

A SHORT ACCOUNT
OF THE
SCOTS BAPTISTS.

IT was supposed, till very lately, that there never had existed in Scotland a religious society of the Baptist denomination before the year 1765; but it now appears that this was a mistake, and that such a society did really exist there as far back as about the middle of the last century, and which used to meet at Leith and Edinburgh. What led to this discovery, was a book which lately fell into the hands of a certain person at Edinburgh, entitled, "A Confession of Faith of the several Congregations or Churches of Christ in London, which are commonly (though unjustly), called Anabaptists: Published for the vindication of the truth, &c. Unto which is added, Heart-bleedings for professors abominations, or a faithful general epistle (from the same churches) presented to all who have known the way of truth, &c. The fourth impression, corrected. Printed at Leith 1653." To this edition a preface is prefixed by some Baptists at Leith and Edinburgh, which, however, contains nothing of the history of their church, only that they were of the same faith and order with the churches in London. It is dated "Leith, the 10th of the first month, vulgarly called March, 1652-3." and "signed in the name, and by the appointment of the church of Christ, usually meeting at Leith and Edinburgh, by Thomas Spenser, Abraham Holmes, Thomas Powell, John Brady."

It is more than probable that this church was composed of English Baptists, who had gone into that country during the civil wars: In that case it may be supposed that they were chiefly soldiers, as we know of no other description of men so likely to have emigrated from England to Scotland; and it is well known that there were many Baptists in the army which Cromwell led into that country, a good part of which was left behind for the purpose of garrisoning Edinburgh, Leith and other places.

This church, it is supposed, continued in existence down to the æra of the Restoration, when, in all probability, it was dissolved and dispersed, owing either to the garrisons of Leith, and Edinburgh being then withdrawn and replaced by other troops, or else to the violence of the persecution which so notoriously distinguished the execrable reign of the second Charles. Be that as it may, there do not appear, as far as is now known, the slightest traces of so much as one single Baptist church in North Britain, for more than a hundred years subsequent to that period. It was not till the year 1765, that the Baptist profession began again to make a public appearance in that country*; its first rise, however, may be traced a little farther back.

In

* A little prior to this date Sir William Sinclair, of Dunbeath, Bart. in the shire of Caithness, baptized a few of his tenants, who united with him

In 1763 Mr. Robert Carmichael*, and Archibald M'Lean printer in Glasgow, conversing together upon the subject of Infant Baptism, were at a loss to find any proper ground for it in the word of God; but being unwilling to relinquish it hastily, it was agreed that each of them should carefully consult the Scriptures upon that subject, and communicate their thoughts upon it to each other. Meantime Mr. Carmichael, having received a call from an Independent† Society at Edinburgh, removed from Glasgow to that place, and was chosen their elder along with Mr. John McLean, shop-keeper there.

In June 1764, he wrote to Archibald M'Lean, requesting him to send him his thoughts upon Baptism according to promise, which induced the latter to examine the Scriptures on that subject with greater attention than formerly, and the result was his full conviction that the Baptism of infants had no foundation in the word of God, and that none have a right to that divine institution but visible believers. These sentiments he communicated to Mr. Carmichael, in a long letter, dated July 2, 1764. This, however, did not fully convince Mr. Carmichael; for, in a letter to Archibald McLean, dated September 3, 1764, he informed him, that though the arguments against Infant Baptism were very forcible, yet he had baptized his colleague's child, apprehending there might be some warrant for it in these words, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not," &c. and "Then were your children unclean, but now are they holy."

Mr. Carmichael had not been long in Edinburgh when he began to discover that the people with whom he stood connected were of various opinions, and that some of them held erroneous sentiments respecting the extent of Christ's death, and the doctrine of the atonement; and as all his endeavours to instruct and bring them to unity in the faith had no effect, but to excite contention, he, with seven others, separated from them in May 1765.

Soon after this he came to be fully convinced of the Scripture doctrine of Baptism, and preached it publicly. Five of the seven who adhered to him declared themselves of the same mind, among

him for some time. His notions in many things were very singular. He observed the Passover, and after the Lord's Supper he girded himself with a towel, poured water into a basin, and washed their feet, which he considered as a necessary appendage to the Lord's Supper. He died several years ago at Edinburgh, when, it is said, all his adherents, excepting one, returned to the Kirk.

* Mr. Carmichael had been several years pastor of an Antiburgher congregation (the strictest class of Seceders), at Cupar in Angus, where he was much esteemed; but, adopting congregational principles, he joined the Glassites, and was appointed an elder of a church of theirs at Glasgow. After having continued with them about a year, he left them upon an affair of discipline in 1763, and it was soon after this that he had the above mentioned conversation on baptism with Archibald M'Lean.

† The Independent Societies, mentioned in this narrative, are not of the Glassite denomination, though like them, Congregationalists.

whom was Mr. Robert Walker, surgeon*. To obtain baptism in a regular way, it was judged proper that Mr. Carmichael should first go to London and be baptized himself. He accordingly went, and was baptized by Doctor Gill, at Barbican, October 9, 1755, and, returning to Edinburgh, administered that ordinance to the five above mentioned, and other two, in November following. Archibald M'Lean, then residing at Glasgow, was not baptized for some weeks after; and while at Edinburgh upon that occasion he was much solicited to write an answer to Mr. Glas's dissertation on Infant Baptism, which he did in the Spring following, but it was not published till the end of that year. A publication of this nature being a novelty in Scotland, awakened the attention of many in different places to the subject.

In December 1767, Archibald M'Lean removed to Edinburgh, the church then consisting of about nine members; and in June 1768, he was chosen colleague to Mr. Carmichael. Soon after this the church increased considerably.

Some persons from Dundee having received baptism, solicited Mr. Carmichael to go and preach at that place as there was some prospect of success. He accordingly went, and during his stay there baptized several who were earnestly desirous of having him settled among them as their pastor. After repeated applications to him and the church at Edinburgh, their request was at last complied with, and, in May 1769, Mr. Carmichael removed to Dundee. They were immediately formed into church order, and some time after Thomas Boswel was chosen for his colleague.— Meantime Mr. Robert Walker was chosen joint-elder with Archibald M'Lean of the church at Edinburgh.

The same year (1769,) several persons came from Glasgow and were baptized. Afterwards when their number increased they were set in order, and Neil Stuart was appointed their elder.— This was the beginning of the church at Glasgow.

In 1770, a small society at Montrose unanimously adopted the Scripture view of Baptism, but most of them having been connected with the Glassites, were tenacious of some of their peculiarities, with which they understood the Baptists did not agree. They wrote to Archibald M'Lean on these particulars, and after several letters had passed between them, they yielded the points in dispute, and requested him to come and baptize them. He complied with their request, and administered that ordinance to them upon a profession of their faith. They were immediately formed into church order, John Greig being appointed their elder: afterwards David Mill and Thomas Wren were chosen into that office.

* Mr. Walker was a man much and deservedly esteemed both for his professional skill and his character as a christian. He was eminently useful in the Baptist church at its first erection, and for several years after, particularly in liberality; for as the members were then very few, and in mean circumstances, the greater part of the necessary expense attending the public profession fell to his share.

Hitherto the Baptist interest in Scotland seemed to prosper ; but it was not long after this when several vexatious occurrences took place, which were no doubt permitted to humble and try them.

In 1772, Thomas Boswel; Mr. Carmichael's colleague at Dundee, died. Mr. Carmichael himself was frequently seized with a profuse spitting of blood ; but his greatest affliction was the unworthy conduct of several of the members under his charge. Some of them were excluded, and others appeared devoid of the spirit of genuine Christianity. These things greatly discouraged and grieved his spirit, and his bodily health declined apace ; so that at length he became unable to discharge the duties of his office among them, which made him incline to return to Edinburgh. He was accordingly recalled, and not long after departed this life about the beginning of March 1774.

About this time an unruly faction began to disturb the peace of the church at Edinburgh, by introducing privately a great deal of vain jangling and disputation upon various points. One of them in particular maintained, That it was not the duty of any but real believers in Christ to pray unto God—That the office of elder had nothing peculiar to it ; but that the work of ruling, public teaching, and dispensing the ordinances, belonged to the brethren in common—That neither the apostolic prohibition of blood-eating, nor the observance of the first day of the week were binding upon Christians, &c. After having been privately admonished without effect, the matter was represented to the church, when it appeared that he was supported by a party who were resolved to stand by him ; so that after much disputing to no purpose, the church was called, and gave their voice to exclude him. Upon this the whole party, consisting of eight persons, left the church. They immediately formed themselves into a separate Society, and baptized several persons ; but being loose and sceptical in their principles, they soon began to broach several other errors, such as denying that unbelief is a damning sin—that the future punishment of the wicked will be eternal—that Jesus Christ is truly God, &c. A few afterwards left them, and returned to the church professing repentance. The rest of that party are now altogether dissolved.

In December 1774, another separation took place in the church at Edinburgh, which was more distressing than the former. This was occasioned by an affair of discipline, wherein Mr. Walker himself was personally concerned, and as his colleague could not altogether approve of his conduct in the matter, which gave offence, nor of his treatment of the brethren who had conversed with him on that head ; it gave rise to a most unhappy difference between the two elders, which issued in Mr. Walker's leaving the church, drawing off with him a number of the members, and forming them into a separate Society. The other churches hearing of this separation, sent some of their number to enquire into the grounds of it, and having obtained a full and distinct ac-

bunt from both sides, they wrote to Mr. Walker, highly disapproving of his conduct, and declaring they could have no connexion with him or his adherents, till they should repent and return to the church.

About the beginning of the year 1776, the church at Glasgow fell into the Sabellian error, denying the personal distinction in the Godhead. Archibald M'Lean wrote to Neil Stuart the elder who had propagated that tenet, requesting him, in consequence of the connexion which subsisted between them, to give a distinct answer to a few questions relative to that point. After a considerable delay he returned a long answer. To this Archibald M'Lean wrote a reply, in which the *unity* of the Godhead was fully admitted, while the *personal distinction* was clearly pointed out from the very passages which had been adduced to overturn it. Finding the Sabellian sentiments untenable, they shifted their ground to Socinianism, admitting that the Father and Son are distinct persons, but affirming that the Godhead is the person of the Father, and the manhood of Christ the person of the Son; and as they did not hold the novel doctrine of Christ's pre-existent human soul, so neither did they believe that the Son of God was a divine person, or had any existence at all previous to his conception of the virgin. This being represented to the church at Edinburgh, it was agreed that Archibald M'Lean should write another letter to them in the name of the church, refuting their heresy, and at the same time informing them, that if this had no effect, they would give up all connexion with them as a sister church. This was done accordingly, and their answer was, that being sensible of their own inability to settle matters by writing, they had resolved to send two of their number to Edinburgh to converse upon the subject, and requested that no decisive step might be taken till that should take place.

In this state matters rested for several months. At last they gave notice of the time when their delegates should be at Edinburgh. The persons appointed were their two elders, Neil Stuart and George Beg. But instead of coming to Edinburgh at the time appointed, they set out in the first place for Dundee and Montrose, where they judged their sentiments would be more easily disseminated. And indeed they were not altogether disappointed, for they unsettled the minds of several of the Brethren at both places, and a few of them were entirely subverted. At length they came to Edinburgh, and obtained leave to declare their sentiments fully and without reserve in the hearing of the whole church, which was convened on that occasion. Neil Stuart made a long speech, the purport of which was, That the Person of the Son of God was merely human, and that he had no existence before he came into the world; though he had now a peculiar union with God, and was exalted as head over all things. Arch. M'Lean made a reply to this speech, proving from the Scriptures the divinity of the Son of God, and the distinct subsistence of his
Divine

Divine Person, not only before his incarnation, but before the creation of all things. To shorten the dispute, he desired Neil Stuart to come directly to the point, and show what sense he could make of certain passages consistently with his scheme, such as John i. 1—4. ch. 8. 58. ch. 17. 5. Rom. 9. 5. Philip. ii. 6, 7. Col. i. 15—18. 1 Tim. 3. 16. Heb. i. 2, 3. Here he exposed himself sufficiently by such arbitrary and unnatural glosses as flatly contradicted the plain sense and scope of the sacred text; but being closely pressed with these and similar passages, he found himself shut up, and at last sunk into silence. Arch. M'Lean then laid before him the magnitude of his error as affecting the whole doctrines of the gospel; the aggravations with which it was attended, in his having not only subverted the flock committed to his charge, but in his going about to subvert the souls of others, after all the pains that had been taken to convince him; concluding with reminding him of the account he must give at the judgment-seat of Christ, and earnestly calling him to repentance. To all which he replied, that he had taught nothing but what he firmly believed, and that he had much satisfaction in his present sentiments. The church was then called, and unanimously declared, that they considered Neil Stuart's tenets as subversive of the faith, and therefore could have no connexion with him, or with those who adhered to him, until God should grant them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.

The Baptist affairs in Scotland had at this time a very discouraging appearance. Two successive divisions had greatly reduced the church at Edinburgh. The church at Glasgow having departed from the faith, was worse than lost to the profession; and there was much reason to fear that a number at Dundee and Montrose would soon follow their example. But it was not long till matters began to wear a more promising aspect.

George Beg, the elder who accompanied Neil Stuart, was much struck with what had passed at Edinburgh. Upon his return home, he reflected seriously upon the subject, and soon came to be convinced that he had adopted and propagated a most dangerous error. He laid open the state of his mind to his Brethren, which produced much disputation among them. At last he and a few more left them, and wrote a penitential letter to Edinburgh, renouncing their error, and desiring to be restored into the unity and fellowship of the churches, which was readily complied with. The next object was the recovery of the members who were in a wavering state at Dundee and Montrose. Those at Dundee had been rather perplexed than convinced by Neil Stuart's arguments, and soon acknowledged their firm belief of Christ's divinity: but the case was otherwise at Montrose. Their elder, David Mill, who had been at Edinburgh to witness the conference, upon his return, found several of them had embraced Neil Stuart's sentiments; but they were all at length recovered, except two or three who left them.

