But it appears to us that we must either disbelieve the whole report of the scriptures concerning the offices sustained by Christ, and the benefits procured by him; or believe that he is "God over all, blessed forever." In the former case we might be hailed by certain philosophists and *Theologists*, as liberal minded men, who instead of sending all who differ from us to perdition, have charity enough to admit the *purity* of all religious creeds, and to hail as brethren the worshippers of Jupiter or Jugger-naut with the same complacency as the humble disciples of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. But then farewell to all the best hopes that cheer and enlighten the vale of tears; to

the strongest consolations that bear us up under the pressure of life's burden; to the best enjoyment of man as an immortal being! In the latter case, we rely on the divine testimony concerning a subject, of which as before observed, we can know nothing, except so far as we are taught from above: But in this reliance, we fear no deception, because infinite wisdom is our teacher; and in our best hopes we fear no disappointment, because they are founded on God's own promises. We will then rely on the quickening grace, the redeeming mercy, and prevalent intercession of the Lord Jesus; we will hope for his presence in the assemblies of his saints, and in our most secret retirements; we will associate with our business, and cares, and pleasures and joys, the ideas of our Saviour's love, and we will rejoice in the assurance that the hopes with which we are gladdened, the presence in which we rejoice, the intercession on which we rely, and in a word the blessings of the gospel which flow so freely to us, are afforded to the people of God of every kindred and family under heaven. We have no doubt indeed but that the converted Hindoo as he reclines in the shade of his banian tree, and reads the epistles of divine love, and rejoices in the full salvation of a once crucified but now exalted Saviour, enjoys his presence; while the humble christian on the opposite side of the world, receives at the same moment the same blessings, and partakes of the same communications from him, in whom "dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." But all this while, the Redeemer, who affords these blessings, is in heaven, at the right hand of glory, diffusing through the adoring throngs of cherubim and seraphim, of saints and angels the highest extacies of eternal felicity. Let all on earth, then, unite with all in heaven in celebrating his praise, who was, and is, and is to come, even Jehovah—Jesus, the Saviour.

MEMOIR OF SAMUEL DAVIES.

(Continued from pa. 188.)

Although in the extract of the letter published in our last number, Davies seems to express some mortification and despondency because so little was accomplished by his instrumentality, yet we have satisfactory evidence that he produced a powerful impression wherever he went. His home was in

the county of Hanover, about twelve miles from Richmond; but his labours were extended through a very considerable part of the state; and he acquired an influence which perhaps no other preacher of the gospel in Virginia ever possessed; it was the influence of fervent piety and zeal directed by a mind of uncommon compass and force. We have learned from aged people who sat under his ministry, that his powers of persuasion seemed sufficient for the accomplishment of any purpose which a minister of the gospel would undertake. Many, for instance, who had grown up in ignorance of religion, who were married and settled in life, and had children around them, were prevailed on to learn the elements of religious knowledge. A mother might often be seen rocking her infant in a cradle, sewing some garment for her husband, and learning her catechism at the same time. A girl employed in spinning would place her book of questions at the head of the wheel, and catching a glance at it as she ran up her yarn on the spindle, would thus prepare for public catechising; and boys, who were accustomed to follow the plough, were often to be seen, while their horses were feeding at mid-day, reclining under an old oak in the yard, learning the weekly task. Young and old were willing to be taught by their preacher; and when assembled for catechetical instruction, the elders of the church, and heads of families, were always examined first. This course of instruction however was not brief, and quickly finished as is the case now. Households generally were furnished with a few standard works, of good old times; and were expected to study them carefully. This writer has scarcely ever visited a family, the heads or fathers of which belonged to Mr. Davies's congregation, in which he did not find books or remnant of books, such as Watson's Body of Divinity, Boston's Fourfold State, Luther on the Galatians, Flavel's Works, Baxter's Call to the Unconverted, and Saint's Everlasting Rest, Alleine's Alarm, and others of similar character. And these were studied with a care and attention, which greatly promoted the improvement of the people. In fact Davies's churches were schools in which the people were taught better things than the ancient sages ever communicated to their disciples. The effect of this discipline remains to this day.

This last remark is verified in a very striking degree among the posterity of the negroes who became disciples of Davies. He took no little pains to afford them religious instruction. Within three years after his settlement in Virginia, he had baptized about forty; and we have been informed that before his removal to Princeton, the number had greatly increased.

There is now a considerable congregation of their descendants at Polegreen, a church in Hanover, at present under the pastoral care of the Rev. John D. Blair. But many of the members of Davies's church belonged to the estate of Col. Byrd. These were sold, and several of them taken to the county of Charlotte. The writer has seen some of the survivors who could read well, and knew perfectly the Assembly's Catechism. At this day there are not fewer than one hundred negroe communicants in a congregation called Cub Creek, in the county just mentioned. Of these, a very large proportion can read, and are instructed in religious doctrines and duties beyond many professors among white people. And they afford an experiment of sixty or seventy years standing of the effect of this sort of discipline among slaves. And we confidently state the result to be more industry, fidelity, and submissiveness; less intemperance, dishonesty, lying and laziness, than are to be found among an equal number of this class in any other part of the country. This has been so notorious, that the owners of these slaves have been compelled to acknowledge that the services of the preachers were more profitable than those of all the overseers ever employed by them. The writer of this has had opportunities of gaining information on this subject, which enables him to speak with the utmost confidence. And all that he has seen induces the most earnest wish, that, generally, the slaves in Virginia were subjected to the same discipline. Let it be distinctly understood however that we do not recommend mere teaching blacks to read. This would do little or no good; and might be productive of mischief. It is moral culture; it is eliciting the best affections of the heart, and giving vigour to them; it is the formation of good principles and good habits that we recommend—and recommend to all. The course of discipline pursued by Davies produced a feeling of loyalty and allegiance in slaves, which ensured their obedience and fidelity, and secured the confidence of their masters. This is a subject in which, in common with Virginians, we feel a deep interest. As owners of slaves, and surrounded by them, we cannot do otherwise. We have, then, examined it carefully, and with as sincere a regard to self-preservation and the safety of our families as any others can feel. How indeed can we wish to see those we love butchered before our eyes, and to be assassinated ourselves? The supposition is absurd. It is with a reference to things of this sort, as well as to the everlasting welfare of the persons in question that the subject has been particularly adverted to. And it is in this view of it that we would have slaves taught to fear and love God; to hate lying

and speak the truth; to scorn stealing and practise honesty; to pray with and for their masters and mistresses; and in a word, associate with the relation the hopes and consolations, and joys of religion. This is our sole purpose, the whole amount of what we recommend.

In the course of four or five years after the settlement of Davies in Hanover, he found it impossible to afford even a monthly supply of preaching to the congregations organized by him. Accordingly he sought for and found an assistant in Mr. John Todd, a young preacher educated in Pennsylvania. He accepted a call from a congregation "in and about the upper part of Hanover in Virginia," and was installed November 12, 1752. The installation sermon was preached by Davies, and published at the desire of the hearers. The only copy that we have ever seen, was printed in Glasgow in the year 1754. To this is prefixed a dedication "To the Rev. Clergy of the established church in Virginia." And as this dedication presents some characteristic traits of the author; throws light on the former ecclesiastical state of the country; and gives a fair view of the spirit which from the beginning has animated the Presbyterians in Virginia, we think that it would by no means be amiss to present it, entire to our readers.

Reverend Gentlemen,

"As meekness and lowliness are endearing ingredients in the amiable and imitable character of your divine master; I flatter myself this affectionate address to you from one of the meanest of the sacred order, will obtain an easy pardon; especially when presented in the humble form of a dedication.

You might justly resent it, gentlemen, should I insult you by arrogating the province of your instructor; or pollute my pen with calumny and reproach. A just sense of my own inferiority sufficiently restrains me from the one; and a regard for our common christianity, and a veneration for the religious establishment of my country, from the other. If I am conscious of my own temper, I can solemnly assure you, I write with all the pacific calmness of an unprejudiced heart, sensible of the divine inspection, and cautious of writing a word that will not stand the test before the supreme tribunal; where I certainly believe the matter will be publicly tried.

You might judge it, gentlemen, a needless and improper application, if I should beg your patronage of the following sermon. If its contents are the truths of God, they are safe under the shelter of divine authority, without the sanction of human approbation: but if they are the little peculiarities of a party, it cannot be expected you should patronize them; and indeed they would not deserve it.

But without arrogance, I may presume to be your informer in what I cannot but know better than you; I mean the doctrines that have been preached among the dissenters in these parts by my brethren and myself. These, gentlemen, some of you have thought yourselves concerned to form a judgment about; and, I persuade myself, you think yourselves as much concerned to know them, as to judge of them. And you will no doubt grant, that you may receive more certain information from one that must, to be sure, know them, than by unattested hearsays.

In the following sermon and the appendix, gentlemen, you may be informed of our sentiments concerning the nature, design, and various duties of the ministerial office. If our sentiments are just, and our conduct agreeable to them, we claim a share in the honour of being accounted ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God; and, we presume you will allow our claim, notwithstanding the difference betwixt Episcopal and Presbyterian ordination, and in the formalities of our respective ministrations; which, to be sure, cannot be deemed a sufficient ground to monopolize the character to either party, except by high-flying bigots; who lay more stress upon the circumstantial differences, than upon the essential agreements between the churches of England and Scotland; and who invest their conscience with the office of conscience-general to mankind, as though they were to stand the representative of their species at the supreme tribunal; and every one were not to give an account of himself to God, but were to be judged by proxy.

The following sermon will also inform you, gentlemen, what is the substance of the doctrines we generally preach; whether they are the rigid peculiarities of Presbyterianism, or the generous truths of Catholic christianity; whether they are the raw innovations of new lights, or the good old doctrines of the church of England, of the reformation, and (to say all in a word) of the Bible: whether they are calculated to bring the established church and clergy into contempt, and to ensure graceless proselytes to a party; or to bring our common christianity, and consequently its faithful ministers of every denomination, into reputation, and to turn sinners to righteousness.

The bounds of one sermon, though sufficiently long when first delivered, and now presented to the public with considerable enlargements, would not admit of a compleat enumeration of evangelical doctrines. But those which I have particularized, will naturally lead to the most of the rest, as their principles or consequences, e. g. The doctrine of the trinity, that glorious peculiarity of revealed religion, is evidently presupposed, in the view I have given of the scheme of redemption; and the doctrine of the resurrection follows from it. Besides the truths and duties that are purely evangelical, or peculiar to revealed religion; and those that may be reduced under the head of natural religion; there are many others which are of a mixt nature, partly discovered by the light of nature, and more fully improved and illustrated by supernatural revelation; and these we will no doubt insist upon, if we declare the whole counsel of God. But to enumerate all these, would be to write a system of ethics and a body of divinity; and therefore you cannot expect a compleat enumeration of them in the ensuing discourse. The doctrines I have particularized are intended only as a specimen of what we conceive should be the principal materials of our public discourses: and they are sufficient for this purpose: nay, I may add, they may serve as a compleat enumeration of those doctrines we generally preach, which some, I hope without reason, have pronounced peculiar to us: and if those obtain your approbation, or incur but a mild censure, I am confident the other ordinary subjects of our sermons will not incur the severities of your displeasure.

If you would know, reverend sirs, what has been that strange charm, that has enchanted people in these parts to leave the stated communion of the established church, and profess themselves dissenters; we can solemnly assure you, and our hearers of every denomination are our witnesses, that it has not been any public or private artifice of ours, to expose the liturgy and clergy of the church of England; but the plain peaceable preaching of such doctrines as are mentioned in the following sermon, in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And if we may believe the united testimony of our adherents, it was an eager thirst after these doctrines, rather than a dissatisfaction with the peculiar modes of worship in that church, which first induced them to dissent.

