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# THE WESLEYAN,

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IN CONNECTION WITH THE BRITISH CONFERENCE.

"LET US CONSIDER ONE ANOTHER TO PROVOKE UNTO LOVE AND TO GOOD WORKS."—HEBREWS x. 24.

Vol. I.

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No. 2.

## DIVINITY.

### ESSAY ON CONSCIENCE.

'And why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?'—Luke xii. 57.

It may occur to some of the readers of this periodical, that among the many able treatises and discourses which have been published on the subject of conscience, by different authors, there are two admirable sermons by Mr. Wesley, one designated "On Conscience," the other "The Witness of our own Spirit;" and an excellent article by Mr. Watson, in his "Biblical and Theological Dictionary;" with other pieces on the same subject in the writings of Dr. Adam Clarke, and in other publications connected with Methodism; and that, therefore, the present article is unnecessary. The writer, however, would suggest, that as the subject on which he now ventures a few observations is one of great practical importance, and concerning which, there is reason to believe, some serious mistakes still exist, from the manner in which some persons plead the approbation of conscience, in justification of proceedings, the rectitude of which, on the ground of Christian principle and morality, is often very questionable; and as it is a faculty of exercise of the mind, which, in its decisions of self-approbation or self-condemnation, becomes a source of pleasure or pain in this world, as it will become one of happiness or misery in the world to come; it is important that we should understand its nature and office, and it may not therefore be superfluous or useless again to institute the inquiry, What is Conscience?—and when and how far may we depend upon the rectitude of its decisions, in its verdict of approval or disapproval of our moral conduct?

It is well known that *summa conscientia* (or) and *conscientia*, from which, in French and English, is derived the word "conscience," are each compounded of two words, and literally imply, the knowledge of two or more things together; that is, the knowledge, or inward perception and consciousness, which a man has of things both present and past, relating to himself, his inward tempers and outward actions; and the judgment which he forms concerning the moral character of those tempers and actions, as being right or wrong, good or evil: or it is "the testimony and secret judgment of the soul, which gives its approbation to actions that it thinks good, or reproaches itself with those which it believes to be evil." In stating further the nature, design and functions of conscience, (though without pretending to any superior acquaintance with the philosophy of the human mind,) there are two or three very common errors, which it is important briefly to notice:—

1. There are some persons who, supposing conscience to be "an internal monitor, implanted in us by the Supreme Being, and exhorting to us on all occasions what is right or wrong," conclude, that they are right in all they do, if they can honestly plead the authority and approbation of their conscience; and this is with them a sufficient justification for the omission of what is by others affirmed to be their duty, and for the commission of acts inconsistent with the spirit and exercise of Christian love. And it is true, that a justly celebrated writer\* has observed, "What is it to which a wise man will pay more attention than to his reason and conscience, those divine monitors by which he is to judge even of religion itself, and which he is not at liberty to disobey, though an angel from heaven should command him?" But another writer,† equally celebrated, seems with

more accuracy to observe, "Who sees not that conscience may be conformable or repugnant to the law of nature?—may be certain or doubtful? It is a maxim of every law, human and divine, that a man ought never to act in opposition to his conscience; but it will not from thence follow, that he will, in obeying the dictates of his conscience, on all occasions act right. An Inquisitor, who burns Jews and heretics; a Robespierre, who massacres innocent and harmless women; a robber, who thinks that all things ought to be in common, and that a state of property is an unjust infringement of natural liberty,—these, and a thousand perpetrators of different crimes, may all follow the dictates of conscience." Paine, the infamous author of the "Age of Reason," declared that a fever, which he and those about him expected would prove mortal, made him remember with renewed satisfaction that he had written the former part of that wicked work; and he knew, therefore, he said, by experience, the conscientious trial of his own principles. And let it be remembered, too, that Saul of Tarsus, while he shut up many of the saints in prison, and gave his voice against them when they were put to death, and punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme, and, being exceedingly mad against them, persecuted them even unto strange cities,—while thus engaged, he could plead the authority and approbation of his conscience, and "verily thought with himself that he ought to do many things against the name of Jesus of Nazareth." And yet such was his sense of guilt afterwards, that he confesses himself to have been a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious, and a murderer, and, in a word, the greatest of sinners; and, as Doddridge observes, paraphrasing the confession of St. Paul, "though he acted in a very rash, savage, and criminal manner, yet he did not therein contradict the sentiments of his conscience; and thereby shows, by the way, how much guilt a man may contract without acting directly contrary to the convictions of his mind, if he has neglected an impartial care in forming his principles of action." And all this is in accordance with the prediction and declaration of our Lord to his disciples, that their persecutors and murderers would think that they did God acceptable service in destroying them. So that men may be acting morally wrong, and wickedly in the extreme, while following what they profess to believe and declare to be the dictates of nature or conscience; and be guilty and condemned before God in those very acts on account of which they may indulge in self-approbation, and in the confidence of being approved by their Maker.

2. This faculty or exercise of the mind has been considered and described as the moral sense, or as an instinctive perception or intuitive knowledge of right and wrong, morally considered,—a testimony as certain and infallible, as the testimony of our eyes to the existence, colour and figure of the bodies about us. But this is surely a mistake. Instinct operates uniformly; it is the same in all individuals of the same species, and if conscience were the moral sense, or a moral instinct, then would its decisions be always and uniformly the same on the same moral facts, in the case of every individual, and of all individuals of the same species. The contrary, however, is the fact. There is great diversity and change in the moral judgments of men, for not only does conscience, in different persons, give a different verdict in the same moral case, but conscience, in the same persons, will at one time approve of that which at another time is the object of its disapprobation. Thus we have seen that the conscience of Saul the persecutor allowed and approved at one time of his hostility to the church of Christ; while, not

long after, the conscience of Paul the Apostle disapproved and denounced that hostility as cruel and wicked, for which, however, he says, he obtained mercy, because he did it "ignorantly in unbelief." A member of the Romish church may plead the dictates of his conscience for refusing to read the bible, professing to believe that for him to read it would be wrong. The same individual becoming a member of the Protestant church, and being better instructed, would as conscientiously engage in the reading and study of the Holy Scriptures, believing it to be his duty and privilege so to do. The Jew, in ignorance and unbelief, may still reject the Lord Jesus as the Messiah, and declare that he does so with the approbation of his conscience; while the Christian as conscientiously believes that it is his duty and happiness to receive him and trust in him as the Son of God. "In one person," says Mr. Fletcher, "it is easy under mountains of guilt; and in another, it is unreasonably scrupulous about mere trifles; it either strains at a gnat, or swallows a camel; when it is alarmed, in some it shows itself ready to be made easy by every wrong method; in others, it obstinately refuses to be pacified by the right." Thus we see that moral instinct, or moral sense, is no infallible guide or criterion of right and wrong. "For if," says Locke, "conscience be a proof of innate principles, contraries may be innate principles, since some men will, with the same conscience, prosecute what others avoid." And hence the diversity and mutability of the decisions of conscience arise altogether out of the rule of judgment by which those decisions have been formed, and the influence of circumstances, education, example, society, and the predominant habits and passions of the mind. "Upon the whole, it seems to me," says Paley, "either that there exist no such instincts as compose what is called the moral sense, or that they are not now to be distinguished from prejudices and habits; on which account they cannot be depended upon in moral reasoning."

These conclusions are not invalidated by any reference to the condition of mankind, as left alone to the dictates of what is called natural religion, or the light of nature, shed forth upon the human mind by Him "who coming into the world enlighteneth every man," and who are therefore supposed to have a natural sense of moral good and evil, and whose case and responsibilities are thus stated by the Apostle to the Romans, (ii. 14, 15.) "When the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which show the work of the law written in their hearts; their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another." It is not denied, that men, strangers to revealed religion, possess an internal and natural power of distinguishing the moral qualities of actions, as, between justice and injustice, humanity and cruelty, gratitude and ingratitude, the acknowledgment and worship of the Creator, and an utter disregard to his existence and authority; and that when this light and power are permitted to operate with a legitimate influence on their minds, their consciences, or moral judgments, on these subjects, will be according to truth and the will of God; and acting agreeably, to their convictions of truth and duty, they will be accepted with God: this, indeed, seems to be the doctrine of the Apostle in the passage above cited. But is it not a fact, that such is the "ignorance and unbelief," the blindness and perversity, of the human mind, that men, even those possessing a divine revelation, and pleading the decisions of conscience, "call evil good, and good evil; put darkness for light, and light for darkness;

\* Beattie on truth.

† Bishop Watson.

put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter?" and thus they "err in vision, and stumble in judgment."

But to return to the inquiry, "What may we understand by conscience?" In addition to what has already been stated in answer to this inquiry, it may be observed, with Locke, that "conscience is nothing else but our own opinion or judgment of the moral rectitude or pravity of our own actions." It is not a faculty or principle distinct from the understanding and judgment, as is sometimes represented, except as it relates to man's moral nature; but it is the decision of a man's own mind in the exercise of his understanding and judgment, concerning the morality of his own actions, with reference to some rule, attended with corresponding emotions of pleasure or pain. The Hebrew language furnishes no name for conscience; the writers, therefore, of the Old Testament sometimes term it "the mind," and the "heart." We are told that "David's heart smote him after he had numbered the people." St. John, also, speaking of conscience, says, "If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God." When we decide concerning the right or wrong, the merit or demerit, of the moral actions of others, it is simply called the decision of our judgment in the case, and is attended with pleasing or painful emotions proportioned to the knowledge by which our judgment has been influenced, the rectitude of our own minds, and the interest we feel in the parties concerned. The same act of the mind, when it has respect to ourselves, is properly designated conscience; and "pleasure or pain is excited with a degree of intensity, proportioned to the importance which we always assign to our own interests and feelings." It follows, therefore, that those decisions concerning ourselves and others will be uniform, according as the same rule of judgment is applied, and correct according to the just perception of the mind concerning the truth and will of God as that rule. And hence arise all the errors of conscience, in not making the will of God, so far as it is made known to us by the light of nature or revelation, or both, the rule of judgment: and, above all, the necessity of the enlightening influences of the Holy Ghost, that that divine rule may in every case be recognised, understood, and faithfully applied.