The same year a pamphlet appeared in behalf of Infant Baptism, written by an Independent at Glasgow; to which Arch. M'Lean wrote an answer, entitled, "A Defence of Believers' Baptism, in opposition to Infant Sprinkling," &c. which he published in May 1777. This drew the attention of many to that subject. The controversy got access into an Independent congregation at Edinburgh, and, in the following August, six of them came off, embraced baptism, and were added to the church. Among these were James M'Lean and Robert Wilson, now deacons.

Meantime, it was privately intimated, that Mr. Walker and those in connexion with him, were disposed to a reconciliation, and desirous of returning to the church, and some of them plainly declared this to Arch. M'Lean. Upon this he wrote to Mr. Walker to know the state of his mind, assuring him that his reunion with the church would give him the utmost pleasure, and that he would cheerfully concur in any proper measure for bringing about so desirable an event. To this Mr. Walker returned a very agreeable answer, expressing his desire to be reconciled to the church, and his readiness to give all the satisfaction in his power with respect to any thing the church had to lay to his charge. A personal interview ensued, when it was agreed, that Arch. M'Lean should draw up the grounds of difference, stating the particulars wherein Mr. Walker had given offence to him and the church, and also an acknowledgment of any thing wherein he found himself blamable. This being done and read to the church, it was delivered to Mr. Walker for his consideration. Mr. Walker having declared his full satisfaction with Arch. M'Lean, and acknowledged his guilt in the particulars laid before him; those in connexion with him followed his example, and particularly confessed their sin in having separated themselves from the church upon such grounds. There was yet another preliminary to settle: Francis Shand, one of the deacons, who had separated with Mr. Walker, was chosen his colleague, and another person appointed a deacon; but as these appointments were made only by the separating party, and in pursuance of their dividing measures, the church would by no means receive them back holding these offices. This was a trying circumstance to Mr. Walker and his wife, who had a high opinion of Francis Shand as an elder. They, however, yielded upon condition, that if the church, after a trial of his gifts, should find him qualified, he should be reinstated into that office.

Matters being thus settled, both Societies met in one place, and joined in fasting and prayer, confessing their sins, particularly those which had occasioned their separation—thanking God for his great goodness and mercy in bringing them together again beyond all their expectations and deserts—beseeching Him to confirm and strengthen their union in the truth, and their love to one another for the truth's sake—and that he would condescend to dwell among them, and build them together as an habitation of His through the Spirit. In conclusion, they saluted one another with

with the kiss of charity in testimony of their full reconciliation. Thus they were united again after a separation of two years and nine months.

It has been noticed, that six members of an Independent society had embraced baptism and joined the church. In the space of half a year, near twenty more from the same society followed their example; among the first was Henry David Inglis, now an elder.

About the end of the year 1777, the doctrine of Christ's sonship by eternal generation happened to be mentioned in conversation. Archibald M'Lean expressed his dislike of the *eternal generation*. Mr. Walker was greatly alarmed at this, and declared his resolution to lay the matter immediately before the church. Archibald McLean perceiving that Mr. Walker did not properly understand his sentiments, and being apprehensive of bad consequences from his involving the church in a dispute of this nature, begged he would delay that step till he had more thoroughly considered the subject; for which purpose he offered to give him his thoughts on it in writing, if he would allow him time. To this he agreed; yet, without waiting for the manuscript, he and Francis Shand, with whom he consulted, hurried the affair into the church. The point was publicly debated at several meetings, and the church at last being called to signify their opinion, it appeared that none agreed with Mr. Walker and Francis Shand but their two wives, and another woman. It was then determined to admit no further disputation upon the subject, and therefore it was proposed that the forementioned members should either agree to forbear the disputed point, or withdraw from the communion, that peace might be restored to the church. After some deliberation Mr. Walker declared that he was in hearty charity with the whole church notwithstanding the present difference; that he could bear with them in love, and that he was very sorry for some unguarded expressions which he had uttered in the course of the debate. The three women also professed forbearance; but Francis Shand went out without declaring his mind. At next meeting, he said, that he had not freedom in his mind to leave the communion on account of this difference; that he could at present forbear it, and had charity for the whole church; but if upon a more deliberate consideration of the subject, he saw cause to alter his mind, he would in that case declare himself and withdraw.

In January 1778, Robert Moncrieff, elder of an Independent society at Glasgow, and other nine, being convinced of the scripture doctrine of Baptism, left that connexion, and wrote to Archibald M'Lean to come and baptize them. He accordingly went, and administered that ordinance to them upon a profession of their faith. At the same time, they and the few in that place who had renounced Socinian principles, were united, and set in church order, Robert Moncrieff being appointed their elder.

Those

Those in connexion with Neil Stuart were earnestly desirous of a junction with this new-erected society, and applied to Archibald Mc Lean for a conference upon the point of difference in order to prepare the way for this. He and Robert Moncrieff met with them, and after some argumentation, it appeared that a number of them were doubtful of their Socinian sentiments. Soon after, the greater part of them relinquished these tenets, and Neil Stuart, likely to be left alone, began to make some concessions, and at last acknowledged his error. Upon this, they wrote a penitential letter to the church at Edinburgh, signed by the whole; and also applied for admission into the church at Glasgow, renouncing their error, and confessing their guilt, and were all received except Neil Stuart and other two. Ever since that time Neil Stuart has kept up a small separate meeting, but has no connexion or correspondence with the other churches. Mean time James Duncan, bookseller in Glasgow, was chosen fellow-elder to Robert Moncrieff.

In March 1778, William Braidwood, elder of the independent society at Edinburgh, left that society, embraced baptism, and joined the church. Mr. Charles Stuart, who had given up his charge as minister of the parish of Cramond, and joined the above-mentioned society, was also baptized and added to the church in May that year. He betook himself to the study of physic, and is now an eminent physician in Edinburgh. About this time some persons from Largo, a village in Fife, were baptized. This was the beginning of the church at that place.

Mr. Walker and his wife now began to be very urgent to have Francis Shand chosen for an elder. The church would not agree to this, but signified their desire that William Braidwood should be appointed to that office. Mr. Walker yielded, but Francis Shand opposed this from time to time, alleging, that William Braidwood had not been sufficiently tried as to his qualifications; but in private he intimated that his main objection was, that Mr. Braidwood did not hold the doctrine of eternal generation. Upon examining Francis Shand; it was found that he did not forbear the disputed point as he had professed to do, but was continuing in the church with a view to form a party, and, if his scheme should succeed, to exclude all such as would not embrace his sentiments upon that point. This design he openly avowed and justified before the church, so that there was no alternative but to put him away. Mr. Walker, Mrs. Walker, Mrs. Shand, and another woman opposed this; for though they were obliged to admit that he was an *offender* in this instance, and was not *bearing* the church; yet they pleaded his sincerity, and the uprightness of his general character, and would on no account agree to his exclusion. After much argumentation he was at length put away, and Mr. Walker, with the three women, withdrew from the church. But as they had sown the seeds of discord before they went off, so their dividing influence continued a considerable time after, by means of some inexperienced members,

kept up a correspondence with them, and under the notion of removing stumbling-blocks out of the way of their return, brought up accusations, and stirred up jealousies and animosities in the church, which rose to such a height, and spread so universally, that all order was subverted, and the elder's advice and warnings disregarded, till the whole body was at last disorganized.

In this extremity the Lord mercifully interposed. The situation in which the members now found themselves began to open their eyes, and awaken serious reflexion and regret. The ferment subsided by degrees, and the cause of it, in so far as it arose from jealousy and evil-surmisings, vanished upon cool investigation. A few were at first united together upon a profession of repentance and mutual reconciliation, and to these all the rest were gradually added upon a like profession. This affair left a deep and humbling impression upon the minds of the members. It taught them experimentally the baneful effects of disunion, and for a considerable time made them more cautious of every thing which had a tendency to separation.

Mr. Walker and the three who adhered to him, formed themselves into a separate society, and chose Francis Shand, again, for an elder. They have kept up public worship ever since; but their hearers, if any, are very few, and it is said their number at present does not exceed five. They have no correspondence with the rest of the churches*.

Early in 1779 William Braidwood was chosen joint-elder with Arch. McLean of the church at Edinburgh in place of Mr. Walker. The same year some persons from Dunfermline in Fife, and also from Wooler in Northumberland, received baptism, and were added to the church.

In 1780, Mr. George Grieve, who had been minister of the presbyterian congregation at Wooler, and had parted with them upon congregational principles, embraced baptism and joined the church at Edinburgh. Soon after he betook himself to the study and practice of physic.

In 1782, some persons from Galashiels, in Selkirkshire, and also from Newburgh in Fife, were baptized and joined the church. About the same time Mr. Andrew Swanston, a Burgher Seceder, a pious young man, and much esteemed as a preacher, was baptized at Glasgow. For two years he continued to exercise his

* In 1787, Mr. Walker published a Defence of the Doctrine of the Trinity and eternal Sonship of Christ, which obliged Arch. McLean to publish, the year following, his letter on the Sonship of Christ (written during the dispute), together with a Review of Mr. Walker's Defence. Mr. Walker died November 1791. In a conversation with an intimate of his, a little before he was seized with his last illness, he regretted with tears the difference subsisting between him and Arch. McLean, and expressed his earnest wish for a reconciliation; but this was not made known till after his death. Notwithstanding all that has happened, his memory is still dear to him who was so long happy in him as a colleague, and he hopes yet to join him in that happy society where no evil influence shall ever separate them again. It is said, he died in a very comfortable state of mind.

gifts in preaching occasionally, particularly at Dundee and Newburgh.

As the small societies at a distance from the church were not embodied or set in church order, they were considered as branches of the church at Edinburgh, to which, as individuals, they had been at first added; but as they could not regularly assemble with the church, by reason of the distance, they met at their respective places by themselves for mutual exhortation, and every part of divine worship excepting the Lord's supper. This exception was objected to by William Hynd, one of the members at Newburgh, who affirmed, that it was the duty of the disciples to observe the Lord's supper wherever *two* or *three* of them could meet together, although they were not furnished with elders, or set in church order. He gained several over to his opinion, and among the rest Mr. Swanston, and prevailed upon him to write to the church at Edinburgh for their concurrence. The question being laid before the church, Mr. Stuart and Mr. Grieve viewed it as a doubtful point, and insisted that it should be a matter of forbearance, and that the church ought not to interfere or oppose it. The elders and the rest of the church were of a different opinion: they maintained, that the Lord's supper belonged only to a regular constituted church, furnished with the necessary gifts and offices, or such an organized body as is described, 1 Cor. xii.—That to such churches it was at first delivered by the apostles, as they had received it from the Lord, Acts ii. 42. 1 Cor. x. 16, 17. ch. xi. 2, 23. and that no instance can be produced to the contrary, as the apostles ordained elders in every church, Acts xiv. 23. Tit. i. 5.—That the example of Christ at its first institution points out the part assigned to the administrator, which is competent to such only as are appointed to feed the flock—That our Lord's rule of discipline (Matt. xviii.) does not permit us to look upon *two* or *three* as a church, since it requires at least that number to go through the private steps of it, besides the church or congregation before which the matter is laid in the last resort—And that the innovation proposed would set aside the solemnity of that sacred institution, tend to wear off the reverence due to it, introduce many disorders, and expose the profession to just censure. For these reasons the motion was rejected.

Though Mr. Swanston did not urge this matter any farther, yet from that time his mind began to cool towards the connexion. But William Hynd, the original broacher of that sentiment, strenuously held to his point; and notwithstanding much pains was taken to convince and admonish him from time to time, for near the space of a year, he still persisted in urging his opinion upon the members at Newburgh and Dundee, and endeavoured to disaffect their minds towards the church at Edinburgh. Three successive letters were sent to him, desiring him to come and appear before the church; but this he repeatedly refused to do. While this matter was depending, Mr. Swanston, then at Dundee,

dee, separated himself from the connexion, without giving any proper reason for so doing, but that he wished to be by himself as the Lord's freed man, and to preach the Gospel at large, without regard to any particular connexion. An elder and one of the members from the church at Edinburgh used much persuasion to make him alter his resolution, but to no purpose. This being represented to the church, it was agreed, that as Mr. Swanston had separated himself, he was to be considered as no longer in the connexion, and held as one who had unwarrantably gone out from them. Mr. Stuart opposed this, and blamed the church for having laid a stumbling-block in his way by their decision as to the Lord's Supper*, and other things.

William Hynd's case was next laid before the church, and after a due consideration of his conduct in this matter, his obstinacy in it, and the evil effects which it had already produced, it was agreed that he should be excluded †. Mr. Stuart and another member, strenuously opposed this also, and were so inflexible in their opposition, that the church were laid under the disagreeable necessity of excluding them also ‡. Mr. Grieve declared that he could not bear with the church unless they yielded the point as to the Lord's Supper, and therefore withdrew from the connexion. This vexatious affair was concluded April 1784, since which time the church at Edinburgh has, upon the whole, enjoyed much peace.

In October 1784, Henry David Inglis was appointed an additional elder of the church at Edinburgh. The same year several persons from Perth, and also from Dundee were baptized. The church at this last place had been long without elders, and were reduced to a small number; but now they began to encrease, and a considerable number was added to them in a short time. In 1785 Robert Walker, one of the deacons of the church at Glasgow, was chosen an additional elder of that church.

About this time William Dickie, a deacon of the church at Edinburgh, received a call to the elder's office from the brethren at Dundee, and though many inconveniencies of a worldly nature lay in the way, yet he cheerfully accepted of it, gave up his business at Edinburgh, and removed with his family to Dundee: So that the church there was again set in order February 1787, and James Duncan, one of the members, was chosen colleague to William Dickie.

The church at Glasgow had by this time increased considerably. Mr. Moncrieff's popular talents, and striking manner of delivery, had also for several years drawn a great number of hearers. But

* Mr. Swanston died at Glasgow of a decline not long after.