Or if you would know, gentlemen, by what means a number of careless sinners have been hopefully reformed to the practice of evangelical holiness, (which is a matter of infinitely greater importance than the change of their denomination; and which, were you to view their past and present conduct in contrast, you could hardly deny to be matter of fact,) these are the happy doctrines that have been instrumental to produce the glorious change; and I am daily more and more confirmed in the persuasion, that (as I observe in the sermon) these will always be found the only faithful expedients to reform a degenerate world.

And while I entertain this persuasion, I cannot but heartily wish, that these doctrines may be preached with more clearness, power, and zeal, by my fathers and brethren among the dissenters; and that you, reverend gentlemen, may take the alarm from their success; and the growth of the dissenting interest by means of their doctrines; and inspired with holy emulation, may preach the same glorious truths in a more clear, solemn, and pathetic manner; and so claim the honour of the success to your own church, and thus weaken the dissenters, by excelling them in preaching those doctrines which people now flock after them to hear. Whatever denomination increases by this means, shall increase with my hearty congratulations.

It has afforded me no small satisfaction, gentlemen, that some of your fraternity, who have had the best opportunity of observing our conduct and doctrine, and whose moral character and intellectual abilities you need not be ashamed of, have of late softened in their resentments; and treated us, not only as creatures of the same species, but as their fellow labourers, and sincere promoters of the cause of our common Lord, though of a different sentiment from them in some things. Had I nothing nobler in view than the advancement of a party, instead of the common salvation, it would be policy in me to wish, that you might convince your people that you are destitute of the spirit and genius of christianity, by the severities of your censure upon me; but as I can honestly declare that my sincere desire is to promote the noble religion of Jesus, and to see it flourish in all the churches of Christ; and as I know that uncharitableness and animosities among its ministers and professors are an infernal expedient for that purpose; I must declare, that the extensive prevalency of a spirit of candour and moderation would very much heighten my satisfaction. For my part, I now acknowledge the most sacred obligations to the public, and to you, to maintain and cultivate such a spirit, and dare not expect your mercy, if I should wilfully violate them. And you, gentlemen, may perhaps judge from the following sermon, whether the difference between us in sentiments, and our obligations to promote our respective churches be such as to admit of no good neighbourhood, no friendly correspondence between us, as men, as scholars, and as professors of the same christianity; but that we must be at implacable hostility, like Jews and Samaritans, till the one party retract his sentiments, and betrays the interests of the society to which he belongs.

Here, reverend sirs, let me insert an extract from a letter of mine to the late reverend and honourable Dr. Dawson, for whose memory I have a sincere veneration, written at his motion, to give him, and the other gentlemen of the council (to whom he promised to communicate it) an impartial account of the circumstances of the dissenters here: and what he was pleased to request, I may, I hope, inoffensively present to you.

“I am not fond, sir, of disseminating sedition and schism: I have no ambition to presbyterianize the colony. But I hope I may declare, without suspicion of ostentation, or wilful falsification, that I have a sincere zeal, however languid and impotent, to propagate the catholic religion of Jesus in its life and power; though I feel but little anxiety about the denomination its genuine subjects assume. The profession of christianity is universal in this colony: but alas! sir, if the religion of the Bible be the test of men’s characters, and the standard of their final doom, multitudes, multitudes, are in a perishing condition! Their ignorance, their negligence,

“ their wrong notions of vital christianity, their habitual neglect of its known
 “ duties, their vicious practice proclaim it aloud: and he that can persuade
 “ himself of the contrary, in spite of evidence, is possessed of a charity un-
 “ der no rational or scriptural regulations. For my part, sir, should I be-
 “ lieve that religion is in a flourishing state in this colony, I must renounce
 “ the bible, disbelieve my eyes, and my ears, and rush into universal scep-
 “ ticism. Could I indulge the pleasing dream, my life below the skies would
 “ be an anticipation of heaven——I do not conclude religion is in so la-
 “ mentable a state, because I see the generality pray by form, receive the
 “ sacrament kneeling, &c. or in a word, because they conform to the de-
 “ bated peculiarities of the established church: no sir, I freely grant these
 “ things are not the test of men’s characters; these may be so far from hin-
 “ dering, that for what I know, they may promote living religion, in such as
 “ have no scruples about them; though the case would be otherwise with
 “ others: but the unwelcome evidences that force this conclusion upon me,
 “ are, the general neglect, and stupid unconcernedness about religion, the ha-
 “ bitual omission of its duties, and the vicious practices that glare upon me
 “ around; and which are utterly inconsistent with true religion in any de-
 “ nomination,” [in a presbyterian, as well as a church man] “ I pretend to
 “ no superior sanctity about the established clergy, who are piously aiming
 “ at the great end of their office; and I allow myself the pleasure of hoping
 “ there are such in Virginia. I pretend to no Apostolic powers and privi-
 “ leges, immediate revelations and impulses, but renounce the claim as pre-
 “ sumptuous and enthusiastical. I am as mean and insignificant a creature,
 “ as you can well conceive me to be. But I dare profess, sir, that even a
 “ heart so insensible as mine, is at times dissolved into compassions and
 “ racked with agonies of zeal, when so dismal a scene opens around me: I
 “ dare profess, I cannot stand an unconcerned, inactive spectator of the ruin
 “ of my fellow sinners, but would very gladly spend and be spent for them,
 “ though the more abundantly I love them, the less I should be loved: I am
 “ bold to avow so much pious humanity, as that I would exert myself to the
 “ utmost, in my little sphere, for their recovery: and since I am disabled, by
 “ some conscientious scruples, to attempt it in the communion of the esta-
 “ blished church; I humbly conceive, I am warranted to attempt it in a
 “ separate communion. This, sir, is my only design; and (as I told you in
 “ conversation) I think it would be no great stretch of charity to suppose,
 “ that even a dissenter may be more distressed to see multitudes rushing on
 “ in a thoughtless career to ruin, than to see them conform to the church of
 “ England; and more zealous to convert them from sin to holiness, than from
 “ party to party.”

This account of my conduct and designs, gentlemen, I have seen no rea-
 son to retract, and my procedure, since it was written, which was about a
 year ago, has not been inconsistent with it. And, till my practice be proven
 inconsistent with it, these unreserved declarations of my design must be
 deemed sincere, and worthy to be credited; unless mortals can produce au-
 thentic credentials to warrant their assuming the prerogative of omnisci-
 ence, and judging the secrets of the heart.

It would really afford me no small uneasiness, if the design of this dedica-
 tion should be misapprehended; and therefore permit me, gentlemen, re-
 peatedly to assure you, that to asperse your characters by so much as the
 most disguised insinuation or oblique hints; or to assume the air of your in-
 structor, is as far from my heart as you can wish it to be: but that my sole
 design is, to give you an impartial account of the doctrines with which we
 entertain our hearers; that you may judge, how far we deserve to be cen-
 sured and opposed as innovators, disturbers of the peace of the church,
 sowers of heresies and sedition, &c. And if the following sermon answer
 this end, the design of its publication with respect to you, is fully obtained.
 But if I should be so unhappy as to be disappointed in this, I must support
 myself by reflecting upon the inoffensiveness and integrity of my intention:

and (as Chrysostome observes in the quotation from him in the title page) "It is a sufficient relief under all his labours, and more than an equivalent "for them all, when one can be conscious to himself, that he regulates his "doctrine to the approbation of the Deity." And (to translate my first motto from Clemens of Alexandria) "He is in reality a presbyter of the "church, and a true minister of the will of God, who teaches the doctrines "of the Lord Jesus, and practises accordingly: and though he be not ho- "noured with the first seat upon earth; he shall be enthroned in heaven," &c—To that state of perfect uniformity in sentiment, and everlasting friendship, may you be conducted, when you have served your generation according to the will of God! And there may divine grace afford some humble place, among the myriads of glorified immortals, so the unworthy mortal, who is, and therefore desires to be esteemed,

Reverend Sirs, your affectionate Brother, hearty well wisher, and humble servant,

Hanover, January 9, 1753.

SAMUEL DAVIES.

On this we shall only remark that from the foundation of the Presbyterian church in Virginia in 1747, to the present day, a period of eighty two years, their great object has been, not to convert men from "party to party," but "from sin to holiness:" They have carried on no controversies; they have adopted no measures of proselytism; they have recognized all, who held the great doctrines of the reformation, as their brethren, and have held communion with them: So they are disposed to act at present. And should they ever hereafter seem to depart from this course, we venture to predict that it will be with a design to put down an assuming and exclusive spirit, which limits the church of Christ by external circumstances, and identifies the christian name and christian privileges with modes of administration and forms of observance—We solemnly protest here against any particular application of this remark. It is founded on general observation, and general principles. In every age of the church, and in every society of christians, there have been persons ever ready to cry, "*The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are WE.*" And while the history of the church confirms this remark, it shows with equal clearness that it is not a mere difference either in doctrine or discipline that alienates different denominations, and exasperates them against each other: it is magnifying those differences into subjects of exclusive and vital importance, that produces this unhappy effect. Allow that I am right as well as you, in the points wherein we differ—that my baptism is as valid as your baptism—my prayers as acceptable as your prayers—my ordination as apostolical as yours—and we can walk together quite pleasantly. But on these very points which constitute our peculiarities, maintain that you are absolutely right; and I so involved in error as to vitiate and unchristianize all my services—and we are immediately at war. This being so; the suppression of an exclusive and assuming spirit is a work of charity; is necessary for

the peace of the churches. Nor is this sentiment at all inconsistent, as seems to us, with that zeal which every one ought to feel for the order of God's house. We can easily conceive that owing to early associations, the prejudices of education, and other circumstances, different individuals can worship most to edification under different form of services. And we are sure that all the institutions and observances of the gospel, in their appointment have a reference to the edification of the worshippers. They are valuable to any individual in proportion as they promote in him repentance, humility, faith, charity, zeal, and the various christian graces. It is the indispensable duty of every one, then, to examine for himself what form of polity and mode of worship is most agreeable to the mind of Christ, and in what connection he can best acquire the wisdom that is unto salvation. And as he loves his soul, he is bound to choose according to the result of this investigation. It is the duty, too, of every particular church to furnish to the enquirer the best possible helps in conducting his researches. This being done, the duty is discharged; because religion is a *personal* concern, and every individual is to answer for himself before God. No church, however pure, however holy and apostolical, can be proxy for a member before the bar of eternal justice. Besides, it will not do to tell an individual, who has made his election, and is conscious of the love of God shed abroad in his heart, and of the consolations of the Holy Spirit, and of the life-giving influences of the Gospel, "You are out of the fold of Christ, and have no title to covenant blessings; because you were not baptised in the right mode; you do not pray in the right fashion; you do not receive the sacraments from authorised ministers." What would be thought if such men as Leighton, Gilpin, Romaine, Newton and Scott; Watts, Doddridge, Edwards, Davies, and Witherspoon; Bunyan, Booth, Fuller, Hall and Foster, should they range themselves under separate parties, and cry out in the angry zeal of party, "You are no true ministers of Christ—you are schismatics and intruders?" The supposition is revolting. To fierce contenders for modes and forms, these holy men themselves would say, "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit: and there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord; and there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

These remarks have been extended farther than was expected. We have indulged ourselves in them, however, under a wish to promote a charitable spirit, and to exhibit the true principles of that society of which Davies was so bright an ornament. It ought however to be observed that differences

in religion have never excited much contention in Virginia; and that we have reason to hope that harmony and brotherly love will increase. When we see, as lately we have seen, the annual meeting of a Bible Society opened with a hymn by a Presbyterian; and this followed with prayer by a Baptist, and this again with a sermon by an Episcopal bishop, and the service closed with prayer by a Presbyterian, it is an omen for good. The reader will pardon this digression.

