

We have to acknowledge the receipt of a copy of "The Wesleyan-Methodist Almanac and General Religious Calendar for the Province of Canada, for 1844." This little work reflects much credit on the enterprising publishers—containing, as it does, a great mass of interesting matter, well selected and arranged, and, in our opinion, well calculated to secure for it a very extensive circulation. It is published at the low price of fourpence halfpenny.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"THE CONVERSION OF THE JEWS." LETTER VII.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN MIRROR.

SIR,—Another objection of your respected correspondent's to the doctrine of the future conversion of the Jewish nation to the Faith of Christ, is grounded on the assumption that the Scriptures adduced in its favour, are entirely misunderstood when so applied.

It is not denied that the terms "Jews" and "Israel" sometimes express what J. H. designates "the spiritual Israel;" not the lineal descendants of Abraham, as such, but all those "of every nation" who partake of "the faith" of that venerable patriarch. Thus in Rom. ii. 28, 29, "He is not a Jew which is one outwardly, [merely] but he is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision is of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter." And again: Rom. ix. 6: "For they are not all Israel who are of Israel;" on which J. H. truly remarks, "Here are two Israels, one evidently different from another."

To be able to agree, even so far, is gratifying. And in the quotation of those Scripture phrases, which are used in more than one sense, it is most obviously important to fairness of reasoning and correctness of conclusion, that suitable care and discrimination should invariably be exercised. Even in the present discussion, some trouble would have been spared us, had such a care and discrimination been observed by our friend J. H. This we have already been under the painful necessity of evincing. And of this we have additional evidence in his notice of Rom. xi. 26: "And so all Israel shall be saved." Relative to this Scripture he writes innocently enough: "This understood of Israel, as a nation, would not be true: as it is certain many of them have been lost!"

Two rather singular errors here stare us in the face, the one arising from the other: first, that the only signification of the phrase "Israel, as a nation," is that of the entire people of the Jews, in all its generations, past, present, and to come. Secondly, that unless every individual in all the past and future ages of Israel be saved, it never can be truly said of them, "as a nation," "all Israel shall be saved."

Whatever may be said of the logic or the theology of this criticism, it must at least be allowed to display no ordinary degree of liveliness of imagination. But if J. H. attributes to us the last mentioned opinion, he has perfectly misapprehended our position, and his arrow is entirely wide of the mark. Those who think with us, have not the smallest expectation of any national conversion, which will exercise a retrospective influence on the destinies of departed generations. We cherish no hope that even one (much less that "all") of the unhappy multitudes of Israel "shall be saved," who, having died in their sins, irrecoverably "have been lost!" That would be a notion not sufficiently PROTESTANT for our acceptance. Such a point of "OXONIAN TRACTARIANISM," we have not TRACT-ability enough to receive. Too well do we bear in mind, and too devoutly do we believe, that tremendous Scripture, even to pray for the salvation of the dead: "There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest." Eccles. ix. 10.

The finger of divine prophecy, must of course be understood as pointing forward to occurrences which are still in the future. J. H. pronounces, indeed, that the passage under consideration is "not a prophecy." But it is easy for some men to write the most unjustifiable things without either fear or blush. If it be not a prophecy, we are utterly ignorant of what, in reality constitutes a prophecy. Johnson defines prophecy to

be "the prediction of future events." And here St. Paul avowedly speaks of a salvation of "Israel" yet future; and predicted most distinctly of an age of the world yet to come: "shall be saved," are his words; and the announcement is made by him for the express purpose of correcting the notions which some had entertained respecting the ultimate condition of the Jewish nation. It will hence be deemed perfectly irrelevant to the argument, to digest from the past as to our hopes for the future; or to DENY that, in a future day, all that nation "shall be saved," because hitherto, "it is certain many of them have been lost!"

There is evidently an intentional deference to the authority of Scripture, when really understood by him, which prepossesses us in favour of J. H., notwithstanding the occasional lameness of his logic, and the unfortunate character of some of his theological adventures. And it has been thought his opposition to Israel's future conversion arises chiefly from his confusedness of notion as to the real nature of the subject, together with a want of distinct perception of the teaching of Sacred Writ respecting it. This suggestion is made in all sincerity. It is not to our taste to make a ridiculous misrepresentation of a friendly controvertist; either by INVENTION, or otherwise.

In endeavouring to take from our side of the argument the Scripture now in question, J. H. has given an interpretation not unusually applied to national movements. If we speak of the American "nation" having elevated the late General Harrison to the distinguished office of President of their cherished Republic, we do not mean to include in our idea the people of that nation who were contemporaries with the celebrated Washington; but the "nation" as it existed two or three years ago. With all the individual changes which have since taken place, the Americans are as really a nation now as they were at the period of their Revolution; and the acts of the majority of their citizens this year are as really the acts of their "nation," as have been or will be those of any previous or subsequent period. With the greatest propriety, also, speaking of France, we may say, "All the French are governed by Louis Philippe."—"No," says the lively logic of your respected correspondent: "this understood of the French AS A NATION, WOULD NOT BE TRUE; AS IT IS CERTAIN many of them were in their graves long before his Majesty was born!" A person must be accommodating indeed to sit down "on the same level," with "SUCH REASONERS!"