Let us now apply these principles to several views of conscience, as furnished to us in the Holy Scriptures.

In 1. Corinthians, viii. 7, 10, 12, we read of a weak and defiled conscience: weak, or erroneous, from want of more light, instruction and experience: and defiled, or polluted and guilty, through those sins which originate in its ignorance or perversity. This was the case with some of the Corinthians to whom the Apostle wrote, who were not yet fully convinced that "an idol is nothing in the world," and therefore are things sacrificed to idols with some consciousness of religious regard to them, as real though inferior deities, and thereby defiled their consciences with the sin of idolatry. "Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak, is defiled." In 1. Timothy, iv. 2, we read of a cauterised conscience: or of a "conscience seared with a hot iron." This is spoken of hypocrites, whose consciences are branded in the sight of God with their impostures and lies: "they bear the marks of their hypocrisy as evidently and indelibly in their conscience in the sight of God, as those who have been cauterised for their crimes do in their bodies in the sight of men." The hypocrite is conscious to himself before God that he is a deceiver: that the character he has assumed does not belong to him; yet, though self-condemned, he continues to practice the imposture, urged on by pride or covetousness, or some other evil disposition. The Apostle, in Romans i. 28, speaks of a "reprobate mind," or a dead, unfeeling conscience, which allows men "to do those things which are not convenient;" as also to the Ephesians, iv. 18, 19, "Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: who being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness." And why are we exhorted not to grieve or quench the Spirit, but

because of the awful possibility and certainty of being involved in his hardened state, should His sacred light and influence be withdrawn? Hebrews x. 22, the Apostle speaks of an "evil conscience," by which we may understand a guilty, accusing, condemning conscience—the consciousness which the awakened sinner has of guiltiness before God—a painful and alarming conviction of having sinned and exposed himself to the wrath of God, and which fills and burdens the mind with sorrow, shame, and fear. But we also and frequently read of a "good conscience;" the conscience of a good man, which is neither weak nor defiled, nor seared, nor dead, nor guilty, but enlightened and guided in its decisions by the Spirit and word of God; for no conscience can be good but in connexion and agreement with that law which is holy, and just, and good—"a heart sprinkled from an evil conscience;"—"a conscience purged from dead works;"—"a conscience that beareth witness in the Holy Ghost;" and to which the "Spirit itself beareth witness;"—"a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men;"—a conscience which becomes a source of peace and joy to the Christian believer: "For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world." This is a good conscience; of which we may say, as Solomon did of wisdom, of which indeed it forms a part, "She is more precious than rubies, and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her."

Let, then, these scriptural views of conscience be considered in connexion with those principles which we have shown to be involved in the nature and functions of this inward monitor, and we shall arrive at the following conclusions:—That conscience is an essential part of the moral constitution of man: that, divinely instructed, it is "the candle of the Lord" in man, designed to be the great principle of moral actions, and guide in matters of sin and duty:—that, however, through the blindness of the human mind, the alienation of the heart from God, and the perverting influence of sinful passions and worldly interests, the verdict of conscience, on many moral questions, is often very erroneous: and that, therefore, the rectitude of our moral judgments concerning ourselves may be relied upon only so far as we are conscious of having carefully and impartially examined the whole case; so far only as our minds are enlightened by the Spirit of God, and conscience is guided and influenced in its sanctions by a solemn recognition of the authority of the will and law of God, as the supreme rule of human conduct. If in these conclusions we are justified by the views of conscience which are unfolded in those passages of Scripture to which we have referred, the following practical reflections seem naturally to arise out of the whole subject:—

1. That, aware of the darkness of the human mind through sin, and its liability and proneness to err on matters of personal interest and eternal moment to man, we should earnestly implore the illumination of the Holy Spirit, and diligently and prayerfully read and study the oracles of God, that they may become "a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path," and that we may be enabled, in our own case and in the case of others, at all times, to "judge righteous judgment."

2. We should learn to value a good conscience as a source of inward comfort and support, which may remain when all earthly and outward comforts are withdrawn. What was it that supported Job amidst his complicated trials, and personal and domestic afflictions, and that enabled him patiently to bear the cruel and groundless suspicions, censures and charges of his professed friends? It was a good conscience: the testimony of "a conscience void of offence;"—"the answer of a good conscience toward God." It was this that enabled him, amidst the darkness of the divine dispensations, to say of his Maker, who alone could read his heart, "He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold;" and to resolve, "Till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me; my righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go; my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live." Great, indeed, and unparalleled were Job's losses, afflictions and sufferings; but greater than them all would have been the forfeiture of a good conscience. It was

the conscious approval of his Maker alone that sustained and comforted him while sitting among the ashes, and while scraping his diseased and encrusted body with a potsherd.

3. We should take care never to rely upon or plead the decisions of conscience in self-approbation, or self-justification, but as we are at the same time conscious that we have decided, not according to prejudice, passion, or worldly interest, but according to reason and those principles of action which revealed religion authoritatively asserts. For a man, for instance, who, in the management of his temporal concerns, is influenced by the example and proceedings of the world around him, may say that he feels himself justified in the manner in which he conducts his business; while his speculations and transactions are such, that if the rule of Christian morality be applied to them, they will be found to involve principles and procedure of very questionable rectitude, honour and honesty. Or, a man may say, that his conscience bears him witness that he gives as much as he ought to do for the relief of the poor, or for the support of the cause of God; while his judgment, in this case, is influenced by the penurious example of others, or by his own covetousness and love of money; and thus he "withholdeth more than is meet," and gives a penny when he ought to give a pound. Other persons there are, and some of them, perhaps, professors of religion, who err in judgment and conscience in other respects; for, instead of "comparing spiritual things with spiritual," they are like those Corinthians spoken of by the Apostle, who "commend themselves; but they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise." Such persons may say that they can, with a good conscience, indulge in fashionable or expensive dress, worldly amusements, splendid equipages, &c. But whence do they get those good consciences that will authorise such indulgences? Is it not rather from "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," and the example of others, than from the sanctions of religion and the rule of God's word? "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world;"—"Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed;"—"Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." How important, then, that we should closely and seriously examine our consciences in the light of God's word, and in the exercise of prayer, in order that we may be directed to a right judgment! "For if a man think himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let every man prove his own work; and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another."

1. Let us remember that there exists an awful possibility of "putting away" a good conscience, as of making a "shipwreck of faith;" that a peaceful and approving conscience may, by disregarding or violating its dictates, become a guilty and an accusing conscience; or, what is worse, the light of truth and life that is in it may be obscured and extinguished. And, O, the blindness, darkness, and confusion, which follow upon the extinction of such a light! "If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" And, O, the insensibility and stupidity of a conscience lulled to sleep; or dumb, that speaks not, warns not, condemns not, that will allow the sinner to "hide wickedness under his tongue as a sweet morsel," that will allow him to go on in his backslidings unchecked and unalarmed! Or, at best, a conscience still awake, but up in arms, filled with upbraidings and remorse, tossing him with tempest by day, and scaring him with dreams of terror by night; his light, and peace, and hope, all fled, and a dark and stormy region of mind all around! Think of a guilty conscience, too, in the dying hour and in the judgment-day: the blinding and stupifying influence of captivating lusts and earthly passions no longer operating, her indignant reproaches and rebukes are then felt with accumulated and agonizing force, while she—

"Shows with a pointing finger, but no noise,  
A pale procession of past sinful joys,  
All witnesses of blessings foully scorn'd,  
And life abused, and not to be suborn'd:  
'Mark these,' she says; 'these, summon'd from afar,  
Begin their march to meet thee at the bar;  
There find a Judge inexorably just,  
And perish there, as all presumption must.'"

And, then, a conscience in hell! It sleeps not there, it bears no false witness there; there, with a voice of thunder, it will be the accuser, and, with its scorpion-lash, the relentless tormentor, of the guilty for ever. "Their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." In conclusion, "take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." L.

## SCRIPTURE ILLUSTRATIONS.

"His head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel."—Matthew xiv. 11.

Similar instances of unfeeling barbarity are to be met with in history. Mark Anthony caused the heads of those he had proscribed to be brought to him while he was at table, and entertained his eyes a long time with that sad spectacle. Cicero's head, being one of those that were brought to him, he ordered it to be put on the very pulpit where Cicero made speeches against him. Jerome informs us, that when the head of the Baptist was presented to Herodias, she indulged herself in the barbarous diversion of pricking his tongue with a needle, as Fulvia did Tully's.—*Burder.*

**HINDOO WEDDING.**—Mr. Ward has given the following description of a Hindoo wedding, which furnishes a striking parallel to the parable of the wedding feast in the Gospel:—"At a marriage, the procession of which I saw some years ago, the bridegroom came from a distance, and the bride lived at Serampore, to which place the bridegroom was to come by water. After waiting two or three hours, at length, near midnight, it was announced, as if in the very words of Scripture, behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him. All the persons employed, now lighted their lamps, and ran with them in their hands to fill up their stations in the procession; some of them had lost their lights, and were unprepared, but it was then too late to seek them, and the cavalcade moved forward to the house of the bride, at which place the company entered a large and splendidly illuminated area, before the house, covered with an awning, where a great multitude of friends, dressed in their best apparel, were seated upon mats. The bridegroom was carried in the arms of a friend, and placed on a superb seat in the midst of the company, where he sat a short time, and then went into the house, the door of which was immediately shut, and guarded by Sepoys. I and others expostulated with the door-keepers, but in vain." Never was I so struck with our Lord's beautiful parable, as at this moment:—"And the door was shut!"