Early in the year 1753, Davies was appointed by the trustees of the college of New-Jersey to visit Great Britain, in company with Gilbert Tennent, to solicit donations for the college. He accepted this appointment; and was absent from Virginia, on this mission, at least eighteen months. We have before us a fragment of a diary (kept by him, as before mentioned,) on his journey. From this we shall make copious extracts; as this will bring the reader to a more intimate acquaintance with this distinguished man, than any narrative that we could construct. It commences thus,

A DIARY BEGUN JULY 2, 1753.

Gratitude to the God of my mercies, constrains me to own myself the favourite child of divine providence; and it has generally disposed of me in a manner different from, and sometimes contrary to my expectation, my purpose and desire. Such an unexpected and undesired event was my separation from my brethren, and settlement in Virginia; and yet I have since looked upon it as a providential dispensation for the recovery of my health, to harden me against opposition, to increase my popularity, to make me acquainted with the world, as well as books, to supply the most necessitous congregation, and upon the whole to enlarge the sphere of my usefulness more extensively than so insignificant a creature had reason to expect. And now as divine providence, quite contrary to my expectation, seems to call me to a very important embassy for the church and for the public, and as it will tend much to my future satisfaction to have the reason of my procedure by me for a review in the hour of perplexity; I think it expedient to state the affair in writing, and to keep a diary of all the remarkable occurrences I may meet with in my voyage, which I intend to begin about **** hence, unless providence lay something in my way, that may acquit me of the obligation which I [seem to] lie under to undertake it—And it is my prayer to the God of my life and the guide of my youth, that he, who condescends to manage even my mean affairs, would clear up the path of duty before me, and make it as agreeable as it is obvious; whether it lead me to the ends of the earth, or confine me to the exercise of my ministry at home:

The college of New-Jersey, erected about eight years ago with the most ample privileges, is of the greatest importance to the interests of religion and learning in three colonies, New-York, the Jerseys, and Pennsylvania, and to dissenters in Maryland, Virginia, and both Carolinas.

There is now about 3000*l.* in the college fund; but this will hardly be sufficient for the erection of proper buildings; and and if it should all be paid out for that end, there will be nothing left for the maintenance of the professors and tutors, to furnish a college library, and to support pious youth for the ministry, who are unable to maintain themselves at learning.

Upon application made to Great Britain, there has been encouragement given to expect some assistance, especially if some proper persons were sent over to represent the affair, and to solicit and receive contributions.

The trustees first endeavoured to employ Mr. Pemberton in that service, who was well qualified, had no family at the time, and was willing to undertake the embassy. But his congregation most unreasonably refused, though Mr. Cumming, his colleague, was still to continue with them, and another minister would have been appointed to officiate in his stead.

After this disappointment (near two years ago,) some of the trustees importuned me to undertake the affair; but considering my youth and other defects, I could hardly think them in earnest. However, I mentioned the personal, domestic and congregational difficulties in my way, and urged them with as much earnestness as was necessary to resist their importunity—last Fall, they renewed their application and I my refusal, and I never expected to hear more of it.

But last winter the board of trustees unanimously voted me to undertake the voyage. When I was informed of it by letter from the worthy president, Burr, it struck me into a consternation and perplexity unknown before. All the tender passions of the husband, the minister, the father and the son, (all which relations centre upon me,) formed an insurrection in my breast against the proposal; and with these I have struggled ever since. My conjugal anxieties were increased by the languishing state of my tenderer and better part, which my absence for so long a time might perhaps increase: I was also afraid lest my dear congregation, whose hearts are so excessively set on me, should suffer by my absence. The danger of the seas likewise appeared terrible: And above all, my just consciousness of my want of qualifications for so important an embassy, sunk my spirit; and yet my remonstrances on this head would not be regarded by others.

After all the deliberation and consultation that was in my power, I determined to take no notice of the many difficulties in my way that were superable, but to insist only on these two things as the condition of my compliance; the one for the support of my family, and the other for the relief of my congregation; viz. That a proper person should be sent to supply my pulpit during my absence; and that he should be maintained at the expense of the college, that my salary might run on for the support of my family.—These proposals I sent in a letter to the trustees per post; but not trusting to that loitering and uncertain medium of correspondence, I dispatched a messenger off to bring me an immediate answer. Upon his return, I found the trustees had readily consented to my proposals; and therefore expected my compliance with their vote.”

The journal then goes on to state a variety of reasons why the voyage should be undertaken. The statement exhibits a delicacy and scrupulousness of conscience, and an attention to the indications of providence, which clearly evince the sincerity and piety of the writer. Among others, however, he adverts to these.

“The various opportunities I may have of personal improvement; and that in things in which a pedant and a recluse is most deficient; the various friendships that may be contracted, which may tend much to the honor and security of dissenters here, who stand so much in need of patronage, are also considerable excitements.”

* * * * * When I consider that there is so much need to make some attempts for the security and enlargement of the dissenters in Virginia; and that if I were obliged to undertake the voyage for that end alone, at the expense of the congregation, it would be very burdensome to them and to me, I cannot but conclude that it is with a view to this that providence has directed the trustees to make application to me: for considering my known want of qualifications, and the little acquaintance the most of the trustees have with me, their vote appears to me utterly unaccountable, without supposing such a providential direction—This is the more remarkable, as this seems on many accounts the most proper crisis to do something in behalf of the dissenters here; as Mr. Tennent’s influence in conjunction with mine, will probably be of great service in the affair; and as it will not carry so selfish and irritating an aspect to be managed by the bye, as if it were made the sole business. * * * * *

The commissioners for Indian affairs will be glad of this opportunity for the propagation of the religion of Jesus among

the poor savages; and it is likely we shall succeed in raising contributions for that end. And oh! how transporting the thought that these barbarians may be cultivated by divine grace in the use of proper means, and polished into genuine disciples of the blessed Jesus! For this alone it would be worth our while to spend and be spent."

One of his principal difficulties arose from the state of his wife's health. This however as well as all others, were overruled, and on September 3d, 1753, he set out from home. Under this date the following note occurs in his diary—"This morning I felt the painful rupture of the tender relative ties which bind my heart to Hanover. I took my leave of some thousands yesterday in public; and to-day I parted with some of my select friends, and my dear, dear spouse, my honoured parents, and three helpless children, and left them in a flood of tears. To thee O Lord, I then solemnly committed them; and now I renew the dedication. I know not if ever I shall see them again; but my life and theirs is in the hands of divine providence, and therefore shall be preserved as long as is fit."

September 7. * * * *. Mr. Finley told me he had lately almost imbibed a notion which he formerly rejected, viz. that compassion proceeds from a selfish principle—because, both persons in the extremity of misery, and that know nothing of misery are incapable of it. * * * *

Sunday. Preached at Mr. Finley's on Deut. x. 13, a sermon which I preached in Hanover with great satisfaction and prospect of success; but alas I have lost that spirit with which it was first delivered: and indeed I can but rarely retain the spirit of preaching in the hurries of a journey. The materials of the sermon were very solemn, and nothing appears to me a more unnatural incongruity, than to speak the most solemn things with a trifling spirit. Indeed the incongruity appeared to me so great, that I was obliged to omit sundry things, though written before me in my notes, for want of a heart to express them with suitable tenderness and fervour—There appeared some small solemnity among the hearers; but oh! how far short of what I have seen in this place in the days of the right hand of the Most High.

Conversed with my ingenious and dear friend Mr. Finley in the evening, and communicated to him my sentiments upon the great influence which the body has to deprave the soul; which I apprehend is much greater than is generally supposed—which appears, from the frequent use of the metaphor, *Flesh* in the scriptures to denote moral depravity, which supposes that the *Flesh*, literally taken, has a special causality in it, otherwise there would be no ground for the metaphor, but

it would be as proper to denominate sin by the term spirit or soul, from the different inclinations of the soul according to the different states of the body; and as the variety of bodily habits may be the occasion of a variety of sinful inclinations, so the habit of the body may be constantly such, amid all its changes, that it may perpetually influence the mind to sin in general.

Monday, September 10, 1753. Continued at Mr. Finley's. * * * * * Read some part of the appeal in favour of the Candid Disquisitions; and never was more pleased with the candour, impartiality and moderation of an author. How becoming, how graceful, how advantageous is such a spirit to the cause of truth and its advocates! May I deeply imbibe it! —Alas I have been perplexed this day with the vigorous insurrections of sin in my heart; but my resistance and humiliation has not been proportioned. Oh! wretched man that I am, &c.

Tuesday. Mr. Roan and Mr. Smith met in committee, and Mr. Finley and I, in conjunction with them, revised and corrected a draft drawn up by Mr. Blair, of a warning or testimony of the Presbytery of New Castle, against several errors and evil practices of Mr. John Cuthbertson, a Scotch bigot, ordained by one Mr. McMullan who was deposed by the General Assembly of Scotland, and subscribed the deposition by his own hand; and one Mr. Nairn, who was once of the Seceders, and afterwards excommunicated by them. The errors on which the Presbytery animadvert are these—That God has made over Christ and all his benefits to all that hear the gospel by a deed of gift (as he affects to speak) so that every sinner that hears the gospel offer, ought to put in a claim of right to him as his Saviour in particular—That saving faith consists in a persuasion that Christ is *mine*, and that he died for *me* in *particular*—That redemption is universal as to purchase—That civil government both heathen and christian is derived from Christ as mediator. * * *

Monday, September 17. Went with Mr. Tennent to wait on the Governor and Secretary; but they were not at home. Waited on three Lutheran ministers, and Mr. Slaughter a Calvinist; and was not a little pleased with their candour and simplicity. How pleasing is it to see the religion of Jesus appear undisguised in foreigners! I am so charmed with it, that I forget all national and religious differences, and my very heart is intimately united to them.

Thursday. Came to New Ark, and was received with much affection by the worthy president—Was honoured with a visit and free conversation, with his excellency the governor

—Was uneasy to find that the trustees seem to expect I should furnish myself with cloaths in this embassy—With what pleasure would I do it, were it in my power; but alas! it is not; and therefore, notwithstanding all the pliability of my nature, I must insist on their providing for me in this respect, as one condition of my undertaking the voyage.

Friday. Waited on his excellency in company with the president and his lady. Was kindly received, and the governor insisted that I should preach for Mr. Spencer next Sunday come se'en-night, that he might have an opportunity of hearing me. O that I may be enabled to shake off the fear of man, and preach with the simplicity and boldness of an ambassador of Christ!

Sunday. Heard the president preach a valedictory sermon to the candidates for a degree, who are to leave the college this week. His subject was, "And now, my son, the Lord be with thee, and prosper thee." And I was amazed to see how readily good sense and accurate language flowed from him extempore. The sermon was very affecting to me and might have been so to the students.

Monday evening. Attended on a meeting for Psalmody, and was much charmed with the powers of harmony—Amid the variety of new objects that draw my attention, my thoughts often take a sudden flight to Hanover, and hover over my Chara, and my other friends there. O may indulgent heaven preserve and bless them.

Wednesday. This day I delivered a Thesis, (*Personales Distinctiones in Trinitate sunt æternæ*.) and vindicated it in a public dispute against three opponents; and afterwards was honoured with the degree of Master of Arts. * *

Friday evening. Took the advice of the honourable William Smith, esq. upon the affair of the dissenters in Virginia. His opinion was that the reversing the order of the county court for a meeting house, would be a sufficient ground of complaint in England.

Monday October 1. * * * * * Lodged at Mr. Brainerd's, the good missionary among the Indians, and was pleased with his accounts of the progress of religion among them, [though now they are scattered by reason of their land being fraudulently taken from them.*]

Tuesday. Took a view of the Indian town; and was pleased at the affection of the poor savages to their minister, and his condescension to them."

