

THE  
BAPTIST  
ANNUAL REGISTER,

FOR 1801 AND 1802.

INCLUDING  
SKETCHES  
OF  
THE STATE OF RELIGION  
AMONG  
DIFFERENT DENOMINATIONS  
OF GOOD MEN  
AT HOME AND ABROAD.

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BY JOHN RIPPON, D. D.

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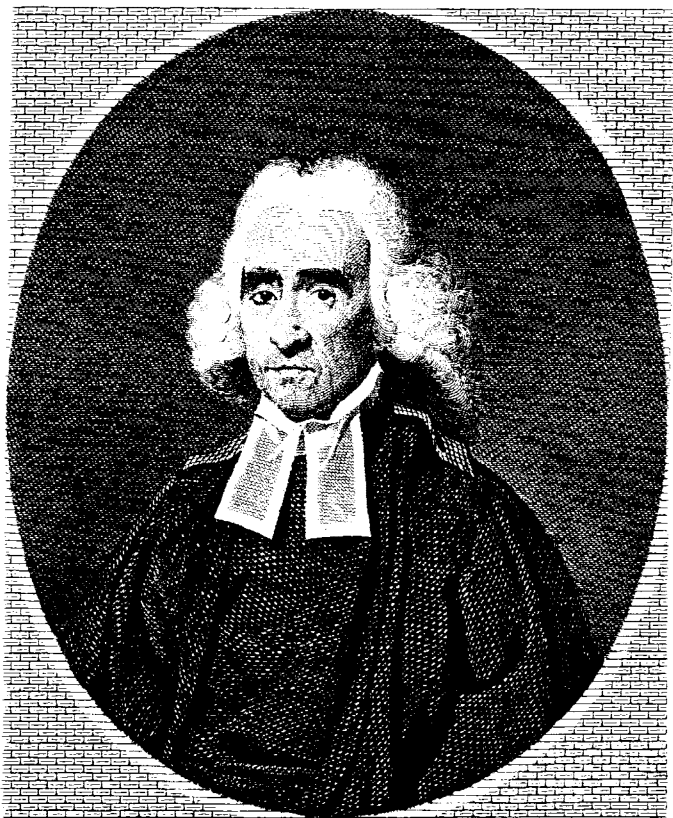
From East to West, from North to South,  
Now be his Name ador'd!  
EUROPE, with all thy millions, shout  
Hofannahs to thy Lord!  
ASIA and AFRICA, resound  
From shore to shore his Fame;  
And thou, AMERICA, in songs  
Redeeming Love proclaim!

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*J. Johnson pinxt.*

*T. C. Carter sculp.*

*THE REV.<sup>d</sup> SAMUEL STILLMAN, D.D.*

*Pastor of the first Baptist Church*

*at Boston in New England.*

*Published at the direction of the Society, May 6<sup>th</sup> 1793.*



## DR. WATTS'S CHURCH RECORDS.

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 520.]

## DR. WATTS'S ORDINATION.

THE church, having heard Mr. Watts's letter on church discipline read, unanimously expressed their approbation of it, and their urgent desire of his acceptance of their call.

FEBRUARY 15, 1701—2.

Mr. Watts promised to ask a letter of dismissal from the church under the care of Mr. Thomas Rowe, to which he had been related these eight years past. Mr. Watts brought the letter on February 27, which is as follows :

*To the Church of Christ, of which the Rev. Dr. CHAUNCEY was lately pastor.*

For as much as our dear brother, Mr. Isaac Watts, who was with great satisfaction admitted a member amongst us, and hath since walked as becomes the gospel, to the glory of God, and to the honour of his holy profession, doth now desire his dismissal from us, we do, in compliance therewith, discharge him from his membership amongst us, in order to his being received by you; praying that his ministerial labours, and those gifts and graces wherewith the Lord Jesus Christ, the great head of his church, hath been pleased so richly to furnish him, may be abundantly blessed to the conversion of souls and your edification: to whose grace and blessing we do from our hearts commend both him and you.

Subscribed, with the consent of the church, by

THOMAS ROWE, Pastor.  
NATHANIEL PEACOCK.  
JOHN ANTRIM.

Feb. 26, 1701—2.

Now, though it is not the practice of this church to require a new profession of faith and hope of every one  
SEPT. 1801.] s s that

that is recommended to their fellowship from a sister church that walks in the same gospel order, yet it was desired of Mr. Watts as a minister of Christ, and being to hold forth the gospel of Christ more publicly, that, for the more abundant satisfaction of the church and for their edification and comfort, he would render the reasons of his hope unto them, which he did, and was received to fellowship with them by the mouth of Mr. William Pickard, the deacon, who was deputed by the church.

MARCH 8.

Mr. Watts being now further urged to accept the repeated call of the church, owned that God had inclined his heart to do it, and, notwithstanding the dreadful providence of *that day*, the death of his Majesty King WILLIAM the Third, who had been a nursing father unto the churches of Christ, yet God suffered him not to consult with flesh and blood, but to venture upon the service of Christ in his church, leaving all future events to Divine Providence. Then, at the church meeting, was a day appointed for the separation of him by fasting and prayer unto the pastoral office, and the approbation and assistance of several pastors was desired for the more public and comfortable solemnizing the work of that day.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18.

The Rev. Mr. Thomas Rowe, Mr. Benoni Rowe, Mr. Matthew Clark, Mr. Thomas Collins, Mr. Robert Bragg, Mr. Thomas Lloyd, and Mr. Thomas Ridgely, were present, and gave their hearty approbation of Mr. Watts as a fit person to be chosen by this church. Mr. Clark began the work of the day with prayer; then Mr. William Pickard, one of the deacons, deputed by the church, put this solemn question unto the church—

“Do you all agree to chuse Mr. Isaac Watts to the office of a pastor in this church, and promise to submit yourselves accordingly to him in the Lord?”

To which a vote was given in the affirmative by every Brother present.

Then Mr. Watts was desired to declare publicly and solemnly his consent, which he did in these words\* :

BRETHREN,

You know what a constant aversion I have had to any proposals of a pastoral office, for these three years, even  
ever

\* These sections are copied from Dr. Watts's hand writing.—EDITOR.

ever since the providence of God called me first amongst you. You know, also, that since you have given me an unanimous and solemn call thereto; I have heartily proposed several methods for your settlement without me; but your choice and your affections seemed still to be settled and unmoved. I have objected warmly, and often, my own indispositions of body, which incapacitate me for such service; and I have pointed often to three reverend divines, that are members of this Church, whose gifts might render them more proper for instruction, and whose age for government. These things have I urged, till I have provoked you to sorrow and tears, and till I have been almost ashamed; but your perseverance in your choice, and your love, your constant profession of edification by my ministry, the great probability you show me of building up this famous and decayed Church of Christ, if I accept the call, and your prevailing fears of its dissolution if I refuse, have given me ground to believe that the voice of this Church is the voice of Christ by you. And to answer this call I have not consulted with flesh and blood; I have laid aside the thoughts of myself, to serve the interest of our Lord; I give up my own ease for your spiritual profit, and your increase; I submit my inclinations to my duty; and, in hopes of being made an instrument in the hands of Christ, to build up this ancient Church, I return this solemn answer to your call—That with a great sense of my inability in mind and body, to discharge the duties of so sacred an office, I do, in the strength of Christ venture upon it, and, in the name of our Lord Jesus, I accept your call; promising, in the presence of God and his Saints, my utmost diligence in all the duties of a pastor, so far as God shall enlighten and strengthen me. And I leave this promise in the hands of Christ, our mediator, to see it performed by me, unto you, through the assistance of his spirit and his grace.

The Rev. Mr. Thomas Collins succeeded in the carrying on the work of the day by prayer; and Mr. Thomas Rowe preached a sermon proper to the occasion, from that Scripture, Jeremiah, iii. 15. *And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.*

The substance of his sermon was as follows, viz.

*First.* How is a pastor said to be the gift of God?

1. As the office is of God's appointment.

2. As his work is all described by God in his word; so that his power, authority, or work, is not to be extended or limited by himself or the people.

3. As all the characters and qualifications of a pastor are laid down by God in Scripture.

4. As all his gifts proceed from God, as a giver.

5. As the inclinations of pastor and people are influenced by God, the people choosing, and the pastor accepting.

6. As his assistance in his work is from God.

*Secondly.* What are the characters of a pastor after God's own heart?

1. He stands in the counsel of God, and delivers not his own mind, but the mind and will of God, to the Church.

2. He designs the glory of God above all.

3. He is not ashamed of the Gospel.

4. Rightly divides the word of truth, and gives every one their portion.

5. Approves himself to the consciences of men, and strives to affect their hearts more than their ears.

6. Is sensible of his own insufficiency for the work.

7. Is patient and meek to bear the infirmities of any of his flock, as a nurse strikes not again, though the child strikes her; as a physician returns not peevishness when his patient is peevish and froward.

8. Is not covetous nor over-careful about his worldly interests: and herein the care and wisdom of Christ appears in appointing deacons in his Church, to take care of the pastors as well as of the poor.

9. Not a self-pleaser, but who seeks to please all for their edification.

10. Faithful to God, to the flock, and to his own conscience.

*Thirdly.* What are the ends and designs of God, in giving such pastors to his Church?—*To feed them with knowledge and understanding.*

1. With knowledge of truths and duties.

2. With the seals of the Covenant of Grace, Baptism, and especially the Lord's Supper.

3. It includes rule and government. So ποιμην, a shepherd, and ποιμαίνω to feed, or shepherdize in old authors, signifies to rule and govern.—This is to be done.



4. By his example. Now all these acts of the pastor tend to nourish the flock, and cause it to grow, and may be implied in the word FEED.

USE: To the people.—If this be the end of the pastoral office; if these be the qualifications; if the person and qualifications be the gift of God, then—

*First*, Receive your pastor as a gift of God—admiring the grace of God herein—with thankfulness to God—with due esteem of the pastor—with obedience and submission to him in the Lord—with due attendance upon his ministry; and do not pretend that your greater edification in another place calls you off from your attendance *here*: for we are apt to mistake an affection warmed, or any thing else, for true edification. Learn, therefore, to pass a due judgment of edification, and trust in Christ, to bless the provision he has made for you—receive your pastor with the other part of that double honour mentioned, 1 Tim. v. 17. (*viz.*) providing for his support—with prayer for him.

*Secondly*.—If pastors are the gifts of God, let all that want them pray to God for them; and if these be their characters, let us pray that God would give these qualifications also.

#### USE TO PASTOR AND PEOPLE.

1. Avoid all debates. Let every thing be done in a way of love and meekness; and observe this caution;—Let not the person offending, whether minister or one of the people, be the *last* person that shall hear of the offence; but remember our Saviour's rule—tell it him *first*, between him and thee.

2. Let both pastor and people study the rule of their several duties, the word of God. If we walk by that rule, how much beauty, how much glory will there be in church order; and what reasons to expect the presence of Christ! Remember, also, why it is you separate from other communions—*viz.* because they walk not according to rule. Do not suffer the same neglect to be charged upon you.

The sermon being ended, Mr. Benoni Rowe farther carried on the work of prayer, Mr. Thomas Ridgely followed, and Mr. Watts, as entering upon his office, finished the duties of the day with prayer, singing, and the blessing.

We hope the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ was in our assembly this day, and receive it as a token for good.

MARCH 29, 1702.

Our pastor administered the Lord's Supper amongst us, having preached the foregoing Thursday a preparatory sermon, from 1 Cor. x. 17. *We being many are one bread, and one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread.* Here he shewed how much our communion with each other, as well as with Christ, was set forth and sealed in this great ordinance—designing to unite all the hearts and affections of the Church to each other, that this day of communion might be as a new covenant with the Lord, and with each other also. We finished the celebration of the Lord's Supper, by singing a Gospel Hymn, suitable to the ordinance, taken from Rev. i. 5, 6, 7.\* with one heart, and one voice, to the glory of our Redeemer, and our great consolation and joy.

MAY 3.

Several persons were proposed for communion,

Resolved, That this church assemble at Pinner's Hall, and join in fasting and prayer with the churches under the care of Mr. Wavell and Dr. Singleton, next Wednesday se'night, June 10, being the the day appointed by public authority to seek the blessing of God upon our army, against France and Spain.

FRIDAY, JUNE 5.

No objection being made against Mr. Rook, Mr. Hilton, or Mrs. Meale, the pastor gave the church an account, that he, with others, had made inquiry into their conversation, and found it agreeable to the profession of the Gospel—that he had examined their knowledge, and found it sufficient for church fellowship. He also read unto the church the several reasons of their hope, and the dealings of God with their souls, as he took it from their own mouths, in short hand, according to several questions that he put to them, in the presence of two or three brethren; which account of faith and hope they acknowledged in the presence of God, and of his church,

\* This Gospel Hymn, (as the Doctor calls it) probably is the first hymn in his first book, entitled *A new Song to the Lamb that was Slain.* Rev. i. 5, 6, &c. But it was not printed till the year 1707, when the first edition of Hymns and Spiritual Songs, in three books was published—at that time the first book contained only 78 hymns, the second book 110. In 1709, the Doctor published a supplement, by which the number of hymns in the first book was increased from 78 to 100, and in the second book, from 110 to 170; several, also, were added to the third book — EDITOR.

to be their own declaration. Then the pastor asked the church, whether they were satisfied with their fitness for church communion, and willing to receive them; to which they assented by the holding up their hands. He then asked the several persons to be admitted, whether they continued their desires of being added to the church; and whether they did solemnly promise, in the strength of Christ, to walk with that church in the faith and order of the Gospel, as far as Christ should instruct and enable them; which they declared they did. Then the pastor spake thus: "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, by the consent of this his church, I receive Mr. Warham Rook, Mr. Alexander Hilton, Mrs. Elizabeth Meale, unto fellowship with Christ, and with this church, in all Gospel privileges and Gospel ordinances; charging you to walk so as to adorn the profession of Christ you have now made; and promising in my own name, and in the name of the church, to watch over you, and discharge our several duties unto you, in the strength of Christ."

These two hours were a comfortable opportunity to our souls. Our reverend brother, Mr. Terry, began with prayer; our pastor preached from those words, Acts ii. 47, *And the Lord added daily unto the church such as should be saved.* Then brother Watts, the deacon, prayed. After that the members were received, and Mr. Terry concluded with prayer.

Note.—The several particulars of the reception of these members is set down here, that the method of admission in our church may appear and stand upon record; it being to the universal satisfaction and full approbation of the church.

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## ORIGINAL SERMON

BY

THE REV. OLIVER HEYWOOD,

*One of the Puritan Ministers in the Seventeenth Century.*

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**T**HE Rev. Mr. OLIVER HEYWOOD, author of the following discourse, which is now published from the original in his own hand writing, it is well known was one of the most eminent of the ejected ministers,

An account of him may be seen in Mr. Palmer's Nonconformist Memorial, vol. ii. page 559. His biography has also been given, at large, in an handsome pocket volume, with an head \*, entitled, "The Life of the Rev. OLIVER HEYWOOD, with Historical Sketches of the Times in which he lived; and Anecdotes of some other eminent ministers in Yorkshire and Lancashire," &c. by J. FAWCETT, A. M.