† Some years after this William Hynd, in order to get access into the church at Dundee, made a full confession of his error, disaffection and wilful obstinacy in this matter. He was received, but soon after excluded again for his factious conduct in that church.

‡ Mr. Stuart with four more met by themselves, and baptized some; but they have all left him and joined the church except two. He and these two at present attend the church assemblies as hearers.

in winter 1787 he was seized with consumptive complaints, which rapidly increased. Physicians advised his removal to a warmer climate, and, at the importunity of friends, he at last consented to go to the South of France. His parting with the church was truly an affecting scene: He addressed them in a short discourse from 2 Cor. xiii. 11. The whole church were in tears, sorrowing most of all for the hints he gave, and the fears they had, of seeing his face no more. He set out, attended by Mrs. Moncrieff, and a young man in the medical line; but when he arrived at London it was not thought advisable that he should proceed on his journey any farther than Lyme in Dorsetshire, at which place he died, and was buried in April 1788. He was a faithful, zealous, and active servant of Jesus Christ, and the loss of him has been much felt and lamented, not only by the church of which he was an overseer, but by the whole connexion.

In August following, an affair of discipline took place in the church at Glasgow, about which the elders disagreed. Robert Walker carried the matter so high as to leave the church, and draw several members after him. His conduct was much disapproved of by the rest of the churches. The greater part of those who went off with him soon left him, and some of them have returned to the church, so that there are not above five or six connected with him at present.

The church at Montrose had gradually declined for several years. Two of their elders were excluded, the third removed to Dundee where he died, and the whole church is now dissolved.

James Duncan, one of the elders at Dundee, embraced Unitarian sentiments, as they are unfairly called, and other errors, and was excluded from the church.

In October 1791 the church at Largo was set in order; John Goodfir, Surgeon; and Thomas Paterson being appointed elders. Since that time they have increased considerably.

In October 1794, Peter Whitock was chosen colleague to Mr. Duncan at Glasgow, and in November following, David Miller was appointed fellow-elder to Mr. Dickie at Dundee.

A considerable number from Paisley have of late years been baptized and added to the church at Glasgow. In June 1795 they were set in church order, Thomas Watson and William Marshall being chosen elders. Their number since that time has been doubled.

There is also a small society at Kircaldy, in Fife, which, not being yet set in order, is under the inspection of the church at Edinburgh.

Though it does not strictly belong to this account of Scots Baptists, yet it may be proper to mention, that there are some small societies connected with them in England, viz. at Whitehaven, London, Chester, Hull and Beverly. Only those at London and Chester are set in church order.

The number of Baptists at present in Scotland amounts to about 380, exclusive of a few small parties which are not connected

ned with the churches. Double that number has been baptized since the beginning of the profession, but many have died in the connexion, and many have been excluded. The strictness of their discipline, and the degree of self-denial which their religious profession requires, do not suffer us to expect that they will ever become a very numerous or powerful body, while the world retains its present spirit and character.

As to their *principles*, they refer us to no human system as the unexceptionable standard of their faith. They think our Lord and his apostles used great plainness of speech in telling us what we should believe and practise; and hence they are led to understand a great many things more literally and strictly than those who seek to make the religion of Jesus correspond with the fashion of the times, or the decent course of the world. They believe that the salvation of guilty, helpless sinners is first and last of sovereign free grace, and not of him that willeth or runneth.—That *Jesus* is the Saviour of his people from their sins—*the Christ*, or anointed prophet, priest and king of his church—*the Son of God*, or the word made flesh, God manifested in the flesh, the first-begotten of the dead, and constituted heir of all things—That by his life, death, resurrection and ascension into the heavenly, holy place, with his own blood, he hath obtained eternal redemption for his people from the guilt, power and all the consequences of sin, and procured for them everlasting life with himself from the dead—That men are justified freely by divine grace, without works of any kind, but solely through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, whenever they really believe, or credit the testimony of God concerning his Son; which belief is not of themselves, but the gift of God—That all who believe and are justified, have immediate peace with God in proportion to the degree of their faith; and joy in God through Jesus Christ, by whom they have now received the reconciliation—That the belief of the truth will work by love to God who hath first loved us, and to those who are of the truth for the truth's sake which dwelleth in them; it will overcome the world, with all the allurements and tribulations thereof; and purify the heart, not only from the guilt of sin, but also from worldly lusts, such as the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, i. e. sensuality, covetousness and ambition (which to a certain degree, they say, are considered as virtues in the christian world, and even by many serious professors)—That in proportion as we hold fast the faith, and are influenced by it to love God and keep his commandments, we shall have an increasing evidence of our interest in Christ, additional to what we had on our first believing, and therefore ought to give all diligence to make our calling and election sure, and to shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end. Though they hold the doctrine of particular election, of God's unchangeable and everlasting love, and of the perseverance of the saints; yet they think it dangerous to comfort people by these considerations

sions when they are evidently in a backsliding state. In this case, they think the scripture motives to fear are most useful, and ought to have their full force, even the fear of falling away, and of coming short of the heavenly rest. They think it also unsafe, in such a case, to draw comfort from the reflexion of our having *once believed*, it being their opinion, that we must be reduced to the mere mercy of God, through the atonement, which gave us relief at first. These appear to be their views of the leading doctrines of the gospel, and of christian experience.

Their *church order* is strictly congregational, and, so far as they can discern, upon the apostolic plan, which is the only rule they profess to follow. The nature of their union requires that they should be strict and impartial in discipline, both to preserve purity of communion, and to keep clear the channels of brotherly love, that it may circulate freely throughout the body. They continue stedfastly every first day of the week *in the apostles doctrine*, i. e. in hearing the scriptures read and preached—and *in the fellowship*, or contribution—and *in breaking of bread*, or the Lord's supper—and *in prayers*, and singing of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. The prayers and exhortations of the brethren are also admitted in their public meetings. They observe the love-feast, and, upon certain occasions, the kits of charity, and also wash one anothers feet when it is really serviceable as an act of hospitality. They abstain from eating blood and things strangled, i. e. flesh with the blood thereof; because these were not only forbidden to Noah and his posterity, when the grant of animal food was first made to man, but also under the gospel they are most solemnly prohibited the believing Gentiles, along with fornication and things offered to idols. They think that a gaudy external appearance in either sex, be their station what it may, is a sure indication of the pride and vanity of the heart: that women professing godliness are not to adorn themselves with plaited or brodered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but with *modest* outward apparel, as well as with the inward ornaments of the mind; also, that it is a shame for a man to have long hair, however sanctioned by the fashion. As to marriage, though they do not think that either of the parties being an unbeliever dissolves that relation, when once entered into, yet they hold it to be the duty of christians to marry only in the Lord. They also consider gaming, attending plays, routs, balls, and some other fashionable diversions, as unbecoming the gravity and sobriety of the christian profession.

As to their political sentiments, they consider themselves bound to be *subject to the powers that be* in all lawful matters; to honour them, pray for them, and pay them tribute; and rather to suffer patiently for a good conscience, than in any case to resist them by force. At the same time, they are friendly to the rational and just liberties of mankind, and think themselves warranted to plead, in a respectful manner, for any just and legal rights and privileges which they are entitled to, whether of a civil or religious nature.

In a following Number of the Register, it is proposed to give a list of the Scots Churches, with the number of Members in each, and also a catalogue of the books and pamphlets which have been published in this connexion*.

ENCOURAGEMENT GIVEN BY THE SCOTS BAPTISTS TO THE MISSIONS.

The attempt of the Free Grace, or Particular Baptists in England, to disseminate the gospel among the Heathen in foreign lands, has only of late been generally known among the Baptists in Scotland. But it appears to have drawn their most serious attention, and to have met with their warmest wishes and hearty concurrence, after they had duly deliberated on the subject. Hence the Pastors of the Baptist Church which meets for divine worship in Richmond-court, Edinburgh, have illustrated the doctrine of the scriptures concerning the spread of the gospel among all nations, and urged their people to be fellow-helpers in this glorious cause, both by their prayers to the Lord of the harvest, and by every kind and degree of co-operation in their power. The brethren also, in their exhortations, have zealously united with their pastors.

At the close of 1795, Mr. Archibald McLean, one of their pastors, delivered a discourse to them, on Psalm xxii. 27, 28. *All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee. For the kingdom is the Lord's, and he is the Governor among the nations.* After repeated solicitations, the Author has been prevailed on to let this sermon appear in print †.

This year, the brethren in that society made a public contribution on a Lord's-day forenoon and afternoon at their place of worship, of which they speak modestly themselves, but it is to a handsome amount, and was with great pleasure received by the Society in England.

Mr. McLean has also printed extracts from the Periodical Accounts of the Baptist Society in England for propagating the Gospel among the Heathen, to which he has added the following address.

* It may be proper to remark, That this account of the Scots Baptists was drawn up from the best sources of information, and bears date Nov. 1795. EDITOR.

† It may be had of the Booksellers in Scotland, and of Mr. Button, Paternoster-row, London.

Address on the Duty of using Means for the Universal spread of the glorious Gospel of Christ.

To the People of God in Scotland.

My design in drawing up and publishing the foregoing accounts *, is to acquaint such of you as have not seen the different publications, with what is going on; and to excite all who sincerely wish the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom, to join issue with the benevolent and spirited exertions which are now making to send the gospel among the dark and benighted heathen. Permit me then to offer a few things to your consideration on this important subject.

The deplorable state of the heathen world demands our most serious attention. According to the lowest computation, there are at this day above four hundred millions of our brethren of mankind involved in gross pagan darkness, and stupidly worshipping demons, or the work of their own hands. Nor is this all; many of them practise the most shocking barbarities and unnatural customs, such as offering human sacrifices, and feasting upon the flesh of their slain enemies, as in New Zealand and the islands of the Pacific Ocean. Others, as in the East Indies, burn women to death along with the bodies of their deceased husbands, and many voluntarily inflict the most cruel tortures upon themselves. These things cannot fail to move the compassion of every person who is possessed of the least spark of humanity. But how deeply must it affect the heart of a Christian when he reflects upon their condition in relation to their eternal concerns! It is truly overwhelming to think, that such a vast number of human beings, possessed of immortal souls, equally precious with our own, and capable not only of civilization, but of regeneration and everlasting happiness, should yet, at this advanced period of the Christian æra, be still sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death, totally ignorant of the only way of salvation, without Christ, without hope, and without God in the world. In comparing our situation with theirs, we cannot but adore the sovereign dispensations of God, and his distinguishing grace towards us, who were originally in the same state, and deserved no better than they: But have we not at the same time much cause of deep regret that we have hitherto done so little, if any thing at all, towards communicating to them the invaluable blessings which we have so freely received?

Some laudable exertions have been made, and are still making, by particular societies, to propagate the gospel among the heathen, and which, through the divine blessing, have produced good effects; but it is too obvious, that Christians in general have not been much impressed with the obligations they are under to

* By the foregoing accounts Mr. M. intends the extracts he had printed from the periodical papers of the Baptist Society. EDITOR.

co-operate in such undertakings: Let it therefore be duly considered, that it is the **COMMANDMENT** of the everlasting God that the gospel should be made known to **ALL NATIONS** for the obedience of faith*. It is the express **COMMISSION** of our Lord and Saviour to his apostles, "Go ye into **ALL THE WORLD**, and preach the gospel to **EVERY CREATURE**—Go ye therefore, and teach **ALL NATIONS**, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world †." This commission was not restricted to the apostles, for many others were engaged in executing it; nor did it expire with their lives. It is a standing law of the kingdom of heaven, and continues in force through all ages of the church, *even unto the end of the world*, as the promise which accompanies it plainly imports. True indeed, it is addressed immediately to teachers, and all are not such; nor is it the duty of all teachers to leave their respective charges: But it is the duty of all Christians to be *fellow-helpers to the truth*, by assisting those who for his name's sake go forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles ‡: They can co-operate according to their respective spheres, abilities, and opportunities, with the societies who are engaged in such undertakings, and assist them by their contributions, their influence, their advice, and their prayers; so that all have it in their power to concur in one way or other in promoting the great design of this commission, consequently it must be their bounden duty. If it be our duty to love Christ's cause, to be zealous for his honour and interest in the world, and concerned about the salvation of our fellow-men; then certainly it is our duty to promote these according to our sphere and ability: If it be our duty to pray that his kingdom may come; that his saving health may be known among all nations, and that for this end he would send forth labourers into his harvest, it must undoubtedly be our duty to act suitably to such prayers, in so far as we have it in our power.

Consider what encouragements we have to concur in such a glorious undertaking. The mighty King of Zion has promised to those who are engaged in it according to his will, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." The work is indeed extensive and arduous, and there are many obstacles in the way, which to human power are altogether insurmountable; but what then? Is there any thing too hard for him who has all power in heaven and in earth; who makes his strength perfect in weakness, and who has pledged his faithfulness to give success to the means he has appointed? Consider also, that the word of God abounds with promises, that Christ's kingdom shall at last universally prevail on the earth. The Father hath given him the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession §. It is promised, that all nations shall be blessed in

* Rom. xvi. 26. † Mark xvi. 15. Matth. xxviii. 19, 20
‡ 3 John, ver. 6, 7, 8. § Psa. li. 8.

him; *—that all the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before him †;—that the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea ‡: And it is the united voice of the oracles of truth, that all the successive shakings and overturnings of the monarchies and kingdoms of this world, shall at last issue in their becoming our Lord's and his Christ's §. What an encouraging prospect does this open to our view! We are certain that this happy period will come; and though it is not for us to know the times and seasons, yet we cannot but observe, that the Lord at present seems remarkably at work in various ways, and particularly in stirring up instruments to diffuse the light of the gracious gospel over the dark parts of the earth. Is not this a hopeful sign that he is about to accomplish the great things which he hath promised respecting the glory of the latter days? Much indeed is to be done, and it is likely that it will be a work of time; but this ought not to discourage the children of God from persevering in the use of the appointed means, which are mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds. The truth shall at last prevail, and those who are instrumental in turning many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.