* The passage in crotchets seems to be an addition—yet in the same hand writing, and apparently the same coloured ink.

A few days after this the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, met in Philadelphia. Here Davies met with his brethren, and appears from his journal to have enjoyed their society with most exquisite relish. He speaks in most exalted terms of the eloquence, learning and piety of Mr. Bostwick, saying that he "was charmed with both his matter and manner." The late venerable Dr. Rodgers is never mentioned without some epithet of endearment. For instance, after recording the opening of Synod, he adds "Saw my dear friend Mr. Rodgers, and many of my brethren." But nothing made him forgetful of his family and flock in Hanover.

"Saturday — Attended on the Synod, and used my utmost endeavours to obtain some supplies for my dear people, besides Mr. Wright; and succeeded so far that Messrs. Brainerd, Rodgers, Henry, Bay, Blair, and J. Finley, were appointed to go there four or six weeks each. I hope this will turn to the benefit of my dear congregation. O that God may go with his messengers thither!"

"Monday Oct. 8. Preached a sermon in the morning from Isaiah lxvi. 1, 2. And through the great mercy of God, my heart was passionately affected with the subject; and what tended not a little to increase my affection was my observing the venerable Mr. G. Tennent weeping beside me in the pulpit. Spiritual poverty and humility appeared very amiable and charming to me. Humility is not that gloomy, sullen, mortifying thing which it is generally accounted; but a most sweet and pleasing grace. O! it is no small ingredient in the happiness of a penitent, and a most congruous ornament to a mean, degenerate creature.

—— Visited the Academy in company with sundry of my brethren, and entertained with a view of what was remarkable in it. Heard some of the little boys declaim; and though I was pleased with their distinct and accurate pronunciation, I thought that in delivering some of the orations, especially those of Brutus and Mark Antony, they were extremely languid, and discovered nothing of the fire and pathos of a Roman soul. Indeed this is one great defect of modern oratory. A defect few seem sensible of or labour to correct."

We have given these copious extracts from the Diary of Davies under the persuasion that our readers would be gratified by these relics of a man of such distinguished eminence. Here, however, our limits compel us to pause. In the next number we shall pursue our design. In the mean time, if any of our readers know of any letters of Davies, or any documents that would throw light on his history, the communication of them would be a great favor.

We would take this opportunity of earnestly entreating those who have access to information, to draw up, for publication in the Magazine, biographical sketches of persons who have distinguished themselves in Virginia, in any of the walks of life. Let us not permit the memory of our fathers to perish, and their example to be lost.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF SCRIPTURE.

No. X.

On the command of God to Abraham to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice.

THE passage here to be considered is recorded in Genesis, xxii. 1—14.

And it came to pass, after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, *here I am.*

And he said, Take now thy *son*, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt-offering, and rose up, and went into the place of which God had told him.

Then on the third day Abraham litt up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.

And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide you here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.

And Abraham took the wood of the burnt-offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife: and they went both of them together.

And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, *Here am I*, my son. And he said Behold, the fire and the wood; but where *is* the lamb for a burnt-offering?

And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself with a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.

And they came to the place which God had told him of: and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order; and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.

And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.

And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here *am* I.

And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, and seeing that thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only *son* from me.

And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, behind *him* a ram caught in a thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt-offering in the stead of his son.

And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said *to* this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen."

The first enquiry is into the meaning of the word *tempt*. In common speech it is used in a bad sense. It signifies the employment of measures to induce the subject of temptation to commit sin. Thus it is said, "God cannot be tempted with evil; neither tempteth he any man:" But frequently in scripture it means, to place persons in circumstances which will discover the real temper and disposition of their hearts. The idea is borrowed from the practice of workmen in assaying metals to ascertain their qualities. This is called proving them. In this sense the word is used in this passage. God placed Abraham in circumstances in which his character and disposition are fully proved—most remarkable evidence is given of the temper of his heart; and the choice of him as the father of the faithful, and depository of God's promises concerning his son, is justified.

In the next place we shall enquire into the situation of the place, where Abraham was commanded to offer his son as a burnt-offering to the Lord. It was a mountain in the land of Moriah. In Chronicles, iii. 1. We find these words, "Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, in Mount Moriah, when the Lord appeared unto David his father, &c." This is the only instance of the occurrence of the word in scripture, except the passage under consideration. Hence the ancient Jews have concluded that the temple was built on the same mountain, on which Abraham built an altar for the sacrifice of his son. It was on an eminence of the same mountain, distinguished afterwards by the name of

Calvary, that our blessed Lord suffered to make an atonement for the sins of the world.

The transaction recorded in the part of scripture now before us, is one of the most extraordinary in the whole bible. Considered in all its bearings, it may, at first view, well appear surprising, that God should have given such a command to Abraham as this; Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt-offering, &c. Here seems to be a violation of every duty which a parent owes to his child, a destruction of every hope which the patriarch had conceived; an abrogation of the best promises which divine mercy had made, and at the same time a sacrifice required utterly repugnant to reason, and to the express command of God afterwards delivered. In what way then are we to understand this subject?

In answer we would observe in the first place, that in ancient times, ideas were very frequently communicated by significant actions as well as by words. This indeed is the practice to a greater or less extent in every age, and by all descriptions of persons. Thus, to use a familiar instance, a certain action used by us, is equivalent to saying "come hither"—another to, I will—another to, I will not, &c. In proportion to the poverty of language, the number of significant actions will be great. Perhaps also to the state of society will have considerable influence. Among the ancient Scythians not only actions, but things were significant—Thus, to send a dart to one, was a mode of expressing defiance—to send a plough, had a contrary meaning—A similar instance may be given from Roman history. One of the kings of Rome, directed that the chiefs of a neighbouring city should be destroyed, by cutting off the heads of the tallest poppies in his garden. In Jewish history we meet with many remarkable instances of this kind. This is particularly exemplified in the conduct of the prophets.

“And it came to pass at that time, when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him in the way, and he had clad himself with a new garment: and they two *were* alone in the field:

And Ahijah caught the new garment that *was* on him, and rent it *in* twelve pieces.

And he said to Jeroboam, Take thee ten pieces; for thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and give ten tribes to thee:”—1 Kings, xi. 29—31.

“And Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah made him horns of iron: and he said, Thus saith the LORD, With these shalt thou push the Syrians, until thou have consumed them.”—1 Kings xxii. 11.

“Now Elisha was fallen sick, of the sickness whereof he died. And Joash the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over his face, and said, O my father, my father! the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof!

And Elisha said unto him, Take bow and arrows: and he took unto him bow and arrows.

And he said to the king of Israel, put thine hand upon the bow: and he put his hand *upon it*; and Elisha put his hands upon the king's hands.

And he said, Open the window eastward: and he opened *it*. Then Elisha said, Shoot: and he shot. And he said, The arrow of the LORD's deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria; for thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek till thou have consumed *them*.

And he said, Take the arrows: and he took *them*. And he said unto the king of Israel, Smite upon the ground: and he smote thrice and stayed.

And the man of God was wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times, then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed *it*: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria *but* thrice.”—2 Kings xiii. 14—19.

“Thus saith the LORD unto me, Go and get thee a linen girdle, and put it upon thy loins, and put it not in water.

So I got a girdle, according to the word of the LORD, and put *it* on my loins.

And the word of the LORD came unto me the second time, saying,

Take the girdle that thou hast got, which *is* upon thy loins and arise, go to Euphrates, and hide it there in a hole of the rock.

So I went, and hid it by Euphrates, as the LORD commanded me.

And it came to pass after many days, that the LORD said unto me, Arise, go to Euphrates, and take the girdle from thence, which I commanded thee to hide there.

Then I went to Euphrates, and digged, and took the girdle from the place where I had hid it; and, behold, the girdle was marred, it was profitable for nothing.

Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

Thus saith the LORD, After this manner will I mar the pride of Judah, and the great pride of Jerusalem.”—Jeremiah xiii. 1—9.

So numerous are the instances of this sort recorded in scripture, that we are warranted in drawing the conclusion that significant actions were in frequent use; and were, in general, as well understood as words. In fact the whole series of Jewish rites were so many significant actions, having reference to things afterwards to be more clearly revealed. In the last lecture we considered at some length the signification of circumcision. We shall hereafter more fully examine the signification of sacrifices. It may suffice now to observe that whenever circumcision was performed, it was tantamount among other things to a profession of faith in the promised Messiah, yet in the loins of the fathers; and whenever a sacrifice was offered it was equivalent to a declaration of reliance upon the appointed atonement. This principle ran through the whole Jewish economy. It was an adumbrative system, as is largely, and in a masterly manner, shewn by the apostle in his epistle to the Hebrews. In allusion to the event under consideration He says, "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises, offered up his only begotten son; of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called; accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence he also received him in a figure." The hint in the last part of the quotation seems to us to throw light on the subject. If Isaac's resurrection were figurative, his death must have been figurative also; and this being so, there is reason to believe that the whole transaction was figurative. But what did it represent? To ascertain this, we will advert to a passage of scripture before considered. Our Lord, says [John viii. 56.] your father Abraham rejoiced (rather *earnestly desired*) to see my day, and he saw it and was glad. That the eternal Word, who was made flesh, appeared to Abraham has been already proved. The passage doubtless means more than that, he who was in the beginning, existed in the time of the patriarch, and made this existence manifest. The phrase **MY DAY**, is one of great emphasis, and indeed of primary importance, in the present question. In the Hebrew idiom, the term day often means the particular time appointed for the discharge of any office, or obtaining any object set before us. When our Saviour then in the flesh uses the phrase *my day*, he means that particular period during which he was to execute his ministry, and bring in an everlasting righteousness; make an atonement for sin, and open the gates of heaven to penitent sinners—This includes certainly those great and important matters which Jesus Christ was to effect as mediator between God and man. This Abraham saw. The phrase as

we render it, is remarkable. Abraham earnestly desired that he *might see* my day; it was a subject of deep solicitude, of ardent wishes. He **SAW IT**. Not that he actually witnessed the incarnation and sufferings of the blessed Saviour, but such a representation was made, of this great subject before the eyes of Abraham, that according to the latitude of the word used, it might well be said that he *saw* the day of our Lord. A glorious exhibition was made to him of the unspeakable love of God in giving his only begotten son up to the death for us all, and of the infinite grace of our Saviour in condescending to give his life a ransom for sinners. This, as we interpret the scripture, was done in a figure, that is in the only way in which it could be done, previously to the actual taking place of the event. This was effected by God's commanding Abraham to give up his only begotten son, the child of his hopes and prayers, as a sacrifice. Abraham, as was said, desired to see the day of Christ, to have a clear view of the wonderful plan of heavenly mercy. God, in compliance with this desire *proved* Abraham by directing to that significant action, or scenical representation, which would give the best possible illustration of the great plan of redemption. And here it may not be amiss to mention the correspondence between the type, and the thing represented by it.

1. Abraham gave up his only begotten Son according to the divine purpose, and

“God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

2. Isaac, who at the time mentioned, must have been a vigorous youth of five and twenty, and might easily have escaped, cheerfully surrendered himself a willing victim. And the Lord Jesus voluntarily underwent the suffering of death, even the death of the cross, for saith he “no man hath power to take away my life from me—I lay it down of myself—I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again.”

3. It was on mount Moriah that Isaac was laid on the altar—And it was on the same mountain, as we have shown, that the Lord Jesus suffered.

4. The transaction recorded in its undertaking and completion lasted three days—The time was the same in the event represented by it.

5. Isaac without a murmur submitted to be bound and laid on the pile. Concerning Christ we learn from the sacred writer that as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth—These coincidences might be traced

farther. Those which have been mentioned will, it seems to us, strike every reader.

