

A BRIEF ESSAY*

TOWARDS

AN HISTORY OF THE BAPTIST ACADEMY

AT BRISTOL;

READ BEFORE

THE BRISTOL EDUCATION SOCIETY,

At their Anniversary Meeting, in Broadmead,

August 26th, 1795.

By JOHN RIPPON, D. D.

BRETHREN AND FATHERS,

IN the course of your Anniversaries, the Flower of the denomination to which we belong have appeared before you; and what article of interesting consideration have they omitted! When I think of the subjects of their address, and the great names who have discussed them; I have feared that it might not be within the compass of my ability to bring into your assembly any topic at all suited to this occasion. But it occurred to me at length, that there is one subject quite untouched—yet this, unhappily for me, a subject of prodigious magnitude, which involves difficulties, requires materials ancient and modern, with catalogues of names, and volumes of

* This Essay, to which the candour of the Bristol Education Society gave publication, is somewhat abridged in the Register, but is printed at large in a pamphlet by itself, which includes several paragraphs here omitted, that had appeared before in preceding numbers of this periodical work.

character; so that now my embarrassment was greater than before: I refer to THE HISTORY OF THE BAPTIST ACADEMY, AT BRISTOL. This I am not prepared to give; but I have prevailed on myself to look *towards* the subject. And if I may be suffered to avail myself of a few papers which have already appeared in print—to give a portrait instead of a long length picture—to hint as it may suit, without detailing—and to introduce names with or without character; then, relying on the plenitude of your candor, I shall, after making a few prefatory remarks on the *former* state of religion and learning among us, attempt an Essay towards an History of this institution from its beginning.

Were I to unite what we contemplate with any select portion of scripture, and to preach a sermon, I should remind you of a glowing promise in the 45th Psalm, 16th verse. *Instead of thy Fathers shall be thy Children, whom thou mayest make Princes in all the Earth.*

These animating strains seem to be addressed to the Messiah, for the consolation of his bride, whose trouble was anticipated that it might be lessened. And they teach us, by implication, that among the distressed of the children of Zion, some of the most pungent would arise from the death of those ancestors and friends of Christ, who in their generations were distinguished by a truly paternal regard to the whole church. But that the mystical head, and the members of his body might have support under their sorrows,

forrows, assurances are here given, that when David and Solomon, and the holy Prophets were no more, the Apostles and other good men should be raised up in their stead---that “when the Jews were broken off from the Olive tree, the Gentiles should be grafted into it;” after which a fruitful progeny should arise from the Redeemer’s groans, whose wisdom and integrity, whose piety and zeal, whose generosity to men and power with God, should capacitate them honorably to fill the stations of their ancestors, and to shed, in their successive generations, an influence which shall, at last, felicitate the Globe.

But as History and not Prophecy solicits our attention to day, I shall waive a farther consideration of this beautiful prediction, requesting, however, leave to carry the couplet with me as the motto of our discourse.

While our Antipædobaptist forefathers were intermingled among other denominations of Christians, and had not yet formed distinct and separate societies; their religion and learning must be estimated, in general, by the piety and erudition of those good men, to whom they were affectionately united, and with whom they worshipped. We had at that time literary men, whose abilities reflected honor on themselves, and on the cause they espoused; and of these, some who ranked high among the learned were disposed to teach. Such, however, was the unsettled state of affairs in the Protectorate, and so great the persecutions of our brethren and other

nonconformists afterwards, from the Restoration in 1660, till the *glorious* Revolution in 1688, that we must not be surpris'd if we find no splendid Seminaries of learning among the Baptists, or any other Protestant Dissenters in those early days. Indeed several of the ejected or silenced ministers, in different counties, took under their care a few young men of promising abilities for the ministry, and, without regard to our distinguishing sentiments, assisted them in their preparatory studies for sacred service. Senior Pædobaptists helped junior Antipædobaptists, and venerable ministers of the Baptist denomination were the tutors of amiable Pædobaptists.

It is not easy for me to say with precision, how early in the last century *our* learned brethren, in this country, began, *among themselves*, to educate their juniors for the work of the ministry. Though it is certain, if they had not been much inclined to it before, the act of uniformity in 1662, made it necessary for them to turn their attention to this object. For now the seats of learning were made so difficult of access by oaths and subscriptions, as to prevent the admission of the wise and good, who were of nonconforming principles.

The earliest Baptist Preceptor of whom I have any account, is the famous Mr. John Tombes, of Bewdley, Worcestershire; a man whose attainments fitted him for any station in which learning and piety were requisite. The noted Mr. Wall, in his elaborate History of Infant Baptism says, that “of the professed Antipædobaptists,

Antipædobaptists, Mr. Tombes was a man of the best parts in our nation, and perhaps in any other." And Dr. Calamy's honorable testimony of him is, that he was a person "whom all the world must own to have been a respectable man, and an excellent scholar." This learned divine, about the year 1650, took under his tuition three amiable young men; Mr. Boylston, of whom no particulars are in my possession; Mr. Richard Adams, and Mr. John Eccles. Mr. Adams in 1662 was ejected from his living at Humberstone in Leicestershire, was afterwards pastor of the Baptist church near Devonshire-square, London; and at length died in a good old age. Mr. Eccles became pastor of the Baptist church at Bromsgrove, suffered much for nonconformity, preached the Gospel there and at Coventry near sixty years with reputation, and died honorably in the year 1711.

By a manuscript letter in my possession, dated London, the 2d of the 8th month 1675, many copies of which were sent to the churches in the country, I find that our ministers of London invited their brethren of the Baptist persuasion, throughout England and Wales, to meet the following May, in the metropolis, with a view to form a plan for the providing an orderly standing ministry in the church, who might give themselves to reading and study, and so become able ministers of the New Testament. This letter is signed by most of the London pastors, among whom were the learned Daniel Dyke, William

liam Collins, Henry Forty, and William Kiffin. The result of this proposal I am yet to learn.

It is of general publicity, that the ministers and messengers of more than 100 baptized congregations in England and Wales met, in a General Assembly at London, in September 1689, to consult the good of the whole denomination. At this convention they resolved to raise a fund or stock, for the advantage of churches who were not able to maintain their own pastors or teachers,—for sending duly qualified ministers from the city and the country, to visit the churches, and to preach the gospel where it was not at that time published,—and for assisting members of churches who had promising gifts, were sound in fundamentals, and inclined to study, in attaining to the knowledge of the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. Towards these benevolent purposes, different congregations made collections, and among them the church in the Pithay, Bristol, sent up by the hands of their pastor, the renowned Andrew Gifford, thirty pounds.

About four months after the General Assembly had met, our brethren, from the church at Plymouth, wrote a letter to the metropolis (the original is before me) with which they remit to the trustees of the fund a collection of 27l. 3s. 8d. and a promise of nine pounds per annum, to be entirely disposed of *in the education of young ministers*---observing that if this contribution were applied to the general uses of the fund, and not to the very purpose for which it was collected, no more would be sent. This letter contains

tains the recommendation of a Baptist student, *at Bristol*. As he was the very first, of whom I have any account, who was educated in this city, though not on our present foundations, a short account of him may be admissible.

This young man was Mr. Richard Sampson, a member of the church at Plymouth. He had been for some time devoted to the attainment of classical knowledge, before the meeting of the General Assembly in 1689. Yet application was made to the trustees of the proposed fund in London, requesting that he might remain at Bristol two or three years longer, and have the expences of his board and education defrayed. It seems the petition was granted.

His tutor was a Mr. Thomas in this city, of whom we learn from Dr. Calamy, that he was a minister at Bristol in Oliver's time, and continued so afterwards, was invited to conform by considerable offers in Wales, but refused to the last. He was educated at Oxford, trained up many for the ministry, and died at Bristol in 1693.

After Mr. Sampson had finished his studies, he became pastor of the Baptist church at Exeter, in 1692. Under his labours, certain records inform us, that the congregation flourished greatly, so that the meeting-house would not hold above half the people who sometimes assembled. Mr. Sampson was much esteemed by Sir Isaac Newton; and so strong was his memory, that one day, when the conversation turned on the depriving good men again of their
bibles,

bibles, Sir Isaac said, they cannot possibly deprive Mr. Sampson of his, for he has it all treasured up within him. Mr. Richard Sampson died at Exeter, in 1716. His son was, for many years, pastor of the church at Tiverton, where his grandson, well known to some present, now resides---I mean James Sampson, Esq; late his Majesty's consul general to the Dey of Algiers, and then in 1770, to the Emperor of Morocco, at Tetuan.

From the death of Mr. Thomas at Bristol, in 1693, our candidates for the ministry, so far as I can learn, were educated in London, at Taunton, Tewkesbury, and elsewhere. Hitherto I have no proof of the existence of any permanent society among the Baptists, for the education of young ministers.

But here with peculiar pleasure and veneration we introduce the name of TERRILL, the father and founder of the Baptist Academy in this city.

Mr. EDWARD TERRILL was born about March, 1635. The good work of grace was begun in his soul when he was 19 years of age. He afterwards kept a reputable school in this city: was baptized in 1659, and, after becoming a member of the church in Broadmead, was called to the office of preaching elder. He was several times, with many other members of the same church, for the sake of a good conscience, imprisoned in the Newgate at Bristol; endured his persecutions as a good soldier of Jesus, and died before July 25, 1686, when the church met at Sister Terrill's, as the Broadmead records express it,

it, to chuse "a ruling elder, in the place of dear brother Terrill deceased." This excellent person was doubtless a competent judge of the advantages which result to men in common, and to ministers in particular, from a good education. And it pleased God to put it into his heart, to promote this object. He left something considerable to the pastor of the church in Broadmead, for the time being, under the following conditions: "Provided he be an holy man, well skilled in the Greek and Hebrew tongues, in which the scriptures were originally written; and devote three afternoons in the week to the instruction of any number of young students, not exceeding twelve, who may be recommended by the churches, in the knowledge of the original languages, and other literature." And out of the estate bequeathed to the pastor of the church, he left ten pounds per annum, to be applied to the use of any student that might need it, and be approved of by his trustees. But though Mr. Terrill died in 1685 or 1686, it has been said, that the estate did not come into hand till about the year 1717.

It is not quite certain that either Mr. Thomas Vauxe, the pastor, in 1687, or Mr. Peter Kitterell, his successor, in 1707, were elected into their office under the limitation of the above clause; but by a letter in which Dr. Evans favoured me with a brief account of Broadmead church, I learn, that "Mr. CALEB JOPE was chosen to educate young men, as well as to assist Mr. Kitterell." This probably was in the year

1710 or 1711. Of Mr. Jope I can obtain but little information from the invaluable records of Broadmead. But I have gathered from divers manuscripts, that he was intimately acquainted with Plymouth church, resided in the beginning of his studies at Trowbridge, and from thence removed to Tewksbury, under the tuition of Mr. Jones, whose seminary was at that time deservedly in high repute, and produced, besides other noted persons, Mr. Pearfall, of Taunton; Dr. Chandler, and Dr. Gifford, of London; Dr. Butler, afterwards Bishop of Bristol and Durham; and also the late learned and respectable Dr. Secker, Archbishop of Canterbury. Mr. Jope, quitting his station in 1719, removed to Exeter, and afterwards laboured some time at Plymouth. With the close of his life, and the names of the students who were under his care, I am totally in the dark. The history of his successor has not shared the same fate, for we are in possession of manuscript and printed documents concerning him.