**JERICHO**, a celebrated city in the tribe of Benjamin, of which frequent mention is made in the New Testament. It was the first city taken from the Canaanites by Joshua, who rased it to the ground, and denounced a severe curse on the person who should rebuild it. (Josh. vi. 20. 26. Heb. xi. 30.) This curse was literally fulfilled, in the days of Ahab, upon Hiel the Bethelite, by whom the city was rebuilt. (1 Kings xvi. 34.) After this event it was ennobled by the schools of the prophets, which were established there (2 Kings ii. 5.); and near it was a large but unwholesome spring, the waters of which rendered the soil unfruitful, until they were cured by the prophet Elisha (2 Kings ii. 21.); and from that time they have become exceedingly wholesome and fertilising. In the time of our Saviour, Jericho yielded only to Jerusalem, for its size and the magnificence of its buildings: it is situated in a bottom, in that vast plain which was named the *great plain* (which marks the propriety of the expression *going down from Jerusalem*, Luke x. 30.); and is 150 furlongs, about nineteen miles, distant from the capital of Judæa. Jericho was one of the cities appropriated for the residence of the priests and Levites, 12,000 of whom dwelt there; and as the way thither from Jerusalem was rocky and desert, it was, as it still is, greatly infested with thieves. A country more favourable for the attacks of banditti, and caves better adapted for concealment, than those presented on this road, can scarcely be imagined. This circumstance marks the admirable propriety with which our Lord made it the scene of his beautiful parable of the good Samaritan, (Luke x. 30. 37.) Jericho is, at present, a wretched mud-built village.

## ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.

## CHRISTIAN DISPENSATION.

ALTHOUGH the Jewish Temple-service and sacrificial institution, were not finally abolished until the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans; and though the synagogue worship has, from that time to the present, been kept up by the Jews, in their state of dispersion throughout the world: the Mosaic dispensation and the Jewish church-state, may be considered as having terminated with the expiration of the seventy weeks of Daniel's prophecy, when "Messiah should be cut off, but not for himself," (Dan. ix.) and when the Lord Jesus Christ, in fulfilment of that prophecy, actually became the sacrifice for our sins, and made reconciliation for iniquity," by dying on the cross, "the just for the unjust." Then was laid the foundation of the sublime structure of Christianity—then had the church and kingdom of Christ, as a new dispensation, its beginning. It is worthy of remark, too, that the manifestation of the Son of God, and the advent of his kingdom, took place at a period of the world, when the Gentile nations, if they had reached the highest pitch of intellectual refinement, they were also as deeply sunk in corruption, crimes and idolatries; and when the Jewish nation and church generally, had fallen into a state of ignorance, luxury and profaneness, which, while it exposed them to the displeasure of the Almighty, rendered his merciful interposition necessary, by sending forth a divine Teacher and Deliverer, in the person of the promised Messiah. Then, "when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, and that we might receive the adoption of sons."

The following beautiful and comprehensive historical sketch of the life and actions of the adorable Saviour, the Great Architect of, and "Head over all things to his Church," is from Mosheim, and is deserving of a place in this department of our work:—

Towards the conclusion of the reign of Herod the Great, the Son of God descended upon earth, and taking upon him the human nature, appeared to men under the sublime characters of an infallible teacher, an all-sufficient mediator, and a spiritual and immortal king. The place of his birth was Bethlehem, in the land of Palestine. The year in which it happened has not hitherto been fixed with certainty, notwithstanding the deep and laborious researches of the learned on that matter. There is nothing surprising in this, when we consider that the first Christians laboured under the same difficulties, and were divided in their opinions concerning the time of Christ's birth. That which appears most probable is, that it happened about a year and six months before the death of Herod, in the year of Rome 748 or 749. The uncertainty, however, of this point is of no sort of consequence. We know that the Sun of Righteousness has shone upon the world. And though we cannot fix the precise period in which he arose, this will not hinder us from enjoying the direction and influence of his vital and salutary beams.

2. Four inspired writers, who have transmitted to us an account of the life and actions of Jesus Christ, mention particularly his birth, his lineage, his family, and his parents; but they say very little concerning his infancy and his earlier youth. Not long after his birth, he was conducted by his parents into Egypt, that he might be there out of the reach of Herod's cruelty. When he was but twelve years old, he disputed, in the temple, with the most learned of the Jewish doctors, concerning the sublime truths of religion. And the rest of his life, until the thirtieth year of his age, was spent in the obscurity of a private condition, and consecrated to the duties of filial obedience. This is all that the wisdom of God hath permitted us to know, with certainty, of Christ, before he entered upon his public ministry; nor is the story of his having followed the trade of his adopted father, Joseph, built upon any sure foundation. There have been, indeed, several writers, who, either through the levity of a wanton imagination, or with a design to attract the admiration of the multitude, have invented a series of the most extravagant and ridiculous fables, in order to give an account of this obscure part of the Saviour's life.

3. Jesus began his public ministry in the thirtieth year of his age; and to render it more solemn and affecting to the Jews, a man, whose name was John, the son of a Jewish priest, a person of great gravity also, and much respected on account of the austere dignity of his life and manners, was commanded by God to proclaim to the people the coming of the Messiah, that had been promised to their fathers. This extraordinary man called himself the forerunner of the Messiah. Filled with a holy zeal and a divine fervour, he cried aloud to the Jewish nation, to depart from their transgressions, and to purify their hearts, that they might thus partake of the blessings which the Son of God was now come to offer to the world. The exhortations of this respectable messenger were not without effect; and those who, moved by his solemn admonitions, had formed the resolution of correcting their evil dispositions and amending their lives, were initiated into the kingdom of the Redeemer by the ceremony of immersion, or baptism. Christ himself, before he began his ministry, desired to be solemnly baptized by John in the waters of Jordan, that he might not, in any point, neglect to answer the demands of the Jewish law.

4. It is not necessary to enter here into a particular detail of the life and actions of Jesus Christ. All Christians must be perfectly well acquainted with them. They must know, that, during the space of three years, and amidst the deepest trials of affliction and distress, he instructed the Jewish nation in the will and counsels of the Most High, and omitted nothing, in the course of his ministry, that could contribute either to gain the multitude, or to charm the wise. Every one knows, that his life was a continued scene of the most perfect sanctity, and the purest and most active virtue; not only without spot, but also beyond the reach of suspicion. And it is also well known, that by miracles of the most stupendous kind, and not more stupendous than salutary and beneficent, he displayed to the universe the truth of that religion which he brought with him from above, and demonstrated the reality of his divine commission in the most illustrious manner.

5. As this divine religion was to be propagated to the utmost ends of the earth, it was necessary that Christ should choose a certain number of persons to accompany him constantly through the whole course of his ministry; that thus they might be faithful and respectable witnesses of the sanctity of his life, and the grandeur of his miracles, to the remotest nations; and also transmit to the latest posterity a genuine account of his sublime doctrines, and of the nature and end of the Gospel dispensation. Therefore, Jesus chose, out of the multitudes that attended his discourses, twelve persons, whom he separated from the rest by the name of Apostles. These men were illiterate, poor, and of mean extraction, and such alone were truly proper to answer the views of the divine Saviour. He avoided making use of the ministry of persons endowed with the advantages of fortune and birth, or enriched with the treasures of eloquence and learning, lest the fruits of this embassy, and the progress of the Gospel, should be attributed to human and natural causes. These apostles were sent but once to preach to the Jews during the life of Christ. He chose to keep them about his own person, that they might be thoroughly instructed in the affairs of his kingdom. That the multitude, however, might not be destitute of teachers to enlighten them with the knowledge of the truth, Christ appointed seventy disciples, to preach the glad tidings of life eternal throughout the whole province of Judæa.

6. The researches of the learned have been employed to find out the reason of Christ's fixing the number of the apostles to twelve, and that of the disciples to seventy, and various conjectures have been applied to the solution of this question. But since it is manifest, from the words of our Saviour himself, that he intended the number of the twelve apostles as an allusion to that of the tribes of Israel; it can scarcely be doubted, that he was willing to insinuate by this appointment, that he was the supreme lord and high priest of these twelve tribes, into which the Jewish nation was divided. And as the number of disciples answers evidently to that of the senators, of whom the council of the people, or the sanhedrim, was composed, there is a high degree of probability in the conjecture of those, who think that Christ, by the choice of the seventy, designed to admonish the Jews, that the authority of their sanhedrim

was now at an end, and that all power, with respect to religious matters, was vested in him alone.

7. The ministry of the divine Saviour was confined to the Jews; nor while he remained upon earth, did he permit his apostles or disciples to extend their labours beyond this distinguished nation. At the same time, if we consider the illustrious acts of mercy and omnipotence, that were performed by Christ, it will be natural to conclude, that his fame must have been very soon spread abroad in other countries. We learn from writers of no small note, that Abgarus, king of Edessa, being seized with a severe and dangerous illness, wrote to our blessed Lord to implore his assistance; and that Jesus not only sent him a gracious answer, but also accompanied it with his picture, as a mark of his esteem for that pious prince. These letters are still extant. But they are justly looked upon as fictitious by most writers, who also go yet farther, and treat the whole story of Abgarus as entirely fabulous, and unworthy of credit. I will not pretend to assert the genuineness of these letters, but I see no reason of sufficient weight to destroy the credibility of the whole story, which is supposed to give occasion to them.

