

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## THE CONVERSION OF THE JEWS.

## LETTER XX.

SUBJECT IN DISCUSSION: The GENERAL SCOPE AND BEARING, on the Question, of the Epistle to the Romans.—No. 9.—Analysis.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN MIRROR.

SIR,—In our last letter, we have seen the twelve reasons on account of which St. Paul professes against the idea that God had so "cast away" the Jewish nation, as to forbid the hope of their ultimate national recovery to his forfeited favour and acceptance. In reading the contents of this eleventh chapter, the pious and intelligent reader has observed the four following particulars.

FIRST. That by the "covenant" made with their "fathers," Jehovah stood engaged to give to their "disobedient and gainsaying" posterity, a national salvation from their sins; ver. 27. "This is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." See also Jeremiah xxxi. 31 to 34; Heb. viii. 8 to 12; x. 15 to 17.

SECONDLY. That this work of national mercy was to be accomplished by "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ;" and that it was reserved for the gospel dispensation to effect that triumph over the national unbelief of Israel which all previous dispensations, whether of mercy or of judgment, had failed to accomplish; ver. 26. "There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob."

THIRDLY. St. Paul, even in his day, regarded this work of national mercy as not having been then accomplished; seeing he speaks of it as an event yet to occur. His words are—verse 26—"And so ALL ISRAEL SHALL be saved, AS IT IS WRITTEN."

FOURTHLY. That, in our day, this joyful event still lives in the PAGE OF PROPHECY ALONE.—History presents us with no record of such fact. It must be regarded as an occurrence YET IN THE FUTURE!

As Wesley observes, "The Deliverer is come, but not in the full fruit of his coming."

What judgment, then, must we form of those persons, who, with so much bold and shameless effrontery, and on pain of damnation, prescribe the following opinion to the world of mankind?—"V. There are none of the prophetic periods, AS WE UNDERSTAND THEM, extending beyond the [Jewish] year 1813!"

These persons are very fond of applying to themselves those words in the prophet Daniel xii. 10: "the WISE SHALL UNDERSTAND!" The question is, HOW do these men of "1813" UNDERSTAND? and the answer immediately suggested by this "Scripture" is, "THEY EVIDENTLY MIS-UNDERSTAND!"

Had they not better surrender the self-conferred title of "THE WISE," and assume that which our Saviour deemed it salutary and proper to fix on some mistaken good men, in the days of his first Advent: "O FOOLS, and slow of heart to believe ALL THAT THE PROPHETS HAVE SPOKEN!"

We proceed to observe, that, in this chapter, II. St. Paul reasons ON THE INFERENCES of the anticipated recovery of the Jewish nation to God, "through Christ."

It will be seen, the apostle here speaks of an "Israel" which is "faded," "broken off,"—"diminished,"—"cast away." This is again repeated in that solemn hope of putting a blush on the cheek of that folly which maintains, that it is of the salvation of "the spiritual Israel," he is here discoursing. This sufficiently demonstrates that to be a perversely foolish misconception of the passage.

It is observable the word "fall" is here used as was the term "cast away," with two distinct shades of signification. And he introduces the two ideas, on purpose to repudiate the one, with a solemn "God forbid!" and to admit the other, and found thereupon his most animating strain of argument; ver. 11. "I say, then, have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid! but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, to provoke them to jealousy!"

Is their national condition a desperate one? Is it to be regarded as incurable? For OTHERWISE, we see a picture in their case which renders it most hopeful. The good physician has only permitted the disease of the patient for a

season to become more virulent, while he tries his sovereign remedy on another subject, before his eyes; the successful experiment of which will induce the unbelieving patient to make an experiment himself of the specific he now rejects. "And SO ALL ISRAEL SHALL BE SAVED, as it is written;" ver. 26.

The "fall" St. Paul repudiates, is such a one as would be total and final; while he admits the temporary depression as a nation from their former privileges as "the peculiar people of God," but which they had "stumbled" by their "unbelief."

A learned theological critic, of high character, informs us that the second word rendered "fall" by our venerable translators, "is a very soft word, in the original," and signifies rather a "slip" than a "fall."

As a nation, they stumbled and "slipped" into a state of judicial degradation; but this is not to be regarded as their total and final "fall." This is "rather" to be viewed as a temporary evil, permitted, as a means, to a long lasting good! This has been over-ruled, by the compassionate government of God, for the immediate "salvation" of "the Gentiles;" who had been "cast away" for more than two thousand years, on account of their abominations. And the "Gentile salvation" shall also be ultimately over-ruled to become the strong and powerfully stimulating means of leading the degraded Jews to recover themselves from the false step they took, in rejecting the Son of God, and from the downward "slip" in the scale of being, by which they fell in consequence.

But I must reserve the further discussion; and remain,

Dear Sir, yours,

AN HUMELE BELIEVER IN A MILLENNIUM YET TO BE PRODUCED BY THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST.

Near Lake Champlain,  
April 15, 1844.

## THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY.

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN MIRROR.]