The Rev. Mr. BERNARD FOSKETT, son of Mr. William Foskett, of North Crawley, in Bucks, a gentleman of good repute, easy fortune, and blessed with a numerous offspring, was born March 10, 1684-5, near Wooburn, in Bedfordshire, where he had an estate. And as he early discovered a taste for learning, he was put under the care of a very able master, with whom he soon made considerable progress. He became experimentally acquainted with religion, in the early part of life, and at seventeen years of age joined the

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the Baptist church, then under the pastoral care of Mr. Piggott, in Little Wild-street, London, over which our excellent friend, the Rev. Dr. Samuel Stennett, I hope yet presides*. About this time an intimacy had commenced between Mr. Foskett, and Mr. John Beddome, (the father of our venerable friend, the Rev. Benjamin Beddome, of Bourton, on the water) some years after a respectable minister of the church in the Pithay. The friendship of Mr. John Beddome and Mr. Foskett was like that of Jonathan and David, and lasted through life. Mr. John Beddome was called to the work of the ministry by Mr. Keach's church, of which Dr. Gill was afterwards pastor, and was sent to Henley Arden, near Aulcester, in 1697, to assist the aged Mr. John Willis, pastor of that church, who died about 1705. A few years after the death of Mr. Willis, viz. in 1711, Mr. Foskett, who had been regularly called to the work of the ministry, and exercised his preaching talents several years, quitted the flattering prospects of his profession in London, preferring the character of an able minister to that of a skilful physician, and removed to Henley Arden, a place to which his pecu-

* It will be recollected that this discourse was delivered at Bristol, on August 26, 1795, when it was hoped that the Doctor might survive his affliction; but at the close of the public dinner of the society, news came that he was no more. On its being announced, every countenance was marked with sorrow, and every voice pronounced the eulogy of tributary esteem.

liar friendship for Mr. Beddome led him to give the preference. At Henley, at Bengeworth, and at Aulcester, these two worthies continued their joint labours, till the year 1719, when Mr. Fokett received a pressing invitation from Broadmead, to assist Mr. Kitterell, their pastor, and to become the tutor of the academy in the room of Mr. Jope, just removed into the west. This invitation he thought it his duty to accept, and, in 1720, entered on his double charge with great seriousness and firmness. One who for upwards of twenty-four years served with him in the gospel of Christ, and who could not be uninformed of his real character, has favoured us with a biographical sketch of him *, which demands a place in this essay.

“ His natural abilities were sound and good; and his acquired furniture, of which he never affected making a great shew, was very considerable.— He had a clear understanding, a penetrating judgment, and a retentive memory. His application to study was constant and severe: but though he was of a retired and contemplative disposition, yet he was not so far detached from the world, as to be wholly unpractised in the duties of social life. In the management of his temporal concerns he was inflexibly just and honest; in his counsels, prudent and faithful; in his friendships, sincere and steady; and though he was not a man of strong passions, yet in the relations of

* This sketch was given by the Rev. Hugh Evans.

a brother and a son, he was tender and affectionate, dutiful and obedient. His conduct as a Christian, through a course of near sixty years, was most exemplary and ornamental. So that it may be truly said of him, he had few equals, hardly any superiors. Religion he considered not as a matter of mere speculation, but as an affair the most sacred and important. How serious and regular he was in his private devotions, in his attendance on family and public worship, and every other religious exercise, they who best knew him will be readiest to declare. Nor was his religion confined to the closet, the family, or the house of God, but happily diffused its sacred influence through his whole life. Few they were, if any, of the Christian virtues, that did not shine with a bright and distinguishing lustre in his temper and behaviour; to delineate them all would carry me too far: I must not, however, omit to mention what he was always careful to conceal, his disinterested and extensive benevolence; for in this, as well as in many other respects, in imitation of his divine master, he went about doing good. The necessitous and deserving without distinction partook of his bounty; but the pious poor he ever considered as the special objects of his regard. And while he often judiciously prescribed to the indigent sick, he generously supplied them with the means of obtaining what was necessary to their relief. And as the Gospel ever held the highest place in his esteem, his charities were chiefly directed in such a manner as tended most effectually to promote its interests; so

that the poor ministers of Christ shared very largely in his compassionate regards, and were multitudes of them refreshed by his liberality. Nor did he confine his benevolence to those of his own sentiments only, but cheerfully extended it to many who differed from him. In a word, as his charities were thus generous and extensive, so the prudence, humanity, and privacy, with which they were conducted, secured to him the most cordial respect from those who shared of them, as well as merited the imitation of those who could not avoid knowing them. And as he was thus charitable whilst living, so in this respect as well as many others, being dead he still speaketh.

“ In the character of a minister, he approved himself judicious, prudent, faithful and laborious. His religious principles, which were those commonly called *Calvinistical*, he ever maintained with a steady Christian zeal. But though he was strenuous for what he apprehended to be the truth, yet was he fond of no extreme. While he strongly asserted the honours of free grace, he earnestly contended for the necessity of good works; preaching duty as well as privilege, and recommending holiness as the only way to happiness. And with what judgment, seriousness, and affection he insisted on these important and interesting subjects, some yet alive remember; as also the extraordinary weight which these his instructions received from his own very regular and pious example. He was indeed a pattern to the flock, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

rity. Nor was he without the pleasure of seeing his labours crowned with great and happy success; of which the very flourishing state of his community, at the time of his death, will be considered a sufficient evidence.

“ To all which I may add, that in the office of a tutor he failed not to pursue the same ends, which animated his profession as a Christian, and his public labours as a Minister. He was always studious to promote the real advantage of those under his care, endeavouring to lead their minds into a general knowledge of the most beneficial and important branches of literature. And though he judged a superficial education best suited to the years and capacities of some; yet he encouraged and assisted others in the pursuit of a more finished one, conforming himself in the whole to the professed design of the founder of this institution.

“ In the regular and unwearied discharge of all these several duties of his profession he spent near forty years; during which time he suffered little or no interruption in his work from the disorders incident to human nature. But at length, by a paralytic seizure, he received the notice of his approaching dissolution. In these circumstances he continued near a fortnight, still enjoying the perfect and undisturbed use of his reasoning powers, and still discovering the same serene, pious, and heavenly spirit which ran through his whole life. Within a day or two of his decease, he addressed himself to his dear friend and colleague, the Rev. Hugh Evans, with a peculiar solemnity, and an uncommon pathos, in these words: “ I have

done with man and the inhabitants of the world, and I have nothing now to rely on, but the merits of my dear Redeemer, who of God is made, I trust, unto me, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption: this is all my salvation and all my desire!" Sustained with these blessed hopes of the everlasting Gospel, he cheerfully submitted to the stroke of death, and quietly fell asleep in Jesus, September 17, 1758, in the 74th year of his age."

His funeral sermon was preached, but not printed, by the Rev. Hugh Evans, from 1 Cor. ix. 27. *I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away.* Thus the course of one holy apostolic man was finished.

If the list of Mr. Foskett's students now before me is complete, they were in number sixty-four, not including a pupil of the independent denomination, who afterwards lived and died a useful minister at Maidstone in Kent.* Concerning the first of these sixty-four, this memorandum is preserved. "November the 5th, 1720, Mr. Thomas Rogers was proposed as a student to Mr. Foskett, recommended by the church in the Pithay, and the ten pounds left by Mr. Terrill was granted to him." Mr. Rogers was from Pontypool, in Monmouthshire, and soon came to the close of life. And as the first of Mr. Foskett's

* This was the Rev. Mr. Herbert Jenkins, whose son is now minister of the Presbyterian congregation at Banbury, in Oxon.

students, so the last of them was from Wales, namely Mr. Samuel George, who was pastor of the church, at Wantage, Berks, and left an excellent character behind him. It is somewhat remarkable that the number of the English and of the Welsh students should have been exactly the same. For there were thirty-two of them Englishmen, and thirty-two belonging to the Principality. But I hope it will appear much more interesting to report, in the words of our ever dear Hugh Evans; “that most of those who were under Mr. Foskett’s care approved themselves truly serious, and with great reputation filled many of our churches.” Here let us pause—and most heartily praise the great Head of the church, for his mercy and grace. I am sure *they* are willing to do it, who still survive of that respectable catalogue.

Blessed be God, there are a few of these good men yet in the wilderness. I know not whether they are more than six or seven; but as you will conceive a favourable opinion of the rest from them as a specimen, I with pleasure recite their names.

BENJAMIN BEDDOME, A. M. at Bourton.

JOHN OULTON, A. M. at Rawden, York.

EDMUND WATKINS, at Ufk.

JOHN EVANS, now at Northampton.

BENJAMIN FRANCIS, A. M. at Horsley.

MORGAN JONES, L. L. D. at HammerSmith, and

JOHN EVANS, of Pentre.

May the latter days of these reverend ministers abundantly increase.

By such disciples * we may, in some measure, form a judgment of the master. And if it be conceded that his method of education was limited rather than liberal; severe rather than enchanting; employing the memory more than the genius, the reasoning more than the softer powers of the mind; in a word, if it be granted that Mr. Foskett was not the first of tutors, it is a piece of justice to his memory, and a debt of honor to the divine grace, most cheerfully to acknowledge, that some good scholars, and several of the greatest ministers who have adorned our denomination since the days of the reformation, were educated by him. Here I pass the names which have been just recorded. But were I to single out from his students a scholar, it would be proper to repeat what the late Dr. Gibbons said to me some years since, when several eminent linguists had been mentioned; "I think, my young friend, that Dr. Llewelyn is the first scholar we have among the Protestant dissenters." Were I to distinguish those who were eminent as scholars and preachers too, I should select not only from the short list which adorns a preceding paragraph, but pro-

* Since this discourse was delivered, we have been called to mourn the death of two of these worthies—Mr. Beddome and Mr. Watkins. The biography of the former may be seen in the register for January 1796, No. 12, p. 314. And a design has been conceived of publishing an Appendix to this Essay, in which shall be given, among several valuable papers, a short account of *all* those students of the Bristol Academy, who have died in the Lord; if materials, sufficiently interesting, are *speedily* communicated.

duce several others; and among them I might mention,

ROBERT DAY, A. M. at Wellington.

JOHN ASH, L. L. D. at Pershore.

JOHN RYLAND, A. M. at Northampton.

But there is one name I cannot omit—the name of the third student in the roll of the sixty-four; I mean that of the immortal

HUGH EVANS, A. M.

Mr. Folkett finished his labours and entered on his rest; but instead of the *father* came up *this* son, who had in general the esteem and influence of a *prince*, wherever he was known, *in all the earth*.

It was the honor and happiness of Mr. Hugh Evans to be descended from Welsh parents, in easy circumstances, illustrious for their piety and benevolence. His grandfather, Mr. Thomas Evans, was eminent in his day, for gifts and grace. In the time of Oliver's commonwealth, he passed his examination before the triers appointed to license ministers, and received from them an honorable testimonial. The original was intrusted to me, of which the following is a copy.

*By the Commission for the Propagation of the Gospel
in Wales.*

WHEREAS five of the ministers, in the act of parliament bearing date the 25th of February 1649, and entitled an *Act for the better Propagation of the Gospel in Wales*, have, according to the tenors of the

saïd act, approved of Mr. Thomas Evans the younger, and have recommended him, with their advice to us, that he be encouraged in the work of the ministry: we do, according to an order directed to us by the committee of five at Neath, therefore ORDER, that Mr. John Pryce, treasurer, shall forthwith pay unto the saïd Mr. Thomas Evans the sum of thirty pounds, which we have thought fit to allow him towards his salary, and encouragement in the work of the ministry. And this our order, together with his acquittal, shall be a sufficient discharge for the saïd treasurer.

Dated under our hands, the 16th of May, in the year of our Lord, 1653.

JOHN WILLIAMS, &c.

By these five gentlemen, Mr. Thomas Evans was appointed to preach in the parish of Maesmynys, where he continued till the restoration in 1660, and appears to have been useful, and highly esteemed by those who knew him and attended on his ministry. But when he was no longer permitted to officiate in the parish church, as his conscience would not suffer him to comply with the terms of conformity then imposed, it was thought he formed a separate church of the Baptist denomination; but the Welsh historian, our venerable friend, the Rev. Joshua Thomas of Leominster, who has enabled me to correct several mistakes which have crept into the history of this family, informs me it is correct to say, "That Mr. Thomas Evans united himself to the Baptist society, which now constitutes Dolau and Pentre churches, and which were then one church, under the care of Mr. Henry

Henry Gregory, who was the pastor of it from 1660, till about the year 1700. Mr. Thomas Evans was first his assistant," and then perhaps co-pastor with him. The church met for divine worship many years in his father's house. He suffered much for conscience' sake, but was carried honorably through all his difficulties, and in 1688 died in peace.