The Rev. Mr. SAMUEL EATON, whose death occasioned this discourse, was another of these worthies. The Nonconformist Memorial gives his name among the ministers in Lancashire, as ejected from Duckenfield; and informs us, that he was of Oxford university; puritanically educated; went into New England, and upon his return, gathered a congregational church at Duckenfield; and afterwards removed to Stockport. He was a very holy man, a person of great learning and judgment, and a most incomparable preacher.

*Noncon. Mem.* vol. ii. p. 91.

"Denton, Jan. 22, 1694†.—Upon occasion of the death of Mr. SAMUEL EATON, who died Jan. the 9th, and was buried Jan. the 12th. He desired this office of love from me, and appointed this text."

JOB xix. 25, 26, 27.

*I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though, after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me.*

IT was the desire of our loving neighbour and dear brother, Mr. Eaton, whose wearisome pilgrimage God hath graciously finished, that he might be buried amongst us, and that I would preach a sermon to the living: this his desire he expressed to me some years ago, but did not mention any particular portion of scripture which was in his thoughts and desire to be preached on. I understand that he continued in this desire to his dying day, and of late singled out, and mentioned these memorable words of Job; that word job, in the midst of his affliction, so earnestly desired might be transmitted to posterity, that it might be written, printed, and graven with a pen, and hid in a rock, that it might abide for ever; in which he doth fully clear his own uprightiness, and has left a legacy to the church.

\* Another portrait also of him may be seen in No. 3 of that beautiful enlarged edition of the Nonconformist Memorial, which is now publishing by the Rev. Mr. SAMUEL PALMER, for Messrs. Button and Son, &c. &c.

† The Nonconformist Memorial mentions 1664 as the time of Mr. Eaton's death; here we read 1694. I know not which is right.—EDITOR.

This portion of scripture he fitly pitched upon as a believer, one that had drunk of Job's cup of affliction and consolation. He drunk in good measure of Job's cup of affliction: he was much afflicted in his estate in the time of the former bishops; he was so afflicted in his body, liberty, friends, good name, oft times, and many ways troubled and grieved in his spirit. Among his many afflictions I observed two especially did fit upon his spirit:

One, the great wrong that was done him in his good name, not by enemies but friends; he might truly say with Job, verse 19 of this chapter, *They whom I loved are turned against me*, and with the best of men, David, Psalm xxxv. 11. and our Saviour, "false witnesses did rise up, they laid to my charge things that I knew not."

The other was the loss of his speech, whereby he was unfitted to serve God and his church as formerly; yet when the Lord had humbled him and proved him, he cleared his innocency, and restored to him some measure of usefulness. Blessed be his name, he drunk of Job's cup of consolation, he had the testimony of his conscience on his side, when he was afflicted, and accused, and reproached; he knew the grounds of his comfort, and had grace given him to apply the same, and therewith to comfort himself, as Job did in the midst of, and above all his afflictions, as appears in the most full and comfortable profession of his faith: he did fitly pitch upon this portion of scripture to be spoken of to the church after his decease. If we consider him as a Minister of the Gospel, hereby he took course, that the church might be put in mind of the doctrine he preached, which he believed, professed, lived in, and died in, that they might be encouraged in their faith, profession, and practice of it. There are several articles of our faith included in these words, which I cannot speak of particularly in a sermon; but that which I shall make choice of in the general, is, to clear two main things held out in these verses.

I. Job's safe estate in midst of his afflictions.

II. His comfortable state in midst of his sorrows and vexations of spirit.

1. Job's state is safe at present, notwithstanding his sins; he was afflicted in his estate, friends, body, name; yet a safe man, for he had a Redeemer, a kinsman, an elder brother, the Lord Jesus Christ, who had right and power to redeem him from sin and affliction. Psalm cxxx. 7: therefore he shall be saved. See Job xiii. 8—16.

2. His safe estate in after time; his Redeemer liveth as God, that's his nature and being; and as man, though he died, yet he rose again, and liveth for ever, Rev. i. 18. therefore is ever a Redeemer to him.

1. He is safe in death, though death separate soul and body, and he can live no longer than his appointed time on earth,

to behold men and worship God, yet his Redeemer liveth, death cannot separate him from the love of Christ; Rom. viii. 38. it cannot dissolve this union; Christ would take care that his soul should enter into peace, and his body rest in the most soft, sweet, and safe bed of the grave. *Isai. lvii. 1, 2.*

2. He is safe in the grave; his Redeemer liveth to preserve the precious dust of this body, that none of it be lost. Not the least particle of the dust of his redeemed, sanctified body, (a member of Christ, and the temple of the Holy Ghost) shall be lost. *1 Cor. vi. 15.*

3. He is safe in the resurrection; his Redeemer liveth to raise his body out of the dust, to unite it to his own soul, and make it like to his glorious body. *John vi. 39. Phil. iii. 21.*

4. He is safe in the day of judgment, safe from condemnation; his Redeemer liveth, he shall be his Judge, as God hath appointed. *Acts x. 36, 42.*

II. As his safe state in all his afflictions is here manifest, so his comfortable estate in all his sorrows; for, he knew by faith, 1st, that he had a living Redeemer; he did not only know by an historical faith that there was a Messiah, (a promised seed, in whom all nations were blessed, typified in the sacrifices, promised to Adam and Abraham, *Gal. iii. 7, 8.*) but he knew by a justifying faith that he was his Redeemer. As Abraham believed, *Gen. xv.* Job believed the same promise, *Job xiii. 18.* his conscience told him he had accepted Christ for his Redeemer, and trusted in him, though he should slay him, *v. 15.* and he knew it was a true trust, not presumption, by the uprightness of his heart, *verse 15, 16.* and by the effects of it, as 1st, it worked by love; he served God for love, and not for wages. 2dly, It purified his heart, and cleansed his way, *Job iii. 4.* he feared God, eschewed evil, 3dly, it made him the pattern of patience; 4thly, it strengthened him in temptations from Satan, the world, friends; so that he kept the way of God, and was not discouraged, but held on till God finished his temptations,—Though he himself was in a dying condition, and did expect death daily, yet his comfort was, that his Redeemer did live, and should live for ever.

2. He knew by faith that his Redeemer should stand in the latter days upon the earth; in the days of the Gospel, he should assume the nature of man, and live upon the earth, that he might obey and suffer, die, and rise again, and ascend to heaven for his redemption; and at the last day he should come from heaven to judgment, when he should be justly judged, and cleared, though he was now unjustly accused, and judged to be an hypocrite, a deceiver, a wicked man, and so afflicted by God. This last judgment was prophesied of by Enoch, before Christ's time, *Jude 14, 15.* Abraham also believed God to be the Judge of all the world, *Gen. xviii. 25.* even God the Son,  
who

who appeared to him and others in an human shape, as a fore-runner of his incarnation. This was Job's comfort, that after all misjudgings and censurings were past, there should be a last judgment, and all by his Redeemer.

3. He knew by faith, that though his body at present was much worn and wasted with affliction, and nothing left but skin and bone, though after death his body should be wholly consumed within and without, yet he should be restored; his skin, flesh, bones, eyes, the self same body that had so suffered, laid in the grave, consumed, though ere long he should be seen, censured no more, yet, when Christ comes, he should appear with him in a glorious body, in perfect health, strength, and beauty; this corruption will put on incorruption. Col. iii.

4. He knew by faith, that in his body, restored and glorified, he should see his Redeemer's glorified body, even with those eyes that had seen so much affliction. What a glorious, ravishing sight will that be! to see the body of his Redeemer, that suffered so much, so painful a death for him; and that with the eyes of his understanding he should see God, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; he shall see him face to face, know him as he is known, have a perfect knowledge of him. 1 Cor. xiii. *Be blessed, and be like him,* Matt. v. 8. 1 John iii. 2.

Job was confirmed in his faith by God's translating Enoch, Gen. v. 24. and by God's preparing an ark, and shutting up Noah in it, a figure of the eternal salvation of the elect, signified and sealed by baptism, 1 Pet. iii. 21. This most comfortable truth of seeing God in glory, and enjoying him, the saints of old were acquainted with; the patriarchs were pilgrims here, and sought an heavenly country, Heb. xi. 9, 10, 15. Moses desired by faith to see God's glory, Exod. xxxiii. but God told him that mercy was reserved for another life.

David, Psa. xv. 1. Psa. xxiv. describeth the man that shall ascend into God's hill, Psalm xvi. xvii. ult. This is the completing of our happiness. 1 Thes. iv. 17.

#### APPLICATION.

We have seen the safety and comfortableness of Job's estate, in the midst of his afflictions and sorrows, cleared out of these verses, in which he makes a confession of his faith, which is also a profession of his integrity, and an encouragement against the false judging of his friends. Our dear brother deceased made the same profession of the same faith, in his afflictions, and desired it might be made known to the church after his decease, and by it he being dead, yet speaketh, with believing Abel, to his neighbours, friends, all in civil and spiritual relation to him, on this manner—

1. I leave you in this my last sermon, for a memorial, the sum of that doctrine I have been taught in the church of God, have believed

believed, professed, practised, and many years preached to you, in which I have lived and died, that ye may remember it, hold it fast, live and die in it: some articles of it are these following:—1. That all men, even the best of men, are sinful and miserable, and cannot redeem themselves, but need a Redeemer. 2. That God, passing by fallen angels, hath provided a Redeemer for mankind, his own Son, God and Man, one that is willing, for he is a Redeemer in name and office; able, he is a loving Redeemer, life itself, able to overcome the death of sin and misery. 3. This Redeemer is not for all men, but for particular persons, such as have grace given them to believe, to accept of Christ, and apply him out of a sense of their need of a Redeemer. 4. That particular believers may, in the use of God's means in an ordinary way, attain to assurance that Christ is their Redeemer, not only to a good hope, but certainty of faith.—5. That though the redeemed die, yet they do not perish; there is a resurrection; the same bodies which they lay down shall rise again. 6. That Christ, the Redeemer of the elect, shall come at last to judge the world. 7. That after the resurrection, and day of judgment, the redeemed shall have a glorious and blessed sight of their Redeemer, both in body and soul.

2. You have been all baptized into this one faith; you have been taught it, have embraced it, professed it; you all agree in the substantial and saving doctrine of Faith, been partakers of the Holy Supper, whereby you have been confirmed in Faith; see that you live in love, that you bear one another's burthens and infirmities, and fulfil the law of Christ.

3. I have gone before you in a way of patience as well as of obedience; my afflictions, with holy Job, have been many and great, some of long continuance. I have been afflicted in my estate, body, spirit, friends, name; that which hath been my support and comfort in all my afflictions, is faith in a Redeemer, that my sins are forgiven, through his blood, that he hath redeemed me from the hurt of all afflictions; that by him I shall be redeemed out of all sin and misery, from death and the grave; and he will not leave me till he brings me to the blessed sight of God in glory: and this faith will be your comfort in like afflictions.

4. I have, as you know, been dying many years, and, at my appointed time, departed from among you, as well as others. I, your neighbour, friend, pastor, can speak no more to you, can pray no more for you, can converse no more with you, can walk no more amongst you; but my Redeemer and your Redeemer liveth, to do all these offices of love for you; he liveth to bring to your remembrance my doctrine, examples, counsels, admonitions; to bless the word I have preached to you, to answer the prayers I have put up to God for you; he will raise up living instruments of your instruction, support,  
and



and comfort; his spirit liveth to be an instructor and comforter; the word liveth to be the food of your spiritual life; there shall be living ordinances, living and life-cherishing societies of redeemed ones, with which, if you hold communion, both in public and private, you shall find your spiritual life maintained and increased.

5. I die in an evil time, and leave you and the Church of God in great and general affliction—I, by the goodness of God, notwithstanding all my enemies, die in my own house and bed, and come to my grave in peace, according to my heart's desire. I have lived to see evils come upon the Church I expected not: but, what you may live to see, I know not. You may drink deeper of the cup of affliction than I have done. Be of good comfort; I leave you this living comfort—your Redeemer liveth, and will redeem you out of all, as he hath done me.—He gives life and being to all afflictions, and instruments of them, even the greatest; and takes it away at his pleasure. *He outlives them all; and because he lives, ye shall live also, and outlive them.* John xiv. 19.

6. Some of you, to whom I have preached, and with whom I have walked, have greatly grieved my heart, with your errors in doctrine, and disorderly walkings; your scandals and divisions. Some of you have returned me evil for good, and hatred for my good will; have filled me with reproaches: some of you have remained under censures, and have not repented.—These things have grieved me, and sent me often to Heaven with a sad heart; even to my living Redeemer, that he would redeem you from sin, and me from sorrow. It may be, when I am at rest in my grave, and turned to dust, you may remember these things, and be grieved for your sins against God, and wrongs done to me. If you repent, and believe in your Redeemer, whom I have preached to you, and to whom I have poured out my grieved heart, he will redeem you from all your sins, and from the hurt of all the smarting afflictions you may meet with, and I shall give up my account concerning you with joy. But be sure, I say be sure of this, that you do not meet me before my living Redeemer at the last day, in a state of impenitency: how sad, O, how sad will it be, if my merciful Redeemer be your severe judge!

2. We may collect hence, from Job's confession of faith, and the safety and comfortableness of his estate, included therein, the greatness of their loss who are like unto Job, eminent in place and grace, that have such faith in Christ, and, upon just occasions profess it; for, 1. they do greatly honour God in the world; what an honour was this to God, that in a time of hardest trial, when Satan was let loose upon Job, and he was under all sorts of affliction, when God dealt with him as an enemy; and all his comforters judged him to be an hypocrite in religion,  
and

and a notorious sinner, that then he should believe God to be his Redeemer, comfort himself in him; boldly profess his faith in him; and not be drawn to speak evil of him, or decline his way, he kept his hold of God though beaten off.

2. They have interest in Christ as a Redeemer, therefore he hath a special care of them in evil times; there is more hope, therefore, in dangerous times, sinful times, while they are living, God hath respect to their persons, prayers, presence, in a place we know not what use one of them may be of, to continue mercies, keep off evils, much more many; the hope is less, and danger is greater when they are removed.

3. They are understanding and knowing persons, well seen in the mysteries of religion, able to instruct others concerning Christ the Redeemer, his divine and human nature, concerning the resurrection, day of judgment, vision of God in glory, there is a loss of spiritual instructors, and the greater loss of these that have been authorized by God and greatly enabled to the work.

