

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE CONVERSION OF THE JEWS.

LETTER XVII.

SUBJECT IN DISCUSSION: THE GENERAL SCOPE and BEARING, on the Question, of the Epistle to the Romans:—No. 6:—Analysis.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN MIRROR.

SIR,—In our progress through this epistle, we have at length found our thoughtful way to the 11th chapter; from whence, when first approaching it, we were warned to take our departure, as being perfectly inapplicable to our argument, and as having been originally written in reference to an entirely different question. We did indeed temporarily withdraw from the ground, because, under such circumstances, it would have been of no service to the mind of the reader to have attempted the construction of an edifice for his satisfaction, on premises to which we were declared to have but a disputed claim. But it has been seen that we have now brought with us every reasonable evidence of the validity of our title; and we shall, accordingly, proceed with our long contemplated erection, until the top-stone shall have been brought "with shoutings of *Grace! Grace!* unto it."

In this chapter, "the pious and intelligent reader" will recognize the inspired apostle to be in the very midst of an argument respecting the unbelieving Israelitish nation; whom, in the ninth chapter, he terms his "kinsmen according to the flesh," and of whom, in the last verse of the tenth chapter, he represents the prophet Isaiah as complaining: "*But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched out my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.*"

THE LAST VERSE of the tenth chapter instructs us to understand of WHAT "people," and of WHAT "Israel" he is speaking, in the FIRST VERSE of the eleventh. For the reader does not need to be reminded that our present division of the Scriptures into chapters and verses, is an arrangement of latter days; very convenient, indeed, as a means of reference to individual passages; but wholly unknown to the inspired writers themselves; and therefore not to be understood as interposing any intended interruption to their continuous chain of thought. In relation to these subjects, those "*holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*"

In analyzing the contents of this chapter, it will be useful to remark upon an apparent discrepancy in the phraseology, which, however, can be easily reconciled and set at rest. In the first verse, St. Paul enters his protest against the idea of the Jewish nation having been "*cast away*;" his words are, "*Hath God CAST AWAY His people?*" God forbid." and again, in the 15th verse, he recognizes them as a people actually cast away, or about to be cast away. He assumes the melancholy fact, and argues as to the incalculable benefits derived thereby to the world at large: thus, "*For if the CASTING AWAY of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?*"

An ungenerous and implacable infidelity would perversely choose to insist that this is a plain and barefaced contradiction, on the part of the apostle, and would draw therefrom an argument to the disadvantage of "*the Holy Scriptures.*"—But, putting aside, for a moment, the truth of his being an inspired writer, the talented and intelligent character of his compositions, in general, will shield him from the imputation of having contradicted in one place what he has in another assumed to be fact. While the recollection that he wrote under the divine inspiration, would naturally suggest that, in this case, there cannot possibly be any real contradiction admitted; but, in the two places, the phraseology must be understood as expressing two different shades of the same idea.

In the first instance, then, we take the expression as applying to A TOTAL AND FINAL rejection of the Jewish nation; including every individual, and every future generation, of the ancient family of Abraham. It is against this St. Paul contends. It is this he denies and repudiates, in the first verse of this chapter. "*God hath not [thus] cast away his people which he foreknew;*" ver. 2.

In the second instance under review, we understand him as meaning to speak of A NATIONAL AND TEMPORARY rejection of the Jews, as his

approved and peculiar people. This he admits to be a mournful and melancholy fact, and on this admission he frames the argument, with which he brings the chapter to a termination.

The pious and intelligent reader will perceive that the intention of the apostle is to show that the case of the apostate, and forsaken, and "*diminished*" Jewish nation, though degraded and deplorable in the extreme, was nevertheless not utterly desperate in its character. There are still some features of hope in their circumstances, found in the covenant which God made with their venerated forefathers, for whose sakes they are still compassionately "*beloved*;" ver. 28.

And though, in consequence of their murderous and most flagrant rejection of their promised and divine Messiah, the adorable Jehovah had solemnly rejected their nation from being regarded as his approved and peculiar people; yet that rejection is not to be regarded as either universal or final. It was not such a "*casting away*" of them, as is UNIVERSAL, extending to every individual Jew; nor was it FINAL, so as to forbid the hope of their being, even as a nation, yet brought into the gospel-fold, by the blessing of God on the means which shall be used to that end.

This, we humbly conceive, is the real line of discussion observed by the inspired apostle, in this controverted part of his epistle. And for this conclusion we shall proceed to give our reasons.

I remain;

Dear Sir, yours,

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

Near Lake Champlain,
March 28, 1844.

NATURAL HISTORY.

THE CAPTURE AND DEATH OF AN ALLIGATOR.

A VERY large alligator was hooked and safely landed at the Acra Farm on Saturday evening last. He was deposited in a strong brick building for the night, his execution being put off to the following day, that notice might be sent to the curious to attend. At daylight he was waited upon by several gentlemen from the surrounding country, who paid their respects from the top of the wall that confined him, and appeared very much affected with delight at the prospect before them of a little sport. The alligator was lying on its belly with its disproportioned legs extended, and might have been conveniently measured in all his proportions, but it was thought as well to put off that until the exact tenacity of life in the amphibious monster had been ascertained.