Caleb, the eldest son of Mr. Thomas Evans, a man of good abilities, and of a most amiable disposition and character, succeeded him in the pastoral office, and continued in the faithful discharge of the duties of it, till removed by death, in the year 1739. Our Rev. Hugh Evans was the youngest son of this Caleb, by his first marriage with Mrs. Hannah Lewis, from Herefordshire, of whose piety and other personal excellencies, it is scarcely possible to say too much. Mr. Thomas informs me, that she was of a reputable family, in the Valley of Olchon, who were distinguished in the Principality for sheltering the Baptists in persecuting times. As our dear preceptor descended from such parents, it may reasonably be inferred that he was a child of many prayers. In early life he was placed under the tuition of the Rev. Mr. Pryce, a worthy dissenting minister, who at that time kept a boarding school of high reputation, near Talgarth, in the county of Brecon, and was eminent in his day, as a sound classical scholar. Here Mr. Hugh Evans was thoroughly grounded in the knowledge of the learned languages, and at the same time had the distinguished happiness of being brought effectually

effectually acquainted with Christ and his own heart. Several things concurred, under the divine influence, towards his conversion: the recollection when he was at school of the prayers, and counsels of his father, before he left home: the conversation of a godly family of his father's acquaintance: and the preaching of that eminent servant of God, old Mr. Enoch Francis,—made such impressions on his mind as were never obliterated. Soon after having come to this city to visit a near relation, and to receive advice for a complaint in his foot, he pursued his learning under the direction of Mr. Foskett, by whom he was baptized, August 7, 1730.

By letters, which have come to light since the death of Dr. Evans, we learn, that soon after Mr. Hugh Evans was baptized, he went into Wales, for the sake of his health, and to see his father, to whom Mr. Foskett wrote, advising him and his friends to try the young man's ministerial gifts while at home; for at Bristol, he said, they could not prevail on him to exercise, such was his extreme modesty and diffidence.

In these early traits of character, the church at Broadmead must have perceived a golden sheaf which presaged a glittering harvest. Accordingly they called him to the work of the ministry on the 17th of August 1733, and, in the December following, gave him an invitation to become an assistant to their worthy pastor, which he accepted, notwithstanding much fairer prospects, as to this world, opened before

fore him from two churches in the metropolis. And in 1739 he was called to the station of teaching elder. The higher he rose in office, the brighter he shone as one of the ambassadors of the churches who are the glory of Christ. The biographical account of him in his funeral sermon, though it be the eulogy of a son, is temperate and just.

Every one who knew him must admit that his gift in prayer was uncommon, his students thought it was unequalled. In the family, at occasional meetings, in the services of the Lord's day, and upon extraordinary occasions, with copiousness, dignity, and warmth of devotion, he poured out his soul unto God; and yet with such variety, that he was seldom, if ever, heard to pray twice alike.

His pulpit compositions were clear, nervous and pathetic. Few men were more capable of taking a large, comprehensive, masterly view of a subject; or of representing it with greater perspicuity, energy, and fervor. His language was striking, his voice clear, and his elocution manly. Nor did any preacher, perhaps, ever know better than he, especially at some happy seasons, what it was to reign over his audience, enlightening their understanding, convincing their judgment, and then kindling all their noblest passions into a blaze of devotion.

After he had many years habituated himself to study, his forte as a minister was an extemporaneous illustration of the sacred scriptures. This was evinced by the weekly conferences; and we are able to assert that

that many of his sermons, which his people deemed the best and most useful, exactly answered to this description. His ministerial labours were far extended all around. He had the care of numerous churches resting upon him; and many were the long journies he took to assist at ordinations, and at the annual associations, in England and Wales.

As a tutor he was not inferior to either of his predecessors. He possessed the assiduity without the severity of his immediate predecessor, and led his disciples into the fields of science by a method, in which hourly acquisitions brought new pleasures, and enabled us to pursue thought from thought, with tranquillity and delight. Every one who sat at his feet recognised in him a friend and a father. He so took us under his care as to inspire affection to him as our *friend*, and we never left his wing, till affection having grown to reverence constrained the filial heart to say, *This is my father.*

O what condescension, what tenderness have we seen in him! What solicitude for our usefulness and felicity has he discovered! With an appropriate facility he planted many a shrub in the very soil which reason and grace had adapted to its growth, and soon as its fruit appeared, how did he rejoice! When we no longer enjoyed the bosom of our Alma Mater, nor rested under his shade, he interested himself in our history: his sympathy lessened our sorrows, and his participation with us increased our joys. What man, since the apostolic days, could have said with more sincerity

sincerity and accent, *I have no greater joy than to bear that my children walk in truth?* Well therefore it was said, in his funeral sermon, that it gave him “inexpressible pleasure to see so many who had been under his tuition fulfil his expectations concerning them.” And that, not long before his death, he spoke with tears of joy to this effect; “I am happy to see these young men rising up, I hope, for great and eminent usefulness in the Church of God, when I and many others shall be here no more!”

But over the annals of this peculiarly eminent servant of the Lord, we exclaim, *The Fathers where are they? and the Prophets do they live for ever!* Through intense application the machine of mortality began to wear out, and the vigour of this holy useful man decayed. But before his dissolution our churches had the pleasure of seeing him attend the association at Frome. Here he took a solemn leave of his connexions in an affecting discourse from those alarming words; *Be not deceived, God is not mocked.* And soon after his return to Bristol, he closed his public ministry, with a truly paternal address from Gal. iv. 19. *My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you.*

During his declining state, it is scarcely possible to describe his placid resignation to the divine will, his meekness and his affection to all around him. Every passion seemed to be extinguished but love. With that he overflowed to his family, the church, and all his connexions. When speaking of the prosperous state

state

state of Broadmead and the academy, he once said, that he thought he might adopt the words of good old Simeon, *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.* He frequently said, *my flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever.*

A student, who was with him in the two last nights of his life, informs me, that for twenty-four hours before he departed he lay totally insensible. About midnight he began visibly to alter, and appeared to struggle with the last enemy. His dear son Caleb was sent for, who came just in time to witness the closing scene. Several of the students were in the room, and his three sons and two youngest daughters surrounded the bed while he breathed out his last.—The scene was unspeakingly striking and solemn.—There lay, in the arms of death—the great Hugh Evans.

Soon after he expired, his son, the Doctor, who had been kneeling by the bed side for some time, and appeared to have been pouring out his whole soul unto the Lord, rose from his knees, lifted up his hands to heaven, and in all the tenderness of filial grief said, *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; he wept bitterly, but then added, for they rest from their labours, and their works follow them:* And indeed all who were present wept aloud, for several minutes.

The evening before the interment, the corpse was taken to the meeting house: The service was to begin the next day at two o'clock, but the house was full

full before one. A suitable and truly melting discourse was preached by an excellent brother, now assembled with us*; after which the funeral procession, covering half a mile in length, attended the body from the meeting house to the Baptist burying ground, where the venerable Mr. John Tommas delivered a pathetic address on the occasion. This was a solemn hour, and the countenance of unnumbered spectators said—We have lost a friend.

This stroke was felt throughout the kingdom.—Our parlours, our pulpits, and our assemblies in general, not without many a trickling tear, sighed, *How are the mighty fallen!* But affecting as was this dispensation, by which the church and the WORLD sustained a loss; one thing consoled us—*instead of this father came up his Son, the Rev. Dr. Caleb Evans, enrolled with the worthies, whom our ascended Lord himself was to make Princes in all the earth.*

The first accounts that we have been able to obtain of our late President, furnish us with a genius in embryo. He was, blessed be God! in early life, called out of darkness into marvellous light. From his own pen, we collect, that when he was only a youth, he beheld with admiration his father in the pulpit, and was delighted with the heavenly sounds which flowed from his lips. Hearing the awful terrors

* The Rev. Mr. Benjamin Francis. This sermon was not printed, as Dr. Evans was preparing one for publication which speedily appeared, and to which this essay is considerably indebted.

of the law, and the astonishing grace of the Gospel, he was brought into the very dust, before the throne of an holy God, and enabled to magnify the riches of free grace in his salvation. Under the parental care and instruction of his father, he received his grammar learning, and ranked with other students under Mr. Foskett, about the year 1753. On his removal to London, he was baptized by Dr. Samuel Stennett, and became a member of the church in Little Wild-street. And having gone through the usual course of studies in the dissenting academy then at Mile-end, now at Homerton, while Dr. Walker, Dr. Conder, and Dr. Gibbons were the tutors, he was called to the work of the ministry by the church to which he belonged; and then for two years, as he himself informed me, assisted the Rev. Josiah Thompson, at that time pastor of the Baptist church in Unicorn-yard, Southwark; and the Rev. Dr. Furneaux, at Clapham.

At the expiration of this time, in 1759, he received an invitation to become his father's assistant, and began his public career in Broadmead, with a discourse from these words; *I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*— This determination he held fast. It gave vigour to his ministry through the varying scenes of life, and at last it placed for him the lamp of hope in the valley of the shadow of death. Having preached at Bristol about eight years, he was ordained, and became his father's colleague. The congregation and the church,
already

already large and reputable, felt his influence. His piety, adorned with an animated eloquence, gave a zest to his prayers and his sermons. His connexions in town and country were numerous and respectable. Where he was known and heard, he was admired and loved. And now, when the influence of his father was apostolic, the popularity of the son proverbial, and every thing in the Church and Academy was approximating to perfection—in the full affluence of fame, he seized the golden opportunity; and in addition to all the other efforts of an expansive benevolence, his liberal heart devised another liberal scheme.

Having surveyed with pleasure the institution of Terrill, the assiduity of Foskett, and the improved method of education adopted by his father—with a disinterested zeal for the glory of God, and the welfare of men, he said of the academy according to the language of sacred song, *If she be a door, we will inclose her with boards of cedar; if she be a wall, the foundation is laid, and the fabric for years has been going up, we will build upon her a palace of silver.* Cant. viii. 9.

He devised—he planned—he executed. It was a structure of faith, founded in hope, on the basis of charity; to which *he, its father,* gave the name of THE BRISTOL EDUCATION SOCIETY—a society of CHRISTIAN PHILANTHROPISTS, before whom I appear with a respect bordering on reverence.

This society was formed in 1770, in aid of the Baptist Academy in Bristol, with the design, “That dissenting congregations, especially of the Baptist de-

nomination, in any part of the British dominions, may, if it please God, be more effectually supplied with a succession of able and evangelical ministers; and that missionaries may be sent to those places where there is an opening for the gospel."

Some of us who had the honor of sitting at Dr. Evans's feet, before and after the emission of his scheme, well remember his anxious solicitude concerning it, and the unremitting exertions he made, in town and country, to realize his plan. And, blessed be God, his efforts were not fruitless. So far from it, that we have reason to believe, indulgent Heaven and a smiling public exceeded, by far exceeded, his first expectations. Under his fostering hand the most benevolent men in all our connexions enrolled themselves as subscribers to the institution; and names, which add a lustre to any catalogue, became its patrons and benefactors. Among them I perceive the Chief Magistrates of the cities of London and Bristol, and other illustrious names, over some of whom, "now to the dust gone down," we drop the tributary tear. Out of these departed worthies, it will be a gratification to mention,

The Right Hon. FREDERICK BULL, Lord Mayor of
London.

THOMAS LLEWELYN, LL. D.

REV. ANDREW GIFFORD, D. D.

JOSEPH TOMKINS, Esq.

JOHN BULL, Esq.

FRANCIS BULL, Esq.

WILLIAM

WILLIAM STEELE, Esq.

Dr. JOSEPH MASON.