It is worthy of observation that whatever might be Abraham's expectation as to the extent to which this representation should be carried, he fully expected that Isaac should finally be restored to him. Ver. 5. "And Abraham said to his young men, abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, *and come again unto you.*" If any should hesitate whether this is decisive or not, let him advert to the passage before quoted from Heb. xi. 19. "By faith Abraham offered up Isaac—Accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead." As then Abraham in purpose gave up Isaac as a sacrifice, fully expecting that God would raise him up; so God gave his Son as a sacrifice from sin, fully purposing to raise him from the dead, and exalt him to the right hand of glory, and give him a name which is above every name.

In the seventh and eighth verses of this chapter, there is a very affecting incident, told in all the simplicity of nature, which it would be difficult to explain, on any interpretation of the passage except that which has been given "And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father! And he said here am I my son. And he said, behold the fire and the wood; but where is a lamb for a burnt offering? And Abraham said, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering."

The patriarch here, evidently did not choose to give an explanation of the intended transaction to his son, but in waving the question, we are sure that he would say nothing but what was strictly true. The assertion in this view may be interpreted as a declaration of the great design of the Almighty God, as about to be represented in the event just ready to take place. In this sense it was strictly true that God would provide a lamb for a burnt offering; and in reference to this passage it is probable that John, the harbinger of Messiah, upon seeing Jesus cried "Behold the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." This remark well introduces another which seems to us important, namely the deliverance of Isaac from the death which seemed to threaten him. Enough had been done to give a striking representation of the sacrifice of Christ, and to prove Abraham. God suffered not the patriarch to go farther, for two reasons. 1. Because he would by no means give countenance to the horrid, and impious custom of human sacrifices; a custom which prevailed to a most monstrous extent in the world, and, what seems incredible to us, in conformity to which even parents

offered their own children, on the horrid altars of paganism. Although then, the Almighty could, with a word, have raised Isaac, after his consumption by fire, it did not seem good to his wisdom to permit the representation to go farther than was indispensably necessary. 2. From the nature of the case such an exhibition as this could not be kept up from age to age; but it was important that the memory of it should be preserved; and the ancient church frequently reminded of the great promise which God had given that in the seed of Abraham all nations of the earth should be blessed—Just then at the critical moment, God interposed, and provided a ram, which was substituted in place of Isaac. This substitution in this particular juncture was of great importance—The scene was calculated to make a very deep impression: the most powerful feelings of nature were awakened to all their energy; at that moment God calls from heaven Abraham! Abraham! Isaac is delivered, and the animal sacrificed. We may well suppose that Abraham and Isaac would never forget this event. The sacrifice of a lamb would be ever afterwards associated with the most powerful feelings of their hearts; these feelings would be transmitted, and the sacrificial offering would, aptly and forcibly to the descendants of these patriarchs, represent the great atonement, that in the fulness of time, in verification of God's promises, should be made for sinful man. This view of this subject makes it at once highly interesting and instructive, and removes the very foundation of the objections, which flippant infidels have raised against this part of the Bible.

The great objection that has been urged against this portion of holy Scripture arises from a limited and unsatisfactory interpretation of it. It has been regarded as simply a trial of Abraham's faith, and the objection has assumed this form. "Supposing that God did hold communications with Abraham, his command was walk before me, and be thou perfect—a command which has justly been interpreted as extending to all the duties of life: and farther, nothing can be more certain than that it is the will of God, that a father should love his son; it is equally certain that such parricidal sacrifices are utterly repugnant to the divine command. Now no command can authorise the commission of crimes such as these, under the pretences of religion; and no evidence can satisfy any one that God has commanded the commission of a crime." This is the objection in its fullest force—But we cannot admit the principle on which it is founded. It is not admitted in common life. For instance, we have no right to take away human life; yet a judge may without impropriety

sentence a man to suffer—an individual may defend himself, &c. That is we may do that in some circumstances which it is not lawful for us to do in others. But if this be the case, surely the God of the universe in executing his infinite purposes, may in his wisdom direct that to be done to answer some great good, which it would be in the highest degree wrong for man to do, in ordinary cases. But however this may be, we shall admit the force of the objection for argument's sake, and what will it prove against the passage as we have interpreted it? Absolutely nothing.

The principal objection to this interpretation is that an event so important, and having such a bearing on the whole system of the gospel has not been more noticed, and subsequently more fully explained. To this we reply that, it did not comport with that figurative and prophetic system, which for wise purposes was adopted, to afford literal explanations. And in the way of symbolical representation, nothing could be more striking than the event under consideration, as we have explained it.

It becomes us here to acknowledge that the leading idea in this discussion was borrowed from Warburton's *Divine Legation of Moses*. For the illustration of it, we are responsible.

In the use to be made of this passage of Scripture, we present to our readers the following subjects of meditation. 1. The strength of Abraham's faith. 2. The wisdom and goodness of God in making known by various methods, his designs of redeeming mercy. 3. His providential interposition in times of danger and distress. *Man's extremity is God's opportunity.*

REVIEW.

RHODODAPHNE, OR THE THESSALIAN SPELL.

A Poem, 12 mo. p. 192. Published by Matthew Carey & Son, Philadelphia, 1818.

Although, as Persius says, we do not know that we ever dreamed on Parnassus, or drank water from Helicon, we are certainly no enemies to the Muses. Indeed, we rather wish to be known as their friends, and shall always esteem it a

pleasing part of our duty to recommend them to our readers. We believe, in fact, that in spite of our modern phlegm, there is still a force and charm in good poetry, to produce the most happy and delightful effects. At any rate, we suppose we shall always have some few of those elegant beings in our commonwealth, who fairly need the music of verses to keep them alive. In this view at least, as christian men, we must wish to see a "happy breed" of native poets about us; and though we are not very romantic, we really think they may do some service to the state.

With these sentiments, we have read the poem of Rhododaphne with great pleasure—none the less because the author is a Virginian.* It is indeed a charming thing in its way, and worthy of no common praise. The outline of the story, (for we cannot stop to give a full analysis) is simple enough. An Arcadian youth is in love with a young maid, who returns his passion with an equal flame. They are accordingly in a fair way to be married, when the poor damsel is seized with a strange sickness, that baffles all the skill of her physicians. The swain, of course, is in great distress, and comes to the temple of love in Thespia, with his wild flower offering for her recovery. Here he is met by the heroine, Rhododaphne herself, a young and beautiful enchantress, who falls in love with him at first sight, and tries all the power of her charms to steal away his heart. He is however, as constant as he ought to be, and makes out to resist all the fascinations of her beauty and magic together. At last though, she contrives (by means of a certain kiss of very uncommon qualities,) to cast her rival into a swoon which he mistakes for death, and still pursuing him with her arts, wins him over to her embrace. She then entertains him in her palace, for some time, till she is slain by the offended power, Uranian Love. The enchantment is dissolved—the lover is restored to his mistress—and both unite in generous sorrow over the author of their distress.

This is the outline—not very new or striking indeed—but it is filled up with a force and spirit of invention, that makes the whole extremely pleasing. The characters are generally made to love and be loved; such as have a natural claim upon the sympathy of our hearts. Rhododaphne herself, to be sure, is not exactly what we fancy in woman. But then she is so beautiful, and so romantic, that we indulge her a little, and at last forget her faults in pity for her fate. The senti-

* Mr. Richard Dabney, we understand, may claim the work. He is also the author of a small volume of "Poems Original Translated." Philadelphia, M. Carey, 1815.

ments (with a few exceptions) are of the most pleasing cast, and flatter some of our best feelings. Thus we have many happy touches of filial and parental affection, attachment to rural life, domestic pleasures, and things of that sort; and love in all its shapes of sweetness. At the same time, the scenery is often brilliant, and is besides nicely adapted to the action of the piece. Indeed the *keeping*, as a painter would call it, is nearly perfect: every thing about us is Grecian, to the very air we breathe.

Over all this, the execution is fine. The narrative runs with a rapid brevity that keeps us all awake. The transactions are well managed, and the various incidents follow each other with the very spirit of magic. The diction is generally chaste and elegant. The versification too, has often a certain Doric sweetness in its negligence, and displays, occasionally, some of the last touches of the art.

On the other hand, we would not have our readers suppose, that we are not able to find a few faults in this poem, as charming as it is. And in the first place, we are not quite sure but we ought to quarrel with it, for its want of moral design. At the same time, we do not mean to deny, that there may be some good poetry, in which the morality is rather incidental than direct. And indeed, we are willing to believe that every fine poem, that is not vicious in its matter, is of course moral in its influence, from its natural tendency to refine the perverse feelings of our nature. Perhaps, however, there may be some part of this tale, which can hardly claim the *benefit of clergy* under this concession.

We are more decided to condemn the irregularity of the metre—though we know it is the fashion of the day. The essence of versification, we take it, is *the recurrence of a certain system of articulate sounds at stated intervals*. And the reason of this law is found in the nature of music. For whoever heard of a musician's jumbling bars of common and triple time together, in the same strain. Or who would be able to beat the time, as we call it, in such a piece? But if poetry borrows the help of music, (as she does in versification) she must conform to its laws. And accordingly, the principle, we believe, is never violated by any bard of good fame, among the ancient classics.

But the greatest fault in the piece, (though it is connected with one of its greatest beauties) is the choice of the subject; which is both foreign and trite. The great charm of poetry lies in its power to interest our feelings, through the medium of our associations. But to do this, it must come home to our bosoms, to our native scenes of action, and habits of life

—that is in their finer parts. And besides, it was at least not quite judicious, we think, to lay the scene of the story among the poor decayed gentry of the classic mythology. Surely the interest of these things, (except with a few determined lovers,) is fairly gone, and cannot be revived even by the *galvanism* of genius. And indeed we rather wonder, (while our author was among his classics) that the sylvan genius of Virginia did not appear to him, as Quirinus did to Horace, and protest against his carrying more wood into the forests of Greece.

After these remarks, we should like to give many “elegant extracts” from this little work; but, unluckily for us, the subject is rather too light for our sober pages. We must however indulge our readers with one or two quotations, as samples of the thing. The following lamentation for the loss of the classic mythology, is full of beauty for all concerned.

“By living streams, in sylvan shades,
 Where winds and waves symphonious make
 Sweet melody, the youths and maids
 No more with choral music wake
 Lone echo from the tangled brake
 On Pan, or sylvan genius calling,
 Naiad or nymph, in suppliant song:
 No more by living fountain, falling
 The poplar’s circling bower among,
 Where pious hands have carv’d of yore
 Rude bason for its lucid store
 And reared the grassy altar nigh,
 The traveller when the sun rides high,
 For cool refreshment lingering there,
 Pours to the sister nymphs his prayer.
 Yet still the green vales smile: the springs
 Gush forth in light: the forest weaves
 Its own wild bowers; the breeze’s wings
 Make music in their rustling leaves;
 But ’tis no spirit’s breath that sighs
 Among their tangled canopies:
 In ocean’s caves no Nereid dwells:
 No Oread walks the mountain-dells:
 The streams no sedge-crowned Genii roll
 From bounteous urn: great Pan is dead:
 The life, the intellectual soul
 Of vale, and grove, and stream, has fled
 For ever with the creed sublime
 That nursed the Muse of earlier time.”

p. 59—61.

The next strain is in the same key, but still more to our taste, and the close is really charming.