The patriot who becomes the envied means of benefitting the country of his birth and even the age only in which he lives, is properly enough eulogized as a national beneactor—a blessing to his "nation." And, although he may not be so happy as to extend the benefit retrospectively, to every individual of his nation who may have existed in the bygone ages of its history:—still he will be recognised as an ornament and an advantage to his "nation," because he was so to THE THEN EXISTING GENERATION of that "NATION." Nor are instances wanting, in the Scripture, of a similar use of the term; to mention but a few: 1 Chron. xiv. 17; Habak. i. 6; Luke xxiii. 2; Acts x. 22. It would make nonsense of these passages, to give to the term "nation" the signification to which J. H. would restrict its use.

The Scripture doctrine relative to Jewish conversion is, that there shall yet be found on earth A LIVING GENERATION of Jewish people, who, (or the major part of them) by divine grace, shall so have profited by the judicial and disciplinary dispensations of God towards them as fully to "turn to the Lord, the Spirit;"—that then "the veil shall be taken away" from "their minds;"—that then "they shall look on Him whom they have pierced, and mourn;" and then they shall joyfully behold "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." 2 Cor. iii. 14 to 18; Zech. xii. 10; 2 Cor. iv. 6; Rom. xi. 25 to 27.

In the animating prospect of this glorious and rapidly approximating era, our hearts expand and rejoice. "The signs of the times" proclaim that, even now, the agencies are visibly operating for the production of this state of things; so greatly and mutually to the advantage, at once, both of the literal and the spiritual "Israel."—With yearning compassion towards still benighted and unbelieving Israel, and with adoring thanks-

givings to God, we unite in the song of the ancient Jewish Church; and exclaim: "When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory;" his character as the Supreme Ruler shall be evidently most glorious. "He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer;" the "destitute" Jews shall have become a praying people, and their supplications shall be wondrously followed by showers of blessing. Former generations of their "kinsmen according to the flesh," have gone down to the grave in silence. But "this shall be written for the GENERATION to come; and the people which SHALL BE CREATED shall praise the Lord."—Psalm ciii. 16 to 18. This will be a most happy and marvellous page of the Jewish history; though viewed in connexion with the mournful assertion of J. H. bearing on the state of the Jews of previous generations, "that it is certain many of them have been lost!"

We may borrow an illustration of our views of the national conversion of the Jews, from the circumstance of their national restoration. When in Babylonian captivity, their prophets were wont to cheer the hearts of the pious minority, with the divine assurance, that "all Israel" should be again restored to the land of their forefathers.—So the prophet Jeremiah, chap. xxix. 10, 14:—"For thus saith the Lord, after seventy years be accomplished in Babylon, I will bring you again unto the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive." J. H. will certainly not deny that their restoration as a community was duly and remarkably accomplished. This he will admit did, at length, actually take place: Psalm cxxvi. 1 to 3: "When the Lord brought again the captivity of Zion we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter and our tongue with singing. Then said they among the heathen, the Lord hath done great things for them. The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." "ISRAEL AS A NATION" was "brought back again" to Judea; notwithstanding, during the continuance of their bondage, thousands of these had died and were buried, in the Gentile soil of their idolatrous and oppressive conquerors.

In our view of this solemn portion of the Divine administration, and all of other apparent inequalities of human apportionment, it becomes us to say, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Genesis xviii. 25. "In his times HE SHALL SHEW who is the Blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords—who only hath immortality—dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen or can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen!" 1 Tim. vi. 15.

Your respected correspondent believes that "ISRAEL AS A NATION"—that is, the generation THEN EXISTING, were really restored; though "many of" their captive and less favoured countrymen did not survive, to participate in that NATIONAL deliverance. So far as the NATIONALITY of the movement is concerned, WE, Mr. Editor, believe in the FUTURE NATIONAL CONVERSION of the Jews to God, in a sense very similar to that which HE believes in their PAST NATIONAL RESTORATION to Canaan.

It is, as we conceive, of the whole of that generation, then existing on earth together, (or the major part of them) that the Holy Ghost has foretold: "And SO," at THAT age, and by THAT means, "ALL ISRAEL shall be saved!" See also Eph. ii. 8.

On this text, your respected correspondent and ourselves are fairly at issue. We are prepared to prove that the usual application of it, is the correct and legitimate one; and that it most clearly announces and divinely promises a future national conversion of the Jews; "the ancient people" of God. But it lies upon J. H., we humbly apprehend, to shew, by fair reasoning on the connected verses, that this text really applies only to "the spiritual Israel," for which he exclusively claims it. Having pronounced so positively, and with no lack of discourtesy, against our doctrine, he is bound in all propriety to evince, by a rational argument, drawn from the chapter in which it is found, that the text is not Scripturally applicable "to Israel as a nation;" in the sense in which we are accustomed to speak of nations, and as restricted to that portion of a people existing on earth together, at any given period of time, to which one may refer.

Let then your respected correspondent PROVE, FROM THE CONTEXT, that St. Paul intends in this