Dr. THOMAS BUNN.

ROBERT HOULTON, Esq. and his nephew,

JOHN HOULTON, Esq. Admiral of the Blue.

To these many other characters might be added ; but I dismiss them, expecting that the next age will gratefully embalm *their* memories in successive anniversaries, while all the churches will give glory to God on *your* account.

As the affairs of the Academy were now to be conducted on a larger scale, and a greater number of students to be educated, the Rev. JAMES NEWTON, A. M. assistant preacher of the Rev. Mr. Tommas, at the Pithay, was respectfully invited to take a share in the education. The province of classical tutor was assigned him—a department for which he was admirably fitted. With the Latin and Greek classics, with the Christian Hebrew scriptures, the Mishnah, Talmuds, and other Jewish writings, he was intimately acquainted. Some of us now assembled, who in our later years at the academy were under his care, perfectly recollect with what humility, prudence and affection, he entered on his office among us, and with what patience and assiduity he sustained it. But though he is no more, NEWTON will long be a fragrant name in this connexion. I am extremely sorry at being under the necessity of referring the audience for a full account of him, to the funeral sermon on his death, in which, however, it will be

found that justice is done to his memory *, by Dr. Evans.

How well the Doctor was fitted, first to assist the great Hugh Evans, and then to preside over the growing institution, it is unnecessary to say, for there can be but one opinion on this head.

As he had known the scriptures from his youth, been called by divine grace in early life, addicted himself to the ministry, improved his mind by extensive reading, and had enjoyed a truly liberal education; he was prepared not only to rise, but to shine like the Sun—an universal blessing. How often have we been illuminated and warmed by his genial rays! Who can read his address to his students, drawn up in 1770, and then delivered, first of all, to some of us who are this day associated;—who can read it, and not perceive that the welfare of *every one* of his pupils lay *very near* his heart! O, how often has he in prayer, and in advice, melted over us! We all of us felt a sincere affection for him, and in some of us it seemed to be a mixture of the filial and fraternal. Similar emotions also of mind were inspired by his conduct in the circles of his friends, in which he charmed by his piety, affability, and good sense.

Our Baptist College in America was proud to confer on him her highest honors, in which she was followed by the Principal and Professors of the King's College, Aberdeen, in the year 1789. But though courted by some, caressed by others, and valued by

* Mr. Newton's Biography is given in the Register, No. II. page 150.

all of his connexions, his native excellencies, as a renewed man and Christian minister, never forsook him. He had been descended from a race of apostolic men, and his character reflected lustre on his ancestors. Great without arrogance, he maintained the dignity of his rank, nor ever gave any one reason to repine at his success. He never professed himself to be a *profound* metaphysician, or the possessor, in a superior degree to all his brethren, of a talent for generalising his ideas; yet his mind was enriched with numerous combinations of thought, with a taste cultivated and pure, and a memory eminently accurate. Warm and occasionally rapid in his manner, he sometimes succeeded more through a kind of natural felicity than previous study. With a plenitude and vigor of expression, the legitimate offspring of genius, his eloquence was neither disgraced by false and meretricious ornaments, nor degraded by dullness and insipidity. His flowing periods, and the harmonious cadence of his voice fitted him, in no common degree, for public speaking. Whether he read his sermons, or delivered them impromptu,* they were as distinguishable for their easy elegance, and evangelical favor, as his prayers were for a rational, manly, and affectionate devotion. His audience, neither attracted by fashion, won by the splen-

* It was his general practice to preach the forenoon sermon entirely without notes; and to read almost every sentence of his discourse when it was his turn to preach in the afternoon service, or at the evening lecture.

dor of establishments, nor the inspiration of music, always numerous, always increasing, and often highly devotional; demonstrated that he was *a workman who needed not to be ashamed rightly dividing the word of truth.*

He was closely attached to the system of theology which we call Calvinism; yet candid in judging of the characters and speculations of others. His zeal, though warm, never degenerated into rancor and bitterness, in proof of which his numerous publications may be produced; yet his temper was not formed for approving virtue with coolness, nor for censuring vice with apathy. Open, honest, generous, his morals were pure without moroseness, his piety sincere without gloominess or ostentation. No good man ever held free intercourse with him without warm approbation, nor was deprived of it without regret. In a word, those who knew Dr. Evans, and were capable of estimating his character, all agree, that his talents were highly respectable, and his virtues rare, solid, and exalted.

For several months before his illness, to use the words of a ministering brother now present, It appeared evidently, to those who conversed with him, that he was ripening fast for eternal blessedness. His mind was in general much taken up with the employ of heaven. In humble abasement of spirit did he often speak of himself, as a fallen depraved creature; but, when he contemplated his privileges as a redeemed, regenerated sinner, his joy was unutterable. With
rapture

rapture he exclaimed, *O the breadth, and length, and depth and height of the love of Christ which passeth knowledge! Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be!*

About a week after his first paralytic seizure, he said to one of his students who now hears me, "I am perfectly resigned to the will of God." And it being signified to him, that at the approaching Association at Wotton, the ministers and other brethren would be much affected by the death of dear Mr. Day, of Wellington, who was appointed to preach the sermon, the Doctor wept aloud, saying, "I expected to have joined him before this time in the kingdom of my father: he is gone, and I am languishing behind; but I know in whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." Recovering himself, he added, "If I had been able to attend the association; and had preached, I intended to have improved these words; *We have this treasure in earthen vessels.* Ah, truly," said he, "Ministers are brittle, earthen vessels; but blessed be God for the treasure which he puts into them. The best composed sermons are nothing without the excellency of the power which is of God, and not of us."

In the same conversation he most earnestly recommended Village preaching, giving a detail of the rise and progress of a favorite congregation at Downend, near Bristol, where he then was. And speaking of

the foundation of his hope, he said, "As for those who deny the doctrine of the atonement, I cannot tell how it may be with them in the near prospects of death; for my own part, I HAVE NOTHING TO REST MY SOUL UPON, BUT CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED: and I am now unspeakably happy to think of my feeble effort in vindicating that *glorious* doctrine, in my four sermons on that subject." Thus happy was the frame of his mind, and he was yet alive—and while he was living we hoped; and prayer was made for his life. *We* made it, and thousands made it to God continually for him. Innumerable were the hearts which ascended to heaven, and, with all the pathos and piety of a wrestling devotion, cried

"Eternal God, command his stay,
Stretch the dear months of his delay,
O! we could wish his age were one eternal day."

WATTS'S *Lyrics*,

And indeed there were moments when some of his dearest friends entertained a flattering hope of his recovery. But on the first of August 1791, he had a second attack, which alas! proved fatal on the Tuesday following. Blessed be God for all the felicity he enjoyed during his affliction, and that during the last hours and moments of life, with glory in his cheeks, he often repeated Dr. Doddridge's animating lines;

"And dying clasp thee in my arms,
The antidote of death."

Hence

Hence those who were around his bed declare, that they never saw so much of the power of the Gospel, to support under the pains of dying, as they beheld in the expiring moments of dear, dear, Dr. Evans; who, with an eminently propitious gale, had an *entrance ministered unto him abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

Thus terminated the exemplary and successful career of our late beloved President, who departed this life, August 9, 1791, in the 54th year of his age. The Rev. John Tommas, of Bristol, delivered the address at his interment in the Baptist burying ground, in this city; and Dr. Stennett, on whom it naturally fell to perform the service, preached his funeral sermon at Broadmead Lord's day the 21st of the same month, from Heb. xiii. 8. *Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.*

What a yearly Meeting of the Society was that on the Wednesday following, when the chairman reported—The death of our President! Father of Mercies! God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! hear a single request, That such another day—if it ever must arrive---may be far---very far distant! At the annual service of 1791 what passage of scripture could have been more suitable than 2 Chr. i. 7. *Ask what I shall give thee---* the text on which our valued friend the Rev. Samuel Dunscombe preached to the assembly! And what Resolution of the Society could have been either more just or more grateful than that which expressed an affectionate concern, honorably
to

to transmit the memory of our invaluable President, as the founder of the society, to late posterity!*

And now when *he* was entombed, calculate our hopes. Ah! whither had they fled! Under former

* To this resolve we are indebted for the Medallion of Dr. Evans, which is fixed in that elegant and commodious room of the Academy called Gifford's Museum. The tablet of which is thus inscribed :

CALEB · EVANS · D · D ·
 SOCIETATIS · BRISTOLIENSIS
 PARENS · ET · AVCTOR
 NEC · NON · HVJVS · GYMNASII · DIV · PRÆSES

VIRTVTIS · ÆXIMIÆ · SVÆ
 RERVMOVE · ACADEMICARVM · FELICITER · AB · EO · GESTARVM
 MEMORES
 FAVTORES · POSVERE
 OB. IX AVG. M.DCC.XCI. ÆT. LIV.

Over the door of the Museum, just within as you enter, is also a Bust of the Rev. Dr. Gifford, who caused this part of the edifice to be erected, and enriched it with his valuable library, paintings, medals, and other curiosities—with this inscription :

D · O · M · P · F · S ·
 IN VSVM IUVVENTVT.
 GYMNASIOLI
 HVJVSMODI BAPTIST. I.
 MVNIFICENTIA EDV. TERRILL
 OLIM INSTITVTI
 MVSEVM HOC D. D. D.
 A. GIFFORD. D. D.
 AET. LXXX. AVG. XXVIII.
 MDCCLXXX.

HVG. ET CALEB EVANS, A. M. ET JAC. NEWTON. GYMNASIARCHIS.

bereaving

bereaving dispensations in the church, and in the seminary, we comforted ourselves with this prophetic motto, *Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children.* And indeed our hope then reached its object, and attained fruition. But now the fathers were gone—gone the way of all the earth, and the children also. In this distress we looked far and near—and looked in vain. Our heads were bound round with weeping willows, and our harps lay neglected on the ground: but

“ Wonders of Grace to God belong:”

His own arm brought salvation. The motto of our essay received a new illustration. Jehovah singled out a man from all the tribes, whose parent, the great John Ryland, in the year 1744 was one of us. Instead of the father came up the son. But, to speak in allusion to Old Testament accents, the young man would fain have hid himself; then the people ran and fetched him, and it was said with peculiar joy in Israel, SEE YE HIM WHOM THE LORD HATH CHOSEN!

The dawn now succeeded the darkness. Since that time two annual days have been spent in prayer, in gratitude, and in hope. And shall not this, the third, be consecrated to the same employ? Blessed be God, the God of Zion, that the constituents of Broadmead Church, and the members of the Bristol Education Society, join in saying, Our eyes behold our teachers; and for both of them our hearty prayers shall ascend

to God, that they may have body enough,* and soul enough, for the arduous work to which they are called, and find it crowned with universal success. In these strains I am confident every heart is united; for while we embalm the memory of our departed tutors, with the incense of praise; on the high altar of devotion we offer the sacrifice of prayer for their successors—

We bow to those whose course is run,
And join to hail each rising Sun,

My dear brethren, the pupils of the academy, cannot expect me particularly to address them, in an Historical Essay. But I would remind them of the honor which I trust high heaven has conferred upon them, in counting them faithful, and putting them into the ministry. The work, to which the providence and grace of God directs your views, is the most solemn—the most important—the most eventful to yourselves and others for ever, that can possibly employ any intelligent being on earth——

“ ’Tis what might fill an *Angel's* heart,
“ And fill'd a SAVIOUR's hands.”

DODDRIDGE.

O! that you may be enabled so to advance in this service, with a single eye to the divine honor, as not

* In August 1795, when the substance of this Essay was delivered, the Rev. Joseph Hughes, A. M. then Dr. Ryland's assistant in the church, and in the academy, enjoyed but poor health. In July 1796, he removed to Battersea, near London, where it seems his prospects of usefulness and happiness are flattering.

to count your lives dear to you, if you may but glorify God, and finish your course with joy.