8. A great number of the Jews, struck with those illustrious marks of a divine authority and power, that shone forth in the ministry and actions of Christ, regarded him as the Son of God, the true Messiah. The rulers of the people, and more especially the chief priests and Pharisees, whose licentiousness and hypocrisy he censured with a noble and generous freedom, laboured with success, by the help of their passions, to extinguish in their breasts the conviction of his celestial mission; or, at least, to suppress the effects it was adapted to produce upon their conduct. Fearing also lest the ministry of Christ should tend to diminish their credit, and to deprive them of the advantages they derived from the impious abuse of their authority in religious matters; they laid snares for his life, which, for a considerable time, were without effect. They succeeded, at length, by the infernal treason of an apostate disciple, by the treachery of Judas, who discovered the retreat which his divine Master had chosen for the purposes of meditation and repose, and thus delivered him into the merciless hands of a brutal soldiery.

9. In consequence of this, Jesus was first brought before the Jewish high priest and sanhedrim, before whom he was accused of having violated the law, and blasphemed the majesty of God. Dragged from thence to the tribunal of Pilate the Roman prætor, he was there charged with seditious enterprises, and with treason against Cæsar. Both these accusations were so evidently false, and destitute even of every appearance of truth, that they must have been rejected by any judge, who acted upon the principles of common equity. But the clamours of an enraged populace, set on by the impious instigations of their priests and rulers, intimidated Pilate, and engaged him, though with the utmost reluctance, and in opposition to the dictates of his conscience, to pronounce a capital sentence against Christ. The divine Saviour behaved with inexpressible dignity under this heavy trial. As the end of his mission was to make expiation for the sins of men, so when all things were ready, and when he had finished the work of his glorious ministry, he placidly submitted to the death of the cross, and with a serene and voluntary resignation, committed his spirit into the hands of the Father.

10. After Jesus had remained three days in the sepulchre, he resumed that life which he had voluntarily laid down; and, rising from the dead, declared to the universe, by that triumphant act, that the divine justice was satisfied, and the paths of salvation and immortality rendered accessible to the human race. He conversed with his disciples during forty days after his resurrection, and employed that time in instructing them more fully concerning the nature of his kingdom. Many wise and important reasons prevented his showing himself publicly at Jerusalem, to confound the malignity and unbelief of his enemies. He contented himself with manifesting the certainty of his glorious resurrection to a sufficient number of faithful and credible witnesses; foreseeing, perhaps, that if he appeared in public, those malicious unbelievers, who had formerly attributed his miracles to the power of magic, would now represent his resurrection, as a phantom or vision, produced by the influence of infernal powers. After having remained upon earth, during the space of time

before mentioned, and given to his disciples a divine commission to preach the glad tidings of salvation and immortality to the human race, he ascended into heaven, in their presence, and resumed the enjoyment of that glory which he was possessed of before the worlds were created.

## BIOGRAPHY.

THE LIFE OF THE REV. JOHN WESLEY, A.M.

[CONTINUED.]

The extraordinary manner in which some persons were frequently affected under Mr. Wesley's preaching, as well as that of his coadjutors, now created much discussion, and to many gave great offence. Some were seized with trembling, under a painful conviction of sin; others sunk down and uttered loud and piercing cries; and others fell into a kind of agony. In some instances, while prayer was offered for them, they rose up with a sudden change of feeling, and testified that they had "redemption through the blood of Christ, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." Mr. Samuel Wesley, who denied the possibility of attaining to a knowledge of the forgiveness of sins, treated these things, in a correspondence with his brother, alternately with sarcasm and serious severity, and particularly attacked the doctrine of assurance. In this controversy, Mr. John Wesley attaches no weight whatever to these outward agitations; but contends that he is bound to believe the profession of an inward change made by many, who had been so affected, because that had been confirmed by their subsequent conduct and spirit. On the subject of assurance, both the disputants put forth their logical acuteness; but the result appears to have been, upon the whole, instructive to the elder brother, whose letters soften considerably toward the close of the correspondence. Mr. Samuel Wesley died in the following November.

About this time a disagreement of opinion took place between Mr. Wesley and Mr. Whitefield. Mr. Wesley, being impressed with the strong tendency of the Calvinistic doctrines to produce Antinomianism, published a sermon against absolute predestination, at which Mr. Whitefield, who had some time previously embraced that notion, took offence. A controversy between them, embracing some other points, ensued, which issued in a temporary estrangement, and they laboured from this time independently of each other; their societies in London, Kingswood, and other places, being kept quite separate. A reconciliation, however, took place between Mr. Wesley and Mr. Whitefield some years afterwards, so that they preached in each other's chapels, and Mr. Wesley preached the funeral sermon on Mr. Whitefield's death, at the chapel in Tottenham-court-road, and also at the Tabernacle in Moorfields.

Several preachers, not episcopally ordained, were now employed by Mr. Wesley to assist in the growing work, which already had swelled beyond even his and his brother's active powers suitably to supply with the ministrations of the word of God. Mr. Charles Wesley had discouraged this from the beginning, and even he himself hesitated; but, with John, the promotion of religion was the first concern, and church-order the second, although inferior in consideration to that only. With Charles these views were often reversed. Mr. Wesley, in the year 1741, had to caution his brother against joining the Moravians, after the example of Mr. Gambold, to which he was at that time inclined; and adds, "I am not clear, that brother Maxfield should not expound at Greyhound-lane; nor can I as yet do without him. Our clergymen have increased full as much as the preachers." Mr. Maxfield's preaching had the strong sanction of the Countess of Huntingdon; but so little of design, with reference to the forming of a sect, had Mr. Wesley, in the employment of Mr. Maxfield, that, in his own absence from London, he had only authorized him to pray with the society, and to advise them, as might be needful; and upon his beginning to preach, he hastened back to silence him. On this his mother addressed him: "John, you know what my sentiments have been. You cannot suspect me of favouring readily any thing of this kind. But take care what you do with respect to that young man; for he is as surely called of God to preach, as you are. Examine what have been the fruits

of his preaching, and hear him also yourself." He took advice, and could not venture to forbid him.

His defence of himself on this point may be pronounced irrefutable, and turns upon the disappointment of the hope which he had ever cherished that the parochial clergy would take the charge of those who in different places had been turned to God by his ministry, and that of his fellow-labourers.

"It pleased God," says Mr. Wesley, "by two or three ministers of the Church of England, to call many sinners to repentance, who, in several parts, were undeniably turned from a course of sin to a course of holiness."

"The ministers of the places where this was done ought to have received those ministers with open arms; and to have taken those persons who had just begun to serve God into their particular care; watching over them in tender love, lest they should fall back into the snare of the devil."

"Instead of this, the greater part spoke of these ministers, as if the devil, not God, had sent them. Some repelled them from the Lord's table; others stirred up the people against them, representing them, even in their public discourses, as fellows not fit to live; papists, heretics, traitors; conspirators against their King and country."

"And how did they watch over the sinners lately reformed? Even as a leopard watcheth over his prey. They drove some of them from the Lord's table; to which, till now, they had no desire to approach. They preached all manner of evil concerning them, openly cursing them in the name of the Lord. They turned many out of their work, persuaded others to do so too, and harassed them in all manner of ways."

"The event was, that some were wearied out, and so turned back to the vomit again; and then these good pastors gloried over them, and endeavoured to shake others by their example."

"When the ministers, by whom God had helped them before, came again to those places, great part of their work was to begin again, if it could be begun again; but the relapsers were often so hardened in sin, that no impression could be made upon them."

"What could they do in a case of so extreme necessity, where so many souls lay at stake?"

"No clergymen would assist at all. The expedient remained was, to find some one among themselves who was upright of heart, and of sound judgment in the things of God; and to desire him to meet the rest as often as he could, in order to confirm them, as he was able, in the ways of God, either by reading to them, or by prayer, or by exhortation."

This statement may indeed be considered as affording the key to all that, with respect to church-order, may be called irregularity in Mr. Wesley's future proceedings. God had given him large fruits of his ministry in various places; when he was absent from them, the people were "as sheep having no shepherd," or were rather persecuted by their natural pastors, the clergy; he was reduced, therefore, to the necessity of leaving them without religious care, or of providing it for them. He wisely chose the latter; but, true to his own principles, and even prejudices, he carried this no farther than the necessity of the case: the hours of service were in no instance to interfere with those of the Establishment, and at the parish church the members were exhorted to communicate. Thus a religious society was raised up within the national Church, and with this anomaly, that as to all its interior arrangements, as a society, it was independent of its ecclesiastical authority. The irregularity was, in principle, as great when the first step was taken as at any future time. It was a form of practical and partial separation, though not of theoretical dissent; but it arose out of a moral necessity, and existed for some years in such a state, that, had the clergy been disposed to co-operate in this evident revival and spread of true religion, and had the heads of the Church been willing to sanction itinerant labours among its ministers, and private religious meetings among the serious part of the people for mutual edification, the great body of Methodists might have been retained in strict communion with the Church of England.

We have now to follow these apostolic men into still more extended fields of labour, and to contests more formidable. They had sustained many attacks from the press; and some frowns from the authorities of the Church. By mobs they had

occasionally been insulted both in England and Wales. But in London, some riotous proceedings, of a somewhat violent character, now occurred at their places of worship. With respect to these, the following anecdote is curious, as it shows that Mr. Wesley's zeal was regarded with favour in a high quarter:—"On the last day of 1742, Sir John Ganson called upon Mr. Wesley, and said 'Sir, you have no need to suffer these riotous mobs to molest you, as they have done long. I and all the other Middlesex Magistrates have orders from above to do you justice whenever you apply to us.' Two or three weeks after they did apply: justice was done, though not with rigour; and from that time the Methodists had peace in London."

