

BIOGRAPHY.

MEMOIR OF THE REV. JAMES MORGAN,
Late of Bridgewater County of Somerset.

Mr. Morgan was born at Langlydon, in the County of Carmarthen, in the year 1758, of honest and respectable parents. His father attended Divine worship at the Independent meeting at Llandwr, and was a moral, upright man. His mother was a member of the Baptist Church at Newcastle Emlyn, and was a woman of exemplary piety and devotedness to God. In his earliest years his father and mother took care to train him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and to instruct him in the principles of true religion. And they had the unspeakable pleasure of seeing their labours crowned with success.

Mr. Morgan received the rudiments of his education at the Grammar school, at Llandwr; and as his father had designed him for business, the learning he acquired at that school was considered sufficient to qualify him for it.

At the age of 14 he was bound an apprentice to a clothier, and served his master faithfully for the space of seven years, several of which he had the entire management of the business.

He had serious impressions very early in life, which I believe is generally the case with those who are blessed with religious parents, provided they attend to the spiritual and eternal welfare of their children; but these impressions were but of momentary duration.

In early life Mr. Morgan delighted very much in reading, and used to buy up every opportunity for that purpose. But I have heard him acknowledge, with deep regret, that he read principally with a view to excel in controversy, of which, to use his own words, his proud, vain heart was exceedingly fond.

As he had regularly attended the means of grace from his childhood, and had been preserved from scandalous sins, for he was never addicted to cursing and swearing, Sabbath-breaking or drunkenness, his friends and neighbours considered him to be a very religious young man. Indeed, such is the self-flattery of the human heart, that Mr. Morgan entertained a very favourable opinion of his own moral and religious character.

In the year 1759, when he was 23 years of age, the Rev. Griffith Davis, of Swansea, came to Rhyd-wilm for the purpose of soliciting contributions for a meeting-house. Under the ministry of that gentleman God was graciously pleased to call him out of darkness into marvellous light. But as this part of the memoir is particularly important and interesting, I shall relate it as nearly as possible in his own words.

"It was (says Mr. Morgan) under a sermon delivered by Mr. Davis, that I was convinced of sin, of righteousness, and of judgement. By the gracious influence and energy of the Divine Spirit working with the word, my conscience was awakened in a very powerful manner; I saw myself to be a sinner of the first magnitude, and this discovery was attended with the most exquisite sorrow and distress of mind. In the anguish of my soul I cried, What shall I do to be saved? Lord save, or I perish. Formerly when I had some slight convictions, I strove, as much as possible, to shake them off; but now my only fear was lest my present alarming convictions and pungent distress should, by any means, be removed, without my being really converted to God. Before this, I occasionally used prayer, and trusted in my own righteousness; but now my every breath was prayer to my Redeemer; and I saw the total insufficiency of my own righteousness to justify me before God. I had such awful views of my fallen state, my sins appeared so heinous, so aggravated, and so numerous; and I saw myself to be so vile and polluted, that I thought it impossible for God to save me consistently with justice and holiness, and his other Divine perfections. However, I still sought redemption through the blood of Christ, in a diligent use of the means of grace; and in particular, I prayed earnestly and vehemently to him for salvation and eternal life. One evening, when I was in private, agonizing with God in prayer for mercy, and almost hopeless of obtaining it; all at once Divine light shone upon my mind. That precious passage of scripture was powerfully applied to

my soul, 'The things which are impossible with men are possible to God,' Luke xviii. 27. In that moment I was delivered from the horrors of a guilty conscience, from the anguish of a troubled spirit, and from the dreadful, terrific fears of eternal judgment, and eternity, with which my mind had been so painfully exercised. Oh what joy and peace filled my heart! Jesus now became so precious as no language can express. His love was shed abroad in my heart, I felt his presence to be nearer to me than all created good. I now saw that there was hope even for me, a poor hell-deserving sinner; and, through grace, I was enabled to cleave to Jesus Christ, by the exercise of a living faith, and to expect present and eternal salvation through his merits alone. No sooner was my soul converted to God, than I lost all relish for controversy. I felt a love for all good men, however they differed from me in some points of doctrine and discipline."

A few months after his conversion, Mr. Morgan gave in an account of his religious experience to the church of Rhyd-wilm, and was publicly baptized by the pastor, the Rev. John James; after which he was received a member of that church.

He was soon particularly noticed for his sincere piety by his beloved pastor, who very much encouraged him to pray at their public prayer-meetings. But such was his excessive modesty and diffidence, and such the mean opinion he entertained of his abilities, that he was very reluctant to appear, in any respect, as a public character in the church of God. What is extraordinary, a few months after Mr. Morgan's admission to the Baptist church, Mr. James observed to him, and to many others of the brethren, that he had two things very powerfully impressed upon his mind: one was, that he should soon be taken from them to a better world; and the other was, that Mr. Morgan would soon be called to the ministry. It is very remarkable, that Mr. James died about nine months after Mr. Morgan was admitted a member of his church. As the prediction of his own death had been so wonderfully accomplished, they began to think that the other would be accomplished also. In this they were not mistaken. God, who had intended his servant for great usefulness, laid the foundation of it in a sound conversion; and, what is of great importance to the ministerial character, in genuine humility of mind. For he had such views of preaching the gospel, and believed himself to be so deficient both in gifts and grace for so holy and Divine an employment, that he trembled lest he should run before he was sent. But after the decease of their venerable pastor, the brethren were very importunate with him to labour in the Lord's vineyard; nor would they listen to any thing he said in opposition to their request, or acquiesce in his desire to continue a private member.