But though I presume not to suggest any rules of my framing for your direction, I freely recommend to your attention, and beseech you, while you remain in this seminary, to read again and again, one short piece which I venture to say exceeds all praise—I mean Dr. Evans's address to his students*. If this is regarded by you, my dear friends, seriously and conscientiously regarded, any one without enjoying a prophetic afflatus, may prognosticate the event—those of you who are entering on an academical education, and those of you who are soon to finish it, will beautifully exemplify the promise before us—you will be, what we pray God every one of you may be, holy and happy yourselves, and, in addition to this felicity, you will make others, many others, holy and happy; and thus, in the highest sense, under divine influence, without which you can do nothing, you will

* It would *now* be a crime not to mention with Dr. Evans's address to his students, a small companion admirably suited to the pocket, which has been published by Dr. Ryland (without his name) since the anniversary of 1795, consisting of extracts from Mather's *Manuductio ad Ministerium*—Brainerd's *Diary*—President Edwards's *Resolutions*—and Dr. Owen on *Spiritual Mindedness*. It is entitled *Christianæ Militiæ Viativum*; or, *A Brief Directory for Evangelical Ministers*. Price 1s. or 1s. 3d. according to the binding. I should be glad if every Minister of the Gospel in England and in America was in possession of this work.

be *princes*, where-ever the providence of God may direct you, *in all the earth*.

How can I conclude this service, though already protracted to an unusual length, without addressing the Honored Friends of the Academy in general, and of the Education Society in particular.

I will not anticipate the pleasures and encomiums of posterity, when they shall contemplate the origin, and review the progressive stages by which the maturity of this feminary shall have been accelerated. But it may pass for an assumption that the next ages will look back on this, as we review the past. At that time *your* names, my brethren, will be recounted with a gratitude, joy and reverence, like that we feel at the mention of TERRILL, of FOSKETT, of the EVANSES, and of NEWTON.

But while we recollect, with every honorable sentiment, the history of our fathers who have lived, and taught, and died; let us rejoice and with all our powers bless the Lord, that their sons, as heirs of their talents and virtues, have arisen in their room. The humble villages, the commercial towns, the populous cities, have heard their voice, embraced their message, adored their master, imbibed his spirit, copied his example, and are now many of them beyond all sorrow, beyond all sin, casting their crowns at the Saviour's feet, and, in all the variety of song, exulting, *worthy is the Lamb that was slain*. And while this Academy may humbly boast of her sons in Europe and America, who have shewn unto millions
the

the way of falvation ; let us, this moment, anticipate the period, when the Alumni of our institution shall have made fruitful, not only wicked, warring Europe, and also the American States to the utmost bounds of the western world ; but when, through their instrumentality, and that of other good men and Gospel missionaries, all Asia, and Afric's sons shall be converted to *humanity* and TO CHRIST—then shall the motto of our essay, which is now seen only in the back ground and shades of prophecy, be read in a long-length historic picture , and the fathers, the patrons, and the sons of the institution meet, and enjoy a rapturous anniversary which shall never break up. In that perfectly holy, happy society, may we all meet ! Amen and Amen.



A Copy of the TABLE of BENEFACTORS, in the MUSEUM belonging to the Bristol Education Society.

	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
1770 FREDERICK BULL, Esq. London, } 5 <i>l.</i> 5 <i>s.</i> annually - - }	150	0	0
Thomas Sparry, Senr. Upton - -	100	0	0
Rebeckah Lippincott, Wellington -	50	0	0
Robert Houlton, Esq. Grittleton, 5 <i>l.</i> 5 <i>s.</i>	21	0	0
Joseph Tomkins, Esq. Abingdon, 5 <i>l.</i> 5 <i>s.</i>	25	5	0
William Tomkins, Esq. ditto, 5 <i>l.</i> 5 <i>s.</i> -	25	5	0
Joseph Butler, Esq. ditto, 5 <i>l.</i> 5 <i>s.</i> - -	41	0	0
John Bull, Esq. Bristol, 2 <i>l.</i> 2 <i>s.</i> - -	15	15	0
Francis Bull, Esq. ditto, 2 <i>l.</i> 2 <i>s.</i> -	10	10	0
John Collett, ditto, 10 <i>l.</i> 10 <i>s.</i>			
John Stock, ditto, 5 <i>l.</i> 5 <i>s.</i> - -	10	10	0
Thomas Bunn, Frome,* - -	10	10	0
William Steele, Esq. Broughton, 2 <i>l.</i> 2 <i>s.</i>	10	10	0
Baptist Church, Lymington, - -	10	10	0
Rev. Hugh Evans, M. A.*	{ Tutors to the Insti- tution }		
Rev. Caleb Evans, M. A.*			
Rev. James Newton, M. A.*			
	31	10	0

* Those marked thus (*) subscribed annually 1*l.* 1*s.* The sums directly after the names were also annual subscriptions; the larger sums were original benefactions.

		<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
1772	John Houlton, Esq. Seagry, 5 <i>l.</i> 5 <i>s.</i>	-	10	10 0
	Rev. Thomas Dunscombe, Coate*	-	10	10 0
1774	Ann Callwell, Chesham	-	50	0 0
	Sufannah Callwell, ditto 10 <i>l.</i> 10 <i>s.</i>	-	100	0 0
	Thomas Llewelyn, Esq. L. L. D. London	-	60	0 0
	Stephen Williams, ditto	-	10	10 0
	Rev. Samuel Stennett, D. D. ditto*	-	20	0 0
1775	Ebenezer Hollick, Esq. Witsler, 2 <i>l.</i> 2 <i>s.</i>	-	20	0 0
	Elizabeth Durban, Bristol	-	21	0 0
1777	Abraham Elton, Esq. ditto	-	10	10 0
	John Crammont, Leicester, (a Legacy)	-	10	0 0
1778	Rev. Isaac Woodman, Sutton, (a Legacy)	-	40	0 0
1779	John Holmes, Esq. Exon	-	16	6 0
1780	Rev. Andrew Gifford, D. D. London	-	110	0 0
	John and William Parsons, Esq. Chicester, 2 <i>l.</i> 2 <i>s.</i>	-	10	0 0
1781	George Wilkinon, London	-	10	10 0
1782	William Deane, Plymouth, (a Legacy)	-	150	0 0
	John Reynolds, Barbican, 2 <i>l.</i> 2 <i>s.</i>	-	20	0 0
1783	Rev. Andrew Bennett, Barbadoes	-	10	0 0
1784	Diana Munt, Tiverton, (a Legacy)	-	20	0 0
	James Hewardine, Arnby, (a Legacy)	-	10	0 0
	Hester Bull, Bristol*	-	10	0 0
	Thomas Llewelyn, Esq. L. L. D. London, } (a Legacy) consisting of his Library, } which cost more than		1500	0 0
	Rev. Andrew Gifford, D. D. London, } (a Legacy) consisting of his Library, } Pictures, Coins, &c. estimated at		1000	0 0
	Frederick Bull, Esq. the Reverfionary Be- } quest of		1000	0 0
1785	John Thornton, Esq. Clapham	-	10	0 0
	John Anstie, Esq. Devizes	-	10	10 0
1787	John Davis, Calne, a Reverfionary Legacy of	-	50	0 0
1789	John Cook, Bristol, (a Legacy)	-	50	0 0
1790	Rev. James Newton, M. A. ditto (a Legacy)	-	50	0 0
1791	William Thomas, Hitchin, (a Legacy)	-	50	0 0
	John Edmunds, Fairford, a Reverfionary } Legacy of 200 <i>l.</i> 3 per Cent. Consols } —Stock		200	0 0
1792	Ann Moore, Bristol	-	20	0 0
	Rev. John Poynting, Worcester, (a Legacy)	-	200	0 0
1793	Rev. Abraham Booth, London	-	5	0 0
1794	Mrs. Simpkin, Balby	-	5	0 0
1795	Rev. Peter Reece, Warwick, (a Legacy)	-	100	0 0

THE
COMMENCEMENT

AT
RHODE-ISLAND COLLEGE.*

PROVIDENCE, SEPTEMBER 10, 1796.

ON Wednesday last was celebrated the anniversary Commencement of Rhode-Island College. The processional train was formed as usual, and at ten o'clock, A. M. proceeded to the Baptist meeting-house. The exercises of the day were introduced by a prayer, delivered by President Maxcy.

The Performances of the Forenoon were,

1. An oration on the drama, with the salutatory addresses—by Benjamin B. Simmons.
2. An intermediate oration, on the importation of foreign luxuries—by Abraham Blanding.
3. An intermediate oration, on the importance of the knowledge of civil rights—by Nathan Whiting.

MUSIC.

4. 2d Dispute, on the policy of establishing a uniform system of education throughout the United States—between Horace Senter, Joseph Holmes, and Asa Kimball.

5. An oration, against religious establishments—by John Holmes.

6. An oration, on the manifestation of Deity in his works—by John M. Roberts.

MUSIC.

7. Astronomy burlesqued; a conference—between Abraham Blanding and Nathan Whiting.

8. An oration, on the necessity of subjecting the passions to reason—by Daniel Crane.

9. An intermediate oration, on attachment to particular systems of religious opinions—by Asa Aldis.

The degree of Batchelor of Arts was conferred on the following young gentlemen, Alumni of this College: Asa Aldis, Abraham Blanding, Bezer Bryant, Tristram Burges, Oliver Cobb, Daniel Crane, John Holmes, Joseph Holmes, Philip Hayward, Asa Kimball, David King, John M. Roberts, Horace Senter, Benjamin B. Simons, Benjamin Shurtleff, Ignatius Tomson, and Nathan Whiting.

* If there are any persons so uninstructed as to think that Rhode-Island College is a seminary, in which are educated, only young persons whose views are directed to the Christian Ministry, they should be informed, that of 70 or 80 students, together at the same time, there are frequently but a very few of them who are devoted to that sacred service.

EDITOR.

The degree of Master of Arts was conferred on the following gentlemen, Alumni of this College: Jones Godfrey, Gilbert Dench, Thomas L. Halfey, William King, Eli Smith, Lemuel Wadsworth, Isaiah Weston, and Abraham Cummings.

The honorary degree of Master of Arts was conferred on the following gentlemen: Rev. Lawrence Butterworth, Rev. James Bicheno, and Rev. Andrew Fuller,* of Great-Britain; and on Foster Swift, Esq. of Taunton, Massachusetts.

Afternoon.

MUSIC.

1. An intermediate oration, on individual and national greatness—by Philip Hayward.

2. 1st Dispute, on this question; Whether Christianity has augmented the temporal happiness of man?—between Benjamin Shurtleff, Oliver Cobb, and Bezer Bryant.

3. A dialogue—between David King, John M. Roberts, and John Holmes.

MUSIC.

4. A dissertation, in favour of female education—by David King.

5. An oration, “pleading the cause of man,” together with the valedictory addresses—by Tristram Burges.

An address was then delivered to the graduates, by the President.

The day was closed with prayer, by the Rev. Dr. Stillman.

At the annual meeting of the Corporation, on the 8th instant, John Brown, Esq. resigned the office of Treasurer to the College, the duties of which, during a period of twenty-one years, he had uniformly discharged with reputation to himself, and advantage to the seminary; for which the Corporation voted him their acknowledgments, and unanimously elected Mr. Nicholas Brown his successor in that office.

* At the anniversary of the Commencement in the College of New Jersey, held September 28, (a few days after that at Providence) the degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred on the Rev. Andrew Fuller, of Great Britain, and on the Rev. Thomas Reed, of the State of Delaware. The degree of Doctor of Laws was conferred on the Hon. William Smith, Member of Congress for South Carolina, and on the Hon. Fisher Ames, Member of Congress for the State of Massachusetts.

A Sketch of the Ministerial Labours of the Rev. Messrs. SAFFERY, of Salisbury, and STEADMAN, of Broughton, as Itinerant Ministers in Cornwall, with Remarks on Village Preaching.

Broughton, Hants, Feb. 20, 1797.