4. They are comfortable persons, enabled by grace to comfort themselves and others, in many, and great afflictions; they are acquainted with God's promises of comfort, they have had experience of the power of them in their own souls, and can comfort others from their own experience of the power of them in their own souls: there is a loss of comforters.

Let us all be stirred up after the example of holy Job, to give diligence to attain the assurance of faith, that we may be able to say, particularly, my Redeemer liveth. We are sure of sin, guilt, affliction, more or less; of death, of judgment; and shall we not get assurance of a Redeemer? give diligence for assurance, take a right course: 1. Be convinced of your sin and misery that you need a Redeemer: 2. Labour to know this Redeemer God hath provided, in his person, nature, offices.— 3. Consider and meditate upon the general offer of the Gospel; Christ is willing to be thy Redeemer, he offers himself to thee, if thou wilt accept of him: 4. Accept him therefore, be willing he should redeem thee from the law of sin, service of it, guilt and condemnation of it: 5. Pray earnestly for assurance; search thy self narrowly, whether thou hast not accepted of Christ. Where Christ is a Redeemer, the effects of his redemption will appear; for instance, 1. thou wilt love Christ as a Redeemer, thy soul will be endeared to him, heretofore thou lovedst sin; now Christ that loved thee and gave himself for thee. 2. Thou praisest Christ as a Redeemer, art greatly thankful to him, Oh! what a kindness hath he done thee; what a tyrant was sin, a slave thou wast to it. 3. Thou dost earnestly desire more of the power of Christ's redemption, more power against sin, it grieves thy soul when sin puts up its head; thou complainest to thy Redeemer.

4. Thou

4. Thou wilt assuredly love and long for perfect redemption, Rom. vii. 24; 2 Tim. iv. 8.

Where Christ is accepted there is the seal of the Spirit, the graces of the Spirit, Eph. ii. 13.

Where the soul bears fruit to God it is undoubtedly married to Christ, Rom. vii. 4.

It will necessarily follow, on the contrary (from the example of Job's safe and comfortable condition, having this knowledge of a Redeemer) the dangerous and uncomfortable estate of all them that have not this faith of a Redeemer: they see no need, they have not sought after him, have no interest in him; sin hath power over them, to command them: afflictions do them hurt: hence many that were troubled about their sins in afflictions, are worse after; death will have power over them, as God's executioner to force their souls out of their bodies; the grave shall have power over them, as God's prison, to hold them in prison chains till the great assize; the resurrection shall have power over them, to raise them, against their wills, as God's jailor, to bring them before the judge: and then he that would have been their loving Redeemer, shall be their terrible judge; their own consciences witnesses; and God's redeemed ones, whose hearts were grieved with their sins, witnesses against them: ministers who have proclaimed a Redeemer shall testify against them: and God himself shall acknowledge their witness to be true: and they having nothing to say for themselves, shall be cast and condemned. This shall aggravate their misery, that a Redeemer was offered—they refused him; loved sin and damnation more than Christ and redemption. They shall see the redeemed go with Christ into glory, and themselves thrust, with Satan, into hell torments.

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#### FOR THE REGISTER.

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*A Letter from the baptized Brother PETER, the First Fruits of the Moravian Mission amongst the Esquimaux nation, to Brother LAYRIZ.*

MY DEAR PAUL,

AS I know thee, I give thee my words to be sent unto thee. All this winter through, I have put my trust in the blood of Jesus; and when I am poor I have recourse to him. The vile torngak\* in me shall be drowned and put to death; I will have him no more, and will be washed clean from him. I have my confidence in Jesus, and have been enlightened; I will not wander in darkness, but will only behold this Jesus the Light; and, when I am quite poor, that I am there purified by the blood. I will henceforth have nothing to do with the wicked torngak; I will only follow the Saviour, Jesus the beloved; to have other thoughts is very bad; I love him alone.

\* Perhaps he means sin.

I have been, this winter, baptized and made lightsome; and have got a new name—PETER. I am thankful that I am not afraid of death. When the time of death comes, it is not dangerous to me; because I have a Lord, the Saviour. I kneel at his feet; I will have him, to fall about his neck and kiss him. Men who make a mock, and use the torngak, I will not follow; but the Saviour Jesus alone: for he has true words which have no end. I will follow Jesu's wounds, and put my trust in them. While I am on earth, I have no comfort but Jesus alone. I kiss in spirit all believing Europeans, since Jesus has given me a new spirit. I am,

PETER.



## PRESENT STATE OF THE MORAVIAN MISSIONS.

TO DR. RIPPON.

THE Rev. James La Trobe, minister of the United Brethren, at Fytherton, near Calne, Wilts, a very pious and intelligent man, has favoured me with the following statement:—His grandfather, a French Protestant, left France, and came into this country to avoid the persecution of Louis XIV. His father and mother were members of the Baptist church meeting in Swift's Alley, Dublin. He was seven years a missionary in the East-Indies; but obliged to decline his mission, on account of ill health. The account he gives of the Hindoos is perfectly conformable to that sent us of them by our brethren, Carey, Thomas, and their colleagues. His nephew, the Rev. Charles Ignatius La Trobe, is secretary to the Brethren's Missionary Society, in London. The number of brethren and sisters engaged in the missions of the brethren, towards the close of the year 1800, were as follows:—

In the Danish islands of St. Thomas, St. Croix, and St. Juan	-	-	-	-	32
In Greenland	-	-	-	-	18
In Antigua	-	-	-	-	13
In St. Kitt's	-	-	-	-	6
In Jamaica	-	-	-	-	9
In Barbadoes	-	-	-	-	3
In Tobago	-	-	-	-	4
Among the Indians in South America	-	-	-	-	25
Among the Indians in North America	-	-	-	-	10
In Labrador	-	-	-	-	26
At Bavian's Kloof, near the Cape of Good Hope	-	-	-	-	10
At Tranquebar	-	-	-	-	5

In all, 161 persons. And in many of the said places, their labours are successful, societies numerous, and prospects pleasing. Yours, &c.

I. T.

## A PERSUASIVE TO CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP.

## THE CIRCULAR LETTER\*,

FROM

*The Ministers and Messengers of the several Baptist Churches  
of the Northamptonshire Association, assembled at Oakham,  
June 2, 3, 4, 1801.*

BELOVED BRETHREN,

OUR annual interview was pleasant, and we hope profitable. The accounts from the churches were many of them encouraging. The affliction of several of our brethren in the the ministry, however, diminished our enjoyments: some of them were not able to attend with us; and others who were present appeared to be much indisposed. Help us, brethren, by your prayers; that useful lives may be preserved, and long continued as blessings to the churches.

In our letters for the two preceding years we addressed you on the Discipline of the Primitive Churches, and the Qualifications for Church Fellowship. Desirous of promoting not only your edification more immediately, but also the spiritual improvement of those who form a part of your public assemblies, we this year present you with a few considerations intended as A PERSUASIVE TO CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP.

There are, in all our congregations, a number of individuals, who appear, in a judgment of charity, to have received the truth in love, and whose conduct in other respects is such as becomes the gospel, but who live in the habitual neglect of its positive institutions. For real or avowed unbelievers to do this, would occasion no surprize; but that those, who profess to love our Lord Jesus Christ, and who cherish the hope of eternal life through him, should thus seem to disregard his authority, is not a little surprizing, and may well be considered as one of the peculiarities of the present state of religion amongst us. Nothing of this sort appeared in the times of the apostles. Converts to Christianity were recognized by an open profession of the name of Christ, and admission to the fellowship of the church. The zeal and ardor of primitive believers admitted of no hesitation or delay: they never stopped to inquire how little they might do for Christ, and yet go to heaven; nor thought of reckoning this or the other ordinance not essential to salvation: but, burning with love to the Redeemer, and zeal for his righteous cause, *they made haste, and delayed not to keep his commandments.* No sooner was Saul converted, than he *effeayed to join himself to the disciples.* Anticipating the pleasure that would result from an obedience

\* This letter having been recommended, as it deserves, in the highest terms, the *whole* of it is inserted in the Register — EDITOR.

to the divine command, and desirous of being numbered amongst the followers of the Lamb, the Eunuch, on believing that Jesus was the Son of God, exclaimed, with an agreeable surprise, *See, water! what doth hinder me to be baptized?* The Philippian jailor, *believing in God, with all his house, was baptized, he and all his straightway*, even the same hour, of the night in which Paul had spoken to them the word of the Lord. When the Samaritans *believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.* In those times, as many as *gladly received the word, were baptized; and continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread; and in prayers.* But how different is all this from the reluctance and supineness of professors in later times, who seem glad of any plea that may exempt them from obligation, or extenuate their remissness in respect to an open profession of the name of Christ, and a practical submission to the institutions of his church! For a change so novel in the visible state of christianity, we are led to inquire the cause; and, as a mean of correcting so prevalent an evil, to point out the importance of gospel fellowship, as binding upon the followers of Christ.

First, Let us inquire THE REASONS WHY THOSE, WHO PROFESS TO BELIEVE IN CHRIST FOR SALVATION, APPEAR, NEVERTHELESS, TO LIVE IN THE NEGLECT OF CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP.

It will be readily apprehended, that, by Fellowship in the Gospel, something more is meant than a friendly intercourse with individual christians, or assiduous attendance on the solemnities of the sabbath; that it relates to that state of union peculiar to a christian society which includes a public profession of the name of Christ, and a solemn engagement to walk together in all his commandments and ordinances blameless. It is of the neglect of these important duties that we complain, and would now attempt to suggest a few hints tending to remove the impediments which may lie in the way.

There may be some amongst us, who, while their general conduct is such as entitles them to some respect, are, nevertheless, conscious of *living in some known sin*, and who may, therefore, feel it necessary to decline any immediate connexion with the church of God—Certainly, where this is the case, we do not solicit any society; but would rather exhort such persons to confess and forsake their sins, that they may find mercy. The fellowship of christians is of a holy nature: it is a *fellowship with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ*: they have intercourse with God as the moral governor of the world, through Jesus the mediator; their object is to carry on the cause of truth and righteousness, to promote the Redeemer's glory, and mutually to labour after a conformity to his will; but it will be impossible to enter  
into

into these designs, or contribute to their accomplishment, if sin have dominion over us. There may be much civility, and many expressions of friendship; but where purity of heart and nearness to God are not carefully maintained, there would be none of that christian tenderness, oneness of spirit, holy freedom, and brotherly affection, in which the communion of saints so much consists. *If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.* Living in sin, therefore, or having sinned and not repented, not only disqualifies us for the fellowship of christians on earth, but also renders us unmeet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.

Some, though not living in any known or positive evil, may think, nevertheless, that a relation to the church of God would lay them under greater obligations to a strict and holy life than they wish to take upon them, and hence prefer a state of freedom from such restraints. It is allowed that such a connexion does indeed imply the most sacred of all engagements: we covenant to be the Lord's; renouncing all other lords who have had dominion over us, we make mention only of his name. Having named the name of Christ, we are required to depart from all iniquity. Having sworn, we are bound to perform it, that we will keep his righteous judgments. And is it, indeed, an object of dread to be bound to Christ and his service, by a solemn surrender of ourselves to him? If there be any amongst us who are of this opinion, we do not immediately invite them to our fellowship; but would rather urge them to inquire, whether their hearts be right in the sight of God? The obligation to universal holiness, though it is directly acknowledged, and in a sense confirmed by an open profession of the name of Christ, yet it does not depend upon any such engagement on our part. Christ's service is not a matter of discretion. Whatever we are or whatever we profess to be, our obligation is radically the same.

It may be pleaded by others, that *church-fellowship is not essential to salvation*, and that, therefore, we may go to heaven without it. Positive institutions are not, indeed, so essential to salvation, as that it could not in any case be obtained without them; but it does not follow, that, therefore, they are in no case necessary to salvation. We are sure that living in known sin would exclude us from the kingdom of heaven, and, for aught we know, living in the neglect of known duty may do the same. And if it be true, that Christ *becomes the author of eternal salvation to all them who OBEY him*, a disobedience to his commands may exclude us from an interest in his salvation, as well as a rejection of his truth. But if it were otherwise, and supposing we might go to heaven without attending to church ordinances, yet what a principle of selfishness does it discover

What a disregard for the authority of Jesus; what a want of love to him and zeal for his glory, to live in the neglect of known duty on the presumption that our own salvation may not be endangered by it! Is it lovely, is it worthy of a child and servant of God thus to act? It might suit a professor whose religion is nothing but selfishness; but let such remember that they have not the love of God in them: *for this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments.*

It is to be feared that some are kept from a public profession of Christ by mere *worldly motives*. They have some flattering prospects in life, and their temporal interest would suffer by it. They have relations and friends who feel averse to religion, and would be offended at their openly professing it. The fear of being disinherited, or sustaining loss in their worldly circumstances, induces some persons to conceal their principles, in hopes that some future opportunity may be more favourable to their avowal, without subjecting them to temporal inconvenience. But this temporising with religion, and treating it as a subordinate concern, is of serious importance; it implies a practical denial of Christ before men, and will, we fear, expose the party, if he die without repentance for it, to a being denied by Christ before the Father another day. *Lord, said one, I will follow thee; but let me first go and bury my father—Let me first go and bid them farewell who are at home, says another. Jesus answered, let the dead bury their dead:—follow thou me—No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.*

*The dread of reproach* is the occasion of preventing some from following the Lord more fully. A general and loose profession of the christian name is common enough, and to take up with a worldly religion attaches no stigma to its professor; but to enter into the spirit of the gospel, to come out from amongst the common herd of nominal christians, to be separate, to follow the Lord *fully*, and to keep his ordinances *as they were delivered*, will subject us to the charge of singularity, and that not only from the grossly immoral, but also from the devout and honourable. But shall we, therefore, be ashamed of Christ before men, and withhold ourselves from the communion of such as are walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless? *If any man be ashamed of me and of my words, saith our Lord, of him will I be ashamed before my Father and the holy angels.* Rather let us go forth unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach; and if this is to be vile, let us be still more vile. He who would please the world, and accommodate his religion to the prevailing taste, undertakes more than he can perform, if he would be the servant of Christ.

“ ————— Faithful found

Among the faithless, faithful only he :

Among



Among innumerable false, unmov'd,  
 Unshaken, uneduc'd, unterrify'd,  
 His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal:  
 Nor number, nor example with him wrought  
 To swerve from truth."

MILTON.

Others may be deferring an attendance on divine ordinances till they receive some *particular impressions* to convince them of their duty.—They think it right for those who love Christ to own and follow him, and are willing to be considered as his friends, only they are waiting at the pool for the moving of the waters, in hopes of receiving some kind of extraordinary intimations of the divine will, respecting their immediate duty.—Many persons appear to be looking for something of this sort, and because they go without it from time to time, conclude it is the mind of God that they should not comply with his ordinances; at least that they should not comply with them at present.—It is allowed, indeed, that impressions are desirable, provided it be truth or duty that is impressed, otherwise they deserve no regard: but let these be as desirable as they may, the want of them can never justify our living in the neglect of known duty. Nor are they at all adapted to shew us what is duty, but merely to excite to the performance of what may be proved to be duty without them. If the want of such impressions, or of such a state of mind as we are wishing for in a state of inactivity, would excuse us in the neglect of Church fellowship, they would also excuse us in the neglect of other religious duties. But such pleas are highly delusive, and serve only to discover our want of love and zeal in the cause of Christ.