In the discipline of Methodism, the division of the society into classes is an important branch. Every class is placed under a person of experience and piety, who meets the others once a week, for prayer, and inquiry into the religious state of each, in order to administer exhortation and counsel. The origin of these classes was, however, purely accidental. The chapel at Bristol was in debt; and it was agreed that each member of the society should contribute one penny a week to reduce the burden. The Bristol society was therefore divided into classes; and, for convenience, one person was appointed to collect the weekly subscriptions from each class, and to pay the amount to the Stewards. The advantage of this system, when turned to a higher purpose, at once struck the methodical and practical mind of Mr. Wesley: he therefore invited several "earnest and sensible men" to meet him; and the society in London was divided into classes like that of Bristol, and placed under the spiritual care of these tried and experienced persons. At first they visited each person at his own residence once a week; but the preferable mode of bringing every class together weekly was at length adopted. These meetings are not, as some have supposed, inquisitorial; but their business is confined to statements of religious experience, and the administration of friendly and pious counsel. Mutual acquaintance with each other is thus formed; the leader is the friend and adviser of all; and among the members, by their praying so often with and for each other, the true "fellowship of saints" is promoted. Opportunities are also thus afforded for ascertaining the wants of the poorer members, and obtaining relief for them, and for visiting the sick; the duty of a leader being to see the members once in the week, either at the meeting, or if absent from that, at home. In regard of this institution Mr. Wesley remarks, "Upon reflection I could not but observe, this is the very thing which was from the beginning of Christianity. In the earliest times, those whom God had sent forth 'preached the Gospel to every creature.' The body of hearers were mostly either Jews or Heathens. But as soon as any of these were so convinced of the truth as to forsake sin, and seek the Gospel of salvation, they immediately joined them together, took an account of their names, advised them to watch over each other, and met these catechumens, as they were then called, apart from the great congregation, that they might instruct, rebuke, exhort, and pray with them, and for them, according to their several necessities."

Mr. Wesley now extended his labours northward. He first accepted an invitation into Leicestershire, and thence proceeded to Bristol in Yorkshire, where John Nelson, who had been brought to the knowledge of God in London by the ministry of the Methodists, had been instrumental on his return of doing great good. After preaching to a large congregation on Birstal-hill, and on the side of Dewsbury-moor, and encouraging Mr. Nelson in his endeavours to be useful, Mr. Wesley proceeded to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, hoping to have the same fruit of his labours among the colliers of that neighbourhood as he had seen among those of Kingswood. In returning southward, he preached in various parts of Yorkshire; and visiting Epworth, where a small society of Methodists had been collected, and finding the use of the Church denied him, he stood upon his father's tomb, and preached to a numerous congregation, who, as well as himself, appear to have been deeply impressed with the circumstance of the son speaking to them, as from the ashes of his father, on those solemn subjects on which that venerable parish Priest had faithfully addressed them for so many years. This was on Sunday, June 6, 1742. The following Sunday he preached on the same spot to a vast multitude from all

parts, and with great visible effect. He left Epworth the following morning, and, after visiting Bristol, was recalled to London, to attend the last moments of his mother; who died a decided witness of the assurance of faith,—a doctrine which in the latter years of her life, she learned from her sons more fully to understand. She was interred in the Bunhill-field burying-ground.

The labours of Mr. Charles Wesley had been very extended and successful during the early part of the year 1743. From the west of England he proceeded to Staffordshire, Birmingham, Nottingham and Sheffield. At Sheffield, especially, he was exposed to great danger from the fury of the mob. In his Journal he observes: "Those at Moorfields, Cardiff, and Walsal, were lambs to these." On leaving Sheffield, a number of persons waylaid him, and pelted him with eggs and stones. David Taylor, who was with him, was much hurt in the head by a stone; and as to himself, he says, "My clothes indeed abhorred me, and my arm pained me a little from a blow I received at Sheffield." Having reached Leeds, he preached to thousands before Mr. Shent's door, and found the people prepared for the Lord. The clergy of Leeds treated him with respect and deference, and constrained him to assist them at the sacrament. He then went to Newcastle; and he remarks in his Journal, that never since he had preached the Gospel had he had greater success than at this time at Newcastle. Soon after this, his brother laid the foundation of a place for the public worship of the society, the size of which startled many; but he received such assistance, sometimes from very unexpected quarters, that he was enabled to complete it. During this year new societies were formed in the western, midland, and northern counties, while those before collected continued greatly to increase. In the latter end of the same year (1743) Mr. Wesley appointed in London visitors of the sick as a distinct office in his society.

The same year was remarkable in the life of Mr. Wesley for his escape from one of the most dangerous of his encounters with deluded and infuriated mobs. The persecution was first excited by a sermon preached in Wednesbury Church by the clergyman. "I never," says Mr. Wesley, "heard so wicked a sermon, and delivered with such bitterness of voice and manner." The effect was soon visible, and was increased by the conduct of many of the neighbouring magistrates, full of what they called churchmanship and loyalty. At Wednesbury, Darlaston, and West-Bromwich, the mobs were stimulated to abuse the Methodists in the most outrageous manner; even women and children were beaten, stoned, and covered with mud; their houses were broken open, and their goods spoiled and carried away. As soon as the intelligence reached him, Mr. Wesley hastened from Bristol, whither he had gone, to comfort and advise this harassed people. On his arrival, he preached at Wednesbury without molestation; but the mob soon after surrounded the house; and he was exposed to their fury for a considerable time. Mr. Charles, who met him at Nottingham, has inserted in his Journal a notice of their meeting, highly characteristic of the spirit of martyrdom in which both of them lived:—"My brother came, delivered out of the mouth of the lions! his clothes were torn to tatters; he looked like a soldier of Christ. The mob of Wednesbury, Darlaston, and Walsal, were permitted to take and carry him about for several hours, with a full intent to murder him; but his work is not yet finished, or he had been now with the souls under the altar." Undaunted by the usage of his brother, Charles immediately set out for Wednesbury to encourage the societies.

In this year, Mr. Wesley made his first journey into Cornwall, whither his brother Charles had preceded him, and had preached to mobs "as desperate as that at Sheffield." Mr. Wesley followed in August, and came to St. Ives, where he found a society formed on Dr. Woodward's plan. They gladly received him, and became the nucleus of the Methodist societies in Cornwall, which from this time rapidly increased. In no part of England has Methodism obtained more influence than in the west of Cornwall. It has become, in fact, the leading profession of the people; and its moral effects upon society may be viewed with the highest satisfaction and gratitude. A serious persecution was, however, experienced in Cornwall, at the commencement; the riots in Staffordshire and elsewhere continued; and cruel was the treat-

ment which the Methodists and several of the preachers experienced.

The first conference was held in June, 1744. The societies had spread through various parts of the kingdom, and a number of preachers, under the name of assistants and helpers, the former being superintendents of the latter, had been engaged by Mr. Wesley in the work. Some clergymen, also, more or less co-operated to promote these attempts to spread the flame of true religion, and were not yet afraid of the cross. These circumstances led to the distribution of different parts of the kingdom into circuits, to which certain preachers were for a time appointed, and were then removed to others. The superintendence of the whole was with the two brothers, but particularly with Mr. John Wesley. The annual conferences afforded an admirable opportunity of conversing on important points and distinctions of doctrine, that all might "speak the same thing" in their public ministrations; and of agreeing upon such a discipline as the new circumstances in which the societies were placed might require. The labours of the preachers for the ensuing year were also arranged; and consultation was held on all matters connected with the promotion of the work of God in which they were engaged. Every thing went on, however, not on preconceived plan, but "step by step," as circumstances suggested and led the way. To the great principle of doing good to the souls of men, every thing was subordinated; not excepting even their prejudices and fears, as will appear from the minutes of the first conference, which was held in London, as just stated, in 1744. The ultimate separation of the societies from the Church, after the death of the first agents in the work, was at that early period contemplated as a possibility, and made a subject of conversation; and the resolution was, "We do and will do all we can to prevent those consequences which are supposed to be likely to happen after our death: but we cannot, in good conscience, neglect the present opportunity of saving souls while we live, for fear of consequences which may possibly, or probably, happen after we are dead." To this principle Mr. Wesley was "faithful unto death," and it is the true key to his public conduct. His brother, after some years, less steadily adhered to it; and most of the clergymen who attached themselves to Mr. Wesley in the earlier periods of Methodism, found it too bold a position, and one which exposed them to too severe a fire, to be maintained by them. It required a firmer courage than theirs to hold out at such a post; but the founder of Methodism never betrayed the trust which providential circumstances had laid upon him.

In August following, Mr. Wesley preached for the last time before the University of Oxford. His sermon evidently produced effect, and the Vice-Chancellor sent after him, and desired his notes, which he sealed up and sent immediately.

The year 1745 was chiefly spent by Mr. Charles Wesley in London, Bristol, and Wales. In the early part of the next year he visited Cornwall, where he preached with great success, though in some places he suffered persecution. On his return to London he visited the Rev. Vincent Peronet, the venerable Vicar of Shoreham, in Kent, of whose wise counsels the Wesleys afterwards frequently availed themselves in matters of difficulty. He then set off on a tour into the north, and in Staffordshire was exposed to the violence of ungodly men. Having visited Dewsbury, Newcastle, Hexham, and other places, he returned, through Lincolnshire, preaching in several places. He did not remain long in London before he set off for Bristol, and at Devizes had as narrow an escape for his life, from a lawless mob, as his brother had experienced at Wednesbury. Amidst such storms were the foundations of that work laid, the happy results of which tens of thousands now enjoy in peace. During the same period of two years the labours of Mr. John Wesley had been as unintermitting. He visited many parts of England; and on his return to London he revived with vigour the plan which he had occasionally acted on, of writing and causing to be distributed small religious tracts, by which the cause of religion was greatly promoted.