Dear Brother Rippon,

IN compliance with your wish, I send you the following account of the Itineration of Brother Saffery and myself, in the county of Cornwall, last July and August; performed at the request of the BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY; and shall add to it such observations relative to the subject of Itinerant Preaching, as may occur to me, and the limits of a letter will admit.

We set out from Salisbury on Tuesday, the 28th of June last, and after stopping some time at Wellington and Exeter, spent the next Lord's-day at Plymouth and Dock, and also Monday and Tuesday in that neighbourhood, preaching at Cawsand, Saltash, and Botus Flemming.

On Wednesday we more professedly entered upon our work, by preaching at a village of the name of Landrake. From thence we took our tour down the southern coast, quite to the Land's-end, preaching in all the towns, and most of the large villages in our way; and, returning up the northern side of the county, reached Launceston, the county town, about that day month. From thence we made a second tour, nearly in the former direction, and visiting those places we had before passed by, and repeating our visits to the places we had been at before, finished our excursion on Wednesday the 31st of August, having been in the county just eight weeks.

We preached in all the towns, except one towards the north east, (and that was omitted through brother Saffery's illness), and in most of the villages of any considerable size. Each of us preached three times on Lord's-days, except in two instances, and on one brother Saffery preached four times; and were not above seven or eight week-evenings in the whole eight weeks without preaching. We found the inhabitants in general civil, friendly, intelligent, and much inclined to hear the word: a description very different from the reports of them prevalent to the eastward. In towns where there were Dis-

senting meeting-houses we generally occupied them.— Where there were none, we applied to the Mayor for the Town-hall, or Market-room, and frequently obtained it. In some neighbourhoods, the Methodists lent us their places of worship; in others we used private houses; and in many instances, the open street. But whether in meeting-houses, or in town-halls, in private houses, or in the open air, we were, as far as we know, entirely free from any designed interruption worth mentioning. In several of the towns, and in some places amongst the tin mines, we had from 500 to 1000 hearers. The tanners we found to be very different from what they are generally represented. We are persuaded they are as civil and intelligent a race of men, as can be any where found amongst the labouring classes in any part of the kingdom. They are greatly inclined to hear the word; and when under it, may be easily distinguished by their steady, eager attention. For our own parts, we can truly say, we do not wish for a higher gratification than to ascend a desk, a table, or a horse-block, either in the street or in the field, on a fine summer's evening, surrounded by 600 or 700 or 1000 Cornish miners.

With respect to our successes, we can only say, that in general we were heard with very great attention and seriousness; and, if we may judge from appearances, the word made great impressions upon many. But the nature and continuance of such impressions, we had seldom an opportunity of knowing. Three or four instances, however, of persons being awakened under our ministry, came to light. One in the neighbourhood of Truro, and two or three near Penzance; and we have reason to conclude, from repeated acknowledgments, that our labours were blessed to the relief and encouragement of several before called by grace, particularly at Truro and Penzance.

It must now be left with others to determine, what encouragement to persevere in similar attempts our experiment affords. We can only say, that we complied with what we were satisfied was the call of God, in engaging in it; were constantly preserved, and comfortably assisted in the labours and fatigues of it; our churches received no injury, by our absence; and we have ever since felt an unshaken conviction, that we did right in going.

I ought however to observe, that our expedition into one county ought not to be looked upon as a certain specimen

specimen of what may be expected from similar attempts in many other parts of the kingdom. Cornwall, take it upon the whole, is more populous than most others, except those containing large cities, or extensive manufactories: and the inhabitants, as to the main bulk of them, being either miners or fishermen, are more in a state of independence, and less subject to the influence of superiors, who may be hostile to itinerant preaching, than those counties which depend wholly upon agriculture. To which I might add, that the labours and successes of the Methodists have largely contributed to civilize the inhabitants in general, and to bring them into the habits of hearing the word. I mention this not only as it may serve to enable you to form a proper judgment of our itineration; but also, to assign the cause of a regret which I have ever since felt, that the Dissenters have paid so little attention to this part of the kingdom, and thereby lost so very favourable an opportunity of serving the cause of religion.

Mr. Wesley, however, and his followers, have availed themselves of those advantages; and have laboured with great perseverance and success; they have, doubtless, proved a very great blessing to the county, and set an example worthy the imitation of all the friends of religion, however different from them their religious opinions may in some points be. The Wesleyan Societies are numerous, and some of them very large; and though probably there are to be met with individuals whose tempers, as well as opinions we could not approve of, yet there are numbers whose candour and liberality do them great honour. Had the Dissenters made similar exertions, they would, in all probability, have been attended with similar successes: and even now, sufficient scope remains for their exertions there; perhaps not so much in itinerant preaching, as in attempting somewhat more permanent, by encouraging some able and zealous ministers to go down and settle there, and affording them pecuniary aid, till congregations could be raised adequate to their support; which it is probable would require no great length of time to effect.

But I do not intend by this to insinuate, that itinerant preaching is not to be encouraged in this or in other counties; on the contrary, it has my most hearty concurrence. The obligations of real Christians to labour to the utmost, to bring others acquainted with the gospel, appear to me so numerous, so powerful, and so obvious, that

I feel surpris'd that the godly among the Baptists, and other denominations, have made so few efforts to accomplish it.* Nor can I conceive of any more effectual means of doing it, than that of itinerant preaching, carried on, either by stated ministers, who may pretty frequently make excursions in villages around them; or, at other times, take a more extensive circle, and leave their own immediate charge for a season (which may often be done without any real injury to it); or else, by those who entirely devote themselves to it. Perhaps there are persons

* As an illustration of this remark, I would beg leave to recommend a paragraph transcribed from the great Mr. Baxter, at the end of Dr. Ryland and Mr. Pearce's sermon, at Mr. Belcher's ordination, just published, and sold by Mr. Button, London; which I would be glad if you could insert in the Register.

In compliance with the desire of Mr. Steadman, the extract is most cheerfully admitted—thus it runs:

“O, if you have the hearts of Christians or of men in you, let them yearn towards your poor, ignorant, ungodly neighbors. Alas! there is but a step betwixt them and death and hell; and if they die unregenerate, they are lost for ever. Have you hearts of rock, that cannot pity men in such a case as this? If you believe not the word of God, and the danger of sinners, why are you Christians yourselves? If you do believe it, why do you not bestir you to the helping of others? Do you not care who is damned, so you be saved? If so, you have as much cause to pity yourselves; for it is a frame of spirit utterly inconsistent with grace. But hath God had much mercy on you, and will you have no mercy on your poor neighbors? You need not go far to find objects for your pity: Look but into your streets, or into the next house to you, and you will probably find some. Have you never an ignorant, an unregenerate neighbor, that sets his heart below, and neglecteth eternity? O what blessed place do you live in, where there is none such! If there be not some of them in thine own family, it is well; and yet art thou silent? Dost thou live close by them, or labor with them, or travel with them, or sit still and talk with them, and say nothing to them of their souls, or the life to come? If their houses were on fire, thou wouldest run and help them; and wilt thou not help them, when their souls are almost at the fire of hell? If thou knewest but a remedy for their bodily diseases thou wouldest tell it them, or else thou wouldest judge thyself guilty of their death;—what shall we say then of them who know of the remedy for curing souls, and do not reveal it, and persuade men to make use of it! Is it not hypocrisy, to pray daily for their conversion and salvation, and never once endeavour to procure it? Alas! that your prayers and your practice should so much disagree! How forward are hypocrites in their sacrifice, and how backward to show mercy! how forward to censure ministers for neglecting their duties; yea, to expect more from one minister than ten can perform; and yet they make no conscience of neglecting their own; as if other men were to work, and they only to sit by and judge!

Look Christians, with an eye of compassion, on the ignorant, ungodly sinners about you: be not like the priest and levite, that saw the man wounded, and pass'd by. God did not so pass by you when it was your own case. Are not the souls of your neighbors fallen into the hands of Satan? Doth not their misery cry out to you, Help! Help! As you have any compassion towards men in the greatest misery, Help! As you have the hearts of men, and not of tigers in you, Help!”

to be found whose talents and inclinations may better fit them for itinerants, than for settled pastors: these may wholly devote themselves to it. Gifted bretheren, who may not be competent to the constant discharge of the ministerial office, either itinerant or stationary, may* do much in a less extensive circle, and in an occasional way. And most churches would probably spare their pastors for a month or two in a year. Supplies would be procured for part of the time; and for the remainder, they might engage in religious exercises amongst themselves without a minister. This would be doubtless making a sacrifice of their privileges for a time; but then they ought to recollect, that he, for whose sake they make it, has not only made a greater sacrifice for them, but promised amply to recompense them for all their labours of love to him and his cause.

Of the necessity of such exertions, within the bounds of this kingdom, little doubt can be entertained. Not to confine Christianity to the denomination to which we belong, or to any one denomination, which would be illiberal and criminal; yet who is there that knows any thing of Christianity on the one hand, and the state of the inhabitants of many villages and towns, yea even counties, on the other; who is not fully convinced that the number of real Christians is exceeding small? What tribes of inhabitants people the forest of Dean, in Gloucestershire, and the extensive collieries in Shropshire and Staffordshire? And yet how very few can it be hoped are truly religious? In what a deplorable state of ignorance and prophaneness is Herefordshire, my native county! Though it be neither the smallest, nor the least populous, yet I doubt whether 300 souls, savingly acquainted with the way of salvation by Jesus Christ, can be found in it. Whilst it is readily allowed, that the millions of heathens abroad call loudly for our help; do not the hundreds and thousands of little better than heathens at home, call for our pity too?

It is true, from the general character of colliers, and other considerations, great opposition may at first be apprehended; and from the peculiar circumstances of the county I just now mentioned, great difficulties would occur. But the experience of the Methodists (patterns

* A young man at Southampton, joined to the Baptist Church in that town, has laboured in such a way for several months. Of the fruits of his labours, eight have already joined the church, and many more appear to be savingly wrought upon.

in this respect worthy of imitation) has proved, that such a description of men sooner yield to exertions, than those of a more civilized cast. And, from the few experiments I myself made, when in Herefordshire, last spring, I am fully convinced, that proper attempts there are not to be considered as hopeless.

Fatigues, it is true, must be endured, and hazards run by all who engage in such attempts. But every Christian, and more especially every minister, should know, that whosoever will be Christ's disciple must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow him—must not count his life dear to himself.

Attempts of this sort require expense, especially where no Christian friend can be expected to entertain such itinerants. But were the business heartily entered into, from the well known liberality of pious and charitable gentlemen in London and other parts of the kingdom, even upon less important occasions, little fear of a want of resources of this kind can be entertained.

It gives me, dear sir, very sensible pleasure to learn, that our brethren in the metropolis have taken up the business with spirit and resolution. May God crown their laudable efforts with success!! and, whilst they are now forwarding it with their property, and others, we trust, will be soon with their labours, may you and I, may all that love our Lord Jesus Christ, and the immortal souls of men, constantly help with our prayers! As it is an attempt in some respects new, would it be amiss, sir, if the friends of it were to set apart some particular seasons of solemn prayer for a blessing upon it? Would it not be practicable to consecrate one hour in a week to that particular purpose? May not an explicit agreement be entered into by them, to engage in such solemn employ at the same time, either socially, with as many as may conveniently meet together; or with their families, if practicable; or else in their closets? Something of this kind has been attempted in some religious connexions, and carried on with pleasure, and attended with a blessing. Would it be improper, sir, to bring forward a motion of that kind, at one of the meetings of the friends and supporters of this undertaking? Earnestly wishing and praying that a blessing may attend this, and every other effort, for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom in the world,

I remain, dear sir,

Your sincere, obliged friend and servant,

W. STEADMAN.

THE BAPTIST SOCIETY IN LONDON,

FOR

THE ENCOURAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

OF

ITINERANT PREACHING.

1797.