ONE of the distressing doctrines of Christianity is the resurrection of the body. How thankful should we be for the Gospel, which kindles in our breasts the joyful expectation of a period in which this event shall assuredly take place!—Before this glorious discovery was made to the world, all the generations of men, except perhaps a few saints of the Jewish Church, sank into the silent tomb in sadness, without knowing what was to become of them. Good men might wish, and wise men expect, a life to come; but those wishes, and those expectations, were mixed with many doubts and misgivings. All their reasoning about a future state were crude and gross. Death was a deep gulph, of which they saw only the entrance; or if the trembling soul could dimly descry beyond that gulph a distant shore, where it hoped for existence among kindred and intellectual spirits, yet could she never dream that her companion, the body, should recover from the ruin and dishonour of the tomb. Accordingly, the last mournful, solemn words of sorrowing friends, when they looked back on the funeral pile, after paying the last duty to the lifeless clay, were, Farewell, eternally farewell! This rendered death indeed a King of Terrors. But since Christ, who is the first fruit and pledge of a general resurrection, and, by a strong figure of speech, the resurrection itself, is risen, this formidable enemy is stripped of all his terrors, and lies at our feet vanquished and disarmed. The Christian can now adopt the language of ancient prophecy, and say, "O death, I will be thy plague." In the awful moment of his departure, he can sing with St. Paul, "O death, where is thy sting?" and where, O grave, is thy victory?" The believer does not now behold heaven, as Balaam did the Messiah, afar off; nor as Moses did the land of Canaan into which he might not enter; but, like dying Stephen, he sees it nigh and open to receive him. This makes him enter the dark vale undaunted, and walk in the shadow of death undismayed; for he hears the voice of Him who conquered death and the grave saying to him—"Fear not; I am he that was dead and am alive, and live for evermore, and have the keys of hell and of death." Rec. i. 17, 18.

The sad survivor, too, knowing that the hour is coming in the which they that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God and live, can more cheerfully resign the friend

that was to him as his own soul. Supported by the pleasing hope which the prospect of a resurrection day inspires, he feels, amidst the tears which nature sheds, a kind of mournful joy, as he takes the last farewell of his dearest relation. Along with the burst of grief, he can now give vent to the voice of faith.

There will be an unspeakable difference between the resurrection of the just and that of the unjust. "Blessed are all they that have part in the first resurrection!" Who would not wish to be in the number! But idle wishes are of no avail. The most earnest endeavours to pass from a life of sin to a life of holiness are necessary, before we can reasonably expect such happiness. They only who are thus in earnest can expect the aid of the Holy Spirit in this world, or the comfort of beholding the face of Jesus, without dismay, when this world is over.—Should we not, therefore, strive, like persons in an agony, till we have found ourselves "passed from death unto life," and are made new creatures in Christ Jesus.

The difference between the resurrection of the good and the bad should teach us to turn our attention more to that quality which will distinguish one man from another in eternity. Instead of being forever dazzled with the little distinctions of this life, and computing men's happiness according to their station—which is as absurd as if we should calculate the enjoyment of an insect from the colour of its wings—let us learn to make piety and virtue the sole object of our admiration and pursuit. All the momentary distinctions of riches and grandeur will soon vanish, and be no more; whilst holiness will raise its possessors to an eternity of bliss and honour.—The last day may bring about such a reverse of fortunes, that the mighty lord, who now looks down with scorn upon the pious beggar, "whom he would disdain to set with the dogs of his flock," (Job xxx. 1.) must then, if he would see him, cast his eyes upwards, and look for him among the archangels. God only knows who are rich and who are poor till the accounts are finally balanced before the great tribunal. Many of "the kings of the earth and captains," and such as we call great and rich men, will then be so ashamed of their souls' poverty, that they will seek to hide themselves in dens, and par to the rocks to cover them; while the lowest poor, who "cut up mallows by the bushes, and juniper roots for their meat," (Job xxx. 4.) shall, if they were rich in grace, soar with joy to meet their Lord, and exchange the cry of "How long!" for the glad song of "Behold he cometh!" O keep me holy and upright, my God, and let who may be great.

The barren fig-tree is cursed; the unfruitful tree in the vineyard is condemned; the virgins who neglected to procure oil are excluded from the feast; and the servant who only laid up his talent in a napkin, is "cast into outer darkness." How should these considerations engage us, not to be barren or unfruitful in the work of the Lord, especially as we know our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.

And if the rewards shall be distributed in proportion to the improvement of our talents, and the degree of happiness be correspondent to the degrees of holiness, which may be called the capacity for happiness; then why not zealously exert ourselves to advance as much as possible in holiness, while our season of improvement shall continue. Why not have the sacred ambition to aspire to something more than the very lowest seat in the scale of glory. And indeed, if we do not aim as high as we possibly can, there is the greatest danger that we shall altogether fall short of the mark and lose the prize.—The bare possibility of so dreadful a risk is enough to alarm the wise. I could bear the thoughts of any disappointment on earth, or of any misery that is circumscribed by time; but every atom of the body trembles like a leaf, and the soul startles to the very centre, at the apprehension of losing heaven, or of incurring a pain that is eternal. O my God! bid my hope of heaven blossom as the rose; and blast, if such is thy pleasure, all earthly comforts!—for, "although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flocks shall be cut off from the folds, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet will I rejoice in the Lord—I will joy in the God of my salvation."