At this time the attention of Mr. Wesley was considerably directed to "the case between the clergy and the Methodists," and to the discipline of the societies, and the means of making provision for their future welfare. He felt that a case of necessity had arisen, calling upon him to provide

a ministry and a government for the people who had been raised up,—a necessity which rested upon the obvious alternative that they must either be furnished with pastors of their own, or be left without sufficient aid in the affairs of their souls. This led him closely to examine the whole matter; and the subject of church discipline was seriously discussed at several conferences.

(To be continued.)

## The Wesleyan.

MONTREAL, THURSDAY, AUGUST 20, 1840.

THE civilized nations of mankind, in the successive ages of the world, contemplating with complacency their own imaginary intellectual superiority—their genius, discoveries and improvements—their advancement in arts and sciences, and general knowledge—have been tempted to adopt the ancient sentiment: “No doubt we are the people, and wisdom will die with us;”—a sentiment which has perhaps never been more proudly indulged than by the present generation. The Aeronaut, descending from his lofty flight—the Miner, emerging from the bowels of the earth—the Navigator, returning from his long and perilous voyage of discovery—the Astronomer, who has brought his knowledge from worlds remote, the distances, magnitudes and laws of which he has ascertained—the Contriver and conductor of stupendous machines, propelled, on land and water, by steam—the originator and inventor of those thousand other useful or curious arts and machines, which, in rapid succession, have called forth general admiration;—may be tempted to imagine that, in their different discoveries and labours, they have excelled the genius and achievements of all that have ever lived and laboured before them. Let them, however, look to the history of the past, and contemplate the labours and ruins of former ages. Let them look at the pyramids of Egypt, and the splendid ruins of its stupendous architecture—mark the sculpture of Greece and the antiquities of Rome—let the astronomy of the Chaldeans, the machines of Archimedes, the mathematics of Euclid, the poetry of Homer, the eloquence of Demosthenes, the logic of Aristotle, and the philosophy of Plato, be remembered; and it must be acknowledged, that the human mind was as powerful and fruitful in inventions three thousand years ago, as at the present period.

If, however, it be a fact that the results and monuments of human ingenuity and power which distinguish the present age are not so demonstrative of the intellectual superiority of the present generation over former ages, as may be fondly imagined by some; they doubtless possess a moral character, and a character of excellence and usefulness, unknown in the inventions and works of the ancients. The pyramids of Egypt are, indeed, stupendous masses, which for thousands of years have astonished the traveller; but what are they but stupendous monuments of the tyranny of Pharaoh, and the slavery of his people, by whom they were erected. The temples and palaces of the Gentiles were splendid specimens of architectural skill, and models for after ages; but they were the shrines of cruelty, pollution and idolatry: whereas the efforts of the human mind now, in the cultivation of the arts and sciences, and in those gigantic labours in which so many thousands are now engaged, are prompted by enlightened philanthropy, and are directed to the civil, social and intellectual improvement of mankind, and are calculated so to aid scientific research and commercial enterprise, and to bring the remotest nations and countries into correspondence

and intercourse with each other, as to establish a bond of national amity and union among them, and mutually to advance each others general interests.

On this subject we extract the following closing remarks in Mr. Grattan's speech, at the late celebration of the “Cunard Festival” at Boston:—

“The million of dollars to be now annually appropriated by the Government of England, for facilitating her intercourse with the various and remotest portions of the American continent and islands, forms so much tribute money paid to the great principle of general civilization, whose whole spirit is embodied in the sentiment that brought us here today. Oh, sir, if it depended on me—and, thank Heaven, it requires no man's exertions to impress it on this assembly—this sentiment should sink deep into the hearts of both countries, like some cherished precept of their common religion of Christianity, in all its length and breadth—binding them together in one bond of family regard and generous rivalry, elevating the views and purifying the objects which should be mutual between them—the improvement of the American and English nations, two populations forming one great people—and through them advancing the civilization, the freedom and the happiness of the whole human race. Such is the career which these two mighty nations are now running—such is the goal which their glorious spirit of enterprise must eventually reach—such is the triumph, one great step in which we are at this moment celebrating.”

But that which more illustriously distinguishes the present period from all former ages, is, the benevolent, and especially the religious institutions and exertions to which it has given birth. And as a Christian nation, we are not ashamed to declare before the world, that we regard our Bible and Missionary Societies, our Sunday School and Tract institutions, and other kindred schemes of Christian philanthropy, as the chief glory of the age; because we regard them as the “light of the world,” and the “salt of the earth,” and because we believe them to be the means by which the blessings of Christianity and civilization will be universally diffused among the nations of the world, and the temporal and eternal interests of the human race secured. We shall, therefore, ever consider our journal as legitimately and usefully employed, in furnishing our readers, from time to time, with information concerning the operations and successes of these great, because Christian and divinely honoured institutions.

CERTAIN as is the final and universal triumph of Christianity, and glorious as that triumph will be: the agents and friends of the Missionary cause are sometimes called to pursue their way amidst dark and painfully mysterious dispensations of divine providence. The Wesleyan Missionary Society, a few years since, sustained a severe loss in the death of one of their most devoted Missionaries, the Rev. Mr. Threlfall, who was massacred in an African kraal, by the people to whom he was sent to preach the gospel of peace; and recently, as is generally known, the London Missionary Society has been deeply afflicted by the tidings of the tragical death of the Rev. J. Williams, who was slaughtered by the savages of Erromanga, while on a visit of Christian mercy to their shores. At the late meeting of the last mentioned Society, the Rev. Dr. Morrison, in moving a resolution relative to this melancholy event, made the following just and affecting remarks:—

“He said, he must have been something more or less than human who could look with calmness or composure of spirit at that affecting providence which this resolution records, and which, as by some mighty up-heavings of the natural elements, has spread desolation and horror through the whole range of the christian community of this

country. For a season after the first intelligence of our sad loss reached our shores, we ventured to hope against hope, and beguiled our fears and our suspicions by an unwilling belief. But now the sad reality has burst upon our bleeding and almost broken hearts. It has burst in all its bitterness and all its woe, and we must say, and I feel my Bible demands I should say—for these events are not to be passed slightly over—with the patriarch of old, “The hand of God hath touched us. How is the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle. Oh, Williams! thou wast slain in thy high places; our hearts are distressed for thee, our brother Williams; very pleasant hast thou been unto us; Oh, how are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!” But while we venture thus to feel, and thus to express our feelings, we dare not forget that it is yet well, supremely well, with the martyr of Jesus. His cross has been exchanged for a crown that shall never fade, and from the blood-stained shores of Erromanga his happy spirit has ascended to his Saviour and his God. There are some dispensations, however, of Divine Providence, and this appears to be one of them, so profoundly mysterious, that we can find no relief under their pressure, save in the settled conviction of the infinite wisdom and benignity of the Divine government. We hear a voice this day accosting our ears from the excellent glory, and saying, “My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are my ways your ways, saith the Lord.” Let us, therefore, bow—humbly bow—beneath this stroke of an inscrutable Sovereignty. Oh, let us remember that though clouds and darkness are round about Jehovah, yet that righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne, and that mercy and truth shall go before his face. We may assure ourselves of this, that it is our ignorance alone that invests the affecting providence which has overtaken us with such a character of mystery. (Hear hear.) Could we see the end from the beginning, could we look at events with the eye of Omniscience, could we fully comprehend the whole series of the Divine operations, the connexion of one event with another, and of all events with one grand and perfect whole, we should feel, we should see, as we cannot feel or see this day, that the providence which has overtaken us is in perfect consistency with the infinite kindness as well as rectitude of God's moral government, and that all God's ways to this great Institution have been in the strictest harmony with his own spotless purity, benevolence, and goodness. (Hear.) It is not our province, and never can be, to attempt to expound the hidden purposes and designs of the Divine mind, for God giveth no account of his matters to any. Yet let us not forget, but cherish the thought, that our martyred brother has assuredly been taken from the evil to come; that the heart-rending death which has befallen him has thrown around him, and the work in which he died, a halo of imperishable glory; that he has fallen at a time, and in circumstances, in which the bright inheritance of a spotless reputation has been bequeathed by him to the cause of christian missions; (cheers;) that the very manner in which he has fallen is such as, by the grace of God, to operate in the most powerful, and, I trust, abiding manner, upon the zeal and devotion of the christian church in that great cause to which he devoted himself.”

We feel obliged by the kind notice which has been taken of the *Wesleyan* by the conductors of the press, here and at Quebec; and are glad that the design and general arrangement of the publication appear to meet general approbation. We can assure our friends that it will be our steady and conscientious endeavour, by the avoidance of all party questions and exciting topics, not only as connected with general politics, but matters of secular, local interest; to render the journal a useful and acceptable vehicle of religious instruction and information to the community in general, leaving the discussion of the great questions arising out of political events, whether here or elsewhere, to the abler pens of those who conduct the secular journals of the province.

CONSIDERING the name and design of this publication, our readers will not be surprised by our

having occupied the biographical department of the first and second numbers with a memoir of that great and good man, the founder of the religious denomination which bears his name—the Rev. John Wesley, A.M. It is expected the memoir will extend through two numbers more, and will then be followed by biographical sketches of other eminent individuals, who, in their day and generations, were “burning and shining lights.”

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Several valuable communications have just come to hand, which shall receive due attention. Orders for the *Wesleyan* from different parts of the country have also been received and forwarded. Our thanks are due to several friends for the support they have kindly promised and already afforded us in recommending the publication and procuring subscribers.