*Natural timidity* appears to beset some, and keeps them back from an open profession of the name of Christ. They feel it desirable to own Christ before men, and are convinced of their obligation so to do; but are deterred by the publicity of such an engagement, and imagine themselves unable to make a good confession before so many witnesses.—The natural diffidence of some persons may indeed render this very formidable; but it should be remembered that to gain some advantage, or avoid some inconvenience in worldly affairs, such objections are generally overcome: and why should they be deemed insuperable in a matter of far greater importance? Our strength is small indeed, if we faint here. What should we do in times of persecution, when called to confess Christ at the peril of our lives? Our blessed Lord openly avowed our cause in the face of danger: he neither failed, nor was discouraged; but endured the cross, despising the shame. Cold indeed must our hearts be towards him, if we can suffer a few imaginary difficulties to hinder us from owning his righteous cause!

Finally, some are deterred from a compliance with this duty by a *fear lest they should not be proper subjects*.—It is not owing to any dislike to the ways of the Lord, nor indifference to the glory of Christ, that some amongst us are living in the omission of his ordinances: they regularly attend on all the other means of grace, manifest good will to the Redeemer's cause, join in social prayer for its prosperity, and are lovers of good men; but fear they are not qualified to fill up a place in the Christian Church. The doubts which they entertain of their own personal religion, the supposition that some eminent endowments and a larger degree of christian experience are necessary to such a connexion, together with the fear of deceiving others, and being themselves deceived, not only excuse them in their own account from a public profession, but appear to justify and commend them in such a line of conduct. We do not wish to persuade any person to profess that of which he is not conscious. But if it be indeed a matter of doubt whether they be true Christians, we may be allowed to express our surprize, that they in general discover so little concern about that all-important question. To be *walking in such darkness as not to know whither we are going*, is far from being desirable; and, if we have any proper sense of things, it must be very painful. And is it really a matter of doubt, whether you be a believer, or an unbeliever; a friend to Christ, or an enemy; whether from your heart you wish well or ill to his kingdom in the world; whether your soul unites with those who love him, or those with who love him not? Remember this, there is no neutrality in this case: *He, that is not with me, is against me: and he, that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad*. We are either Christ's friends or his enemies; believers, or unbelievers. We either embrace the Gospel, or reject it; would choose Christ and heaven for our portion, if we might have our choice, or the present world; and we have only to decide which. In other cases, we are not at a loss in judging who or what we love and habitually prefer, nor in determining whose side we are of, or to whose interest we feel attached. If our heart be not with Jesus, by no means let us give him our hand, nor betray him with a kiss: but if it be, even though we may not enjoy the comforts of religion in so great a degree as some other Christians, it becomes us, nevertheless, to express it by an open profession of his name. *If with the heart we believe unto righteousness, let us make confession with the mouth unto salvation*.

Secondly, We proceed to point out THE IMPORTANCE OF CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP, AS BINDING UPON THE FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST.

If there were no other considerations to induce us to give up ourselves to a Christian Church, the requirements of our Lord and Saviour ought to be deemed sufficient. Those who pay

pay no practical regard to this duty; generally live in the neglect of the ordinance of Baptism, which Jesus declared was *becoming* him and his followers; and also of the Supper, which he enjoined upon us when taking his leave of the world. The tenderness of this, his dying request, ought to overwhelm all hesitation, and confound the very idea of delay. That a sinner should ask to be remembered of the Saviour is nothing surprising; for if he forget us, we are entirely undone: but that the Lord of glory should ask to be remembered, and remembered as dying for us, is kind and condescending beyond expression. He who can deny such a request must surely be at a loss to prove himself the friend of Christ: *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.*

The importance, which attaches to individual Christians in uniting with Churches, must bear some proportion to the importance of the existence of those Churches; for, if it be a matter of small account for any one Christian to unite in fellowship, it may be the same for another, and so for all; which is the same thing as supposing it to be a matter of little consequence whether there be any Christian Churches in the world. But Christian Society seems to be no less essential to the carrying on the interest of Christ, than human society is for promoting the interest of man, and even for preserving alive a posterity upon the earth. Where do we ordinarily see the work of conversion carried on, but where a Christian Church is established, or where the word and ordinances are administered? When Christ ascended up on high, *he gave gifts to men;* and wherefore? *That the Lord God might dwell among them.* It is under a social character that Christians are denominated the *house* or *temple* of God, in which he deigns to dwell; where his beauty is beheld, and where we inquire after truth. It is the *body of Christ*, which being fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working of the measure of every part, maketh increase unto the edifying of itself in love—The *golden candle-sticks*, by which the light of truth and holiness is exhibited to the world, among which our great High Priest condescends to walk—and the *dwelling places*, and *assemblies of Mount Zion*, on which Jehovah, as over Israel in the wilderness, has created a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; covering their glory with his defence. The natural inference from these representations is, that if we have any regard for the interest of Christ, or any desire for walking in fellowship with him, we should surrender ourselves up to him, and to the fellowship of saints, according to his will. If we would find the Shepherd, we must *go forth by the footsteps of the flock.*

From the first creation of man upon earth, it was judged by his benevolent Creator *not good that he should be alone*; and as the state of society advanced, its advantages were felt and acknowledged. *Two (saith the wise man) are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. And if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.* These, and many more such considerations, which recommend society in general, apply with peculiar force to Religious Society. It is this which sweetens duty, aids our recovery when fallen, excites warm and gracious affections, and strengthens our hands to repel the temptations of an evil world:

We doubt not but that there are godly individuals scattered up and down in the world, who have little or no opportunity of enjoying the fellowship of saints: but it is seldom known that such persons arrive to any considerable eminence in spirituality or usefulness. The eye, or the hand, is singularly useful *in the body*: but if separated, it would be otherwise. The most honourable member cannot say to the least honourable, and still less to the body, *I have no need of thee*. And if those who are lawfully prevented, suffer for the want of Christian fellowship, what may be expected of those who voluntarily neglect it? If the Lord in his providence call us to walk alone, we may hope that he will, at least in some measure, make up the loss of public means by a greater blessing on private ones: but if the former be slighted, he will assuredly withdraw his blessing from the latter.

The neglect of positive institutions under the Old Testament, was sometimes punished with temporal judgments. The Lord sought even to slay his servant Moses, for having omitted to circumcise his son in Midian. And probably it is in allusion to the infliction of calamities for such neglects, that it is said in prophecy, *Who so will not come up to the feast of tabernacles, upon them shall be no rain*. Under the gospel dispensation, it is God's usual way to punish, not by temporal, but spiritual judgments; and whether the neglect of his ordinances be not generally accompanied with a suspension of spiritual blessings, let experience determine.

The principle from which Christian fellowship arises is *love*; and this is of so much importance as to be made by the scriptures a test of personal religion. *We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren: he that loveth not the brethren, abideth in death*. But if we love the brethren, we shall desire to be one with them in the tenderest ties; to join in ardent and honourable efforts, to pray and to praise with them,

them, to sympathise in their sorrows, and rejoice in their joys; in short, to cast in our lot with them, that whatever good thing the Lord their God may bestow upon them, he may bestow upon us. This is the natural operation of love: and without such a tendency, at least, it cannot be genuine. The renewed heart beats spontaneously after the closest possible union with God and his people. Its language is, *Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God, my God. Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me!* David, even in praying for the salvation of his own soul, did not ask for a separate blessing, but for a share in the portion of the people of God. *Remember me, O Lord, with the favour which thou bearest to thy people: O visit me with thy salvation: that I may see the good of thy chosen: that I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation; that I may glory with thine inheritance!*

The simplicity of gospel ordinances must render an inattention to them inexcusable. Under the former dispensation, the positive institutions of religion were numerous and complicated. The distance, also, which the Israelites, and especially the proselytes from among the Gentiles, had to journey at the times of their solemn assemblies, was very great when compared with ours. God required of them great labour and expense, yet the godly amongst them cheerfully complied. And now that he hath brought the bread of life home to us, raining manna, as it were, around our tents, shall we, therefore, make light of it? If the Lord had bid us do some great thing, should we not have done it? Then how much rather, when he saith, "Wash, and be clean?"

One of the most interesting ideas given us of the celestial world is that of a state of glorious society. Angels and saints innumerable, ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, each vie with the other in love and praise, while every creature in heaven and earth, and under the earth, and in the sea, unite in ascribing blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, unto him who sitteth upon the throne, and to the lamb for ever and ever. And how are we to be fitted for this blessed state, but by associating with the people of God on earth? It is thus that we are prepared for glory. Nay, more: It is thus that we actually partake of it—By cordially uniting with the friends of Jesus in this world, we unite with *the whole family of heaven and earth*, which is but one. Hence it is that believers in the present life are represented as already come unto Mount Sion, unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born which are  
written

written in heaven, to God the judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant.

If these sentiments be properly considered and felt, they will not only stimulate those to prompt obedience, who have hitherto neglected the institutions of Christ, but impress us all with a sense of our great advantages, and cause us to rejoice with trembling. We stand on high ground: we walk as upon the borders of heaven: let us watch and pray, lest we be found cleaving to the earth, notwithstanding these distinguished privileges. Nay, it is not impossible that from these heights some of us may fall, like the inhabitants of Capernaum, into perdition!

Finally, It may not be unprofitable for those of us who are ministers and members of churches to inquire whether the neglects of which we complain may not, in part, be owing to something in us? If a minister be uninterested, and consequently uninteresting, in his work; if there be but little favour in his spirit, or profit arising from his communications; if the people be haughty, covetous, self-willed, litigious, and conformed to this world; there will be but little encouragement for young christians to cast in their lot with them. Or, if none of these evils be remarkably apparent, yet if there be a want of holy affection and free conversation, it will not be much otherwise. It is by our having fellowship with God, that godly minds will be induced to have fellowship with us. *We will go with you, say they, for we have heard that God is with you!*

Beloved brethren, Farewell!

JOHN SUTCLIFF, Moderator.

### BREVIATES.

*Tuesday, June 2, Evening, Six o'clock.*—Met to hear the letters from the churches. Brother Read began in prayer; Brother Sutcliff was chosen Moderator; and Brother Nichols concluded.

*Wednesday, June 3, Morning, Six o'clock.*—Time was spent in prayer by the following Brethren:—Millar of Partney, Berridge of Northampton, and Barker of Towcester. Read letters from some of the churches which were then received.

*Morning, Half-past Ten o'clock.*—Assembled for public worship. Brother Crapps prayed. Brother Evans preached from 1 Pet. i. 4, 5. *An inheritance—reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation.* Brother Edmonds prayed. Brother Fuller preached from Jude 3. *Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you, that ye*  
*should*

should earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints. Brother Hopper concluded.

*Afternoon.*—The Ministers and Messengers heard the Circular Letter, which was approved, and ordered to be printed. The Letter for next year, ON THE PRACTICAL USES OF THE ORDINANCE OF BAPTISM, to be written by brother Fuller.

*At six o'clock in the evening met for public worship.*—Brother Morris prayed; brother Keely preached from Mat. xi. 5. *The poor have the Gospel preached unto them:* and brother Mills concluded.

*Thursday morning, six o'clock.*—After prayer by brother Fletcher, the ministers communicated the exercises of their minds during the past year. Sung a parting hymn; brother Burton prayed; dismissed the congregation; settled the business of the Association fund; and the Moderator concluded in prayer.

The next association to be held at Northampton, on the Tuesday and Wednesday after Whitfun-week. Brothers Sutcliff and Hopper to preach. Put up at the SARACEN'S HEAD.

*State of the Churches since the last Association.*

RECEIVED.		REMOVED.	
By Baptism	- 101	By Death	- 33
Restored	- 2	Dismission	- 10
		Exclusion	- 21
	<hr/>		<hr/>
Added	103	Diminished	64
	<hr/>		<hr/>

Clear increase 39

EXTRACTS FROM THE CIRCULAR LETTER,

TO

*The Baptist Churches in Essex, who associate for the purposes of propagating the Gospel in the Villages of that County; assembled at Colchester, May 5th and 6th, 1801.*

TUESDAY, May 5, we met at three in the afternoon. Prayer. A letter from Brother Brown gave us the painful information of his incapacity through the effects of a fever, to attend our meeting, although appointed to preach; expressed his kind and earnest wishes for the welfare of the associated churches and the success of village preaching; and gave the following pleasing view of the church at

POTTER'S STREET:

"I am happy to inform you, that the Lord is pleased still to continue his blessing and presence with us, as a church. We have had an addition of four to our number, since the last meeting.

“ual day, by baptism, and one by dismissal from another church. Our congregation is increasing. Four persons are to be proposed for communion at our next church meeting. Many others in the congregation, we hope, are inquiring the way to Sion; and we have the pleasure of saying, that we not only increase in numbers, but, we trust, in love to Christ and each other.”

BRAINTREE.—“ We are at peace among ourselves, but have had no addition since the last association. One member is removed from us by death. We request to be remembered by you at a throne of grace, that the great Head of the Church would revive his work among us, and add to our number such as shall be saved.”

COGGESHALL.—“ We have cause to be humble and thankful: humble, on account of much coldness and deadness; but have to rejoice, as we enjoy the blessing of peace among ourselves, and are not destitute of love to one another. Four persons added this last year, and we have in prospect more. Lost one by death.”

EARLS-COLNE.—“ We lament that but little of the vital power of true godliness appears among us; so that our pastor is often adopting the language of the prophet, “ Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?” But we are well attended, and there is a little real religion among us. There are three proposed now, who, we hope, are subjects of divine grace; and others we hope are earnestly seeking the Lord. We have been called to the painful exercise of excommunicating two of our members; two are dismissed, and one added. Since the last association, we have called out our respected brother, Richard Owers, to preach the Gospel.”

HALSTED.—“ We lament, that among many settled churches the hand of prayer is low—the world seems to be uppermost. Though we have to say, with pleasure, on the other hand, many are content with such things as they have. As it respects the state of *our* church, we live in peace among ourselves and we trust we love as brethren;—we are well attended on Lord’s days, and the people seem to pay attention. We hope there are evidences of the strong holds of Satan being broken by the mighty power of God. There is a prospect of some joining us. We have received and baptized three.”

LANGHAM.—“ Some things of an humbling nature loudly call upon us to watch and pray. Two have been excluded from us, and one died after having communed with us at the Lord’s table but once. We have also dismissed one. But we have had eight added; and were never better, nor perhaps so well, attended at our public worship. We also enjoy as much peace as most churches—but want more spirituality and heavenly-mindedness.”