In forming associations of this kind, it is proper that Christians should be satisfied as to the leading views and principles of those with whom they propose to co-operate; and though it cannot be expected that all who unite in this design should be precisely of the same sentiments in every thing, yet it is absolutely necessary that they should be agreed in the great and essential doctrines of the gospel; for without this they can have no proper union: And there is the more need to be cautious in this, because no other scheme of doctrine than that which the apostles preached will be blessed of God for the salvation of men; and there is an anathema denounced upon all who preach any other gospel, or corrupt the gospel of Christ. It gives me sincere pleasure, however, to observe, that the missionary societies which have lately been formed profess evangelical principles, and in so far as they propagate the faith once delivered to the saints, I most heartily wish them God speed.

Though we of the Baptist denomination in Scotland differ in some things from those of the same denomination in England, and have no intention to depart from those principles by which the order and government of our churches have hitherto been regulated; yet being satisfied upon the whole that they preach the faith of the gospel, and, as they declare, “ maintain the important doctrines of Three equal Persons in the Godhead; eternal and personal election; original sin; particular redemption; free justification by the righteousness of Christ imputed; efficacious grace in regeneration; the final perseverance of the

* Gen. xxii. 18.

† Psal. xxii. 27.

‡ Isa. xi. 9.

§ See Dan. ii. 35, 44. chap. vii. 14, 27.

Rev. xi. 15.

“saints; the resurrection of the dead; the general judgment at the last day; and the life everlasting,” we have considered it as our duty to assist their missionary society, and have made a general contribution among ourselves for this purpose. But being few in number, and most of us in moderate circumstances, it is not in our power to give any considerable aid; and as we understand the Baptist Society’s Funds are but small, though they have four missionaries already employed in heathen countries; we therefore wish to give an opportunity to such of the disciples of Christ in this part of the country as may approve of the measures hitherto pursued by that society, to contribute for the purpose of enabling them to be more extensively useful.

Donations to the Baptist Society in England, for propagating the Gospel among the Heathen, will be received by Mr. William Braidwood, merchant in Edinburgh; Messrs. James and Andrew Duncan, booksellers in Glasgow; and Mr. Alexander Millar, merchant in Dundee.

O B I T U A R Y,

FOR 1795.

Brief MEMOIRS of the late

REV. SAMUEL STENNETT, D.D.

Chiefly drawn up by the Rev. Joseph Jenkins, D. D. and communicated by him for insertion in the Register.

DR. SAMUEL STENNETT the younger * son of Dr. Joseph Stennett, a former worthy pastor of the Baptist church in Little Wild-street, Lincoln’s-inn-fields, London, was born at Exeter, in which city his father had been many years pastor of the Baptist church, before his residence in London. He was formed by nature, and by grace, for the distinguished figure he afterwards made. To the strength of natural faculties, vigour of imagination, and acuteness of judgment of which he was possessed, he had added, from his earliest years, so close an attention to reflection and study, that there was scarcely a topic in science or literature, in religion, or even politics, but he seemed to have investigated: and so habitual was it to him to arrange his ideas on the different subjects, in a manner peculiar to himself, and

* Dr. Stennett had an elder brother, Mr. Joseph Stennett, who was pastor of the Baptist Church at Coate, in Oxfordshire. He died in 1769, and a funeral sermon for him was published by the Rev. Mr. Turner, of Abingdon.

STENNETT, D.D.

THE REV. SAM^r



yet quite natural, that when a question, which to others was new, unufal, or perplexed, hath been propofed to him, they were furprifed to find how familiarly he was acquainted with it. In a few fentences he would develop the difficulty as far as a reasonable man could expect fatisfaction, for he enjoyed an happy facility of refolving intricate matters, fo that confufion feemed to fly before his comprehensive mind. His preparatory ftudies for the miniftry were paffed under the tuition of the Rev. Mr. Hubbard *, formerly an eminent theological tutor, and under that celebrated linguift Dr. John Walker, once of the Academy at Mile-End, which was afterwards removed to Homerton; whose fuccefsful method of instruction furnifhed fo many Difsenting congregations, as well as churches in the Establishment, with critical, learned, and evangelical minifters. Dr. Stennett's attainments in Latin, Greek, and the Oriental tongues, and his knowledge of facred literature, are abundantly vifible in his valuable controversial writings, and the variety of difcourfes he hath publifhed. Befides which, his acquaintance with modern authors, with what is commonly ftiled polite learning, history, the constitution and language of his country—his command of words upon all occafions, and that mellifluous art he had of putting them together—the chafity of his diction—his lovely talent for poetry (which he chiefly applied to religious fubjects)—the melting elocution with which he fpoke—the cheerfulness and entertainment of his common converfation---the lively fallies of his wit---his confummate prudence and power over his own temper---the unaffected gentility of his address, and the politeness of his manners, were fo pleafing, that whenever he was fpoken of it was with affection or admiration. Such was his affability of mind, that he could accommodate himfelf to the meanest, and give advice and comfort to the poor, the vulgar, and the illiterate.---In many a wretched apartment in the city of London, he has wept over the fick and dying, generously relieved their wants, and with his knees on the bare floor, has lifted up his cries to God for them. And yet if called upon, he was fo perfectly at ease in the higher circles of life, that respectable perfonages in honourable ftations and of noble rank, have fought his friendship, and thought themselves honoured by it: all the use he made of which was, to embrace the greater opportunity it gave him of doing good; nor was he to be retarded in this purfuit by the attacks of obloquy and flander; a good confcience in the fight of God

† Predecessor of the late Rev. Samuel Brewer in the parsonal office at Stepney.

carried him above the reproaches of censoriousness and calumny. Had ambition, his personal emolument, or preferment of any kind been his objects, his own accomplishments and large connexions opened a ready door to them: and what is more, he might have had preferment unenvied. Persons of eminence in the establishment have expressed their regret that Dr. STENNETT was not among them; voluntarily remarking, that there is not a situation in the national church which he was undeserving of. But though he was candid to the opinion of others, a friend to private judgment, and a lover of good men of every persuasion; he was a Dissenter--- a Dissenter from principle---a Baptist;---he desired no higher honour upon earth, than to be an useful Baptist Minister *; and the only preferment he had (if we may so call that which had no emolument whatever) was, that in the year 1763, the King's College and University of Aberdeen, unsolicited by him, conferred upon him the degree of Doctor in Divinity. But this honour did not elevate his mind above what he was before. No; he was still the same humble christian; and to God he had consecrated his days, his talents, his strength, his reputation, his all. He was called by the grace of God in early life, and it is conjectured that the circumstances attending his conversion may fairly be gathered from the following hymn, with which he appeared more pleased than with many others which he had composed, and suffered to be published. It is the 437th in Dr. Rippon's Selection.

Praise for Conversion. Psalm lxvi. 16.

- 1 Come, ye that fear the LORD,
And listen while I tell,
How narrowly my Feet escap'd
The Snares of Death and Hell!
- 2 The flatt'ring Joys of Sense
Assail'd my foolish Heart,
While Satan, with malicious Skill,
Guided the poisonous Dart.
I fell beneath the Stroke,
But fell to rise again:
My Anguish rous'd me into Life,
And Pleasure sprung from Pain.
- 4 Darkness, and Shame, and Grief
Oppress'd my gloomy Mind;
I look'd around me for Relief,
But no Relief could find.

* The article "Baptist," in Dr. Rees's edition of Chambers's Cyclopædia, was drawn up by Dr. Stennett. EDITOR.

- 5 At Length, to GOD I cry'd;
He heard my plaintive Sigh,
He heard, and instantly he sent
Salvation from on high.
- 6 My drooping Head he rais'd,
My bleeding Wounds he heal'd;
Pardon'd my Sins, and with a Smile
The gracious Pardon seal'd.
- 7 O! may I ne'er forget
The Mercy of my GOD;
Nor ever want a Tongue to spread
His loudest Praise abroad.

Under these impressions he voluntarily presented himself a living sacrifice unto the Lord. Baptized by his own father when very young, he became a member of the Baptist church in Wild-street, of which he was the ornament for more than fifty years, and forty-seven of them he ministered to the Church in Wild-street, first as assistant to his father, and afterwards as his successor in the pastoral office, to which he was ordained in the year 1758.

How naturally he cared for the dissenting interest was visible from his assiduous labours for its prosperity, and the use he made of his intercourse with the great, for obtaining objects of vast importance towards the extension of religious liberty; for deliverance from those shackles that were oppressive, and which might in worse times prove an handle for persecution. His judicious publications upon that occasion will long speak for him, as will the respect he at all times paid to each denomination, and his readiness to serve them in every good work. Difference of religious sentiments made not the least alteration in his behaviour. And though he might think the difference of such magnitude, that he durst not venture his own soul upon the sentiments of others, still he knew that the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God, and that bad temper, bad manners, and illiberal epithets, would not recommend the love of God, or the truth as it is in Jesus. There was not an austere feature to be seen in his countenance, nor a forbidding accent heard to fall from his lips.

The Baptist denomination lay particularly near his heart, and his concern for it ran uniformly through his whole life. In the earlier part of his ministry he proved how well qualified he was for the tuition of the younger brethren intended for the service of the sanctuary; and he was the means of introducing into public life some worthy characters, whose

learning and ministerial abilities were a credit to the cause they espoused*. But if the diversity of his other engagements prevented his continuance in that capacity, he was happy whenever an opportunity offered of infusing instruction, indeed of saying or doing any thing that might contribute to the good of that profession which he judged to be nearest the plan of the sacred scriptures. It was his delight to promote peace and brotherly love; to make up differences, or explain misunderstandings, that at any time unhappily took place in churches or among ministers. He grudged no pains: and many can recollect repeated instances in which God made him remarkably instrumental in bringing about so desirable an end. If the churches were in harmony, and appeared upon sound principles to prosper, no man took greater pleasure than he did, or had more heart-felt sorrow at the contrary appearances.

What he was in his pastoral office will long, and affectionately be remembered. His christian friends will never forget what he was to the very short interval between his labors and his decease—With what unwearied zeal he appeared in the house of God—With what fervor and humility he went before them in supplications to the throne of grace!—With what clearness and warmth he opened the scriptures, declared the tidings of salvation to them, and as a father doth his children, exhorted, comforted, warned, directed them!—With what solemnity he administered the ordinance of baptism!—With what sacred ardor he petitioned God, when in prayer he laid hands upon the baptized at the time of their admission into the Church—With what melting pathos he statedly administered the memorials of the body and blood of the Lord!—With what emphasis, even to tears, he would frequently repeat those lines of Dr. Young,

“ A pardon bought with blood! With blood divine!

“ With blood divine, of him I made my toe!”—

In what a pleasing and familiar manner he expounded the word of God in the private meetings of the Church!—With what prudence he presided in their assemblies for deliberation, and how anxious he was that unanimity might prevail among them!—Nor must it be omitted how ardently he recommended to them the annual charity, commonly called **THE FUND** for

* One of his pupils, called into the ministry by his church, was the Rev. W. Clarke, A. M. formerly pastor of the Baptist Church in Unicorn-yard, Southwark, but more lately of that in Exeter, who died a few days before him—a man of deep reflection, extensive learning, and of a most excellent spirit.—His biography may be seen in the Baptist Register for Sept. 1794, page 276.

the relief of indigent ministers. What pride (if we may so speak) he took, if they excelled in that duty; and how much was his heart drawn out to the dear children who attended worship with his people, and whom he addressed publicly, and more privately, as those that he hoped would be the future seed of the church, and ripen to the glory of God, when the present generation hath left the world!----With what tenderness did he, as long and as often as he was able, visit his charge, and impart sympathy and help in their afflictions; and how frank, open and accessible was he at all seasons, when his advice or assistance was sought!---With what faithfulness, yet meekness, did he even rebuke where necessary, and how glad was he to restore the unsettled, or reclaim the wandering!---His friends know, and God also, after what manner he was with them, and how he kept back nothing that was profitable, but shewed them and taught them, publicly and from house to house, testifying repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.

As an husband, a father, and master of a family, he was alike upright and exemplary. United in marriage with one of the best of women, they lived together in the closest and most uninterrupted affection, for more than forty years. She was a picture of unaffected piety and good-nature, and he walked with her as an heir of the grace of life, till about five months ago, she stepped out of this world a little before him, that she might, as it were, meet him, and welcome him to glory. The acknowledgment of God in their family met with ample reward. The tender love and christian solicitude they bore towards their children was returned with reciprocal affection, and they had the happiness of seeing them walk in the ways of God, and their son a preacher of the gospel. The concern they shewed for the domestics of their family, for their spiritual good especially, was such as it is hoped will not be forgotten by them. Pleasing instances are recollected in which God blessed the Master of the family for the conversion of his servants, particularly of one servant who, at an affecting church-meeting in Wild-street, told the church how a check was given to the thoughtlessness of his youth, and his resolution for sin, at Dr. Stennett's family worship; and how, born again in his master's house, he was brought into the road to Zion. Those who were present heard in silence and in tears, and their hearts praised God †. Nor were

* The poor Children of the Friendly Society in Great Wild-street-- a charity by which about 100 Boys and Girls are educated and clothed.

† This was a very remarkable story of a prophane and vicious youth, tutored on a bowling-green, whom the Doctor, at the earnest request of

were his endeavours confined to his own family, the whole neighbourhood shared in them, and good effects have been heard of the very last sermon he preached at Muswell-Hill, where he resided the latter years of his life.