## WESLEYAN INTELLIGENCE.

## ANNIVERSARY OF THE WESLEYAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY, HELD IN LONDON, MAY 4, 1840.

(Continued from page 7.)

As a summary of the Report, it was stated, that the principal or Central Mission Stations occupied by the Society, in the various parts of the world now enumerated, are about 240. The missionaries are 362, beside catechists, local-preachers, assistants, superintendents of schools, schoolmasters and mistresses, artizans, &c., of whom upwards of 300 are employed at a moderate salary, and 3,350 afford their services gratuitously.—The number of communicants on the Mission Stations, according to the latest return, is 78,228, being an increase of 5,578 on the number reported last year. This total does not include the number under the care of the missionaries in Ireland.—The number of the scholars in the Mission Schools is 53,703.

After an admirable speech from the Rev. J. Dixon, for which we have not room,

The Rev. EDMUND CRISP, from India, and belonging to the London Missionary Society, said—He was extremely happy to have the opportunity of attending that meeting, that he might give a personal illustration of the principle that had been brought forward more than once in the speeches that had been delivered, that, in our great missionary enterprise, we were all one. (Hear, hear.) It was his happiness to be associated in missionary labour, in India, with one of the meeting's own Secretaries, (Mr. Hoole,) and it was in deference to his call that he had engaged to come forward this morning, in order, as that gentleman himself had stated, to express a fraternal feeling towards the great body which that meeting was supposed to represent. Heartily thankful he was, at having been able thus to meet the members of the Wesleyan Society. (Hear, hear.) He had found no difficulty in co-operating with Wesleyan Missionaries in India, nor did he take any credit to himself, because he had been able to go on hand in hand and heart in heart with them in this vast enterprise. (Hear, hear.) They had but one spiritual object to promote; they had been enabled to keep that distinctly and steadily before them; and this being the case, little matters had been lost sight of. He should have been happy to say more upon this subject, but he understood it was wished that he should state something on the topic which this resolution distinctly brought before the meeting. It was always very painful to have to say anything against those from whom we had experienced kindness, and it was with undissembled sorrow he had to raise any objection to any of the proceedings of the East India Company, from whom the greatest kindness had been received. There was a time, however, when they frowned upon missionaries, and when the missionaries experienced no protection from them; but now all the freedom they as men experienced, they had from the local government of India, and, by the distinguished individuals there, they were treated with unmingled kindness and courtesy. (Cheers.) Fourteen years of the best of his life had been spent there, and he should be happy to return, which he was upon the point of doing, to that distant land, there to end his days. He had hoped that the abomination of idolatry would have been entirely removed, before he again quitted

the shores of his native country, but it was not so. A short time since, he had received a letter from a gentleman in Madras, which stated, that, notwithstanding the pledge that had been given in Parliament, and notwithstanding the express orders, and the distinct promises, of the Court of Directors, nothing had been done in Madras with a view to remedy the evil which had been so long complained of; and it was a monstrous evil. Would the meeting believe, that the Great Feast in the Island of Seringapatam, about three miles from Trichinopoly, when the idol was brought out with great pomp, and lifted up into the car, amid the rending shouts of multitudes, and when those shouts had been hushed into silence, before any native was allowed to approach, and make an offering to the idol, all eyes were directed to a tent, from which one advanced, and offered a gift to be presented to the idol, in the name, and on the behalf, of the British East India Company. (Hear, hear.) Would the meeting believe, that a golden cloth, as it was called—a cloth into which much gold was interwoven—was handed up into the car, to be placed upon the idol; and thus honour was done to their wood and to their stone. (Hear, hear.) This was a scene, which was occurring at that moment; even in this very month of May; and the letter which he had alluded to, went on to describe other offerings to idols, on account of the Honourable East India Company. For instance, the emblem of marriage was presented to, and tied round the neck of, an idol, by some officers of the government, as if to intimate how their secular and idolatrous pursuits harmonised. It was these things the missionaries complained of, and it was these things that must be abolished. It was constantly cast into the teeth of the missionaries, that the government could not interfere with the religion of the country; all they wished was, that the government would do just nothing at all; [hear, hear;] that they would let the system of the country stand upon its own strength, because then, from its own weakness, it would soon fall. They distinctly disclaimed any wish that the government should interfere, by any statute, for the purpose of forcibly putting down idolatry. Let the system be adhered to by the natives, till they become more enlightened, but let there be no participation in that system by our local government. (Hear, hear.) Had time permitted, he should have liked to have shown how these practices operated on the young European. It was not unusual to entrust to the young civilian the pagoda affairs as they were called; and the young civilian, having his religion hanging but loosely about him, was liable to have his horror of idolatry removed; and many of those young men, in this way, had become the actual defenders of idolatry in India. (Hear, hear.) Under such circumstances, it ill became men of station to taunt the missionary system with want of success, when they themselves were labouring, with both hands, to uphold that which it was the object of missionaries to overthrow. So long as he could, during his stay in England, he had never hesitated to raise his voice against those practices in India, and to bring the details before the British community; and he hoped the matter would be steadily and strongly pressed and persevered in at home, because nothing could be done yonder, until such unhalloved practices were entirely swept away. He most cordially seconded the Resolution.

Sir PETER LAURIE, on receiving a vote of thanks, said,—Instead of thanking me, I ought to thank you, for you have afforded me a treat this day that I shall never forget. (Cheers.) I always loved the Wesleyans. Many a time I have slipped into Hinde Street Chapel, unknown to anybody, and I was always enamoured of your creed. (Hear, hear.) Mr. Dixon has stated that you could give a code of laws for New Zealand. Why, the code of laws I have read of the Wesleyan Connexion would afford laws for the government of Europe. If ever I saw perfection in laws,—if ever I saw human wisdom in laws,—it is, in my humble opinion, in the laws by which you are governed. I am glad to have the opportunity of adding this to the former expression of my sentiments; and I am very glad now to have the opportunity of saying that although I loved the Wesleyans before, I now loved them more and more. (Hear, hear.) I will go farther than that, because I will declare, that that member of the Church of England—who does not love the

Wesleyans, and who does not feel gratitude to them for their support of that Establishment does not deserve to belong to the Church of England. (Cheers.) You have been the best friends of the Church of England. You have shown them a zeal and an example which they have endeavored to follow; and you are now supporting them in the position they hold; and therefore, every member of the Church of England, if he is true to his own creed, must love, as I do most cordially and most sincerely, the Wesleyans as a body, and every one of you as individuals. (Much cheering.)

## ASHANTEE MISSION.

WESLEYAN MISSION-HOUSE,  
Hatton Garden, London, June 18, 1840. }

“We have much pleasure in stating, that the Rev. T. B. Freeman, Wesleyan Missionary on the Gold-Coast in Western Africa, whose Journal of his recent tour to Ashantee has just excited so deep and universal an interest, arrived in London on Thursday last. Mr. F. is accompanied by Mr. W. De Graft, a native Local Preacher, and a valuable assistant in the African Mission. Their stay is expected to be very short: when Mr. F. hopes to return to the scene of his evangelical labours, accompanied by six other Missionaries; four of these are intended to be his companions in the glorious enterprise of attempting to establish a mission among the 4,000,000 of men who constitute the population of Ashantee and its dependencies; and thus to introduce Christianity, education and civilization into one important portion of that great continent, to which Britain owes so vast a debt of reparation for the wrongs and miseries of the accursed slave-trade.”

## RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

## SWISS MISSION AT GRANDE LIGNE.

The mission-house which has been building for some time, through the Divine blessing, is now completed. It was opened last Sabbath, the 9th instant, with services of a very interesting character, in the French language, conducted by the Rev. E. N. Kirk, of New York, and the Rev. L. Roussy, labouring at this station. The morning service was attended by 150 persons, several of whom came from New York, and others from Montreal. About two-fifths were French-Canadians, including the members of the Congregation. In the afternoon, the attendance was less—many having left after the English service, in which the Rev. Messrs. Chickering, of Maine, and Dr. Davies and Mr. Strong, of Montreal, took a part. In the morning, after a solemn dedicatory prayer by Mr. Roussy, a very impressive discourse was delivered by the Rev. Mr. Kirk, on Matt. iv. 15, 16. “The land of Zebulon, and the land of Nephthali, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles. The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up.”

The sermon in the afternoon was preached from the words, “What think ye of Christ?” and seemed to make a considerable impression on the audience, mostly Canadians.

This interesting occasion deserves further notice, which we expect to give in our next paper. It may be safely said that the influences of the gospel were largely felt by all present. May the blessing of the Most High be vouchsafed to our brethren and sisters labouring in this important field! It is gratifying to know that £20 was collected to assist in rebuilding a barn belonging to one of the members of the church, which had been lately burnt down, there is little doubt, by an enemy to the gospel. We are informed that the Rev. Mr. Kirk preached on Monday evening, on which occasion the attendance of French-Canadians was much greater.—*Occasional Paper, issued by the French Canadian Society.*

## MARRIED.

At Quebec, on Saturday the 8th instant, by the Rev. W. M. Harvard, Mr. Matthew Scott, of Norwich, Upper Canada, to Miss Baird, lately from Ballina, Ireland. In this city, on Saturday the 15th instant, by the Rev. R. L. Lusher, Mr. John Evans Lovell Miller, printer of the *Wesleyan*, to Miss Margaret Esther Gillis, of this city.

## DIED.

At Quebec, on Friday the 7th instant, after a short illness, the infant daughter of the Rev. John Borland, of Melbourne, aged sixteen months.



