

which we lately published) any reference to religion or country." But we rather think that our correspondent alludes to a systematic mode of relief, and not to isolated cases of individual suffering; for he proceeds to inquire, "Ought not every church to support its own poor? Is it not the duty of Roman Catholics to support their's? And yet there are at this moment hundreds of them in a starving condition, particularly in Grifflintown, totally neglected by their priests and their church." Under these circumstances, we humbly conceive it to be the duty of Protestants to represent such cases whenever they are met with, in the proper quarter; and we believe the application will not be in vain. We strongly deprecate any mixture of narrow-mindedness or sectarianism, in the dispensation of our charity. Let Protestants be influenced by that holy motive suggested by our Lord himself,—“That others seeing your good works may glorify your Father which is in heaven.” But we would not be understood to say, that no distinction should be made in the amount and permanency of the relief afforded; for we are commanded to do good to all, but “especially to them who are of the household of faith.” While the former should not by any means be neglected, the latter should be treated as “brethren” in a more peculiar sense. We fully agree with the concluding remarks of the communication before us, viz: “I am no advocate for state provision for the poor; a large proportion of such provision is generally squandered in large salaries on officials, and the poor pittance doled out to the poor is given in so improvident a manner that it only serves to make paupers of them. In a Christian country every individual ought to belong to some church; and if any are in pecuniary distress, it is the duty of the church to take care of them. To this end some efficient plan should be adopted, which should form an important and integral part of the affairs of the church. Lending money is better than giving it; in case it be not paid back it can at all events be no worse than giving it away. Labour for money is still preferable. One shilling earned by labour or otherwise, is worth two received as a gift.”

THE Annual Meeting of the Christian Mutual Improvement Society (late the Young Men's Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge) was held on Tuesday evening last, in the basement story of the Wesleyan Chapel; when a most interesting Report of the Society's proceedings was read; from which it appears that the object of the Association has been fully realized, and that it is now in a very flourishing condition.—After the company had partaken of some excellent refreshments, the meeting was favoured with some valuable addresses from the Rev. Messrs. Wilkes, Lang, Cooney, and Dr. Carruthers. The surplus receipts of this meeting have been appropriated to the funds of the Strangers' Friend Society—whose claims were most ably advocated by its Treasurer, Mr. Yates. The company separated at an early hour, highly gratified and doubtless much edified. We heartily recommend the Christian Mutual Improvement Society to the young men of our different churches, (for it is purely anti-sectarian) as an

excellent means of strengthening Christian principles, and promoting advancement in the knowledge and love of God.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE CONVERSION OF THE JEWS.
LETTER IX.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN MIRROR.

SIR,—We shall now endeavour to bring to a close our controversy on the above subject; and which we hope may the more easily be done, since your respected correspondent, who has defended the negative of the argument, has withdrawn from the discussion. This we the less regret from his unhappy and almost incurable infirmity of misunderstanding and misapplying the “plain declarations of the Word of God,” and which has occasioned a considerable delay in regard to the primary object of the correspondence. But for this source of interruption, it must have been long since most obvious that for the future national conversion of the Jews to the faith of Christ we have special reasons of hope which do not with equal force apply to any other nation.

In reply to our first letter in favour of this animating doctrine, J. H. complains that we have “scarcely advanced a single argument”—a declaration which early discouraged the hope that a discussion, having the most pacific intentions, would produce any desirable influence on his own mind. But still it is hoped that not a few will have seen that while, in that communication, we only attempted one point of argument, we assuredly did not fail to accomplish the object we therein proposed.

The first objection started by J. H. to the future conversion of the Jewish nation is, that “the purposes for which they were raised up as a nation were accomplished at the advent of the Messiah;” and hence, that as a separate and distinct people, God will no more deal with them. Our first letter was intended to overthrow this position. And if there be any signification in words, “the pious and intelligent reader” will have decided that this objection of J. H.'s arises from such a want of correct acquaintance with the subject as, considering the positiveness of his tone of writing, he will allow us to say, was truly not to his credit as a Christian controversialist.

Our argument was founded on Rom. xi. 11, 12, 15, in which Saint Paul triumphantly calculates on unprecedented benefits (THEN, and STILL future) to be derived to the world at large, through the instrumentality of the nation of “Israel.” Surely, from this, the only rational conclusion is that the Jews were raised up for purposes of utility and subserviency to the Divine government which were not “accomplished at the advent of the Messiah.”