But that which diffused vigour and animation through all the rest was his character as a man—a Christian. He set the Lord before him---had habitual recourse to prayer, private and mental---and walked with God. When he related the inward workings of his mind, it appeared how deeply he had entered into the spirit of experimental religion; and on this head, where he was intimate he would astonish. Much of it was seen also in his preaching and his behaviour;---in that disinterestedness, which made him think that he was the debtor of all if he could do them good;---that patient submission to the divine will in a variety of trying afflictions, and none more trying than the dissolution of a long and most affectionate connexion, by the death of his wife;---that forgiveness of injuries, and disposition to put the best construction upon the actions of other people;---that abhorrence of evil speaking, which, as it was commonly remarked of Mrs. Stennett, that “no one heard her speak evil of any one however bad:” so if the Doctor heard any one spoken evil of, he would reply, “Well, see now if you can’t tell something good of that person.”

Mrs. Stennett’s dissolution was a very great affliction to the Doctor and his family. Though she had been for some time rather declining in her health, yet her being at last so quickly removed was what they little expected. She was confined to her bed only about a week. Her disorder was of the nervous kind, and greatly affected her spirits. A delirium attended her illness, but yet she was enabled at intervals so to express herself as afforded those round about her no small pleasure. Being happy that those whom she so tenderly loved were with her in her affliction, she said at different times, “I dwell among my own people,”---and then, “Jesus is the only Saviour,”---“My Christ! Glory! Glory!” Her son asked her if she did not love Christ, she replied, “Yes.” Dr. Stennett said to her, “All is well, my dear,” she answered, “Yes.” She had walked humbly with God, was remarkably fond of the duties of retirement, and took great delight in reading books of experience. Her end was peaceful and serene---her death bed was a most pleasing one, and she might well be said to fall asleep in Jesus. She died March 16, 1795, and was buried in the family vault in Bunhill Fields. Mr. Booth de-

an aged member, the boy’s aunt, took into his family, and who afterwards proved a very godly man. The Church will recollect with respect the name of *John Hancock*.

livered

livered the address at her interment, and Mr. Josiah Thompson, of Clapham, preached her funeral discourse the following Lord's day, at Wild-street.

The death of Mrs. Stennett was an event that presaged his own removal. He was submissive to the supreme disposal, but did not appear to have any further regard for living in this world, or to think of his long continuance in it. All his talk seemed to be a repetition of these words, "The time of my departure is at hand." The duties of his ministry indeed he went to with redoubled diligence, as if aware that the night was coming when he could no longer work; and he was hardly with-held from those super-abundant exercises, that must have been immediately detrimental to his health. His retirements were chiefly spent in meditations on the bible; in which also he indulged his taste for poetry, as some admirable specimens he has left behind him demonstrate. His conversation and prayers were particularly spiritual, and his people will long retain the favour of the two last discourses he preached to them. The first, on Christ as an High-Priest "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," was the result of his meditations during a sleepless night the preceding week; but a night so comfortable as, he confessed, he had never before enjoyed in his life. The perfect knowledge the Lord Jesus had of his wants---the tender care he exercises, and the sufferings he so freely underwent, were his astonishment. None who knew Dr. Stennett could suspect him to be deficient in exalted sentiments of the Redeemer, yet all he had before conceived and preached of him, appeared small to what he then experienced; and hence he exhorted his people to "come boldly to the throne of grace, that they might obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need †." Though illness and approaching death prevented his preaching it had not lessened his love to his flocks. He desired a friend to tell them, "that he loved them all in the Lord, and that the truths he had preached were his alone consolation in the hour of death."---The temper and comfort of his mind in his illness, were discovered by several little incidents which cannot but be pleasing to those who had such a value for him. Before he was confined to his bed, he prayed one evening in his family in a manner which deeply impressed all present, "that God might give an easy passage out of life;" and God granted him that which he requested. Some vinegar and other ingredients being given him as a gargle for his throat, he said, with great emotion, which shewed his thoughts to be directed towards Jesus, "And in his thirst they gave him vinegar to drink. O! when I re-

† Heb. iv. 15, 16.

fleet upon the sufferings of Christ, I am ready to say, what have I been thinking of all my life? They are now my only support;" and he added, respecting those tenets that would degrade Christ's person and atonement, "What should I do now, if I had only such opinions to support me?"*---Taking his daughter by the hand, he said, "Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him--- He is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."---To the kind enquiries of a friend he answered, "Here I am, cast down but not destroyed;" And upon another occasion, repeated a verse of the charming hymn he had formerly composed, and which was printed † :

Father at thy call I come:
In thy bosom there is room
For a guilty soul to hide
Pres'd with grief on ev'ry side.

To his son, who (at that time very ill also) came to see him, he said, "My son, God hath done great things for us, He is very gracious to us. I can leave myself and my family with him." In short, every little speech he uttered indicated the invariable frame of his mind, that he was happy in God, and that the ground of his happiness was the love of God in laying down his life for us. "Other foundations," as he expressed it with energy, "can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. His name is as ointment poured forth. O! he is the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely." The powers of expression were taken from him, a few hours before his departure; but he went off in a tranquil and easy manner. He quietly fell asleep in Jesus, August the 24th, 1795, in the 68th year of his age. His remains were deposited in his family vault in Bunhill-fields, where Mrs. Stennett his beloved wife had been interred a few months before him. The pall was supported by the following ministers: Dr. Kippis and Dr. Rees of the Presbyterian; Mr. Brewer and Mr. Towle of the Independent; Mr. Martin and Dr. Jenkins of the Baptist persuasion. The last of these gentlemen, who was a

* Mentioning Dr. *Priestly* by name; and I think (says Dr. Jenkins,) it argues very highly in favour of the doctrines of our Lord's Deity and atonement, and of his free and efficacious grace, that Dr. Stennett, a man of strong natural parts, a cool and dispassionate reasoner, and whom none that knew him would charge with ignorance or enthusiasm, believed in, and avowed those doctrines in his life, and gave so explicit a testimony to their usefulness and importance, when he viewed himself as going to appear before God the Judge of all. If Dr. Priestly should ever see this note, I wish it may be duly weighed, as he also must die.

† Hymn cclxx. of Mr. Rippon's Selection.

member of Dr. Stennett's church, and by that people sent into the work of the ministry, preached his funeral sermon Sept. 6, 1795, on 1 John iii. 16. The discourse was immediately printed, with Mr. Booth's Address at the grave; and the providence was felt, not only by all the Baptist Churches throughout the three kingdoms, but by great numbers of the most respectable persons in the other denominations of Protestant Dissenters, not to mention pious and evangelical ministers and people of the establishment—and John's Eulogy concerning one of the best men in apostolic times, was pronounced in every circle of the godly, "Demetrius hath a good report of all men, and of the truth itself; yea, and we also bear record, and ye know that our record is true."

The Doctor has left behind him two affectionate children, the Rev. Mr. Joseph Stennett, and Miss Elizabeth Stennett, in both of whom he had "inexpressible satisfaction."

THE BIRD OF PARADISE *,

By the late Rev. Dr. SAMUEL STENNETT.

AH me! I've lost my liberty;
 And in this cage
 My active mind
 Is close confin'd:
 Nor can I hope again
 My birthright to obtain,
 Till this my gilded tenement shall be
 Destroy'd by some disaster or by age.

2.

But—How came I here?
 Who was it that depriv'd my heav'n born soul,
 Of the freedom she enjoy'd,
 In the paradise of God;
 Where no base passion could my peace controul,
 Or in my breast create a fear?
 'Twas Satan, aye, 'twas he
 That robb'd me of my liberty:
 His artful snares th' insidious Fowler laid,
 And to this captive state my innocence betray'd.

3.

Cruel enemy to try,
 When I fear'd no danger nigh,
 Thus to deceive and ruin me,
 With basest arts of treachery!

* The Rev. Mr. Joseph Stennett, who communicated the Bird of Paradise for the Register, wishes it to be said, that this is the first correct copy of it which has been given to the public. EDITOR.

But boast not, Satan, thou thy point hast gain'd.
 Heav'n permits it so to be,
 That all the world may one day see
 Justice triumphant over perfidy ;
 For know that Christ the conquest hath obtain'd.
 Yes, and he'll quickly come,
 And publicly pronounce thy doom.
 So shall the horror of this cruel deed,
 By which thy malice had design'd,
 To draw down vengeance on mankind,
 With double fury light on thy devoted head.

4.

In the mean while I sit,
 And here in groans,
 And silent moans,
 Lament my 'prison'd state :
 Ah me ! I once was us'd to mount and fly,
 Up thro' the trackless regions of the sky ;
 And as I pass'd along,
 In sweetly pleasing strains,
 To trill my warbling song,
 All o'er th' ethereal plains.
 But now condemn'd within this cage to lie,
 I droop the wing,
 Refuse to sing,
 And sighing wish to die.

5.

But why despair ?
 Come try thy voice, and stretch thy wing ;
 A bird within a cage may chirp and sing,
 And taste what freedom is e'en while she's here.
 Strike up some cheerful note ;
 With fond desire
 Peep thro' the wire :
 Thy keeper'll quickly come and let thee out.

6.

This, O this, is happy news !
 Now to sing I can't refuse :
 These shall be the notes I chuse :
 " Satan the cruel Fowler put me in,
 " And fast enclos'd me round with sense and sin :
 " But Satan cannot keep me here ;
 " For not to him the cage belongs,
 " 'Tis Christ's, and he shall have my songs ;
 " Since he's my kind deliverer."

7.

Thus awhile,
 I will beguile

The passing hours away :

Affur'd my master'll not forget
To make my bed and find me meat,
So long as 'tis decreed that here I stay.
Wherefore free from all cares,
From all dangers and snares,
While Jesus my Saviour is by ;
O how happy I dwell,
Tho' immur'd in a cell,
Not anxious to live, nor yet fearful to die !

8.

But soon, alas ! secure of future bliss,
Senseless I grow,
And scarcely know
What real freedom is.
The little circuit of my cage
Doth all my thoughts and time engage :
With heedless feet from perch to perch I hop ;
And passing round,
Pleas'd with the sound
Of tinkling bell
Hung o'er my cell,
My nobler notes I drop.
Ah ! how deprav'd this wretched heart of mine,
So soon to lose its taste for joys divine !

9.

Buſied thus with motes and ſtraws,
Idle nonſenſe, empty joys,
Without a hope, without a fear
Of pleaſures or of dangers near,
Aſleep I fall :
Fatal ſecurity !
But hark ! I hear my keeper call.
Aye, 'tis his voice : now I awake,
Fancy I feel my priſon ſhake,
And dire deſtruction's nigh.
Affrighted round my cage I caſt my eye,
And flatt'ring to and fro,
Not knowing where to go,
Attempt to make my eſcape but cannot fly.

10.

Ah ! filly heart,
(I fetch a ſigh,
And ſighing cry,)
Thus fooliſhly to part
With noble hopes, ſubſtantial joys
For airy phantoms, gilded toys,

Trifles, the fond pursuit of which unmans my soul;
 And leaves me to the sport of ev'ry fancied fear,
 That would my peace controul.
 What miseries befall a heav'n-born mind,
 By being thus within a cage confin'd!
 Pity, Saviour, pity me,
 And quickly come and set me free!

11.

My Saviour hears, and strait replies,
 With soft compassion in his eyes,
 " Thy silent moans,
 " And piteous groans
 " Have mov'd my heart;
 " Ere long I'll come,
 " And fetch thee home,
 " Where reason and the passions ne'er shall part."

12.

'Tis Jesus that speaks! how charming his name!
 At the sound of his voice,
 O how I rejoice,
 And kindle all into a flame!
 I leap and I fly,
 And in ecstasy cry,
 Vain world, I bid thee adieu:
 I'll wait not for age,
 To pull down my cage,
 But, fearless of danger, will force my way thro'.

13.

Check thy passions, foolish man;
 The longest life is but a span.
 Be contented here to stay,
 Another hour, another day;
 To feel a joy, to bear a pain,
 To do some good, some good t'obtain.
 Think not the moments long, Heav'n hath decreed;
 Impatience cannot lash them into speed.
 With meek submission wait the approaching hour:
 The wheel of time will quickly whirl about,
 And then thy keeper'll come, and ope the door,
 Put in his hand, and gently take thee out.

14.

The day arrives.
 Now thro' the wire,
 With strong desire,
 I cast my wishful eyes.
 I see him come: yes, yes, 'tis he!
 Hither he hastes to set me free.
 O the music that I hear,
 Sweetly warbling in my ear!

“ Little songster, come away,
 “ In this vile cell no longer stay;
 “ But take thy flight to realms above the skies.”

15.

I hear and instantly obey;
 Out of my cage I spring;
 And as I pass the wicker'd way,
 Thus to myself I sing:
 “ How safe, how easy 'tis to die,
 “ With Christ my Guardian-angel by!
 “ He's my defence from pain and sin,
 “ From foes without and fears within.
 “ O Death, where is thy sting? O grave, thy victory?”

16.

Now I'm happy, now I'm free:
 My active spirit, heav'n-born mind,
 From all the dregs of sense refin'd,
 Feels and enjoys her godlike dignity.
 No more oppress'd with the gross atmosphere
 Of error, prejudice and sin,
 Freely I breathe my native air,
 And drink ambrosial fragrance in.
 O who can think, O who can tell,
 The strange sensations now I feel!

17.

Awhile my wings unused to flight, I try,
 And round and round in sportive bliss I fly:
 Then through the opening skies,
 In rapt'rous ecstasy I rise,
 Up to the flow'ry fields of Paradise.
 And as I dart along,
 On full expanded wing,
 Amid th'angelic throng,
 Celestial anthems sing:
 “ Glory to him that left his throne above,
 “ And downward bent his way on wings of love;
 “ That wept, and bled, and died upon the tree,
 “ To conquer death and set the captives free.”

REV. JOHN GRIFFITHS,

Late Pastor of the Independent Church, at *Hitchin*, in the County of Hertford.