He appears to have remained perfectly motionless during the night, being found in the morning just as he was left. It may be mentioned that the off hind leg was gone at the first joint, that is, the foot was wanting, or hand, for their extremities are much more like hands than feet. There are five fingers, three of which have large and long nails upon them, and the other two are scaled to the very tip. He was maimed also in the near fore-flapper, and evidently been in the wars. They are known to fight desperately with each other about their prey and this one had been maimed for life without a pension; the stump was well rounded off, and the injury could not have been a recent one.

Some fortnight ago a child was taken away in this neighbourhood by an alligator, while filling some water vessels, and it was thought most probable it might be the monster now under sentence. Gentlemen who amuse themselves with firing ball at this kind of large game may save their powder and lead. The trials made with a rifle show how heavy the odds are against doing anything with them. There was some difference of opinion as to whether a rifle ball would pass through him, supposing it not to strike the scales. The first one fired with a view to this experiment, entered the side below the strong scales of the back, and the brute took not the slightest notice of it; and a second, near the same spot, seemed not to trouble him in the least; neither of them passed through, though they were fired from a distance of not more than ten feet. He was now stirred up in the rear with a long pole, and he turned upon his assailant with a ferocity that was terrific; people talk of alligators not being able to turn easily; he was round with the rapi-

dity of a flash; the report, when he opened his jaws to their full extent, and closed them in his rage, was incredibly loud, and gave a tolerable idea of the enormous power of the jaws. A third shot was now fired, with the view of finishing him, if possible; and the aim was behind the large raised scales, at the extreme end of the head, so as to break the spine. This would appear to have been done, for he turned upon his back, and did not again recover his position. After a fourth ball, and a most careful search for his heart with a bayonet and a spear, a rope was passed over him, and he was dragged out, giving ever and anon sufficient warning of the propriety of standing aloof. A fifth ball in the spine appeared to settle him; and, on passing the tape along his back, he measured to a nicely 16 feet 6 inches; but his tail too had been curtailed 18 inches less than one caught in the same place about three years ago, and of which a very perfect skeleton was made on the farm, taken to England by Mr. Waterhouse, and deposited in a museum in Yorkshire. With a heavy axe he was now divided just abast his hind legs. The next process was an interesting one,—the examination of the stomach. It contained little; portions of the skull of a child, the thigh bones of some smaller ones, and the bones of one hand, a quantity of straw, a large ball of hair, about four feet of inch rope, and six or eight bangles, two or three of which were of silver. Having cut off the head and weighed it, it was found to be, to an ounce, 2 cwt. The muscular action in the tail end, about 6 or 7 feet was extraordinary, for, on inserting a knife to expose the fat, which here lies in thick layers, the whole mass, saving only the chump, was thrown into violent motion; and, after performing several gyrations almost on end, struck the ground with extraordinary violence. This was the effect of every insertion of the knife, and it could not be less than an hour after it was severed from the body. The head, by the by, was 5 feet 8 inches round the jaws, and 3 feet 6 inches long. It is cleaned and preserved. The fat from the body was carefully taken off by native operators, it being highly valued as an external application for rheumatism, &c.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THRILLING INCIDENT.

The following thrilling incident is related of a post-man, who, for a very large reward, attempted to carry a letter across one of the deep glens of Scotland, through an overwhelming northeast storm. He had been, if I remember right, a shepherd, and fearlessly set out on the enterprise, while many were filled with apprehension for his life, if the storm did not subside. The weather was excessively cold, and the violence of the storm rendered it impossible to see any track of man or beast, through the whole glen. The only chance of a safe arrival consisted of some knowledge he had of the ground, where he had many a time driven his flocks, in summer. But, as he afterwards assured us, one may have a very accurate knowledge of the way in summer, while, in a winter storm of snow, at night, the whole way seems like a trackless ocean. It is said that some of those glens in Scotland are so full of snow in winter, as not to thaw out in midsummer.

His courage, as the storm thickened, and the cold increased, would have failed, but at length it became as doubtful whether he could find the way back, as whether he could succeed in crossing the mountain ridge in safety. As he had to cross many a small stream, now filled with snow, he not unfrequently sunk, and wet his feet in the stream, and on bringing them up again to the cold air, they froze, and at length became so disabled that he could rise on his feet no more, and he had to press forward on his knees, as well as he could. From some indications, he concluded that he had well nigh crossed the glen, and might, by lifting up his voice, be heard. He cried aloud for help—a *lost traveller*!—but cried in vain. At length he became frozen to his knees, and he could only worm himself onward with his hands, for he knew that, when he should cease all exertion, he must immediately die, and there was a possibility that his cry might be heard, and he should live. Hence he raised again and again his cry, a *lost traveller*! But at length a little opening of the storm showed a shepherd's cot at hand. He had not missed his