“ Magic and mystery, spells Circean,
 The Siren voice that calmed the sea,
 And steeped the souls in dews Lethæan:
 The enchanted chalice, sparkling free
 With wine, amid whose ruby glow
 Love couched, with madness linked, and wo;
 Mantle and zone, whose woof beneath
 Lurked wily grace, in subtle wreath
 With blandishment and young desire
 And soft persuasion, intertwined,
 Whose touch, with sympathetic fire,
 Could melt at once the sternest mind,
 Have passed away: for vestal truth
 Young Fancy’s foe, and reason chill,
 Have chased the dreams that charmed the youth
 Of nature and the world, which still,
 Amid that vestal light severe,
 Our colder spirits leap to hear
 Like echoes from a fairy hill.
 Yet deem not so. The power of spells
 Still lingers on the earth, but dwells
 In deeper folds of close disguise,
 That baffle reason’s searching eyes;
 Nor shall that mystic power resign
 To truth’s cold sway his webs of guile,
 Till woman’s eyes have ceased to shine,
 And woman’s lips have ceased to smile,
 And woman’s voice has ceased to be
 The earthly soul of melody.” p. 83—5.

We must give one more passage, which is both poetical and moral, and will find an echo in every heart.

“Hast thou, in some safe retreat,
 Waked and watched, to hear the roar
 Of breakers on the wind-swept shore?
 Go forth at morn. The waves, that beat
 Still rough and white when blasts are o’er,
 May wash, all ghastly, to thy feet
 Some victim of the midnight storm.
 From that drenched garb and pallid form
 Shrink not. but fix thy gaze, and see
 Thy own congenial destiny.
 For him, perhaps, an anxious wife
E B

On some far coast o'erlooks the wave
 A child, unknowing of the strife
 Of elements, to whom he gave
 His last fond kiss, is at her breast:
 The skies are clear, the seas at rest
 Before her, and the hour is nigh
 Of his return: but black the sky
 To him, and fierce the hostile main,
 Have been. He will not come again.
 But yesterday, and life, and health,
 And hope, and love, and power, and wealth,
 Were his: to-day, in one brief hour,
 Of all his wealth, of all his power,
 He saved not, on his shattered deck,
 A plank to waft him from the wreck.
 Now turn away, and dry thy tears,
 And build long schemes for distant years!
 Wreck is not only on the sea,
 The warrior dies in vistory:
 The ruin of his natal roof
 O'erwhelms the sleeping man: the hoof
 Of his prized steed has struck with fate
 The horseman in his own home gate:
 The feast and mantling bowl destroy
 The sensual in the hour of joy.
 The bride from her paternal porch
 Comes forth among her maids: the torch,
 That led at morn the nuptial choir,
 Kindles at night her funeral fire.
 Now turn away, indulge thy dreams,
 And build for distant years thy schemes!" p. 127—30.

After this, we cannot take leave of our author without wishing to see him again. We think he has a good deal of the poet about him—*Spiritum Graiae tenuem Camænae*—And we shall always be happy to meet him in our walks.

**REMARKS ON THE ATTEMPTS NOW MAKING TO CHRISRTIAN-
 IZE THE WORLD.**

The attempts made by Christians in the present day to propagate their religion, have considerably excited the attention

of philosophers and statesmen; and they well deserve all the attention that has been given to them. It is no trivial object that has been undertaken; christians are engaged in no scheme of narrow and sectarian ambition. Nothing less than the conversion of the world will satisfy their hopes. The banner of the cross must wave in all lands; the gospel of Jesus Christ must every where be known; or the schemes of the Protestant Church will remain unaccomplished, and they will lie under the reproach of having begun to build, and being unable to finish. The magnitude and magnificence of this design overwhelm the minds of many; and they regard it as an object so disproportioned to the limited means now employed, as to sit down in hopeless despondency, and by their supineness discourage their fellows. Others consider the undertaking as evidence of a wild and crack-brained enthusiasm; and the exertions made in its promotion, as labour foolishly thrown away; and the contributions made for its support, as a ridiculous mispending of money. To such we would remark that once the Church of Christ had a very brief register; and that when the Apostles went forth to accomplish their mission, they undertook a task apparently much more hopeless than that in which the disciples of the present day are engaged. And while their numbers and resources, to all human observation, were incomparably smaller than ours, they had difficulties at least as great, prejudices at least as deeply rooted as any which now impede the operations of Bible and Missionary Societies. How would these obscure Galileans have incurred the ridicule and scorn of our *wise* ones, had they been present when the mighty work was begun. Yet history teaches us that in a few years the primitive preachers diffused christianity through the Roman empire. The philosophy of Greece and the power of Rome in vain opposed their progress. The gospel sent by Bible Societies and preached by Missionaries, is the very same by which Peter and Paul pulled down the strong holds of Pagan superstition. Why may it not in the present day be mighty to accomplish the same effects? Why may not the empire of China, or the vast regions of Hindostan, be subdued to the obedience of the faith, as well as haughty imperial Rome?

These remarks may make some impression on those who do not regard the predictions of scripture, which assure the believer that the time shall arrive when the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the whole earth, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God. On this topic however we shall not dwell at present. The point on which we mean to insist is this, *that the good to be accomplished by evangelizing the world is so*

transcendantly great, that any prospect of success will justify the attempt. And in case of failure, the consciousness of a benevolence so pure and expanded as that implied in this object, will afford better enjoyments than success can do in any other cause. Admit the gospel to be true, and no reasoning on the subject can be necessary. The salvation of men is an achievement paramount to all others. The everlasting glories which invest a ransomed soul in heaven, as far surpass all that is great and splendid and magnificent in this world, as the brightness of the sun, when he goeth forth in his strength, surpasses the feeble glimmering of the glow-worm; the happiness which shall be the portion of one of the spirits of the just made perfect, during the lapse of ceaseless ages, will as much exceed all that the race of man ever enjoyed or ever will enjoy on earth, as eternity exceeds time, or infinite extension a mathematical point. In this view there is no calculating the blessings of christianity; and we are under the highest obligations to promote it among ourselves, and to communicate it to the heathen.

But there are other considerations which show the obligation, and powerfully enforce it. The temporal evils of a false religion are neither few nor small. In fact, the religious principle, whether directed by truth, or misled and perverted by error has a diffusive influence; it operates with uncontrolled energy on the great mass of human society, pervades all the relations of life, and penetrates into our inmost domestic retirements. It is true that we hear many fine reports, and read many fine stories respecting the honesty, the purity, the innocence of savages; and we have been amused with many pompous declamations respecting the virtue of heathens. But who make these reports? For the most part, persons whose opportunities of observation were transient; or whose hostility to all the peculiarities of christianity is most obvious. Of many newly discovered countries, the first reports have represented tribes and nations as living in primeval innocence, and enjoying in pious simplicity the bounties of Providence; inclined to every virtue, and full of the milk of human kindness—Yet a nearer acquaintance has shewn them to be incontinent, fierce, implacable, and dishonest. We meet with some curious inconsistencies in the reporters on this subject. Some will admit the obligation to impart the blessings of civilization and christianity to the heathen; and in the next breath represent these very heathen as holding a more rational creed, and practising a purer morality, and living a happier life than obtains among christians. It is not christianity, however, as it prevails among christians that is to be propa-

gated; but christianity stripped of all mysteries; that is deprived of all its peculiarities, despoiled of all the attributes that adapt it to the condition of sinful man, it is christianity *de-christianized* and transformed into a cold and heartless system, that we are to give to the heathen. For ourselves we are wearied with the unceasing and unmeaning declamation respecting *mysteries*. What subject more mysterious than the existence and attributes of an uncaused, self-existent, eternal, almighty, omniscient, omnipresent, infinitely wise, and holy, and just, and good spirit—unless, indeed, we plunge into the interminable perplexities and monstrous absurdities of Atheism itself? But while some amuse themselves, and make the inconsiderate and unthinking wonder at the profoundness of their philosophy; others seem to be highly enamoured with the classical mythology of ancient Greece and Rome. They envy that age when every temple was adorned with naked statues of male and female deities; and every grove and every river was the abode of nymphs and goddesses, invested with immortal beauty. When on every high festival, and solemn religious celebration, the amours and intrigues of the gods were chaunted in language adorned by all the charms of poetry. These scenes were well calculated to delight a debauched and prurient imagination, but the moral effect of them is most powerfully expressed by a heathen in the short question, “*Nam quo non prostat scœmina templo?*” We grant that this mythology was admirably adapted to the *machinery* of poetry, and that it gave rise to some of the most splendid monuments of taste and the fine arts that ever enchanted the world. But how deplorable was the case when the exercises of religion and the pleasures of taste were associated with licentiousness and debauchery; and the very things which ought to refine and elevate were employed to corrupt the heart and defile the conscience?

Turning from these scenes, in which we see a disgusting mixture of high intellectual power and deep moral defilement, to modern heathenism, we contemplate a prospect in every way more revolting. The most unbounded licentiousness, and, in many instances, the most shocking cruelty appal the spectator. Disregard of marriage rites, oppression and degradation of women, tyranny in fathers, disobedience and rebellion in children, debasement of the understanding, and eager pursuit of sensual gratifications fill up the picture. Surely to breathe life into these regions of death, and the spirit of love into these habitations of cruelty, is a work of benevolence worthy of our highest approbation and our best exertions. For ourselves, we rejoice that it is undertaken;

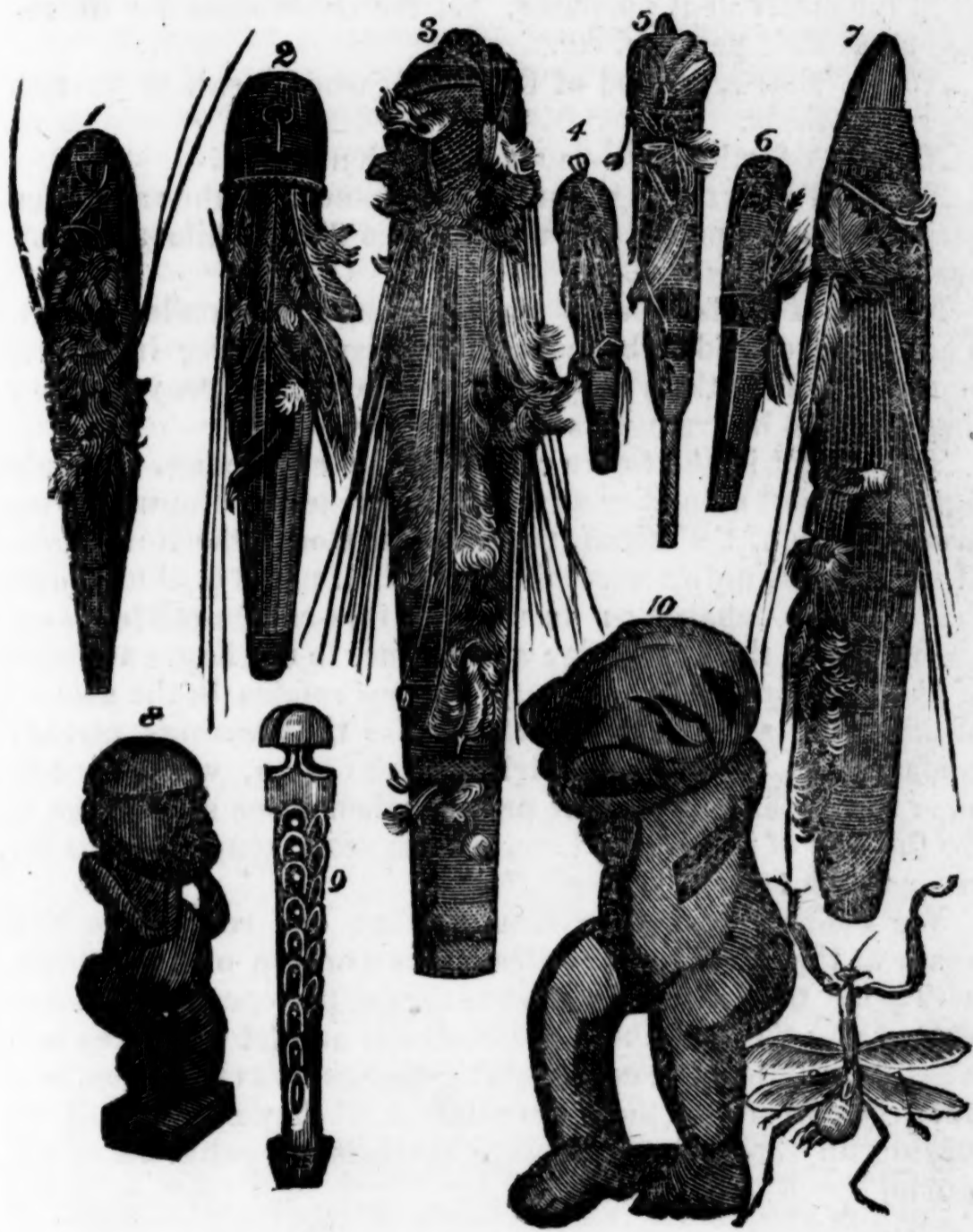
we deeply sympathise with the missionaries in their disappointments and sorrows; partake of the joys which their success affords, and exult in their triumphs.