The Rev. Mr. John Griffiths was born in the parish of Llanvinnach, Pembrokeshire, South Wales, Nov. 16, 1736. His father's name was William Griffiths, and his mother's maiden name was Gwennlian Thomas. He was very obedient to his parents from a child. Like Obadiah of old, he feared the Lord from his youth. He made a public profession of religion, and became a member of the Dissenting Church at Glandwr, when he was about sixteen years of age. After having been at various schools in his earlier days, in 1753 he was placed in the Dissenting Academy at Carmarthen, where he remained two years, and from thence removed to the Academy at Abergavenny, where he finished his education. He entered upon the work of the ministry in the year 1758. In 1759, or 1760, he went to Wotton-under-edge, in Gloucestershire, where he preached about two years. He was after this settled as pastor over an Independent church at Hinkley, in Leicestershire. In February 1772, he preached his first sermon to the Independent church at Hitchin, as a probationer, and he was settled over them as their pastor in the ensuing summer. Here he went in and out before his people and preached the glad tidings of salvation to them, as long as his health and strength enabled him to do it; faithfully and affectionately labouring to save his own soul and those of his people, and thereby to promote the glory of his great master. He was eminently of a devotional spirit—a man of prayer. Mr. Geard, minister of the Baptist congregation at Hitchin, in preaching his funeral sermon, said; “Repeatedly have I united with him in this place, when no one has been present but ourselves, in communicating our views upon particular subjects to each other, and in endeavouring affectionately to recommend each other, and our respective churches and congregations to the divine regards in prayer. And yet, though we were in one sense alone, I trust we were not alone, because our glorious master now and then at least was with us, agreeably to his own condescending promise.”

He was a man of disinterested benevolence. “I have known,” said Mr. Geard, in the same sermon, “several instances of this: but one of a pleasing description, and not very commonly paralleled, I shall mention. It was a handsome gift sent by him to a poor afflicted minister, not of his

his own denomination, whom I have reason to think he had never seen in his life, but to whom he was spontaneously induced to send this relief on the poor good man's circumstances being related to him, without the smallest solicitation. I had the pleasure of being the medium of the conveyance of the gift; and of observing the benevolence of the giver, and the gratitude of the receiver. They are both in heaven, nor do I know that any person now living knows the particulars of the circumstance but myself; nor did I consider myself at liberty to mention it, even in general terms, till the generous benefactor was gone."

In January 1776, he married Miss Hannah Richards, daughter of Mr. Samuel Richards, late of Birmingham. By this lady he had two children, a son and a daughter. Their daughter, Mary Griffiths, died suddenly Feb. 18, 1783, aged 2 years and four months. Their son, Ebenezer Griffiths, was an exceedingly amiable and promising youth: but it pleased God to remove him also after a long lingering indisposition, Jan. 12, 1794, when he was fifteen years of age. The loss of the daughter was a heavy trial to the bereaved parents, but the death of the son was still much heavier. In him they had lost their all as to the endearing relation of children. It was their great felicity however that they had not to sorrow as those without hope*. But whatever consolations attended this affecting providence, as Mr. Griffiths's constitution had begun to fail before the death, and even before the indisposition of his beloved son, this providence appears to have operated very powerfully towards pulling down his already shaken tabernacle. In the summer of 1794, he went to Bristol to try the medicinal waters at the Hot Wells for the recovery of his health: but he derived no essential benefit from them. After his return home, he preached occasionally with considerable difficulty, till at length he was obliged quite to give over. His last sermon was preached Feb. 22, 1795, about 23 years from the time of his first preaching as a probationer at Hitchin. It seemed remarkable that this discourse was preached from 1 Cor. xv. 57. *Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.* For a long time before his death his mental powers were at intervals exceedingly deranged. When he was favored with a proper exercise of them, which through the goodness of God at certain periods was the case to the last, his mind was generally calm. It appeared as though when

* For some account of this amiable youth, see a little piece, entitled, *Youthful Piety exemplified.* Printed for W. Button, Paternoster-row. 6d. 1794.

his affliction had extinguished every other light in him, that the light of devotion still attempted to burn. - His grand support of mind in his collected intervals, was the mediation of Jesus Christ between God and sinners, and a good hope through grace of interest in that mediation. He had been at times exercised with fears, and particularly dreaded the article of death. It is a pleasing reflexion, however, that death at length grew less terrible to him the nearer he approached it: and the very day before his departure, during a lucid interval, he expressed himself to his nearest relative as wonderfully relieved from the dread of death, and as enjoying a cheerful hope that he should soon be at his father's house. It was remarked concerning him, that no one ever heard him murmur, however much his long and trying affliction might cause him to mourn. At length, on the 6th of December 1795, he was released from all his burdens, and entered into the joy of his Lord, aged 59 years.

On the 11th of December, he was respectfully committed to the house appointed for all living, and a suitable oration was delivered on the occasion by the Rev. Mr. William Williams, his successor in the pastoral office, who was ordained some time before Mr. Griffiths died. On the following Lord's-day afternoon, in the meeting-house where he had laboured so many years, his funeral sermon was preached to the two congregations of the Independents and Baptists, who met together to pay their last tribute of respect to a truly worthy character. The passage which Mr. Geard improved upon this occasion was given him by his dear departed brother, in one of the many friendly visits which he paid him during his affliction; it was Heb. iv. 9. *There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.* Six months before his dissolution Mr. Griffiths requested his brother Geard to improve this scripture as his funeral text, and prefaced his request by affectionately mentioning the long friendship which had subsisted between them—and indeed those who were acquainted with both of them have admired their sincere affection for each other, and longed to see the different evangelical denominations breathe the same spirit in every place. Who can say what advantages might result from the meeting of Independents, Baptists, and other holy ministers of the same neighbourhood, in each others vestries, for the purpose of consultation, prayer and praise, according to the example of these two brethren at Hitchin!

It must be mentioned also to their honor, that when either of them was ill, or on a journey, instead of sending thirty or forty miles for a minister to fill the vacant pulpit, he encouraged

raged his people to meet with the congregation whose pastor was at home, and able to preach. The places of worship are both large. The members and hearers accommodated each other. Love continued, and good was done. But this interchange of kind offices was misunderstood and misrepresented, in consequence of which, Mr. Geard published, in one of the Magazines of April 1795, the following letter which is *here* reprinted, by particular request from Hitchin.

To the Editor, &c. &c.

SIR,

AMONG those characters which are represented in the sacred oracles as an abomination unto the Lord, is included the sower of discord among brethren *. Your ungenerous correspondent, who is noticed on the cover of your last magazine, as having sent you a long letter, without paying the postage of it, complaining of a custom adopted somewhere near Hitchin by two ministers, of shutting up one of their places of worship, if either of them have occasion to be absent on the sabbath, appears intentionally to come too near a character of that description. As I am not at all ashamed to avow myself to be one of the ministers alluded to in that complaint, and as I do most cordially approve of the object that is complained of, I consider myself as called upon to attempt to vindicate my conduct, and the conduct of my honored brother minister, and of our respective churches and congregations, in that instance. To remove every kind of ambiguity from the business, I would observe, that the complaint evidently alludes to the conduct of the Independent and Baptist ministers and congregations at Hitchin itself; for that conduct has certainly been observed by those ministers and congregations. I do not know who the complainant is in this matter, but I flatter myself with the hope that it is not any person belonging to either of the said congregations.

It appears that a friendly understanding has in general subsisted between the Dissenting congregations at Hitchin, for a century past or upwards. This friendly understanding has been rather improved and strengthened in some particular instances, within a few years past. One instance of this is the custom complained of by your correspondent. Another is that of united meetings for prayer and a sermon, held alternately at each of our places of worship. The circumstance, which originally occasioned these meetings, was a very affecting and important one; it was that of the alarming indisposition of his majesty, our sovereign. At the time when our minds, as well as those of our fellow-subjects in general, were deeply impressed with his melancholy situation, it was thought expedient to have a joint meeting of prayer, between our respective congregations, on his account. Accordingly we assembled for that purpose at the

* Prov. vi. 16. 19.

Independent meeting-house, on the 14th of November, 1788, which was about the time of the crisis of his disorder. Both of the ministers and one of the deacons of each of our congregations engaged in united addresses to the King of Kings, for our earthly King's recovery. As it was a very solemn occasion, so it was a very solemn meeting: and the minds of ministers and people were so impressed, particularly at that time, that it was proposed afterwards that one united meeting of prayer should be observed at each meeting-house every year, and that a sermon should be preached on the occasion, which has accordingly been done ever since. At some of the meetings of this description, we have been kindly assisted by neighbouring ministers, who have evidenced their cordial approbation of them, and contributed to their promotion, by preaching on such occasions.

The friendship that has subsisted between the ministers and congregations at Hitchin, has, at different periods, and in different ways, produced salutary consequences. Both ministers and people, and the poor in particular, of both congregations, have derived advantages in more views than one, from this friendship. It being now upwards of twenty years since I and my beloved brother, the Rev. Mr. John Griffiths, have laboured together in this town, it is not to be wondered at that we have each of us had our trials during this period: but it has been our mutual concern, not only to sympathize with each other under these trials, but to assist one another as far as we well could. I am exceedingly sorry that his circumstances have long been such, that he has neither been able to co-operate, as he formerly did, in carrying on our joint meetings, nor to attend to the concerns of his own congregation: and it adds to my sorrow, that, I am afraid, his ability for these purposes is not very likely to be restored. I have the satisfaction however to reflect, that it has been my concern to do what I could to assist him under his incapacity; and among the motives that have operated to produce and promote this concern, gratitude, from the recollection of past exertions of his on my behalf, when I have been comparatively in similar circumstances, has had its share.

Nor has the sympathy that has been evidenced relative to our respective afflictions been confined to ourselves. Our friends on each side have mutually sympathized with us. I have not only had the satisfaction to hear my good brother's case affectionately noticed at a throne of grace, by his own immediate connexions, at their place of worship, but by my immediate connexions, at our place of worship. And we have had the satisfaction likewise of seeing or hearing of mutual assistance being afforded by our respective friends to one another, as circumstances have particularly required.

As to our united meetings, God has appeared to stamp them particularly with marks of his approbation. Two persons were received into the church with which I am connected, in one day, to whom the labours of my worthy brother upon such occasions

casions, had hopefully been blessed, and one of these instances respected the very first sermon that ever was preached upon these occasions.

And as to our uniting our congregations together, when either of us has had occasion to be absent on a sabbath, the circumstance which your correspondent particularly complains of, that likewise has had its advantages. By this means, at short notice, without any particular inconvenience to ourselves or our people, we have each of us been enabled to assist neighbouring congregations, when they have peculiarly needed such assistance, owing to the illness, the removal, or the death of their own ministers: and we have considered such a conduct as likewise calculated to promote affection and harmony among our own connexions.

Whether such considerations as these will or ought to induce other ministers and congregations, that may be similarly situated, to imitate our conduct, I shall leave to their own prudence to determine; but they so impress my mind in reference to ourselves, that I should be exceedingly sorry indeed, that that conduct should by any means be altered, in the instances referred to. And as I hope, through the medium of your magazine, a considerable number, at least, of our respective congregations, will either read or hear the following address, I beg leave through that medium to address myself to them, in the following manner:

“ Dearly beloved brethren and friends,

“ Whereas an unworthy attempt has been made by some person, to me unknown, to interrupt the harmony which has subsisted between you and your respective ministers, though I am abstractedly sorry that any such attempt should be made by any person whatever, yet, in another view, I am glad hereby to have an opportunity afforded me thus publicly to return you my most cordial thanks, to whichever congregation you belong, for all the kindness and respect which you have discovered to me, collectively or individually; for all the kindness and respect which you have manifested to my honoured brother in the ministry; and for all the affection and harmony which you have discovered towards one another. I earnestly beseech you to listen to no attempts that may be made to diminish that affection, or to interrupt that harmony. And I would earnestly recommend to your serious consideration, the following apostolic exhortations: “ Mark them which cause divisions and offences. Let us follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another. Endeavour to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.” *

In proportion as you may be enabled to act in this manner, such an attempt as I have in view, instead of interrupting your union, will eventually draw the cords of it tighter than ever. May this happy effect follow, and then whatever is said of the attempt itself, we shall have cause to rejoice in the consequence.

* Rom. xvi. 17, and xiv. 19. Eph. iv. 3.

If, fir, you will be fo kind as to infert this letter the firft opportunity you can, in your magazine, you will much oblige.

A Friend of Peace and Harmony,

And your humble Servant,

Hitchin, April, 7, 1795.

JOHN GEARD.

NEW DISCOVERED ISLANDS IN THE PACIFIC OCEAN.

The Rev. Dr. Jeremy Belknap, one of the Presbyterian minifters of America, author of the *History of New Hampshire*, in 3 vols. 8vo. † having been acquainted with the design of fending Miffionaries to the iflands in the pacific, expreffes an hearty wifh that they may be fucceeded, remarking, that “ They will have to contend with many difficulties, and among others, the bad examples of European navigators, who have before vifited and abufed thefe people.” He adds, “ There is a group of iflands lately difcovered by fome of our American navigators, *which are faid to be populous*, and which are hitherto uncontaminated by the vices of civilized people. I WIFH, if it were poffible, AN EXPERIMENT MAY BE MADE THERE. As this account may probably be new to Dr. Rippon, I fend him the copy which accompanies this, with my cordial refpects.”

An Account of the Difcovery of a Group of Iflands in the North Pacific Ocean, by Capt. James Magee, in the Ship *Margaret*, of Boston, in his run from Canton, toward the N. W. Coaft of America. Extracted from his Log-book.

“ Tuesday, 6th of March 1793, fteering N. E. at three o’clock in the morning we faw land, bearing N. E. by E.; tacked and flood to the N. W. At 5, tacked and flood to the E. At day light, faw *fix iflands* bearing from S. S. W. to N by E.; the neareft appeared to be about four leagues diftant. At 7, the fouthernmoft ifland, by our account, we judged to lie in latitude 27, the northernmoft in 28 lat. 4 min. north.