If this objection was by him advanced as an argument that the Jews are no longer to be considered by us in their distinctive character as a separate nation, and hence that their national conversion on that account is not to be expected; by the reversal of that argument we have laid a foundation for the reversal of its inference; and it must be conceded that so far as that argument is concerned we have immovably established the contrary position.

The smooth and conclusive course of our discussion was, however, soon interrupted by a theological objection on the part of J. H., but which he has only substantiated by an appeal to his own JUDGMENT; which, he says, is his supreme authority in such matters. The objection is, that the eleventh chapter of the Romans has no application to the subject: that Saint Paul is there referring by no means “to Israel as a nation,” but to “the spiritual Israel”—the possessors of “the faith of Abraham,” of whatever nation. Could this objection be supported, our position would indeed become untenable. But, in truth, no support is produced. Without any argument drawn from the chapter to prove the validity of his objection to our application of its contents, J. H. considered it amply sufficient to declare as follows: “For my own part, I CANNOT SEE what bearing these verses have on the subject!”

From this, the reader will see that instead of our reasoning having been pronounced “scarcely an argument,” it ought to have been pronounced a most triumphant refutation of his first objection, since he was unable to furnish any

counter-reasoning. There was an air of impermanency in all this which, unless it amused by its self-importance, would be sure to offend by its perverseness. Happily the latter was not the effect. But every well-informed and well-regulated mind will regard it very much in the light of an insult, to have the force of his argument bluntly denied, unless also the accuracy of his reasoning shall be fairly disproved.

At this point, we confess, we had one of two alternatives presented to our choice, either at once to proceed to a condign chastisement of such an unjustifiable polemical transgression, or to pursue a more lenient course. We determined, by a goodnatured forbearance, which induced somewhat of a style of desultoriness, to encourage your eccentric correspondent to bring out all he had to say on the subject, in his own antinomian method; of this we have had as *unique* a specimen as perhaps, on the part of any respectable writer, can be found in all the records of literary prodigction. The sum and substance of the whole, so far as the eleventh chapter of the Romans is concerned, has never gone farther than this: “This chapter is generally misunderstood. It has never been properly elucidated. It ought to be explained. I CANNOT SEE that the conversion of the Jews is taught here!”

It may be sufficient to reply to this, that while we may lament your respected correspondent should have to make so deplorable an avowal of his defect of intellectual vision, we, for our own part, have to be thankful we do not labour under the same melancholy disadvantage. We beg to assure him, we “SEE” plainly enough, whether he does or not, that the conversion of the Jews as a nation IS TAUGHT HERE. Nor will he expect that others will close their eyes to the truth because unhappily he “CANNOT SEE.”

Were we singular in our opinion of this chapter, or only supported therein by persons not more knowing than ourselves, we hope we should have sensibility enough to avow such an opinion with a modest and becoming deference for the judgment of our “betters.” But it is a satisfaction that so many of the most celebrated “SEERS” of “the Church” have borne testimony as to what may be SEEN in the chapter.

Previously to his denial of the applicability of the eleventh chapter of the Romans to our side of the argument, we respectfully contend that J. H. should have produced his argument against it, deduced from an analysis of the contents of the chapter and a review of its connection. He has adopted another and singular mode; first to refuse our quotation, and then to call for an explanation of its real meaning. This certainly looks too much like a disposition to “*upset the Scriptures*” to suit a pre-conceived notion. Common sense and common propriety would both dictate, that unless he produced a better explanation he would be bound to abide by the one we had assumed; especially since, after all, he was obliged to admit it to be “*confessedly difficult*” to explain it in favour of his own position.

J. H. seems so far to have taken the dimensions of the understanding of your readers as to conclude that his “I CANNOT SEE” would perfectly convince them all that NOTHING IS TO BE SEEN in the chapter to encourage special hope for the future conversion of the Jewish nation. Your correspondent dates his letters from “*Montreal*.” And this (to use a trading phrase) may be “a very good fit” for some in that influential city, while others will assuredly reject it. But, for the credit of our neighbourhood, we assure you, Mr. Editor, there are several, even in these country parts, for whom such an argument is very considerably “*too small*.”

We would be sorry to discourage the laudable attempt of an enterprising spirit in any honourable department of useful science; but, as a theological instructor, J. H. must be prepared to be regarded by “the pious and intelligent reader” with no small degree of distrust, after his announcement respecting the epistle to the Romans that the judgment of “the Church” is it has never yet been properly explained. With some readers this alone would inspire them with the most unbounded confidence in his critical qualifications. “There must be some of THAT sort to make up some of ALL sorts.” There are individuals who, according to his own showing, would instantly proclaim so bold and adventurous a writer to be an expositor of the Holy Scriptures