RAYLEIGH.—“ Though the increase of our number has not been equal this year to former seasons, yet we are not without evident tokens of the divine presence in enlightening and establishing our understandings in the doctrines of grace; in making public ordinances profitable and private communion delightful. Since our last association there have been baptized and added to our number four men and one woman; but, for the honor of God, we have been obliged to exclude two of our members. The one of them at first was esteemed a pillar and chosen as deacon; yet, seduced by the devil, he has turned to damnable heresies..”

WALTHAM ABBEY.—“ We enjoy the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; the ordinances of Christ are wells of salvation and breasts of consolation. Since the last annual meeting, we have lost one member by death; two have been baptized and added; and one received by dismissal.”

THORPE, (a small market-town between Colchester and Harwich.)—A letter was read from the hearers of Mr. Bolton, at Thorpe, expressing gratitude for his being sent to them, and strong desire for his continuance. The letter was signed by 34 men and women, in behalf of many besides themselves. The following is an extract:

“ There is, we apprehend, honoured and dear brethren, a prospect of great success in these parts; as the number of attendants is much beyond what might have been expected in a situation so dark, and where the very little that was known was so much despised. Moreover, we trust that some of us, since Mr. Bolton came here, have felt the power of the word; and, as many come constantly and hear with great seriousness, we hope that it will not be in vain. The oppositions we meet with are not such as ought to discourage us; were they far greater than they are, we know that the followers of the Lamb were persecuted from the first—and, what are we that we should be excused?”

The Langham letter says, concerning Thorpe:—“ And now we send you glad tidings. The Gospel has been introduced into Thorpe, and the prospect is pleasing—a divine blessing has attended the word. Three persons from that neighbourhood have been baptized and joined the church at Langham: of whom one is now no more; and there appear to be many more asking the way to Sion with their faces thitherward. We hope these things, brethren, will excite your energies, and help you to pray, and preach, and praise.”

When all the letters had been read, a short rehearsal of the peculiarly trying state of the church at Colchester was given by its Pastor. The sum of their case is this—not one addition, five dead, eight excluded, some of them for very grievous crimes; pretty well attended on Lord's days; two or three, perhaps  
more,

more, wishing for a place and name among us. The clouds are not wholly dispersed, yet the restoration of order, peace, and love, is hoped for. The church most anxiously requests, together with the Minister, an interest in the prayers of the sister churches; that these hopes may be realized, that the glory may not depart, but that our name may be "The Lord is there," and may this be the common name of all the churches.

Some of the letters mention exertions in villages, but the success is not great. In three, viz. Coggeshall, Earls Colne, and Halsted, schools for the instruction of children, on the Lord's Days particularly, are established, through the assistance of friends; some of whom reside in London.

The service on Tuesday afternoon Brother Stevens concluded by prayer.

In the evening met at half past six, brother Pudney prayed; Mr. Owers preached from Psalm xxvii. 4. *One thing have I desired of the Lord, &c. &c.* and closed with prayer.

On Wednesday we met at half past ten in the forenoon. Our brethren Hornblow, Hutchings, and Trivet prayed. Brother Pilkington preached from John x. 16. *Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold, &c. &c.* and brother Brackett, from Psalm cxlv. 11. *They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power.* In the evening Mr. Rance, from Hackney, near London, after praying, preached from Coloss. i. 12. *Giving thanks to the Father which hath made us meet, &c.* Mr. Hall, of Ipswich, prayed, and dismissed the assembly.

All the services were well and seriously attended. Several ministers and friends of different denominations gave us their countenance by assembling with us, which was an additional pleasure. The addresses to the Throne of Grace were fervent and suited to the occasion. The state of our country and its distressed poor was not forgotten. The sermons gave general satisfaction. May their effects be beneficial and permanent. It was, indeed, a time of refreshing to many. Our business was conducted with unanimity and dispatch. Mr. Bolton is to continue at Thorp.

The next Association to be at Halsted, on the third Tuesday and Wednesday in May 1802. Service, on Tuesday, to begin at three in the afternoon; on Wednesday, at half past ten forenoon; brother Brown and brother Hutchings to preach; in case of failure, brother Steevens.—Put up at the George.

INCREASE.		DECREASE.	
Baptized and added	27	Dead	- 9
Received by letter	2	Dismissed	- 3
Restored	0	Excluded	- 14
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	29		26
	Increase 3.		

No. of Members.		No. of Members.	
Braintree	- - 49	Langham	- - 72
Coggeshall	- 60	Potters Street	- 50
Colchester	- 116	Rayleigh	- 30
Earls Colne	- 39	Waltham Abbey	47
Halsted	- - 44	In the whole	—507

(Signed)

THOMAS STEEVENS.

## LETTER FROM FRANCE.

TO DR. RIPPON.

July 10, 1781.

REV. SIR,

I HAVE now visited Rotterdam, Delph, the Hague, and Dort; but I need not describe the canals running in every street, with the trees planted by their edge, which, at this time of the year, render Holland a delightful place; nor the different public buildings, taken notice of by every traveller. Though Holland is so pleasant in summer, I think the badness of the roads, and the great quantities of water, must render it very cold and disagreeable in winter.

Vital religion, I am informed, is here at a low ebb; the *Monnonite Baptists* are much on the decline. In a travelling barge to Dort, I found a grave old gentleman, a merchant, reading Erskine's Sermons, translated into Dutch. By means of his son, who spoke French and interpreted between us, I learnt that he was a serious man, a Calvinist, belonging to the *ci-devant* established church; and that he knew Dr. Vanderkemp, concerning whom he related several anecdotes.

The first city you enter, by that rout into the French Republic, is Antwerp.—Some of the streets are very fine; the exchange is pretty, though surrounded by shops, and the grass literally growing in the midst of it. There is a great deal of ground, within the walls, not built on; but as Antwerp has communications, by canals, through a great part of Flanders; as the distance of the port from the sea is about the same that London is from the Nore; and as the Scheidt is now opened—a fine river, with only one sand-bank in the passage, well known;—the city, when peace arrives, must infallibly regain its former trade and opulence. There are in it 56,000 inhabitants. Prior to the revolution, it contained above 3000 priests and monks—caterpillars and locusts, preying upon the body politic. Their number, at present, is very small. In the few places that are now opened for the Catholics, you see no silver or gold, as heretofore: the ornaments of their images are nothing but lead, pewter, and brass; their candlesticks and cens-

fors

fors are of brass and copper. A protestant is not now disgusted with processions in the streets, and the continual ringing of bells day and night; they are all done away. Many of the churches are pulled down, and their iron and lead sold; others are turned into magazines for merchandize; and there is one at Antwerp converted into a bawdy-house, inhabited by eleven common prostitutes. The windows in many of the churches have scarcely a pane of glass but which is dashed to atoms.

From Antwerp I went to Brussels; whose population consists, it seems, of 80,000 inhabitants. The streets are not so fine as those of Antwerp. The buildings which were once called the Place Royal, now termed the Place of Liberty, are superb. The park at the extremity of the city is near a mile in circumference. The gravel walks, grass plats, the rows of trees, statues, and fountains, are adjusted with such judgment, taste, and elegance, as to render them, in my opinion, superior to any thing of the kind I ever saw, either in England, Holland, or France. The beautiful palace of *Maria Christiana*, the late emperor's sister, with its marble stair-case and elegant paintings, is converted into a school for teaching painting and the fine arts. Here is a library of 100,000 volumes, collected from the convents, opened *gratis* to the public, six hours every day, decades excepted. Here I spent many of my leisure hours. Can you mention to me such a public library in Great Britain, opened for the diffusion of knowledge *to all the world*? Both the French and Flamand languages are spoken by every body at Brussels.

I cannot but feel very sensibly on account of missionary efforts—Thomas and Carey spending years to fit themselves for preaching to the Hindoos, a people whose *cast* prohibit them from receiving Christianity, while, at the very time, they were but seven miles distance from a *numerous* people, who had no insuperable barrier of *cast* among them\*. The good and zealous Dr. Vanderkemp, braving the dangers of the ocean, living among savages, bears, and lions; learning a foreign language, to preach to a *few* Hottentots; whilst so many cities in his *own* country, speaking one language, only slightly differing in dialect, and which contain so many myriads of souls, are neglected—I mean Antwerp, Brussels, Guant, Bruges, Louvain, &c. &c. &c. where the Flemish language is spoken. The inhabitants of these places are immersed in papal darkness, pe-

\* The writer of this letter evidently refers to what is hinted concerning the Rājahmal.

Suffice it, however, to say, that the Baptist Missionaries could not pursue every object: that they have kept the commission with which they were charged, *steadily* in view; and that the last number of the periodical accounts, with other papers of a more recent date, will convince any unprejudiced person that the prospects of the Mission are highly flattering; and that the labours of our dear brethren have not been in vain in the Lord.—  
EDITOR.

rishing without vision; not a single Protestant place of worship among them all. The Dutch bibles may now be introduced, and protection for public worship obtained of the magistrates.

Oh, what a field for Dr. Vanderkemp to have preached in his own mother tongue! How absurd to leave all these souls \* near two millions, perishing without knowledge, and fly to the Cape of Good Hope, to preach to a few Hottentots, in a foreign tongue. I have made particular inquiries of several literary men, and have myself compared the books printed in Holland and Flanders together, and I find that the Flemish and Dutch are only different dialects of the same tongue; and that there is not so great a difference between them as between the languages of Edinburgh and London. A Dutch minister would be as well understood in any part of Brabant where the Flemish is spoken, as Mr. Hill in Scotland, or you at Dublin. Had I the smallest acquaintance with Dr. Haweis, or any of those gentlemen who conduct the London mission, I should, by all means, point out to them the propriety of establishing a mission in Flanders; of seeking out and sending some Dutch evangelical ministers, to itinerate in this populous province; where they would have no new language to learn, nor any bible to translate.

As soon as you enter France, you find every thing very cheap and in great abundance; the markets well supplied. The best and whitest of bread is here three halfpence a pound; the common, one penny: butchers' meat, common, two-pence halfpenny; the very best, four-pence per pound: butter, six-pence per pound: and every thing else in proportion.

## NEW PLACES OF WORSHIP.

### BARN AT KERLINGBURY.

THE gospel has been preached at Kirlingbury, in Northamptonshire, occasionally, for some years, by neighbouring ministers, both Baptists and Independants. In the summer season, evening lectures have been preached in a barn, and in the winter, in a private house, which has frequently been so crowded with hearers as to render it very uncomfortable,

\* Though this is the opinion of our correspondent, and, perhaps, of many other respectable persons, the Editor of the Baptist Register, however differently minded, does not think himself under any obligation to refute or to defend it. But, as there are so many *beathen* ALMOST AT OUR DOOR, he has no doubt that some truly benevolent persons will, sooner or later, devise and execute a plan for sending the Gospel among them; especially as the expenses of such a service are not likely to be immense, and the difficulties attending it may be comparatively few.

A short time since, the friends of religion there procured a barn, which they have fitted up in a neat manner; it will contain more than two hundred people, and was opened, for public worship on Thursday evening, the 28th of May 1801. After singing and prayer, the first sermon was preached by Mr. Keely of Northampton, from Matt. xi. 5. *And the poor have the gospel preached to them.*

After singing, the second prayer was offered up by Mr. Joseph Patrick of Bugbrook. Then Mr. Moseley, Independent minister, of Long Buckby, preached from Haggai ii. 9. *The glory of this latter house, &c.* The place was greatly crowded with attentive hearers, many of whom found it a very pleasing and profitable opportunity. The good people have preaching every Lord's day evening; many attend, and there is a prospect of great good in the village.

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MR. UPTON'S MEETING-HOUSE, NEAR BLACKFRIAR'S-BRIDGE.

(Extract of a Letter.)

“OUR meeting-house was shut up from January 11, 1801, until Friday evening, August 21, when we met as a church, I hope under a grateful sense of the Lord's goodness to us in our scattered condition; that we had been so kindly accommodated in different places, particularly by Mr. Humphreys and his friends in Union street, on a Lord's day evening, and on a Thursday evening; that such peculiar liberality had been shewn to us in several instances in town and country; that so many of us had been spared to see the place nearly finished (having lost by death only two members since the place has been enlarging)—particularly to bless the Lord, that my health is in some measure restored, and also to pray for the divine presence and blessing to be with us in time to come. Three Brethren engaged in prayer, portions of the word of God were read, we sung, and I closed the opportunity. I trust it was, to many, a solemn evening.

“On Lord's Day morning, August 23, we met at seven o'clock, when three other brethren engaged in prayer, &c.

“We assembled again at half past ten for public worship. I was enabled to preach with some degree of solemn pleasure, from 2 Chron. vi. 18. *But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth?* In the afternoon Mr. Martin preached a very suitable and excellent discourse from Heb. iii. 6. *Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.* In the evening I preached from Zec. vi. 13. *Even he shall build the temple of the Lord, and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne, and shall be a priest upon his throne.*—The house was filled the whole day; and I hope the Divine presence was enjoyed by many. Con- sidering

sidering what had been done by the church and congregation before, a spirit of liberality was manifest on the occasion. About 54*l.* was collected through the day.

“The dimensions of the place are not so easily ascertained as in many instances. I believe in the inside they are nearly as follows:—In the front about 61 feet 7 inches wide; west side about 61 feet; back wall about 42 feet: and the east side about 56 feet.

“Unite with me, my dear friend, in praying that the Lord would condescend to bless his sacred word for the conversion of ransomed sinners to our blessed Redeemer, and for the edification of many who have already believed through grace.

“JAMES UPTON.”

August 28, 1801.

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### ORDINATIONS.

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April 28, 1801. Mr. THOMAS SMITH, late of Long Buckby, after the services of two years, was ordained at Shipston-on-Stour. Mr. E. Smith began by reading. Mr. Mann, of Morton-in-the-Marsh, prayed. Mr. E. Smith introduced the service by shewing the design of the meeting,—not to impose a pastor on the people, but to shew approbation of their choice, to rejoice in their mercies, implore a divine blessing on minister and people, and to give a word of advice to each. Mr. Thomas Smith gave a concise but judicious account of the leading truths of the gospel. Mr. Whitmore, of Hooknorton, prayed the ordination prayer, with laying on of hands. Mr. Suttcliff addressed an affectionate charge to the pastor from 2d Timothy, iii. 15. Mr. Fuller pointed out the several duties of the church from Philippians i. 9, 10. Mr. Harris, late of Burford, concluded by prayer. Mr. Fuller, in the evening preached from John xii. 20, 26. All the services were judiciously conducted. Brother Smith has made some commendable exertions in the villages, where his labours are blessed. A school is established in the society, which is managed by the friends: their scholars are 100 or more,—Harmony prevails, and the prospect is pleasing.