Yielding at length to their incessant importunity, with fear and trembling, and much prayer, he ventured to preach that gospel which he had found to be the power of God unto salvation. He began first, in the neighbouring villages, chiefly among his own friends, that they might judge whether or not the Great Head of the Church had furnished him with gifts for the great work of the ministry. The more they heard him for the Lord was with him, the more thoroughly were they persuaded that a dispensation of the gospel was committed to him.

About this time, Mr. Morgan's father engaged suitable premises, and purchased tools and other necessary articles preparatory to his son's commencing business: but God, who soon found, had other business for him to be engaged in. To his great surprise, he learned, that his beloved son, with heartfelt concern, saw the dangerous condition of sinners, and thought that he could spend his whole life in warning them to flee from the wrath to come, and in inviting them to Christ as the only refuge for guilty mortals. Mr. Morgan considering the importance and necessity of mental improvement to qualify him for expounding God's holy word, told his friends, that if they would recommend him to an academy, he would cheerfully relinquish all his worldly prospects, and wholly dedicate himself to the service of his ever-blessed Redeemer. The church unanimously recommended him to the late Rev. Mr. Evans, of Bristol. He left Wales in the year 1762, and on his arrival at Bristol was kindly received by his tutors.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

DOMESTIC MISSIONARY INTELLIGENCE.

To the Editor of the New Brunswick Religious and Literary Journal.

DEAR SIR,—I have much pleasure in communicating to you, for insertion in your interesting Paper, the following particulars respecting a Missionary Meeting, held in this Town last evening, should they meet your approbation. Have the kindness to give them a place in your next number.

A. M.

FREDERICTON, Feb. 17, 1829.

On the last Lord's day, according to previous notice, a Missionary Sermon was preached at the Wesleyan Chapel in Fredericton, by the Rev. Mr. Smithson, in the forenoon, and one in the evening by the Rev. Mr. Strong, on both which occasions the importance and necessity of making every proper exertion to spread the knowledge of the Redeemer amongst the benighted nations of the earth, was very powerfully and impressively set forth.

And on Monday evening, 18th inst.—the Anniversary of the Fredericton Wesleyan Branch Missionary Society, was held in the Wesleyan Chapel, which was crowded with an attentive congregation. The services commenced with singing and prayer, by the Rev. Mr. Williams, after which William Taylor, Esq. (one of the Representatives of this County) was called to the Chair. A very interesting Report was then read by the Rev. Mr. Strong.—After the Report had been received it was moved by the Rev. Mr. Williams, and unanimously carried, that you Sir, as Editor of the New Brunswick Religious and Literary Journal, should be requested to insert that Report in the pages of your valuable paper, with as little delay as possible. Among the speeches delivered upon this interesting occasion, there was little, if any, of that studied eloquence which merely gratifies the ear, without producing any beneficial effect. But the individuals who addressed the meeting, appeared in doing so, to give utterance to some of the best emotions of the human mind, whilst they were impressively pleading the cause of the perishing heathen. And the congregation thus affecting addressed proved by the collection which was made that their hearts warmly responded to the sentiments advanced. The amount collected at this Anniversary is £13, which considering the unprecedented scarcity of money is a sum far beyond what might have been expected.

After the meeting had continued more than two hours and a half, it was concluded by singing that admirable Hymn on the 427th page "On all the earth, &c." and by Prayer.

REPORT

OF THE FREDERICTON WESLEYAN MISSIONARY BRANCH SOCIETY.

In presenting this Report of the Fredericton Wesleyan Missionary Branch Society, the Committee feel much satisfaction in meeting the friends of this good cause in a tone of congratulation on the efficiency of their past exertions, and with the most lively sentiments of gratitude to Almighty God, for the encouraging success which has attended the parent Institution, in the widely extended field of its operations.

The progress of Christian Missions in the arduous but merciful enterprise, to enlighten, and bless the world, cannot be contemplated by a pious mind, without feelings of the deepest interest; every year adds to the number of their victories; and by hastening the period of their universal triumph, over the polluting superstitions which have so long debased and afflicted mankind, strengthens the confidence and invigorates the efforts of their benevolent supporters.

We are warranted by the faithful word of prophecy, connected with the signs of the times, in believing that the sublime and glorious object, to which the united prayers and energies of the whole Christian Church are directed, will be certainly, and perhaps speedily realized. The Protestant Church, which has been for some time encroaching Catholic in its spirit, is already, in no small degree, Catholic also in its extent; and encircles in its pale, people of many nations and kindreds and tongues. It is true, the aggregate number of converts made by all Missionary Societies taken collectively, is comparatively small; but then they are the first fruits of nations;—they prove, by actual experiment, that universal man may be evangelized. If our dove of peace has returned with but one olive branch in its mouth, we have satisfactory assurance that the wasting water