“ At 10, A. M. a large ifland was feen, bearing S. $\frac{1}{2}$ W., to the fouthward of all which we had feen. At meridian, the extremes of the iflands in fight bore as follows: that to the fouthward of us from S. S. W. $\frac{1}{2}$ W., to S. S. E. $\frac{1}{2}$ E; the fhip’s diftance from the body of the ifland, five miles. That to the northward of us, and forms the channel we paffed through, bore, at the fame time, N. $\frac{1}{2}$ W., diftant 6 or 7 leagues. Several which we had feen in the morning were now out of fight; the moft fouthern ifland not being in fight, but we fuppofed it to bear S. S. W., 8 leagues diftant; and the moft northern N. by E. 12 or 13 leagues diftant.

“ The meridian altitude gave the latitude 27, 12 min. N. The longitude, by a good obfervation of the fun and moon, was 214 degrees 20 minutes W. from Greenwich.

“ This group of iflands lies nearly N. and S., extending about 64 nautical miles. As they are not laid down in any

† Sold by Mr. Dilly, London,

chart in our possession; and as I suppose myself the first discoverer, I give them the name of my Ship, MARGARET'S ISLANDS.

"Wednesday, 7th of March *, at half past 5, P. M. while standing to the E, a large number of breakers were seen off the E. end of the fourth island from the southward, which we found it impossible to weather. Wore ship and stood to the westward (the wind being then about E.), to clear these islands. At 6, the northernmost island, in sight, bore N. N. W.; the southernmost, S. $\frac{1}{2}$ E. At half past 6, double-reefed the topsails, and hauled up the courses. At half past 7, hove to. At 11, filled and stood, during the night, first N. E. then S. by E., then N. by W. At 6, the next morning, the northernmost island, seen the preceding day, bore S. E. $\frac{1}{2}$ E., 10 or 11 leagues distant. Being now clear of the islands, we let out our reefs, and set our top-gallant-sails, keeping our course to the N. E. as before this discovery. Latitude this meridian, 28 degrees 19 minutes N.

"The islands, which lay to the northward of the channel through which we passed, were small and irregular, appearing to be mostly solid rocks, of a whitish colour, with very little wood on them, and great numbers of sea fowl hovering over them. Two of those to the southward were well wooded, and covered with beautiful verdure. Each of them appeared to be about twenty miles in circumference, having a gradual ascent from the shore to the summit.

"The nearest lands to these islands, according to the latest charts, are the Sulphur islands, discovered by Capt. King, in his return from Kamtschatka, in 1780. Their latitude is 24 deg. 40 min. N., and their longitude 141 deg. 12 min. E. It is probable, however, that the northernmost of the *Marian* islands, which lie nearly in the same longitude with the *Margaret's's*, may not be not much further distant than the *Sulphur* islands."

Boston, Dec. 14, 1795.

JAMES MAGEE.

Mr. Rippon has had the pleasure of communicating this Paper to the Rev. Dr. Haweis, Capt. Wilson, and other members of the Committee of the Mission to which they belong—and though the six new discovered islands are so situated as not to afford a probability of Capt. Wilson's visiting them in his present expedition: we all join, with every mark of fraternal esteem, in hearty thanks to Dr. Belknap for so kindly interesting himself in the design, and for his communication of a discovery which it is expected will be connected with others of a similar description—all tending, we humbly hope, not only to link man to man, but finally to unite millions of apostate sinners to our adored God and Savior.

* This was the same day, according to the civil account; but it is to be noted, that the marine day begins at noon, and the log account is kept in conformity to that custom.

An Account of the *Pholeys*, or *Foleys*, on the river Gambia, in Africa *.

“ IN every kingdom and country on each side of the river Gambia, are people of a tawny colour, called *Pholeys*, who resemble the Arabs, whose language most of them speak; for it is taught in their schools, and the Koran, which is also their law, is in that language. They are more generally learned in the Arabic than the people of Europe are in Latin; for they can most of them speak it, though they have a vulgar tongue called *Pholey*. They live in hoards or clans, build towns, and are not subject to any of the Kings of the country, though they live in their territories; for if they are used ill in one nation, they break up their towns, and remove to another. They have chiefs of their own, who rule with such moderation, that every act of government seems rather an act of the people than of one man. This form of government is easily administered, because the people are of a good and quiet disposition, and so well instructed in what is just and right, that a man who does ill is the abomination of all.

“ In these countries the natives are not avaricious of lands: hence the Kings are willing to allow the *Pholeys* to cultivate the land, and live in their dominions. They plant tobacco near the houses, and all round their towns they plant cotton: beyond that are their corn fields, of which they raise the four kinds usually produced all over this country; that is, Maize, or India corn, rice, and the larger and lesser Guinea corn. The *Pholeys* are the greatest planters in the country, though they are strangers in it. They are very industrious and frugal, and raise much more corn and cotton than they consume, which they sell at reasonable rates, and are so remarkable for their hospitality that the natives esteem it a blessing to have a *Pholey* town in their neighbourhood: besides, their behaviour has gained them such reputation, that it is esteemed infamous for any one to treat them in an inhospitable manner. Though their humanity extends to all, they are doubly kind to people of their own race; and if they know of any one of their body being a slave, all the *Pholeys* will unite to redeem him. As they have plenty of food, they never suffer any of their own people to want; but support the old, the blind and lame, equally with the others. They are seldom angry, and I never heard them abuse each other; yet this mildness does not proceed from want of courage; for they are as brave as any people in Africa, and are very expert in the use of their arms. They commonly settle near some Mundingo town; there being scarce any one of note, especially up the river, that has not a *Pholey* town near it. They are strict Mahometans; and scarcely any of them will drink brandy, or any thing stronger than sugar and water. They breed cattle, and are very dexterous at managing them, so that the Mundingoes leave

* Extracted from Moore's travels into the inland parts of Africa.

theirs to their care. They are likewise great huntsmen, and not only kill lions, tygers, and other wild beasts; but often go 20 or 30 in a company to hunt elephants, whose teeth they sell, and whose flesh they smoke-dry and eat, keeping it several months together. The *Pholeys* are almost the only people who make butter, and of whom cattle can be purchased at some distance up the river. They are very particular in their dress, and never wear any clothes but such as are of white cotton, which they make themselves. They are always very clean, especially the women who keep their houses exceeding sweet. In some things they are superstitious, in particular, if any body boils the new milk bought of them, they will not on any consideration sell that person any more, because they say, boiling the milk makes the cows dry. The *Arabic* is not only spoken by the *Pholeys*, but by most of the *Mahometans* in the river, though they are *Mundigos*."

THE MANNER OF BEATIFYING A SAINT IN ITALY.

Ancona, Sept. 2, 1795.

As I am now in a country where miracles are wrought, I will give you a little account of some of their proceedings, which have come within my knowledge.

Yesterday I heard an unusual noise of ringing of bells and firing of guns, and on enquiry I found the cause of it to be the Beatification of a Saint. This naturally led me to enquire into the cause of his promotion, which I understood was as follows. About three hundred years ago, Antonio Fattatti was bishop of Ancona. Being remarkable for his great learning, justice, piety and charity, he was much beloved while he lived, and at his death much lamented. The lower class of people revered him as a saint; and I find his friends, who were very rich, designed to procure canonization for him—he was accordingly embalmed and deposited in the cathedral church of this place; many people worshipped at his shrine, and implored his assistance and interference with the Almighty to procure the blessings they needed. In the course of twenty-five years numerous miracles were wrought by him. Many who had broken limbs were carried there, and by praying to him came away perfectly healed: also many blind people, it is said, have received their sight by applying to him as their advocate in heaven. These miracles fixed his friends in their former opinion of fainting him; they accordingly took the necessary steps in the court of Rome for that purpose. To examine into the merits of the cause, and prove the miracles to a certainty, has taken up the small period of 275 years. But last Thursday the case was determined at Rome in favour of Antonio Fattatti, and yesterday we received the news here. I find it requires an uncommon sum of money as well as great interest to procure this favour, I need not say it requires time also. Am

NOW

now going to see him, and when I return will give you a farther account.

Sept. 5. I have now been to see this wonderful man; he was placed under a kind of an altar surrounded with iron railing to keep off the people. About a dozen were in the act of praying when we went in, but the priest, who knew we should pay him for his trouble, did not hesitate to disturb them in their devotion in order to gratify our curiosity. The front of the case in which he was deposited is of glass, he is clothed in red velvet trimmed with gold, has a kind of cap on his head, and shoes on his feet. His left arm lay over his breast, and a ring was on one of his fingers. My friend tells me, that he has not yet attained the full honor of a Saint, to procure that there must be another course of law, which will cost a great sum of money. He is at present only called *Beato*, he may be sainted in about three years for about twenty thousand pounds; otherwise he may be another century more before he arrives at that dignity.

In another part of this church is the altar of St. Ciriaco. The story of him is still more ridiculous. He is said to be the saint who found the cross of our Saviour—he died a vast while ago. Several hundred years since, having a mind to visit the pope, he put to sea in an iron coffin, bound, I suppose, to the Mole of Ancona, but through bad seamanship he drove ashore in the night on a rock close to the Mole: in the morning he was discovered, and the coffin being opened, his body was found perfect, and writings which discovered who he was were also in the coffin with him. He was accordingly removed with great pomp to the cathedral, and is at one time of the year exposed to view for three days. We found a great many worshipping at his altar, which was entirely covered with gold. The priest, who accompanied us, brought from behind the altar a parcel of crutches and sticks which he assured us were left by cripples who had been entirely cured, through his intercession with God.

Sept. 7. I was yesterday, Lord's-day, to see the high mass celebrated in honor of our new Saint. To me the ceremony was truly ridiculous, although the Cardinal himself assisted. They chattered their prayers like magpies, and in the organ loft were 5 fiddlers, and as many vocal performers with three French horns: the ceremony concluded with a salute of 72 small cannon which belong to the cathedral. I now drop the subject, may our intercessions for mercy be offered through Christ alone, who is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through him!

A short account of THE GENERAL EVANGELICAL SOCIETY in Dublin, and of the state of Religion in that vicinity.

Dear Brother Rippon,

Birmingham, August, 1796.

At your particular request, I transmit a brief account of my late visit to Ireland, together with such observations on the religious

gious state of that kingdom as I recollect to have made during my stay; and to your prudence I leave the selection of what you may deem proper to be communicated to your friends.

The nature and design of the society, at whose request I went over, will be best represented by a paper published by themselves in Dublin, in 1793*.

The desirableness of making vigorous exertions on the behalf of religion in Ireland, can scarcely be conceived unless by those who have made themselves personally acquainted with the country. The inhabitants present themselves in two different classes; the one assuming the gaiety and splendor of affluence, the other exhibiting tokens of the most abject poverty: with the former the spirit of the world powerfully resists the spirit of religion; and whilst, for the most part, they avow themselves protestant christians, it is but here and there you find any under the visible influence of the religion they profess. The *poor*, being mostly Papists, are as ignorant as they are indigent, and highly superstitious. One instance of their superstition I had an opportunity of witnessing.

Near Island Bridge, about a mile from Dublin, adjoining the public road, is a well, which, because it was formerly included in the precincts of a priory dedicated to St. John of Jerusalem, is called *St. John's well*. On midsummer day these deluded people came from 20 miles round Dublin to visit this well, and for 24 hours, from 12 the preceding night, they were coming and retiring in crowds. Some eagerly drank of the holy water—others washed their heads and other parts of their bodies with it. Some bottled the water and carried it home for the use of

* TO THE FRIENDS OF RELIGION.

It is too evident to have escaped observation, that the state of Religion in this kingdom, for some years past, has been such, as could not but give pain to every serious and discerning mind.

In the year 1787, a number of persons in this city, deeply affected by this melancholy fact, met to advise and to adopt some plan to check the growth of irreligion and vice, and to promote a spirit of vital godliness.

To them it appeared that the most likely way to accomplish these great and desirable ends, would be to gratify that taste for variety, which is essential to the human mind, by furnishing a succession of zealous and popular ministers of every denomination, who should be employed to preach occasionally, wherever an opportunity should offer, either in the city, or in the country.

A beginning was then made, by forming a society under the name of THE GENERAL EVANGELICAL SOCIETY; and a subscription was opened for raising a fund to defray the expenses of such ministers as might from time to time comply with the invitation of the society. There is good reason to believe their endeavours have already been productive of good effects; they are therefore encouraged to wish not only a continuance, but an extension of the plan. And impressed with a conviction of the necessity and importance of the undertaking, and conscious of the purity of their motives, they venture afresh to call upon the Friends of Religion of every denomination, to unite with, and to assist them in this labour of love

Subscribers names will be entered, and benefactions received by the Rev. Dr. M'Dowel, Mary's Abbey, &c. &c.

their

their friends; others brought their diseased children to the spot; whilst not a few I saw on their knees before the well at their devotions, which were frequently interrupted during their genuflections by offers of whisky from their acquaintance, which I never observed them to refuse: and as there were many whisky sellers close by the well, it was not strange to see the devotees retire from the sacred water highly inebriated.

It is easy to conceive that where such superstition and ignorance prevail, prejudice will not be wanting; so that it is a rare thing to see any of these miserable creatures attending on the means of instruction, unless it be in the mass-houses. Indeed they are for the most part kept in such a state of subjection to the priests, that if, by their confessions, he learns they have only attended on domestic worship in a religious family, he enjoins a certain penance for every offence, which he sometimes administers himself.

Such a state of things is certainly highly discouraging to the ministers of religion, who, perhaps in many instances despairing of success, have withheld themselves from those exertions which with more flattering prospects they would have made; whilst the manners of the people, with whom they are continually obliged to mingle, greatly tend to divert them from that spirituality and active zeal which are essential to a high degree of religious usefulness in every situation.

But this is not the case universally. Some recent appearances are very encouraging. For, besides the zealous friends to religion in other communions, it has pleased God to raise up many pious young men*, from among the students of Trinity College, who having taken orders are vigorously exerting themselves in various places, on behalf of evangelical piety. Their zeal is countenanced and cherished by two Fellows of the College †, who having been, for the truth's sake, prohibited by the Archbishop of Leinster from preaching in any of the churches in that province, do now constantly deliver the word of life in a chapel belonging to the Lock Penitentiary, called Bethesda.