(*Extract.*) July 8th, 1801,—“We had a pleasing day at Morton-in-the-Marsh. Our brother MANN, has formed a society, by uniting the serious characters of Morton with those at Broadway, into one body. Brother Smith, of Shipston, began the service by reading and prayer. Brother L. Butterworth shewed the component parts of a gospel church. Brother Jones of Chalford Bottoms, asked the usual questions. Mr. Joseph Proctor, Fleet-street, Linen-draper, London, related the lead-

ings of his mind, which directed him to the truly benevolent efforts he had made in behalf of his relations and friends in the place of his nativity, and the steps which led Mr. Mann to that situation. Mr. Mann delivered a judicious and truly evangelical summary of the leading particulars of the truths of christianity, with a few hints of his experience of those truths on his own mind. Brother Burder, of Coventry, delivered a well-digested charge from 2d Tim. ii. 3. *Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.* Brother Moody, of Warwick, preached from Psalm cxxii. 6. *They shall prosper that love thee.* In the evening, Brother Jones, of Chalford, gave us a good sermon from Prov. xviii. 24. *There is a friend which sticketh closer than a brother.* We had a happy interview with our friends; the most cordial affection glowed in every countenance, and a good portion of that *one spirit*, which ought to animate the whole church of Christ, seemed to pervade every heart.

On Wednesday the 1st. of July, 1801, Mr. ABRAHAM GREENWOOD, jun. was publicly set apart to the pastoral office in the Baptist Church at Bingley, in Yorkshire. The exercises on this pleasing occasion, were conducted as follows:—Mr. Dickinson, of Pendle-Hill, introduced the solemnity by reading (Psalm 132, and 1 Tim. 3.) and prayer. He also read the psalms and hymns for singing, at the usual interval throughout the service. Mr. Hartley, of Lockwood, delivered a brief discourse on the nature of ordination; proposed several proper questions to the parties, principally concerned in the transactions of the day; and received Mr. Greenwood's Confession of Faith. Mr. Ashworth, of Farsley, offered up the ordination-prayer, which was accompanied with *the laying on of hands.* Mr. Abraham Greenwood, senior, of Killingholme, Lincolnshire, gave the charge TO HIS SON, from Rev. ii. 10. *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.* Mr. Fawcett, sen. of Hebden-Bridge, preached to the people, from the Apostolic Benediction, Rom. xvi. 24. *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.* He concluded with prayer.

Mr. Greenwood has laboured at Bingley eight months. The congregation is considerably improved under his ministry, and the prospect of peace and success is pleasing. *O Lord, send now prosperity!*

In the evening, Mr. Hartley, who was, formerly, a considerable number of years pastor of this church, preached a funeral sermon for one of his old christian friends, from Psalm xxx. 5. *Into thine hands I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me; O Lord God of Truth.*



## OBITUARY.

Mr. JOHN GREENWOOD, *who had been an ATHEIST.*

ON the 13th of June, 1801, died of a lingering illness; in the 38th year of his age, *Mr. John Greenwood*, of Coln, Lancashire. This case is worthy of being recorded, as it affords a striking instance of the *insufficiency of infidel principles* to support the mind, when the world recedes, and the King of Terrors approaches.

Divine Providence had favoured him with considerable mental powers, and he possessed an ardent thirst for knowledge.—While a mere boy, he was heard to say in a determined tone, “I will know every thing.” His parents were exemplary in the maintenance of family religion; and in a pious care of their children. By their means he was introduced to an acquaintance with the Gospel, as explained among the Calvinistical Dissenters. In early youth he professed faith in Christ, and was admitted to fellowship in one of their Churches.

A few years he appeared to be satisfied with the truth as it is in Jesus. But, even then, his turn of mind was highly speculative. He was extremely fond of reading, and perused books inimical to the doctrines of grace. This, it is allowed, *may* be done by persons of *eminent* abilities, without harm; and, in certain circumstances, with advantage. It is useful to the Christian soldier to know the length of his adversary’s sword. But the subject of this article ventured upon the hostile field, without having his feet *sufficiently* “shod with the preparation of the Gospel.” “He leaned upon his own wall, and a serpent bit him.” By the power of error he was overcome—he fell—his fall was gradual—deep—awful. He progressively became an *Arminian*, a *Socinian*, a *Deist*, an *Atheist*!

He lived *several years* in the open profession of *atheistical* principles; but in them he did not die. In his last illness he owned that he had been miserable ever since his departure from the faith. He dwelt much on the *horrors* of atheism, and said, “I am as fully persuaded of the existence of God, as I am of my own.” He constrained a female relation to assist him in burning four elegant volumes which contained atheistical principles. These are believed to have been a translation from the French.

It is not our province to pass sentence on his state, but the evidence which he gave of his belief in Christ, and subjection to the Gospel, is pleasing. He was solicitous for mercy from God—was frequently overheard in secret prayer—spoke of the precariousness of a death-bed repentance—and expressed a fear that his friends would conclude too favourably respecting his conversion. Awaking one night, with much emotion he said to a nephew, with whom he slept, “O Tommy, *mind reli-*

gion!" suffer me to repeat it, "mind religion, mind religion!" To a friend, who had put "Mr. Fuller on Deism" into his hand, he said, after reading a part of it, "Oh! it is a convincing book." In conversation with a Deistical acquaintance, he maintained that Christianity *alone* could produce a truly good life. He spake of the evangelical books, which he sold on his apostacy, as his best books; and to a professor who was exhorting him to better himself, and seek the salvation of his soul, he said, "It is all of grace, from first to last." He was interred in the ground belonging to the Baptist Meeting, in Coln. On which occasion a brief discourse was delivered from 1 Tim. 4. 8. *Godliness is profitable, &c.*

Oh, my soul, cease thou to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the paths of knowledge: guard, sedulously guard against the very first influx of error; its current may not be turned till it has swept from the heart every mould, every vestige of religious principle.

### DESOLATE HERITAGES.

EXTRACTED FROM SIR WILLIAM JONES.

FREQUENT mention is made by the ancient Grecian orators of *desolate heritages*, as they are called, by Isaiah xlix. 8. Now a family was considered as *become desolate* when the last occupier of an estate left no son by nature or by appointment, who might perform holy rites at his tomb, preserve his race, and, by transmitting his name to a perpetual chain of successors, confer on him a kind of immortality. As these ideas might have been extremely pleasing to men, whose views of a better life were rather faint glimmerings of hope, than well grounded expectations, they were very early indulged with the power of *adopting sons*; hence as Isæus \* observes in his sixth speech:—"That all they who thought their end approaching, took a provident care that their families might not become extinct; and, if they had no heirs by birth, yet they left sons at least by adoption." *The preservation of NAMES* might have been one reason for the preference given to males in the Attick Laws of succession; and it is very remarkable that both in the Hebrew and Arabick, the word for a male implies *remembrance*, and that for a female *oblivion*; but this extinction would not have existed, if it had been enacted that the husband of an heiress could either assume the name of her ancestor, or give it to one of his sons.

Sir William Jones's remarks, perhaps, may also illustrate the following scriptures. Psalms xxxiv. 21—22; and lxix. 25. Isaiah v. 9. and xiii. 19—22. and xxiv. 6. Isaiah xlix. 21. Isaiah liv. 1. Zeph. i. 13.

\* Isæus was a lawyer of the first class at Athens, he was the master of Demosthenes, and a true fountain of that elegance which afterwards flowed with so impetuous a stream. He flourished 2166 years ago.

## ORIGINAL POETRY

To the EDITOR of the BAPTIST  
REGISTER.

REV. SIR,

The following lines are the production of a poor pious day-labourer; and, as they are calculated to excite gratitude to the LORD, for the rich blessings with which he hath crowned the season, they may not be unacceptable to pious Readers.

Yours,

Aug. 15, 1801.

PHILEMON.

## AN HARVEST HYMN.

"They joy before Thee, according to the joy in harvest."—Isaiah ix. 3.

WITH joyful eyes the fertile fields I  
view,  
Beauteous with corn of various glossy hue;  
The ears, with lowly posture bending down,  
Proclaim the hand that doth the harvest  
crown.

The grain, though precious in the master's  
eye,

Among the clods was sown, in time to die;  
The blade erect, springs from the healthy  
soil,

Shoots into corn, and pays for all his toil.

Lord, break our fallow ground! kill every  
weed,

And sow in every heart the precious seed,  
Nourish its growth and watch it night and  
day,

And let not Satan steal one grain away.

Behold the ripen'd corn in bright array,  
Whose lovely shocks proclaim the harvest day  
To each beholder richest joys impart  
While life and bliss expand the farmer's  
heart.

Children and maidens now, with cheerful  
morn,

Haste on their way the fruitful fields to  
glean;

The yellow ears fall'n from the reaper's hand,  
Are theirs by right—*Ti, a divine command*

Now comes the last the welcome loaded cart,  
Beheld with joy by ev'ry grateful heart;

No more with anxious fears their bosoms  
roam

With mutual bliss they shout the harvest  
home

Behold the husbandman—look how he smiles,  
Well pleas'd to reap the fruit of all his toils;  
"My friends," he cries, partake my feast,  
come hither,

"And let the sower and reaper sing together."

The feast is done, O may we all prepare  
To meet our God in humble, faithful pray'r;  
Thy word and minister. O JESUS, own,  
And let the God of Harvest wear the crown!

## THE SENSITIVE PLANT.

DEGRADED man would fain be wife,  
And boasts of wond'rous pow'rs;  
Yet must be taught to know his God,  
By lowly plants and flow'rs.

"Shake off dull sloth the SAVIOUR said,  
"Arise and view with me,  
"The lovely scene which nature spreads,  
"Its opening beauties see.

"Stern Winter's icy reign is past,  
"The vines and fig-trees spring;  
"And all the feather'd choirs unite  
"Their Maker's praise to sing.

"Behold, in spotless purity,  
"The lilies as they grow;  
"Not Solomon in all his state  
"Could such a glory show."

Urg'd by the call of JESU'S love,  
My willing feet obey'd,  
And 'midst the flow'ry tribes had long  
With pleasing wonder stray'd;

At length a serious monitor  
My musing mind address'd,  
And in a soft but powerful voice  
Instructive truth impress'd.

A tender plant, preserv'd with care  
Beneath a sunny shade,  
Receded from the touch I gave,  
And quickly bow'd its head\*.

In reason's ear it seem'd to say,  
"Mortal, behold in me

"An emblem of the Righteous Plan,  
"Expos'd to death for thee.

\* See Harvey's reflections on a Flower Garden

"Humble and meek thy Master came,  
 "To suffer rude disdain;  
 "And though by thankless men revil'd,  
 "Resisted not again,  
 "Thou, too, art plac'd where many a foe  
 "Thy fall would gladly see;  
 "With cautious care avoid their wiles,  
 "As I withdraw from thee.  
 "Deign to be taught, though blooming  
 now,  
 "Soon thou wilt bow thine head;  
 "A chilling hand will touch thy frame,  
 "And lay thee with the dead."  
 "Thanks, gentle Moralist," I cried,  
 "Still to my thoughts be nigh;  
 "Each day the solemn truth repeat,—  
 "Remember thou must die."

But souls by JESUS lov'd will live,  
 When winds and storms shall cease;  
 Where no base hand, or cruel blast,  
 Will e'er assault their peace.

~~~~~  
 "THY KINGDOM COME."

LOOK, mighty God, with pitious eye,  
 Down from thy pure and righteous  
 throne,  
 On the whole race of men, who lie  
 Buried in miseries unknown.

Let thy benigna pacific sway  
 Extend its influence thro' the world;  
 And ignorance and tyranny  
 Down to their native hell be hurl'd.

Then the best interests of mankind  
 Shall be well understood and taught;  
 Kindreds and men no more contend,  
 But live and love as brethren ought.

Justice and Truth shall rise and shine,  
 While Plenty crowns the rolling years;  
 And Peace and Purity divine  
 Felicitate these lower spheres.

Hush the distracted globe to peace,  
 Almighty LORD! At thy command  
 Tumult and war forever cease,  
 And love prevails thro' ev'ry land.

May the devouring sword be still,  
 And in eternal quiet rest!  
 But, if unheath'd, it should fulfil  
 Thy purposes; 'tis wisest—best.

Men boast inglorious conquests gain'd  
 And vainly shout of victors crown'd,  
 While wreaths with human blood are stain'd  
 And slaughter'd millions strew the ground.

Grant, while thy judgments are abroad,  
 Mortals may learn they are but men;  
 Tremble beneath thy sovereign rod,  
 And own it was not rais'd in vain.

G. B.

BABYLON'S FALL. PREDICTED.

REV. XIV. 6, 8.

PROUD Babylon yet waits her doom;  
 Nor can her *solit'ring* palace fall,  
 Till some blest messenger arise,  
 The spacious heathen world to call.

And see the glorious time approach!  
 Behold the mighty angel fly,  
 The gospel tidings to convey  
 To every land beneath the sky!

O see, on both the India's coast's,  
 And Africa's unhappy shores,  
 The unlearn'd savage prefs to hear,  
 And, hearing, wonder and adore:

See, while the joyful truth is told,  
 "That JESUS left his throne in heaven,  
 "And suffer'd, di'd, and rose again,  
 "That guilty souls might be forgiv'n:"—

See what delight, unfelt before,  
 Beams in his fix'd attentive eye;  
 And hear him ask, "For wretched me  
 "Did this divine Redeemer die?"

"Ah! why have ye so long forborne  
 "To tell such welcome news as this?  
 "Go now, let *ev'ry sinner* hear  
 "And share in such exalted bliss."

The islands waiting for his law,  
 With rapture greet the sacred sound;  
 And, taught a SAVIOUR'S precious name,  
 Cast all their idols to the ground.

Now Babylon thy hour is come,  
 Thy curst foundation shall give way,  
 And thine eternal overthrow  
 The triumphs of the Cross display.

*From the Addenda to the Tenth Edition of  
 Dr. RIPPON'S Selection.*

~~~~~  
 HOLY SOLILOQUY.

WHY, O my soul! why so distress'd,  
 Why thus indulge to grief?  
 Is there no promise in God's word  
 Which can afford relief?

His acts may change, but not his heart,  
 He loves e'en when he frowns;  
 And, by Affliction's heaviest strokes,  
 Trains for immortal crowns.

Withdrawn awhile, he will return  
 And chase away thy fears;  
 Thus midnight clouds and mists are gone  
 When the bright morn appears.

BEDDOME.

## DR. WATTS'S CHURCH RECORDS.

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 559.]

*The Customs of this Church in the Celebration of Worship and the Exercise of Discipline as they are practised among us at present, 1723.*

**T**HOUGH the books of the New Testament contain divine directions in all the most important parts of worship and discipline, yet there are many lesser circumstances that relate to the particular practice of all church affairs, which cannot be at large described in the word of God; but 'tis left to the christian prudence of every church to methodize and order their concerns in such a manner as may keep nearest to the general rules which scripture has given, and may tend most to the honour of Christ, the decent administrations of his ordinances, and the edification of the people.