ADDRESS

TO THE FRIENDS OF EVANGELICAL TRUTH IN GENERAL;

AND

TO THE CALVINISTIC BAPTIST CHURCHES

IN PARTICULAR.

IT is very affecting to think, that, in this country, though highly favoured with civil and religious privileges, the inhabitants of many villages are destitute of an Evangelical Ministry : because it is apparent, from Holy Scripture, that the gospel of salvation by grace is of the highest importance, to enlighten the minds and relieve the consciences, to sanctify the hearts and reform the lives, of the ungodly and the profligate.

This gospel, though contained in the Bible, and though that best of books lie open to every one who can read his own language ; must, according to the appointment of Heaven, be exhibited in a public ministry. Preaching the gospel, or publishing salvation by Jesus Christ, is the ordinance of God ; and the grand mean of converting sinners, in order to their present peace, their greater usefulness, and their final happiness. *Preach the gospel to every creature*, was the high command of our sovereign Lord, to his disciples, just before he ascended the throne of universal dominion. This divine order is yet in force ; and its obligation extends to all that are invested with the ministerial character. Nor ought private Christians to consider themselves as unconcerned in the execution of an order so authoritative, and so beneficent. For, without their cooperation, by affording pecuniary assistance, the ministers of Christ are not able to make those exertions, which, in the common course of providence, are necessary to the diffusion of spiritual knowledge, by itinerant preaching, in the darker parts of any country. Thus private brethren become *fellow-helpers to the truth*, and to the public ministers of it.

It is with peculiar pleasure that we contemplate the recent formation of societies in the country, not only among the Particular Baptists, but also among our Congregational Brethren, for the spread of the gospel in this land by village preaching. A design so important, and a conduct so laudable, that we cannot but earnestly recommend them, as worthy to be adopted by all those pastors and churches, in the different counties, who love the doctrines of divine grace; and, especially, to those of our own denomination.

As private brethren, though not endued with abilities for the public ministry, may nevertheless possess a well-informed understanding, a gift for prayer, a talent for edifying conversation, and be conspicuous in the churches to which they belong, for steady piety, for benevolence, and for a well-regulated zeal; so it is very desirable that such characters were selected and encouraged, by those churches of which they are members, to use their pious endeavours in adjacent villages. By benevolent, prudent, and gradual efforts, one or another, in each circumjacent village, might admit a few neighbours into his house, to hear a person of the preceding description read the scriptures, converse on sacred subjects, and pray; whether on Lord's-days, or at other times, as opportunity presented. By such means the cause of Christ might be greatly promoted: for experience and observation unite in attesting, that a similar line of conduct has been owned of God, to the spiritual benefit of many.

Though real Christians ought always to consider themselves as lying under indispensable obligations, to use every scriptural mean in their power, to diffuse *the savour of the knowledge of Christ* in the several countries where they reside; yet, the varying aspect of Divine Providence may more loudly call for exertions of this kind, at one time, than at another. Such is the present season. For who, that seriously reflects on those scenes of distress which are in the world, but must exclaim? *Behold the works of the Lord! What desolations he hath made in the earth! God, in the language of prophecy, is manifestly come out of his place, to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquities, and to shake the earth with terror.* The great and alarming events, which have recently taken place, are pregnant with new and powerful *motives* to strenuous endeavours, for the spread of divine truth: by a conscientious and practical regard to which motives, it shall be apparent, that our hearts are in unison with that comprehensive petition, **THY KINGDOM COME.**

While

While we rejoice in the spiritual and laudable exertions of our Christian Brethren, under different denominations, to propagate the gospel among the Heathen in foreign climes: we should not forget the many myriads at home, who have scarcely any thing pertaining to Christianity, besides the name—who are profoundly ignorant, if not notoriously profligate and profane.

The spread of infidelity is now uncommonly great. Multitudes of people in this country, being unacquainted with the true principles of Christianity, have no experience of their salutary tendency to relieve the distressed conscience, to sanctify the depraved heart, or to meliorate the conduct; and, consequently, there is no reason to wonder, that many of this description fall an easy prey to the artful insinuations, and the blasphemous assertions, which so frequently proceed from the lips, or the pens, of Deists. Many, indeed, are the judicious defences of Christianity which have appeared in our language. These, however, being seldom read by the lower classes of people, can have but little effect in preserving them from the contagion of Infidelity. Besides, *reading* the inspired volume, and the *preaching* of divine truth, are the grand means, appointed of God, to excite serious reflection, and earnest prayer; to produce conviction of sin, and interest the conscience in what the Scriptures reveal; to renew the heart, and give an holy bias to the whole soul. Now, persons who are thus affected, by what the Divine Writings contain, will revere the Bible, and be far from renouncing Christianity.

Amidst all the improvements in Philosophy, in Science, and in useful Arts, there is the highest reason to lament the neglect of that inspired volume, which is *able to make us wise to salvation*. A serious attention to the sacred contents of which, must lead us to conclude, either, that the New Testament does not give a just representation of *Christianity*; or, that incomparably the major part of those who profess the religion of Jesus, are not *Christians*: for Christianity, as delineated in the Apostolic Writings, is the religion of rectitude, of love, and of peace. Evangelical truth, which is the great instrument, in the hand of God, for promoting real Christianity, is the doctrine of divine benevolence to man—the doctrine of pardon, of reconciliation, and of salvation, by Jesus Christ. This doctrine, by whomsoever sincerely believed, never fails to produce a cordial veneration for God, and an unfeigned benevolence to man. *That* veneration is expressed, by a con-

conscientious regard to holy worship, according to scriptural rule; by habitually observing the divine precepts; and by devout submission to the orders of Providence. *This* benevolence is manifested, by a series of truly virtuous affections towards our own species, in order to promote individual and social happiness: or, in other words, a prevailing disposition to treat others, as we might reasonably wish them to treat us. To profess the religion of Jesus, while habitually destitute of that veneration, and of this benevolence, is to insult Christianity, and to libel the New Testament.

Let us, then, Christian Brethren, regard these considerations as emphatically inculcating the uncertainty of all temporal enjoyments; the necessity of spiritual mindedness; and a practical attention to that divine precept, *Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might*. Nor is much reflection required to convince us, that there is no object of equal importance, with that of promoting the genuine cause of Christ. To this, therefore, let pious and prudent exertions be directed. Let suitable persons, for an itinerant ministry, be, therefore, engaged: and let stated pastors in the country, according to their abilities and opportunities, employ themselves in village preaching. Let reading a portion of the sacred scripture constitute a part of their public devotions; that those who cannot read, who have not Bibles, or who suffer them to lie neglected, may hear the Lord himself speaking in the Old and New Testament.

In these labours, let them keep the great object constantly in view: which is, not merely to propagate a set of theological sentiments, though ever so true; much less to disseminate political opinions, or to canvass the affairs of state; but, in the fear of God, with much prayer, circumspection, and self-denial, to warn sinners of *the wrath to come*—to *preach the unsearchable riches of Christ*—and to render their ungodly fellow-creatures truly wise, holy, and happy. Then, being Christians indeed—by exemplary piety in the several churches with which they may be connected—by domestic religion and good order, in the families to which they belong—by integrity and benevolence, in all their private connexions—and by a peaceable behaviour, as members of civil society at large—they shall *adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour*.

Such, Brethren, is the object we have in view; and such are the effects to be expected from a successful pursuit of it! But as, in this case, no success can possibly attend

tend the most arduous exertions, without the concurrence of Divine Providence, and the powerful influence of the Holy Spirit; it is our indispensable duty, daily to solicit the blessing of God upon all our feeble endeavours to promote the interests of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

RULES OF THE SOCIETY.

I. THAT a voluntary subscription be opened for the benevolent and pious purposes of this Society.

II. That any person subscribing one guinea *per annum*, shall be a member during the continuance of such subscription; and that a donation of ten guineas, or upwards, shall constitute a member for life.

III. A general meeting shall be held at our first monthly association after each quarter day; at which meeting, seven members shall be competent to transact business.

IV. The following Ministers, Abraham Booth, John Martin, John Rippon, William Smith, William Button, James Dore, Timothy Thomas, Thomas Thomas, and Thomas Hutchings, with any other Baptist Ministers the Society may think proper, shall be considered as members: who, together with one member, being a subscriber, of each of their churches, and eleven others, whether members of churches, or not, chosen from among the subscribers at large; shall form a Committee, for conducting the affairs of the Society. This Committee shall meet in the afternoon of the day of each monthly association; five of whom shall be deemed sufficient to transact business.

V. Any seven of this Committee, giving one Week's notice to the subscribers, shall have power to call a general meeting.

VI. A Treasurer and a Secretary shall be annually chosen: and when, respecting either of them, a vacancy happens, by death, or otherwise, another shall be proposed by the Committee, for the approbation of the general meeting.

VII. No subscriber shall vote, at a general meeting, for any appointment of this society, after the first year, who has not been a subscriber for twelve calendar months.

VIII. The Treasurer shall not pay any bills, on account of this Society, without an order signed by three members of the Committee.

IX. Five

IX. Five Auditors shall be appointed annually, by the general meeting, to examine the bills and accounts of the Treasurer.

X. An account of the receipts and disbursements of the Society, shall be annually laid before the general meeting, for the inspection of the subscribers; and, if thought expedient, printed.

XI. The Committee shall provide, and send out, as soon as may be, after due examination, such Calvinistic Ministers, of the Baptist persuasion, as appear to them properly qualified for itinerant preaching; which Ministers shall be entirely under the direction of the Committee; and, together with such assistance as the Committee may judge necessary, for the encouragement of village preaching, by settled Ministers, shall be paid out of the fund of this Society.

XII. The Committee, as they may think it expedient, shall be allowed to furnish their itinerant Ministers with a few small religious tracts, to give away.

XIII. This Society, though formed under the countenance and direction of the Baptist Monthly Association, is at liberty to permit its itinerant Ministers, whenever expediency calls, to unite with Pædobaptist Ministers of evangelical principles, who may be engaged in the same general design.

N. B. All contributions, however small, will be thankfully received. But it is hoped, that persons whom God has entrusted with considerable property, will be induced, by a consideration of the importance of the undertaking, to afford it a liberal support.

Form of a Testamentary Bequest.

Item, I give and bequeathe to the Treasurer, for the time being, of the *Baptist Society in London, for the Encouragement and Support of Itinerant Preaching*, established in 1797, the sum of _____ to be paid out of my personal estate, and to be applied towards carrying on the benevolent and pious purposes of the said Society.

Subscriptions received, by Mr. Wm. Fox, Treasurer, Colebrooke-row, Islington; or at No. 136, Cheapside; and by Mr. GALE, Secretary, No. 12 and 13, Clement's-Inn.

A L I S T,

FOR 1797.*

OF the PRINCIPAL BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS which have been *lately* printed by the BAPTISTS; with a few others, distinguished by the Denomination to which their Authors belong.

B.

Rev. ISAAC BACKUS, Middleborough, Massachusetts.

A Church History of New England, extending from 1783 to 1796; containing an account of the religious affairs of the country, and of oppressions therein, on religious accounts; with a particular History of the Baptist Churches in the five states of New England. Vol. III. 8vo. pp. 334. price 4s. 9d.

Sold by Button and Thomas, London; and may be had of the Publisher of the Baptist Register.

Rev. THOMAS BALDWIN, A. M. Boston, Massachusetts.

1. A Sermon delivered at Bridgewater, December 17, 1794, at the Ordination of the Rev. David Leonard, to the Work of an Evangelist, on 2 Timothy, iv. 5. *Do the work of an Evangelist.* 8vo. pp. 31.

2. A Sermon delivered February 19, 1795, being the day of public thanksgiving throughout the United States, on Psalm xxxiii. 12. *Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.* 8vo. pp. 24.

Sold by Manning and Loring, Boston.

Rev. ABRAHAM BOOTH, London.