In several passages in the first volume of our Journal, we recorded the successful operations of the London Missionary Society in Otaheite and the neighbouring islands. Our readers know that the people of that region have renounced idolatry, and adopted christianity as their religion; that numerous churches are now erected among them, and the Sabbath of the Lord piously observed. The places of their idolatrous worship have been demolished, and a number of their mishapen idols have been sent to the society. These are now actually deposited in the British Museum. Drawings have been taken of them; and from these, exact engravings have been made. We regard these as trophies of an important conquest atchieved by missionary efforts. And at considerable expense have caused the following exact likeness of these idols to be engraved, that our readers may see for themselves how great a blessing has been bestowed in turning a people from the worship of these rude wooden gods, to the service and love of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the pure and spiritual worship of the gospel.

It has often been said that the missionary efforts among the heathen are vain and inefficient. We know that they are incumbered with great difficulties, and are subjected to many disappointments; but every thing finally yields to the persevering zeal of christian benevolence. The desert is made to bud and blossom as the rose; the most thirsty and barren soil is filled with pools and made productive of even better fruits than grew in Eden.

THE FAMILY IDOLS OF POMARE,

Which he relinquished, and presented to the Missionaries, either to be burnt or sent to the society.



No. 1. **TERIAPTUURA** is said to be the son of the great God **ORO**, the national protector of *Otaheite, Raiatea, Huaheine, Taha, Borabora, and Marua.*

No. 2. The Missionaries could not learn the name of this idol.

No. 3. **TEMEHARO**, the principal God of Pomare's family. He is said to be also one of the chief deities of the island of Otaheite.

Nos. 4, 5, 6. These are called **OROMATUAS**, which represent the spirits of deceased relations. To these prayers are made as to the *Tiis*, with this difference, that the *Tiis* are prayed to for malevolent purposes, but the *Oromatuas* for the recovery of sick persons, &c.

No. 7. **TIIPA**, a God of Otaheite, who is said to preside over the winds.

No. 8. A family **TII**—a small wooden image.

No. 9. **TAHIVI ANUNAEHAU**, the handle of the sacred fan with which the priest drove away the flies, while about his prayers and sacrifices.

No. 10. This is an ugly wooden image, and called a **TII**. The *Tiis* are said to be powerful beings dwelling in the *Po*, or night, and to them the sorcerers direct their prayers when they want to injure a person.

The insect in the lower corner of the engraving, the only figure without a number annexed, is a true but diminished representation of the *Mantis Oratoria*, the God of the Hottentots, of which some notice was taken in vol. I. pa. 476. The people that were so debased as to worship this contemptible thing, are rising to the knowledge and virtue, to the hopes and joys of christianity. Again we say that we rejoice in the success of missions; and rendering thanks for the blessings already conferred on the benighted tribes of the earth, will pray and hope for the arrival of that period, when Jesus shall reign in the fullness of redeeming love, "from sea to sea, and from the river to the end of the earth."

We cannot conclude without asking our readers to look again at this plate, and contrast the worship of these idols, with what they witness and what they experience in the house of God and the assemblies of his saints; and let them then say, what they think of persons calling themselves christians, who publicly affirm that they "would not if they could do it by raising up their hands, change the existing religions of the world!"

LITERARY INSTITUTIONS.

[We have more than once attempted to turn the attention of our readers to the literary institutions of the state; and have wished our correspondents to afford information of the present condition of the public schools. Our success has hitherto been very limited. The communication which follows is the only one which has been received. The College of Hampden Sidney is now under the direction of Moses Hoge, D. D. His predecessor was Archibald Alexander, D. D. and his again John B. Smith, D. D. who succeeded his brother, the late venerable president of the College of New Jersey, Dr. Samuel S. Smith. Under his auspices the College was founded about the year 1774. Since that period it has been supported almost entirely by the liberality of private persons. Some attempts are now making to enlarge its operations and make it more extensively useful. To these the editor most heartily wishes success. The locality of the college makes it convenient to a very extensive section of the state; the part of the country is as healthy as any in Virginia; and the moral influences of the surrounding population are likely to be highly salutary. There is an unusual degree of intelligence and virtue among that portion of our countrymen.

If time and space would allow, we should offer some remarks on the general subject of a course of collegiate studies. Hereafter we shall take up this subject. The following seems to be judicious, inasmuch as it is well calculated to exercise the mind, and give it expansion and vigor. We are much pleased to see the subject of Agriculture introduced. It falls in with our views and wishes as to general improvement.

It would have been well, we think, to mention the text books used in the junior and senior years.]

THE COURSE OF STUDIES AT HAMPDEN SIDNEY COLLEGE.

Grammar School.

Latin grammar, Adam's; Corderii, 50 Colloquies; Sacred History; Viri Romæ; Cæsar's Commentaries, 6 books, read with Mair's Introduction; Narrationes Excerptæ; Virgil, through the 6th Æneid; Greek grammar; Greek testament, John, Acts, Romans and Hebrews, *or its equivalent*; Lucian, 33 Dialogues, *or its equivalent*.

College Course.

Arranged in four classes, each class having two studies, and a daily recitation on each study.

LITERARY INSTITUTIONS.

FRESHMAN CLASS.—*Winter Session.*

- *1st. Recitation—Cicero's Orations and Xenophon, 3 books.
2nd. Do. Arithmetick and Algebra.

Winter Session.

- 1st Recitation—Xenophon, 3 Books, and Sallust.
2nd. do. English Grammar and Exercises, and select parts of Rhetoric.

Compositions every four weeks throughout the year.

SOPHOMORE CLASS.—*Winter Session.*

- 1st. Recitation—Geography and Logic.
2nd. Do. Livy and Longinus.

Summer Session.

- 1st. Recitation—Euclid, 6 books.
2nd. Do. Homer, 4 books, and Greek Prosody.
Compositions every three weeks during the year.

JUNIOR CLASS.—*Winter Session.*

- 1st. Recitation—Chemistry with experiments, and Agriculture.
2nd. Do. Trigonometry, Mensuration, Surveying, Navigation, and Conic Sections.

Summer Session.

- 1st. Recitation—Natural Philosophy and Astronomy with experiments.
2nd. Do. Horace, and English Composition every two weeks through the year.

SENIOR CLASS.—*Winter Session.*

- 1st. Recitation—Philosophy of the mind, Rhetoric, Moral Philosophy, and Dissertations in English every two weeks, and Declamations throughout the year, of their own composition.

Summer Session.

- 1st. Recitation—Law of Nature and Nations, the Elements of History and Chronology.

These studies are to succeed each other as they are arranged.

* There are in each class two recitations during each year, except the Senior, in which there will be only one; that the Seniors may have an opportunity to pay more attention to composing and to review the studies required.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

DOMESTIC:

Meeting of the Presbytery of Hanover.

The Presbytery of Hanover, held its spring meeting at Pisgah church, in the county of Bedford, on the 15th day of April, 1819; and continued its sessions until the seventeenth: When it adjourned, with reference to the ordination of John Kirkpatrick, as pastor of the church in Cumberland county, to meet at Cumberland church on the third Friday in July.

Besides the ordinary business of the presbytery, Mr. James B. Stafford, was licensed as a probationer for the gospel ministry, and James H. Brookes, was admitted as a candidate for licensure.

From the free conversation held, according to a standing order of presbytery, on the state of religion within its bounds, it appeared that great insensibility prevails as to the interests of eternity, while all seem to be alive to the concerns of the present life. But although multitudes appear dead to spiritual things, there are many who mourn the desolations of Zion, and pray for the peace of Jerusalem: while a majority labour hard, and almost exclusively for the bread that perisheth; there are many labouring for the bread of life, and who endeavour by their prayers, and their becoming offerings in support of charitable and religious institutions, to bring others to relish and to share the blessings of salvation.

The bounds of Hanover presbytery are, the Rappahannock on the north, North Carolina on the south, the Blue Ridge on the west, and the Atlantic Ocean on the east. Within these bounds there are only fourteen ordained clergymen of the Presbyterian church, and seven licentiates.

The Committee of the Auxiliary, Missionary Society of the Presbytery of Hanover, in conformity to the requirement of the Constitution would present their First Annual Report.

The Society not having been organized more than six months, can as yet, furnish a record of very little that has been done through its instrumentality in promoting the kingdom of the Redeemer.

On the 11th November last the Committee held its first meeting, at which time a brief address to the pious and benevolent, was drawn up, and directed to be printed, together with the Constitution of the Society, for distribution. A number of copies have been sent to such persons as it was supposed would make good use of them; and we have reason to expect that considerable sums will be raised by means of associations formed, or that will hereafter be formed for the aid of the Society. Reports have as yet been received from very few; but it is hoped that something has already been done in many places from which no communication has been made to the Committee; and that a subject so deeply interesting as that of sending the Gospel to the destitute, will call forth the vigorous exertions, and most earnest prayers of all who are united under the Presbytery of Hanover.

Your Committee has been able to employ only two missionaries since the organization of the Society. Mr. Joseph E. Curtis, itinerated a few weeks in the counties lying between Henrico and Gloucester. In the journal of this missionary the Committee finds pleasing evidence that he was

received with much cordiality, and treated with great respect. He preached on several occasions to very attentive and solemn audiences; among which several gave indications of considerable affection. The general state of the people in the region through which he travelled, as respects religion, is represented by him as very deplorable. They are very ignorant of christian doctrine; negligent of the Sabbath; and careless as to the religious education of children.

Within a few days the Committee has employed Mr. Walter S. Pharr, to itinerate for two months in the counties of Charles City and New Kent. By a late communication from Mr. Pharr, it is understood that he is occupying the station assigned him with much diligence and zeal, and that he is well received among the people, and the prospect of usefulness is encouraging.

There are various places within the limits of the Society where there is reason to believe not only that your missionaries would be cordially received, but that the people earnestly desire to be visited by them. The Committee has adopted such measures as were within its power to procure labourers to send into those parts of the vineyard, but hitherto without success. They however are not discouraged. Let the members of Presbytery and people committed to their care, exert themselves to raise funds; and the Theological Seminaries in the Church will at no very remote period furnish an adequate supply of preachers.

Besides the members of the Society (yet indeed very few in number) who contributed to the missionary fund, associations have been organized in Lynchburg, in Manchester, in Richmond, and in the vicinity of Hanover Town, from which in part, contributions have been received, and from all of which shortly, something may be expected to aid in replenishing the Treasury of the Society.

As this Institution is Auxiliary to the board of missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, it deserves consideration whether

any of the small funds now in the hands of the Treasurer ought to be sent to that board. The Committee considering the very great demand for missionary services within your limits; and the immense field of missionary labours lying all around you, and stretching to a vast extent, have not thought themselves warranted to appropriate any part of their surplus fund to the parent association. Within the bounds of the Presbytery of Hanover there is ample room and great occasion for the labours of at least fifty missionaries—If the Society should disapprove of this determination they can easily instruct the Committee for the ensuing year to that effect.