## LORD'S DAY WORSHIP.

Our usual celebration of worship on the Lord's day is performed in this manner:

In the morning we begin with singing a psalm, then a short prayer follows to desire the Divine Presence in all the following parts of worship; after that, about half an hour is spent in the exposition of some portion of scripture, which is succeeded by singing a psalm or an hymn. After this the minister prays more at large, for all the variety of blessings spiritual and temporal, for the whole congregation, with confession of sins, and thanksgiving for mercies; petitions are also offered up for the whole world, for the churches of Christ, for the nation in which we dwell, for all our rulers and governors, together with any particular cases which are represented. Then a sermon is preached, and the morning worship concluded with a short prayer\* and the benediction.

The worship of the afternoon is performed in the same manner with this difference, that we omit the first short

\* The hymn or psalm which is sung just after the exposition, should have been sung just after the sermon; but Mr. Watts, our pastor, being for several years so much indisposed with nervous disorders, desired the hymn to be sung rather before he went into the pulpit, only because his head was unable to bear the sound.

prayer and the exposition, and sing the psalm or hymn just after the sermon which in the morning followed the exposition.

On the third Lord's day in every month there is a public collection made at the door for the necessities of the poor of the church, and for defraying some part of the incidental charges that attend the place of worship, &c. There is also, once a year, a collection made for the support of the poor ministers in the country, which is brought into a general collection which is called the *Fund*, and is here distributed by the ministers and messengers deputed from almost all the churches in the city, who are called congregational, and on this day the collection for the poor of the church is omitted.

#### ADMINISTRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

The first Lord's day in every month the Lord's supper is administered just after sermon in the afternoon, though it has been sometimes the custom of this church, for the conveniency of the pastor or of particular members, to have the Lord's supper now and then administered at noon, and particularly in the winter season, when the days are shortest.

The Lord's supper is administered alternately by the two pastors\*, in the plainest manner, just according to the institution, (viz.) first the history of the institution of this ordinance is read, either out of Matthew's gospel or the first ep. Corinthians, that it may ever be kept in mind to regulate every part of the practice; and the sermons of that day being equally suited to the design of the Lord's supper, or a commemoration of the sufferings of Christ, 'tis but seldom that any other speech or exhortation is made before the celebration.

The minister, taking hold of the plate in which the bread lies, calls upon the people to join with him in seeking for a blessing on it, which is done in a short prayer of eight or ten minutes. Then the minister says, "Having blessed this bread, we break it in memory of our Saviour's body," &c. Then the loaves, which are before cut in squares, almost through, are broken by the minister into small pieces, as big as walnuts, or thereabout, and taking the plate of bread in his hand, he says, "This is the body of Christ, or the emblem or figure of the body of Christ, which was broken for you: take it and eat ye

\* The two pastors at this time were Dr. Watts and Mr. Samuel Price, uncle of the late Dr. Price.

all of it, in remembrance of our Saviour who died for us," or such like words; which are a plain declaration that the bread represents the body of Christ, according to his own appointment: it is then distributed by the pastor to the deacons, and to one or two more of the members who are appointed to it, and it is carried by them to the various members of the church. Then, after a short space, an inquiry being made if all have received the bread, and that those who have not received it are desired to stand up and signify it, the pastor proceeds, in like manner, to pour out the wine, at least into one of the cups; then he asks a blessing on the cup; and then distributes it, as before, to the members or the deacons, and they to some other members of the church, by whom it is carried round to all the seats. In many churches, the pastor is frequently speaking proper sentences or texts of Scripture, to awaken the faith, hope, and joy of Christians; and I cannot but approve of it in the main. But our former pastor, Dr. Chauncey was so much against it, that it was not practised among us. But when most of the members, on some particular occasion, met together, the two pastors proposed it to them, whether we should keep up this practice or leave them to their own silent meditations. They seemed generally to approve our silence, and this is the reason we omit it.

After this, there is a psalm or hymn sung, suited to the ordinance. Then the plate is sent around to collect for the necessities of the poor. After this, particular cases of the members are represented, who desire the public prayers of the church; and then, with a prayer offered on this occasion, together with thanksgiving and the final benediction, this service is concluded.

Note.—Just before the administration of the Lord's Supper, the pastor makes public mention of any person who is a member of another church, and desires occasional communion with us at that time; then, also, he declares the name and place of abode of any persons who desire to join themselves to us in fixed or constant communion, that the members may take notice of it, and make due inquiry into their conversation, against the beginning of next month. And as it is at this time that new members are publicly declared to be received into the church, so if any are dead, it is generally declared to the church at this time, that the whole community may be acquainted with it.

## FRIDAY BEFORE THE LORD'S SUPPER.

On the Friday, in the afternoon, before the Lord's Supper, there is generally a sermon preached on some evangelical subject; and if any church affairs require it, as the admission, the dismission, or the seclusion of any member, or any other matter of importance, that relates to the spiritual or temporal concerns of the church, the members are desired to tarry a little for that purpose.

For many years, it has been the custom of the church to spend an hour or two, on the Fridays in the afternoon, together: wherein some of the brethren who are most capable are wont to exercise their gifts in prayer; but the attendance has been so little, and the persons so exceeding few, that; for the present it is laid aside, though not without hope of revival.

## DEACONS.

There are, at present, four deacons, who take care of all the secular affairs and keep their accounts; two of them collect what is subscribed for the support of the ministry of the church; and the two others concern themselves chiefly for the table of the Lord and the support of the poor; and whensoever it is thought necessary, their accounts are audited by them all.

## OF ADMITTING A NEW MEMBER.

The method of receiving a member into our church, who has never yet been received into any communion, is this:—The person desirous of fellowship with us, makes it known to the pastor or pastors, privately; then one or both of them discourse with him, concerning his knowledge of the things of God and the Gospel; his hearty profession of repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, according to his various offices; and humble purpose and endeavour to walk with God in the world, and obey Christ in all his institutions, as well as in all moral duties. The minister also generally asks, if he can remember the way and means whereby he was first awakened to a sense of his sins and his danger, and first led to a willing acceptance of Christ and his Gospel. But, we do not make it necessary that he should remember or declare all these particulars; only so far as it may help to give the minister a fuller conviction of his inward serious



rious religion; but this we do not impose on any who declare to us their evidences of true Christianity. If the minister receives satisfaction from his discourse, he then privately informs one or two of the deacons, or aged and worthy members of the church, concerning it; and having learnt his name, character, business, and place of abode, if he be a stranger to them, they make what inquiry they can concerning the piety of his character, and his conversation in the world; and if it appear agreeable to the Gospel of Christ, they appoint some time when the pastor, and at least one of the brethren, may meet with the person proposing himself, to have some free conversation about the things of God; wherein there is nothing desired but a repetition of the same conference which the pastor before had with him.

Some one of the brethren is usually desired to be present, together with the pastor, at this second discourse with the person desirous of communion, to witness to the care of the pastor in his examination of persons to be admitted, and to begin an acquaintance with them. It has been also thought proper, on another account, viz. lest some busy and conceited members of the church should be over officious in visiting and examining such a person themselves, under pretence that the pastor has been too remiss in his inquiries. It may be said, that very bashful young persons will speak more freely before the minister alone. This is granted. But, inconveniences of this and other kinds will sometimes attend the management of this part of discipline, in all churches. And since these things are not expressly regulated by the Scripture, there is a great latitude left for every church, and the officers thereof, to practise, and to alter according to present circumstances and their best discretion, both for the purity and welfare of the church, and for the ease and encouragement of the persons to be admitted.

If the pastor and those brethren, to whom he has communicated the affair, be satisfied with regard to the knowledge, piety, and conversation of the person, his name and place of abode is then mentioned to the whole congregation at the Lord's table, that they may have a month's time for more public inquiry into his behaviour in the world; whether his character be unblemished and honourable. If they hear of any blemishes in his conduct, unsuitable to the character of a Christian, they are desired

to let the pastor, or the officers of the Church be speedily acquainted with it, and that privately, that the reputation of any person may not be publicly exposed; and that the matter may be dropt intirely, or delayed till his character be cleared from any such blemish or reproach. Then, on the Friday, in the afternoon, before the Lord's Supper, when the Church are met together, and desired to tarry after the public worship, the pastor declares, that he having heard a good character for seriousness and religion, and nothing blameable or offensive in the conversation of the person lately proposed to the Church, proceeds to acquaint them with a short account of the profession of his faith, and the reasons' of his hope, which the pastor has received from him; and if there be any thing peculiar and edifying in the methods of his conversion, the pastor declares it to the Church for their edification, so far as the person has communicated to the pastor with leave to declare it to the Church. Note, This profession is written by the person himself, or by the pastor from his mouth, as the person himself shall chuse.

This being done, the pastor declares, that as himself and one or two of the brethren had been well satisfied by their conversation, with the person, so he hoped that this account of things might also satisfy them, that the person was a credible professor of Christianity, and had a right to communien in all ordinances: and if they acquiesce in this account, and are willing to receive him to their communion, they are desired to signify their consent either by their silence, or the lifting up of their hands; which being done, a short prayer or thanksgiving is offered to God.

Note, though the person thus publicly approved, be hereby made a member of the church, yet he is not formally declared so till the Lord's day following, when a greater number of the members are present; that so the whole congregation may see the face, and know the person who is to be received a member amongst them.

Then on the following Lord's day, just before the Lord's supper, the pastor speaks in this manner to the person, placed somewhere near him, and in the face of the whole church. "The account of your conversation, together with the profession of your faith, has been repeated to the church, and they have declared their readiness to receive you into their fellowship. Are you now, therefore,

therefore, willing to give up yourself to our Lord Jesus Christ, and to walk with him in all his ordinances in this church, so far as Christ shall instruct and enable you?" The person declaring his consent, then the pastor replies to him in this manner, "I do, therefore, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, by the consent of this church, receive you to fellowship with us, in all privileges and institutions of the Gospel, charging you so to walk as to adorn the profession which you have now made, professing in my own name, and in the name of the church, to watch over you and discharge our several duties unto you by the assistance of divine grace."

RECEIVING A MEMBER FROM ANOTHER CHURCH,  
TO FIXED COMMUNION.

*From a Congregational Church.*

If the person who desires communion with us has been, or is a member of another church of Christ, that walks according to the same faith and order which we observe, and the reasons of his desire to change his communion are just, we then desire a letter of dismissal from that church to which he belongs, which is, or ought to be attended with some good character of the person who is thus dismissed. This letter being read to the church, and no objection made against the person, or the reason of his dismissal, the church declares their satisfaction and readiness to receive him into their communion, in silence or lifting up their hands; this is usually done on the Friday before the Lord's supper. Then on the Lord's day, the person is received into the communion, by the pastor addressing himself to him, and declaring the churches consent to receive him, and giving him a charge, to walk in this church with diligence and holy watchfulness, as through the grace of Christ he had been enabled to do in the church to which he was before related; using expressions near a kin to those used in the foregoing case.

Note.—If the person come from a Baptist church, where their discipline is congregational, we receive them in the same manner, when they will dismiss them to us; but this they seldom will do, as supposing us not to be baptized.

*From a Presbyterian Church.*

But if the person who desires our communion, hath been a member of such a church as never requires any

particular account of their Christian profession, and the reasons of their hope to be given to them, but are contented with a general account of their knowledge and their blameless conversation given only to the pastor; then we use this method, viz. if the reasons of his desire of changing his place of communion, be just and approved, we first desire an account and recommendation of this person from his pastor, either by letter or discourse; and such a recommendation, when given to us, is received and accepted by us, so far as concerns the knowledge and the blameless conversation of the person, which is all that his former pastor required, so far as we know. But we then usually desire some account of the reasons of his hope, and relate them to the church on the Friday before the sacrament, upon which he is received to our communion solemnly, the following Lord's day.

Note.—In receiving a member to our church who hath been in communion with any other church, of any denomination whatsoever, we generally let the church know of it, three or four weeks before hand, that if there should be any blemish, or scandal attending him, which was not known to the other church, we may have time and opportunity to enquire into it; and though several members of our church, are ever so well acquainted with the person, to be admitted, yet we usually give the same notice, that no offence may be taken in treating others so.

Note.—If any such objection be made against a person who is proposed to the church, as gives reason to delay, or forbid his admission, we drop the matter, as privately as may be, that no public dis-reputation may fall on the person on that account, though we generally make all the enquiries we can, before we bring matters into the church, that if possible there may be no stop to our proceedings afterwards.

#### OCCASIONAL COMMUNION.

When any person who is a member of another church, among the three denominations of Dissenters, viz. Presbyterian, Independent or Baptist, desires occasional communion with us, for one or two months or more, for special and justifiable reasons; viz. their present distance from the place of worship, in sickness or death of their pastor, their desire of communicating sometimes with the  
rest

rest of their family, &c. We then only give notice of it to the church, just before the first time of their communion with us; provided always, that we know the person, or that he be recommended to us by his own pastor, or by some persons whose testimony we can entirely rely upon.

It may be objected here, Why do you receive a member of a Presbyterian church to occasional communion with you, upon so slight a recommendation, and yet require a more particular account of him when he desires constant or fixed communion? To this we reply, That it is a matter of much more importance to receive a person into our congregation as a part, and member of the society as one of our body, and in order to worship always with us, and have a vote in all church affairs; than it is to receive one merely to sit down at the Lord's table, occasionally, and eat and drink with us once or twice at this ordinance; so that we think, the meer reason of things and Christian prudence gives us just ground to make a more particular inquiry into the character of the person in one case than in the other; just as any master of a family would be more solicitous whom he admitted to dwell in his house, than whom he admitted to dine there; and be more strict in inquiries about the one than the other,

Now, if persons continue more than a twelvemonth in occasional communion with us, we think it proper to give them notice, that they should either return and communicate with their own pastor and people, or that they should be dismissed entirely to us, in order to become members of the society with which they constantly communicate; unless they give us some satisfactory reason for their continuance in this occasional communion.

In all these affairs that relate to the recommendation, dimission, and occasional communion of the members of other churches joining with us, we endeavour to practise the same with regard to our own members, when they desire communion with other churches, as is here declared; following herein the great rule of our Saviour, "Do to others as you would have others do to you."