With these Gentlemen, three others were prohibited the use of the churches on the same account; but the inhibition has turned out to the furtherance of the gospel, and God hath made the wrath of man to praise him: for it has proved in its effects similar to the persecution of the primitive church, which, by driving the disciples from Jerusalem, occasioned their travelling to Phenice and Cyprus and Antioch, preaching the Lord Jesus. And there are several young men now in College of serious piety, who propose to devote themselves to the ministerial work. Some of the happiest hours I enjoyed in Dublin were spent in spiritual converse and prayer in their company.

Several of the pious ministers of that city, justly considering that union among the friends, and especially the preachers of

* Particularly a son of Baron Kelly, and the Rev. W. Shirley. EDITOR.

† The Rev. Mr. Walker, and the Rev. Mr. Maturin. EDITOR.

the gospel, was the most likely way to advance its interests in Ireland; by a circular letter, in 1795, made a proposal to their brethren of various denominations, to meet in Dublin for a friendly conference.

In this letter they say, "All distinctions of names and parties are to be excluded from this meeting, and no pre-eminence to be admitted of one or more members above the rest, except as far as the regularity of the meeting may require the appointment of a temporary president."

But "none are to be admitted members of whom there is not reason to hope, that they desire to give themselves up to the service of God in the gospel of his Son, and to preach him as the only and all-sufficient Saviour of lost sinners. But as it must be expected, that there will be various differences of views, and that among those who attend this meeting there will be persons differing in degrees of knowledge and experience, the exercise of mutual tenderness, forbearance and love, is to be insisted on among all, as most essentially requisite to their common edification, and most likely to cause all at length to be perfectly joined together, not only in one heart, but also in one mind and judgment."

They express also their hope, that such friends to the meeting as are unable to give personal attendance would communicate by letter; and they propose to defray the travelling expences of such as cannot afford to do it themselves.

Accordingly on the 3d and 4th of June 1795, twelve or thirteen ministers of various denominations assembled, and about the same number signified their approbation of the meeting by letter. After prayer and reading the holy Scriptures, time was spent in conversation on various interesting subjects, such as the most useful way of preaching—the best rules for ministerial conduct—the treatment proper for persons newly awakened—the means of promoting brotherly love, and the present state of religion in the kingdom; when one of the brethren present, who had been called by the Saviour's grace the preceding year, gave very pleasing accounts of the state of his neighbourhood, as not only a great number of papists are disposed to attend the public means, but many scores of them visit him at his own house, which is open every evening for prayer and spiritual discourse.

The conversation closed with grateful remarks on the gracious presence of the Lord enjoyed at this meeting, which was concluded with prayer.

There has been another meeting this year, I have not seen the minutes, but I believe the attendance was larger, and the interview no less pleasing or profitable than the preceding. The good effects of such an union are already visible. O that in England we could rejoice in similar associations. I trust it will not be long before we imitate our Irish brethren. It is not a matter of despair with me.

I preached

I preached in Dublin six Lord's-days, and, one excepted, thrice a day. I had the pleasure of addressing auditories that seemed to increase every week, both in number and attention. It is wrong to decide hastily on the success of the word, but, when I left Ireland, there were not wanting some whose deep concern about spiritual things, or whose joy in God our Saviour, inclined me to hope that I had not laboured in vain:

As the Society wished me to preach a lecture on Thursday evening in Dublin, I could not make any wide excursions in the country. I preached however at Leixlip, Wicklow, Willow-Bank, and the Black Rock. The congregations in neither place were very large, yet in most under encouraging circumstances. I hope no minister in England, who may be solicited by the Society, will refuse to labour in this harvest. The number of faithful labourers, compared with the mass of the inhabitants, is small indeed. The cities and large towns have not much light, but the villages are mostly in total darkness. Could a few zealous and intelligent men be found who would be willing to itinerate in Ireland, it is the opinion of many that much good might be done. But as you *, my dear Sir, have been on the spot, I need add no more, but a continued assurance that I am

Yours, &c.

S. PEARCE.

Since Mr. Pearce left Ireland, Mr. Rippon has received two letters, one from the Rev. Dr. M'Dowel of Dublin, and another from Mr. Howard, an aged deacon in that city. The first of these epistles says, "We have had the pleasure of Mr. Pearce's labors for some time past. I trust it has been a blessed visit to many. Numbers of God's people have been greatly refreshed, and I believe several persons have been awakened, and brought to a serious concern about their everlasting interests under his preaching. He is now returned to his family and flock, but he will be long remembered with affection in this city." The other letter confirms these tidings: "We have had a jubilee for some weeks. That blessed man of God, Mr. Pearce, has preached among us with great sweetness, and with much power. I trust some will have reason to rejoice to eternity, that he was sent to this city. Another noble champion is expected to arrive here every day, Mr. Rowland Hill. If all our souls felt the power of godliness equal to these privileges, surely we should be upon the tip-toe for Heaven."

* I am constrained to join with my brother Pearce in expressing an hope, That no minister who may be solicited to help the Society in Dublin will deny his assistance. On various accounts I shall always remember the sabbaths I spent among them; nor have I heard of any minister who has repented his acceptance of their invitation. The following brethren, I think, succeeded each other in this service. The Rev. J. Boddily, now minister at Newbury Port, in America: J. Jones, Lady Glenorchy's chaplain in Edinburgh; J. Rippon of London; Rowland Hill of the same city; Samuel Medley of Liverpool; Benjamin Francis of Horsely; Isaiah Birt of Plymouth Dock; Samuel Pearce of Birmingham; and now Mr. Rowland Hill is with them the second time. EDITOR.

EXTRACT of a LETTER from Mr. DAVID GEORGE,
concerning the Negro Church, and the two Missiona-
ries, Messrs. GRIGG and RODWAY.

Free Town, Africa, 19th April, 1796.

My dear Brother,

I RECEIVED your very kind letter, with the trunk, which Mr. Etheridge has been pleased to send—for which I, in the name of my brethren and sisters, return him our most grateful acknowledgements—May the Lord reward him an hundred-fold. The names of those who received the garments your people were so kind as to send, I will transmit to you in my next; they have afforded us a most comfortable supply of those clothes we stood most in need of—may the Lord bless your congregation for their kindness to us. We have also received all the linen, and divided it agreeable to your directions. My brothers and sisters with me, are also at a loss how to express our gratitude to our heavenly Father for his goodness, in inclining the heart of Samuel Whitbread, Esq. to take such notice of us. Shirts and shifts we stood much in need of—our *wants* in that article are now in a great measure supplied. We intend to write to him a letter of thanks,* if in our power, before the ship sails—if not, you may expect it with the next, which will sail, in about three weeks hence.

These things, with the hymn and tune books, we received from brothers Rodway and Grigg, who appear to be two most excellent young men, and well qualified for being Missionaries—Mr. Rodway has been rather poorly since his arrival here, but Mr. Grigg has kept his health amazing well—has been for some time at Port Loko—has made considerable progress in the language, and is much respected, and greatly beloved by all the people there; at present he is come down to *Free Town*, and intends staying till the rains are over.

I gave the book to governor Dawes, which you was pleased to send, he kindly received it, and returns you many thanks for it. He still thinks, and we agree with him, that it will be most prudent to defer *building our meeting*, till once peace shall have taken place, (which we pray God, may be soon.) We have preserved the writings of it you sent, and intend, when
the

* When Esquire Whitbread heard of Mr. Rippon's endeavour to procure a quantity of clothes for the christian negroes, at Sierra Leone, who had lately been plundered by some of the French; he sent to Mr. R. a twenty pound bank note, "towards furnishing the wardrobe" of these distressed creatures; wishing it to be laid out for shirts and shifts—it was accordingly done. The *letter of thanks*, for this generosity, mentioned above, was duly written at Sierra Leone, signed with the name of each man and woman, who shared in the distribution. The sight of this letter would surely have given the benevolent Whitbread great pleasure, but it came to the hands of Mr. R. a few hours after Mr. Whitbread died.

the time shall come, to build it on the same spot, on which the present meeting stands.

The two missionaries have preached frequently with us, much to our satisfaction, and I trust to our edification likewise—they have not had opportunity for examining yet into our experiences, being so much taken up with their own business, in which they seem to engage with becoming spirit—they have been no expence to any of us.

We have appointed the afternoon of the first Tuesday of the month, to be kept as a meeting of prayer for the success of the Gospel in all the churches, and *for its spread throughout the whole earth.* We had a day of fasting and prayer lately, on account of the missionaries, Messrs. Rodway and Grigg—they were both present—this was *a most delightful season*—I trust the Divine Presence was in the midst of us.

We return you ten thousand thanks for your good advices—May the Lord enable us to act, and to walk in the way we ought—We have constant remembrance of you and of our dear brothers and sisters with you at the throne of grace—May the work of the Lord prosper among you.—We beg your prayers for us—yea we trust we have them—O that the Almighty would be pleased to pour out more and more of his Spirit—may the wilderness every where soon become as a fruitful field—may men be blessed in our Jesus, and all the ends of the earth speedily call him blessed.

We have had two deaths, since I last wrote to you, Euphemea Demps, whom I baptized about ten years ago in America, and one of my own children, Jane George, aged 12 years, they both died very comfortably. I have collected many of their dying sayings; Mr. Clark, the chaplain, would have inserted them, but has not time at present—his love to you, and all your dear people—he preaches commonly once a week in our meeting—we meet at an earlier hour than usual on the Lord's day, and go all of us to his place of worship to hear him—he intends writing to you by the first opportunity. The young men who came out as catechists with him are doing well, much beloved by all—they keep their school in our meeting-house, and frequently attend with us.

We have had no addition of members since I wrote to you last—Mr. Macaulay's compliments to you—Governor Dawes is coming home*—My wife is but poorly at present. All the rest of my family, with myself, are well; for which we desire to bless God.

I remain your affectionate brother,

DAVID GEORGE.

* The Governor is safely arrived in England, and speaks respectfully of Messrs. Rodway and Grigg.

Extract of a Letter from MR. CAREY to MR. RIPPON.

Mudnabatty, October 7, 1795.

My very dear Brother,

I RECEIVED yours of May 31st, 1794, and must say it afforded me no small pleasure to receive that testimony of a fraternal love begun on earth, which I trust can never, never end. One great glory of Christianity is the communion of saints, which, though it may be obstructed, yet, like a river, gathers a number of lesser streams, and thus accumulated flows into the sea. We have a river named *Atri*, almost as large as the Thames, near me, into which a few years ago there fell an amazing rock, on the borders of Boutan; and though many hundreds of people were long employed to clear the old channel, it was choaked up; *but this did not stop the River*; it took another course, formed a new channel far from the old one, but in the same direction till it found the sea: this is a fact, and you can apply it.

Your letter is full of questions; to many of which I cannot reply: a life-time is too short, perhaps, to investigate the mythology of the Hindoos. The current notions are, that God created three persons; these are worshipped as deities: their names are Birmmha, Beeshno, and Seeb; Birmmha was the creator, Beeshno is the preserver, and Seeb will be the destroyer of all. He is however the principal idol of the Hindoos, and is represented with a strange obscenity in all his temples, which are very numerous. Beeshno has been incarnated nine times, and is to be incarnated a tenth, to judge the world at its destruction; a correct account of these incarnations may be found in *Sonnerat's Voyages*, and there is a translation of the *Bhagvat Geeta*, part of the *Mahabarut*, one of the most popular of their Shasters, by *Mr. Wilkins*, which is a good one and translated from the Shanscrit. I am inclined to the opinion, that the Hindoos are in great part descended from the ten tribes who were led captive—for in translating Exodus, and Leviticus, the Hindoos declared that they act according to the bible, but that we do not: there is an astonishing similarity between the Mosaical Institutions and the Hindoo Observances; and Brahma, their great predecessor, is not very different from Abraham. This subject I am investigating, and hope not to be unsuccessful. It is wonderful to think, what a number of Hebrew words are in constant and common use. I know it is said, they are of Arabic and Persian extraction; but

it is amazing how they came into constant and general use (except a people speaking that language had been dispersed about the country) more than the Bootan, or Chinese, whose countries are nearer than Arabia by far, and border upon Bengal, which Persia does not. I was astonished to find that two thirds of the words in the Hebrew bible are familiar to Moonshi, a circumstance of very great use in translating the Old Testament! Many will say that the number of Hebrew words in use among the natives, instead of being an evidence of their descending from the ten tribes, may as well be accounted for by the invasion of the Moors, who were lords of the country 1100 years, and who spoke many Persian and Arabic words. I am not ignorant of this, nor that, from this mixture arose the Hindostanee tongue, but it must be observed that Hindostanee is spoken by the Moors principally now, and very few Hindoos speak it; but these words are in constant use among the people who speak the Bengal tongue, and appear too general to be derived from that source, considering the antipathy between the two people.

I wish I could tell you of souls converted to Christ, and walking in his ways. I speak to a large assembly twice every Lord's day, and have besides occasional opportunities of addressing smaller parties in the week; but hitherto in a fruitless manner. They come to hear—sing not only then, but as they go about the street,

“ O who besides can recover us,

“ Except the Lord Jesus Christ?”

and they know some things about the general tenor of the Gospel; but O that I could write to you of their conversion. I find preaching a very pleasant work, and am well understood by all the better people, though the poor, who speak provincial language, don't understand so well. But these difficulties are almost gone; and we have now Genesis, Exodus, Matthew, Mark, James, and part of Leviticus, Luke, John, and the Acts of the Apostles, translated. But what is this, unless the spirit of God powerfully work among us. Well, his providence has brought us here, and wonderfully settled us, and his promises expressly assure us, that he will work. Therefore we will trust him, for he is faithful who hath promised.

And now, dear brother, adieu! Let my Christian love be remembered to all the London ministers, and country ones too of my acquaintance, and to the churches.

Very affectionately yours,

WILLIAM CAREY.