The Committee in concluding this report, beg leave to say, that by the little experience which they have had, and the small opportunity afforded of making observation, they are persuaded that nothing is required but combined and vigorous exertions to raise funds to considerable amount for promoting the objects of this association. The feelings of the people are somewhat awakened on this subject, and they are beginning to see that religion is necessary for the support of law and the promotion of good order in society as well as to secure the everlasting interests of man. The importance of domestic missions too begins to be recognised; and many are ready on application to contribute the small portion called for by the Society. But it is not to be forgotten for a moment, that the nature of the institution and the only mode by which it can be conducted requires combination, and united exertion—The whole Presbytery ought to move in concert; and lay out their strength in this cause. The interests of the Theological Seminary may be greatly promoted by a zealous prosecution of the missionary business; the borders of our Zion may be greatly enlarged; waste places may be settled, and new congregations formed; and thus the glory of our redeemer be promoted; the interests of his church advanced; and souls rescued from the bondage of satan, and prepared for a part in the inheritance of the saints.—While the

church in general is rising in the strength of its Redeemer, to extend his triumphs, and gives wider diffusion to the blessings which flow through him, it is hoped that the particular part of it with which the society is connected, will not leave any thing undone that can be accomplished by the full employment of all its talents, and all its influence. Let the kingdom of the Redeemer come, and his will be done on earth as it is in heaven!

It will belong to the society, according to the Constitution, immediately after the adjournment of Presbytery to appoint a Committee for the ensuing year.

Signed by order of the Committee.

JOHN H. RICE,
D. J. BURR.

—
*Second Annual Report of the
Auxiliary Missionary Society
of Hanover Presbytery.*

The committee of the Auxiliary Missionary Society of Hanover Presbytery, would in discharge of a duty enjoined by the Constitution, now submit their second annual report

They have the satisfaction to state that, during the year just elapsed, the society has been favoured with a degree of success sufficient to encourage the prosecution of their object with renewed alacrity. At the same time, however, the best exertions that have been made are extremely disproportionate to the wants of the people. As the acquaintance of the committee with the real religious state of the country has increased, the evidence that our most vigorous united exertions are loudly called for has been strengthened. The committee has been utterly unable to supply the demand made on them for missionary labours. The funds indeed of the society have been adequate to the expences incurred. The difficulty has been to procure missionaries. But it ought to be distinctly understood that these two subjects are intimately connected. Without funds missionaries cannot be employed; and without missiona-

ries the interest taken in this important subject dies away. Considering this remark in connection with the destitute condition of many, very many parts of our country, it appears to be the duty of every member of the presbytery, of the society, and of the church, to do all that he can do in his place, to raise up and support missionaries among ourselves.

The committee has been enabled to employ four missionaries in the service of the society during the past year. The amount of their labour is that of twenty-two months.

Mr. Walter S. Pharr was employed for five months: during three of these he itinerated in the counties of New Kent and Charles City. The committee have reason to believe that he laboured with diligence and fidelity, was received in a very cordial manner by the people, and was instrumental of doing good at least to some.

The same missionary performed two months service in the counties of Lunenburg, Nottoway, and Amelia. His journal warrants the same remarks that were made on his former tour, with the addition that he was most kindly received by christians of other denominations with whom he met in his travels. In Lunenburg strong desires were expressed for the settlement of a Presbyterian preacher.

The Rev. James Mitchell has been employed as a missionary for nine months in the counties of Franklin, Pittsylvania, Bedford, Campbell, and Amherst. The committee has understood, from information on which they could depend, that this venerable missionary has pursued his labours with exemplary activity and diligence, *but from him they have received no report.*

Mr. James Wharey was commissioned to itinerate for two months; and was required to spend one week on either side of James River, between Richmond and New Canton; and the remainder of his time in the counties of Louisa, Fluvanna, Albemarle, Amherst, and Nelson. This mission was fulfilled during the most intemperate season of the winter in

a manner entirely satisfactory to the committee.

Mr. Reuben Post, (from the seminary at Princeton) sent on to us by the General Assembly's Board of Missions, was employed during six months, principally in the counties of Spottsylvania, Orange, Louisa, Fluvanna, and Albemarle. The labours of this missionary were very acceptable to the people, and he was made the instrument of awakening some to a serious concern for the welfare of their souls.

No extraordinary work of revival has taken place under the labours of any of your missionaries; but still it is believed that good has been done—Prejudices against christianity have been weakened—a desire for the stated means of God's house has been awakened in some and increased in others—the few pious persons in our connection that are dispersed through the country have been refreshed and strengthened—Sabbath schools have been formed—Several missionary associations have been organized—and in a word, should these labours be followed up with suitable zeal and energy by the society, the best results may be expected. The people of Charlottesville and its vicinity, the committee are happy to state, are exceedingly anxious that Mr. Post should settle among them.

Four Missionary Associations have been formed during the year, auxiliary to this society—One at New Canton, another at Columbia in Fluvanna, and two others in Albemarle.

In addition to this, it will afford the society pleasure to learn that a Young Men's Missionary Society has been formed in Richmond; a society for similar purposes has been organized in Norfolk; and a missionary Society, with a Ladies Cent Society connected, has been organized in Mecklenburg county.

The treasurer's report will be annexed, that the society may have a full view of the state of the funds, and thus be enabled to determine whether any part of them shall be contributed to the board of missions of the General Assembly. In reference to this subject the committee should state that almost the whole of

Hanover presbytery, from the Blue Ridge to the Ocean is missionary ground; that the wants of the people are great, the call for missionaries importunate, and more urgent every year.

A zealous and popular missionary sent by the Young Men's Missionary Society of New York, has laboured for some time within our bounds; for this work of love the thanks of this society are due.

The committee conclude this report of their proceedings by expressing their belief that there has not been a period since the Revolution when it was more important that vigorous efforts should be made to promote true religion, and none when there was greater encouragement for the church with which we are connected to put forth their best exertions. May the blessings of heaven rest on the Society, and may heavenly wisdom guide its counsels.

Submitted

By order of the Committee.

JOHN H. RICE.

17 April, 1819.

FOREIGN.

Extracts showing the efficacy of Religious Tracts.

From a Dignitary of the Established Church in Ireland.

October 8th, 1817.

I beg leave to assure the Committee, through you, that by all means in my power, I desire to promote their interests; convinced as I am, from *experience*, of the great benefit resulting from the distribution of such Tracts as they publish. It may be satisfactory to the Committee to hear, that, within the small circle of my charge, I have known the distribution of Tracts to have been instrumental, I trust, to the saving illumination of some individuals. In particular, I know the Tract entitled *The Warning Voice*, to have been the means of awakening a young man, about two years ago, of whom I have hope, that ever since he has been kept under the influence of divine grace; and, lately, I have come to the knowledge of an aged woman, who had been quite ignorant and careless,

having been much assisted in coming to the knowledge of her Saviour, in whom now she hopes, by getting the Tract of *The Negro Servant*, and *Vivian's Three Dialogues*.

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From the Rev. J. Hands, Missionary at Bellary.

August 4th, 1817.

You will be happy to hear that the cause of the Redeemer continues to prosper among us, especially among our poor countrymen, nearly thirty of whom have, within a few months, become members of our church; and, we hope, are of those who shall be saved.

I have again the pleasure to forward to you, from our Tract Society the sum of four pounds, which you will be pleased to receive from the Treasurer of the Missionary Society, as before; and we shall feel obliged by your sending us out another supply of Tracts, when a suitable opportunity presents itself.

The large increase we have lately had of Missionaries and pious Clergymen, has already begun to produce an alteration in the state of society in India. European as well as native, and many civil and military officers, who were formerly inimical to the cause of Christ, are beginning warmly to espouse it; in many instances we are filled with wonder and admiration, and cannot but exclaim, "What hath God wrought!"

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From a country Clergyman, addressed to the Auxiliary Society in the parish of St. Swithin's, London.

A short time ago, a little lad was reading, in a cottage, a Tract, which I received, among others, through one of your members, containing an affectionate address of a parish minister to his people, on the importance of attending public worship. As he read, a woman came in, who had not been at any place of public worship for the last twenty years; she seemed struck with what the boy read, and begged he would begin again: she heard the whole of it; and on her return home, she spoke very serious-

ly to two others, who had also lived in the same neglect: and now by God's goodness, I observe them regularly attending the public means of grace, and we will hope they may yet be brought to feel the power of Christ's religion on their hearts.

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From a Minister at St. Neot's.

May 14, 1818.

We are accustomed to stitch together selections of Tracts, and give them to the children of our Sunday School, as reward books. One of these containing the Tract *On the Lord's Day*, was given to a child, whose mother had not attended on public worship for several years. As her child read this Tract at home, she was struck with the criminality of her conduct, in having so long neglected the sanctuary of God, and formed a resolution from that time to attend regularly on the public ordinances of religion.—She acted upon this resolution; her heart was soon impressed with the truths she heard; and, in due time, she became a member of the christian society of which I am the unworthy pastor.

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Colonization Society.

We have just received a copy of the second annual report of the American Colonization Society. It contains a number of interesting documents, which we recommend to the attention of our readers. We are well aware that this subject has occasioned considerable diversity of opinion. It is our purpose in an early number to take it up and consider it as fully as we are able. The free people of colour in our country are becoming so numerous, that it behoves the statesman as well as the christian to consider their case. Remaining among us, they will in process of time acquire an influence of very extensive character. Wherever there are slaves, they will always associate with them instead of whites: and their influence will chiefly be felt on the slave population. That this is likely to be injurious both to servants and their masters is obvious to every observer—What shall be done with them?

The plan of forming colonies on the western coast of Africa to many appears chimerical—Whatever it may be as to the final disposal of the people of colour in general; we think that the measure is highly important as regards the practical abolition of the slave trade.

LITERARY NOTICES.

Proposals are issued for publishing by subscription, at the Franklin Press, the History of the early settlements of Virginia, New England, and Bermuda, by the celebrated Captain John Smith. This work ought to be in every family in Virginia. It will be contained in two octavo volumes, with the map annexed. Price to subscribers, \$2, 25 per volume in boards, \$2, 50 bound. The price to non-subscribers will be raised. The subscription is likely to succeed, and the work will be put to press early in the summer.

John W. Campbell, of Petersburg, proposes to publish by subscription, a periodical work to be entitled, "*The Farmer's Register*." The ob-

ject of the work is to improve the present state of Agriculture in Virginia. It will be published quarterly, price \$4 00 per annum, to be discharged by paying 75 cents for each number on delivery.—Success to this design!

Recently published by Ananias Davisson, Harrisonburg, "*THE MOUNTAINEER*," second edition, revised and improved. This work is a republication of a number of essays, which were first printed in a newspaper called the Republican Farmer, published in Staunton. It is our purpose in the next number to present a review of this *home made book*. We therefore now barely announce its appearance.

☞ We hope that our correspondent *Philopsuchos* will excuse us for not inserting his communication in the present number. The reason is that a scheme for the establishment of a Religious Tract Society in Virginia on a plan different from his, is in agitation; that this plan is likely, as far as we can judge, to succeed; that a gentleman who will superintend all the *business* part of the institution, and who may be entirely relied on for this purpose, has been engaged; and of course in these circumstances, to urge a different scheme on the public attention might have an unhappy effect.

NOTE. A fresh supply of Religious Tracts just received at Raymond & Brothers.

It gives us the highest pleasure to observe the success of the Young Men's Missionary Society of Richmond—The first annual meeting will take place on the 12th inst. And we hope that a full attendance will be reported.