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Hearts in the holy bands of love combin'd,
 Death has no power to sever. Thou art mine!
 A little while, and thou shalt dwell with me
 In scenes where sorrow is not. *Cheerily*
 Tread thou the path that leads thee to the grave;
 Rough tho' it be and painful!—for the GRAVE
 Is but the threshold of eternity.

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G

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ORDINATIONS, &c.

IN

1795, 1796.*

Rev. JAMES SMITH, (extract of a letter from Rev. L. Butterworth.) The 15th of April, 1795, I attended the ordination of Mr. James Smith, over the Baptist Church at the Old Meeting-House, Perthore. He is a young man of very promising abilities, from the Church at Chafewater, Cornwall, under the care of Mr. Reading, but late from the Bristol Academy. The service was introduced by reading Ezek. iii. 17—21. and Tit. i. chap. and prayer, by Brother Elisha Smith. The introductory oration by your unworthy servant. Brother E. Edmonds, Birmingham, prayed the ordination prayer. Our Brother Dr. Ryland gave a most excellent charge, from 2 Tim. 2, 3. Brother Pearce, Birmingham, preached in a very pleasing manner, from 1 John i. 3. By fellowship he understood partnership, and strongly recommended it to the people to become partners with their minister in promoting the interest of the Lord. Brother T. Edmonds, Upton, concluded in prayer. All present found

* If any ordinations are omitted in these pages, they may be inserted as notes in the new list of churches, in No. 15.

it to be a more edifying season than they had experienced on any similar occasion. Every one seemed to be in a good frame, and to enjoy liberty.

Rev. JOSEPH BELCHER, Rushden, Northamptonshire, (Extract). My ordination took place on August 4, 1795. Began by singing the 132d Psalm, L. M. Brother Alcock, of Hail Weston, prayed. Afterwards Brother Grindon, of Sharnbrook, opened the work of the day, and proposed the usual interrogatories, and received the confession of faith. This done, the call to, and acceptance of, the pastoral office were recognized. We then sung the 410th Hymn, of your Selection. Mr. E. Edmonds, of Birmingham, gave the minister his charge from the 28th chap. of Matthew, 19 and 20 verses; and Mr. Nickolls, of Kimbolton, preached to the people, from Psalm cxxii. 9 verse. We then sung the 411th Hymn in the Selection. Mr. Hall, of Irthlingborough, concluded by prayer, and the usual benedictions.

On account of our meeting being so small, we were obliged to attend to the service in the meeting-house-yard.

Mr. Davis, of Romsley, preached in the evening of the day, from 1 Cor. iii. chap. part of 22, 23d verses, *All are yours, and ye are Christs*. I am happy to say we are in a peaceable and flourishing condition.

Rev. JOHN MILLARD, Baptist Minister, was ordained pastor of the Baptist Church, (admitting pious Pædobaptists to communion at the Lord's table), at Stevington, Bedfordshire, Oct. 8, 1795. Mr. Grindon, of Sharnbrook, prayed. Mr. Dickens, of Ketto, delivered an introductory discourse, asked the usual questions, and received Mr. Millard's confession of faith. Mr. Hillyard, of Olney, (of whose church Mr. Millard had been a member) prayed the Ordination Prayer. Mr. Bull, of Newport-Pagnell, (in whose academy Mr. Millard had spent some time), delivered the charge from 1 Tim. i. 18. first clause. Mr. Sutcliff, of Olney, addressed the church, from Rom. xiv. 19. and concluded the service with prayer. Singing was attended to at proper times, throughout the service.

Rev. JOHN RIGBY, (Extract.) On the 6th of Jan. 1796, I was ordained pastor of the church of Christ at Bramley, Yorkshire, lately under the pastoral care of the Rev. Joseph Askwith, deceased. Mr. Ashworth, of Gildersome, introduced the service of the day by reading Ezekiel 33. 1—16. Eph. 4. 1—14. 1 Tim. iii. asked the usual questions of the church and minister, received my confession of faith, and prayed.—Mr. Bowser, of Shipley, gave the charge from 1 Tim. iv. 16. *Take heed unto, &c.* from which he properly recommended a devout circumspection, and divine perseverance, with regard to a life of holiness; and also a zealous regard to the important doctrines of the blessed gospel, upon this ground, that the benefits inseparably connected with salvation, would result from
such

such a conduct, to both minister and people. Mr. Crabtree, of Bradford, delivered a very suitable and animating discourse to the people, from 1 Theff. v. 12. *And we beseech, &c.* Mr. Holton, of Rawdon, directed the praises of God through the whole. The service was conducted with order; and the presence of the Lord was with us.

Rev. JOHN TIMSON was ordained pastor of the newly formed Baptist Church at Earls-Barton, near Wellingborough, in Northamptonshire, Jan 23, 1796. On this occasion, Mr. Sutcliff, of Olney, went through the preparatory services of the ordination. Mr. Hall, of Irthlingborough, prayed over the newly ordained minister. Mr. Grindon, of Sharnbrook, delivered the charge from 2 Tim. iv. 2. *Preach the word.* Mr. Nickolls, of Kimbolton, addressed the church from 1 Theff. v. 12, 13. Singing and prayer were interspersed at proper times throughout the service.

Rev. JOSEPH LEE SPRAGUE, (Extract.) My ordination, at Bovey, took place on March 30, 1796. The work was introduced by Mr. Willey, of Dartmouth, who read several suitable scriptures, and prayed. Mr. Birt, of Plymouth-Dock, explained the nature of the service, and showed the right of the people to choose their own pastors, with the propriety of this conduct.—The church recognised their call; and having signified my acceptance of it, I read my confession of faith. My uncle, Mr. Daniel Sprague, of Tiverton, implored the divine blessing on the relation then formed between me and the church. Prayer was attended with the laying on of the hands of Messrs. Sprague, Birt, Norman of Bampton, and Thomas, of Prescott. Mr. Sprague delivered the charge from Acts xx. 28. *Take heed, &c.* Mr. Birt preached to the people from Ezra x. 4. *Arise, for this matter belongeth unto thee, &c.* Mr. Thomas closed the service in prayer. Suitable hymns were sung in the course of the solemnity.

About a fortnight since there was a meeting of ministers at Kingsbridge; Mr. Gibbs and Mr. Birt preached. It is pleasing to see the harmony which subsists between Plymouth and Dock. O how good it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is intended to have a meeting twice in a year, composed of the church at Exeter, and the churches westward of it, and to visit each in rotation.

Rev. THOMAS BERRY, (Extract.) A short account of my ordination service, which took place at Hanley, in Staffordshire, on Wednesday the 6th of April, 1796. It may not be amiss briefly to remark, that the following day was appointed by the Independent Ministers of this circuit, to hold their quarterly meeting; and providentially the place of meeting this quarter was at Hanley. They all, I believe, gave us the pleasure to attend with us; and (what may perhaps appear as strange to you as it did to many of us) the Popish Priest, who resides in that

this neighbourhood, attended us in the morning. The services of the day were conducted in the following manner:—At eight o'clock in the morning the members met to implore the presence and blessing of God to attend the church and congregation on the solemn occasion; and at half past ten public service began. Brother Sharp, of Manchester, introduced the work by reading the 132d Psalm, and the 1st chapter of the Epistle to Titus. He then engaged in prayer. (Singing.) Brother Sharp proceeded to ask the usual questions, and receive the answers of the church and minister; then the confession of faith was called for, and read in the space of fifteen minutes. Brother Medley, of Liverpool, prayed the ordination prayer, which was accompanied with laying on of hands. (Singing again.) He then, in a most solemn, affectionate, and encouraging manner, gave a weighty charge to the poor minister from 2 Timothy ii. 1. *Thou therefore, my Son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.* (Singing.) Brother Reese, of Congleton, then engaged in prayer, and dismissed the congregation. In the evening, at seven o'clock, met again; after singing, Brother Boden, of Hanley, engaged in prayer, (Singing.) Brother Sharp addressed the church in a very faithful and affectionate manner, from 1 Thess. v. and 13. (Singing again.) Then Brother Ralph, of Stone, engaged in prayer, and dismissed the assembly. Messrs. Reese, Boden, and Ralph, are amiable Independent ministers. I think it pleasant to add, that our brethren, Medley and Sharp, were requested to preach the intended double lecture, for our worthy Independent brethren, at Mr. Boden's meeting-house, on the Monday evening, to which they cheerfully attended. Brother Sharp first from 1 Cor. xv. and 10 verse; *But by the grace of God I am what I am.* Then Brother Medley, from Deut. xxxiii. and 25 verse, latter clause, *And as thy day, so shall thy strength be.* Surely the Lord was with us of a truth, and made it a day much to be remembered.

Rev. JOHN PALMER was ordained pastor of the Baptist Church at Salop, April 13, 1796. The service of the day was opened with singing. Brother Harrison read the hymns; Brother Pearce suitable portions of God's word; and assigned scriptural reasons to justify the conduct of a gospel church in the choice of a pastor; and received the declaration of faith, which was very satisfactory. The ordination prayer was offered up by Brother Steadman, with imposition of hands; and he delivered the charge from Acts xx. 26 and 27 verses. *Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men, for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.* Brother Webster preached to the people from the 1st Thessalonians v. 12, 13 *And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, &c.* and concluded in prayer.

Being without a Deacon, Brother Evans, of Alcastan, a reverend old man, and an honourable disciple of Christ, (who hath long

long stood a member of the church), was named for that office, and unanimously approved. Accordingly the church met a quarter before six o'clock the same evening, to ordain him.— Brother Steadman prayed, and imposition of hands was adopted. A Lecture in the evening. Brother Smith, of Wolverhampton, began in prayer. Brother Pearce preached from the 2d of Corinthians, iv. chap. 7 verſe. *But we have this treasure in earthen veſſels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.* Brother Harrifon concluded in prayer. The ſervices of the day were pleaſing and profitable, inſpiring an hope that the union formed betwixt the paſtor, the deacon, and people, will prove a ſingular bleſſing under the great Head of the Church.

Rev. J. WILSON, Warwick, (Extract.) My ordination was on June 1, 1796. Mr. Green, of Middleton Cheney, introduced the ſervice by reading the ſcriptures, and prayer. Mr. John Butterworth, of Coventry, propoſed the uſual queſtions, and received the confeſſion of faith. Mr. Whitmore, of Hook-Norton, offered up the ordination prayer, with laying on of hands. Mr. L. Butterworth, of Eweſham, gave the charge from Rev. ii. laſt part of 10th verſe. Mr. Palmer, of Salop, addreſſed the people from 1 Pet. iii. 8, 9, and concluded in prayer.

Mr. SAMUEL RUSTON's call to the miniſtry by the Church at Hamſterly, Durham.

In the month of Sept. 1795, the church upon deliberation at a regular meeting agreed to call Brother Ruſton, to exerciſe his talents before *the church alone*, on the Lord's-day evenings.— With this he complied. From the firſt he was approved of; but theſe exerciſes were continued for ſix or ſeven weeks, in order to form a better judgment, and that all the members might have an opportunity of hearing. The laſt Friday in October was obſerved as a day of prayer and faſting on that account, and the paſtor delivered a ſermon on the occaſion. After ſolemn addreſſes to God for direction and ſerious deliberation, the whole church unanimously agreed to call him to the work of the miniſtry; of which, after due conſideration, he cheerfully accepted. On the afternoon of Nov. 8, after the paſtor had asked him ſome queſtions in the behalf of the church, in the preſence of the whole congregation, to which he made a ſuitable reply, *the churches call of him to the miniſtry, to preach the word and baptize thoſe who were proper ſubjects*, under the direction of the church, and as eligible to the paſtoral office, when called to it, *was announced*, of which he modeſtly declared his approbation, with the motives which influenced him to give up his ſecular employment, and to devote his time and talents to that work.— After ſolemn prayer to God, the paſtor preached a ſermon from 2 Tim. iv. 5. on the vigilance, patient fortitude, and perfevering diligence, which are required in the ſacred miniſtry.— May the great Lord of the Harveſt ſend forth many more faithful labourers into his harveſt!