If any of our members fall into sinful practices, which give public offence to the world or to the church; or if they professedly depart from the doctrines which we think necessary to Christianity; or if they wilfully separate and absent themselves utterly from our communion for a year

or two, without any sufficient or justifiable cause, then, upon our notice of it, the pastor, or some one of the members that are best acquainted with him, is desired privately to inquire of them the reason of their conduct: if this does not reclaim them, two or three members of the church to repeat the same inquiry: if this has no effect, the church is acquainted with it, on some week day of our church meeting, and messengers are sent from the church to expostulate the case with him: and if no methods are effectual for reclaiming them, after due delays, and having reported the whole matter to the church, and sentiments of the church are required about it; and upon the concurrent vote of the church, according to the rule of Scriptura, we "*withdraw from those that walk disorderly,*" and declare them to belong to our communion no more: and thus we free ourselves from any further care of them as fellow members, and secure the church from the scandal which such members would or might bring upon it, according to the rule of Christ. Note—We practise the same thing, when any member departs and declares he will come no more.

Note—If the crime be of a most gross, profligate, and notorious nature, and proved by sufficient evidence to the church, then the sinner is excluded from the society, in a most solemn manner, and declared unfit for Christian fellowship, at least till there be evident and sufficient testimonials given of his repentance. But, in cases of less scandal or offence, we make much longer delays, and deal with persons by repeated admonitions; and we use greater patience and tenderness, in hope to reclaim them to their duty, without proceeding to any public censure.

#### OF RESTORING MEMBERS.

When any person, after long and wilful separation from the church, that has given just offence, or especially after any censure past upon him, desires to return to the church again, there is fresh inquiry made into his late conversation, as well as into his repentance and acknowledgement of his miscarriage; which being reported to the church, such a person is again received to the fellowship of the church, if there be no objection made against it by any of the members; but, if any such objection be made, it is always desired that it may be done privately before hand, and the matter is delayed till this objection be removed.

OF EXAMINATION OF MEMBERS TO BE ADMITTED,  
SOMETIMES BY THE PASTOR ALONE.

Let it be observed here, that these were the customs of the church, which for many years had been practised among us, with regard to admission and exclusion of members. But about the year 1728, the deacons complained to the minister, that when they were present with them to hear the profession of the faith and hope of persons who desired to enter into our communion; these persons did not speak so largely, nor so freely as the account which the ministers before gave them, concerning their profession; and that they saw little advantage of any of the brethren being joined with the ministers in the examination of them, by reason of the bashfulness and silence of the persons, that they thought it a needless thing to require this, their presence and attendance at the examination of the persons proposed; unless the persons themselves had so much courage, or such acquaintance with one or more of the deacons or church members as to declare their freedom to speak of their Christian experiences and hope in their presence; from which time the pastors, one or both of them, have conversed with the persons who desired church fellowship, and who were not free to converse with other members on this subject; and when the pastor has related to the church the substance of that conversation it has been esteemed a sufficient satisfaction; always supposing the enquiry to be made by any member of the church concerning their pious conversation, and report of it made to the church.

## SKETCH OF DR. RYLAND'S SERMON,

*Preached at Broadmead, Bristol, May 31, 1801;*

OCCASIONED BY THE DECEASE OF JOHN HARRIS, ESQ.  
ONE OF THE ALDERMEN OF THAT CITY.

*Psalm xxxvii. 37. Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright:  
for the end of that man is peace.*

**F**EW persons could be more averse to all funeral panegyrics on the dead, than the very excellent man, who has so lately left the Church, assembling in this place, to join the general assembly above; and, in his own case, he

he especially signified a desire that nothing might be said but what tended to the benefit of the living, and the honour of God, and his grace.

However, I cannot feel myself bound by any intimation from our deceased friend to omit illustrating the nature of real religion, and displaying the faithfulness of God to his people, by an example which has been conspicuous to all impartial spectators. Nor do I fear lest reading this passage should only give even the censorious an opportunity to expatiate on his defects when they get home. Though my acquaintance with him has been but of short standing, compared with that of many now present, yet nine years intercourse, and observation of his temper and conduct under trials and afflictions, have so confirmed the general testimony of those who knew him for a much longer period, that I do not hesitate to say, it would be hard to find a man whose integrity in general, and whose godly sincerity in his religious profession, could be less exposed to be called in question by any one whose opinion is worthy of the least regard.

And, thanks be to God, as the character in the text was evidently exemplified in his dear departed servant, so likewise was the truth of this observation illustrated, his *latter end was peace*.

But let me consider the doctrine of the text in a more general way; we may afterwards apply it particularly to our departed friend.

I would delineate the character, illustrate the affirmation, and enforce the injunction, and assign the reasons of it.

I. I am to delineate the character—*perfect, upright*.

The terms are so nearly, if not altogether synonymous, and so evidently belong to the same person, that I shall not attempt to distinguish them. The first is sometimes used in a higher sense than the latter, but is not so to be taken here.

To the character of absolute perfection, none of our race can lay claim. “Who can say, I have made my heart clean; I am clear from my sin?” “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves.”

He that can indulge the idea that he never sinned, has no knowledge at all of himself and his duty; and he that sees not a mixture of sin in all his present obedience, has a very defective acquaintance with the spirituality of the divine law, and the evil of his own heart.



Yet the text evidently speaks of some as perfect and upright, whose end we are assured is peace, and whose character and conduct, and circumstances, we are called to mark and behold.

In what sense can this appellation be given them? I dare not suggest that the expression here, and in many other places, refers directly to the imputed righteousness of Christ, though I believe that none of our race can be accepted of God but in his beloved Son; and that a man must be found in him, having on his righteousness, if he would escape the wrath to come, and be entitled to eternal life. But I think that the true saint is *here* denominated *perfect* and *upright* on another account; on account of his inherent disposition as renewed by the Holy Spirit, and his being sincerely and universally devoted to God.

No one can answer to this character, who does not know and approve of the standard of duty exhibited in the divine law.

He must be delivered from that carnal mind which is enmity against God, and cannot bear subjection to his law; and be renewed in the spirit of his mind. He must account all God's commands concerning all things to be right, and hate every false way. For one who is acquainted with the standard of duty, and sensible of the beauty of holiness, must have a proportionate view of the evil of sin; must admit the justice of God's displeasure, the dreadfulness of falling under it; must see the demerit of his transgressions, and yet wish to escape so awful a doom, but in a way consistent with God's honour.

Such a one will clearly see the insufficiency of his own righteousness, and the impossibility of attaining salvation by the works of the law.

He will be most heartily willing to be indebted to the mediation of Christ for his acceptance with God: he will not scorn the blood of sprinkling; but will thankfully submit to be saved by grace, and glory only in the cross. The upright love him who has magnified the law, and made it honourable; they are pleased with him, &c.

The upright will thankfully receive Christ in all his offices: he will acknowledge he is not his own: it is his desire to be wholly the Lord's: he will yield himself to God: he will not think his obligations to personal obedience lessened by Christ's having obeyed the law for him:

he will long for conformity to Christ: his being redeemed from the curse of the law will be no motive for him to break that law, which the Saviour so carefully kept, or despise that in which he delighted.

He that is most evidently perfect in one sense, will be most sensible of his own imperfection in another: he that aims most truly at full conformity to God, will be most sensible how far he falls short of it, will think himself most to blame for so doing, and be most grieved on that account.

He will think the lowest of his own attainments, and be most sensible of his own defects. He will be sensible that the obligations of the saved are not lessened but increased, by what Christ hath done for them. He will hunger and thirst after righteousness. He will prize the influences of the holy Spirit, and earnestly seek his aid.

He will be universally conscientious in his regard to the divine will, love the ordinances of God, and regard relative duties. Will be careful not to separate the two tables. Will be just and upright in his conduct among men, as well as punctual in his attendance on divine worship, &c.

It will afford strong evidence that this character belongs to a man, if he be consistent and persevering in his attention to every duty; yet never resting in past attainments, but pressing toward the mark, discovering more of his own defects, and labouring not to excuse them, but to be freed from them; bewailing his most secret sins, and longing for a state of absolute perfection in the world above—I am

II. To illustrate the affirmation, *The end of that man is peace.*

Being justified by faith, the believer has peace with God as soon as he has fled for refuge to the hope set before him; yet his spiritual enjoyments may be sometimes interrupted through the defects of his faith, through mistake, or temptation.

Yea, godly jealousy itself, and a sense of the awful consequence of a mistake in the momentous concerns of eternity, may occasion a degree of anxiety and suspicion of his own sincerity, which will have very painful effects.

Satan may also harass and perplex the mind; and, as he knows how to suit his temptations to the different temperaments of the bodily constitution, so some men of distinguished

distinguished integrity, may have a tendency of this kind to gloom and melancholy, which religion does not wholly overcome, and which probably gives the tempter a peculiar access to fill them, at times, with groundless distress.

Nor is the believer by any means exempt from outward troubles. He may have a large share of them, and, after being delivered once and again, may find a succession of them.

He is liable to pains and afflictions of body—losses and crosses—His unavoidable connection with wicked men would make him liable to be injured by them, (as they injure one another,) if they had no peculiar dislike to him for his religion. But often has the enmity of sinners been excited against men of whom the world was not worthy, by their very excellencies.

The Lord, also purposely, trieth the righteous for wise reasons, both to discover more of their imperfections to themselves and to manifest also their sincerity and the power of true Godliness; but their trials shall redound to his glory. Yet, at present, they are not joyous but grievous.

These trials may occur not only in younger life, but may sometimes be most severe, when the natural strength fails. Outward and inward trials may meet. Satan may take occasion to tempt the upright to question their interest in the divine favor, or even assault the very foundation of their hope, &c.

Yet God will not leave his people in their troubles. Sorrow may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. And often is that expression fulfilled in the death bed of a Christian, "At evening time it shall be light."

Very seldom, indeed, has an upright humble walker with God been suffered to leave the world in a state of darkness; and very often have those, who had been exercised with many tears, been freed from them all at last.

The end, however shall be perfect peace; eternal rest; not in endless sleep, but endless enjoyment and satisfaction. I proceed

III. To enforce the injunction, *mark the perfect man, and behold, &c.* This is to be done;—That you may see the reality, beauty, and genuine nature of true religion; it influences the whole man.—That you may see the advantages

vantages of true religion, with what a blessed end it is connected—That you may see the faithfulness of God to his people—That you may be excited to attend to religion yourselves—That you may be encouraged to trust in God—That you may be excited to bless God for eminent examples of sincerity and integrity; and yet be reconciled to his holy will in removing them, seeing they rest in peace. May you imitate them carefully, and possess solid evidence that you shall shortly join them in the world above!

And now, my dear friends! we have reason to bless God that in this world where so much wickedness abounds, and what is called a Christian land is filled with profligate, profane and irreligious characters, and too many careless and inconsistent professors, among those that make greater pretensions to religion; yet God has ever had some faithful servants, children that will not lie, witnesses for himself, who bear faithful testimony to the holy tendency of the Gospel. Thanks be to God that a succession of such characters has appeared in this church. And our late venerable Deacon may be confidently ranked among the most exemplary Christians we have known. I am not afraid to mention him as one proof—That a man who is in Christ is a new creature. He was baptized on a profession of faith, and received into this church near fifty six years ago, in the year 1745, before he was twenty years old; and from that period, I suppose, no man was more steady in his attachments to the doctrines of grace, more constant in his attendance on public ordinances, more conscientious and upright in his whole department. He was called to the office of Deacon, and solemnly ordained, August 28, 1760, and this whole Church can testify, that for forty years and upwards, he “used the office of a Deacon well,” and thus “purchased to himself a good degree” in the estimation of all who cared for the cause of Christ. So that we have like reason to respect his memory, as the Jews had to respect that of Jehoiada, “because he had done good in Israel, both towards God and his house.” He was one that feared God above many. He was a uniform consistent character, nobody could charge him with being one kind of man at home and another abroad. He manifested that the love of Christ constrains those, who have tasted the Lord is gracious, to depart from all iniquity.

The grace of God which bringeth salvation, taught him to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present evil world. His integrity was manifest in all his conduct, in the family, in the Church, and in the world. When he was chief magistrate of this city in 1790, he was enabled to discharge the duties of that office with great fidelity and respectability, and ever since he maintained the highest character for diligence and uprightnes in his civil capacity. So that God is witness, and you are witnesses, in how holy and blameless a manner he was concerned to walk before him.

How much he has been used to care for the welfare of this church, how he has strengthened the hands of your pastors, and how diligently he sought the peace and prosperity of the church when you were left without a pastor, you all know.

You know, likewise, a little of the trials he met with by sore bereavements and other afflictions, and how patiently he submitted to the most painful dispensations. When outward and inward troubles met together, though he sometimes sunk too low into dejection, and indulged groundless suspicions of his own state, yet he was far from murmuring against God. I have heard him, when in the most pitiable darkness as to his own state, express his sense of the divine righteousness in the strongest terms imaginable; and justify God, let what would become of him, even if he should be lost for ever.

He had such a sense of the excellence of true religion, and the vast importance of the heart being right with God, that he sometimes expressed himself afraid lest all that he had experienced should not amount to genuine piety; or lest there should be somewhat essential to true religion which he had never attained. But though like Hezekiah, he could sometimes say, "Behold for peace, I had great bitterness," the Lord left him not long without relief; "In love to his soul, he delivered it from the pit, and cast all his sins behind his back."

Several months ago he found great relief from a sermon preached in this place, from Isa. x. 27. and some time afterwards, when his bodily afflictions wer much increased, he told me, that he would not have been without his sharpest afflictions, for he had been favoured with such views of the Divine Glory, as were much more

than sufficient to counterbalance them. It would be worth while to go through much more than he had suffered, for such discoveries of God as he enjoyed under them. Indeed, he seemed to dread the removal of the affliction, lest his spiritual enjoyments should then be lessened. I am sorry the defect of my memory prevents my repeating his words more exactly, but I hope ever to retain the general impression of his conversation.

For several weeks past his disorder had rather lethargic tendency, which prevented his saying much when I visited him. But all he did say, indicated a mind deeply submissive to the will of God, relying on the atonement of Christ, wishing well to the interest of the Church, and waiting for the Lord's time to be admitted into his heavenly kingdom.

And now, can any one imagine it would have been better with our dear friend, if he had never known the religion of Jesus—If he had lived without prayer, without the fear or love of God, would he have been a better member of society, a better parent, or husband, or master, or magistrate? Would he have been happier himself, more exempt from trouble, or better prepared to bear it? —If he had trusted to his own righteousness, would he have been more zealous of good works? If he had trusted to bare repentance to make atonement for sin, would he have been more careful to depart from all appearance of evil? Would any other foundation of hope have given him more solid peace, and have enabled him to meet death with more composure?

Rather may I not ask, and appeal to your consciences, was not vital faith in Christ, the life-blood of all his virtues?

Had not true religion a happy effect on his whole character and conduct? And did not the consolations of the Gospel enable him to endure bereavements, losses, and afflictions, with such submission, and patience, and reliance on God, as could never have been derived from any other source? May his nearest relations—may all his descendants—may his intimate friends—may his late fellow members—may his numerous acquaintance, remember his amiable and exemplary character, imitate his example, bless God for his goodness to his deceased servant, and be prepared to meet him in the kingdom of God, Amen.

LETTER