## MISCELLANEOUS.

## THE DESTRUCTIVE TORNADO AT NATCHEZ.

THE following letter, (which we have permission to publish,) addressed by the Rev. S. G. Winchester to his friend, the Rev. W. Blood, A. M., who is at present officiating, with great acceptance and usefulness, among different congregations in this city; furnishes a melancholy corroboration of the accounts which have appeared in the public prints relative to the recent tremendous catastrophe at Natchez and its neighbourhood; and while it excites our sympathy for the bereaved and suffering families which have survived, should also fill our hearts with gratitude to Almighty God, that in this northern clime we are happily free from those visitations of storm and tempest, by which the regions of the south are so frequently ravaged:—

NATCHEZ, May 11, 1810.

DEAR FRIEND,—I have just received yours of the 2d May. I hasten to answer it. As a city, we are in ruins. You will doubtless have heard before this reaches you, that an awful tornado has swept over our city, and laid us to the dust. There is scarcely an entire house standing in the city. It occurred on Thursday last, between one and two o'clock. My chimneys were blown down—the two gable ends of my house blown out—the back gallery blown away—my trees and fences on the ground. More than three hundred lives were lost, and more than five millions of property. Three steamboats and about ninety flat boats, with all their crews and cargoes, entirely lost. The Methodist church is in ruins; the steeple of mine thrown down; and part of the roof of the Episcopal is gone. The whole scene is one of unexampled distress. Every hotel is demolished; one end of the City Hotel and one end of the Mansion-house remain. The tavern under the hill is even with the ground, and eleven dead bodies have been dug from the ruins. The theatre is in perfect ruins. Mr. Wilson's store, where your coats were, is utterly destroyed, and partly blown into the river; if your coats were not sent, they are now forever lost. I arrived in the night about one o'clock, and found my family all well; they have been mercifully spared from the desolating hurricane.

We are all in confusion. I have boarded up my house, and returned to it to-day. I write now in haste, but will write you again as soon as I hear from you, and know when you sail for England, and where I am to direct my letter. My wife joins me in kind regards to you.

Excuse haste, and believe me ever your sincere friend.

S. G. WINCHESTER.

VALUE OF ONE BIBLE.—Were it possible to realize the idea that only a single copy of the bible was upon earth; and that all mankind knew where it was deposited; with what delight would myriads press to the favoured spot!—what pilgrimages would be undertaken to catch even a glimpse of the inestimable treasure! Kings would lay down their crowns before it, and sages press from the shades of retirement, and the schools of science, to partake of wisdom at the fountain which mercy had unlocked. And is the value of this treasure become impaired because means are devised to render it accessible to all? Is the light of revelation less valuable because it no longer admits a "struggling ray" through the jealous door-ways and narrow windows of the temple, but bursts forth in all the brightness of its majesty, to console and cheer and animate the universal family of man?—*Dudley.*

ANECDOTE OF QUEEN ELIZABETH.—Bacon, in his Apophthegms, relates the following anecdote:—Queen Elizabeth, seeing Sir Edward in her garden, looked out at her window, and asked him, in Italian, "What does a man think of when he thinks of nothing?" Sir Edward, who had not had the effects of some of the Queen's grants so soon as he had hoped, made answer: "Madam, he thinks of a woman's promise." The Queen shrunk in her head, but was heard to say, "Well, Sir Edward, I must not confute you: anger makes dull men witty, but it keeps them poor."

EXTRACT FROM RUSH'S MEMORANDA OF A RESIDENCE AT THE COURT OF LONDON.—"When the Prince came from his apartment, called in the language of palaces his closet, into the entré rooms, I presented to him Mr. John Adams Smith, as public secretary of the legation, and Mr. Ogle Taylor, as attached to it personally. Other special presentations took place; amongst them, that of the Prince of Hesse Hemberg, by Lord Stewart, both distinguished in the then recent battles of the continent. The Prince Regent moved about these rooms, until he had addressed every body; all waiting his salutation. Doors hitherto shut, now opened, when a new scene appeared. You beheld, in a gorgeous mass, the company that had turned off to the right. The opening of the doors was the signal for the commencement of the general levee. I remained with others to see it. All passed, one by one, before the Prince, each receiving a momentary salutation. To a few he addressed conversation, but briefly; as it stopped the line. All were in rich costume. Men of genius and science were there; the nobility were numerous, so were the military. There were from forty to fifty generals; perhaps as many admirals; with throngs of officers of rank inferior. I remarked upon the number of the wounded. 'Who is that,' I asked, 'pallid, but with a countenance so animated?' 'That's General Walker,' I was told, 'who was pierced with bayonets, whilst leading on the assault at Badajos.' 'And he, close by, tall but limping?' 'Colonel Ponsonby: he was left for dead at Waterloo; the cavalry, it was thought, had trampled upon him.' Then came one of like port, but deprived of a leg, and as he moved slowly onward, the whisper went, 'That's Lord Anglesea.' A fourth had been wounded at Seringapatam; a fifth at Talavera; some had suffered in Egypt, some in America. There were those who had received scars on the deck with Nelson; others who carried them from the days of Howe. One, yes one, had fought at Saratoga. It was so that my enquiries were answered. All had 'done their duty.' this was the favourite praise bestowed. They had earned a title to come before their sovereign, and read in his recognition their country's approbation."

And does the hero of a hundred battles consider himself as amply rewarded for the perils, toils and wounds of his military career, by the approving recognition of his prince, and the grateful plaudits of his country? Let the Christian warrior continue courageously to fight the "good fight of faith," and resist the spiritual enemies of his soul and of his God, and he will be "more than conqueror," and finally realize the fulfilment of that great promise, "I will give him the morning star"—yea, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."—Rev. iii. 21.

About thirty streets of the city of Pompeii, after having been covered with the lava and ashes from Vesuvius, for nearly 1600 years, are now restored to light, forming a third part of the town: the walls which formed its ancient enclosure have been recognized; a magnificent amphitheatre, a theatre, a forum, the temple of Isis, that of Venus, and a number of other buildings, have been cleared; the secret stairs by which the priests of those times slyly crept to prompt the oracles have been detected; but the works are progressing very slowly, owing to the want of funds.

THOMAS A KEMPIS.—"This Thomas was called a Kempis from a little village of that name in the diocese of Cologne, where he was born in the year of our Lord 1373. His parentage and fortune were mean: at 13 years old he began his studies, and about 19 betook himself to a Monastery of Augustin's Monks. About five and twenty he took the habit of that house and order; there he continued for the space of seventy years, particularly eminent for his piety, humility, diligent study of the Holy Scriptures, anxiety of life, moving eloquence of discourse, and extraordinary zeal in prayer. In his person, he was of middle stature, of a strong brown complexion, a lively piercing eye, and a sight so good that though he laboured much under infirmities of old age, yet he was never reduced to the use of spectacles. He died July 25th, 1471, in the ninety-second year of his age.—*Colonial Churchmen.*

There is at present in the gratery of Col. Connolly, at Castletown, a vine measuring the extraordinary length of 100 feet; and, in order to thin the crop, the gardener cut away 2,000 bunches of grapes, leaving to ripen the prodigious quantity of 3,500 bunches. This is the largest and most productive vine in this country.—*Dublin paper.*

Last year, in a field at Three Rivers, two seeds were sown, which produced the same season, two cart loads of vegetable melons.

## POETRY.

## THE TRIUMPH OF TRUTH.

'Tis built on a rock, and the tempest may rave;  
Its solid foundation repels the proud wave;  
Though Satan himself should appear in the van,  
Truth smiles at the rage of the infidel clan.

"Like the sun going forth" in his mighty career,  
To gladden the earth and illumine each sphere;  
The chariot of Truth shall in majesty roll  
O'er climate, sea, ocean, to each distant pole.

A glorified course it shall nobly pursue,  
Encircling with radiance both Gentile and Jew;  
And millions of heathens, their idols despising,  
Shall bask in the light, and exult in its rising!

The shadows that cover the regions of HAM  
Shall vanish, or flame with the light of the LAMB:  
Each lovely green island, that gems the salt wave,  
His truth will convert, his philanthropy save!

Already a glory has flamed in the West;  
Poor Negroes with spiritual freedom are blest;  
The palms of the South show its beautiful blaze;  
And the Boreal pines have been upt with its rays

A voice in the desert, a voice in the wood!  
A voice o'er the mountain and billowy flood!  
"Thy glory is come;" abject heathen, "arise,  
And shine," like a new-risen star in the skies!

"A Star in the East" is to millions display'd,  
Whose lustre has sunk the proud Crescent in shade  
O'er the darkness of nations, for ages forlorn,  
Bright Truth is diffusing millennial morn!

O'er pagod and altar the Gospel has blazed;  
The Brahmin has wonder'd, the Moslem has gaz'd;  
The vision delightful shall Salem behold;  
And, under one Shepherd, the world be one fold!

The sign of the Cross has appear'd—the blest sign;  
And faith has decypher'd the motto divine,  
"He must reign" till the nations in homage bow down;  
The wicked his footstool—believers his crown.

Life's river of crystal shall ever where flow,  
Till flowerless deserts a paradise grow;  
And wilds bleak and barren burst out in the glory,  
Predicted by Seers in prophetic story.

The record denounces that Babel shall fall;  
Priest, pagod, fanc, idol, mosque, minaret—all  
The strong holds of Satan to ruins be hurl'd;  
And glory shall cover our desolate world!

The mighty may fight with JEHOVAH'S decree;  
And the sceptic may write that it never shall be;  
But the finger of time on its dial shall stop,  
Ere one promise prove false, or one prophecy drop!

Go, stop it, proud scorers! alas, it is vain!  
Ye may as well tie up the winds with a chain;  
Or the stars, or the tides of the ocean control;  
Or fuse the vast ices that rivet the pole.

MARSDEN.

## MONTREAL:

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